

be so severe in my criticism of this particular gentleman if it were not for the fact that after the dreadful circumstances the Premiers' Plan imposed upon the people of Australia, on his recommendation, he went to America and, when speaking to his colleagues there, the international Jews, he said that he knew the Premiers' Plan of Australia would not be a success, but as he was not asked to formulate a plan he took no responsibility for its dreadful effects. He knew all the time, as we know now only too well, what would be the results of his advice as a professor of economics.

I would have thought the very first job that the late John Curtin would do would be to dismiss that gentleman. I would never feel comfortable in taking his advice. But I find that he is now chancellor of a mythical university in Canberra. He will remain there to carry on his nefarious practices against the people of Australia until another crisis arises—then woe betide most of us!

I will leave the question of inflation to a later date and make one more brief observation before I conclude. I do not wish it to be thought that, because I do not propose to deal today with departmental administration or the requirements of my electorate, everything is O.K. I want water supplies, schools, roads and a multiplicity of other things for my electorate, but I would rather confine my remarks this evening to the subject to which I have given a lot of study and about which I possess a great number of facts and a lot of evidence. I state definitely that unless there is a material change in our monetary system there is very little hope of real progress ahead, either in Australia or in the world as a whole.

At a later stage of the session, as opportunity presents itself, I will deal with the urgent requirements of my electorate. For the present I say only that in the matter of railways and transport generally the Murchison area has always been treated badly. On every occasion when the Government or the Railway Department sets out to economise in this direction it is the Murchison electorate that is singled out for attention. That area has received worse treatment than any other in the State throughout the years that I have been in this House. I hope that there is a change looming on the horizon because we, of the Murchison area, have just about reached the point where we can stand this treatment no longer. I support the motion.

On motion by Mr. W. Hegney, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.3 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 5th September, 1950.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Motion: Medical Act, to disallow specialist rules	532
Address-in-reply, tenth day	535

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

MOTION—MEDICAL ACT.

To Disallow Specialist Rules.

Debate resumed from the 9th August on the following motion by Hon. J. G. Hislop:—

That new Rules 22 to 29 inclusive, and Form H, made under the Medical Act, 1894-1946, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 21st October, 1949, and laid on the Table of the House on the 1st August, 1950, be and are hereby disallowed.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [4.35]: Dr. Hislop, in submitting his motion for the disallowance of these rules, which provide for the definition of the term "specialist," presented a very clear and cogent argument. These rules were prepared by the Medical Board, which, as members are aware, is appointed under the Medical Act to advise and assist the Government, and is comprised of six eminent and experienced medical practitioners.

The necessity for the rules came about as a result of an agreement reached between the Western Australian branch of the British Medical Association, the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association of Western Australia and the State Government Insurance Office, which administers the Workers' Compensation Act. This agreement, which was finalised on the 1st April, 1950, and which came into operation on the 1st July, 1950, laid down general procedure, and adopted separate schedules of fees to be paid to general practitioners and to specialists. The Advisory Council, which recommended these provisions, was composed of three representatives of the Underwriters' Association and three members of the B.M.A. One of the recommendations was—

A specialist shall be defined as a medical practitioner who, either by special qualification or experience, shall be entitled, in the opinion of the Medical Board of Western Australia, to be enrolled on a special register kept by that board.

In addition, as Dr. Hislop stated in his speech, Section 11A of the Medical Act provides—

The Governor may upon the recommendation of the Board from time to time, by Order-in-Council, declare what branches of medicine and surgery shall, for the purpose of this Act, be and be deemed to be specialties with respect to which medical practitioners who are duly qualified may be registered as specialists.

In view of the fact that specialists were to be paid higher fees than general practitioners for treating workers' compensation cases, the underwriters and the State Insurance Office naturally required information as to who these specialists were. To provide this, the Medical Board drafted and recommended the rules which are now under discussion. Dr. Hislop stated that the B.M.A. and the whole of the medical profession were emphatic that the rules were completely unworkable. He also pointed out that ere long the Commonwealth Government would supply a definition of "specialist" under the National Medical Scheme, which would supersede any State definition.

I have to inform the House that, after due consideration, the Government has agreed not to oppose Dr. Hislop's motion. This decision was reached after discussion with the Commissioner of Public Health, the Deputy Commissioner, the Medical Board and the B.M.A., all of whom are emphatically unanimous that the rules are unworkable. Even the members of the Medical Board, who prepared the rules, now state that, after further consideration, they wish the rules to be withdrawn, and, furthermore, they strongly recommend that the State take no further action to define the term "specialist" in view of the expected action by the Commonwealth Government. It has not been possible to ascertain when the Commonwealth definition will be issued. It is expected that it will be promulgated this year, and indeed it might be shortly.

