

no finer law text books have been written than by professors from their universities. I respect Mr. Miles's remarks but I believe their legal standards are equally as high, if not higher, than our own.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: If they are naturalised they will be able to practise, will they not?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: No.

The Chief Secretary: They can go to England, be admitted, and then come out here.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I know it is a delicate subject and I do not ask members to spare my feelings in any way because I am an Australian of three generations but I am looking at the matter in a sensible light.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hope the Committee will not consider this amendment at all. Personally, I think it is an insult to the Committee to have had the matter brought up in any way. These people have proved themselves to be traitors to the Empire and we should defeat the amendment unanimously.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 9, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

*House adjourned at 10.12 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 18th November, 1948.

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

### MICE IN CHAMBER.

*As to Precautions.*

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to inform members that I have been advised that mice have been discovered in desks in the Chamber and I urge all members to make sure that no sweets are left lying about.

**QUESTIONS.****TRACTOR CONTROL.***As to Proclamation and Staff.*

Mr. BRAND asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is it intended that the tractor control Bill be proclaimed this year?

(2) If so, on what date?

(3) Will the number of personnel administering the control be the same as during Commonwealth administration?

(4) As the death of Mr. Linton has caused a vacancy in this department who will now be responsible for the allocation of tractors?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is not necessary to proclaim this Bill, which is now awaiting the Governor's assent.

(2) The legislation will operate as from the date the Minister makes the first order.

(3) Approximately the same number of personnel will be required.

(4) An appointment is pending.

**PRICES CONTROL.***(a) As to Inspectors, Prosecutions, etc.*

Mr. HEGNEY asked the Attorney General:

(1) How many inspectors or investigators are employed by the Government under the Prices Control Act, 1948?

(2) How many charges have been laid under the above Act since the 20th September, 1948, against traders in connection with the unauthorised increases of prices of commodities to purchasers?

(3) Is it necessary for the Prices Commissioner to obtain the consent of the Attorney General before any legal action is taken for alleged breaches of the Act?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

(1) Sixty-seven.

(2) None.

(3) Yes.

*(b) As to Hay and Oats.*

Mr. FOX asked the Attorney General:

(1) Does he intend to bring hay and oats under the provisions of the Prices Control Act?

(2) If not, why not?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

(1) Not at the present moment.

(2) The position relative to chaff has been under investigation, and will be carefully watched. The Prices Control Commissioner does not consider that any action is warranted at present.

**POULTRY INDUSTRY.***As to Government Loans for Stock Losses*

Mr. FOX asked the Minister for Land

(1) Have any loans been granted by the Government to poultry farmers who suffered stock losses in the recent outbreak of laryngo-tracheitis?

(2) If so, how many received loans and what were the respective amounts?

(3) What was the basis on which such loans were computed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Two grants of £150 each.

Two free of interest loans for £5 and £450.

All have been paid in full.

(3) Thorough inspections of the properties and stock were made by officers of the Poultry Branch. Consideration was given to the amount which would be required to enable the poultry farmer to restock his property with a reasonable chance of success. Each case was treated individually and the personal factor and special conditions considered before a recommendation was made.

**SOUTH FREMANTLE POWER HOUSE.***As to Construction and Shortage of Labour*

Mr. FOX asked the Minister for Work

(1) Is there a shortage of labour at the South Fremantle power house?

(2) If so, has such shortage been brought about by the transference of such labour to work on the Perth Town Hall?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) As at all such works, the labour supply fluctuates.

Steps are now being taken to increase the number of men employed at South Fremantle power house and no difficulty is anticipated.

(2) Not that is known. If at all, it would be to but a minor degree.

### COAL.

*As to Expenditure on Black Diamond Leases.*

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Premier:

(1) Has the Government yet signed an agreement with Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd. regarding the Black Diamond Leases?

(2) If so, does the agreement make it legally necessary for the Government to recoup to the company all expenditure incurred up to date in covering any and all work carried out on the leases for the purpose of ultimately producing coal?

(3) If no agreement has yet been signed, will he indicate what the actual position is at the present?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Arrangements for the present workings on the Black Diamond Leases were set out in letters exchanged between the Government and Amalgamated Collieries.

(2) These arrangements involve the recoup to the company of expenditure properly incurred in removing overburden, depreciation of plant, and other relevant cost items as has been provided in previous years under successive agreements between the Government and its instrumentalities and the company.

(3) The arrangements as to working of the Black Diamond Leases after this year will be included in the general basis to operate regarding all coal taken from the company for Government purposes after the end of this year—such basis being at present the subject of discussions with the company.

### RAILWAYS.

*As to Engine Mishaps and Delays.*

Hon. E. NULSEN asked the Minister for Railways:

Referring to a paragraph appearing in "The West Australian" of the 16th inst.,

entitled "Breakdown of Westland" (as reported from Kalgoorlie on the 15th November)—

(1) What was the nature of the mechanical defect?

(2) What resultant delays to other trains arose from the mishap?

(3) What other main line goods and passenger trains were delayed on the same day through engine trouble?

(4) What was the nature of the trouble in each instance?

(5) Are such troubles attributable to the age and state of the locomotives, or to bad administration?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Left-hand leading coupling rod broken.

(2) Kalgoorlie-Perth express four hours. Two goods trains two hours and one and a half hours, respectively.

(3) (a) Albany-Perth express.

(b) Perth-Katanning passenger train.

(c) Perth - Wyalkatchem - Merredin passenger train.

(d) Goods train Northam-Mullewa.

(e) Goods train Fremantle-Brunswick Junction.

(f) Midland Junction-York goods train.

(g) Perth - Kalgoorlie perishable goods.

(4) (a) Vacuum auxiliary pipe broken on engine.

(b) Engine steaming badly.

(c) Bracket broken cylinder lubricator.

(d) Fourteen engines off traffic, Northam, stopped for repairs. Waiting arrival of another engine and then repairs to cylinder cocks and piston packing.

(e) Bad condition of engine. Divided load Jandakot-Armadale section.

(f) Mud hole door blew out.

(g) Bad condition of engine. Load divided Swan View.

(5) Age and general condition of the locomotives.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FRANCHISE.***As to Introduction of Legislation.*

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Premier:

What was responsible for the long delay in introducing legislation to liberalise the franchise for the Legislative Council?

The PREMIER replied:

The Government is obliged to give every aspect of its legislative programme careful consideration.

**HOSPITALS.***As to Suitability of Mortuary, Merredin.*

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Has the mortuary at the Merredin District Hospital been condemned by the Health Inspector and the Medical Officer?

(2) Does the Department consider that the present mortuary is suitable for its purpose, having regard to its general condition and its situation in close proximity to the children's wards?

(3) Is it intended to erect a new building, and if so, when?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The persons concerned have stated that the mortuary requires improvement.

(2) The mortuary is not good, but serves its purpose.

(3) Necessary work to provide a suitable mortuary will be done as soon as possible, but the provision of suitable accommodation for hospital patients must take priority.

**FISHING INDUSTRY SELECT COMMITTEE.***Extension of Time.*

On motion by Mr. Leslie, the time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee was extended to the 15th December.

**BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.**

- 1, Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment.
- 2, Electoral Act Amendment.
- 3, Constitution Acts Amendment (No. 2).

Introduced by the Attorney General.

4, Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Premier.

**BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.***First Reading.*

Introduced by the Premier and read first time.

*Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. D. R. McLarty-Murray-Wellington) [4.41] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this short Bill is to repeal two war-time amendments to Subsection (3) of Section 6 of the Public Service Appeal Board Act and also to amend that provision. Under the section in its original form, which by the passing of this measure will again become effective, a temporary officer employed under the Public Service Act had the right to apply to the Public Service Commissioner for appointment to the permanent staff after completing five years' continuous service in a department, if he could show that his duties were similar to those of an officer on the permanent staff. The Commissioner was required to consider the application and to give his decision in writing. In the event of the decision being adverse, the applicant then had the right to have his claim heard by the Public Service Appeal Board, as constituted under the principal Act.

Due to the heavy enlistment of young officers on the outbreak of war and the consequent engagement of a greatly increased number of temporary officers to take their places, it was soon apparent that unless the right to claim permanency after five years' service was suspended, claims would arise out of service given to the State during a period of national emergency. This was not contemplated under the provisions of the Act, which were intended to restrict the continuing employment of temporary officers in positions that should be treated as permanent. The amendment to Subsection (3) of Section 6 of the Act was assented to on the 25th November, 1941. This short amendment provided for the suspension of the subsection during such time as the war continued and for a period of one year after the Governor General of the Commonwealth had declared the war ended.

Whilst the amendment provided for the suspension of the right of appeal to the Commissioner and to the Public Service Appeal Board if the Commissioner refused the application, it did not cancel the period of service of temporary officers. It would have been competent for any temporary officer, therefore, to add his war-time service to his other service in making up the period of five years. This oversight in the amendment was corrected by a further amendment passed in 1945 and assented to on the 30th January, 1946, which made it clear that service during the war period and for the further one year after the Governor General had declared that the war had ended, would not count towards the five-year qualifying period of service of temporary officers. The Governor General has not yet issued a declaration of the end of the war.

After considering representations from the Civil Service Association and the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner, the Government has agreed that a definite time limit should be determined for the continuance of the restriction imposed by the amendments to which I have made reference. By this Bill the amendments will cease to have effect on and from the 1st July, 1949.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You have not made it retrospective!

The PREMIER: Continuous service of temporary officers will then be established by adding service before the 25th November, 1941, to service after the 30th June, 1949, to accumulate the five-year period required for a claim by a temporary officer to a permanent appointment.

Mr. Graham: What would be the position if peace were declared before the 30th June next year?

The Minister for Education: We would still require the Act.

The PREMIER: I do not know when the Governor General will declare a state of peace; no-one else seems to know. In any event, this legislation will still be required. Service in between the two dates I have mentioned must also be continuous with service before and after, so that the effect of the amendments which have operated since the 25th November, 1941, will be to cancel nearly eight years' service of a few

temporary officers who were employed when the first amendment became law, and in other cases to cancel all service until the 1st July, 1949. I stress the point that this cancellation refers only to the right to claim permanency; it does not affect all other rights which temporary employees have for the accumulation of service towards long service leave and other rights which will still be preserved to them under the relevant regulations.

Members may wish to know something about the general position with regard to the employment of temporary officers in the Public Service. At the present time there are 418 male temporary clerical officers in the Service, of whom 207 are acting in positions appearing as items in the Public Service List. The remaining 211 officers are generally employed in positions of a purely temporary nature as the result of activities which, in course of time, will diminish. The employment of such a large number of temporary officers in established positions is not normal and is the direct result of losses of permanent officers through war service and the shortage of juniors. In addition, the shortage of juniors has been aggravated by the policy pursued by the Commonwealth Bank in its recruitment of young men by offering automatic progression to a salary in excess of £600 per annum, with the result that the Service has lost a considerable number of junior officers through resignation.

In view of the low birth-rate in the depression years, with the resultant current shortage of juniors, it is obvious that the permanent staff cannot be built up to full strength through recruitment of junior officers, and other means must be determined to bring the permanent staff to its normal level. A plan is therefore being formulated which has the objective of bringing into the permanent service a number of officers who are at present employed in a temporary capacity. This will be directed towards strengthening the lower ranges which have been so greatly depleted by recent resignations and the dearth of juniors.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Are these men in the school all returned soldiers?

The PREMIER: Yes. I understand they are there under the repatriation scheme. I was discussing the matter with the Public

Service Commissioner this afternoon and will refer to the numbers. A scheme for the training of ex-Servicemen has also been introduced. Under this scheme, 40 selected ex-Servicemen have been undergoing at the Technical College a full-time course that was arranged through the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme. Some of these trainees will become fully qualified for appointment at the end of this month and the remainder by June of next year. There are also 15 ex-Servicemen at present employed in Government departments who are taking part-time studies and their appointment to permanent positions will follow on their passing certain subjects.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Is that the scheme which is being run by the Public Service?

The PREMIER: Yes. I think the men are allowed a certain time off for study. It will be seen, therefore, that efforts are being made to place the Public Service on a more stable basis than is possible under conditions which have required the employment of such a large temporary staff. The Public Service Commissioner has discussed these proposals and the contents of the Bill with the officials of the Public Service Association who, I understand, approve of them. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Graham, debate adjourned.

## BILL—LAND TAX.

### *First Reading.*

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) [4.53] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to increase by 25 per cent. the rate of land tax payable by all but the smaller landowners.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Shame!

The PREMIER: It is proposed to exclude from the increase landowners whose taxable holdings do not exceed £250. As I explained when introducing the Budget, the present rate is 2d. in the pound on all taxable holdings irrespective of their unimproved value. The proposed rates are 2d.

in the pound on taxable holdings when the unimproved value does not exceed £250, and 2½d. in the pound when the unimproved value of taxable holdings does exceed £250. A rebate of 50 per cent. in respect of lands deemed improved, provided for by Section 9 of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, will continue to apply in respect of tax assessed at the proposed new rates. The necessity for the increase is due to the Government's need for more revenue and is in accordance with the recent increases in railway and tramway charges. The amount of additional revenue which will result from the proposed increase is estimated at £10,000 in this financial year. At present, the minimum amount payable in respect of any taxable holding is 5s., and it is not proposed to alter this. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

## BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Country Towns Sewerage.

2, Electricity Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

## BILL—LOAN, £2,315,000.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. A. R. G. HAWKE** (Northam) [5.57]: I have no opposition to offer to the Bill and practically nothing further to say about it. It has been the practice in recent years to stand the Loan Bill over until the Loan Estimates have been considered.

