

culable injury not to schools, houses, railway engines or hospitals, but to human flesh and blood and human mentality and nervous systems.

So I hope that we may from now on, as the Acting Premier suggested in his speech, try more to develop a statesman-like attitude. I trust, however, that it will be developed in regard to the real, complete problems, and especially the fundamental causes for the fact that periodically, despite there being an abundance of production available and means to make further production available, great groups of people in every Australian State, and probably in every country of the world, are reduced to misery and suffering, because through some maladjustment, deliberately brought about by small groups of powerful individuals in different countries, it is made impossible for the average man and woman to work and obtain weekly or fortnightly the amount of money necessary to enable them to buy the bare necessities of existence plus a few comforts. I am not suggesting that we alone could solve the problem, but we might make a valuable contribution, together with the other States and countries of the world, towards finding a solution. That, in my opinion, would be an achievement in which we, having played some part in it, might well feel that we had done some good for humanity, and for which, I am sure, the generations of the future would have reason to call our name blessed.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

BILLS (7)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Education.

- 2, Hospitals Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Health.

- 3, Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment (Continuance).

- 4, Industries Assistance Act Amendment (Continuance).

- 5, Northampton Lands Resumption.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

- 6, Builders' Registration Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Works.

- 7, Railway (Brown Hill Loop Kalgoorlie-Gnumbulla Lake) Discontinuance.

Introduced by the Minister for Railways.

House adjourned at 10.22 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 7th September, 1948.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT—ELECTION OF HON. W. J. MANN.

The Clerk (Mr. L. L. Leake): I have to announce that the President, Hon. H. Seddon, is absent. It is, therefore, necessary for members to elect one of their number, now present, to fill the office, perform the duties, and exercise the authority of the President during such absence.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood): I move—

That Hon. J. A. Dimmitt be elected to fill the office, perform the duties, and exercise the authority of the President during the absence of the President, Hon. H. Seddon.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I second the motion.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I move—

That Hon. W. J. Mann be elected to fill the office, perform the duties, and exercise the authority of the President during the absence of the President, Hon. H. Seddon.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I second the motion.

Ballot taken.

The Clerk: As a result of the ballot, Hon. W. J. Mann has been elected Deputy President.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

QUESTIONS.

GALVANISED WIRE AND NETTING.

As to Imports, Local Manufacture, etc.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Honorary Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What quantity of galvanised wire, both plain and netting, has been imported into this State during the period from the 1st June, 1947 to the 1st June, 1948.

(2) To whom and in what quantity was the wire consigned?

(3) What quantity of galvanised wire, both plain and netting, has been manufactured in this State by the W.A. Netting and Wire Coy. from the 4,000 tons of rods processed?

(4) What quantity of wire, both plain and netting, has the State Government received from the supplies referred to in question (3) for and on behalf of the War Service Land Settlement Scheme?

(5) Which distributing agents handled the remainder and in what quantities?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Barbed wire, 23 tons; galvanised wire, 11 tons; wire netting, 2½ tons.

(2) Have no means of ascertaining who the consignees were.

(3) Barbed wire, 248 tons; plain, 1,366 tons; wire netting, 1,110 tons.

(4) Barbed wire, 26½ tons; plain 140¼ tons; wire netting, no orders placed.

(5) Practically all hardware merchants are distributors and it is impossible to say what the quantities handled were.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Securing Treedozers.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Honorary Minister for Agriculture:

In view of the repeated statements that clearing on many of the war service land settlement farms was being held up, was any action taken by the Minister responsible to secure some of the twenty-five treedozers exported to Tanganyika?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

The treedozers are an attachment and does not include the bulldozer. Steps have been taken to manufacture the treedozers in Western Australia.

MOTION—ELECTRICITY ACT.

To Disallow Radio Workers' Regulations.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South-East) [4.46]: I move—

That Regulations Nos. 113, 117, 118, 119, 123, 124, 129, 130, 131, 132, 138, 139, and 142 made under the Electricity Act, 1945, as published in the "Government Gazette" of the 25th March, 1948, and laid on the Table of the House on the 27th July, 1948, be and are hereby disallowed.

I feel sure that during the last few days members have had brought under their notice the full power of regulations and the control that is vested by means of regulations. It is unfortunate that the power of Parliament, the members of which are elected by the people, is surely and not too slowly being taken away by permitting the setting up of boards under various statutes and by the introduction of regulation after regulation which, I believe, is done with the idea of causing confusion in the public mind. The attitude seems to be, "People do not know their own minds; therefore we must have these boards to guide them," and thus confusion is added to confusion as regulation is added to regulation.

Under the Electricity Act, the State Electricity Commission was constituted which, in its wisdom, decided to provide four boards. I cannot give the names of the members of those boards, but I believe that, in some instances we would find not only a duplication of names of persons representing, in quite a few cases, different interests but appointments made to the boards with the one idea of keeping the industry a very close preserve and endeavour

ing, as they are doing in no small way, to protect the power of the Commission. When members agreed to this legislation in 1945, I do not think they visualised the effect that its passing would have on the electrical workers in this State. Provision has been made for the setting up of a radio workers' board, a cinematograph operators' board, an electrical workers' board and an electrical contractors' licensing board.

There is a total of 319 regulations, and page after page of forms to be filled in by those who wish to take out licenses or to be registered under the boards. Under one regulation, it is necessary to fill in separate forms in order to sit for A class, B class and C class licenses. I think the idea is to regulate the whole of this industry. People who are prepared to work are being refused the right to do so unless they have a permit, and even a permit allows them to work only in the specialised avenues specified in the permit.

I fail to see why it is necessary to have regulations in connection with radio workers. If a man engaged in radio work is able to pass the ordinary safety test, why should he not be able to service radios? If I wish to go to a certain serviceman, I do not want to be told I can go to him only because he has a certificate. Should I be prepared to trust a man, although he may not have a license, the responsibility is mine and no-one else's. I do not think any guarantee is given by the Electricity Commission that, simply because a man has passed an examination, he is a qualified serviceman, and I do not think people should be compelled to go to him to have their sets serviced.

In my opinion, the radio workers' board should set the examination, which should consist of the safety principles of electricity only and relate to the physical protection of the users of radio sets and other radio equipment which is connected to supply mains in excess of 40 volts. The board should also arrange the place and time for such examinations, which should be held at not less than quarterly intervals. Printed copies of all safety regulations should be made available to those sitting for examination, and the issuing of a license should be governed by a person's knowledge of those regulations. That is all that is required under the radio workers' license.

I do not propose to go into all the pros and cons of the regulations it is sought to disallow. Some of them replace regulations which were previously disallowed, and which have now been slightly altered, words being transferred from one regulation to another, the effect being somewhat the same. The object is to stop an individual from doing radio work without passing examinations prescribed by the boards; and the regulations exist, in many cases, simply to retard progress and to prevent men who are prepared to work from doing so. I hope that other members will have something to say regarding the regulations; and I will have a chance later of dealing with the regulations one by one and showing where I think they should be amended.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

MOTION—ELECTRICITY ACT.

To Disallow Cinematograph Operators' Regulations.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (East)

[4.56]: I move—

That Regulations Nos. 71, 80, 86 and 104 made under the Electricity Act, 1945, as published in the "Government Gazette" of the 25th Mreh, 1948, and laid on the Table of the House on the 27th July, 1948, be and are hereby disallowed.

The regulations I seek to have disallowed refer to cinema operators exclusively. It is most extraordinary that we have a very important Commission—the Electricity Commission—dabbling in minor matters like this. Cinematograph operators have been working in this State for a very long time—almost as long as I can remember—and not on one occasion has there been an accident of any sort, nor any reports of negligence or carelessness on their part. I would like the Minister, on behalf of the Commission, to tell us why that body is dabbling in these things. A board has been appointed that will conduct examinations, and all sorts of conditions have been imposed which I propose to read to the House directly. For what reason this has been done I cannot for the life of me understand. I can see no danger at all, except such as is provided for already in the Health Act. The bio-box itself is controlled, inasmuch as it has to be built to certain specifications.

Fire-proof facilities have to be made available, and are definitely provided. I remember that, when I was Minister for Health, appeals were made to me many times to have alterations made, but the department has always been very careful to see that the strictest supervision was exercised with respect to bio-boxes. I hope it is not expected by these regulations to ensure that a man who operates a cinematograph shall have the same qualifications as an electrician. They are two different occupations. There is justification for a man who is wiring premises or handling electricity to have a good deal of knowledge of what his work entails. The cinematograph operator, however, is engaged in operating an ordinary machine. This is the only place I know of where there are such regulations. Are we to continue legislation by regulation and say that a person shall not repair a motor car because the lives of the public might be endangered by the careless handling of parts of motor cars? Is this to be the start of further controls?

The Honorary Minister: You would not have your car repaired by an unqualified man.

Hon Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No, and I have often been sorry to have to give it to a garage to repair. I am sure the Honorary Minister, having taken his car to a garage, has been informed that the trouble had been rectified, but before going far on the road has discovered that it was as bad as ever. On one occasion, coming from Wyalkatchem, I spent two hours in a garage at Northam having my car repaired, but, when I got two miles along the road, I had to send for a man to look at the engine again. I finally discovered that I had to rectify the trouble for myself.

The Honorary Minister: I have had that experience, also.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Fancy, when cinematographs first came out, a man having to pass an examination before he started to operate the machine. It could never have been done. I appeal to the Minister to get the department concerned to give people a free run. There is no justification for legislation of this kind.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Is it not necessary to have highly qualified men in the outback country?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: How would this legislation help such a man? First of all, he would have to come to Perth or some other centre to gain the two years' experience. Having done that, he would not return to the country. Our greatest trouble is to get people to stay in the outback and this House should do nothing to encourage people to leave the rural areas. I will deal first with Regulation 71. Certainly the amendment is better than the original provision, because it provides that one member shall be a chairman appointed by the board, one an employer's representative, who shall be an employer, and one a representative of the operators, who shall be an employee. That is the only alteration there, and I think it is a wise one. Regulation 80 provides—

No person shall be eligible to sit for examination (or any part thereof) unless—

it is proposed to add these words—

he has attended a full course of instruction at a training centre approved by the board.

It must be realised that there will not be training centres in many country towns, as it is difficult enough to have them provided in the metropolitan area under the Education Department. And then the amended regulation continues—

he can produce proof of having had experience and practical training under the direct supervision of a senior licensed operator in a cinematograph projection room during the screening of full programmes at public exhibitions of films for at least two years, and has received instructions from a licensed operator, or other instructor approved of by the Board in such details of subjects (A) and (B) hereunder as are appropriate to the scope of the examination for which he desires to sit and in subjects (C), (D), (E) and (F) hereunder.

I desire members to note particularly what is provided for under paragraph (A). First, he is to have a knowledge of electricity. It would not be of great advantage to him if he were asked what electricity is, because he would be confounded by the question, as would also the examiner. Next he is to have a knowledge of electrical action in general with regard to direct and alternating current, motors, generators, transformers, convertors, rectifiers, resistances, choke coils, volt and ampere meters, arc lamps, switches, fuses, wires, cables, sound equipment and the necessary connections for the various appliances. If that were submitted to a man qualifying to be an

electrician it might be a wise provision, but these men are not allowed to touch an electrical wiring system. The owner of a cinematograph would not allow such an employee to interfere with that expensive equipment. Such machines are serviced by the agents of the manufacturer, just as is done in the case of typewriters. If the owner allowed the equipment to be interfered with the guarantee would lapse. No applicant might be asked questions on all those subjects, but the board could make a selection from them, and I would not give it that power. Paragraph (B) covers projectors—mechanism, optical system and sound equipment. The operator simply operates the machine, just as a girl in a tailor's shop operates a sewing machine.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: That is a description of what the machine does.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The employee has only to operate it.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: He must know how to operate it.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The only way he could get a knowledge of projectors would be to take one to pieces and reassemble it. "Mechanism" would also be covered by the remarks I have made. The optical system would have to do with focussing on the screen, and the sound equipment is self-explanatory. Paragraph (C) covers films—care of, handling, joining and re-winding. Would the employer be likely to allow a man who did not understand film to handle it? The employer does not own the film, but is liable for it. Paragraph (D) covers the projection of pictures and sound. Paragraph (E) covers safety precautions—especially in relation to prevention and extinction of fire in the projection room and re-winding room. Those precautions are provided for under the Health Act, which provides for the imposition of a heavy fine if the bio box is not set up according to the requirements of that Act. I know of no instance where those requirements are not met. For many years we have had picture operators in this State and all over the Commonwealth and I know of no single instance of a fire from the cause mentioned. Paragraph (F) requires—

a knowledge of the method of resuscitation in cases of electric shock. Application to be examined under this regulation shall be made in Form S.E.C. 16 in the Appendix hereto.

In other words, he must have some knowledge of the first aid required to deal with a person who has come into contact with a live electric wire. He would probably handle the situation with common sense, as any normal person would, and that is about all he could do. I do not think the House should expect an operator to sit for an examination of that kind. When a man has been in such employment for many years, why should he now have to register and put in two years under a qualified operator before sitting for an examination, and assure the board that he has had a full course of instruction? Some men in the country have been operating for 20 years and it would be wrong to ask them to undergo an examination of this sort.

