Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 19th November, 1946.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2 p.m., and read prayers.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [2.3]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the third reading of the Land Act Amendment Bill, the Country Areas Water Supply Bill and the Comprehensive Agricultural Areas and Goldfields Water Supply Bill to be passed at this sitting.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House and assured myself that there is an absolute majority of members present. I declare the question duly passed.

Question thus passed.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Report, etc.

Report of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—COUNTRY AREAS WATER SUPPLY.

Reports, etc.

Reports of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.

Reports, etc.

Reports of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION.

In Committee.

Mr. Rodoreda in the Chair; The Minister for Labour in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Non-application of Act to medical practitioners, nurses, masseurs:

Mr. ABBOTT: Subclause (2) provides that students who are learning the profession shall not be required to be registered for the purposes of the Act. As the clause stands, the only school at which hairdressing may be taught other than under the conditions of apprenticeship is the Perth Technical College at Perth. I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause (2) the words "in the Perth Technical College at Perth" be struck out and the words "in a school registered under this Act" inserted in lieu.

I want to provide for this to apply, if necessary, to a technical college at Fremantle or East Perth or elsewhere, or to any other suitable school, because a school has to be registered and approved by the Minister. The clause at present makes no provision for the Minister to permit tuition to be given at any other school.

The Minister for Labour: We do not want it, either.

Mr. ABBOTT: Does the Minister want to cut out Fremantle, Midland Junction or some other place that might have a technical college? I contend that we should provide for schools at which tuition may be given to be prescribed by the Minister from time to time or sanctioned by the board. We are creating a board to say what training shall or shall not be given and why should it not say what schools should and should not give tuition? Why cut out Fremantle and other metropolitan schools?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I do not intend to accept the amendment. The object of the amendment is probably a fairly good one, and I think it is taken from the Victorian Act. I point out, however, that there are over 1,000,000 people in Melbourne, and, of necessity, many hairdressers and schools. The Perth Technical College is looked upon as providing the highest standard of training. We have no desire, and neither has the Master Hairdressers' Association, to provide other schools. Clause 11 of the award made between the Metropolitan Hairdressers and Wigmakers Employees' Union and the Metropolitan Ladies Hairdressers' Industrial Union of Employees of W.A. provides that no person shall directly or indirectly request or permit any other person to pay or give, or shall receive from any other person, any premiums, bonus, consideration or payment for employing or teaching, or purporting to employ or teach such person, or any other person, in any of the callings to which this award applies. And this award applies to everything we have in the Bill. Members will appreciate that the Perth Technical College does not have to be paid for teaching. It is laid down by the court that the students must spend a certain amount of their time there and, in addition, persons from the Forces are being trained there under the rehabilitation scheme. I am desirous of retaining that free tuition on the highest possible standard. If the amendment is carried it will lead to private schools being started where premiums will have to be paid.

Mr. Abbott: Why? They would have to be registered.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: It is far better not to give them the opportunity. As far as Fremantle is concerned, I think the Minister for Education will support me when I say that there is no desire to have a lot of these schools started all over the metropolitan area. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. McDONALD: I think it is desirable to include this amendment. Under the Bill everyone concerned, within the radius prescribed, has to learn either through apprenticeship with a hairdresser or by going to the Perth Technical College. Quite apart from the matter of fees we should leave the door open for the creation of other schools—perhaps branches of the Technical College—in towns such as those mentioned by the member for North Perth. It is no small expense for a student to come daily from Fremantle to the Perth Technical College, and while that school may be meeting the present requirements it is quite possible that branches will be established in other towns at which tuition could be given and where the student could attend with the minimum of expense, and where instruction, similar to that given by the school in Perth, would be available.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Appointment of Hairdressers' Registration Board:

Mr. ABBOTT: This clause provides for setting up a board.

The Minister for Labour: I agree to your amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to the fact that he has an amendment on the notice paper which comes in before that of the member for North Perth.

Mr. WATTS: If the member for North Perth succeeds in his amendment I shall not be able to move mine. I am in somewhat of a quandary, because this board of five members is too cumbersome. The Minister has expressed his intention of agreeing to the amendment of the member for North Perth, but if he is not going to move it my course is perfectly clear. I am not the slightest bit interested in the amendment to be moved by him. My point is that the board is too big. I do not see why there should be two nominees of the association mentioned when one would serve very well; or why there should be a special chairman when one of the members of the board could occupy that position and the Governor would not be limited in the slightest degree in his selection of a suitable chairman. If the member for North Perth moves his amendment, whether it is defeated or not, I am blocked.

The CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition has priority in moving an amendment. But I would suggest, so as to give everyone a chance, that the Leader of the Opposition move to delete the first line of the subclause, which would achieve his intention, and the member for North Perth would still be able to move his amendment.

Mr. WATTS: Very well. I shall adopt your suggestion. I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (3) the words "The board shall consist of" be struck out.

I consider a board of five is unnecessarily cumbersome, and these people will have to be paid. I do not see an enormous revenue being procured by the board from its operations, and the less the expense the better, provided it does not interfere with the reasonably successful working of the board to be appointed. My proposal is for a board of three persons, one of whom shall be nominated by the employees in both sections of the industry—male and female workers.

The Minister for Labour: There are two organisations.

Mr. WATTS: They are very closely allied. The only difference is that one lot consists of male employees and the other of female employees. Whether a man or a woman is appointed he or she can effectively represent the employees of both branches. The other sections can be coped with by the Master Gentlemens Hairdressers' representative and the other person to be nominated, and one of them could be appointed chairman by the Governor. With the object of re-constituting the board on the basis of three members being placed in office, as I have suggested, I ask the Committee to agree to the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This is a test as to whether we are to have three members on the board, or five. I have no objection to the amendment proposed by the member for North Perth, but this is neither a Government Bill nor a Bill of the Minister for Labour; it was brought down at the request of the Master Hairdressers' and the Master Lady Hairdressers' Organisations. The amendments were submitted to a combined meeting of the organisations in order to get the hairdressers' point of view. Provision is made in the Bill at present for a quorum of three out of the five members of the board, but under the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, the quorum would have to be two. The opinion of the people most concerned at the moment is that a board of five would not be too large. This is one of the few occasions when ladies have been put on a board, and it is intended that there shall be two lady representatives, with an independent chairman, out of a board of five. No payments from Consolidated Revenue are involved, as the organisations are finding the necessary fees. I hope the Committee will reject the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (a) of Subclause (3) after the word "chairman" the words "not pecuniarily interested in hairdressing" be inserted.

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

Clauses 6 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Who may be registered:

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (1) after the word "person" the words "including members of the board other than the chairman" be inserted.

I believe we should ensure that any person who practises hairdressing, either as an employer or an employee, should be qualified, and having in mind what has taken place in other industries, I think the Committee should safeguard the position. As the chairman will be a person not pecuniarily interested in hairdressing, I desire to exclude him from the provision.

The Minister for Labour: I am not particularly concerned about this amendment.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I do not agree with the amendment, as I feel that the community is not being protected. If we have on the board only registered hairdressers there will be nobody to represent those who do not know anything about hairdressing. The chairman may be a nominee of the Government, who would not know anything about hairdressing, but who would know whether the work had been properly carried out or not.

Mr. WATTS: I think the member for Subiaco means that the consumer is not being represented on this board, and there is substance in the argument. The member for North Perth has succeeded with an amendment to the effect that the chairman of the board is not to be pecuniarily interested in hairdressing, and the member for Pilbara proposes that the chairman shall not come under that restriction. It is not altogether

right that the government of this organisation should be vested almost entirely in persons engaged in the occupation of hairdressing. From time to time we have subscribed to this point of view. It has been suggested that, on the Medical Board and the Legal Practitioners' Board, there is room for at least one representative of the public in order to keep in touch with public opinion on the subject. If the chairman of this board will fill that position, I shall be satisfied; otherwise we should make some provision for representation of the community.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: In reply to the member for Pilbara, I point out that under Clause 5 the four other persons must have had at least three years' experience.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I have been given to understand that there are men on the Builders' Registration Board who are setting examinations that they themselves could not pass. I wish to protect the public by ensuring that, whether a person has been engaged in the industry for three years or not, he shall be subject to a test.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I had my hair permed in England years ago at the premises of an exclusive firm and it has not grown since. If we are going to have boards, we ought to have somebody on them to protect the interests of the community.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause (1) after the word "class" the words "or classes" be inserted.