The withdrawal of the rules will mean that the State Insurance Office will find it difficult to ascertain who is, or who is not, a specialist. However, this problem is being solved by conferences between the State Insurance Office, the underwriters, the B.M.A. and the Medical Council in order that a list of specialists can be provided for the private use of the State Insurance Office. I have discussed the matter in detail with the manager of the State Insurance Office who agrees, under the circumstances, that there should be no opposition to the withdrawal of the rules.

It is apparent, in view of the unanimous opinion of the medical profession, including the Government's medical officers, that it would be useless persevering with these

rules, which even if they remain, the profession assures us, cannot be used satisfactorily for the definition of the term "specialist." I am assured, also, that they are so drafted that they do not even lend themselves to amendment, which in any case the Medical Board has recommended be not done.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [4.41]: I am not going to oppose the motion, but I am not entirely satisfied with the explanation given by the Leader of the House in connection with the rules. It appears to me, notwithstanding the fact that he said they were drawn up as the result of a conference, that there must have been some very loose work performed by the particular body which drew them up. We find that immediately they are challenged, the Government at once says they will be withdrawn. It does not give a person very much confidence in the competency of those concerned when that sort of thing occurs, and I am a little worried in this respect.

While an agreement has been arrived at satisfactory to the State Insurance Office, I should like to know what about the satisfaction of the general public regarding visits to so-called specialists? The State Insurance Office is not the only body concerned in that particular phase. We get down to the position that a person visits and pays a fee to someone deemed to be a specialist because he calls himself one, in consequence of which there is to be a watertight compartment and no-one will be able to call himself a specialist without some special qualifications. We find now that the position has been ventilated—I may be drawing the long bow—any ordinary man could set up a practice in St. George's-terrace and charge specialist's fees when he has no more right to call himself a specialist than I have.

I think this is rather disconcerting, from the public's point of view, if such a position is allowed to operate. It seems to me to be very disappointing that now that a move has been made by some ordered body to study the position, action is to be taken whereby the Government is going to withdraw the rules and leave the position as it was before. I am very pleased that Dr. Hislop did move in this connection because it has, at any rate, thrown a little light on the subject. Now that something has been started, however, I want to see it finished. I repeat, therefore, that when a person goes to the Terrace and pays a fee to a specialist, he should know he is getting treatment from a specialist.

Then again, I am not too happy that the Government intends to withdraw the rules and leave the position as it was until such time as the Commonwealth Government introduces some special standard in regard to specialists. It is said that will be next year, but it may be next week or next month. The whole matter is just

left in the air, and I am hoping that something more definite will be done. I am not going to oppose the motion, but I am not satisfied with the answer of the Leader of the House, and would like some assurance from someone in an official capacity that the present Cabinet will straighten out what in the minds of the public has in the past been regarded as a fiasco. I want to see the position rectified, and even if the Government withdraws the rules, I hope it will not leave it as a sort of Kathleen Mavourneen affair but do the job it should be doing itself, and not leave the task to somebody else.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [4.45]: The criticism of the rules under discussion is, of course, that adequate consideration had not been given to them before they were gazetted. Mr. Fraser's point of view is, naturally, that it leaves little confidence in the minds of people who desire to consult specialists. Usually a person has his own medical practitioner who will generally recommend the other physician the patient should see. The person's doctor would have better knowledge than the individual concerned as to who is a specialist.

We, who are not professional men, cannot speak authoritatively as to what qualifications are requisite for those who are covered by the definition of "specialist." We have nothing by way of explanation on this point, and do not know whether the man is an ordinary practitioner, an ordinary surgeon or a specialist in any line. It is true that doctors go away for post-graduate courses and return with added knowledge. They do not generally advertise themselves as specialists but they are regarded as such, and, in consequence, we probably pay an extra fee when we call one of them in to express an opinion respecting our ailments.