I come next to Regulation 86. The existing regulation provides that no person shall be licensed unless he has attained the full age of 21 years. That is extraordinary in view of the fact that we have recently allowed youths of 18 and 19 years of age to handle bombers and all other sorts of aircraft under the most dangerous conditions possible. Now we would say that a man cannot operate in a bio box unless he is 21 years of age. That is modified by the provision that a special or limited permit might be given to him. That provision reads that Regulation 86—

Is amended by adding after the word "years" in line two, the words "but the Board may issue a restricted permit to a person under the age of 21 years entitling him to operate until he attains such age provided such person has qualified by examination."

If he has qualified by examination, and has gone through the necessary tests, his age should not be allowed to stand in his way, and he should be given the permission on a permanent basis. I come now to Regulation 104 which provides for penalties for certain offences. It states—

The license or permit of any cinematograph operator may be suspended or revoked by order of the Board if—

Then the words of the existing regulation are struck out and the provision is made—

(a) he has been convicted of any offence against this Part of these regulations; or

(b) his physical condition is such as to render him incapable of carrying out the duties of a cinematograph operator in a competent manner.

Who is more capable than the owner of the machine as a judge of that? Surely

the man whose income depends on the machine is not likely to allow an incompetent person to handle it, or one whose physical condition will not allow him to operate it properly. I hope the House will leave that power in the hands of the employer. If the employee has been convicted of an offence against this part of the regulations he is to have his license cancelled. This House should not agree to anything that would handicap a man in the earning of his living, which this provision would do. Regimentation of the people is a serious handicap to the progress of Australia and while we have the chance in this Chamber we should do nothing to encourage it. If we are to have such a provision we might with equal justification say that no woman shall use a flat-iron that is electrically heated unless she has first passed an examination. There are more deaths caused by electric irons than by any of the appliances mentioned in these regulations.

Hon. A. L. Loton: What about electric razors?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: People have been killed through the use of electric razors, but I have not heard of anything so serious with regard to cinema operators even though they may not have been licensed under these regulations.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: They are capable.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Are those who use electric razors required to have a license?

Hon. E. H. Gray: They would kill only themselves.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Are people required to have requisite qualifications before they can use electric irons?

Hon. E. H. Gray: But they would kill themselves only should an accident occur.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That would apply to anything happening in the operating box.

Hon. E. H. Gray: A fire in the operating box might burn the place down.

The Honorary Minister: Yes, it might burn the whole show.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Surely members know that the Public Health Department has controlled these matters over the years. I suggest that the Honorary

Minister has not heard of any place in Western Australia that has been burnt down because of a fire in the operating box.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Because capable men are employed there.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is so.

Hon. G. Bennetts: And why take that right away from them?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The whole position has been properly supervised under the Health Department. As a matter of fact, in a country town I saw a live wire make contact with a film and although the operator was not qualified under these regulations, he dealt with the situation and no-one knew that anything had happened. Films are highly inflammable and despite that, I have not heard of one instance of anything better being achieved because of the passing of regulations such as those under discussion. Let the members of the Electricity Commission get on with the big job they have in hand and provide cheap electricity, particularly for the people in the country areas. Why not let these pettifoggish details go by the board? We should aim at big men for big things, and leave little men to deal with little things. I hope the House will agree to the disallowance of these regulations and I move accordingly.

On motion by Hon. H. Hearn, debate adjourned.

BILL—NEW TRACTORS, MOTOR VEHICLES AND FENCING MATERIALS CONTROL.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Honorary Minister for Agriculture, resolved:

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Thirteenth Day.

Debate resumed from the 31st August.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.22]: I regret that the President is not in the Chair this afternoon and I hope he has not been stricken down as I was five or six weeks

ago. I certainly trust that his illness is of a temporary nature only. I join with others who have congratulated the President on his excellent win at the election that resulted in his return to this House and I am pleased that he has received the approbation of members generally in his re-election to the Chair. At the same time I must confess we feel the loss of Mr. Seddon from the floor of the House. He certainly is doing excellent work as President, but he was a wonderful asset to us as a private member. His analytical mind when dealing with financial matters made him extremely helpful. We certainly miss him in that respect, but possibly he may find his present position somewhat more congenial.

With others, I congratulate Sir Frank Gibson and Sir Charles Latham on their being honoured by His Majesty the King. As other members have referred to the work they have carried out, I shall not further comment on that phase. I congratulate those members who secured re-election and also welcome the three newcomers to the Chamber. Judging by their speeches so far, we can look forward to useful work from them in the near future. At the same time, a feeling of regret is engendered by the knowledge that some who have sat with us for many years have gone by the way.

Among them is Sir Hal Colebatch who has had a very varied career. He was a member of this Chamber for two years before I took a seat here and for years we were colleagues as representatives of the East Province. We sat together in three different Ministries. He was away from Parliament for some time occupying important positions elsewhere and ultimately was re-elected to this Chamber. He has led a most useful life and had vast experience. He had a wealth of knowledge and was a most fluent speaker. We certainly miss him from our midst. Then there was our old colleague who at times created some amusement in this House. I refer to Mr. Williams. That gentleman certainly had his use in this Chamber. No-one here could excel him in knowledge of industrial legislation and he was of great assistance in that respect. He was fearless politically and apparently that was his undoing. There are times when a man may have an open fearless mind, but it does not always do to express his views.

Coming now to the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor, I noted that references were made to the creation of the Department of Supply and Shipping. If there was one avenue of Government work from which I would not expect much, it was in that respect.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have not been disappointed there.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am sorry to differ from the hon. member. I certainly have been disappointed in some respects, but not with regard to the Honorary Minister and I think that Mrs. Cardell-Oliver has done excellent work in her administration of that department.

Hon. G. Fraser: Figures do not bear that statement out.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am not concerned with figures, but rather with facts. Take the position regarding deck space on ships from the Eastern States. There are factories here that employ a large number of people. Members are fully aware that although many efforts have been made in that direction, we have not always been able to compete with the Eastern States on a successful basis. That has been largely due to a lack of raw material. Several times Mrs. Cardell-Oliver, in her capacity as Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping, has been able to relieve the situation to a marked degree. Every time she has been approached with a view to securing deck space for necessary cargoes, she has been successful within a reasonable time in obtaining the required space to enable the essential commodities to be conveyed to Western Australia. By that means she has been able to keep the factories operating and many people in continued employment. In that direction her work has been very useful indeed. I regret that some members have sought to ridicule her work, but the administration of her department has turned out to be very satisfactory. The appointment of Mrs. Cardell-Oliver as Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping was an excellent one. I certainly disagree with those who are always trying to castigate her. There is no justification for such an attitude and those concerned know nothing about the position.

The reference to the goldmining industry in His Excellency's Speech supports the Government's action in endeavouring to

maintain the mines in operation and in endeavouring to secure assistance from the Commonwealth Government. There is one way only in which the goldmining industry can be assisted and that is by the provision of finance. If the mines were allowed to languish and go out of production, it would be a poor lookout not only for Western Australia but for the finances of Australia as a whole. The Government has endeavoured to induce the Chifley Labour Government to assist the industry with Commonwealth funds and to help either by increasing the price of gold or in some other way. Beyond promising assistance to marginal mines for a period of six months, the Commonwealth Government has done little, and the State Government can do no more in that respect.

I was impressed by a statement regarding prospectors that I read a little while ago. As members will agree the prospectors constitute a very important section of the community. Practically speaking it can be said: No prospectors, no new mines. When I read a statement by a man who holds a high position—I shall not mention the name but I can give it to the Honorary Minister in private if he so desires—to the effect, after he had been requested to lend assistance: "Oh! no, let them go and get work on the mines." I was amazed. What ridiculous advice to give to prospectors, men whose lives are wrapped up in prospecting for gold. As a matter of fact the existing system with regard to prospectors is absolutely wrong. What do we do? A man goes out prospecting and possibly is lucky in striking payable gold. He applies for a lease and then we charge him £1 per acre per annum for ground that is absolutely useless to him unless he can get more gold from it. Then we charge him a survey fee.

Surely that is a miserable way of treating men who go out into these areas prospecting for gold. The question may be put: How can we avoid making those charges if we are to protect the finances? That difficulty is easily overcome. I think we should dispense with the rental and survey fee and then after allowing the prospector a certain number of ounces, to apply a tax on the gold. The only sound way of encouraging the prospecting industry is to adopt that principle. We should give every assistance possible to encourage the

prospector to go out and find more gold. I do not say that we should pay the men as has been suggested in some quarters because I think that is very often fatal.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Do you know that some of them have had their sands tied up for four years and could not get any money advanced against those sands?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I know: I do not propose going into that side of the question. How many times have we heard of prospectors who through the want of a few pounds only—it is marvellous how little they can live on and continue with their work—have to give up their effort and secure work so that with the wages earned they can get together a few more funds with which to resume their prospecting. In the meantime others may come along and continue where the prospectors have ceased operations and frequently strike payable gold. Thus others benefit as a result of the prospectors' initial efforts. That happens all because a prospector may have to pay, say £24 per year, which he cannot raise—24 acres would be the least area that he would in all probability require—and cannot continue his work until he earns the necessary money.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Do you know that if the prospectors are in receipt of the old age pension or a military pension the Government will not help them?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I certainly agree that the Government is rather niggardly in that respect because there is no finer type of man in Australia than the prospector. If there is any, I would like to know more about it.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They do not ask for anything unless they are really in need of it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: As indicated in His Excellency's Speech, the housing problem constitutes a major question. Every man desires to own his own home. Under present-day conditions, with the prevailing rates of wages and the high cost of living, no man who works for wages or salary has any chance of paying off his home during his lifetime. This is regrettable, but something we must face up to. In this respect, it is interesting to note the increases in wages over a short period of years. Let us analyse the wages paid under the building trades award for 1930 and the

wages being paid in 1948. The award covers bricklayers, carpenters, painters, plasterers, plumbers and stonemasons, all of those workmen who actually are engaged in the erection of a building; but we must also take into consideration all the other workers who supply the materials necessary for buildings. At the 30th September, 1939, the carpenters were paid—

	£	s.	d.
Basic wage	4	2	2
Margin	1	8	6
Holidays	0	4	3
Lost time	0	6	0
Tool allowance	0	1	0
Total	6	1	11

As at the 21st May, 1948, the carpenters were paid—

	£	s.	d.
Basic wage	5	15	9
Margin	2	3	6
Holidays	0	6	0
Lost time	0	6	0
Tool allowance	0	1	0
Total	8	12	3

That represents an increase of 41.29 per cent. All the other tradesmen I have mentioned have received virtually the same increase, although there may be a difference of a few pence here and there. The cost of erecting houses has practically doubled in a period of nine years. This is regrettable and surely we can find a cheaper way of building homes. Members will recall that there was a demonstration of cement bricks in Parliament House grounds. I had the pleasure—I emphasise the word "pleasure"—of seeing a building erected of those bricks. Such a building can be put up by any ordinary intelligent man without any building training whatever. The building was a model. There may be some drawbacks to it, but I would like to know what they are. The bricks have cement facings—not that the cement is necessary, it is to make them more attractive—and I fail to see why they should not be used. I feel sure in my own mind that homes erected of such bricks would involve only half the cost of the building now being constructed. What is holding up their use? I have been informed that a layman erected a house for himself with these bricks in four days. Evidently, their use would relieve the housing position tremendously.

References have been made to the danger of Communism. In fact, such statements are made every day. Some people are urging the State Government to take action against these disloyalists. No doubt the Government is keeping a watchful eye on communists, but in my opinion it is up to the State Government to force every government employee to sign a declaration to the effect that he is not in any way associated with Communism. Surely that is not too much to ask of a public servant. Beyond that, I cannot see what the State Government can do in this connection. However, the position calls for immediate action by the Commonwealth Government. So far as I can see, communists have little to fear from Mr. Chifley, judging by his actions.

Recently there was a discussion on Communism in the Commonwealth Parliament, but Mr. Chifley did not make the slightest attempt to answer the charges then made. He side-tracked them. For what reason? Is it for the votes he thinks he will get from the communists? Does he not realise the danger to Australia? Australian industry has suffered considerably by upheavals many of which can be traced to communistic control of unions which are out to destroy democracy and undermine British control. They are a menace to the British dominions, and if another war is forced on us, we shall have to fight the enemy within Australia. Australia has a buffer in the islands to the north, which are being thrown to the wolves. We must secure the co-operation of the peoples of those islands. But the communists' efforts directed towards the dangerous Malayan trouble have exposed over 1,000 Australian nationals, whose assets are worth £6,000,000, to grave danger.