The Premier: That has always been the practice.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I take it that the Premier will adhere to that practice on this occasion.

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

# **BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.**

## *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 10th November.

**MR. MAY** (Collie) [5.1]: In the first place, I regret the necessity for this Bill and would rather have seen the objects proposed to be achieved by it attained in a voluntary manner, particularly as regards the necessity of action being taken, as is set out in the Bill. Neglect of proper development of the Collie mines during past years has led to the position in which we find them today, where it is impossible to keep the supply of coal up to meet the demand. There is no excuse for that condition of affairs and the recent world war cannot be blamed for it, because that position existed long before the outbreak of war. As a palliative it is proposed to adopt the open-cut system of coalmining in an endeavour to make up the discrepancy between supply and demand. That might have answered the purpose had proper development of the deep mines been attended to while the open-cut coal was being used, but up to date the use of the open-cut system has not improved the development of the deep mines. There is now a great demand for coal, but no effort is being made to provide working places for extra miners in the pits in order to get out more coal.

The Bill is really divided into three parts, the first of which deals exclusively with control and provides for an advisory committee to be set up in an endeavour to effect some control over the industry and particularly over its development. Whether that end will be achieved if the Bill becomes law remains to be seen. I believe that for some time the Government has been trying to obtain the services of a qualified coalmining engineer who, I am informed, will be chairman of the advisory board. I do not know what the remuneration for that position is to be, though I am given to understand it will be in line with that of the highest paid public servants in this State.

**Hon. A. H. Panton:** You would not get a suitable man for less.

**Mr. MAY:** I do not think we can expect to get the services of an engineer with the necessary qualifications at that figure. The

Government has not informed me what remuneration it proposes to pay to this engineer and therefore what I say is subject to correction. If the delay in obtaining the services of this engineer is to continue, the question of control of the mines will also be delayed. When the Bill is in the Committee stage I will move an amendment with the object of meeting that position.

The second part of the Bill deals, as the Minister said, entirely with the industrial set-up. In the event of the Commonwealth control being discontinued it is the intention of the Government to have other controls ready to come into operation immediately. It was expected that the Commonwealth controls would be discontinued at the end of this year, but we are now given to understand that they may continue to operate until the end of 1949 and possibly thereafter. Nevertheless, they are liable to cease at any time. I am happy to say that the Government has decided to have ready controls along the present lines, with the exception that any appeal from the tribunal will be to the State Arbitration Court instead of, as is the case today, to the Commonwealth Coal Tribunal. I do not think we will experience much industrial trouble under the machinery laid down in the Bill. At all events, that has been our experience under Commonwealth control throughout the war years and since the cessation of hostilities.

The third part of the Bill deals with the distribution of coal which, as far as I can ascertain, is to be continued in the same way as under Commonwealth supervision. I am more concerned about the first part of the Bill and the necessity for control over the industry in order to ensure its systematic development. Down through the years no attention has been given to how the mines were being developed or worked, and that has led to the present unsatisfactory condition of affairs. No serious attempt has ever been made, when faults have been met, to go through them. Instead, the tendency has always been to go round them and so complicate mining operations, particularly with regard to haulage. The companies at present have under consideration a proposal to mechanise the mines, but I think they will find it very difficult. To mechanise the majority of the Collie coalmines will not be

easy, owing to the haphazard manner in which they have been developed in the past. It is difficult to mechanise a mine that has been worked and developed according to the old ideas. However, that is one of the problems that the engineer who is to be appointed will have to solve.

I am concerned at the delay in the appointment of a suitable engineer. We have our State Mining Engineer and an Assistant State Mining Engineer, but they are more conversant with goldmines than with coalmines. When the Bill is in the Committee stage I feel that provision should be made to fill the gap until the Government is successful in obtaining an engineer of the type and with the qualifications required. I do not think there is any need for me to speak further to the Bill at the present stage.

**MR. MARSHALL** (Murchison) [5.14]: This measure is quite in conformity with the timidity of the present Government in introducing legislation. It leaves one in the invidious position of being obliged to support it without any confidence in its effectiveness. It seems to me to represent a positively milk and water attitude towards a most important problem. One would have thought, with the Government's experience, that it would have introduced legislation which, when given application, would be effective. It is not that the Government has not had experience of what has happened in Collie over a period of many years which would cause it to hesitate in taking drastic action to remedy the situation. This Bill will fall far short of effecting results which are required at Collie.

Why the Government hesitated to take the necessary powers I do not know. Whether they will be essential or necessary, is a mystery to me. I would suggest that the Minister who introduced this measure apologised to the Collie coalmining companies before he introduced it. It is a shadowy Bill devoid of substance. It reminds me of the unfortunate individual who looks quite well and yet is suffering acutely from heart disease. The outward appearance is rather good, but inwardly it is particularly weak and dangerous, and that is about the only way in which one can sum up this measure. As pointed out by the member for Collie, the Bill introduces four phases, none of which we

could oppose strongly if at all. If we do oppose them, we would do so knowing full well that there was a reasonable good chance of them falling far short of the effectiveness with which the Government should seek to deal with such a problem. Just what the Minister will do, if the Bill becomes law, nobody knows.

**Mr. Graham:** Not even the Minister.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** Nobody knows, because all that the Minister proposes when dealing with the question of mining, working or developing the Collie coalmines, is to make regulations. It is proposed to do all this by regulation. Therefore, we do not know now whether there will be any further effective control than there is at the moment. I put it to the Minister in this Chamber that surely, if the Government were sincere and conscientious in this matter, it would have put into the Bill itself that which it proposes to do instead of leaving it to the chance of regulations. Although this matter is of vital importance, as has already been outlined by the hon. member who knows more about Collie than any one of us, the development of our mines in Collie is deplorable in the extreme. To effect such development drastic control and severe penalties are required even when the Minister frames his regulations under this particular part of the Bill. Any company that opposes the enforcement of them is penalised only to the extent of a paltry £100 or six months imprisonment. I can not see this Government sending any of the coal barons to gaol. That is the last thing it would do. So the fine imposed will be anything up to £100 for a breach of a regulation, but for a start we do not know whether they will be fined.

It is ridiculous to deal with this subject in this paltry way. When I was Minister for Mines I was constantly endeavouring to get these companies to carry out their developmental work underground. I wanted them to get ahead with it so that the various places could be opened up and we could depend upon getting coal from them when the easily-accessible coal from the open cuts was diminishing. But the Minister had no power to direct the company to do such developmental work and I therefore introduced a Bill to obtain that power. But the hon. gentleman who introduced this milk-and-water Bill opposed it



strongly. He said it would be granting too much power. When it comes to the question of conserving, and working efficiently and economically an asset such as coal, a Minister can never have too much power. When we now gaze upon the deplorable situation at Collie, one might have expected the Minister to be a little more courageous with his measure.

I repeat that we do not know what the Minister proposes to do because it must be done by regulation. We do not know whether he proposes to ensure that the coal resources of the State are developed and conserved to provide coal for the future. The Minister does not encourage the belief that that is his intention or that that is what he will do. If that is his intention, he could have put it in the Bill. We do not know whether he proposes that the working and the getting of coal, including the introduction of sound mining principles and practices and methods of haulage are to be carried out by regulation. If that is the intention of the Minister, why is it not in the Bill?

Does the Minister propose to have regard to the conservation of coal, the development of any coalmine, seam or field, and the opening, closing or abandonment of any coalmine? Are these matters to be the subject of regulation? If they are, why are they not in the Bill? Does he propose the introduction, modification, replacement and operation of machinery, plant and equipment for use in connection with the production and distribution of coal, and the manufacture, procurement, improvement and standardisation of such machinery, plant and equipment? Does he propose the classification, blending, cleaning and grading of coal and its preparation for market? If he does propose to do that, why is it not in the Bill? Why is there all this secrecy in dealing with a subject-matter so important as this? That is what I have against the Government and the Minister. Why play about with a proposition that requires most drastic measures of control at present because of the situation into which this wonderful asset has drifted over a period of years?

The day is past when Governments can sit idly by and see the country's assets destroyed. I have seen, and the member for Nedlands has seen one goldmine after another become the plaything of indi-

vidual investors who work upon the Stock Exchange converting the industry into the proverbial monkey on a stick and finally after reaping great rewards from the goldmines, close them down. We have little better mining practices in the coalmines. At this juncture we cannot calculate what this State has lost because of the lack of control and direction by Ministers for Mines in past years. I want it to be clearly understood that these utterances of mine in regard to the development of the Collie coal basin are such as to provide some excuse for the deplorable circumstances that prevail there, because in the early development of the Collie coalmines, those that were interested in the production of coal and investing their reserve capital found that they had strong opposition in markets where they could sell the product.

For many years people had a hard battle to establish the Collie coal basin. Consequently, it was not advisable at that juncture to go into the Collie coal basin with a large amount of capital, knowing that the opposition to the consumption of Collie coal was particularly strong at that time. As a result, they developed the basin in such a way as to get some return on the capital invested. In mining their property at Collie they left the field in a most deplorable state. But we have now reached the stage where the Government proposes to do something and we should review the situation in the light of existing circumstances and not from past events.

I feel confident that Collie coal has established itself as a consumable and valuable commodity. So the picture is an entirely different one now from what it was years ago. Also, I feel confident that those who invested money in the Collie coal deposits have been well rewarded for the risks taken. We should now adopt the attitude that this is such a valuable asset to the State that a complete revision of mining methods and practices should be the order of the day. In my opinion, the present workings at Collie need immediate attention with a view to almost complete abandonment of their present hauling systems for the purpose of putting down new tunnels and shafts which will provide efficient and economic working of the coal seams at depth.

A long vision is required; a constructive policy must be the order of the day. It would be of little advantage to take over the various propositions at Collie and endeavour to use that which is now being used or has already been used. The work there has been done in a biggledy-piggledy uneconomical fashion, so that a complete review of the situation with the idea of developing the coal seams in a modern and scientific way should be the policy of the Government. But this Bill in itself will not achieve that. However, I am speaking in the dark, because I do not know what the Minister proposes to do and thus I am handicapped.

The measure contains no provision for requiring the grading and blending of coal at Collie; nor is any power being taken to make regulations to that end. This was one of the strong points made by the former member for Collie. That grand old man fought year in and year out to have a uniform standard brought into existence. While I was Minister for Mines, I endeavoured to get a blending and grading plant installed at Collie, but hard as I worked to bring about this necessary and valuable reform, I was not long enough in office to complete it. No power is proposed in the Bill and, so far as I know, there is no authority in the existing law to accomplish that. If the Minister can, with the aid of this very weak Bill, bring into existence at Collie a policy of complete reform, I shall be the first to congratulate him.

What makes me doubtful about this legislation is that the Government proposes to take power to repeal this division of the measure by proclamation. To me this implies that the Government is not sincere. Does the Minister imagine that, because the mining company may be reformed and induced to adopt modern and scientific methods now, it will not be necessary to have power to ensure that in the future this asset will be preserved and the working of coal deposits at Collie carried out economically and efficiently? From my experience I can tell the Minister that immediately he relaxes control, the company will revert to the quickest and cheapest methods of working in order to accumulate profits. The Minister proposes not to give Parliament an opportunity to say whether this division shall be repealed but to do it by proclamation.

The Minister for Housing: I am afraid that you have mis-read the Bill. I shall explain that.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is the situation as I see it. I warn the House that, notwithstanding what is said by the company, the State will find itself in the grave danger in a year or two of producing less coal than is being won today unless the development of the mines receives immediate attention and speedy execution, because the number of places where men can be put to win coal is limited. We shall not be far enough ahead with development work in the mines to catch up with requirements before the output of the open-cuts begins to diminish. When we reach that stage, there will be a crisis. All around us we see evidence of the rapid development of secondary industries and the consumption of coal must increase enormously. So I warn the Minister that his job will be a difficult one.

Side by side with the development of the existing workings at Collie, there must be a programme of revision. The old workings and haulage ways cannot last much longer. A complete change-over must be made; we must start afresh to get the coal. To do this we have but a limited time before the open-cuts will be finished, so the situation should be clear to every member. But we shall find that those who are interested in and are watching for dividends will decide otherwise. I have no adverse comment to make about those people because, after having invested their capital in the industry, they are entitled to a fair return, but they will be prepared to argue until the crisis arrives and then the Government, when it is too late, will have to shoulder the responsibility. That is our experience already with other of our State activities. As I have pointed out, this is as far as the Bill proposes to go.

It is intended to appoint an advisory board. This, I think, is sound policy to which I can subscribe, more particularly as the Cabinet does not contain one Minister with any practical experience of mining. It was the intention of the previous Government to secure the services of a coal-mining engineer, and I had hoped that the present Government would have succeeded before now in getting a man for this all-important post. Though I have no objection to the appointment of an advisory board, I would have preferred a complete board of man-

agement and the power of control vested in it, subject to the Minister.

Under the second part of the Bill the Minister proposes to create an industrial tribunal. I have no adverse comment to make on that because it is almost word for word with the provisions in a Bill I introduced. The intention is to give the tribunal complete power to deal with all matters of an industrial nature but, in the final analysis, the decision must be filed in the Arbitration Court in order to ensure harmony and will be subject to review by the court. That is the right thing to do. I think this is a particularly good move on the part of the Government. There is nothing like getting speedy action when industrial trouble is simmering. The idea is to deal with it before it develops and becomes a serious problem. Boards of reference may easily be appointed and can be quickly on the spot, and, as their jurisdiction will be subject to the tribunal proper and ultimately the court, I regard this move as a particularly wise and valuable one and support it wholeheartedly.