There is grave danger concerning rules that are framed in this connection. It is wise that people should know something about the matter, and the authorities are to be commended for having consulted the Western Australian branch of the British Medical Association. Certain recommendations have been made as a result of the consultations, but evidently these have not satisfied other members of the profession, in consequence of which an objection has been raised. We are fortunate in having in this House a representative of the medical profession in Dr. Hislop. We are a body of laymen here with that one exception, and we have the doctor to help us in coming to a conclusion. It is a different thing when a Minister of the Crown comes to this House and indicates that the proposed rules, which might have gone on indefinitely but for the point having been raised, are now to be withdrawn by the Government, which after all was responsible for their promulgation in the first instance.

I personally object to having such a great number of regulations brought down as have been submitted. It is a dreadful thing. In the old days, when laws were made they were worded simply, and people could understand them correctly. Today we frame legislation which gives rise to a great deal of argument before any conclusion is reached as to what is meant. Action may be taken first in one court and then in another to determine the issue. Regulations are framed concerning which we have no say. Frequently they are made by officials in some department, handed to the Minister who has no knowledge of them and is probably too busy to consult anyone and get advice from him, are then signed by him and sent to Executive Council, gazetted, and finally laid on the Table of the House. We know the number of regulations that have been tabled this year. It is a full time job for any member to go through them and to appreciate what they mean.

Great care should be exercised before regulations are signed and subsequently gazetted, so that the full force and effect of them are known by the proper authorities. Regulations have the same force as has a law that is passed by this House. Regulations often provide for penalties, and therefore we ought to be very careful before approving of them. I think the Minister was wise in admitting that these rules do not meet with the desires of the authorities that have to administer the Workers' Compensation Act and in agreeing to withdraw them, and it is well that they should be withdrawn before they inflict injury upon some of the people who have to work under them.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan—in reply) [4.51]: I thank the Minister for the manner in which he spoke in agreeing to the disallowance of these rules. I can fully sympathise with him in the action he has had to take. I moved for the disallowance of the rules because I considered they were not in the public interest, not in the interests of the Workers' Compensation Act, and certainly not in the interests of the profession generally. I can well understand the attitude of Mr. Fraser and other members when they urge that the public is entitled to protection in dealing with specialists, but I make this statement quite frankly that anybody would be unwise to seek the aid of a specialist without acting upon the advice of his own general practitioner, because a general practitioner will send his patient only to a man in whom he has confidence. Consequently, a doctor would be jeopardising his own reputation if the person to whom he sent a patient did not measure up to all that he should.

A question asked by Mr. Fraser was: How does a specialist arrive at the position where he is able to charge specialist fees? My reply is that he would not be

able to continue to charge specialist fees if he was not able to render satisfaction to the public. There have been instances of men having attempted to specialise, but, because they did not gain the confidence of their fellows in the profession, they did not continue long as specialists.

Hon. G. Fraser: And quite a number of others have continued.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Quite a number of other things happen in precisely the same way. The public would be wise to seek the advice of the general practitioner, who would only send a patient on to a specialist necessary for the particular service required. I consider that no blame is to be laid on the Medical Board because of its endeavour to define what a specialist is. The board certainly made a sincere attempt to lay down a definition, but it failed, and the position that has arisen is that conditions would have been worse under these rules than they are without them. There would have been less safeguard under the rules than exists at the present time without them.

I may say for the general information of members that I believe some satisfactory conclusion will result. Representatives of the Underwriters' Association and the B.M.A., together with the Commissioner of Health and myself have held a meeting and we realised that if the rules became law the situation would be worse. We realised that it was almost impossible to define the word "specialist." I considered that the Act might well be amended to provide for the use of the word "consultant." I think it would be wise to compile a list of consultants, who would be men possessing the confidence of their fellows in the profession, to whom patients might be sent without any fear that they would receive anything other than the soundest advice.

It was agreed at our meeting that we should attempt to get an amendment to the Medical Act to permit the Medical Board to hold a roll of consultants, among other things, for the purposes of the Workers' Compensation Act, and the only qualification would be that the board should be satisfied that the medical practitioner making application to be a consultant under the Act should satisfy the board of his ability to act in that capacity. The list would be available to the Underwriters' Association and the State Government Insurance office, who would then know the consultants who were entitled to charge special fees. That would certainly be an improvement on the set-up under the rules that have been tabled.