This has an exceedingly bad influence on Australian personnel working on Australian-owned tin dredging properties and rubber plantations and who include men, women and children, some of whom have been murdered. The assets consist mainly of a number of costly tin dredges which, to replace, would be worth at least £20,000,000. They would probably cost much more than that now, while the delay in rebuilding them, if destroyed by the terrorists, would set the dredging industry back at least 10 years. The communists' desire is to aid Chinese communists to murder

these people and destroy their assets. Surely they are entitled to look to their own country for encouragement and assistance. But the power-drunk Chifley Government has been very tardy in rendering them assistance. A short time ago, the communist paper—the "Tribune"—told Mr. Chifley to "shut up about Berlin." It has since given him direct instructions about Malaya. An editorial in the "Tribune," under date of the 17th July—the "Tribune" is the leading communist paper—contains this misleading statement—

What else can freedom-loving Australians do but support the struggle of the Malayan people for national independence and a higher standard of life?

Rarely have I read a more blatant piece of distortion than the paragraph I have quoted. This alleged struggle of the Malayan people is, in fact, a terrorist conspiracy organised and carried out by Chinese communists. Malays as well as British people have been murdered. In a word, communist-hired assassins are murdering indiscriminately not to liberate the Malayan people but to destroy the authority and influence of Britain and the British Commonwealth in South-East Asia. It is vital to the national interests of Australia and the Empire that communist terrorism should be put down in Malaya. Assume, therefore, that the Commonwealth Government agrees to sell arms to Malaya.

What happens next? The secretary of the Seamen's Union, Mr. Elliott, supplies us with the answer. He tells us that his union would boycott any vessel carrying arms, and with this he couples the threat that the boycott would be as effective as the boycott of Dutch ships to Indonesia. That, in itself, should be no great obstacle. If the Government decides to send arms to Malaya, these can be carried by the Navy. But the implications of Mr. Elliott's threats are more ominous. The Dutch boycott by Australian trade unions, and the threat of a boycott of ships carrying arms to Malaya, make it perfectly clear that wherever there is a conflict between the interests of international Communism and the national interests of Australia, the Australian Communist Party is not on Australia's side. In support of that statement, I point out that early this year the communists held a meeting at Cowra, New South Wales. At that meeting a communist organiser, Freda Broun, stated—

We owe no loyalty to the Throne. The Communist Party would support Russia if it were fighting a war with America.

At the same meeting, Comrade Dixon, another leading communist, said—

We need victory because we can then set on our task of transforming Australia into the Soviet State of the South Seas.

This gives us a fair idea what the role of the Australian Communist Party would be if the present conflict between Russia and the Western Powers developed into open war. What the nation has a right to know is how the Commonwealth Government intends to counter the increasingly hostile anti-British and anti-Australian challenge of the Communist Party in this country. Mr. Chifley and his Government, by their attitude, are giving the communists every encouragement. He side-tracks all discussions and thus fosters this disloyal body. Let us hope that in the near future he will see daylight. It is the bounden duty of every Australian to make himself acquainted with the aims of the communists and their power over trade unions and to realise the peril in which our freedom lies. Furthermore, it is the bounden duty of the Commonwealth Government to ban the communist organisation.

I am alarmed at the extensions of motor transport which have been made and at the further extensions which are apparently being planned by the Commissioner of Railways in respect of road transport for both passengers and goods. I do not know the exact number of new bus runs which have been commenced by the Railway Department; but quite a number have been opened up in the South-West from Perth to Bunbury and from Bunbury to various other places in the South-West and the metropolitan area. For example, the Commissioner of Railways in his report for the year ended the 30th June, 1947, under the heading "Road Services," says—

On the 16th December, 1946, the Perth-Kojonup road passenger service was extended and increased. Twice weekly the route, instead of being via Boddington, is now via the main road with an extension to Cranbrook, and the third service is via Boddington to Kojonup. Additional service is provided twice weekly Perth-Williams via Boddington and Quindanning, specially tabled on the week-ends to suit the convenience of the many workers at Boddington.

Results of working this service were:—Passengers carried, 10,085; gross earnings, £8,357; working expenses (excluding indirect charges),

running £2,716, maintenance £1,296; total, £4,012. Interest and depreciation totalled £659, leaving a net return, excluding overhead and indirect charges, of £3,686.

Further, extensive plans for road services radiating from Bunbury have been in existence for a considerable time, and have only been prevented from implementation by the delay in getting suitable vehicles. At time of writing this report, railway road services are now operating from Bunbury to Busselton, Caves House and Collie, and additional services will be provided as vehicles come from the body builders. Delivery of units on order has commenced, and should continue regularly at the rate of approximately two per month.

A road passenger service was introduced on the 10th September, 1946, between Northam and Spencers Brook to replace the connecting train service. On Mondays an extension to Toodyay and Clackline operates to provide a return week-end service connecting with a main line train at the latter place. In addition the vehicle is also used as a school bus between Mookine, Muresk and Northam under contract with the Education Department.

Delivery of the two Australian designed and built "Cheetah" buses referred to in the previous report should be effected towards the end of 1947. These will be additional to the one of similar type commissioned since the 30th June, 1947, and now operating.

During the year the department extended its activities in the road transport of goods. To improve the transport of perishables a road truck service between Perth and Kojonup was inaugurated on the 19th May, 1947. In addition, on the 5th May, 1947, by arrangement with the W.A. Newspapers Ltd., the transport of newspapers between Perth and Fremantle daily by motor truck was instituted; this has since been followed by similar services to Northam, Toodyay, Bunbury, with extensions to Pemberton and Margaret River, and Narrogin, with extension to Albany on Mondays.

The Department proposes to extend its road transport activities both in respect to passengers and goods, and at present consideration is being given to various projects in this regard.

From this report it is apparent that the department is in favour of Government-run motor services, which no Government should attempt unless private enterprise will not carry them out. The report of the recent Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the "Landliner" and "Cheetah" omnibuses affords some illuminating information on the unbusinesslike manner in which such buses were purchased and operated by the Railway Department. The Commissioner of Railways has his hands full in attending to the railways, and this question of road transport could well be left to private enterprise, except in areas where private services

could not operate. New bus runs which have been inaugurated by the Tramways Department are—

Perth to Maylands.
Perth to Canning Bridge.
Perth to Jolimont.

A Government bus run has also been put into Mt. Hawthorn in lieu of the tram service, and a similar bus run is contemplated from the Nedlands jetty into Perth, via Subiaco. This latter run will be in lieu of the Nedlands tram service, which runs from the Nedlands jetty to Keightley-road, Subiaco. It is childish to attempt to justify these Government runs by asserting that the tramways must be protected. Once a tram service has been discontinued, the capital sunk in the tramline is lost and gone forever, and I question the policy of the heavy expenditure of further loan moneys in running Government bus services over these disused tramlines.

Take the Mt. Hawthorn Government bus run, for example. It is probably being run at a loss. On the other hand, if it were being conducted by private enterprise—and the natural operator for that particular run would be the Scarborough Bus Company which conducts many runs in that district—the Government would be showing a clear profit of 6 per cent. on the gross earnings from that run—and this without the outlay of any capital at all. Similar considerations obtain with respect to the proposed Government bus run from the Nedlands jetty. The logical operator for that run is the United Bus Co. which has a network of routes through that district. Here again it would be good business for the Government to allow a private operator to work that run and for the Government to collect 6 per cent. of its gross takings instead of laying out large amounts of loan moneys in the purchase of new buses, and then running them at a loss, in addition to having to meet the interest on such loan moneys.

I do not believe that any Government could run buses as efficiently and economically as does private enterprise. In his speech on this debate, Mr. Watson pointed out that last year the Government-owned tramways, trolley buses and omnibuses in the metropolitan area sustained a loss of £111,000 with a gross revenue of about half a million pounds. The privately-owned

bus services had a gross revenue of about the same amount, and out of their operations the Government made a clear profit of over £30,000 by way of the licence fee of 6 per cent. on their gross takings. This is over and above the £10,000 or thereabouts which the private buses pay by way of ordinary traffic licence fees. And let us not forget that the private companies cannot juggle as they like with their fares because they are controlled by the Government. I heartily endorse Mr. Watson's suggestion that it would be a good proposition for the Government to cut its loss and save the outlay of much fresh additional capital by restricting its own services and allowing private enterprise to expand on a basis which will ensure the Government a certain profit of 6 per cent. on the gross takings of the privately owned buses.

I notice from a report in "The West Australian" for last Wednesday of the proceedings of the Loan Council, that Western Australia's loan programme of £6,246,000 has been substantially cut. That loan programme included the proposed expenditure of £200,000 on tramway buses. I trust, that this suggested expenditure will form part of the proposed loan expenditure which will not be proceeded with. In the present condition of our finances, we cannot afford to increase the State's indebtedness and its interest bill by spending huge sums of loan moneys on losing propositions which could well be handled by private enterprise. To me the policy appears to be—motor transport and no consideration for the railways. Whilst there may be instances where it is necessary to provide motor services, every consideration should be given to the railways, which, necessarily, must be a Government concern. But, wherever possible, motor transport should be left to private enterprise.

No Government department can run such undertakings as motor services. The ramifications must be and are cumbersome, and Government-owned services must necessarily be much more expensive than those controlled by business management which gives closer and more careful attention. In this respect I might say that we have only to look at the state of our railways to see their shocking neglect, which is not the fault of the Commissioner or his officers—we cannot blame them because they have not had the money with which to do anything—but of

each successive Government. While some of the engines are 50 years old, most of the others are about 30, with a few, but not many, not so old. They have stood the test of 30 to 50 years. The life of a motor bus, assuming it is controlled by someone interested in it, and not by a Government department, is about a quarter of that. We cannot expect personal attention with a Government service.

Hon. L. A. Logan: We should.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have run Government trading concerns, and I know how difficult it is. If I could run them as commercial concerns are conducted in Perth, they would be a different proposition from what they are. Who is going to take an interest in a Government concern as we know is done with a commercial undertaking? The care of a motor vehicle should be in the hands of one person. The omnibus companies invariably give a bus to one man who is responsible for it, and he sees that the vehicle is kept up to standard. But what would we find in ten years' time with a Government bus service? The position would be worse than it is in the railways today. We should be very wary about this policy. The Government should take the 6 per cent., which is a very heavy imposition on the gross takings of the bus companies.

The Lieut.-Governor's Speech contains a reference to Wundowie, from which it would appear that the Government expects wonderful things from operations there, but, I wonder. I have heard some very bad reports of Wundowie, but I do not intend to deal with them. The output is stated to be 20 tons of iron per week. It would be interesting to know the weekly cost. I do not know the price of pig iron, but if we assume it is £7 a ton, that would mean there would be a revenue of £140 a week from the production at Wundowie, but the costs would be twice or three times that sum. Again, what is the quality of the product?

The Honorary Minister: The quality is all right.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That has to be proved.

The Honorary Minister: I have checked on that.

Hon. L. Craig: It is very good indeed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is the distillation side of the industry, and we should tread very warily in that respect. I do not

know what is going to happen to the distillation process which, I have always felt, was put in at Wundowie in order to save face in connection with the enormous expenditure on the charcoal iron section. As a matter of fact, charcoal iron has gone out in other countries long ago. There is a reference in the Speech also to Lake Chandler. The Government expects that the new experiment will be successful, but as far as I know it is not. What is going to be the result of the industry there? Why did the previous Government purchase it from a private company and saddle the present Administration with it? I hope both these industries will be successful but I am very doubtful. In any case, even if they are not, this Government should not be blamed, because it has been loaded with them and cannot get rid of them. I do not like to see these undertakings being continued at a loss.

I wish to conclude my remarks by complimenting the present Government on its stand for State rights. Ever since the Government took office, it has asserted the rights of this State, and I feel it will continue to do so. Western Australia is a long way behind because of Commonwealth encroachment on State rights, and I was pleased to see that Mr. Menzies recanted, after many years, by saying that he did not believe in Commonwealth control. Mr. Chifley called Mr. Menzies a chameleon because he had changed his colour, but Mr. Menzies had done so only as to his opinion that Australia could manage better under a Federal system of government.

That is very refreshing and I hope that members of the Liberal Party, as well as members of the Federal Country Party, feel the same way. Each political party in the Commonwealth sphere wants one thing, and that is unification. This augurs badly for the States, especially Western Australia, which is situated so far from the seat of government and because two States have the majority of members in the House of Representatives, and, consequently, control the situation. The present State Government is battling hard all the time to assert the rights of the State and, while I do not agree with some of its actions, I am whole-heartedly behind it in this respect. The Government is gaining experience and it must realise what it means to control the affairs of

this State, but I do feel that it is doing a good job, and I hope it will continue to do so. I trust the Government will stand firm for the rights of the State against any Commonwealth Government which may be in charge of the Treasury bench. I support the motion.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Central) [6.3]: At the outset of my remarks, I desire to say that I regret the President, Hon. H. Seddon, is ill and is unable to be present. I would also like to say how much I regret the illness of the Leader of the House, and his inability to be in attendance. I feel sure that that is the feeling of all members, and it is to be hoped that these two members will soon be fully recovered and able to resume their duties. I wish also to associate myself with the expressions of congratulation voiced by other members to old members who have been returned and to the new members who have been elected. I extend hearty congratulations to the two representatives from this Chamber on whom have been conferred Royal honours. I join with you, Mr. Deputy President, in saying that I think these Royal honours have a very definite value. They not only reflect credit on those who have received such distinctions, but also reflect distinction on the institutions with which they are associated. I think, too, that they convey the idea that more service at the hands of those members is expected.