The clause does not make it plain that an applicant may be trained in more than one class of hairdressing.

The Minister for Labour: That is agreed to.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN: Notice has been given of several amendments covering the same ground in paragraph (c). If an amendment is put to strike out the paragraph, whichever the way the vote goes, nobody else will be able to move to amend the paragraph. I suggest that the member for North Perth move the deletion of the first four words as a test.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (c) of Subclause (1) the words "subject as hereinafter provided" be struck out.

If successful, I shall later move to delete the rest of the paragraph. Under the paragraph only those people engaged bona fide in the practice of hairdressing continuously for 12 months immediately before the commencement of the Act may obtain registration. This would make the provision too narrow. Anyone who any time during the 12 months has been practising hairdressing should be admitted or, if practising outside the metropolitan area and changing his domicile to the metropolitan area, should be able to apply for registration so long as he continues to practise until the date of his application.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I have discussed this matter with the principals, and the general opinion is it would be wise to accept the full amendment of the member for North Perth. Of course, it remains for the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Pilbara to say whether that amendment will suit them.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Would I be able to move my amendment in the event of that of the member for North Perth being carried?

The CHAIRMAN: It depends on the vote on the amendment. If these words are deleted the member for North Perth will move to delete the rest of the paragraph, in which event the member for Pilbara's amendment could not be moved. If this amendment is not agreed to, the member for Pilbara will be able to move his.

Mr. WATTS: I am not altogether satisfied with the amendment of the member for North Perth, although it is somewhat on the lines I desire. He is providing for people who are outside a radius of 25 miles from the G.P.O. and who are bona fide engaged in the business now to come in at any time they change their domicile. At the same time he is providing that this qualification of having been engaged in the business for a period of not less than 12 months shall only apply for six months after the Act comes into operation. To that I object. We have had the same difficulty in regard to the Builders' Registration Act,

which we were obliged to amend because it was doing an injustice to people who did not deserve it. I contend that it does not matter when a person applies so long as he establishes that at the time of the passing of the Act he was bona fide engaged in the profession for the requisite period.

Why stipulate six months when certain people may be unable to apply within that time because they happen to be out of the State or faced with circumstances otherwise not under their control? Although they were bona fide engaged in the profession, and can prove it, they are to be obliterated because of the six months' limitation and then, I suppose Parliament will set to work, as in the case of the Builders' Registration Act, to amend the law to make the time unlimited, so as not to impose injustice. That is why I do not want to see the amendment carried in its present form. It does not make any provision for people outside of Western Australia, but I see that further on the hon. member provides for the completion of an appropriate course of training of like standard as is prescribed in Western Australia.

If a man was bona fide practising hairdressing in another State in the same way as another man was bona fide practising the profession in this State before the passing of this Act, is he not justified, if he comes from that State to this, to be registered on the same basis as other Australian citizens previously living in Western Australia are entitled to be registered on the basis of having been engaged in the industry prior to the passing of the Act? It seems to me that he should be, and the amendment I had in mind would have accomplished that by inserting after the word "engaged" the words "in the Commonwealth of Australia." I do not think we should distinguish between citizens of one State and another in identical circumstances, so far as the practice of a profession or occupation is concerned.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (c) the words "had been bona fide engaged in the practice of hairdressing of that class either as a principal or as an employee for a period of not less than 12 months immediately prior to the commencement of this Act. Provided that the alternative condition contained in this paragraph (c) shall not be a qualification for registration under this Act after the expiration of six months next following the date of commencement of this Act" be struck out.

I have already explained my reasons. I am rather inclined to agree with the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition that people coming from the Eastern States might be permitted to be registered, but that can be done under paragraph (b) because so long as a person has completed the appropriate prescribed examinations, he may be admitted.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That a new paragraph be inserted as follows:—"(c) Was bona fide engaged in Western Australia in the practice of hairdressing of that class either as a principal or employee—(i) at any time during the period twelve months immediately prior to the commencement of this Act and shall apply for registration within six months next following the date of the commencement of this Act; or (ii) immediately prior to the commencement of this Act outside a radius of twenty-five miles from the General Post Office at Perth and has remained so engaged until the date of such application."

Mr. WATTS: I move—

That the amendment be amended by inserting after the word "class" in line 2 the words "or those classes."

This is to dovetail with a previous amendment.

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

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That a new paragraph be added as follows:—(d) Has outside of Western Australia completed an appropriate course of training of a like standard as that prescribed in Western Australia and passes such examination (if any) as may be required by the Board.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause (2) the word "six" be struck out and the word "twelve" inserted in lieu.

I think that the period within which exmembers of the Forces are allowed to make application should be greater than six months. There is a lot of delay when these lads come back before they are able to as-

certain what they can do. I do not think we should place an unnecessary restriction on them. It will not do any harm to give an extension.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause (2) the word "six" be struck out and the word "twelve" inserted in lieu.

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

Clause 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Fees and expenses:

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause (4) the words "and by the Metropolitan Hairdressers and Wigmakers Employees' Union of Workers on behalf of each and every one of its members practising as an employee a fee of five shillings in respect of each such member" be struck out.

I referred briefly to this on the second reading. Subclause (4) makes provision for payment of annual fees, by the master hairdressers and by the union. I strongly object, as a matter of principle, to workers being obliged to pay any fee, no matter of what amount, to the registration board for the purpose of being registered under it. For years we have endeavoured to abolish the payment of fees to labour exchanges, but this measure, in a modified form, would perpetuate such payments. If the employees pass the prescribed examination and are admitted to the register, that should suffice. I hope the Committee will agree to the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: Under certain circumstances I could be at one with the member for Pilbara, but this provision has been inserted at the request of the union, that it be allowed to pay the equivalent of 5s. per member to the board. As it is purely a domestic matter between the union and its members, that this fee should be paid, I think we should reject the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause (7) the following words be added:—"and a copy of such report shall be laid upon the Table of both Houses of Parliament within 14 days if Parliament is then sitting otherwise within 14 days of the commencement of the next following session of Parliament."

The clause provides for an annual report to be submitted to the Minister, and I think it should be tabled.

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

Clause 13—Unregistered persons, etc.:

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of Subclause (2) the words "less than twenty pounds nor" be struck out.

The subclause provides that any person who knowingly assumes or takes or uses any such name or title or addition or description or practises hairdressing of any prescribed class of hairdressing in contravention of this section shall be liable to a penalty of not less than £20 nor more than £50. That is altogether unreasonable and against the principle of British law, which allows a magistrate discretion as to the penalty to be imposed.

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

Clause 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Cancellation of registration for fraud or on other grounds:

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (c) be struck out.

As it stands, the provision is unnecessary and unfair. If there is a breach of an industrial award or agreement, a proper penalty is provided under the Industrial Arbitration Act and deregistration should not be required in such circumstances.

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

Ayes	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	21
Majority against	..	..	1

AYES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Read
Mr. Doney	Mr. Seward
Mr. Fox	Mr. Shearn
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hill	Mr. Watts
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Willmott
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Leslie

(Teller.)

Noes.	
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Triat
Mr. Holman	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Wise
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Cross
Mr. Nulsen	*(Teller.)*

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16—Powers of board in conducting investigations:

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That Subclause (2) be struck out.

The clause provides that for the purpose of conducting an inquiry the board shall have power to compel the attendance of witnesses and may administer oaths and affirmations. That is quite all right because the board should have those powers, but Subclause (2) sets out that the board may, for the purposes of the inquiry take a statutory declaration from a witness or some other person. I think that is very unwise. The Act will apply only within a radius of 25 miles of the G.P.O. and there is no reason why witnesses from such a short distance should not be present. If a statutory declaration were received by the board an unsatisfactory state of affairs would arise seeing that no opportunity would be afforded the parties concerned for the further examination or cross-examination of the individual furnishing the statutory declaration which, while possibly quite true in its substance, might be set out merely in general terms suitable to one or other of the parties only.

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

Clauses 17 to 19—agreed to.

Clause 20—Power to make regulations:

Mr. WATTS: Paragraph (c) sets out that regulations may be prescribed fixing the fees to be paid to members of the board which are not to exceed £50 per annum for any member other than the chairman. If it is reasonable to prescribe the fees to be paid to board members other than the chairman, it should be equally reasonable to provide the maximum fee to be paid to the chairman himself.

The Minister for Labour: I would be prepared to accept an amendment if you moved to strike out the words "other than the chairman," which would prescribe fees not to exceed £50 per annum payable to any member of the board.