The provisions dealing with the distribution of coal are practically similar to those of the existing law and were contained in the Bill that I introduced, and so I have no opposition to offer to them. In fact, no member can do other than support those proposals. The greatest fault I find with the measure relates to the most important aspect and that is the working and development of the mines. The outstanding need is to preserve the asset to the utmost and at the same time produce coal speedily enough to satisfy the needs of industry, and ensure that the State in the next few years will not suffer from a shortage of coal. Such a shortage would be a tragedy, and I consider that if it did occur, the responsibility would rest upon the Government which, having been warned, failed to make the requisite arrangements. While I subscribe to the Bill, I regard it as a very weak measure to deal with a very important problem.

**MR. WILD (Swan) [5.43]:** I support the measure because it deals with the most important industry in the State. Without coal, we are powerless to do anything. We are singularly fortunate firstly, in having coal in very fair quantity and, secondly, that over the years the miners have shown a great measure of restraint. They are mod-

erate men, as the record of strikes at Collie shows.

I have no knowledge of coalmining and have never been down a coalmine, but I have worked in gold and silver-lead mines and consequently have a great respect for the men who undertake this very dangerous work, whatever the nature of the mine might be. Therefore, I reiterate that we are fortunate that we have men engaged in this dangerous work showing regard for the economy of the State by adopting a sane and moderate attitude. At present we are struggling day by day in an endeavour to keep industry going on the output of coal from Collie.

With the completion of the South Fremantle power house in 12 or 18 months' time, it will be necessary to have an increased quantity of coal available from Collie. The Minister, therefore, is to be commended for looking ahead to ensure that we have a continuance of peace in industry, and the assistance of an advisory panel chaired by a first-class mining engineer so that when the time comes we shall not be, as we are today, scratching for coal. The member for Collie said he was sorry that to date the Minister had not been able to obtain a competent coal engineer. I feel that one does not want to rush into making an appointment of that kind. There probably are engineers and engineers. I would sooner wait a little longer to get the right man, and then pay him the biggest salary possible.

A tribunal, similar to the one now operating under the Commonwealth regulations, is to be set up. Quite frankly, I do not agree with that, but I shall support the measure in toto because, as I said before, the production of coal is in the interests of the State, and if the measure will ensure peace in industry, and the men want a tribunal, I shall support it. Personally I would prefer to see provision made for a direct approach to the President of the Arbitration Court of Western Australia, instead of a coal reference board, because I have the greatest respect for President Dunphy, as I think all other sober-minded citizens of the State have. I do not wish to delay the House further, except to say that I again congratulate the Minister on bringing the matter forward. It is necessary to have peace in industry if we are going to have coal production. I hope that in the years to come we will be able to look

back and say, "This was another milestone in the production of more and more coal at Collie." I support the second reading.

**MR. HEGNEY** (Pilbara) [5.45]: Like the others who have spoken, I must support the measure. The previous speaker rightly said that without coal we can do nothing. The provision of the Bill setting up the advisory board and that dealing with the regulation and distribution of coal, gives such boards very wide powers. Another part of the measure deals with industrial regulation and I shall have a few words to say about that before I resume my seat. It appears that by degrees we are increasing the restrictions on private employers in connection with coal production. I believe the only and final solution to the production of coal in this country is to nationalise the coalmines. The member for Swan said that without coal we can do nothing, and he was quite right. The Government controls the railways and, as far as I know, that department consumes 80 or 90 per cent. of the coal produced at Collie. Private industry and other consumers account for the remainder. Reference was made to electric power. The power house is also a Government concern and is vital to the needs of industry. Coal is the life-blood of industry and the nation. The water supplies are also a Government responsibility. Water, transport and coal are three of the main aspects of Government and society which the State should control. I am surprised that serious efforts have not been made to nationalise our coalmining industry.

The Attorney General: The railways have not been a very great success.

**Mr. HEGNEY**: Why should coal, which is the most important commodity the State requires, be in the hands of a few private individuals? I endorse the remarks of the member for Swan that the coalminers should be commended for their pronounced restraint in regard to industrial matters. At times they have had every reason to take action more drastic than they have done. The Government introduces regulations and restrictions for the production and distribution of coal, so why should it not be the one to produce it? Why should coal production be left to a limited company? The Bill does not deal with the question of nationalising the industry, but its provisions

are in the direction of restraining private enterprise. The time will come when this, or some other Government, will appreciate that the only solution is to see that the production of coal is in the hands of the Government. As far as the industrial provisions of the Bill are concerned, I have no hesitation in saying—and the provisions have obtained through the Commonwealth during the war—that the peculiarities and intricacies of this industry are such that special legislation of this character should be continued.

No-one denies that President Dunphy of the Arbitration Court is a most responsible and impartial person. But it is not fair to require the President of the Arbitration Court to be on hand for all emergencies that may arise in regard to industrial regulation at Collie. The tribunal proposed to be set up will be able to function with very little formality or delay. It will be able to investigate disputes at first hand and make determinations which will have the force of law unless either of the parties sees fit to appeal to the Arbitration Court. In that event it will have to submit a case to the President who can exercise his prerogative of referring the matter to the full Arbitration Court. The coalmining industry is most important and we should set up the most elastic machinery possible for dealing with the industrial disputes which may occur from time to time. The board of reference will be a subsidiary body. Practically every award and industrial agreement includes provision for the setting up of a board of reference to deal with matters within the jurisdiction of the particular award or industrial agreement. The Attorney General looked very startled when I suggested that our coalmines should be nationalised.

The Attorney General: I am not startled. I know that is your view.

**Mr. HEGNEY**: I believe the coalmining industry should be controlled by the representatives of the people of the State. I propose to support the Bill.

**THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING** (Hon. R. R. McDonald—West Perth—in reply) [5.55]: I am indebted to the members who have spoken for their examination of an industry so important to our State, and for their comments on the Bill. The member for Collie said that whether the Bill would

bring about the orderly and efficient development of the coalfields that the measure aimed at and that everyone desired, would only be known from experience. I agree. The measure has been introduced to give new powers of direction in connection with the development of the Collie field, and it will be for us to see that it achieves its object. If it does not achieve all that we desire, then it may be necessary for some further measure to receive the attention of Parliament later. The hon. member referred to the coal engineer. The matter of salary has not yet been considered, but I can say that, in order to get a man with the experience and expert qualifications desired, the Government would be prepared to entertain a salary which could be commanded by a man with such qualifications, because we want to get someone who can give authoritative advice which will be of advantage to the Government, the coal industry and those engaged in the mines.

Mr. May: Have you not formed any idea of what you are prepared to pay?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: No. The amount will depend a good deal on the man, his qualifications and the position he previously held. It would not be wise at this stage to say, "We shall not pay more than a certain sum," because we might have to make an advance on the amount in order to get a man with the qualifications we wish. The hon. member referred to the position that would obtain pending such an appointment. Well, the Bill takes care of that by providing that until such appointment is made, an engineer of the Mines Department may be appointed to act as chairman of the coal advisory board. We have in our department some very able men with a not inconsiderable knowledge of coal-mining, as well as other forms of mining. So, there is no reason why the coal advisory board should not commence its operations promptly, after the Bill becomes law, the chairman being a mining engineer from our department until a coalmining engineer is appointed. The member for Collie said, very correctly, that the measure would replace the Commonwealth regulations which provide for an industrial tribunal, if those regulations cease to operate.

I have not been able to find out exactly what the Commonwealth Government has in view regarding the regulations relating

to industrial matters in the coal industry, or the provisions of the Coal Production Act which deal with the distribution of coal. When I was in Canberra this week I saw Senator Ashley and asked him if he would give me some idea of what the Commonwealth intended, as we had a Bill before this Parliament that would replace by State legislation the matters which at present are authorised by Commonwealth legislation or regulations.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Did you ask him to give us a drop more petrol?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: No, I keep to my job, and that is not connected with petrol. He is the Minister for fuel and, had the member for Fremantle mentioned the fact to me before, I might have approached him on that matter. Senator Ashley told me that he could not yet give more information as to the Commonwealth Government's intentions, but he would write to me as soon as possible and let me know. In the meantime, by this measure, it is provided that those portions of the Bill which deal with industrial matters and with distribution of coal can come into operation on proclamation. If this measure is passed, irrespective of what the Commonwealth Government does, we can take up the position immediately by proclamation, if the Commonwealth does not extend the measures which now operate.

Mr. Marshall: Where is your power to proclaim? Under the parent Act?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: No, under this Bill. The member for Murchison dealt with the coal industry and I am in complete agreement with a great deal of what he said. The Bill is before the House because the Government has an appreciation of the urgency of measures to provide for the effective working of our coalfields and for the maximum production of coal. In addition to the appointment of a coal advisory board, the existing provisions of the Mining Act will be amended to enable regulations to be made to direct the development of mines. The proposed appointment of an advisory board is so that representatives of the Collie unions may have a direct voice in advising the Government. As it is now, regulations can be made dealing with the working of mines, and this provision has been amended to include their development.

As to whether this should be done merely by direction of the Minister, or whether it should be the subject of regulation, is a matter of opinion, but there is some ground for its being done by regulation, because that will give the House an opportunity of passing judgment on it. This measure gives power to make regulations for the development of the coalfield in wide terms. It is true, as the member for Murchison says, that we do not state that regulations can be made for development by road machinery, or by driving proper tunnels, or utilising this portion of a lease or another portion of a lease, because it does not go into detail, but the broad term in the Bill "to make regulations for development" is, I think, as extensive as it could be and will cover all the various ways in which development can be brought about.

Mr. Marshall: The provision in the Bill has only two words that are absent from the parent Act—"working" and "development."

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: That is the whole point. The parent Act was weak in that respect. It is corrected by giving the necessary power to control development, and that is the crux of the matter. For the first time it does give power to the Government to make orders regarding the development of the coalmining industry. The member for Murchison also referred to the importance of the coal industry and, when introducing the Bill, I gave my personal opinion that there should be a separate measure dealing solely with it. As the hon. member has rightly said, the industry has reached an importance and has so many aspects to it that it could be the subject of special legislation. As I explained to the House, such legislation would take some time to prepare and, if we are to get a coalmining engineer, it would be wiser and more prudent to await his arrival so that he could advise us as to legislation that may be desirable.

In the meantime, so that the Government may be in a position to deal with development without delay, this measure has been introduced to confer, what the member for Murchison agrees, are necessary and desirable powers. The hon. member also suggested that the provisions of the Bill could be repealed by proclamation. That is not so. The provisions of the Bill

regarding power to direct development are permanent. They will be as much a part of the Mining Act as any other section of it, as also will be the section dealing with the industrial tribunal. The only part that can be repealed by proclamation is that dealing with a coal distribution committee.

Mr. Marshall: That is the way the Bill is worded.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The last clause says, "This division may be repealed by proclamation," and the reason for that is something which can be discussed in Committee. The member for Swan referred to what I think is a very sound principle, and that is that all industrial matters should be under the control of our State Arbitration Court. But it has been found from experience, and has been the practice in the coal industry, that some special conciliation and industrial measure are of advantage. After consulting representatives of the Colliery unions, we have continued in this Bill a measure regarding conciliation and arbitration and, as the member for Murchison said, "speedy action," which has been found to work well on the coalfields.

Mr. May: It is often necessary to deal with problems on the spot.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: That is so.

Mr. May: That is the whole object.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The member for Pilbara referred to a matter which is one of opinion, but is outside the Bill, and I would perhaps be rather indiscreet if I permitted myself to enter a debate of that description. The Bill is a definite contribution to the development of our coal industry and will assist in the objectives we all have in mind. If there should be further measures, that will be a matter for consideration by Parliament at a later date, but this Bill has been brought down with all possible expedition, so that we will have some provision in these various directions to meet the needs of the industry.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Housing in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—new Part 11A inserted:

Mr. MAY: I move an amendment—

That after the word "engineer" in line 8 of the definition of "the Chief Coal Mining Engineer" the words "or Inspector of Mines who is so qualified" be added.

It may be that the coalmining engineer will be absent from the State or through illness, or for some other reason, and if my amendment is agreed to it will safeguard the position and help the industry.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I hope the hon. member will not press the amendment. The idea is that the coal advisory board is to have the advantage of the coal engineer who will be a highly expert man. Until he is appointed, or if he is absent after he has been appointed, then any mining engineer employed in the department may be appointed to act temporarily as chairman of the board. If there is any officer who is in fact a mining engineer and whose services it might be desired to utilise for the purpose, it might be possible to give him some standing or status as a mining engineer to enable him to qualify under the measure. However, I do not think it would be wise to insert the name of any other officer, however able he may be, except as mentioned in the Bill. I must oppose the amendment.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. MARSHALL: I am sorry that the Minister has seen fit to oppose the amendment. I admit it can be accepted in one sense as probably lessening the prestige of the position, but it should be remembered that this is merely a matter of providing a substitute for the chief coalmining engineer pending his appointment or during his absence through illness, or owing to his being away on leave. Unless the amendment be agreed to, the Minister might find himself in the invidious position of having no qualified person available, with the result that the board could not function.

The Minister for Housing: I think we would always have an engineer available in the department.

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot see any real objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. MAY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (c) of Sub-clause (2) after the word "person" the words "to be elected by ballot and" be inserted.