I am very pleased that a suggestion which you, Mr. Deputy President, made at the close of last session in regard to the raising of the status of the Lieut.-Governor, to Governor, has been acted upon. We all realise the distinguished service which Sir James Mitchell has rendered to the State, and we are all pleased that this additional honour has been conferred upon him. One note of regret I would like to voice is the announcement by our old friend, Mr. Alec Thomson, that this will be his last session.

Hon. A. Thomson: The next one.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Members have learned to look forward with interest and pleasure to the speeches which Mr. Thomson has made. They are always full of meat and are distinctly helpful to young members, like myself, who are learning the ropes. The Speech of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor is comprehensive in its survey of

the work done and that contemplated. It also reveals a record of steady progress and a sound programme for future development. Like Sir Charles Latham, I have listened to the speeches of other members with a good deal of interest. It is casting no reflection on the various speeches to which we have listened to say that the speeches of Dr. Hislop and Mr. Watson were masterpieces and revealed very close knowledge of their particular fields. We can look forward to those two members being very helpful to this House when questions arise of which they have particular knowledge.

One feature of the year that impressed me was the activity of Ministers in visiting country centres. Those visits were very much appreciated, and, whether it is due to those visits or not, or whether it is due to representations made to those Ministers, members can tour the country and see the very active programme of works being carried on.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We received very little of it in Kalgoorlie and on the Goldfields.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I have not been to Kalgoorlie, but I am talking about a fairly considerable portion of the State over which I have travelled.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The work may be in the constituencies members of the Government represent.

The Honorary Minister: What about the abattoirs?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Members can see around the country progress in hospitals, and the reconditioning of schools.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We want them badly.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Some new structures are being built and where the supply of material is not sufficient to build new structures at present, improvements are being effected which will enable schools and hospitals to carry on, and in the main, effectively.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I would like to show the hon. member the letter I received from the St. John of God Hospital in Kalgoorlie, for which a permit has been refused.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: The Government cannot do everything at once. I am only speaking of the centres which I have visited and where I know there is an active pro-

gramme of work. In addition, provision has been made for water supplies in various centres where they have been long needed. This will overcome their difficulties.

I also wish to congratulate the Government on the establishment of zone district councils in various centres. I am a firm believer in the principle of decentralisation, and I consider it would benefit the State, as well as other States, if more power could be delegated to local authorities. This system of what I might call regional government, is largely used in Great Britain and also in America. In Britain, which has the reputation of possessing a greater respect for law and order than any other country, Parliament lays down minimum standards and many community services are undertaken by local authorities, mainly, I believe, because there the business of government has a greater spread and more people share in it.

The local authorities in Great Britain handle police—that is, outside London—public health, including hospitals, maternity and child welfare, education, housing and public relief. Local authorities may also provide purely local services, such as museums, libraries, markets, fire brigades, street cleaning and refuse disposal, drainage, sanitation and, in some cases, such public utilities as water, gas, electricity and transport. The 560 municipal hospitals in Great Britain provide two-thirds of the hospital accommodation, and if it is true that in a division of government authority lies the average man's guarantee of security, then I think that system can be said to conform to this ideal. On the other hand, in Australia, in our State as well as in others, there seems to be a growing tendency towards concentrating the power of government in the hands of a select few and with an ever-growing army of civil servants. Reference was made in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to the question of native affairs. The Speech stated that a Royal Commissioner had been appointed, but his report is not yet available to the public.

The Honorary Minister: It will be, this week.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: We can only judge the nature of the report from the fairly comprehensive Press comments which have appeared from time to time. Judging from those reports, I should say the Com-

missioner's report will be of considerable value. One feature of the report which did impress me was a suggestion that schools and colleges for natives and half-castes should be established. When I spoke on the native question in this House about two years ago, I pointed out that the attendance of native and half-caste children at State schools did not work out as well as many people might have expected. Those children attend school five days a week and are under the influence of the teachers for only five hours per day. For 19 hours a day, all week-ends, holidays and days on which they like to stay away from school, they are subject to their home environment which, in some cases, is sub-standard. This gives the teacher little or no chance to do anything with them.

Recently I had an opportunity of visiting the Beagle Bay Mission where there is a school operating on the lines which I imagine the Royal Commissioner suggests. In that school, provision has been made for about 12 children, but there is room for a larger number if the department can make the children available. The children there were happy, well-cared for and well-fed. When the member for Irwin-Moore and I visited the mission, the children were sitting at a table with knives, forks, plates and so on. They have a dormitory which is equipped with beds. The children make their own beds and are provided with sheets and pillow-cases. The whole place is spotlessly clean. There is also a system of showers in operation, and I asked the director if the kiddies used them. He said that for a time they did not like them at all, but once they became used to them, they were quite popular.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I was speaking of the native question, the housing of natives and their training at the Beagle Bay Mission. From my inspection I can vouch for the fact that the conditions under which those natives were being trained were in every way excellent and we can congratulate those responsible on the results being achieved. I have always contended that, if we are going to bring the native up to white standards and invest him with a sense of responsibility equal to that of a white man, the only solu-

tion of the problem is segregation. Whether that solution lies in the hands of institutions, or whether it should be undertaken by the Government, it will certainly entail the spending of a great amount of money. I say now, as I did two years ago, that this money should be made available on a Commonwealth basis and there should be a grant on an estimated per capita basis of the native population, which would enable Western Australia to tackle this problem with some prospects of getting results.

I note that the Government has appointed a Commissioner of Native Affairs. Judging by the reputation this gentleman has, I have no doubt that he will be able to tackle the problem with energy and enthusiasm. At the same time, I should like to pay a tribute to Mr. McBeath who for some time acted as Commissioner of Native Affairs, and also to Mr. Martin, the district inspector for the Murchison area. I had occasion to see some of the work of Mr. Martin, and the people of that area are very pleased at the appointment that has been made and say they will be able to co-operate very well with him in his inspectorial duties.

Hon. G. Bennetts called attention to the state of the House.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There is a quorum present.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I had an interview with Mr. McBeath and he impressed me more than any other departmental head to whom I had spoken. He realises that the ramifications of the native problem are very wide and that no hard-and-fast plan could be laid down for treating natives in the Kimberleys, those who were in the transitional stage from the wild state to the civilisation expected of them when they came to town areas, and the last class, some of whom had been educated in the State schools and some of whom had actually seen service overseas. He said his policy was not to issue regulations but rather to invite the co-operation of men in the various centres who could help. In that way he was quite satisfied he was getting results. From the reports of people in the back country that employ natives, I am quite satisfied that the system under which he worked was a good one and might with advantage be continued.

When speaking on the Address-in-reply last year I dealt with the subject of migra-

tion. I thought I had covered the subject fairly well, had given some useful hints and made some valuable suggestions. Seemingly it was not a world-shaking speech and the Press was not interested in it because no mention of it appeared. Unfortunately there are not too many people who take the trouble to read "Hansard." One thing I stressed in a 10-point plan I recommended was the need for educating the public to a realisation of the need for an active migration policy, its effects, its desirability and its urgency. I listened with interest the other night to Mr. Logan's remark that before we could embark upon a migration programme we should attend to the needs for water in various districts.

I agree with Mr. Logan that the provision of a water supply for any district is an urgent responsibility resting on the shoulders of the Government, but I would point out to him that our greatest intake of migrants occurred when the Goldfields were discovered. At that time our population multiplied $3\frac{1}{2}$ fold in the space of 10 years. There was then no question of waiting for water supplies to be provided before people came here. I contend that we have the resources which could be developed and which, if properly presented, would form an attraction equal to gold to induce migrants to come here, if only we are active in that direction.

Some idea of the opportunities that await exploitation in the far North was given by Mr. Miles. We had an instance of what could be done as a result of the visit of the British Food Mission recently. I note with interest the announced intention of the Government to develop the land around about Albany and the contemplated programme of developmental work on the Albany Harbour which, I hope, will have the effect of increasing the population in that area very soon and to a very great extent.

When I mentioned the need for educating the public mind, this is what I meant. If we talk of migration to the average man, his first reaction is, "Where are you going to get houses for migrants"? The next reaction is, "What about jobs"? When settlers first came to this State, there were no houses for them, but they settled in and solved that problem for themselves as they went along. As I have already stated, when we had that big increase of population in a very short

time, the question of housing did not worry the people and did not prevent settlement from occurring.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Would they be allowed to build their own houses as we had to do when we used saplings? The present-day restrictions would not permit of that.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: If the hon. member takes into account the urgent need for an active migration policy, he will realise that the time may come when any Government will have to ease the housing regulations at present in force. The other night I listened to a humorous broadcast that featured a prospector going out on the Goldfields to try his luck. He was asked whether he had obtained a permit, whether he had a petrol ration ticket, whether he had a permit to make the journey. Finally, the Housing Commission came along and said it was going to resume the area for building houses and so he could not go out prospecting. That was all by way of a joke, but it certainly does indicate the length to which legislation can go if it be carried to its logical conclusion.

Last year I mentioned that Argentine and Brazil had, over a period of 30 years, received a migration intake of four and five per cent. per annum. The total migration intake for the whole of Australia is envisaged at 70,000 souls per annum, which is equal to only one per cent. As I pointed out on that occasion, those two countries were able to accommodate the migrants under what might be termed a scheme of peaceful penetration. They had no overriding need to build up their population in face of a possible threat from overseas. I think the solution will lie in the suggestions offered by Mr. Calwell and Mr. Richard Casey, namely, that the Mother Country should transfer capital, plant and population so as to bring about a balanced proportion between the centre of the Empire and its constituent parts. At the moment we are suffering from congestion at the centre and anaemia at the extremities.

An expert named Mr. Goerke, whose condensed article, which I strongly commend to the attention of members, appeared in "The West Australian" of the 17th January, 1947, proved from an investigation of migration movements over a considerable time, that it was necessary to provide jobs for only one-third of the incoming mi-

grants. The other two-thirds would create work and provide the labour necessary to keep themselves employed. Of the one-third, which was actually 36 per cent., 8 per cent. would be engaged in the task of regulating migration movements, so that what might be termed basic work would need to be provided for only 28 per cent., or a little over one-quarter. He then stated that as far as Western Australia was concerned, it could absorb double the present rate of intake of migrants for five years without having to worry over the problem of providing more jobs. The jobs were already there. In that five years there would be time to provide the basic work necessary to accommodate the others coming in.

In his speech on the Address-in-reply, the Honorary Minister for Agriculture stated that very little had been said about the Department of Agriculture and added quite logically that this probably indicated that members generally were satisfied with the conduct of his department. I think he was quite right. At the same time he was quite right in saying that the importance of this department should be recognised. When we consider that in the last year for which figures are available the wealth from primary production in Western Australia was £32,000,000, and that by far the greater part of it came from agriculture, members do not need to be reminded what that means to the State. With regard to vegetables alone, I can give figures that might be of interest. The actual value of vegetable production for 1929-30 was £75,000. For last year it was £472,000—about six times as much. I have two matters in connection with agriculture that I want to dwell upon a little; but before I start I would say that this is not in any way intended as a criticism of the Minister in charge of the department. I know that in these matters he thinks exactly the same as I do, and my purpose in saying what I have to say is to strengthen his hand; because undoubtedly agriculture in this State is going to grow and expand, and we may be called upon to give it more and very serious consideration and build up a department, particularly of research officers, which will help in the exploitation of our agricultural wealth.

I spoke last year of the problem of soil salinity. This is one of the very important

problems giving concern to the department; because, of the estimated 5,000,000 acres of cultivable land that is suitable for wheat growing, it is considered that already 1,000,000 acres—or one-fifth—are affected by salt. It is further considered that unless some solution is found, other areas affected by salt will total another 1,000,000 acres. I think it can be realised how important it is first to try to save that 1,000,000 acres from being encroached upon by salt and then, if possible, to attempt the reclamation of the other 1,000,000 acres which have already gone. I want to read a report. It is not too long, but it gives factual evidence of the activities of one section of the community. I would like it to be recorded in "Hansard"; because this is a problem that will demand growing attention in the future, and I think members should have on hand something which will inform them and possibly induce them to think about what is a matter of very serious importance to the State. This is an account of a meeting that was held in the Bowgada hall on the 28th July, and it read as follows:—

A particularly well attended meeting of farmers took place at Bowgada Hall on 28th July. Convened by Farmers' Union branches of Morawa and Perenjori, farmers from Morawa, Koolanooka, Bowgada, and Perenjori were in attendance to discuss the problem of salt encroachment.