Mr. WATTS: I will accept the Minister's suggestion. I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of paragraph (c) the words "other than the chairman" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (i) be struck out.

The paragraph sets out that regulations may be promulgated prescribing standards of hygiene, sanitation and safety to be observed in premises where hairdressing is practised. Ample provision exists in the Health Act and the Factories and Shops Act for the inspection of hairdressers' shops and there may be duplication if further inspectors are to engage in this phase of the work. Unless the Minister can satisfy the Committee that there will be no duplication on the part of the various inspectors, the paragraph should be deleted.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I trust the paragraph will not be deleted. Great need exists within the metropolitan area for a stepping-up of the hygienic conditions prevailing in barbers' establishments. Reform along those lines is long overdue and the health authorities have failed miserably in this regard. It is essential that the board should have power to appoint an inspector directly responsible to it for ensuring proper standards of hygiene, sanitation and safety in hairdressers' shops. During the war period my son was infected in one of these shops, and it took a skin specialist six months to get rid of the trouble. We know the filthy establishments that people had to patronise during the war period and the time is certainly long overdue for attention to be given to these shops. Customers pay the highest prices for tonsorial attention and are entitled to treatment along the most up-to-date lines.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I heartily agree with the member for Middle Swan. This is the very basis of the Bill. In introducing the measure I emphasised the necessity for hygiene and I would not have submitted the Bill were it not for the great necessity for improvements along those lines. This is particularly so seeing

that so many ladies patronise the hairdressing salons nowadays and because of the possibility of contracting skin diseases, particularly in connection with the tinting of hair.

Mr. ABBOTT: I am afraid there is a little confusion about this matter, which deals with the prescribing of standards of hygiene. The succeeding paragraph, if I may be permitted to refer to it, provides for the inspection by authorised officers of the board of premises where hairdressing is practised. What inspectors are better qualified to make such inspection than are the inspectors of the Health Department? We do not want two controlling authorities.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: As the member for North Perth has pointed out, this clause gives power to make regulations. I suggest that one of the first things that the board would do would be to submit regulations of this description to the Commissioner of Public Health. I venture to say that all of our health inspectors would not know the constituent parts of various things used in hairdressing.

Mr. Abbott: I do not think the barbers would know, either.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I am not suggesting they would, but we have got beyond the barbering stage and are now dealing with hairdressing establishments. One cannot go too far in securing proper hygiene.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: This paragraph deals with standards of hygiene, sanitation and safety. As regards standards of hygiene, I presume this has reference to the cleanliness of combs and hairdressing machines and that sanitation has reference to the general cleanliness of the saloon. Safety would refer to the condition of the machines. These are the various aspects with which the paragraph deals, and, if passed, it will be for the good of the profession and of the community.

Mr. ABBOTT: I am in sympathy with the purpose which the paragraph hopes to achieve, but I again say that there should be only one authority and that should be the best authority—the Health Department.

Amendment put and bells rung.

Remarks During Division.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: May I point out that the member for Subiaco said, "Aye," not "Divide."

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That is so.

The Chairman: I understood the hon. member to say "Divide." Is it the wish of the Committee that the division be called off?

Members: Yes!

Division called off.

Committee Resumed.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That a new paragraph be inserted as follows:—"(j) Prescribed standards of training to be observed in schools registered under this Act and the qualifications of persons teaching hairdressing therein."

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

New clause:

Mr. ABBOTT: I propose to move to add new clauses.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member kindly resume his seat? As to the first three subsections of proposed new Section 20, these deal with questions which the Committee has already negatived, and consequently the hon. member would not be in order in moving them.

Mr. ABBOTT: Proposed Subsection (4) deals with the continuance of the training of any person who has not completed his training at the commencement of the Act. Some ladies' hairdressing establishments may be at present training hairdressers.

The Minister for Labour: They would be apprentices.

Mr. ABBOTT: They might be.

The Minister for Labour: This Bill does not deal with apprentices.

Mr. ABBOTT: That may be so.

The Minister for Labour: They are dealt with by the Industrial Arbitration Act.

Mr. ABBOTT: I do not quite agree with that statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the hon. member that he will have to strike out the words "Notwithstanding anything in Subsection (1) of this section" from his proposed amendment, as they refer to a subsection dealing with a matter already negatived by the Committee.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—"20. The owner or occupier of any beauty parlour or like establishment in which imme-

diately prior to the commencement of this Act hairdressing was being taught shall upon application to the Board and payment of the prescribed registration fee within one month after the commencement of this Act and compliance of this Act and the regulations as to the conduct thereto be entitled to have such beauty parlour or establishment (as the case may be) registered as a school under this Act in respect of the appropriate prescribed class or classes of hairdressing."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: It would be wrong to insert this new clause. An employer is entitled to engage an apprentice or an improver. Under the award, "apprentice" means a male or female worker in the industry who is serving articles of apprenticeship or who is employed in the industry with a view to becoming an apprentice. This award is one of the very few awards that makes provision for an improver. The definition of improver is as follows:—

"Improver" means a worker under the age of 21 years who has completed an apprenticeship of four years but who is not in possession of a Special Certificate as provided in Clause 8, Subclause (c).

The special certificate refers to a diploma issued by the Technical School. The Bill does not deal with apprentices and the Committee should negative the proposed new clause.

New clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—MARKETING OF BARLEY (No. 2).

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it did not insist on its amendments.

BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY (HOUSING OF EMPLOYEES).

In Committee.

Resumed from the 13th November. Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Forests in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Housing inspector (partly considered):

Mr. McDONALD: This clause provides that the Governor may appoint a fit and proper person to be housing inspector under the Act and, under the control of the Minister, the housing inspector has general superintendence of the general administration of the Act. As has been pointed out he is to be a single individual with great powers. His is to be practically the last word, and from him there is to be no appeal, except so far as the Minister might be induced to intervene. My amendment is designed to place the administration of the Act under the State housing commission. By a Bill, now before Parliament, the control of housing in this State is to be vested in a housing commission. That commission is meant to keep the balance fairly between the town and country, between the Serviceman and civilian, and between any one section of the community and the rest of the community.

It seems logical that this branch of housing, like all others, should come under the one authority, namely, the State housing commission. If that were done, much of the apprehension expressed by members would be removed because the commission would be charged with preserving a fair equity between the people who have no houses and the deserving people in the timber industry who want new ones. If the housing commission were in charge of housing in timber areas it would arrange a programme of building there which would be co-ordinated with the building of houses, on the Goldfields, in the country towns and in the metropolitan area, and would ensure that materials and labour would be used equitably. With all respect to the Royal Commission that dealt with this matter, it apparently overlooked, or did not know, that there was to be a State housing commission. If that fact had been brought to the attention of the Royal Commission it would have felt the full force of the argument in favour of the housing of the timber workers being one of the functions of the new State housing commission. I feel that those who framed the Bill, or conducted inquiries into the matter, overlooked the fact that there was to be a fundamental change in the housing laws by the establishment of a comprehensive commission to control housing in all parts of the State. With a view of placing the administration of this measure under the control of the

housing commission, I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (1) all the words after the word "the" be struck out with a view to inserting the following words:—"State Housing Commission constituted under the State Housing Act, 1946, shall be charged with the administration of this Act."

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I hope the member for West Perth will not persist with the amendment. He almost gave the reply to his own argument, and that is that if this Bill becomes law, we will still need the authority of the housing commission for many of the essentials in building. As a result the timber workers would not be given any advantage over other people, as has been suggested. It would be easy for the timber millers to build and re-build houses on their property because timber, which they produce, is the principal material required. But other essentials necessary for the completion of houses will have to be approved by the State housing commission. Therefore, that argument in favour of the amendment is not altogether sound. The Bill was purposely framed to put on the timber mill owners the responsibility of housing their employees. It has been an unwritten law, ever since the timber millers were permitted to take large areas for milling purposes, for them to be responsible for the housing of their employees.

This legislation will only make statutory what has been carried out voluntarily for many years. It would be wrong, in my opinion, to have the administration of the Bill carried out by the housing commission. It would not have the time to pay proper attention to the matter and would not know or understand the various areas that have to be dealt with. The Bill, therefore, has been framed so as to provide for the appointment of some person to be in charge of its administration. It is also proposed that the district inspector should be in charge of the legislation. All these matters were considered before the Bill was framed. In the opinion of those who have paid particular attention to the matter, the measure should be under the administration of some person appointed for the purpose.