It will be necessary also to alter the Workers' Compensation Act to give the Underwriters' Association and the State Government Insurance Office this role of consultants. It has been agreed that if the Government were not desirous of introducing the requisite legis-

lation, I should do so, but the measure would be brought here only after the underwriters and the profession were satisfied that it would be in the interests of all concerned—the underwriters, the profession and the public. I again thank the Minister for his remarks.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the 24th August.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Suburban) [4.57]: With others who have spoken to the Address-in-reply, I wish to add my congratulations to those members who have been associated with the House for some years and whose electors have signified their faith by re-electing them. I also congratulate the new members and hope their association with the House will be a long and happy one. The two new members who have succeeded their fathers have indicated that they will eventually become worthy successors of parents who for many years gave honourable service in this Chamber. We all regret the loss of Mr. Miles and Mr. Thomson, both of whom contributed largely to the debates and played an important part in the framing of legislation that is now on the statute-book.

I was particularly struck with the speeches made by the new members and wish particularly to refer to the remarks of Mr. Strickland. He gave clear evidence of his knowledge of the province he represents, but he made some criticism of Air Beef Pty. Ltd. and I intend to take the liberty of commenting on his remarks. I hope that other members representing North Province will forgive me for intruding upon matters that particularly interest them, but I claim the privilege on account of my very long and close association with aviation in this State. I felt that Mr. Strickland, in advocating roads and commenting on Air Beef Pty. Ltd. condemned that organisation with faint praise.

I feel I should enter a defence for air transportation. It is true that roads established in the North would play an important part in the development of that vast territory but I think it is equally true that aviation has already played a tremendous part in the development of the North-West and the Kimberleys. I go back to the early 1920's when Norman Brearley founded West Australian Airways and gave facilities to the North-West that it had never before enjoyed. When that air service was started, it was the first air mail service in the Southern Hemisphere, and the longest in the world. That did a lot of good in relieving the isolation of the people in the North-West. It gave them air transportation for themselves, as well as for ordinary freight and mail, which helped them along their lonely way.

To come to Air Beef Pty. Ltd., Mr. Strickland said it was a new and revolutionary method of transport. Air Beef Pty. Ltd. can be considered in the nature of a research station in its endeavour to prove the importance of transporting perishable food over long distances in tropical climates, as contrasted with travelling livestock over the same, or greater distances by road and then having the animals slaughtered at the end of the journey. Members may be interested to know something of the origin of Air Beef Pty. Ltd.

Back in 1930, Mr. Grabowsky, then a pilot in Guinea Airways, conceived the idea of transporting heavy materials over the mountain ranges to the almost inaccessible parts of New Guinea. Some three years later he became manager of Guinea Airways and then instituted a scheme of carrying not only machinery and mining materials, but perishable food. Junkers aeroplanes were imported for the purpose, and so commenced carriage by air of perishable food such as meat and vegetables to almost inaccessible places.

In the meantime, Mr. Gordon Blythe, a partner in Mt. House station, was thinking and working along similar lines. He got in touch with Australian National Airways, and Mr. Grabowsky who by this time was employed by Australian National Airways as the planning and development manager, was brought into the consultations, and it was decided to form a company for the purpose of killing bullocks near their natural feeding grounds, and transporting the carcasses by air to the Wyndham Meatworks. This company was formed, and I want to correct Mr. Strickland in regard to its financial set-up. He said words to this effect, that one of the things he was not keen about with respect to Air Beef Pty. Ltd., was the fact that it gave Air Lines Ltd. a monopoly.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: No, I did not mention that.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: That is the note I took. Actually the financial position of the company is as follows:—McRobertson Miller Aviation Company Ltd. subscribed £5,000, Australian National Airways Ltd. subscribed £5,000 and some pastoralists and other interested parties subscribed £1,853. So, whilst the company has an authorised capital of £25,000, it has a paid-up capital of £11,853. It was decided by the company, after it had been floated, that it should establish abattoirs at Glenroy station because it is in the middle of a number of adjacent cattle stations. It was felt that that central point would be a good one from which to operate because the other stations could, with very short driving, reach it for the purpose of having their beasts slaughtered. Glenroy station is, by air, 192 miles south-west from Wyndham, and 162 miles due east of Derby.

As further funds were required for the establishment of these works, the two airways companies—that is, McRobertson Miller and A.N.A.—each loaned the company £5,000. The Western Australian Government was then approached, and it provided a free-of-interest loan of £10,000. The company started the erection of its plant in February, 1949, and it is interesting to note that all the material was transported by sea to Derby and flown there to Glenroy station. The plant was erected, and operations commenced in May, 1949. In the first season, 1,800 head of cattle were slaughtered and the carcasses transported by insulated aircraft to the Wyndham freezers.