At the outset Mr. W. J. Campbell was elected chairman, who opened the meeting by inviting Mr. F. From, who has carried out numerous experiments in regard to the reclamation of salt land, to give his views on the subject. Mr. From gave a comprehensive report of his observations since his experiments were made and also when inspecting reclamation work carried out at Hine's Hill by Mr. Whitehead. Mr. From stated that while he considered sub-soiling was definitely of great benefit in treating salt lands, he had come to the conclusion that in this district, where the water table is very high, channelling is the only possible remedy.

Mr. Rogers agreed with the previous speaker that channelling is the only remedy for the salt problem in districts where our water table is high and pointed out the disastrous effect of a rising water table and the salinity of the soil in Western Australia. He said that it is estimated that already one million acres out of five million acres of wheatland in this State is already salt and he considered that, at the present rate of encroachment, the time is not far distant when a much bigger percentage of valuable wheatland will be barren and unproductive. It is a well known fact that salt invariably affects the finest of our wheatland.

With modern machinery the work of channellisation can be done quickly and comparatively cheaply. Furthermore, the work must be done on a co-operative and watershed basis, for it is useless for one property to be drained without an outlet. It is realised that it is the individual's responsibility to make every effort to deal with this problem, at the same time, we must have certain technical advice.

The speaker then paid a tribute to the officers of the Agricultural Department in their attempts to cope with the soil erosion and salt problems of the whole of the agricultural areas. It was most regrettable that the Governments of the day had allowed officers of the Department with exceptional knowledge and experience in this problem to go to other States without offering considerably higher salaries as an inducement to keep them here to continue this most urgent work.

The chairman then spoke of conditions on his own property where salt water may be found at a depth of three feet and again emphasised the seriousness of salt encroachment. His opinion was that, knowing the cause of the trouble to be salt water at shallow depths it necessarily followed that everything possible should be done to remove it by means of channels to a depth of eight feet.

The chairman referred to a natural channel in the district which is no more than six feet deep. All land adjacent to this water course is entirely free from salt. Ditches had been completed through a considerable portion of his property but were inadequate to take the water. Subsoiling over 200 acres had also been tried with negative results.

There followed statements from farmers on similar lines and who were unanimous that channelling is the only remedy for salt. It was drawn to the notice of the meeting by a farmer with considerable knowledge of the problem that this year there were many wheat growers who had discovered areas of delayed germination in land sown to wheat. His experience led him to believe that this was the first indication of soil salinity.

Areas of salt affected land were given and in one case as much as 1,000 acres out of a holding of 3,000 acres was instanced by the owner.

After further discussion Mr. Rogers suggested that, as the W.A. Soil Conservation Act makes provision in Section 22 for the proclamation of soil conservation districts, the meeting should consider writing to the chairman of the Central Soil Conservation Advisory Committee that he might bring our problem before his committee and advise us of their deliberations and the possibilities of having these districts proclaimed as soil conservation districts, when Government surveyors could survey the areas affected and find the necessary levels for the purpose of channellisation.

A committee of three were then appointed to carry out this suggestion with authority to call a further meeting when a reply has been received.

I may say that I have seen the chairman of this meeting since that date. Mr. Lundy, who was chairman of the Soil Conservation Board, had been communicated with and had written a letter congratulating these people on their action and promising his full co-operation. About a fortnight ago, I went through this salt-affected area and it was an eye-opener to see how the problem has developed. There was one area of about 100 acres, and I and my friends estimated that 90 per cent. was absolutely barren. The farmer had ploughed it and seeded it in the ordinary way, and there it was with only ten per cent. containing a crop, and a very poor one. There were only isolated patches of barley grass—bare tufts here and there—and Mr. Rogers said he had discussed the matter with the Agricultural Research Officer and had jokingly suggested that if it were possible to cross barley grass with bamboo—which is apparently salt tolerant; it grows at the river's edge here—we might attain something worthwhile. He said that, to his surprise, the officer took the suggestion seriously. He said it was scientifically possible to develop something along those lines.

Some years ago the departmental experts advised that when the soil became salt it should be let go; but now they say it should be cultivated and kept covered at all costs. About the only thing with which it can be kept covered is salt-bush, but as one can only feed off that once in every five years, it is not a payable proposition on first-class wheat land. It was rather curious and disturbing to notice that it was the best of the land that showed a tendency to become salty. I saw the channel that was referred to in the report. It is about 6ft. deep and 20 ft. wide; and where it runs along a fairly narrow channel, one can see the soil is fertile to the edges of the banks, and there is good growth of wheat or grass. But when the stream becomes sluggish and spreads out, everywhere the water lies the grass, and even the bush, dies.

One point in the report is worth comment, and that is the implied obligation on the Government to try to retain our trained officers. Those who are interested in farming may remember that a little while ago—the 1st July to be exact—an article was published in "The Western Mail" which referred to the comparatively low rates paid to research experts in agriculture as

compared with those paid to school dentists. If members have not read that article they will find it worth while to do so. There was a reply from the Public Service Commissioner, Mr. Taylor, in the issue of the 15th July, with the comments of the editor, who had written the original article. I do not want to take sides on that particular question. I know both Mr. Mallet and Mr. Taylor and I have every respect for them, as I think they have for each other. But I know there is a grave need for keeping the officers we have already got and providing more. I am sure that the Honorary Minister has the same views. As a matter of fact, I believe, though I am not quite sure, that action in regard to the status of these officers is already under review.

It is high time the matter was seriously considered; because, over the past few years, we have lost several very valuable officers. It is quite understandable that men might want to extend their experience and go to other States, and if men from other States came here there could be no serious objection. At the moment, however, it is a case of one-way traffic, and there is no doubt that these competent trained men, with expert knowledge of Western Australian conditions, are going away and not sufficient young men are coming forward to replace them. At a Founders' Day celebration in Geraldton recently, there were some interesting addresses. There was one on the question of civics, which is a matter I raised in my maiden speech two years ago. One of the local gentlemen, the deputy mayor, Councillor Shepherd, in responding to the toast of the visitors, said—

Founders' Day presented a favourable opportunity to criticise as there were always inspectors and departmental officials present on such occasions. There was insufficient teaching in schools of the democratic way of life. After they had left school very few people knew how to fill in an income tax form, and party leaders quickly influenced those not versed in the intricacies of party politics. There was generally a marked indifference on the part of young people to participate in public life and this was illustrated locally by the difficulty experienced in getting people to offer their services as councillors. Apparently schools did not train young people to accept responsible positions. Many left equipped with a certain degree of education and eager to find an easy way of life. Most sought positions where they did not have to think. They just aimed to hold out their hands on pay days.

That is a serious indictment. I think most of us agree it is not very wide of the mark. It has been tauntingly said to me on more than one occasion over the past year that quite a lot of electors in the metropolitan area do not know their province member. I will go further and say that many electors do not know even their own Assembly members, or electorates.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They do, in the country areas.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: From about 25 years' experience as an electoral officer, I know that many of the travelling public who lived for some time in certain areas came to me, and it was the exception rather than the rule for them to know the electorates for which they were enrolled, or who was the member representing them. I wonder how many men in the street today could tell one offhand the names of three Ministers in the present State Cabinet, and their jobs, or the names of three Federal Cabinet Ministers and their jobs.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Our newspapers have given them plenty of that lately.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: There would be few who could tell the number of members in the Upper or Lower House, either State or Federal. In the early days of the war when the initial contingent of Americans came to Western Australia, some of their number were picked out to look over Parliament House. The present Minister for Housing told me that they displayed a keen interest in the House and seemed ready to understand the explanation given of our parliamentary system. In return, one young man of about 18 or 19 years of age gave a really excellent exposition of their system of electing their President, which is a complicated business. Mr. McDonald said to him, "I suppose you have given this a special study," but he replied, "No, this is taught in all our schools and is part of our programme of civics."

I have here the curriculum of our primary schools, which is applied to our State School system. It was published in 1930 and for some reason—probably a good reason—it has not been amended, though it is in use at the present time. It is an important book, because it is an instruction to the instructors. In this volume of 376 pages 112 pages are devoted to English, 78 to arithmetic, 54 to geography, 20 to health

12 to music, 9 to history, 8 to drawing, 6 to needlework and 2 to civics. It has been mentioned by members on both sides of the House, both here and in another place, that civics is an important subject for younger folk, in particular, to take up. I have already mentioned the lack of knowledge, on the part of grown-ups, about things we think they should know. It may be said that if they do not know them, we cannot expect it of the rising generation. It is because the rising generation does not appear to have that knowledge that we feel there should be something in the school syllabus to provide what is obviously lacking.

Although the curriculum contains a reference to civics, it is very brief, and so little emphasis is placed on that subject that apparently the teachers do not think it is of much consequence. I would suggest that something along these lines be adopted—

(1) That scholars should be taught a sense of law and order, obedience to law and the principle that laws are framed for their protection; that law has an ethical base and a law that is morally wrong cannot be legally justified.

(2) The principles of government, the machinery of government, embracing the local State, Federal and Imperial relationships.

(3) A working knowledge of the functions of the principal parliamentary figures, the Governor, the Premier, Cabinet Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, the President of the Council, and the Speaker.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: But the children are at school only until they are 14.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Another heading should be—

(4) Tuition in a senior class in public speaking, class debates and model Parliaments.

I have mentioned that because it seems to have been wholly omitted from the curriculum now being used. The children of today will be the citizens of tomorrow, and theirs will be the responsibility of electing future legislators. If they are not given tuition along the lines I have mentioned we will, whatever results accrue, have only ourselves to blame.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Is not the answer to be found in extending the school-leaving age for a couple of years?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That might come into it. If there were an indication from Parliament that something of the kind was

necessary, it could be followed up by the experts of the Education Department, who, I think, are capable of doing it. Some indication should be given that we desire the youth of tomorrow to be trained for the job that it will be called upon to do. In this book—it is an excellent book on the whole—there are two paragraphs that I find rather disturbing, and I think they may disturb other members. They appear on page 131 and read as follows:—

In these days of gradual socialisation of essential services and common relations, the preponderance of social studies in our curriculum needs no justification. But we cannot too sedulously guard against the common error of attributing to them an inherent value transcending the utilitarian demands of the present-day community. This is an age of scepticism if not iconoclasm. No institution is too sacred or too venerable to be challenged. Democracy, even in its strongholds, is upon trial; the institution of private property is under impeachment, and the upstart principle of free contract is already convicted and under sentence. Education, too, must be judged in terms of its social significance, and the social studies have failed lamentably in their purpose unless they are related to the contemporary life of the community in all its aspects. This is readily conceded in theory, and the fact that practical achievement falls short of the goal is largely due to a failure to apprehend the significance of social phenomena. Indeed the social milieu has become so complex that it is only through the eyes of an expert that we can approximate to a unified view of contemporary social process. It takes some time for the results of scientific research to permeate the common conscience, but this does not excuse members of the teaching profession from an earnest endeavour to interpret contemporary social phenomena and from doing all in their power to curtail the inevitable social lag.

Social education emphasises the importance of active and willing co-operation on the part of the individual in effectively meeting the great human needs. On the ability and the desire of members of the community to co-operate with one another for the common good rest the very foundations of our social structure. Furthermore, without the general spirit of co-operation, the individual cannot fully realise his possibilities; in other words he can find the opportunity of a full development of his powers only by co-operating with others. Apart from society the individual is an abstraction. The importance of socialisation in any scheme of education is therefore obvious.

In those paragraphs there is perhaps quite a lot with which we can agree. I read them in full lest I be charged with separating some of the matter, to which I take exception, from its context. If that was

not written by someone who was anxious to formulate socialist propaganda, my name is Jones and I am the daughter of a Swiss admiral—which it is not and which I am not. I would like to see the whole section dealing with social and moral education reviewed and overhauled. The many teachers that I have known were, without exception, earnest individuals. They were fully seized with the importance of their job and co-operated in the civic life of their towns. They were assets to the community in every possible way. They were trained thinkers and did not accept directions from any source—even in the form of a syllabus from headquarters—without giving it careful scrutiny. The senior officers of the department are men of sound views and common sense, and that applies also to the Minister for Education.

I think this syllabus has come down to us unchanged, from one year to another, and the passages to which I object have been accepted without much thought. I would rather see in heavy type, underlined, that the guiding concept of the British way of life and administration and law is the fundamental principle that the State exists to serve the individual and not the individual to serve the State. Coming now to a brighter aspect, my colleague Mr. Daffen gave, in his speech, an excellent review of the history and points of interest of the town of Geraldton, the chief centre in our province. If anyone were to visit that town, and I advise members to do so—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What about accommodation?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: We will arrange it. I think anyone could do worse than to read Mr. Daffen's speech, which affords a fund of useful and interesting information. It told me a lot that I did not previously know. In conclusion I will give members one or two word pictures of the developments in country areas.

The citizens of Morawa, on the 14th July, celebrated Morawa Day, and invited the Premier and a number of other prominent citizens to be present. They provided a plane for that purpose. They had put down an air strip and had built a power station, which they invited the Premier to open. They had built a National Fitness Centre, all by their own efforts and with their own funds, though they took the liberty of ask-

ing the Government for quite a lot while their parliamentary representatives were at that centre. At least they had shown that they were imbued with a spirit of civic effort. That was demonstrated by what they had already done for themselves.