Mr. McDONALD: I, like the Minister, want to have houses built on new areas as soon as possible, and so do the millowners, and that is what they are doing now. I do not quite know where, under this measure, the millowners will be. They are to be responsible, under penalties, for not carrying out the provisions of the Act. I presume that all the timber they produce will come under the control of the housing commission. So they will have no say as to whether the timber they produce should be used for dwellings on their properties, or elsewhere. On the other hand, they are to be made subject to an obligation to build houses. If the housing commission says, "You cannot have the timber," and the Act says, "You must use the timber to build houses on timber areas," I do not know where the owners will stand. They will have to make a plea to the Minister or the housing inspector to be exempted from any offence they may have committed.

Why, in the matter of housing, do we have one authority, the State housing commission, and another authority, the timber housing inspector? I suppose in the course of time we will have still another one, who will be the mining areas housing inspector. And in the middle we have the State housing commission with a sort of over-all authority. However, the Minister quite rightly sticks to his brief and puts up the best fight he can for the Bill, but I suggest that it is indefensible in principle. Having gone to a lot of trouble, by a comprehensive Act, to set up a housing authority for the whole State, we are now going to stultify it by putting up a potty housing authority, comparatively.

Mr. HOLMAN: The arguments of the member for West Perth do not fit in with the question. During the second reading debate he raised the objection that under the Bill much building would have to be carried on to the detriment of other building in the State. He said then, as he does now, that he wanted someone to maintain the balance. That balance is already maintained because of legislation that has been passed by this Chamber. Under the Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act, the Workers' Homes Board, or the State housing commission, has the power to say whether any person can have the materials necessary to build, and that Act also includes the Crown. Should a millowner be required to erect new premises for his employees, he would first have to get the sanction of the housing commission. Without that authority he

could not go ahead. There would therefore be control. If the housing commission administered this Act, it would have to appoint an inspector to visit the mill centres to ascertain what had to be done there. The inspectors who are appointed under this proposed legislation must be specialists in that particular class of work and be able to make recommendations as to what is required to be done. The amendment is unnecessary.

Mr. ABBOTT: I support the amendment. The most suitable source from which to obtain an inspector of the kind required is from the staff of the housing commission. Such a man would be fully conversant with what is required for the ordinary average standard of housing in the State. Indeed, several such men would probably be appointed. Once the alterations are effected, fewer inspectors will be required. If special houses are to be erected for the workers in the timber industry, why should not the same principle apply in a case of pastoral properties and mining properties? We are everywhere piling up authority upon authority until we are getting together a colossal number of people all doing little jobs and none of them experts.

Mr. STYANTS: If the amendment were agreed to, the Bill would become unnecessary, or would require to be redrafted. There is no reason why the Minister should not make use of the services of officers employed by the housing commission to police this proposed legislation. When an inspector is appointed, he would go from mill site to mill site, examine all existing dwellings and make out orders for the quantity of materials required to bring those dwellings up to the requisite standard. There is no fear that the timber workers will receive preferential treatment in the matter of materials. They would only receive pro rata what workers elsewhere in the State would get.

Mr. McDONALD: This Bill could be administered by the State housing commission as a separate piece of legislation in the same way as that commission administers a separate Act dealing with priorities of building materials. The commission will have inspectors of its own, and it may be that one of them will arrive at, say, Manjimup, to inspect certain buildings there, and another inspector, appointed under this proposed legislation, may arrive the same day to inspect timber housing two or three miles away.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: There is need for a special Act. In this case we are dealing with leases, not with ordinary townsite blocks or privately-owned land over which the housing commission has certain powers. Under the timber regulations, leases of large areas of land are given to syndicates and companies for long periods, and it is necessary to have a special Act to deal with the particular class of housing that has to be provided on those timber areas.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. LESLIE: Subclause (2) provides that the housing inspector shall be under the control of such person as the Minister may from time to time appoint. The proper person surely is the district inspector under the Timber Industry Regulation Act. The Royal Commission considered that this would throw too much work on the district inspector. There is only one district inspector for the whole State who receives a remuneration of about £350. I thought we had a chief inspector with other inspectors attending to the requirements in the respective districts. Under my amendment the inspecting of mills will be far more efficiently carried out than is possible under the present arrangement. The district inspector is obviously the man who should be in control because of his knowledge of the requirements at each mill. There may be circumstances that would justify the non-enforcement of strict compliance with the Act, and these would be within the knowledge of the district inspector. I move an amendment—

> That in Subclause (2) the words "such person as the Minister may from time to time appoint" be struck out with a view to inserting the words "the district inspector appointed under the Timber Industry Regulation Act, 1926-37" in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I oppose the amendment. The job of district inspector is a very unenviable one, especially in the winter months, and he might or might not have the qualifications for the work under this measure. His time is fully occupied at present, and the work of the housing inspector will be a full-time job

for some period. Full consideration has been given to the question of the person to be appointed and I am satisfied that a special inspector should be chosen.

Mr. WATTS: The subclause proposes that the housing inspector shall be under the control of some person unknown, and the member for Mt. Marshall wishes to provide that he shall be under the control of someone we do know. We are entitled to know who is to have control of the housing inspector. The Minister has not given the slightest indication as to the sort of person who would be appointed. Surely the man whose every activity over the years has been in the mills should be the one to control the housing inspector! The man to be appointed to supervise the inspector might know plenty about housing but nothing about the general conditions of the industry and the employees.

Mr. HOAR: This is a very plausible attempt to secure a very important amendment. True, there is only one district inspector, but working in conjunction with him is an inspector appointed by ballot to represent the workers in the industry. The district inspector is appointed from the employing side and represents that section only. Consequently, if the housing inspector were under the authority of a man appointed to look after the interests of the industry from the employers' angle, it would be too ridiculous for words. On this ground alone the amendment should be rejected. The housing inspector should have special qualifications and be responsible to an officer appointed by the Minister or to the Minister himself, not to an inspector appointed by the employers. Otherwise, advantage might be taken of the opportunity to prevent much work being done in the way of erecting new houses and renovating others.

Mr. STYANTS: The amendment should be rejected. Evidently the member for Mt. Marshall and the Leader of the Opposition have not consulted the Timber Industry Regulation Act in which precisely the same wording is used, and that provision has operated satisfactorily since 1926. It is not such a nebulous person that it is proposed to put him under. He will be under the controller of forests, the same as the inspectors. It would also be wrong from a practical point of view to say that this man, of whom we demand special qualifications, should be placed under a man whose appointment does not depend upon his having those qualifications. The parent Act does not require a district inspector to be possessed of any special qualification except that he shall have been employed as a practical worker in the timber industry for a period of five years. There has been no objection to and nothing found wrong with the operation of the parent Act in this regard, and I see no reason why objection should be taken to the provision in this Bill.

Mr. LESLIE: Unfortunately, I was not here in 1926 when these points were included in the parent Act. If I had been, I would have objected to them. If it is the intention of the Minister to appoint a controller of forests to be in control of this housing inspector, I would prefer to see that stated in the Bill. The member for Kalgoorlie covered only half of what is in the parent Act. I went through the Act and it provides for the appointment of a controlling officer and then for the appointment of district inspectors.

Mr. Styants: Where do you find in the parent Act reference to the controlling officer?

Mr. LESLIE: It says there shall be an officer in control and then goes on to provide for the appointment of district inspectors. We have only one district inspector—a man who is already overloaded. I searched for a chief inspector, a man to whom these district inspectors was responsible. In view of the fact that only one inspector is appointed, I can visualise that we will have more district inspectors and the chief district inspector—a man who knows the timber industry—is the man in the best position, because of his knowledge, to say what is reasonable. I disagree with the member for Forrest that the district inspector is the employers' representative. He is appointed by the Government and is a Government officer. He is there to carry out the job from the Government's point of view and not from the point of view of the employers. To have complete balance, we would require to appoint a millowners' inspector, a Government inspector and an employees' inspector. At present the scales are weighted very much in favour of the

employees. They have their own inspector, but the millowners have not.

Mr. Hoar: They have one, too.