In almost all instances where an employee's representative is to be elected, it is by ballot. That applies to the election of a workmen's inspector. There is no reference in the Bill as to how the election shall be dealt with.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I have had no opportunity to consider the suggestion as I knew nothing about it until I heard the amendment moved. I am prepared to believe that the suggestion may be worthy of adoption, but it might require some further additions to the Bill to enable the necessary regulations to be formulated dealing with the method of holding the election. I will examine the amendment, and if it does not seem to involve any difficulty, the Bill can be recommitted and the amendment inserted.

Mr. MAY: I did not have an opportunity to confer with the Minister because he was out of the State.

The Minister for Housing: That is quite correct.

Mr. MAY: If the Minister is prepared to give me an assurance that, after he has given consideration to the amendment and decides to accept it, he will have it inserted, even though it be in another place, I shall be satisfied. Some such provision dealing with the election should be included.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. MARSHALL: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (a) of proposed new Section 9G after the word "the," the words "efficient and economical" be inserted.

As this provision is worded, it leaves it open for a company to argue with the Minister as to the actual point raised respecting development in a mine.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I agree with the amendment, which I believe will be an improvement on the Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. MARSHALL: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (a) of proposed new Section 9G after the word "safety," the words "and health" be inserted.

With the inclusion of these words, there will be a safeguard against development in the workings that may be injurious to health as well as that dealing with the safety aspect.

The **MINISTER FOR HOUSING**: The amendment will enlarge the service the board can render to the industry and I accept it.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. **MARSHALL**: A consequential amendment will be necessary in proposed new Section 9H. I move an amendment—

That in line 10 of proposed new Section 9H after the word "safety," the words "and health" be inserted.

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

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 308:

Mr. **MAY**: Will the Minister give the Committee a more definite interpretation of the words at the end of the proposed new paragraph (7)—"possession of, held, occupied, used, developed, worked or enjoyed"?

The **MINISTER FOR HOUSING**: This provision will enable regulations to be made prescribing the labour, development, working and other conditions and the incidence, rights and obligations under which mining tenements shall be taken possession of, held, occupied, used, developed, worked or enjoyed. All I can say is that, in my opinion, they are very comprehensive words and will give wide enough powers to enable regulations to be framed prescribing the terms upon which these tenements shall be held and dealt with. They are a series of words that are meant to be comprehensive and to enable directions to be given on a broad scale as to the obligations and incidence involved on the lessee of a mining tenement.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## **BILLS (2)—RETURNED.**

1, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

With amendments.

2, Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

## **BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH** (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth) [7.50] in moving the second reading said: One of the most serious and dread diseases that we have to combat today is tuberculosis. This disease is one of the most readily curable if found at its early stage. Contrary to the old belief, tuberculosis is not hereditary; but it is infectious and can strike anyone of any age. Stamping out the disease should be the concern of everyone. It is difficult to control, because in its early stages it gives little or no warning of its presence. The Commonwealth has decided to initiate a campaign which calls for a great degree of co-operation between State and Commonwealth Governments for the purpose of controlling and, if possible, ultimately eradicating this dread disease, which in Australia is by far the greatest individual cause of death among men and women in the prime of adult life, between the ages of 20 and 40 years.

In 1946, the latest year for which details are available, tuberculosis was responsible for 27.6 of deaths from all major individual causes among people aged 20 to 39 years. It caused more than twice as many deaths in this age-group as did cancer, and it exceeded by more than 50 per cent. the total of deaths from diseases of the heart and the circulatory system. Amongst people of these ages, there are between 30,000 and 40,000 known tuberculosis sufferers in Australia, and there may be many thousands more unsuspected cases. The Commonwealth has based its campaign on Commonwealth and State co-operation and collaboration, and it is desired that it should be worked on a uniform plan throughout the Commonwealth. The States will continue to administer control and utilise their existing organisations and facilities, expanding them to provide adequately for expanding needs.

The Commonwealth will bear the whole of the cost of maintenance expenditure of the States, approved by the Commonwealth, in excess of the net maintenance expenditure incurred by the States in diagnosis, treatment and control of tuberculosis in the financial year 1947-48. The Commonwealth will also bear the cost, by reimbursement



to the States, of all new approved capital expenditure of the States from the 1st July, 1948, for land buildings, furnishing, equipment and plant for use in the diagnosis, treatment and control of the disease. There is a real need to educate the public as to the means of combating the spread of tuberculosis and of the value of early diagnosis and treatment. There is need to destroy the fear of the disease and to overcome the reluctance of some people to undergo proper examination.

There is also need, where required, for the proper control of the few persons who are affected by the disease and are in a highly infectious condition, in order to ensure that serious damage is not done by them to healthy persons. The disease is highly infectious at certain stages and the community should be given the maximum protection. The Bill is designed to enable the closest co-operation to be established with the Commonwealth in implementing the campaign and assuming the necessary control to ensure that all reasonable protection is given to the community against such irresponsible persons who do not care whether they spread infection or not. At the present time, the Wooroloo Sanatorium and Tuberculosis Clinic in Western Australia are maintained and administered under the provisions of the Hospitals Act.

The Bill provides that all matters relating to tuberculosis shall be dealt with under the Health Act. It is thought desirable, in view of the Commonwealth's expressed intention to provide a very large portion of the future expenditure to be incurred in maintaining necessary hospitals, sanatoria and clinics, as well as future buildings, that the expenditure should be severed from the money to be expended under the Hospitals Act. The Bill provides that the Governor may, for the purpose of ascertaining the incidence of tuberculosis prevention, treatment and control, establish and maintain a tuberculosis control branch of the Health Department, as well as hospitals and sanatoria for the treatment of cases. Wooroloo and all future sanatoria will be administered under the provisions of the Health Act. Provision is also made for the proper notification to the health authorities of any case.

Some of the provisions are already incorporated in the Health Act, but it is thought desirable to consolidate them in one

part of the Act. The Bill provides that a person suspected by an approved medical officer of having tuberculosis may be required to submit to an examination, if it is considered necessary. If, in the opinion of the Commissioner, or an approved medical officer, a person is suffering from communicable tuberculosis and does not conduct himself so as to preclude infection by him of other persons, or if a person so suffering consumes excessive intoxicating liquor and does not voluntarily submit himself to proper treatment, or if a patient conducts himself in such a manner as to be detrimental to the condition of other patients in an institution, or attempts to leave an institution, a complaint may be made against him, with the approval of the Commissioner of Public Health or an approved medical officer. The complaint is to be heard and determined by a magistrate under the provisions of the Justices Act. On the hearing the magistrate may exclude all persons and prohibit the publication of the proceedings at his discretion. If the complaint is established to the magistrate's satisfaction he shall adjudge the person a declared patient and order him to enter an institution and to remain there for such period as he shall think fit, not exceeding 12 months.

Hon. A. H. Pantou: Without the option?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes. If contrary to the terms of an order by a magistrate a declared person does not enter an institution, or having entered it does not remain there while the order is operative, he commits an offence and the magistrate may issue a warrant for him to be apprehended and conveyed to the institution, where he may be kept in custody during the operation of the order. There is provision for the order to be extended for a further period, if necessary, and also for the Commissioner to be able to discharge a patient at any time if he thinks his condition no longer requires him to remain. Power is given for the Governor to make the necessary regulations for the purpose of carrying the provisions of the Act into effect.

Provision is also made for a penalty not exceeding £20 for acting in contravention of or failing to comply with any of the provisions of any regulation made under the section providing for the regulations. It

might be thought that some of the provisions of the Bill are unduly severe or oppressive, but it must be remembered that this disease is highly infectious, and that it has been found that there is a certain number of people who are not prepared, either in their own interests or in the interests of others, to subject themselves to the discipline that is required if they are not to be a menace to the community. The Controller of Tuberculosis in Western Australia, Dr. Henzell, has reported to me that there is a small number of people who cannot or will not conduct themselves in such a way as not to be a menace to the community. I will read out a small portion of that report. After dealing with the necessity for educating the public so as to enable the people to obtain the maximum protection, Dr. Henzell goes on to say—

But there remains a small minority who cannot or will not conduct themselves in the interests of themselves or of the rest of the community. These few, usually numbering about 10 at any one time, constitute a serious gap in our defences against this disease. The chronic alcoholic, the mentally sub-normal and the wilfully anti-social person are by their homicidal lack of responsibility a great menace to those who have to associate with them. A few case histories will illustrate this.

A man with the advanced infectious disease refused treatment and isolation in hospital. He ultimately was admitted after three years at home with his wife and child of four years and subsequently died. His wife was then found to have slowly progressive active disease and will probably need operative treatment. The child also received a heavy lung infection which is only partly overcome and which might well become active again in early adult life. This patient was not an alcoholic but was mentally sub-normal and irresponsible.

A young woman with a child of six months was found to have the active disease. Sanatorium treatment with excellent prospects of healing the disease was refused. She refused to allow anyone else to take care of the child and insisted on bringing it with her to the clinic, even nursing it in her arms. The mother is now worse and the child, three years of age, has developed the disease in its lungs.

A man, an alcoholic, with four children, three daughters and one son, aged from 10 to 18 years, refused sanatorium treatment 12 years ago. He died 10 years ago, in the meantime remaining at home with his children and denying that there was any risk. His son has since died of tuberculosis and two of the three daughters have had to be treated for the disease in the sanatorium. One is doing well but the outlook of the other is grave. These histories could be multiplied a hundredfold. All workers

in tuberculosis throughout the world agree that they nullify much of our anti-tuberculosis work.

If the incidence of the disease in contacts of all known cases is five per cent., over 12 times that of the rest of the population, it must be nearly 10 times as high again in contacts of the recalcitrant patients. In other countries, for example Canada and many of the States of the U.S.A., this problem has been faced by providing statutory powers for the compulsory control of such cases and the use of restraint if necessary. In those countries it has been found by experience that such powers are acceptable to the community and salutary in their effect and that, in fact, it is rarely necessary to use them. The fact that they are in existence is sufficient to induce the great majority even of recalcitrant patients to conform to proper social conditions.

On reading that somewhat sad report it must be realised that if we are to do our duty to the community we must have power to control those who lack all sense of responsibility and proper social instincts. If passed the Bill will be, I believe, the opening move in a strong campaign by the Commonwealth and States to stamp out tuberculosis and to relieve a very great amount of suffering that now exists owing to this disease. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. H. Panton, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH** (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth) [8.10] in moving the second reading said: I intentionally separated this Bill from that which preceded it because I thought that a measure dealing entirely with one matter could better be dealt with by the House apart from another dealing with a number of amendments to the Health Act. It is some little time since that Act was amended and the provisions of the Bill have been recommended to the Government by the Commissioner of Public Health. The first amendment sought to be made deals with two definitions in the Act. Under the Act "a drug" means any substance, organic or inorganic, used as a medicine, or in the composition or preparation of medicine whether for external or internal use and includes tobacco, soap and perfumes. It has been found that some cos

metics, absorbent cotton wool and surgical dressings which are not now governed by the Act are unsuitable, owing to their contents or condition, to be used. Some cosmetics contain substances that are deleterious to the skin and to the health generally, and it is desired to bring them within the scope of the definition. The definition of "sanitary convenience" under the Act is as follows:—

"Sanitary convenience" includes urinals, water-closets, earth-closets, privies, ash-pits, ash-tubs, or other receptacles for the deposit of ashes, faecal matter, or refuse, and all similar conveniences.

It has been found that baths and wash troughs which are not included in the definition are frequently of an insanitary nature, and it is desired therefore to bring these conveniences within the definition of "sanitary convenience." The next provision of the Bill deals with Section 18. This section provides that—

Every municipal district shall be a health district within the meaning of this Act and the municipal council shall be the local authority for such district.

However, it makes no mention of road boards. Under the next section in the Act, provision is made for any adjoining territory to a municipality to be added to such municipality for the purpose of being treated conjointly as a health area. But once this has been done there is no provision to make any alteration and it is thought desirable that power should be given for this purpose. In order to minimise the cost of health services in the country, arrangements have been made for a number of local authorities to combine so as to employ one health inspector on health matters and thus save expenditure. There is no authority under the Act for this to be done and no procedure under the Act by which such a method or system shall be carried out. The Bill proposes to make provision for the creation of regional health areas, where a number of local authorities can be joined together for the purpose of carrying into effect the duties imposed upon them by the Health Act.

The Bill provides that local authorities or any part of a local authority may be joined in a regional area, and may be constituted a health district by the Governor, and that such areas may be changed from time to time. A regional health area is to be administered by a board which is to comprise one representative from each local au-

thority or part of a local authority within the area. Members of the board are to be nominated by the local authorities, and in addition there is to be nominated by them for each member a deputy who takes the place of the representative when the member is unable to be present at any meeting. These regional areas will be bodies corporate and act as such. The regional areas are to be financed by the local authorities which comprise them. Each year a statement is to be furnished by a board to the various local authorities it represents showing the anticipated contributions that are to be made by them to the board. If any local authority disagrees with the amount of its contribution there is an appeal in the first instance to the Commissioner and subsequently to the Minister. Local authorities are required to raise the necessary funds under the provisions of Part III of the Act.

At present there is no provision in the Act for a reserve fund to be created by a local authority in respect of health rating. A new section is to be added after Section 45 giving power to any local authority to create a reserve fund with the consent of the Minister. The next matter dealt with comes under Section 133. This is the section which gives the local authorities power to make bylaws with respect to a number of matters. Portion of that section gives power to the local authority to make bylaws regulating the disposal of night soil, urine and refuse. The proposed amendment is to give the local authority power to regulate pig swill. At present no power of that kind exists.