The Honorary Minister: Who provided the plane?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: They provided it and paid for it.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Did they get anything from the Government?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I am not prepared to discuss that, at the moment. At the National Fitness Centre they have installed a band of 15 instruments which they obtained fairly cheaply from some regimental unit. Prior to the formation of the band, nine of its 15 members did not know a single note of music. The oldest member is 63 years of age while the two youngest members are aged 13 years. They are learning to play and are doing a fine job. I have here the programme of a concert that they are putting on, and it is one that members would be pleased to attend in many much larger centres. I believe the people of Morawa are on the right track. They realise the necessity of keeping their young people interested and satisfied with their jobs in the country so that they will look upon farming as a way of life and not simply as a temporary means of filling in time until they can find something better to do elsewhere.

In another centre, Wongoondy, a hall was recently erected. There is really no town there in the ordinary sense of the word, and it is a small district. The money for the erection of the hall, which cost £600, was collected over a period of years. The people there are doing useful work and are instilling the spirit of district interests into young and old.

At Wiluna, which, I am afraid, is becoming one of the ghost mining towns, the citizens are trying to reclaim what they can from the wreckage. They had a fine town there with some splendid buildings, a good water supply with a commendable system of reticulation. They are trying to establish the peanut industry. It is in the early stages, but the hope is that it may develop and that some 500 acres will be planted. That means it may become an important factor in the

economy of the State. In any event, the industry will retain in the district a number of people, and to that extent will relieve the housing problem in the metropolitan area. Again, there is a small community at Murgoo where over the war years they raised £8,000 and have also collected funds at the rate of about £400 a year for the Food for Britain Appeal. These are indications that, as one travels through the out-back, one finds the spirit of the real Australia and something of the spirit of the pioneers that has come down to us through the years.

I will close with the story of a very gallant lady I met just recently. She and her husband have taken over a little tea-shop in a certain country town. I knew her twenty-five years ago, when she and her husband went on to a station. I said to her, "How have you been getting on?" She said that they had gone on to the station property, where she was living 55 miles from her nearest neighbour and 180 miles from the nearest doctor. I asked her if she did not find it lonely. She replied, "For the first two or three years we had neighbours 18 miles away, and it seemed as though they could look into our back yard." She told me that she did not feel lonely. She had had her experiences with accidents and troubles. There had been snake-bite, a broken leg, a premature still-born child. This lady carried on right through and seemed to be proud of her experiences. At any rate, she seemed to be quite happy. I did not ask her why she and her husband were not still on the station. I knew that they had passed through a period of depressed prices and there had been several droughts. That may have been the explanation, or it may have been that their family of five needed schooling. I did not like to ask the reason. However, there was a woman, perfectly happy to be in a place like that.

While we may applaud the exploits of our heroines in the field of athletics—I have in mind young ladies like Shirley Strickland and Nancy Lyons—it is people like this gallant lady who displayed such a spirit of fortitude over the years with little or no chance of letting up, that reveal the true heroism of our womanhood. This is the type of woman and, in the case of the husband of the lady I mentioned, of man that we have in the

back areas. As long as that spirit still persists, I have hopes that this country of ours will ultimately realise the destiny we all wish for it.

Hon. G. Bennetts: If they do not get assistance, many of them will be broken-hearted.

Hon Sir Charles Latham: The Commonwealth Government does not give much help!

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: We should endeavour to give all the assistance we can, and I know that is the desire of the Government. I am pleased to support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

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

BILL—PRICES CONTROL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd September.

THE HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood—East—in reply) [8.20]: I do not intend to take up much time in replying to the debate because I hope we shall be able to take the Bill into Committee tonight and perhaps finish its consideration, if that is found possible. Generally speaking, I am pleased with the reception the Bill has received at the hands of the House. Naturally there has been a divergence of opinion as to how price control should be carried on. I think that, with the exception of Dr. Hislop, every member realises the importance of continuing price control.

At this stage, I shall not say that Dr. Hislop, who has other ideas, is wrong but he thinks we should dispense with all controls and allow the law of supply and demand to work out its own destiny. Although, as I say, I shall not at this stage suggest that he is wrong, it would certainly be risky for any Government to adopt that policy at this particular juncture, in view of the shortages that exist. We appreciate the state of the market and the fact that prices are going higher. We know that Dr. Hislop said that America had adopted the policy he suggested and that while prices soared immediately afterwards, they ultimately returned to something like normal. I am glad that mem-

bers generally agree that the control of prices for various commodities is desirable at present.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Did not your party tell the people at the elections that their policy was to abolish controls?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Definitely not. The policy of both the Liberal Party and the Country and Democratic League—I can refer the hon. member to speeches delivered in the Perth Town Hall and elsewhere—was that certain controls would have to be retained for the time being, with the ultimate objective of decontrolling them by a gradual process in, perhaps, 1950 or 1952. That was the policy of the Government. We also said it was desirable that if controls were to be continued, it should be by the State and not by the Commonwealth. I am in accord with that policy. I believe that members of the Labour Party will, in the course of a few years' time, be of that opinion too. They will then be convinced that the policy I have now enunciated was correct.

Hon. A. L. Loton: They are now.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: But they will not admit it.

Hon. G. Bennetts: The Bill is not a good start.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think it is.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have grabbed everything from the Commonwealth Government.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Thomson hit the nail on the head when he said the Government found itself in the position of having to do something quickly, and this was the method adopted.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: There is nothing original in it.

Hon. A. Thomson: Is there anything original at all in these times?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At any rate, that was just the position in which the Government found itself. Some members have suggested we should have dealt with the matter in another fashion. Of course, that is the same old story used so often in this House—let us do it another way! When a Bill is introduced, we say, "Do not do it this way; do

it another way." I do not say that as an reflection upon members, because I have adopted that course myself. At any rate we do often do it in another way. I was surprised to note so much distrust and suspicion of the Government, particularly on the part of Sir Charles Latham. He will trust neither the Government nor myself nor would he accept my assurance that this is merely a temporary measure.

Hon. G. Bennetts: He knows the part you represent.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I was surprised at the attitude of other members as well. When I moved the second reading of the Bill, I gave the House an assurance that the Commonwealth regulations would be used for the minimum time possible. Sir Charles Latham said that the regulations could continue until the Act was repealed.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: So they could.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We admit that that is so but surely the assurance that I gave on behalf of the Government could be accepted by Sir Charles Latham, and he could trust us just a little bit.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: This House would have something to say on that point.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is quite so. I assure the House that I have seen the new regulations.

Hon. G. Bennetts: But we have not.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Attorney General has informed me that they will be placed on the Table of the House at the earliest possible moment. There are many regulations and they could not all be included in the Bill. We do not desire to use the Commonwealth regulations. Why should we?

Hon. G. Fraser: But you are doing it.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The new regulations will soon be brought down and they will be under the State Act.

Hon. G. Fraser: And I reckon they will be an instance of Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I assure the House that

as quickly as the Crown Law Department can attend to the matter and the Attorney General can do what is necessary, the regulations will be presented. What is proposed is merely a transitional arrangement. Some provision had to be made for carrying on before the change-over from one method of control to the other. If we had attempted to amend the Profiteering Prevention Act, by the time this House and another place had finished with it, we would not be able to recognise the measure, and it would have meant further delay.

Hon. G. Fraser: If you had adopted that course, you would hardly see any amendments made to it.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Some members have complained about the absence of the regulations. They could have seen them by perusing those that were tabled in this House or those that were placed in the Parliamentary Library. I feel safe in asserting that not one member of this House went to the library to look at those regulations. It is no use Mr. Gray saying he wished I had given him a copy of them, because it would not have made any difference. Sir Charles Latham told us he took home his copy of the regulations, which I let him have, and he spent eight hours over them, and still could not understand them.

What chance had Mr. Gray of understanding them if Sir Charles could not do so? I do not mean to cast any reflection upon Mr. Gray; the same remark would apply to myself. Certainly, I did not have eight hours to spend on the study of them. I did peruse them but, knowing that they were to be availed of for only a short time, I did not think it worth while devoting much attention to them. Then again, Mr. Gray said that I blamed the 40-hour week for the spiralling of prices. I did not say any such thing. What I said, and I think Mr. Hearn made a similar statement in his speech, was that we had not yet felt the full repercussions of the 40-hour week.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We have felt some of them.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is true.

Hon. G. Bennetts: You will get better results from the 40-hour week.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think so. The effect will be to lift prices, and then people will have to seek a further increase in the basic wage—and so it will go on. Mr. Heenan went so far as to say we could produce just as much in 40 hours as we could in 44 hours.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: No, I did not.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I understood the hon. member to say that, and when I interjected asking him if a tractor could plough as many acres in 40 hours as in 44 hours, he said he could give an answer satisfactory to himself. I cannot see that any machine could do as much in 40 hours as in 44 hours.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It would all depend on the driver.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not so at all. Could a tractor speed up sufficiently to cover the same ground in 40 hours as in 48?

Hon. G. Bennetts: Yes.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Don't be silly!

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That was tried in the Eastern States and the machines were ruined.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Which would last the better at the end of five years?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The tractor that was worked for 40 hours a week. But what is the good of that? We do not desire to take it out of the life of the machine, but we want it to produce.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: What about the human machine?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A man could drive a tractor for 44 hours a week without it having any more effect upon him than if he drove it for 40 hours.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: That is illogical.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Not at all.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Do you know of any farmer working only 40 hours a week?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The farmer may not, but shortly his employees will. I merely men-

tioned the tractor by way of illustration. Perhaps I know more about tractors than about other machines. It is ridiculous to think that we can produce as much in 40 hours with a tractor as we could in 44. A man using an axe might be able to fell as many trees in 40 hours as he could in 44, but I am talking about machines, and what I say is logical.

There has been some talk about the non-uniformity of this legislation in the various States. I do not think that matters very much, provided that the Ministers controlling the legislation act uniformly with regard to the fixation of prices. Mr. Fraser said there will be anomalies among the States. There always have been anomalies, even in Commonwealth legislation. For instance, the price of meat in Sydney has for a number of years been 6d. or 7d. per lb. higher than in Perth.

Hon. G. Fraser: Not lamb.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. I saw lamb selling in Sydney at 2s. 5d. per lb., when I believe the maximum price in this State was only 2s., and that price was charged only for a short period. Generally, it is about 1s. 5d. to 1s. 7d.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Mutton chops in Sydney were being sold at 7½d. each.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I had a long list of food prices in Sydney and they were far higher than ours. We cannot expect 100 per cent. uniformity throughout the States; but it matters not whether the Commonwealth or the States are running the show, there will not be complete uniformity. Therefore, that is no argument against the States assuming price control. Mr. Fraser had something to say about control from Sydney, as there is a secretariat in that city. However, that is merely a liaison office to co-ordinate control. It is not control in Sydney. Mr. Fraser did not care for the word "secretariat"; I do not know why or whether he knows exactly what it means.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You are not very complimentary.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not sure that I know what it means. There will be two officers in Sydney who will co-ordinate the control, nothing more. No-one can tell me

that that is comparable with control at Canberra.

Hon. G. Fraser: No, it is definitely not.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. The hon. member wants control from Canberra. I do not. I consider this proposal better than control from Canberra.

Hon. G. Fraser: I want control with one voice.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There will be that control, as far as is possible. Our price-fixing commissioners will meet in Sydney with the object of attaining control with one voice.

Hon. G. Fraser: It might be their objective, but they will never attain it.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I believe they will. We must not be pessimistic. The people of Australia said that the States should control prices, and we are going to do so.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And we can do so.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, in spite of the pessimists who say we cannot. I do not believe that this Government, or a Government of any other political colour, desires to carry on these controls indefinitely if they are not necessary. I propose to read to the House once again what was decided at the Premiers' Conference—

It is desirable to reduce to the greatest extent possible the incidence of price controls, and action should be taken immediately to survey all existing orders with a view to their elimination when such course does not interfere with the economic stability of the State concerned or of other States.

That was a unanimous decision. I believe it necessary to retain some controls for a year or two or perhaps longer. No-one can tell what the future will bring forth; but this Bill is to continue for only 12 months, when Parliament will have an opportunity to review the whole situation. It may then be found desirable to scrap this measure and revert to the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1939.

Hon. G. Fraser: Why did you not go on with the 1939 Act?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Because it was considered by those who know more about the matter than I do that this was the best way

to control prices. We had to move quickly, and we thought this the best method of transition.

Hon. G. Fraser: Is there a quicker method than to use something we already have on our statute book?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Gray took me to task about something I said on wheat. He rather misrepresented me. He said that I expected the price of wheat to be 20s. per bushel, but I did not say anything of the sort. I seem to be in the wars lately in regard to wheat matters; I cannot open my mouth on the subject without somebody saying I said something I did not say at all. I know Mr. Gray would not misrepresent me intentionally.