Mr. LESLIE: To say that this district inspector is an employers' inspector is wrong. If he were employed by them and his job was to consider the millowners' angle, very well! But this appointment of a housing inspector will be only temporary. It will last only a few years. So instead of setting up something of a permanent character, it is possible that the Minister or whoever is in control, will appoint a man with a complete knowledge of housing, including sanitation, health and familiarity with the Act—and put him under the Public Health Department or the Department of Labour or of Works. Any department may be the controlling authority for the sake of convenience. The man may be another Government officer appointed for the job. That leaves the position in the air. The Act then becomes nobody's baby at all. This is the vital part of the Bill and the person who is to be the controlling officer should be nominated in the measure. Because he was not nominated in the parent Act is no reason why the position should not be remedied, or for not establishing this man as a permanent officer whose job it would be to carry out these duties.

Mr. HOLMAN: The remarks of the member for Mt. Marshall, supplemented later by the Leader of the Opposition, suggest that they are afraid of this nebulous person, as they term him, who would be appointed by the Minister from time to time. They wish to delete the words "such person as the Minister may from time to time appoint" and insert the words "the district inspector appointed under the Timber Industry Regulation Act, 1926-37." Any person with a knowledge of the timber industry knows full well that two inspectors are appointed—a workmen's inspector, selected by the workers by ballot; and a district inspector appointed by the Government to look after the interests of the sawmilling companies and the State Sawmills. It would be absolutely stupid to put the housing inspector under the control of the district inspector. The Act states there shall be two inspectors. Why pick out one and make him the controlling authority?

Mr. Leslie: He is a Government officer.

Mr. HOLMAN: That has nothing to do with it. If members want to go the whole hog, the housing inspector should be under the control of the two inspectors in order to maintain the balance we have heard so much about. A point that has been overlooked is that the Royal Commission questioned the district inspector and the workmen's inspector and they definitely stated they had not the time to do the job. So what sense is there in overloading them? The member for Mt. Marshall has already told the Committee that the inspector is overloaded.

Mr. Abbott: There could be more inspectors or smaller areas.

Mr. HOLMAN: If the member for North Perth, with his legal training, would look at the amendment he would see that the reference is to district "inspector" and not "inspectors."

Mr. Abbott: There may be more districts.

Mr. HOLMAN: If there is more than one district, which of the inspectors would be the one chosen?

Mr. Abbott: There may be smaller districts.

Mr. HOLMAN: Then why not put the amendment in understandable language, and use the words "under the control of the district inspectors?" All this Committee has to consider are amendments that are placed before it and this proposal is that the district inspector shall be the controlling officer. On that I have based my arguments and not on supposition. I hope the amendment will not be carried.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—Application of this Act:

Mr. ABBOTT: This clause sets out that the Act is to apply not only to future houses but to those that have already been erected, and there are very comprehensive provisions as to the type of house to be used. I do not like retrospective provisions such as this, which deals with houses that have been occupied for a number of years. I move an amendment—

> That in line 2 of Subclause (1) after the word "purposes" the words "erected or" be struck out.

One might think that the only people concerned were the employees and the employers, but that is not so. The employers are not particularly interested, because all this will be a charge on the general public. Just when housing is coming to the fore and timber is required, additional costs are to be imposed.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I hope the amendment will not be carried. This is one of the most serious grievances of employees. As a matter of fact, employers themselves realise that something more has to be done than has been done in the past. Numbers of young men who enlisted from the timber industry have refused to return to it, their major reason being the housing conditions that they had to endure before they enlisted.

Mr. Abbott: Many have refused to return to the farming industry. You must be fair to all sections of the community.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I am dealing with the timber industry, at present, and the mill owners, who are aware that one of the objections of many men to returning to the industry is the appalling housing conditions. In all new buildings, on new holdings, the mill owners are prepared to provide amenities and make the employment congenial. I hope the amendment will not be agreed to.

Mr. LESLIE: I agree with the Minister that deplorable housing conditions have prevailed in the past, and still exist in some areas today as a deterrent to employees returning to the industry, but even a palace in the timber areas would offer no attraction to many young people, unless other amenities were also provided. If we build these very fine houses, that alone will not overcome the difficulty. Life in a palace in the timber areas could not be compared with life in a cottage in the city, with all the amenities available here. It is admitted that the timber millers are doing something to improve the conditions of employees, but I think housing is one of the lesser deterrents to young people going to the timber areas. I support the amendment.

Mr. STYANTS: I hope the amendment will be rejected because, if it is not, 90 per cent. of the benefits proposed to be conferred on the unfortunate people now compelled to live in hovels will not be possible of accomplishment. The member for Mt. Marshall referred to the very fine houses to be built on the mills. I ask any member to go through the specifications and visualise the type of house recommended by the commission. The house recommended consists of four small rooms, the biggest measuring 12 feet by 12 feet. It has a front and back verandah, and may be built of jarrah or asbestos. The only qualification is that it must be properly ventilated and provided with adequate window space, and with bathroom and laundry facilities. In the greater portion of the metropolitan area such a building would not be allowed to be erected.

The fallacy was put to us by the sawmilling interests, and has been repeated here, that not only the employers and employees are concerned in this matter, but that the cost of the buildings will be an additional levy on other members of the community purchasing timber to erect homes. That could only be substantiated if it were asked that the improvements and renovations were to be carried out without additional cost to the tenant, but that is not the proposal. Any cost incurred by the owner either in building new houses or in improving present buildings may, under the Bill, be defrayed as additional rent. Why, therefore, should it be passed on to the rest of the community?

Mr. HOLMAN: I hope the amendment will not be agreed to. It has been said during the debate that the sawmillers are providing better homes, in the case of new buildings, but that should not be used as an argument why there should not be legislation providing for such improvements. We must lay down a standard for the houses to be built, as some companies are doing nothing, particularly in the case of houses that have been erected for many years, and where the conditions under which employees are living are shocking. In some of the dwellings the only ventilation provided is that which comes through the cracks in the flooring. The member for North Perth does not like what he terms retrospective legislation.

Many buildings in Perth were erected before there were laws governing the standard of dwellings. Legislation was eventually passed and any buildings that were then below the standard prescribed were con-

demned. Such houses were not built after that legislation was passed. Previous members of the Parliament saw fit to make such provisions, and the Committee is only being asked to agree to the same principle. We are now asking for power for the authorities to direct that certain renovations and repairs shall be done to dwellings in the timber areas. In subsequent clauses provision for exemptions is made, the exemptions to be granted under certain conditions. The member for Mt. Marshall drew a red herring across the trail, crying with one eye and winking with the other, when he said that the deplorable housing conditions were not the main reason why many young people will not go to the timber areas. He wishes to take away the opportunity of providing better housing.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

> That at the end of subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (b) the following proviso be added:—"Provided that any owner of a timber holding aggrieved by any refusal of exemption may appeal therefrom as provided in this Act."

There should be some outside and independent body to adjudicate in such matters. It is a general principle in legislation such as this that the administrative authority has not the final say, but that there is an independent authority by whom a decision can be made after both sides have been heard.

[*Mr. Rodoreda took the Chair.*]

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I hope the amendment will not be agreed to. Any decision by the Minister will be based on information supplied by the Conservator of Forests, and, no matter who the Minister may be, I think he can be trusted to do his best on the information supplied to him. An appeal to the local magistrate or court would mean that the whole of that information would again have to be supplied through the Conservator of Forests or the Forests Department, which would make the process very slow and cumbersome. I hope the amendment will not be pressed.

Mr. McDONALD: Under the Bill, the Minister has power to exempt a timber holding or part thereof from the application of this legislation. That matter is entirely within the discretion of the Minister. It is a very important and extensive power because it may mean the expenditure of £16,000—I quoted such an instance in regard to a small mill—to comply with the requirements of the legislation. In the instance I referred to, the parties concerned were not at all sure that they could raise such a large sum of money. The amendment seeks to leave the discretionary power of exemption in the hands of the Minister but, in the event of an individual not being satisfied with the Minister's refusal to grant an exemption, to allow that person the right of appeal to a magistrate or, should the amount involved be large, to a judge of the Supreme Court. Without disparaging in any way the good faith and ability of Ministers, I say they are not infallible and may, quite conscientiously and honestly, be predisposed by some suggestion from their officers.

A practice has been growing up of leaving decisions on matters of importance as between the subject and the Crown to Ministers themselves. There is a type of jurisprudence in some countries, such as France, which is known as the administration law, under which control and decision are in the hands of administrative officers of the Crown, and there has been a tendency almost to disregard one of the distinctive and valuable features of English jurisprudence which sets out that decision in such matters shall be in the hands of an independent judicial officer who stands between subject and subject and between Crown and subject. The proposal in the Bill seeks to do away with what I regard as a very valuable principle in English constitutional law and practice. A magistrate or judge can be said to be just as honest and conscientious as a Minister of the Crown and no-one has suggested, apart from exceptional cases, that in such matters there should be no appeal.