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask members to give the Minister better attention. They are too noisy.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is thought that local authorities should have power to deal with pig swill and determine in what manner it should be disposed of. At present swill remains the property of the individual who produces it and he can do what he likes with it. Power is also taken to make regulations governing the use of damaged vessels, whether cups, plates or dishes and whether of pottery, glass or otherwise, used for the serving of food, and prescribing the kind of vessels which may be used for various purposes. Members are aware that some of the crockery found in some eating houses is in such a bad condi-

tion as to be definitely unhealthy for users. At present no power exists to prevent the use of these vessels in any way whatsoever. The power, however, is given by this Bill.

Power is also being taken to prescribe those matters and things which shall be observed for preventing rodents entering premises or rendering premises free of rodents and keeping them free thereof. Rats may be a serious menace to the health of the community and these provisions will enable local authorities to make bylaws dealing with precautions that should be taken in that connection. Power is also taken to make regulations dealing with the construction, situation, inspection and maintenance of bath and laundry facilities. Section 164 gives the Governor power to make regulations for the prevention of overcrowding and obstruction in any gangway and passages of any public buildings and the prevention of fires in such public buildings, or boarding houses, lodging houses, licensed premises and so on.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You ought to add Government buses to that.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Perhaps the hon. member is right. The Bill seeks to provide that the Governor shall have power to make regulations relating to the safety and conveniences in or upon any building or premises referred to in the subsection. This will include all persons, whether members of the public or persons who are in or upon buildings or premises in pursuance of their employment, occupation, or other purpose. This makes it quite clear that not only the safety of members of the public but also that of the employees of any occupied premises can be brought under control by regulation.

An additional section is to be added after Section 185 giving the Governor power to make regulations requiring persons engaged in prescribed industries to submit themselves for periodical medical examination. As members are aware, the health services are taking more and more interest in industrial occupations. There are some occupations where periodical examination of those who are engaged in them may be of material benefit, and power is sought to enable this to be done in respect of those who feel that it is not desirable for them to be examined. For instance, the periodical

examination of persons coming into contact with the melting of lead is highly desirable.

Mr. Hegney: Who would pay for the examination?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I think the Government would have to pay. It would be hardly fair to compel people to submit to examination and then require them to pay for it. The next section we desire to amend is No. 193, which deals with the period before and after parturition at which milk may be drawn from cows. The amendment seeks to make the Act uniform, as in some sections a different period is provided. It is proposed to substitute 15 days for 30 days and 10 days for five days.

Section 212 provides that it shall be an offence for a person to publish false statements in an advertisement relating to the contents or effect of patent medicines, but the publication does not include statements made by word of mouth over the air. The amendment will bring advertising over the air into line with advertising in a newspaper. Section 221 deals with persons who sell or expose for sale any substance or compound under the name or description of or with the intent that the same may be used as a disinfectant, deodoriser, germicide, preservative, antiseptic, sanitary powder or sanitary fluid without disclosing the ingredients on the label. We propose to include insecticide because some insecticides, such as D.D.T., which is being used quite a lot, might contain deleterious substances.

Section 225 empowers the Governor, on the advice of the Advisory Committee, to make regulations dealing with a number of matters. These include the taking of samples of foods, drugs and disinfectants, and prohibiting persons having in their possession for sale any food, drug or disinfectant which has been adulterated by the admixture of any foreign substance. It is desired to prohibit the manufacture, sale or offering for sale of any toy, wallpaper or paper for wrapping food in which the colouring matter used is in excess of the quantity prescribed, and to prohibit the manufacture, sale and offering for sale of any textiles used for wearing apparel that contain arsenic or other deleterious compounds. Another prohibition proposed is against the manufacture, sale and offering for sale of

any tubed nursing bottles for infants' food. This item may not be considered of great importance, but I have been informed that the long-tubed bottles, which one seldom sees nowadays because their use is not encouraged by health authorities, are liable to cause serious infection. It was the custom to lay the bottle on the bed of the baby and let it suck the milk through the tube. The modern feeding bottle has merely a teat which can be sterilised after use.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Are you speaking from experience?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes. I marvel that I have survived. Section 228 authorises local authorities to make bylaws for various purposes, one of which is for cleansing and disinfecting houses, buildings, yards, drains, sewers, etc., and for isolating or disinfecting persons, houses, buildings, places and things.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Persons?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes. The incidence of American typhus, commonly known as Brill's Disease, is quite high in this State, and the Commonwealth research organisations are being asked to investigate the trouble here. This disease is carried by the fleas of rats or by lice, and communicated to humans. The Bill proposes to add the word "disinfecting." Those who have served in the Army will appreciate what that means.

The Minister for Railways: Commonly called "delousing."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I did not catch what the Minister said. Section 269 empowers the Governor to proclaim that certain drugs shall not be sold except on the prescription of a doctor, but there is no power to remove a drug from the prescribed list. Amongst the drugs now prescribed is penicillin, which is one of the principal drugs used by the veterinary service to treat various diseases in cows, particularly mastitis. We desire to withdraw this drug from the list so that it may be used in the country without a doctor's prescription.

Section 314 requires midwives to furnish certain information of cases attended by them. It is desired that a record of still-births should be kept because such information might have an important bearing on the health of the community. Under the

amendment, midwives and medical officers will be required to notify the health authorities of any still-birth, and, if thought necessary, a post-mortem may be conducted on the body of a still-born child.

An additional section is to be added after Section 318 to provide that local authorities may conduct immunisation campaigns against diphtheria, whooping cough, etc., and use their funds for the purpose. There is some doubt whether they now have authority to do so, although immunisation is recognised as one of the most valuable preventives of diphtheria. Immunisation is regarded by all health authorities as a matter of great importance and is being encouraged by the Commonwealth Government even to the extent of its providing anti-toxins free. We desire to give local authorities power to conduct these campaigns. Some have already been conducted with great success and it is hoped that through these efforts a majority of the children will be immunised.

Section 330 of the Act imposes a duty on police officers to demand the name and address of any person found committing a breach of the Act. It is desired to impose the same duty on and give the same authority to health inspectors. Those are the provisions of the Bill. They may seem to be large in number and alterations of a minor nature, but none the less they are important from the point of view of the administration of health in the community. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Styantz, debate adjourned.

## BILL—DOG ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT** (Hon. A. F. Watts—Kataning) [8.47] in moving the second reading said: Most of the amendments in the Bill have been asked for by various local authorities which are responsible for the administration of the present law relating to dogs. I have heard it said in the House "The Bill is a very little one." That applies with considerable force to the measure now before us.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Such Bills are generally described as being important little Bills.

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: But from the aspect of the provisions this Bill contains I think it can be said to have some importance. The first thing the Bill purports to do is to define what the words "wandering at large" in Section 19 of the parent Act mean. That section provides—

Any dog found wandering at large may be seized and kept by the police, or any authorised officer of a local authority.

Difficulty has arisen as to the meaning of the words. Efforts have been made to seize dogs in the company of their owners but not under any specific type of control. The Bill provides that a dog wandering at large shall mean a dog roaming about without any control whatever. The Bill contains some special provisions dealing with health, and dogs on leashes to which I shall refer later. The next proposal affects Section 5 of the principal Act which refers to persons keeping unregistered dogs. Under that section there is a maximum penalty of 40s. and a minimum penalty of 10s. It has been found that the power of mitigation has been used, as contained in Section 166 of the Justices Act, so that the minimum penalty has, on many occasions, not been assessed by the justices or other authorities hearing the cases. We desire to make it perfectly plain that notwithstanding that power of mitigation, the penalty is to be a minimum of 10s.

A request has also been made that the courts should have power to direct the payment of the unpaid license or registration fee to the local authority. Power to do that has not hitherto been vested in the court. Section 19 of the principal Act is amended to provide that local authorities may maintain dog pounds. At the present time, as I said a moment ago, Section 19 of the Act provides that any dog found wandering at large may be seized and kept by the police or any authorised officer of a local authority. In the larger towns, particularly, difficulties have arisen as to where the dogs should be kept by these interesting gentlemen, there being no regular authority for the maintenance of a pound from the revenue of the local authority. It is, therefore, considered desirable that an amendment should be made to correct that position and enable such a place to be kept. The Bill then goes on to provide that "any dog so seized shall be held and disposed

of in the manner prescribed." The "manner prescribed" is to be by regulation made by the Governor, which come under the last but one clause of the measure, and to which I shall refer in a moment. Section 22 of the principal Act sets out that—

The owner or occupier of any enclosed field, paddock, yard, or other place in which any sheep or cattle are confined, or any person acting under the authority of such owner or occupier, may, without incurring any liability in respect thereof, shoot or otherwise destroy, without cruelty by some speedy means, any dog found at large therein.

It is desired to add to that section the words "or poultry" in the interests of poultry farmers who, in many areas, complain of the worrying of their stock by dogs, and the losses they suffer in consequence.

Mr. Marshall: What effect will the word "or poultry" have on the section?

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: They will mean that if a dog is found wandering at large in a field in which poultry is kept, the owner shall be at liberty to destroy it by humane means.

Mr. Marshall: A dog with foul intentions!

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: The next clause of the Bill seeks to amend Section 35 of the Act and provides for the making of regulations. Obviously if a local authority is empowered to maintain a pound, it will need to have regulations to control the impounding of the dogs therein, to deal with their care, release and disposal, and to prescribe the fees to be payable in respect of the same. It will also be necessary to make regulations prescribing the liability of any person in respect to the fees; prohibiting the release of any dog from a pound except in accordance with the regulations; and prohibiting the obstruction or hindrance of any employee of a local authority or member of the police force in the performance of anything authorised by the provisions of the Act. The Governor, therefore, is to be empowered to make regulations in connection with these matters.

I said a moment ago there was some reference in the measure to dogs on leashes. It is desired, both on health grounds and others to prevent dogs, in any circumstances from entering certain premises such as shops, particularly those where food for

human consumption is available for sale. It was considered impossible to set out these places in an Act of Parliament. Therefore it was thought better to enable regulations to be made, not by the local authority but by the Governor through Executive Council, setting out the places that dogs might be prohibited from entering, and other places that they might enter provided they were under control as specified in the Bill. I think members will agree that in the circumstances I have mentioned it is desirable that some control of this nature should be exercised. There is no doubt that at times the presence of dogs in such establishments as I have referred to is a menace to public health.

While the regulations should be reasonably drawn and properly applied, I believe there should be power for them to be made by the Governor. Consequently that provision is in the Bill. The last point in the measure is that the Governor may, subject to such restrictions as may be specified in an order, permit a local authority to make regulations under the preceding section for use within its own district. It also gives power for that order to be repealed or amended, thereby depriving the local authority of the right to make these bylaws. This power would be exercised only in the event of a local authority not making bylaws of a desirable character, or not administering them in a reasonable way.

Mr. Marshall: Will this affect a municipality such as we have in the metropolitan area?

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: It will be effective throughout the State.

Mr. Marshall: I do not see how you could use firearms within municipal boundaries.

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: There is nothing about firearms in the Bill.

Mr. Marshall: How otherwise could you destroy a dog?

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A dog would not be destroyed in the open street, but would be taken away and disposed of in accordance with the reasonable regulations of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. There will not be any wholesale slaughter.

There has not been in the past and there will not be now. The hon. member may be under some misapprehension in respect to Section 22. That deals more particularly with the rural areas; it certainly does not deal with municipalities. There would not be enclosed fields, paddocks, or yards, to any degree, in such places. That provision has never applied except in rural or semi-rural areas where these animals, of a domestic character, are likely to be disturbed by dogs roaming at large. It would be impossible to repeal or abandon that provision, because of the suffering occasioned to live-stock—particularly sheep—by dogs. I have seen terrible examples of such suffering, and the cause has not been dingoes or dogs of a wild pattern, but domestic dogs that have gone haywire. This provision must be retained. It is not proposed to alter Section 22 except by the addition of the words "or poultry" in order that the poultry owner may protect himself in the same manner.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Is this a substitute for the Vermin Bill?

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: The hon. member chooses to be humorous. I shall take his remark accordingly. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Brady, debate adjourned.

## BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. H. S. Seward—Pingelly) [9.0] in moving the second reading said: I indicated earlier in the session an intention to bring down a Bill to amend the State Transport Co-ordination Act with a view to bringing all transport under the direction of the Transport Board and also under the direction of one Minister. If members will study the Act they will find that it gives the board very wide powers with regard to transport. Section 10 states—

Subject to this Act, the Board may of its own volition, or under the direction of the Minister shall—

(a) make investigations and inquiries into transport matters. In making such investiga-

tions and inquiries the Board shall give consideration, among other factors, to all or any of the following factors, namely:—

- (i) The question of transport generally in the light of service to the community;
  - (ii) The needs of the State for economic development;
  - (iii) The industrial conditions under which all forms of transport are conducted;
  - (iv) The impartial and equitable treatment of all conflicting interests.
- (b) Be empowered to demand and obtain information relating to matters connected with the internal transport of the State, including transport controlled by the Crown or any agency of the Crown.

The result of any investigation or inquiry made by the Board shall be reported to the Minister, and for the purpose of such investigation or inquiry the Board shall have the powers, authority and protection of a Royal Commission under the Royal Commissioners Powers Act, 1928 . . . .

(c) Consider and determine all applications for licenses in respect of public vehicles.

(d) Without limiting any of the provisions of this Act specifying any particular conditions the Board may impose on the granting or holding of a license, determine in respect of any particular license or group of licenses, what conditions shall be imposed on the granting and holding of the license or licenses or, before granting any new license, as hereinafter defined, call tenders and invite premiums in any case where, owing to the importance of the route or area in which the applicant proposes to operate, the board considers that the interest of the public would be best served by calling tenders.