I have not much more to add. There are two schools of thought on this matter in this Chamber. Some favour controls remaining for all time; others want them abandoned as quickly as possible. I would like to be rid of them as quickly as possible but I assure the House I will retain them if it is deemed advisable to do so. We do know that many controls will be abandoned by the 30th September. I do not want to force the debate through Committee, but I hope we will get through it as fast as we can, as we shall be receiving a further control Bill from another place tomorrow and, as members will see from the notice paper, we have much business in front of us.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Do you recommend the Bill as it is?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That will be discussed in Committee, when the hon. member will have an opportunity to learn what I like and do not like about the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Appointment of Commissioners:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (a) the words "three Prices Control Commissioners, one to be

representative of the consumers selected from a panel of names submitted by the State Executive of the Labour Party, and one to be a representative of manufacturing and commercial interests, to be selected from a panel of names to be submitted by the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Manufactures. The Government-appointed Commissioner to be the Chairman," be struck out, and the words "a Prices Control Commissioner" inserted in lieu.

I dealt with this amendment when speaking to the second reading and indicated my reasons for it. I do not think I can usefully add anything further.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I am surprised that the mover did not give more cogent reasons for his amendment. I anticipate the Minister will insist on the clause as it stands, as all sections of the community will be well represented.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Who is the consumers' representative?

Hon. G. Fraser: We do not know.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: He will be elected from among the people. The provision in the Bill is fair and reasonable. It is a Government amendment made in another place.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Surely the Honorary Minister would not say that everything put before another place would be accepted without amendment! This addition to the Bill was made by the Minister himself.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is nonsense!

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I thought the suggestion was put forward by him.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Anyhow, the majority carried it.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: At any rate, the proposal is fair and just and should be acceptable to all parties.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I am surprised at the hon. member trying to cut out these other representatives, because we live in a democratic country. A good panel is provided for here. We say we believe in arbitration courts, and this is a sort of arbitration court. The amendment put forward by the other House is a good one. We want the workers to be represented on this board. If there are no boards to which people can go, that is what breeds communism.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The sponsors of this amendment have no idea of what it really means. How can three commissioners affect the position beyond holding up the business? The price of any article is worked out on the percentage of profit, and the figures cannot lie. We in trade are not complaining, but at the same time we are frequently delayed. If two more representatives are appointed, what will be the position? The whole of the work is machinery work. It is not a matter of policy, like the Arbitration Court, and that nonsense.

Hon. E. M. Davies: How long has the Arbitration Court been nonsense?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We cannot apply the methods of the Arbitration Court here, which is what I meant by that statement. I hope that members will support the amendment.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It certainly looks as if the hopes of Mr. Baxter will be realised, and that the amendment will be carried. In spite of that pessimistic outlook, I intend to say why, in my opinion, the clause as it stands would be better than the proposed amended clause. There have been many abuses in price control in the past. Many members of the public who voted against the referendum proposals thought that price control was to be abolished. They will be rudely awakened when they realise that the Government is taking over the exact situation which existed with the Commonwealth, as far as regulations are concerned. We want to abolish black marketing forever, and we want the people to understand, sympathise with and agree to price control. This provision of three commissioners is a wise one. It will make for greater representation of the public.

There is some prejudice about the consumers' representative being nominated by the State executive of the Australian Labour Party. But what body in Western Australia is more representative of the consumers? I agree that nobody is more representative of the manufacturers than the Chamber of Manufactures. These two representatives would be of inestimable service to the chairman. They would see fair play, and the public would have greater faith in the set-up. The clause, as it stands, is an improvement on the pre-existing arrangement. We have all criticised Commonwealth control. The best the

Government is offering the public is to take over the whole of the Commonwealth regulations and copy its administrative set-up. This will be a slight improvement, and the Legislative Council which is not representative of the people—

Hon. A. Thomson: It is!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: —but, at the outside, of only one-sixth of the people, would be very unwise to agree to the amendment.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I cannot follow Mr. Heenan's logic. This is the first time in my 27 years' experience that I have seen legislation introduced dealing with a political party. After all, this House is non-political and we might turn down the proposal suggested by the hon. member who pointed out that the executive of the Australian Labour Party represents a large number of people. I would be surprised if it represented more than one-third of them.

Hon. W. R. Hall: It represents more than does the Country and Democratic League.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I admit that. Why should not the country people be permitted to submit some names? Not all the brains are to be found in the executive of the Australian Labour Party. If this were carried, the Government would be quite capable of getting a person to represent the people who was not a representative of the employers, but of the employees. I doubt whether the Chamber of Commerce or the Chamber of Manufactures represents a great number of the community. As Mr. Baxter pointed out, it is not a question of knowledge, but of what is a fair price for an article. That can be determined by the man who has had eight years' experience.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Have a look at Clause 10. They have immense powers.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I know that. This is taken from legislation which is controlled by one man. In New South Wales, where there is a Labour Government, without hindrance from a Legislative Council, there is only one commissioner. The Commonwealth Government carried on for eight years with one commissioner. He certainly had his deputies in each State, but that set-up was found to be satisfactory. To suggest that we shall abolish black

marketing is trying to fool ourselves. While we have price-fixing we shall have black marketing.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: While there is a shortage of goods we will have it.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: When the supply exceeds the demand we shall not need price-fixing. This legislation is only to tide us over the time of short supply. Let the people have the legislation they know. If we bring in more commissioners with different ideas, the public will have very little confidence in them. I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Gray is an optimist if he imagines for one moment that I am going to oppose the amendment. The Bill started off as a Government measure, and provided for one commissioner. The Government, in another place, did not say that there should be three commissioners. They were included by the combined vote of the Labour Party and the two Independents and one Country and Democratic League member, in a division which resulted in 22 votes for their inclusion and 19 against. But an amendment which will be suggested in a moment by Mr. Watson will make this a better Bill than when it first started on its journey, because he proposes to make provision for an advisory committee. I have personally advocated an advisory committee because I have considered that in the past Mr. Mathea should have had some advice on matters about which he did not know as much as other people.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Is it not surprising that you did not move the amendment yourself?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It was not my place to move to amend my own Bill if someone else desired to do so. I hope this amendment will be carried.

Hon. G. FRASER: We get used to the Minister introducing a Bill and not standing up to it.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I told you why.

Hon. G. FRASER: I know that. Because one portion of Parliament, which represents the people, came to a decision, then the Government said, "The Upper House will do the job for us."

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You are saying, in effect, that there is no use for this House.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is the method the Government adopts. The popular Chamber, representing the people of the State, makes an alteration and it is left to the Upper House, which represents one-third of the people, to do the job for it. The Minister in charge of the Bill is not prepared to accept the decision of the representatives of the majority of the people of this State.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Wait until Mr. Watson finishes with his amendments.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am telling the Minister what his attitude is. He does not defend his own Bill.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: This House does not accept everything sent up to it by another place. Sometimes it goes out of the window.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Minister is not prepared to stand up for his Bill and is going to use the unfair advantage of this Chamber in order to have something re-inserted after it had been removed by another place.

Hon. A. Thomson: How is it unfair? We are a House of review.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like hon. members not to interject so freely.

Hon. G. FRASER: We are tired of Ministers introducing Bills and not standing up for them.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The Minister in charge of the Bill can think he is wrong sometimes.

Hon. G. FRASER: We think he is wrong very often. The contention advanced by Sir Charles Latham and other speakers that because the Commonwealth Government did not have three commissioners there is no reason why there should be three in this Bill is wrong. Since the controls have been in operation, it has been found that three commissioners would be an improvement.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Tell us why.

Hon. G. FRASER: I consider that altering the number from one commissioner to three will be an improvement. The commissioner already has wide powers

and it is only right that the legislation should be improved, which would promote confidence on the part of the public. There have been many complaints in the past—

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: There will be a Minister to assist this time.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is all very well, but with three commissioners there will be added protection.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The advantage of having a consumers' representative would be to prevent anomalies taking place. I have the utmost confidence in the present Commissioner, but one man is liable to make a mistake. Take the fishing industry. It is a puzzle to everybody why there is such a difference between the retail and the wholesale price of fish. This has such an adverse effect upon the fish market that all the refrigerated space is occupied, and boats are held up in the North-West. The second industry that suffers because of price-fixing is the tailoring industry. Nobody has been able to explain satisfactorily the price-fixing in relation to better class tailoring establishments. The other industry is the poultry industry which is severely handicapped because of the price of special foods sold by the mills. Farmers cannot get the required supplies of bran and pollard, but if there were a representative on the commission he could look after their requirements.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: It can be done under the advisory committee.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Three commissioners would be better than an advisory committee because a committee's recommendations could be rejected by the commissioner or the Minister.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	7
				—
Majority for	...	..	9	

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. Tuckey
	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. G. Benhette	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. R. J. Boylen
Hon. E. H. Gray	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of paragraph (b) the words "Commissioners three persons" be struck out and the words "commissioner a person" inserted in lieu.

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

Clause 7—Appointment of staff:

Hon. G. FRASER: An injustice might be done to many of the staff taken over from the Commonwealth. In comparison with the conditions they have enjoyed, I believe they will suffer an Irishman's rise. The Minister might give consideration to that aspect. Commonwealth conditions and remuneration are better than those of the State. Does the Government intend to do anything for these employees?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I understand that the employees will be brought under the Public Service Commissioner and it does not necessarily follow that they will receive worse conditions. They might receive better positions.

Hon. G. Fraser: I do not know about that.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member does not know; he is only guessing. Because a man is transferred to the employment of the State, it does not follow that he will suffer worse conditions.

Hon. G. Fraser: That generally follows.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I saw a newspaper statement to the effect that the State would pay those employees and that the cost would be recouped by the Commonwealth. If that is so, these officers will not be any worse off than they are today.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think these officers will be paid by the Commonwealth, except perhaps till the end of the year. I understand that the Commonwealth guaranteed them employment for a certain time only.

Hon. G. FRASER: Qualified men who have been on the job for years will look for more lucrative employment.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They have done that already.

Hon. G. FRASER: Some of them have, and we do not want to lose any more of them, but we shall lose more if pay and conditions are worse under the State than under the Commonwealth. I cannot see how the arrangement mentioned by Sir Charles Latham can operate. There is a vast difference between wages and conditions under the Commonwealth and under the State. Will the Minister give his assurance that none of these men will suffer as a result of their transference to the State? I am afraid they will.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The officers who will be retained by the State will receive reasonable remuneration, otherwise they would not continue in this employment, as there are plenty of avenues open to them. Immediately the result of the referendum was made known, many officers left the Prices Branch and went into other employment.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Appointment of acting Commissioners:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I take it that the alteration of the word "Commissioners" from the plural to the singular will be regarded as a consequential amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 and 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Delegation of powers under regulations:

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I cannot understand what is meant by paragraph (c). I have given notice to strike out portion of it. Perhaps Mr. Heenan can explain it. I notice that in the South Australian and Victorian legislation the paragraph is excluded, but it is included in the New South Wales legislation. I understand it is taken from the Commonwealth regulations. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (c) be struck out.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The paragraph seems to me to be redundant. I agree with what Sir

Charles Latham has said and offer no objection to the amendment.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The object of the paragraph seems to be to clothe the commissioner with complete discretionary power.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Will he not have that power under paragraph (a)?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I think so, but paragraph (c) seems to have been inserted to make assurance doubly sure.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: How is it possible to transfer a "state of mind"? You could not transfer your state of mind to me and ask me to use it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I do not accept responsibility for the paragraph and I think it should be struck out.

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

Clause 12—Secrecy:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I move an amendment—

That sub-paragraph (iii) of paragraph (d) be struck out.

It is astounding to think that we should give authority to a department to do work for the Taxation Department. Members will doubtless agree that the Taxation Department has the fullest power imaginable; the only thing it cannot do is to hang a man. The inspectors to be appointed under this measure will have quite enough to do to attend to their own duties. Then the question of secrecy arises; how can we have secrecy if the officers in this department give information to the Taxation Department?

Hon. A. Thomson: How can we reconcile this sub-paragraph with the declaration of secrecy set out in the schedule to the Bill?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have dealt with that point.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: This is a very important provision, and I hope the Committee will endeavour to save its reputation by defeating the amendment. If the officers of this department come across any flagrant breach of the taxation laws, wherein a firm is ruthlessly beating the Government for thousands of pounds, why should not one civil servant notify another department that

the robbery is taking place? The hon. member is forgetting that he is a representative of the public and is looking after private interests. I know that he would not do that sort of thing himself, but there are numerous people who save large sums of money by defeating the Taxation Department by very ingenious methods.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am going to disappoint my friend opposite once more. I do not intend to oppose the amendment. The Commissioners are to be appointed to do a certain job and will not be there to be pimps for the Taxation Department or any other department. I believe the Taxation Department can look after itself.

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

Ayes	16
Noes	7

Majority for 9

AYES.	
Hon. G. F. Baxter	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. G. H. Simpson
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. R. M. Forrest

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. G. Fraser	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Regulations:

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That in line 15 of paragraph (a) of Sub-clause (2) the words "and not disallowed" be struck out and the words "subject to Section thirty-six of the Interpretation Act, 1918-1938." inserted in lieu.