I remember a case being mentioned here affecting the rights of the Crown where a judge decided, under the Crown Suits Act, against the Crown. The judge—he is the present Chief Justice—was beyond question as to his impartiality, ability and good faith. But the Crown did not say his good faith was beyond question, because it went to the High Court, which decided against the Chief Justice and in favour of the Crown. The member for North Perth simply asks that the same privilege shall

be extended to the subject in matters of this description as the Crown claims and exercises for itself against the subject in the ordinary courts of law. I regard this as a matter of some principle, and I should be glad to see the amendment vindicated as a declaration by Parliament in favour of the ordinary man or woman or timber-owner being able to approach the ordinary courts of law in case of a grievance against any decision or determination of the Minister or a housing inspector.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. LESLIE: I would like the Minister to give the Committee an assurance that the wording of the previous clause with the inclusion of the phrase "including State saw mills" appearing therein is sufficient to bind the Crown.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I am satisfied it would bind the Crown even without those words being included, because the Bill sets out that it shall apply to all timber-milling areas, and under the parent Act that covers the State Saw Mills.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Housing accommodation to be provided for employees:

Mr. LESLIE: I move an amendment—

That in lines 17 and 18 of Subclause (2) the words "one-eighth part of the wages or salary" be struck out with a view to inserting other words.

If the amendment be agreed to, the words I propose to insert in lieu are "one-fifth part of the family income." The subclause deals with the basis upon which the rents of the new houses will be fixed and sets out that, failing agreement being reached between the parties concerned, the rent fixed shall not exceed an amount of one-eighth of the wages or salary of the employee. The object I have in providing that it shall not exceed one-fifth part of the family income is that I seek uniformity and to bring conditions into line with those prevailing under the Commonwealth-State Housing Scheme, which this Parliament approved last year, in common with all other State Parliaments and the Commonwealth Legislature.

Throughout Australia today, the working man knows that the reasonable rental fixed by the Government is one-fifth part of his income if he is in receipt of the basic wage. As his earnings increase, so the basic wage is adjusted and the rent altered accordingly. If the amendment be agreed to, I will move a subsequent amendment to enable the rental to be worked out on a sliding scale in accordance with the Commonwealth-State scheme. If that were done, the man would know the maximum rent he would be called upon to pay. It will be found that on an average the rental paid under the Workers' Homes Board's operations works out at about one-fifth of the worker's income. My subsequent amendment will set out that the maximum rental shall not be more than 7½ per cent. of the capital cost of the home, which would work out at about 13s. 2d. a week on a house costing £450. I will also provide that the rental to be paid on a house costing more than £450 shall not be more than one-fifth of the family income worked out on the sliding scale mentioned under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS: I hope the amendment will not be pressed because, if accepted, it would upset the procedure followed in the timber industry for many years. The Bill has been framed to conform to the practice adopted in the industry and provision is made for a board of reference in the event of a dispute occurring. That practice has worked smoothly for many years and is understood by all concerned. The Committee would be wise to accept the clause as framed.

Mr. STYANTS: I hope the amendment will not be accepted, although I am not wholly wedded to the reference in the clause setting out that the rental shall not exceed one-eighth of the worker's salary or wages. In the earlier portion of the clause are set out a number of means by which the rental can be arrived at. The first concerns the size and value of the dwelling and another is that the rental may be fixed by the provisions of an industrial award or agreement. Another is that the rental may be fixed by mutual agreement where no award exists while it may also be dealt with by a board of reference. The reason the Royal Commission suggested a proviso fixing a limit to the percentage of the employee's wages that could be paid as rent was that the commis-

sion took into consideration a basic wage of £5 2s. under which, according to the Bill, the worker could be called upon to pay about 13s. 2d. per week for a house costing £450.

Mr. Watts: That is 8 per cent., is it not?

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, about that. The additional intention of the member for Mt. Marshall to fix the rental at an amount not to exceed one-fifth of the employee's wages goes too far, seeing that it would provide for a rental much too high for the type of house envisaged. A further amendment he has in mind would enable the rental to be calculated "in the manner prescribed in paragraph (12) of the Schedule to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement Act, 1945," but he also sets out that the rental shall not exceed "Seven pounds ten shillings per centum per annum on the gross capital cost of the dwelling." The proviso is somewhat complicated but simply means that the wage of the parent is taken and then consideration given to any amounts earned by his spouse and family.

Mr. Watts: If they live with him.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes. One-third of the amount earned by the children and the spouse is added to the wage of the tenant, and, according to my calculation, if the parent earns £6 a week and two children 30s. a week each, £1 of the £3 earned by the children is added to the wage of the parent. That would mean that for a house costing £450 it would be permissible to charge a rental of 28s. a week.

Mr. Leslie: No.

Mr. Watts: No. This is governed by the 7½ per cent.

Mr. STYANTS: That should not be introduced at all and I will give my reasons for saying so. The commission was given evidence by the sawmillers as to the method by which they assessed the cost of the houses. I think it will be conceded by members that if this type of house were erected in the metropolitan area today it would cost £650; but the sawmillers charge up the material at cost price, not the market price. Therefore, if a definite rate of interest is provided—

Mr. Abbott: It is only a maximum rate.

Mr. STYANTS: The maximum will work out at 12s. 2d. per week. What I am afraid of is that if a definite rate of interest is prescribed, the sawmillers will adopt a different method of computing the cost of the house. They will charge up the materials at market price, and interest would be charged at 7½ per cent. on £600 instead of on £450. I am not wedded to the one-eighth proposal. I think it a wise provision, but I certainly object to fixing the rate of interest at 7½ per cent., or fixing the rental at one-fifth of a man's wages. There are four other methods of computing the rent and these have worked out with reasonable fairness. The system has operated well in the past and should work well in the future.

Mr. HOAR: Under the amendment the worker on the basic wage would be expected to pay one-fifth of his wages as rent.

Mr. Leslie: No.

Mr. HOAR: Then why make that provision in the amendment? The idea of making it possible under this measure to charge different rents for houses in the same timber camp is a mistake.

Mr. Leslie: On a different rate of wage.

Mr. Watts: That is the position under the Bill as it stands.

Mr. HOAR: One-fifth of the basic wage is £52. That is the maximum which a worker on the basic wage would pay. But then there is a further proviso or addition which restricts the amount to 7½ per cent. On a house costing £450, 7½ per cent would amount to £33 15s. What does the mover of the amendment mean?

Mr. WATTS: A little while ago the member for Nelson suggested that an argument that I put forward was plausible. May I give him the retort courteous and tell him that his argument is even more plausible, if mine were plausible at all? He knows perfectly well that the basis of the amendment was that the rent should, under no circumstances, exceed 7½ per cent. on the capital cost. He does not know, however, that the capital cost will in no circumstances exceed £450. He has taken the figure given by the Royal Commission as being the likely figure and he says the rental will be in the vicinity of 12s. 11d. per week maximum. If the house cost double that amount, then on the same computation the rent could be

25s. 10d.; but in those circumstances it could not be that figure unless 25s. 10d. was less than one-fifth of the family income. That is the motive and intention of the amendment. The member for Kalgoorlie knows perfectly well that the rental for a man on the basic wage could not be 28s. a week.

Mr. Styants: It could.

Mr. WATTS: It could not, because the maximum is 7½ per cent. on the capital value, and if the cost is anything like £450, the rental could not be 28s. a week at 7½ per cent. on the capital cost, as the hon. member might discover if he did a little mental arithmetic. What the member for Mt. Marshall seeks to impress upon the Committee is that the Commonwealth and State authorities have agreed to a housing scheme which is supposed to be giving service to the men of this State in particular and Australia in general who are unable to obtain homes and pay what is known as the economic rent, that is, the rent that might be required had they to pay interest on the money involved, the necessary sinking fund, rates and taxes and other sundries. Therefore, the agreement provided that the rents should not exceed, no matter what the economic value of the property might be, one-fifth of the family income. That has been agreed to by every Parliament and every Government in Australia as the basis of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. The member for Mt. Marshall, having heard so many arguments in this Chamber coming from the other side as to the desirability of uniformity, suggests we should have uniformity in this case also.