It is important to note that not only did the carcasses transported by air arrive in good condition, but the export quality was considerably increased compared with that of cattle which previously had been driven over the stock route to Wyndham. Mr. Strickland said he thought that about 100lb. weight was lost.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: That there was a gain of about 100lb.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I meant, that 100lb. was lost by road, and saved by air.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: That is what was claimed.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: The following are the figures given me by Air Beef Pty Ltd.:—The average weight per carcass when travelled by road, 531lb.; when flown by air, 588lb. So, the saving is 57lb. per beast on the average according to the experience up to date. That is an interesting figure, but more important even is the fact that the percentage of first quality export beef has greatly improved. When these cattle were travelled by road the first grade export quality was an average of 39 per cent.; the first grade export quality of the carcasses flown by air is now 85 per cent., so the position with the aeroplane is economically sound, and the progress of the company has made is truly remarkable. As I said a little while ago, during the first season, 1,800 head of cattle were slaughtered at Glenroy.

As a result of the first season's experience it was realised that the plant at Glenroy—the abattoirs and the freezing plant—was insufficient to deal with the larger output, so more money was needed. Australian National Airways then lent to the company £16,000, and the second season, which is the 1950 season, reveals the following details:—The season has operated smoothly, and 3,700 head of cattle have been slaughtered in addition to 100 sheep and 40 pigs. The pigs were purchased somewhere down south and flown to Glenroy station as slips with an average weight of 40lb. They were flown there in April, 1950, and slaughtered in August, 1950, with a dressed weight of 147lb., and all were graded first quality export freezer.

As an experiment, Air Beef Pty. Ltd. obtained 100 sheep from Noonkanbah station and flew them to Glenroy where, I think, they were fattened for some time and then slaughtered and transported by air to stations throughout the West Kimberleys, to Wyndham and to other parts on the north coast where mutton is very seldom obtainable. So that experiment was a great success, and the company is now using £47,853 of working capital, a good deal of which is, of course, by way of loan.

I felt that Mr. Strickland would be interested in these figures, and perhaps they would correct some wrong impressions which may have developed in his mind. He raised another point, the cost of transporting the carcasses from the airstrip seven miles outside Wyndham to the freezing works at Wyndham. I am informed that that charge is met by Air Beef Pty. Ltd. at the ordinary rate, and the Government is not involved in any cost.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: It costs a farthing per lb.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: The Honorary Minister says that the cost is one farthing per lb., so apparently that is the ruling rate for that seven miles of transport. Mr. Strickland said he believed that air beef would not contribute to the increase of population in the North-West. As a result of the second season at Glenroy I think it will be found that there is a small increase in permanent population, due to the establishment of the works there. There may also be some little increase in the population of Wyndham where the products are handled.

But an important point is that instead of those who are directly concerned with the slaughtering of cattle at Glenroy station being employed for 20 weeks, as they have been in the past, it is estimated that they will be employed for 35 weeks in the future. Whilst that population is not permanent, it will be there for 35 out of the 52 weeks of the year; and that is a definite contribution to the development of the North-West. I agree with Mr. Strickland that roads are a necessity and would be a tremendous help to the North-West but we, as members of Parliament, whilst advocating that, should by no means do anything to discourage air transport of mails, freight and perishable goods.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The air freight scheme does not compete with the roads.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Not at all. Another point which must be considered regarding the economics of air and road transport respectively is that the cost of many roads would run into hundreds of thousands of pounds, and the interest and sinking fund plus maintenance would be a big drain on the public purse.

On the other hand, air strips are reasonably numerous throughout that north-west country and I understand that the cost of making an air strip, adjacent to a station, is somewhere in the vicinity of £400 while the cost of maintenance is fairly light. However, the economics of the air beef plan are sound, and I say, "Let us encourage air transport" because it has achieved much for the development of the North-West and the convenience and comfort of its residents.

Hon. G. Bennetts: If the outback is to be developed, we must have decent roads.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I agree entirely with the hon. member, but we must have decent air transport, too. I shall now refer to the Tydeman harbour scheme for Fremantle. During the debate on the Supply Bill Mr. Fraser dealt interestingly with the subject and I thought he was extremely sound in his approach to it. He was particularly careful in his choice of words and language when he commented on the Tydeman plan. He did not condemn it. However, he was a strong advocate for the outer harbour scheme in contradistinction to the up-river plan. That was a sound approach, but what I am concerned about is the unsound approach of many of the critics of the Tydeman harbour scheme.