Section 11 states—

On the direction of the Minister, the Board shall, or of its own volition may, inquire and report whether the services of any railway or part of a railway or any tramway or any part of a tramway, are adequate for the requirements of the district or area which such railway or tramway serves.

Many who have read the State Transport Co-ordination Act will agree that the power, in many instances, has not been used as it should have been used. In any tenders that are accepted, the board has power to impose conditions that the tenderer—

(a) shall provide a minimum service as specified by the Board;

(b) provide such minimum service for a minimum time as specified by the Board.

From that it can be seen that the board has powers wide enough to give it very effective control over transport in this State. However, there is one authority that the board does not possess and which it is desirable that it should have; that is control over

Government-owned transport. In the past railway and tramway road services have been established without any reference to the Transport Board. That is a weakness which it is desired to overcome, and provision is contained in the Bill to bring such services under the control of the Transport Board. That means if the Government railways are desirous of instituting a road service then the railways must make application to the Transport Board for permission to do so and the Transport Board will have to investigate the matter under the powers it holds, and make a recommendation to the Minister as to whether that service should be permitted or not. Similarly, where any metropolitan passenger service wishes to put in a new omnibus or tramway service, it must apply to the Transport Board for permission. That, I think, is essential to overcome duplications in road transport services in the city.

Through lack of that power in the past, some Government-owned transport services have been established without any reference to the board, thus nullifying any efforts to prevent duplication. In the past, too, the State Transport Co-ordination Act has been used to protect the railways rather than to spur them on to greater activity to meet the requirements of the people. When the Act was first brought into being some years ago and motor transport was put on the road, nothing was done to see that the railways provided a service which the people were entitled to expect, and which would be in keeping with the requirements of the period. On many branch lines, unfortunately, we are using passenger coaches that have been in operation for the past 50 years instead of more up-to-date coaches being used in an endeavour to attract passengers rather than to drive them away.

By bringing this under the control of the one authority and one Minister it is hoped to overcome these difficulties. There is, of course, one weakness in the placing of all forms of transport under the one Minister. It will mean that there is one Minister controlling the Government Tramways, the Government Railways and the various branches of privately-owned transport. It might be contended that there would be a leaning by the Minister towards the Government-owned transport service to the detriment of any other tenderer. To over-



come that, there is, I think, only one method and a clause has been inserted in the Bill providing that when an application for a new license by or on behalf of the Crown is made, the Transport Board shall exercise the powers conferred upon it by Section 10 of the Act. That means that the Transport Board shall report fully to the Minister on all aspects of the proposed service. Should the Minister subsequently depart from the board's recommendation, then it will be his responsibility, and he will have to justify his action accordingly. However, it does convey the security that any new applications by any other owned transport service will be thoroughly investigated by the board and reported to the Minister.

As previously mentioned the Bill will bring the Government-owned road transport services, both as to omnibus and commercial goods services, under the Transport Board and make them liable to the fees as prescribed by the board. Hitherto Government-owned vehicles, including trolley-buses, have been exempt from payment of Transport Board fees with the result that they did not contribute to the upkeep of the roads that they used. I have not been able to find any reason why they should not be so liable but, in the case of the trams, they pay for the maintenance of the tram lines and the road within 18 inches of each side of the lines. There is no reason, therefore, why the trolley-buses should not pay for the upkeep of the road because they practically travel on the one portion of it. Therefore provision is made for these buses to be liable for Transport Board fees. However, there is provision that these Transport Board fees, or the proportion of them that is distributed, will not be distributed in exactly the same manner as other transport fees.

Members will know that license fees are paid into the State Transport Board's fund, and after paying for administrative expenses, superannuation fund contributions, and subsidies as in the opinion of the board are necessary or expedient in the interests of public transport, the remainder with the exception of air fees, shall be divided and paid out to local authorities for the maintenance of roads. Subsidies are usually paid for transport services in country districts or sparsely populated areas and in later years as a result of an amend-

ment to the Act, to subsidise air transport to the North-West.

With the increase of subsidies on transport by air in sparsely settled areas, the local authorities' share of these moneys has been declining, while, of course their expenditure has been increasing. Speaking from memory, in the case of the Perth City Council they received some £8,000 about two or three years ago, but that has now been reduced to something over £6,000 and the council is naturally concerned because, while its fees are decreasing, the cost of the maintenance of its roads is increasing owing to the larger number of vehicles that are being used. This amendment will be the means of restoring to the local authorities an increased revenue with which to look after their roads.

Mr. Rodoreda: What basis will be used?

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** That is a matter entirely for the Transport Board. It is able to levy up to six per cent., but it will be a fair and equitable figure.

Mr. Rodoreda: They charge six per cent. to the private companies.

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** Yes. Private buses pay six per cent. However, I think it has been the practice, on the inauguration of a new service, to charge about one per cent. until the service becomes established and when it has submitted returns the board can raise it to any figure up to six per cent. if necessary. To ensure that the fees received from these Government-owned vehicles go to the local authorities, and are not used in paying subsidies, provision has been made in the Bill for such fees to be paid into a special account and only the proportion of administrative charges and superannuation fund contributions are to be paid, the remaining amount going to local authorities.

Under the Act the board has power to vary, cancel or add to the conditions of any omnibus or commercial goods vehicle license at the request of the owner. It is necessary that the board should have that power irrespective of the owner, particularly if the term of licenses are extended to seven years. Very often large sums of money have to be expended in acquiring vehicles and it is not possible to carry on and recoup that expenditure within a period of

12 months. Provision is therefore made in the Bill to give the board power to grant licenses for up to a period of seven years and to alter, vary or cancel and license. At present the licenses run for 12 months only and must be renewed on the 1st of July each year. Many omnibus companies will not take the risk of acquiring a fleet of vehicles that will enable them adequately to cater for their patrons, because they are not absolutely certain that their licenses will be renewed at the end of that 12 months although where bus companies have been operating satisfactorily their licenses have been renewed. However, it is felt that they should have a greater permanency or security with their license and that is why provision is made to grant licenses for a period of up to seven years. That will give them an extended term of security of tenure, and they will be able to incur an expenditure that will give them a chance adequately to cater for their passengers and a reasonable time in which to recoup themselves for such expenditure.

In some of the local authorities around the City of Perth there are many of these services in operation, with the result that some local authorities have been called upon to erect a large number of shelters for bus patrons. Some of the authorities, however, are finding it difficult to carry out this work and the bus companies themselves are unwilling to do so because they are granted a 12 months' license only. If they have a longer term it is reasonable to suppose that they may decide to erect some of these shelters.

Another provision seeks to permit commercial goods vehicles to transport goods by road for a distance of 20 miles instead of 15 miles as hitherto. At present they can only operate to a distance of 15 miles from the G.P.O. Perth or from the residence of the owner. The trend of modern policy is that road transport should be provided with a greater volume of short distance traffic in preference to the railways. In New South Wales, for instance, the railways will not take any goods for transport over a distance of less than 50 miles from Sydney. Victoria has not yet adopted that policy but is considering it. Possibly the main reason why that State has not adopted it yet is that some large centres such as Warragul and Geelong are within the 50-mile radius, but

it is quite possible that it will adopt the policy for a radius of 50 miles or some such distance, with exemptions.

Representations have been made in this State to extend the distance to 20 or 25 miles. Our position is not the same as that of other States, and it is considered desirable that goods should be sent by road to near centres such as, for instance, Armadale instead of their having to be trucked from the metropolitan goods yards. Under present conditions, the goods would have to be loaded on to a motor van and taken to the Perth goods yards, loaded on to the trucks, railed to Armadale, unloaded there to motor vans and delivered. On the other hand, such goods, if handled by road transport, would be in Armadale almost by the time they could be trucked to the Perth goods yards. In the circumstances, it has been decided to extend the distance from 15 to 20 miles.

Mr. Brady: Are the railways likely to run their own road transport?

**The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** No. Private people will engage in that work and this will leave the railways to handle long distance traffic for which the system is more suitable, and that type of traffic is more legitimately theirs. A clause is included in the Bill that will obviate staging. That will prevent a man from taking goods by road for a distance of 20 miles where he may have an office, then take them on a further 20 miles where he will have another office, and so on until he might eventually reach Albany. If that practice were permitted, the effect would be to deprive the railways of traffic to which they were entitled, and the clause will prevent that happening. Another provision will permit the road transport of furniture without the necessity of obtaining a permit. At present, if anyone desires to shift furniture from a country district to the city, a permit has to be obtained. That has often proved irksome and at times almost impracticable. It has not been possible to send the furniture down by rail because of the housing shortage, particularly when people have been transferred from the country to the city.

In these days it is not safe to leave a house empty in the city for a few days; if that were done, by the time the person from the country arrived with his furniture he might find someone else in the house. In the circumstances, it is desirable to get the

furniture down quickly and therefore the obligation to secure a permit is being dispensed with. I may remark that the Railway Department does not like this provision at all, and the authorities claim that it is their business and that they should be allowed to handle it. I am inclined to give it to road transport in the hope that it will stir the railways up to exercise considerably more care. In the short time I have been in office, I have received a number of claims regarding furniture broken in transport.

If we allow those engaged in road transport to deal with this business, it might induce the railways to exercise greater care in handling such goods. It might spur the railways on to greater efforts to secure the traffic once more. That is what I regard as one of the main objects of the State Transport Co-ordination Act—the stirring up of the railways to a proper sense of responsibility in handling goods, rather than its application as a means of removing competition and permitting the old order to continue. Another matter dealt with in the Bill is the authority to add a clause to the First Schedule of the Act to extend the exemptions granted, which will be done by regulation.

I have received applications from apiarists for the right to take their bees from place to place just as farmers can transport their produce from one centre to another, without the necessity for any permit. I think that is quite reasonable, and the effect of the amendment in this instance is that instead of having to bring down an amending Bill to enable this to be done, the necessary action can be taken by promulgating a regulation. It is quite possible that other types of primary production are entitled to similar facilities.

Mr. Marshall: Some of the provisions in the early part of the Bill may be contrary to the provisions of the Government Railways Act.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: That is not so. There is a clause in the Bill setting out that despite any provision in the Government Railways Act or the Government Tramways Act, those contained in this Act shall apply. I think that deals with the point that the hon. member has in mind.

The only other provision I shall mention is that which will enable representatives of different departments or their Ministers to

confer when activities conflict. A similar provision appears in other Acts. Where those concerned are not able to adjust their differences, the matter can be referred to the Governor, who will determine which is right. These are the main provisions of the Bill. When I gave consideration to the application of the State Transport Co-ordination Act, I found that those in authority had not exercised their very wide powers as far as they could have, and with these additional powers there is no reason why the whole transport system of the State should not be efficiently carried out by the board. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Marshall, debate adjourned.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1948-49.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

*Vote—Education, £1,728,475 (partly considered):*

MR. WILD (Swan) [9.24]: I listened with great interest to the Minister for Education when he outlined the proposals regarding educational facilities for the coming year. I appreciate that he, probably in common with all other Ministers for Education throughout Australia, is experiencing great difficulty regarding the provision of teachers and new schools. Another difficulty is that in accordance with our statute the education of children has been extended to 15 years, which is an absolute impossibility in view of the present situation. Two or three years ago great plans were formulated for the consolidation of schools throughout the country. It was a very highly desirable proposal but at the moment it appears rather impossible.

Quite recently a list appeared in "The Sunday Times" and later in "The West Australian," of the schools where improvements were being carried out at the time of publication. I was very disappointed to find that my electorate was not one of those that had drawn a lucky marble. Nevertheless, quite a considerable volume of small work has been carried out in the Swan electorate. I call at every school in the district once or

twice each term, and from what I have seen I suppose I must be thankful for small mercies. I recognise that many other schools, particularly those in the city, are suffering greater hardships than are those in my area. Some alterations have been made there including the closing of the Westfield school and the introduction of a bus service to convey the children to Armadale. The closing of that school has had a very desirable result seeing that formerly the average class there was 60, which made the position impossible from the point of view of both teacher and pupil. Under the new arrangement that average has been reduced to something in the vicinity of 45 or 46.

At Gosnells the pupils in the classes comprise one with 56, two with 48 in each and one with 58. I respectfully suggest to the Minister for Education that early attention be given to relieving that situation by the provision of at least one more teacher. I draw attention to another feature. When work is required to be undertaken and a No. 1 priority is secured, it is easy to get past the Education Department, but the matter then goes to the Public Works Department. I cannot blame the latter department so much because I recognise it has a list of works as long as one's arm, all requiring attention. I think the position could be eased considerably if use were made of private enterprise in the district where a school required attention.

Not so long ago I made representations on behalf of the Gosnells school for the grading of the playground. For the past two years it has been an absolute quagmire. When I made inquiries, I found that the work would be about No. 30 on the list of similar applications, and I recognised that the possibility of having the schoolground attended to within the next couple of years appeared to be negligible. With the aid of the Gosnells Road Board and the co-operation of the Public Works Department, the board carried out the job and today we have quite a satisfactory playing area. In the circumstances, I feel that greater use should be made of the plant and machinery that could be provided by the road board or private enterprise within the district concerned, so that these small jobs could be carried out promptly.