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not know what this argument is for, but I have it in mind that the employers do not want this provision.

Mr. Abbott: It is not the employers, but the general public.

Mr. HOLMAN: With the member for Kalgoorlie, I am not altogether in favour of the fixing of the rent at one-eighth of a worker's wages. The fact remains that previous provisions were made for the assessment of the rent. Now we are presented with a further complicated scheme by which the rent is to be fixed at one-fifth of the family income, with a provision that the rent shall not exceed 7½ per cent. on the capital outlay. The Leader of the Opposition talked about uniformity and mentioned the Commonwealth-State Housing Scheme, whereby the rental is fixed at one-fifth of the family income under certain conditions. But that is an entirely different matter and the rental was fixed for a specific purpose. It was to provide homes for people regardless of their economic circumstances.

If members will study the Bill, they will see that it covers persons who are actively engaged in the timber industry. If a man loses his job, he must vacate his house within 14 days and he would therefore cease to come under the provisions of this measure. There can be no uniformity so far as this Bill and the Commonwealth-State Housing Scheme is concerned. There are methods already fixed for the assessment of rent. Now it is suggested that we should have an additional method. We might as well strike out the other methods and provide that the rental shall not exceed 7½ per cent. on the capital outlay.

Mr. LESLIE: Members appear to lose sight of the fact that it is not the intention of the amendment to interfere with or alter the provisions existing in the Bill. For some reason the Minister has provided that the rental may be assessed on the basis of one of the three methods referred to. Whatever agreement is reached it is provided that the maximum shall not be more than one-eighth. My amendment is to ensure that the maximum shall be one of two things, one of which is one-fifth of the family income based on the uniform scale. I desire to benefit the worker, and cannot understand the opposition of members on the other side of the Chamber to the amendment.

I want to provide against the man who has an income of his own, and the members of whose family are working, going into a £450 house and paying 13s. or 14s. a week rent when he should be in a house costing £700 or £800 and living in comfort. Under this arrangement if he tried to cramp his family in a small house he would pay rent out of all proportion to the premises he would be occupying. On the other hand, a man on the basic wage is provided for. He will be able to occupy a suitable house at a maximum rent of 13s. It is of no use the member for Kalgoorlie suggesting that the mill-owners will put their costs up to £600 as soon as the 7½ per cent. provision is included.

Progress reported.

BILL—DAYLIGHT SAVING.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, resolved:

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

First Reading.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [5.20] in moving the second reading said: It is unfortunate that this Bill has only just reached the House, and that I did not have the opportunity to introduce it earlier in the day. It is designed to enable the Government to issue a proclamation providing for the introduction of daylight saving. Without at this stage discussing the negotiations for settlement of the strike, it is obvious that it could continue and may continue for a time. In exploring all the avenues open to the Government to alleviate the distress and inconvenience caused by the strike, we considered that the introduction of a daylight saving measure could be very beneficial to the community.

Daylight saving, while the metropolitan area is without light, has some very obvious advantages. As we have no artificial light, in the form of that provided normally by electric current, the idea behind this move is to take advantage of all the natural light that there is during the 24 hours. With the present dislocation of transport it is dark now before many people, working in the city in any avenue of employment, arrive home in the evening, and in almost every case those people are forced to take their evening meal with meagre artificial light. As members know there is a tremendous shortage of both candles and lamps throughout the metropolitan area and, indeed, in outer metropolitan areas, and many homes have just a few candles or an improvised light or two. Some homes have little light after dark, with the result that those who live in the outer suburbs arrive home to find the housewife preparing the evening meal under difficult circumstances. As the sun goes down today at a minute or two after seven o'clock the idea behind the measure is that whatever may be proclaimed as the reasonable addition to our standard time, there will be less hours in the dark for people to manage and live through before normal bed-time arrives.

It is within the scope of the Bill to give authority to introduce daylight saving as a temporary measure only to meet such an emergency as now exists. It empowers the Governor to introduce daylight saving, by proclamation, from such a date and for such period as he thinks fit. The measure limits the area to be served to that part of the State within a radius of 35 miles from the G.P.O., and authority is sought to cover the area which is reticulated from the East Perth power house, and is within the radius of 35 miles that I have mentioned. The Bill also limits the extent to which daylight saving might be applied, by providing a maximum of two hours. The only other provisions in the Bill are those dealing with the safeguarding of contracts, and I am advised that adequate cover for the security of contracts is included in the wording of the Bill. I would like to make progress with this measure because I am sure it would ease the position in many homes. For example, the sun rises within a minute or two of five o'clock, which would be comparable with 7 a.m. in winter time.

If the transport facilities were arranged to the standard time set, whether it be one or two hours, there would be an added advantage at the end of the day for all of those using improvised light. I have consulted many authorities and conferred with many people, and I would be prepared to consult the leaders of the opposition parties so as to get their points of view and those of the people they may particularly represent so that the Government would be on the right lines in whatever time it prescribed. It may be that the majority of people would be advantaged by one hour; it may be that the majority would be advantaged by two hours. However, as I have said, I am quite prepared, on the passing of the Bill, before its proclamation to consult with them so that the majority of the people will be beneficially affected. If the Bill receives the sanction of Parliament the Government proposes to issue the necessary proclamation immediately.

Where a borderline exists in the change in time, from standard time, there would, of

course, be necessary adjustments to be made for people whose business takes them frequently, or infrequently, over that borderline. But no more adjustments would have to be made than are necessary now when crossing between the borders of South Australia and Victoria, either way. Although there would have to be adjustments I am sure they could be readily made, in no matter what avocation a person might be interested. I simply say that this measure would be administered with great discretion and commonsense to fulfil the only purpose it is designed for, and that is, in this period of emergency, to give the advantage of natural light when we have not artificial light available to us. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Watts, debate adjourned.

BILL—MARKETING OF POTATOES (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th November.

MR. WILLMOTT (Sussex) [5.28]: This Bill has been brought down to form a board to control potato growing, the issuing of licenses, and to deal with acreage and the marketing of potatoes. As much as I dislike boards, I feel that we must have something to control this industry. As members know, the subsidy ceases at the end of this year, so the Government decided to form this board which is to consist of six members. There are to be three members to represent the producers, two of whom are to be nominated by the producers and one by the Minister. I have gone through the provisions of the Bill with the growers, who consider that the nomination of the Minister shall be made from a panel of growers submitted by the Potato Growers' Association. If this were done, we believe that we would then get a fairer distribution. I hope the Minister will accept this suggestion. Another point which ought to be covered by the Bill is a minimum price.

The Bill proposes no guaranteed price at all and the growers will be producing potatoes without knowing what price they will receive for them. We consider that a guaranteed minimum price should be stipulated so that growers will know where they stand. The price at present is £12 10s. per ton and potatoes cannot be produced for much less than that price. There is a point with which I should like the Minister to deal when he replies to the debate. The three principal potato-producing States are Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. We are hopeful that each of the other two States will pass similar legislation and constitute a board but, if they fail to do so, what will be the position? I understand the intention is that each of the three boards should work in co-operation, but difficulties will arise if one of those two States does not form a board. With these remarks, I support the second reading.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington [5.32]: I support the second reading. There is no question that measures must be taken to protect the future of the potato industry. The Minister pointed out that, during the war, potatoes were grown and marketed at a fixed price, and, because of that, the quantity produced in this State very soon doubled. It is impossible to say what quantity of potatoes really could be produced in Western Australia. We have a tremendous area of land capable of growing potatoes and much of it capable of returning heavy yields. Further, we can grow potatoes all the year round, and with additional country being cleared and brought under irrigation, it is easy to see that the production in this State could be increased enormously.

It is necessary that some legislation should be passed to take the place of the National Security Regulations which will expire on the 31st December, but I must say that I should not be keen to become a member of the proposed board because I consider that its task will be exceedingly difficult. The price paid during the war tempted many producers to undertake the marketing of potatoes. Then there are returned soldiers who wish to settle on the land and quite a number of them will apply for permits to grow potatoes. As members are aware, the foreign element, particularly in the South-West, has been very keen on growing potatoes. Consequently, the area for the average grower will have to be restricted and, in imposing the restriction, I hope provision will be made to ensure that

returned soldiers who desire to engage in potato growing will be given a fair share of the market.