We find men who, by their training and calling, have no technical knowledge at all, yet pit their lack of knowledge against the abundant knowledge that is possessed by Mr. Tydeman. I suggest that Western Australia is extremely fortunate in having the services of so eminent an engineer as Mr. Tydeman, and as a layman I would be inclined to back Mr. Tydeman's opinion on such a harbour scheme against people who have no claim whatever to any technical knowledge of the subject. This State has an unhappy background as to criticism of its engineers by people who should never have criticised them. We know of the untimely end of C. Y. O'Connor, an eminent engineer, whose plans for the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme and the Fremantle harbour were ridiculed by people not entitled by their training, education or experience to criticise. Now we have a repetition of the same sort of criticism by people who should never criticise, because the whole of their background of experience and training makes them unfit to do so.

Next I shall draw attention to one of the problems of the housewife. During the war she had a pretty thin time. She had to fetch and carry all the goods for the family larder. It was necessary, during those years, for restrictions to be imposed by the Government, and in 1943 a Commonwealth National Security Regulation called the Bread Industry Order was brought into operation in April, 1943,

and continued until February, 1946. This National Security Regulation or Order zoned the delivery of bread. Despite the fact that it ceased to operate from February, 1946, the master bakers have continued the unofficial zoning of bread deliveries and I think it has been the experience of every member of this Chamber—

Hon. E. H. Gray: No, not of mine.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: It has been the experience of many members in this Chamber that they have had an unsatisfactory bread delivery. I know it was so in my case.

Hon. G. Bennetts: There is no bread delivery in Merredin or Norseman.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I am dealing with bread delivery in the metropolitan area which today is unofficially zoned by the action of the master bakers.

Hon. E. H. Gray: In East Fremantle there are three bakers operating, and they all deliver in one street.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: East Fremantle is extremely fortunate because in my district there is only one baker and one must either take the bread or jolly well leave it. That is the attitude of the master bakers, Mr. President—take it or leave it! Members can go down any day to one of the big provision stores in Perth and see, from the time the store is open until it is closed, people standing in a queue at the departmental counter waiting to buy bread.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: A good loaf of bread.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: That is so for the simple reason that their baker supplies them with bread which they do not like. The baker provides no range in types of bread and frequently there is a very indifferent service by indifferent employees who deliver bread to the housewives.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is why there is bad bread.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: That interjection is very interesting, but this year the New South Wales Government attempted to break the ring of the master bakers.

Hon. E. H. Gray: How did it get on?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: It introduced a Bill this year, which has now become an Act, called the Bread Manufacture and Delivery Act, 1950. I have a copy of the Act here which I intend to hand to Mr. Gray.

Hon. G. Bennetts: He is an authority on bread.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I suggest that the Government might quite seriously consider the introduction of a similar measure although it would be a pity to do so. That step would be a last resort.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Tell us something about it.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Did you say this Bill was introduced in New South Wales?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: It was introduced in 1950, passed in 1950 and is an Act now. This measure sought to abolish the unofficial system of zoning bread. I will quote from the Act, which says—

4. (1) Notwithstanding the terms of any contract, agreement or arrangement with any other bread manufacturer or person (whether made before or after the commencement of this Part of this Act), a bread manufacturer shall, if so required verbally or in writing by any person—

(a) sell to that person; and

(b) deliver or cause to be delivered at any place situated not more than three miles (measured by the nearest practicable route) from any bakehouse or distribution centre of such bread manufacturer for the time being in use,

In other words, the consumer will be given a choice of several bakers within a three mile limit, or of any other bakers outside the three mile limit who care to deliver bread in competition with those within the three mile limit. I think there have been certain difficulties in the operation of this Act in New South Wales.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There have been.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Mr. Gray says that is so, but it is a genuine attempt to give the housewife a better deal than that which she had been experiencing. The New South Wales legislation not only provides for a number of bakers being available to the housewife but also for the manufacture of a standard loaf and a variety of different types of bread. Another interesting portion of the legislation is that it provides that all flourmillers shall label their flour which is to be delivered to a bread manufacturer with a specification giving the protein and maltose content of that flour. I do not know how valuable that is but it suggests to my mind that perhaps the baker, knowing the physical content of the flour, might be able to make a better loaf of bread. Mr. Gray could inform the House on that point more ably than I can. However, I do feel that the Government might easily give consideration to the framing of a Bill along the lines of the New South Wales Act so as to give much needed relief to the harassed housewife. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Davies, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.27 p.m.