Another difficulty concerns the fixing of electric points. With the ad-

vent of visual education, many schools that would like to engage in that form of training have all the necessary power available but cannot get the points installed whereby their cinematographs could be hooked up to the supply. I know of three instances in my electorate where they have been waiting for five months, although they are on the priority list, for the necessary electric points, in anticipation of an electrician coming along to do the job. I submit that the Education Department should be permitted to make contact with local contractors, who could quite easily do in two or three weeks the work which it now takes five or six months to complete. It may be necessary, of course, for that contact to be made through the Public Works Department. It is understood that in the not-too-far-distant future a high school will be erected at Armadale. I draw the Minister's attention to the fact that there are at present large numbers of children who now travel by bus from Jarrahdale and Serpentine, leaving home as early as seven o'clock in the morning and not returning until seven at night. I am fully aware that children in country centres suffer the same disability.

I believe that in the Armadale Roleystone, Jarrahdale and Forrestfield districts there are some 600 children who come to Perth for higher education. Therefore, if the high school could be erected, much unnecessary travelling could be saved these children; and, as I said, there is a sufficient number of children in the district to warrant a high school at Armadale. I would particularly mention the children of Roleystone, who come down by bus. Many of them walk from Karragullen and other places to catch the bus at Roleystone. They then stand in the bus all the way to Perth. The journey occupies an hour. They have also to stand on the return journey. I submit those children are not in a fit condition, when they arrive at school in the morning, to receive the education that is to be imparted to them. Moreover, when they get home at night, they are far less able to do their homework, especially after having had to stand up for such a long time in the bus.

I suggest to the Minister, on account of the long period that elapses before the Public Works Department does these jobs, that

some liaison should be established between the Education Department—if necessary, as I said before, through the Public Works Department—with the local road boards in whose districts the schools are situated. I am certain much could be achieved in that way and work would be done in a matter of two or three weeks that now takes six to seven months.

Mr. Nimmo: And cheaper?

Mr. WILD: Yes. I mentioned that children travelled by train from Armadale to Perth. I am aware it is difficult to supervise them in a train with independent carriages, but would it not be possible to provide corridor carriages? A teacher, or some other person, could then be placed in charge of the children and maintain discipline during the journey. I think over 400 children travel by train from Armadale to Perth. I do not know what rollingstock the Railway Department has available, but it would be highly desirable to provide corridor carriages for these children, because, as I said, a teacher could be placed in charge of them to preserve decorum on the journey.

**MR. HOAR** (Nelson) [9.35]: I do not propose to address myself to the general subject of education on this Vote; but I desire to draw the Minister's attention to some of the regulations of the department in the hope that he might be able, at his convenience, to redress some anomalies, and in some cases, injustices, which I believe result from at least one of the regulations. I refer to the secondary school scholarship regulations. As members are aware, under this regulation 50 scholarships are provided each year to enable children to receive a higher education which will carry them through the Junior examination, and at the end of five years, the Leaving examination. The regulation governing these scholarships reads as follows:—

(3) A candidate for these scholarships shall—

(a) sit for the examination held in the year in which he attains his twelfth birthday;

(b) produce a certificate of industry and good conduct from the headteacher of the school at which he is attending when he becomes a candidate;

(c) have been resident in Australia for at least two years immediately preceding

the first day of January of the year in which the successful candidates will enter upon the scholarship.

Whilst this regulation might have been applicable to the conditions then existing—I believe it dates back to 1929—it no longer applies to present conditions. We are today, as we know full well, endeavouring to encourage, by immigration, British people and people from other countries to populate this State and help us to develop it. Because of this regulation, however, we find that children who today are arriving from England, and who would be eligible to sit for a similar examination in their own country, are denied the opportunity in the country of their adoption. It seems to me that it is discouraging to British immigrants to find that their children are denied the right to sit for an examination here until they have resided in the State for two years.

I know of one child in my own electorate who was recently refused under this regulation. There is no doubt whatever that the Director of Education was right in the action he took, because of the regulation I quoted, but the time has arrived when we should no longer discriminate between our children and children of other countries, particularly children from other parts of the British Empire. They should enjoy the same educational facilities as our own children. If the claim is advanced that even in these days our own children should receive preferential treatment, then the time has come for us to increase the number of scholarships to be made available by the department each year. It is a retrogressive step on our part to retain an outmoded, outdated regulation such as this, and I hope the Minister will give it his serious consideration.

Regulation No. 5 (a) of the Secondary School Scholarship Regulations provides that one-fifth of the total number of scholarships offered shall be reserved for pupils from country schools. The remaining four-fifths are distributed amongst the metropolitan children. If we study the population trends of the State, we shall find that approximately half of our children live in country areas, and consequently the time has arrived when there should be some relaxation of this regulation. It should be brought more into line with present day conditions and population trends. The policy

of the present Government, and its predecessors—who incidentally originated it—is to consolidate schools. Under this regulation, that policy will, in my opinion, deny numbers of children in country areas from ever having the right to sit for an examination to enter one of our secondary schools. I shall quote the regulation—

5 (a) A number of scholarships, not exceeding one-fifth of the total number offered, shall be reserved for pupils from country schools, provided that candidates of sufficient merit present themselves.

(b) A school located outside a radius of 20 miles of the Perth Railway Station with not more than four teachers and not within two miles of a school with more than four teachers shall be deemed a country school for the purposes of this section.

Our present policy of consolidating schools results in the closing down of scores of small one and two-teacher schools which have been eligible, because they have not four teachers, to be classed as country schools. The pupils of such schools would be eligible to sit for these examinations. But the moment the schools are consolidated and there are four or more teachers, the children are automatically debarred from sitting for the examination because of this 1929 regulation. I have heard the member for Murchison complain about the effect of regulations. In view of what I have said about these regulations, I consider the Minister ought to give his personal attention to them with a view to placing country children on the same footing as children in the metropolitan area. At present, most of the country children are denied the opportunity. Quite apart from the fact that the one-fifth proportion is not a fair deal to the country children in these days, their opportunities are further restricted as a result of the consolidation of schools.

Another matter I wish to mention is the bus services operating in country districts in order to further the policy of consolidation. It is well known that these bus services for children were started on the basis of one shilling per mile for the contractors. That was the accepted figure, which might have been varied one penny either way. During the latter part of the war, when the Government instituted this policy, it was only too pleased to encourage the contractors to put any sort of vehicle on the road, for the purpose of bringing children in to the larger schools. Consequently, at that

time we often saw on the roads Army vehicles converted into some sort of condition to carry children. Those vehicles cost perhaps £300 or £400, and in that case 1s. per mile was a reasonable figure to cover the outlay. The department's policy is a good one inasmuch as it now demands a better type of vehicle, but 1s. per mile is no longer sufficient to cover the cost.

The Minister for Education: None of them is now paid 1s. per mile.

Mr. HOAR: I realise that. I have checked the figures. For a bus meeting the requirements of the department today, the outlay is from £1,700 to £2,000.

The Minister for Education: Most of them are now paid 1s. 5d. per mile.

Mr. HOAR: I attended a meeting of all the bus-drivers and contractors in my area, and they agreed unanimously that not less than 1s. 6d. per mile should be paid to cover their outlay. I have figures from a banking point of view to prove that, in relation to the deposit that must be paid on that type of bus.

The Minister for Education: Many of them tendered at 1s. 4d. or 1s. 5d. a mile.

Mr. HOAR: That was to maintain what was already established, because they did not want to lose the contracts.

The Minister for Education: They must take some responsibility for that. We are very reasonable in meeting them when they put up a case.

Mr. HOAR: The case is already on the file, in all its detail, because I put it there myself. The 1s. 6d. should be the minimum and not the maximum. The department should not pay less than that to cover the outlay and wear and tear on a modern bus.

The Minister for Education: Some of them do other work apart from the transport of school children.

Mr. HOAR: I know that, but few of them do much other work, because they wish to keep their buses in order.

The Minister for Education: They might not, in your electorate, but in other places they do.

Mr. HOAR: There are special difficulties associated with the hilly country of the South-West, which I think should carry a higher price per mile than is paid in the flat

areas of the wheatbelt. I think the minimum should be 1s. 6d., plus any necessary addition to compensate for difficulties of a particular area. These buses, running over country roads, do a tremendous amount of damage, and the road boards and local governing authorities are expected to foot the bill. In some cases, inspectors of the Education Department have denied the right of the contractor to transport children over certain roads until the roads have been put in order by the local authority. I know of at least one such case. That throws on the local authorities the responsibility of striking higher rates in order to find the money to pay for this Government service, which really should be paid for out of general revenue. It would be more reasonable for an allocation of money to be paid each year for this purpose to the local authorities, particularly in hilly country where considerable damage is done to culverts, and so on, by the passage of school buses. Some of the roads have been put into dangerous condition by the heavy traffic of school buses and the road boards concerned are often not in a position to find the money needed to undertake essential repairs.

The Minister for Education: The Main Roads Board last year distributed £129,000 to road boards, with priority for those in whose areas there were school bus routes.

Mr. HOAR: Not much of it went to my electorate.

The Minister for Education: I believe £1,000 went to every board whose roads included a school bus route.

Mr. HOAR: That is news to me. I have been informed by the Manjimup Road Board that from time to time it has been unable to keep pace with repairs out of its own funds. If what the Minister says is correct, that is a step in the right direction. I trust I have given the Minister some information of value, and in particular with regard to the secondary school scholarships I would like him to give the matter his personal attention.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [9.50]: I feel that I must adopt a different role tonight and congratulate the Minister for Education on the good work he has done. I believe in giving praise where it is due. I

realise that the Minister has done an excellent job, particularly in the case of the new Quairading school, which is one of the most modern in Western Australia. He has implemented much of the policy of the previous Government, and it must be agreed that the consolidation of schools is an excellent idea. We will go a long way before we get a better man for the job than is the present Minister for Education, and, coming from me, that is praise indeed. I thank the Minister for what he has done on behalf of the whole State. He has shown no party bias but has done his work with complete impartiality. The approval of the department for school buildings is sometimes obtained, and then it is impossible for the architect to handle them. Mr. Clare, the Chief Architect, is a most capable officer, but he is overburdened with work. This causes delay in the school building programme.

The problem today is not so much to get a builder willing to do the work in country districts as to get an architect for the job. I am wondering how long Mr. Clare will be able to stand up to the strain under which he is at present working. Assistance should be given in that department. Although many road boards are increasing their rates considerably, they are unable to do all the urgent work, and men will not tender for school bus routes when they know that high-priced buses will be ruined in three or four years by the bad roads. In the case of some of the school bus routes that will be reasonably permanent, it might be possible to use the ribbon system of bituminising—two straight lines of bitumen. At present, some children are being carried up to 60 or 70 miles per day on school buses, and something will have to be done about the roads.

If conditions remain as they are at present, in a few years the shortage of buses will become acute. Country people today are enthusiastically supporting the policy of the Government with regard to the consolidation of schools. A few years ago, the mere mention of a bus service to bring children to a central school would have horrified many people, but today they are able to appreciate the benefits of that system. In that regard, the policy of the previous Government has been proved to be good and the department has continued to

implement that policy with excellent effect under the direction of the present Minister. We are fortunate in our Education Department officers, who are all keen to help in every way. I will not discuss any extreme views that some teachers may hold but rather would I pay a tribute to the Minister and his department for the great job they are doing for the State.

**MR. RODOREDA** (Roebourne) [9.55]: I am going to mention several matters of great interest to me, and I hope the Minister will refer to them when replying to the debate. So far, I have written to two Ministers for Education, the present Minister and his predecessor, with regard to one matter, but have received no reply. Admittedly, the letter I wrote to the previous Minister was forwarded only a short time before he left office. In those letters I referred to the question of the correspondence supervision allowance, which was introduced by the previous Government. The amount of that allowance has been added to by the present administration. I was given to understand that the policy of the previous Government was that the allowance should be paid to all parents who had children doing correspondence lessons, and I think that principle should apply, at least in the North-West of the State, with no strings at all attached to it. Unfortunately, we find that when the Education Department got hold of the arrangement, they tied strings to it and the only people now eligible to receive the supervision allowance are those who employ someone to teach their children.

The Minister for Education: It is not necessary for them to employ anyone.

**MR. RODOREDA**: They must employ someone, either to teach the children or to do the mother's work in the house while she does the teaching. That is the arrangement as I understand it, and to my mind that defeats the objective of making the allowance.

The Minister for Education: What was the objective?

**MR. RODOREDA**: From what I was told by the man who formulated the scheme, I presume the objective was to recompense the mother for the trouble to which she is put in teaching her children in addition to doing her housework. This correspondence

school work takes up the bulk of a mother's time. I have been interested in the system since its inception, and am well aware of what it involves. The mothers quite rightly expect to receive some reward for the great deal of extra trouble to which they are put. The position now is that only those who can afford to employ someone to teach the children or take over the mother's work in the house are granted the allowance.

Those most deserving of it are people who cannot afford to pay for assistance in the home, and in the North-West many people, even though they could afford assistance, cannot obtain it. The result of it all is that in fact many people who should not receive the allowance are getting it, while people working on stations in the North-West as managers or overseers, with no hope of employing assistance in the home, do not receive the allowance. That applies to almost all classes of workers. I hope the Minister will give the matter consideration and endeavour to formulate a scheme by means of which all the people of the North-West whose children are being taught by the correspondence system, will be paid this allowance. For about 15 years I have been trying without success to have a residence provided for the school teacher at Onslow. I believe that is the only settlement on the coast where no residence is provided for the teacher. Until recently this meant that a single man or girl had to be sent to that township to teach, and had of necessity to stay at the hotel. That is not at all a desirable state of affairs. If there were a residence a married teacher would be sent there as would happen in most other districts, but it is practically impossible for a teacher to go to Onslow because there is no house provided.