My attention has been drawn to the definitions in the Bill relating to a commercial producer and a grower. A commercial producer is one who grows at least three acres of potatoes, while the definition of a grower is one who produces potatoes on his property for sale. Commercial producers are the only ones eligible to take a seat on the board and the only ones eligible to vote. There will be a scaling down of areas under this measure and I think it will be found that a large number of producers will have no say in the election of members of the board. Neither will they be eligible to sit on the board. The Minister should make provision for such growers to have a vote, and they should also be eligible to sit on the board. This is something that certainly needs attention.

The Minister has probably been advised that a large number of growers at present are producing from areas of less than three acres, and I cannot see that they are likely to be granted an increase. Yet the position might easily arise that a producer on two acres of land will raise more potatoes than a producer with three acres of land. Yet the man with a smaller area is neither eligible to vote nor to accept a seat on the board.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is proposed to amend the Bill to fix that up.

Mr. McLARTY: I am pleased to have that assurance from the Minister. The board will exercise a very wide measure of control. A glance at the Bill will satisfy members that the powers to be given to the board are very wide indeed. The board may grant or refuse a license to a grower and regulate the registration of growers and the potato growing areas. I cannot see anything in the Bill to give a grower who has been refused a license the right of appeal. The board's decision should not be final; provision should certainly be made for an appeal. The same remark applies to an agent. There will be registered agents, and any person desiring registration as an agent of the board must apply to the board and give such information relevant to his application as the board may require. Later, provision is made that the registration shall continue in force until cancelled, or until the agent surrenders it or dies. There should be some provision here also for an appeal. If an agent feels that he is not getting justice, he should have the right of appeal.

The board will have the power to acquire potatoes. All potatoes grown will become the property of the board. There is one point I should like the Minister to explain. In the event of a producer being told to hold his potatoes for a certain time and a loss resulting, would he be expected to bear any loss?

The Minister for Agriculture: No.

Mr. McLARTY: I thought that as the potatoes were being acquired, it would be only reasonable that the board should accept the responsibility for any wastage or loss that might occur. I realise the necessity for some control in the industry, for otherwise chaotic conditions would arise. I hope that other potato producing States will enact similar legislation. We do not want to be in the position of passing this Bill only to find that Victoria and Tasmania do not and are able to flood this State at will with their produce. If those States do not co-operate, this measure cannot function successfully. The Minister stated that the Agricultural Council had approved of the Bill and so I assume there is no doubt that the other States will pass similar legislation.

MR. OWEN (Swan) [5.43]: Anyone who has followed the history of the potato industry cannot fail to have observed the wide fluctuations that have occurred both in acreage cropped and price per ton of potatoes. Usually the price fluctuates in inverse ratio to the production. Before the war, it was the experience to find the price as low as £2 10s. or £3 10s. per ton in years when there was a huge surplus, to be followed a year later by a price of £10, £12 or more per ton. In those circumstances, it was only natural that the area cropped, particularly as it could be doubled from one year to another at the whim of the growers, should have varied considerably.

Many attempts have been made by interested growers to secure some measure of organisation to control the industry, but these attempts failed to a large degree through the fault of the growers themselves. Many growers were quite apathetic and took no interest at all in their industry; others

who received a low price went out of production for the time being and those who stayed in received a higher price during the following year and were content to continue in that way. There was always a certain opposition from some of the growers, particularly in areas that either produced potatoes very cheaply or which were climatically favoured and could produce potatoes out of season, the growers thus receiving quite a high price for their product. For that reason, and on account of opposition from vested interests, all those schemes attempting to control the industry came to naught, and it was felt that control to be successful must be statutory so that growers would be forced to do certain things in the interests of the industry.

None of us is happy about controls. We do not like being told to do certain things and when to do them, and that applies to the exercise of control over the potato industry. If this Bill results in a board being appointed, growers will be told whether or not they may grow potatoes, what area they may plant, when they may plant and when they may sell. That is felt to be opposed to the idea of Australia being a free country. Lack of freedom of choice is often most irksome. People feel that they would like to plant potatoes whenever they wish and particularly when they are easy to grow, but it is that freedom to choose which often gives the individual the right to starve or the right to go bankrupt; so, in a general way, it is necessary, in the interests of industry and to some extent in the interests of individuals, for growers to submit to control. Consequently, although growers recognise that these controls are irksome, they have pressed for some action to be taken to assume the controls that prevailed under National Security Regulations.

Those wartime controls were introduced when there was a shortage of fertiliser and manpower and when increased production was required. No doubt they did quite a lot of good. Admittedly, many mistakes were made, and possibly some of the shortages that occurred were due to those controls. On the whole, however, they worked fairly smoothly and benefited the industry. There is another point to which the Bill does not make reference and which was mentioned by the member for Sussex; that is to say, no price is suggested. Under wartime control, when the Commonwealth subsidy operated, growers had a minimum guaranteed price of £12 10s. per ton. They were quite happy to grow potatoes under those conditions, and production increased enormously; in fact, in some districts, particularly in that of the member for Nelson, people found it more profitable to grow potatoes than tobacco. The guaranteed price of £12 10s. gave a great impetus to potato production. Now that the requirements have decreased, it is essential that the acreage or the production should be reduced. I am told that the acreage, which I believe was about 10,000 acres, has been compulsorily reduced to something like 7,000 acres.

If there is no control to bring about reduction, I fail to see how it can be achieved, and there is no reason why production should not increase. Without control, the price would fall to the old pre-war level. However, if this board is created and there is not provision for a minimum price, I can see that difficulty might be experienced, even with controlled acreage, through a favourable season leading to production 30 to 40 per cent. above what is estimated. Consequently there would then be a big surplus and, unless there were outlets in the way of export markets or some means of processing the product, that surplus would either have to be disposed of very cheaply or a portion of it dumped. In that event, it appears that the growers would not be much better off financially, but would still have to pay the administrative costs of the board. A fixed minimum price could be financed by a pool or a subsidy. When we are dealing with Nature's way of providing good, bad and indifferent growing seasons, I do not see how control can be exercised within the rather narrow limits required to bring about an equalisation of supply and demand, and thus maintain a regular price to the grower.

With regard to the provisions of this Bill, my own feelings are that control of this industry, as in the case of other industries, tends to destroy the initiative and enterprise of the individual. I might mention that before National Security controls were imposed, I, as a potato-grower, was in the happy position of being able to grow out-of-season potatoes and cater for a market which often provided a return of £5 a ton higher than was obtainable under normal conditions. That was quite a profitable business, but under the provisions of this mea-

sure that business would be entirely eliminated. All we could do would be to grow potatoes, or endeavour to grow them, when they could be produced cheaply. So we will run up against the board, because, if we want to grow potatoes when we can get a good crop, the board will say, "No, you can only grow a portion of your requirements at that time. You must grow more in the late season." But there is no guarantee that the grower will receive an adequate return for his labour and the risk he takes in growing an out-of-season crop. This might lead to a serious shortage during the early spring months.

However, taking the industry as a whole, I feel that controls such as we experienced during the war did quite a lot of good. People have become used to them and have realised that it is sometimes necessary to be cruel to be kind, and for someone in authority to tell them not to grow potatoes lest they should go bankrupt. I feel that this measure will do quite a lot of good for growers and the industry, although it may adversely affect certain individuals. The Bill provides that there shall be three growers' representatives on the board, two to be elected and one to be nominated by the Minister. With regard to previous Bills that have sought to control primary industries, I have been somewhat opposed to the idea of only two out of the three members being elected; but I have come to realise that perhaps it is a good thing, because, if all were elected, there might be petty jealousies between sections or districts engaged in the industry. But if two growers are elected by the commercial growers, then the Minister, if he has the good of the industry at heart, as I believe he has, will nominate a third who will, with the other two, give balanced representation. For that reason I think the number proposed to be elected is quite sound.

Regarding the definition of "commercial grower," I am pleased to know the Minister has an amendment, and I hope that amendment will take into consideration production rather than acreage. In the outer metropolitan area, there are some districts where the yield from two acres is very much higher than that from 10 acres in other places, so I hope the Minister will provide an amendment to cover those smaller areas that produce large quantities of potatoes. Generally speaking, the Bill provides for a board that will benefit the industry, and for that reason I support the second reading.

On motion by Mr. Hoar, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2 p.m. tomorrow.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 20th November, 1946.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

"THE CLOISTERS."

As to Conforming to Building By-laws.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON asked the Chief Secretary:

1, Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a paragraph in "The West Australian" of the 19th November regarding temporary buildings at "The Cloisters" in St. George's-terrace acquired by the Government?