I propose to ask the Committee to agree that these regulations—and they are the Commonwealth regulations—shall lay on the Table of the House just the same as if they were regulations made by the Government under this measure. I would remind members that a number of things we have disagreed with are included in the regulations; so I do not know what the position will be

if the Committee does not agree to the suggestion.

Hon. L. Craig: They are in the Federal regulations.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is the Federal regulations I think should be tabled.

Hon. L. Craig: They are only temporary.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Minister said I did not trust the Government and the Minister. I never said that; but I know that very often Ministers and Governments become so busy that they take months to do something they undertook to do quickly. It is no use, just because we do not agree with the Government, having this sort of accusation made against us. It is not quite reasonable or fair. I have not said I did not trust the Minister. He is only one out of a Cabinet of ten.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I am entitled to fair comment on your remarks.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I have no objection to that. Any criticism the Minister makes will not affect me. I am far too hardened for that.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: It was not criticism, but an answer to your criticism.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Very well, it was not criticism. If it will oblige the Minister, I will agree on that. I hope he will agree to the amendment. I want to see regulations tabled as provided for in the written law; and if he agrees, I will have no complaint to make.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot agree to the amendment. The idea is to insert something which is in the Interpretation Act. That will confuse the issue considerably more than it is at present. I hope that Sir Charles Latham will not insist on the amendment.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is quite a departure from ordinary law.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have consulted with the Attorney General and he has convinced me that these words are necessary.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. The clause deals entirely with Commonwealth

regulations and not those which will be laid on the Table after being prepared by the State Government

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: See what effect it has on them.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It deals with the Federal regulations, and we agree that they are stop-gap regulations. It is unnecessary to go to all this trouble, because when the State regulations are put on the Table and the period has elapsed when they can be disallowed, this will come out altogether. It is desirable from the point of view of uniformity that we should not alter anything that is essential in the measure. We want to co-ordinate the regulations and operations of price-fixing with the other States.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I hope any hon. member who considers supporting the amendment will consider it very carefully, because it is a far-reaching one.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Is not the clause far-reaching?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It means in effect, if we apply Section 36 of the Interpretation Act, that every Commonwealth regulation will have to be laid on the Table of the House—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: So it should be.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: —for 14 days before coming law.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: No.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I may be wrong. Section 36 is fairly long. Time is going on, and this proposal would probably skittle the Bill entirely.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I hope members will support the amendment. We stultify ourselves if we allow the Bill to go through in its present form in respect of these regulations. There is a host of regulations which will automatically come into force on the passing of the measure. Although it is hoped that they will be only temporary, and that State regulations will be gazetted, if the State regulations are disallowed the Commonwealth regulations will still prevail, and Parliament will have no redress whatsoever. The Commonwealth regulations could continue for all time and Parliament would have no control. We should carry the amendment so that the

Commonwealth regulations will be laid on the Table of the House and be subject to disallowance.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you want the lid off price control?

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: We are not dealing with taking the lid off price control.

Hon. G. Fraser: Yes, you are.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I was going to agree with the Honorary Minister until Mr. Craig spoke. He has evidently not quite reasoned out what effect this will have. The Commonwealth regulations become law as soon as the Bill is assented to, and they remain law until the first State regulations are introduced. I think the hon. member misled the Chamber, although not intentionally. For that reason I thought I should make the position clear. We have provided in all our past statutes that if regulations are made, Parliament shall have the right at some time to exercise its authority over them. We are setting that principle aside for the first time in the history of Western Australia when we say our own State regulations shall remain there, and that if members do not pass them exactly as they are these others automatically come in. It is a question of principle with me, and nothing else. I hope the new regulations will be subjected to very close scrutiny.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They will be.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Regulations do not originate with the Minister, but with the departmental officers. They then go to the Crown Law Department to be put into legal phraseology. Next they go to the Commissioner who, unless he has legal advice on hand, must use his own knowledge of law to see their effect. I would like the Minister to promise that careful scrutiny will be given to the State regulations that are to be introduced. If he does that, I will not press for a division on the matter.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This is the crux of the Bill and, if members object to it, I cannot understand their supporting the measure. The whole clause must be read to get its effect. The other regulations are already drafted and are receiving close scrutiny. Although I have not had time to go through

them, I feel that by the 20th September they will meet the desires of members. They will then be laid on the Table of the House, when any single State regulation may be rejected.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: If we disallow the State regulations, the Commonwealth regulations operate.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Then we will be thrown back on the Commonwealth regulations.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A genuine effort has been made to formulate regulations suitable to Western Australia. I hope the Commonwealth regulations will remain only for a short time. That is the desire of the Attorney General and of the Crown Law Department.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	5
Noes	..	..	..	18
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	13
				—

AYES.

Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. Hearn
Hon. A. L. Loton	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. C. H. Simpson
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15—Trial of offences:

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I can understand provisions such as those contained in Sub-clause (4) being in the Commonwealth Act and the Commonwealth Government, through its legal representatives here, doing this class of work, but under the State law there will be many petty offences that could better be dealt with by police officers in the police court, thus saving the Crown Law Department a tremendous amount of work and expense. It would be much better to call in the police to deal with small offences of that nature.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If Mr. Gray had put an amendment on the notice paper I would have made some inquiries. I cannot see any harm in the clause and it is not going to impose very much expense as the work will be done, not necessarily by the Attorney General, but by officers of his department. It is merely a safeguard so that an appeal can be made to the Attorney General for his guidance as to whether a person shall be prosecuted.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16—Power to order recognisances:

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I wish to know whether the Government intends to repeal the Profiteering Prevention Act. An action could be taken under this Bill, when it becomes an Act, as well as under the Profiteering Prevention Act. The correct thing would have been to repeal the Profiteering Prevention Act by means of this Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If there is any conflict between the two, I have no doubt the Government will repeal the Profiteering Prevention Act. I will take the matter up with the Attorney General and advise the hon. member. If necessary, the Act will be repealed.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 17—agreed to.

New Clause—Advisors:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move—

That a new clause be inserted to stand as Clause 15 as follows:—“(1) For the purposes of this Act the Minister shall appoint to advise him an Advisory Committee of persons possessing expert or business knowledge among whom shall be a representative of consumers who shall be nominated by the President of the Arbitration Court of the State and all of whom shall hold office during the pleasure of the Minister.

(2) A person appointed pursuant to the provisions of the last preceding subsection shall be entitled to receive such remuneration for his services and travelling allowances at such rates as the Minister determines.” The proposed new clause is self-explanatory and is an improvement on Regulation No. 8 of the existing Commonwealth controls.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am not concerned whether the advisory committee is appointed or otherwise. It may be of some

use to the commissioner or it may not, but it is the most extraordinary clause I have ever seen presented to this Chamber. It says nothing about who shall appoint the person with business knowledge, yet the President of the Arbitration Court is called upon to appoint the consumers' representative.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Do you want the Trades Hall?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, the Trades Hall represents most of the consuming public of the State. There are a lot of people who ought to be consumers' representatives but who have gone over to the enemy. How does the President of the Arbitration Court know anything about the consumers of this State?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Why should he not know?

Hon. G. FRASER: I would prefer the Minister to appoint the consumers' representative, as well as the other representatives, because the Minister would then be sensible enough to ask for a panel of names to be submitted.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It is surprising that anyone who opposed the appointment of three commissioners should submit such a lame, ineffective proposition as this. The new clause will make it mandatory, and the Minister will have no chance of saying who shall appoint the committee. It does not say how many representatives there shall be and they are to be paid travelling allowances and so forth. It says that the President of the Arbitration Court shall nominate someone but it does not say that he must do so. I do not know whether this is intended to be a sop, but in my opinion it is a poor, unworkable proposition.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I entirely disagree with Mr. Heenan. The new clause will improve the Bill. I have always favoured the appointment of advisors to the commissioner. What would be wrong with the Minister's calling for advice on the fixing of the price of meat or, in fact, the price of any other commodity? He would appoint only people from whom he required advice.

Hon. G. Fraser: How many would be appointed to the committee?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I approve of the new clause. I favour the calling in of people conversant with the matter on which information is required. The Minister will be able to obtain advice from someone particularly trained in the subject under discussion. If goods were in large supply and could be decontrolled, only those in the trade would be in a position to advise him.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I am amazed to hear a business man like Mr. Craig supporting such an unbusinesslike proposal. The idea has been taken from Commonwealth Regulation No. 8, but there is an important difference between its provisions and those of the new clause. The President of the Arbitration Court has had no special experience for a task of this sort.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What an insult!

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is not intended to be an insult.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: What special knowledge would the Trades Hall have to nominate a representative of the consumers?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It would be better to adopt the Commonwealth regulation which makes the appointment of advisors permissive, not mandatory. I oppose the new clause.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: Why not leave it to the discretion of the Minister to call for such advice as he requires? If the word "shall" were struck out and "may" inserted in lieu, I would have no objection to the new clause.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I agree with Mr. Loton. The appointment of an advisory committee should be made permissive and then the Minister could call for such advice as he needed. It would be wise to delete the proposal requiring the President of the Arbitration Court to nominate a representative of the consumers. I move an amendment—

That in proposed new Subclause (1) the word "shall" where it first occurs be struck out and the word "may" inserted in lieu.

Hon. H. HEARN: I support the new clause. In these days we should turn our thoughts in the direction of decontrol, and

I consider it essential that we should make provision for an advisory committee.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am in agreement with Mr. Hearn. It should be mandatory upon the Minister to appoint an advisory committee.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I ask Mr. Thomson not to press his amendment. The class of advisory committee suggested by me I consider to be essential to assist the Minister and the commissioner in the smooth working of this measure. Both Mr. Heenan and Mr. Fraser expressed a desire for a consumers' representative to assist in the administration of price-fixing, and consequently I thought this proposal of mine would appeal to them. Naturally, they can understand my reluctance to a consumers' representative being nominated by the Labour Party.

Hon. G. Fraser: We would not hesitate to nominate a representative from the Chamber of Commerce or the Chamber of Manufactures.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Why should not the Liberal Party appoint the consumers' representative? It should not be left to the Trades Hall to nominate a member to this advisory committee. I have left the nomination with the President of the Arbitration Court.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I hope the Committee will not agree to Mr. Thomson's amendment. It is important that we should provide in the measure for an advisory committee.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Is that the view of Cabinet?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is my view; I have not consulted Cabinet on the point. The Act should make it mandatory to appoint an advisory committee.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I strongly advise the Committee to accept the amendment moved by Mr. Thomson. The Bill will cause the Government, or whoever is called on to administer it, much embarrassment.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: We are quite happy about it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: How many representatives shall the Minister appoint? If he appoints a committee of three, I might come along and say, "Mr. Smith is a man possessing expert knowledge in some sphere and it

is mandatory that you appoint him to the committee." If the Minister prefers the new clause as it stands, good luck to him; he has to administer it.

Point of Order.

Hon. A. L. Loton: I raise a point of order. Will not this proposed new clause impose a charge on the Crown?

The Chairman: The point of order raised by Mr. Loton is a sound one, and I rule that Subclause (2) of the proposed new clause is out of order, as it would, if passed, impose a charge on the Crown.

Committee Resumed.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I beg to differ, though not in respect to Subclause (2) of the proposed new clause, because I think Mr. Loton is on good ground there. But I do not think he is on good ground in Subclause (1).

The CHAIRMAN: My decision referred only to Subclause (2).

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I would still like the Committee to adopt Subclause (1).

The CHAIRMAN: I think the best way to handle the matter is to deal with the question that is before the Committee, namely, that a new clause be inserted after Clause 14 to stand as Clause 15, to which an amendment has been moved to strike out the word "shall" in line 2 of Subclause (1) with a view to inserting the word "may." The question is that the word proposed to be struck out be struck out.

Amendment put and negatived.

The CHAIRMAN: If it is the wish of the Committee I shall submit Subclause (1) of Clause 15.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not propose to move my amendment dealing with the reference to the President of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the hon. member does not propose to move his amendment, I shall do so. I would prefer to leave the consumers' representative to be appointed in the same way as the other representative. Why make a distinction?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I believe it was done by Mr. Watson as a safeguard for your people.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not care what his objective was. I would rather have the Minister choose the person to be appointed.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is all right.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think he would carry out the project properly. I move an amendment—

That in proposed new Subclause (1) the words "who shall be nominated by the President of the Arbitration Court of the State and" be struck out.

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

Ayes	9
Noes	12

Majority against 3

AYES.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. W. R. Hall	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. R. M. Forrest	Hon. O. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. H. Tuckey
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope members are quite clear that the motion I am about to submit is to insert a new clause, and it is Subclause (1) as printed on the notice paper because I have struck out Subclause (2), as it is out of order.

New clause (as amended from the Chair) put and passed.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 7th September, 1948.

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

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Outstanding Applications and Permits.*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

How many applications were outstanding for—

- (a) rental houses;
- (b) permits to erect houses;
- (c) permits to make additions to houses;
- (d) War Service homes;
- (e) Mc Ness homes;
- (f) other buildings,