At the moment there is an exceptionally capable teacher at Onslow and he is fortunate in occupying a house which was recently vacated by a police officer who has been transferred from the district. The teacher is now living in that house with his wife and children but if it is decided to send another police officer there, which is quite probable in the near future, the teacher will have no option but to live with his wife and family at the hotel or else obtain a transfer to another centre. While I realise it is rather hopeless to get a building erected under present circumstances, I think that



if the Minister made inquiries he might be able to purchase a building situated near the school at Onslow which would provide quite a desirable type of residence.

**MR. BRADY** (Guildford-Midland) [9.59]: There are several matters which have been brought to my notice. In the first place, the school sites committee, of which I understand one of the Education Department officers is a member, recently decided on what it considers is a suitable area for a school. I have here a letter recently written by Mr. O'Mahoney, Chief Administrative Officer of the Education Department, to Miss E. H. Hooten, Hon. Secretary of the W.A. Federation of Parents & Citizens' Associations, which reads—

I am in receipt of your letter of 14th February and thank you for furnishing the list of branches of the Parents & Citizens' Association. In reply to Mr. Corboy's inquiry, I have to advise you that the ruling concerning areas necessary for school sites was given by the School Sites Committee at a meeting of the committee held on 20th August, 1948.

The ruling is as follows:—

The minimum area requirements for school sites are—

Primary schools .. ..	5 acres
High schools .. ..	10 acres
Area schools .. ..	20 acres

In regard to that ruling, I received a protest from the Midland and District Council of the Parents & Citizens' Associations on these lines—

At the last meeting of the above council the following resolution was carried: That we protest against area 10 acres considered suitable for high schools as we consider that a high school requires at least two football grounds, 14 acres approximately, two hockey grounds 5 acres approximately, tennis courts, four courts to 5 acres approximately, and provision made for all sports.

This motion was the result of a discussion on the enclosed letter from the Education Department and speaks for itself. The above council is very concerned with the position and would like every endeavour made to see that this latest decision of the department is altered to conform more with the wishes of the parents and citizens in this district.

I am in accord with the contents of that letter. Quite close to where I am at present residing I believe a site has been chosen for a high school. I understand the maximum area available is 11 acres. In my opinion, although the area might be suitable for a primary school, it is totally unsuitable for

a high school. The ground is undulating, quite boggy, and there is very little flat country whereon any sports, which may be conducted by the school, could be played. I believe that in this State and, in fact, in Australia as a whole, we are entering into a new phase of education.

The public generally are beginning to realise the value of education and the value of being associated with schools after school leaving age. Apart from that, there are quite a number of sporting activities which are now followed but which did not create any interest in the early days of education. If we consider the matter for a moment, any school—and it may be a high school—can allow only two teams out of 300 children to play on a ground of an area of 4½ acres. If a larger area than 10 acres is not provided then I can see, in a few years, quite a number of protests coming from high and other schools because of the lack of playing space. We are entering into a new phase of education in Western Australia. By that I mean that Parents & Citizens' Associations are taking a keen interest in the after-school activities and also in the existing work of the schools.

I recently attended a Parents and Citizens' Association meeting where not only were adults present but also a number of young people who had just left school. They were encouraged to come back to the school and avail themselves of a library scheme provided for them and also to interest themselves in the activities of the Parents and Citizens' Association generally. I listened the other evening to a member who spoke of the activity of the Como Parents and Citizens' Association in that it had built a hall in the school grounds. If we think a few years ahead we will realise that these associations will be clamouring for new halls in other school grounds, and extra space will be required for sporting needs. In addition, we may have requests for hostels to be built in the school districts. I feel the time is opportune to take up larger areas for schools while land is cheap.

We all know that population is flocking into the State in considerable numbers, comprising both adults and children, and that will impose a big strain on existing schools. Whilst ground is relatively cheap in the vicinity of schools at present, bigger areas should be resumed and even if they are not

used for educational purposes they could quite easily be used for other objects. We do not know how far visual education will progress. In a few years I can see that there may be an agitation by Parents and Citizens' Associations for the erection of proper halls for visual education. The existing schools are not built for cinematographic purposes and visual education generally, and in a short time proper halls and facilities adjoining schools will be required. It is necessary that all these things should be centralised in one educational area in the various districts.

Another matter I wish to raise is the sending of young girls into the country districts as teachers. We have heard a number of complaints about young people leaving school after a great deal of money has been spent on them, and I will now mention one of the reasons why they leave the country areas. Recently a young lady teacher was sent to a country district and she found that the only accommodation available was at a hotel where she had to pay three guineas a week for board and lodging. As the member for Roebourne has pointed out, a hotel is not a suitable place for a young lady to reside in because of the lack of social amenities and facilities for after school studies. This young lady, after much trouble was able to locate a local family who were good enough to take her in. Imagine her surprise when, after getting settled there she was told she was to be transferred almost immediately to another country district not more than 200 miles distant. The young lady could see herself going through the same difficulties again and she did contemplate resigning. Fortunately, commonsense prevailed with the officers of the department and it was agreed that she should remain after a number of people had interested themselves in her case. Such situations should not occur because young people today are already experiencing enough difficulties. This sort of thing has been going on long enough and it should not require half a dozen people to obviate it.

I am pleased to see the Minister is encouraging visual education and I hope that policy will be continued. I also hope that one phase of visual education will be fostered which, so far as I am aware, has not been encouraged by the department to date.

I refer to the provision of "Safety First" films for children. Unfortunately, in these days a lot of children do not realise the dangers which may beset them whilst they are going to school, on foot, riding bicycles or travelling in trains or buses. I believe that "Safety First" films would make the children realise some of the dangers that exist. If the Minister will consider the matter for a moment he will realise the value of introducing such films into the visual educational scheme.

Regarding the erection of the Midland and Districts High School, which I, like other members am anxious to see built in Midland Junction, it distresses me to see the number of commercial and industrial concerns of huge dimensions that are erecting structures in the metropolitan area whilst the building of important edifices such as hospitals and schools is being neglected. Midland Junction, I understand, was promised a high school before the war.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Fremantle was promised one fifteen years ago.

Mr. BRADY: I think Midland Junction was promised one 20 years ago, but Fremantle got in first. I have recently been told that Midland Junction is to get an infants' school, but in fact, we require two infants' schools and a high school. I am concerned as to what the feeling will be in the near future if something is not done to provide a high school. It is strange that industrial and commercial firms in Perth can erect buildings of huge dimensions while such schools are neglected. What is more strange is that the bricks for the construction of buildings for industrial establishments are being carried to Perth from a site within a mile of Midland Junction. It is also strange that while bricks are being carried out of the Midland Junction area, weatherboards, asbestos sheets, plaster sheeting etc., are being transported from Perth to Midland Junction.

Mr. May: That is overlapping.

Mr. BRADY: That is an unnecessary overlapping. At an early date I hope the Minister will be able to announce that a high school has been decided upon for Midland Junction and that early consideration will be given to the provision of larger areas for the various schools, whether it be a primary school, a high school or other-

wise. I feel that we must take a long-range view, because in 20 years' time land that can now be bought for a pound or two will cost £5, £10, and £15 an acre in a few years. We will require all those grounds because of the great influx of population to this State.

**MR. ACKLAND** (Irwin-Moore) [10.13]: I listened with considerable interest and great satisfaction to the Minister for Education when introducing his Estimates and I congratulate him and the Government upon the great progress that has been made during the past twelve months. The Minister told us that more progress had been made in education during the year than in any other similar period in the history of the State. I believe that to be a fact, but it is only what should be expected because, on the hustings, members of the present Cabinet promised that, if returned to office, they would provide more and better schools, train more teachers, make more facilities available and step up education generally throughout the State, not forgetting the children in the outback areas.

Anyone who listened attentively to the Minister must admit that this has been done. I am of opinion that it was, to say the least, very ungenerous on the part of the former Minister for Education to speak immediately afterwards and do his utmost to depreciate the good work that has been done. I hope that before the debate concludes, figures quoted in that speech will be corrected because some of them appeared to me to be very weak.

Before the last election I had occasion to visit every school in my electorate, and though I was conversant with the conditions at many of them, I was surprised to find the poor state of the buildings, the general overcrowding and the teaching of children being carried on in all sorts of improvised places. Nobody would blame the previous Government for not having provided facilities during the war years. Anyone with a desire to be fair would agree that it was practically impossible during that time to meet requirements. I do not believe that the conditions in my electorate, however, differ much from those in other districts, and the state of educational facilities in my electorate revealed the neglect not of six

years but of a period nearer to 20 years. Previous Governments had neglected educational requirements, particularly in the country districts, for a very long period indeed, and it is all the more gratifying that in the short space of time this Government has been in power, it should have accomplished so much.

In my electorate I found very many vacant and deserted schools. The statement has been made that I have criticised the policy of consolidating country schools. That is not a fact. I have criticised the consolidation of schools and the bringing of children to already over-crowded schools before facilities were provided for their accommodation. In various centres in my electorate, schools were spread over three or four buildings in the town because bus services had been inaugurated to bring children in from surrounding districts without provision having been made for their accommodation.

Halls, shops, verandahs and buildings that were never intended for educational purposes were being used, places where children could not be given reasonable education and where it was unfair to ask the teaching staff to work. I approve of consolidated schools. I believe they represent a very good move, but I say this policy should be put into effect when buildings are available. It is quite wrong to have little country schools empty and deserted while children from those parts are being conveyed to larger schools that cannot accommodate them.

On more than one occasion the Minister has stated his intention to deal with the most serious and most deserving cases—cases where the greatest hardship was being encountered—before dealing with the larger schools, and I think he has done that particularly in my area. We have places such as Mil-ling, Pithara, Ballidu and Cadoux where conditions have been improved and I give credit for the improvement at Cadoux to the previous Government which had authorised the work. I understand the previous Government had authorised an expenditure of £2,300 to provide school facilities at that small centre. Today we have a school there which was opened in the last fortnight and which cost a little over £4,000. I understand it is serving the children well and giving much satisfaction.

I do not want the Minister to run away with the idea that, because those things have been done, all that is necessary has been accomplished. We have several other schools in the district, at Dalwallinu, Moora and Watheroo, every one of which is overcrowded and has to provide accommodation outside the building. At Wongan Hills the children are accommodated all over the town in improvised buildings, one of which is 30 chains away from the school. It is impossible for the headmaster to look after the children and assist the junior teachers under such conditions. I hope that the Minister will give me an assurance that something will be done to improve the conditions at the centres I have mentioned. With consolidated schools should go provision for boarding accommodation.

It would be far better for the Government to encourage local governing authorities, parents and citizens' associations and similar organisations to provide boarding facilities for country children. We have a notable example of what can be accomplished in this way at Koorda. That is not in my electorate, but in the electorate of the member for Mt. Marshall. At Dalwallinu the people have converted existing buildings and Army huts into suitable boarding establishments for children, who are catered for at a reasonable cost to the parents during the school days of the week. I am certain it would be far better for the Government to assist such organisations, where necessary, even to the extent of making them a subsidy, than to build boarding-houses at centres such as I have mentioned.

The aim of the Education Department should be to provide proper boarding facilities for school children. I am aware there are many other matters that should first claim the attention of the department, but this is one of great importance. If the children are living together under conditions such as I have indicated, it will be of considerable help to them. I would also like the Minister to give attention to the provision of an agricultural school for the wheatbelt areas. We have already two fine institutions, one at Narrogin which is providing agricultural education for the children of the Great Southern district. At Denmark we have another school catering for the dairying section of our primary produc-

tion. (We have no schools, however, in which children can be taught in the wheat growing and sheep growing districts. We must bear in mind that it is from those districts that the State is receiving a great deal of wealth. I ask the Minister to give consideration to the provision of such a school north of the East-West railway. That is where the greater part of the wheat of the State is grown.

Without wishing to be parochial, I ask the Minister to give consideration to providing such a school at the light lands farm at Wongan Hills. That institution is doing a great deal for the light lands of the State. As we have so many million acres of this type of country still unimproved, it seems to me that the big reserve at the light lands farm could be used for the establishment of an agricultural school. The member for Wagin has suggested to me that we already have such an institution at Muresk. That is not the case. Muresk is an agricultural college something totally different. I would not ask any Government to duplicate that college. If necessary, it could be extended. It would be better to enlarge the existing facilities and not separate them in different parts of the State, because when it comes to higher agriculture the principle applies no matter in what district or what State or country a person may be.

Although the principle of consolidated schools is a fine one, I would ask the Minister to consult with the people in the various districts where small schools are situated before compelling the children to attend a consolidated school. I know of three centres where the community spirit is very strong and where there is adequate accommodation for the children. Whilst the children are in the junior classes, it is far better that they should be attending schools in their own districts. Later, when they are older, they can attend the high schools where boarding facilities would be provided for them. There are many places in the State—three in which I am vitally interested—where the people will strongly oppose the closing of their schools and the moving of their children into bigger centres, whether by bus or other means. I hope the Minister will give some consideration to the feelings of those people. Finally, I want again to congratulate the Government on what it has done for education during the short period it has been in office. I agree with the Minister entirely

when he says that we have made the greatest progress in education during the State's history.

[*Mr. Brand took the Chair.*]

**MR. LESLIE** (Mt. Marshall) [10.31]: From the number of members who have spoken on this Vote, the Government will obtain some idea of the growing importance that they attach to the department. I believe the greater interest taken by members of Parliament in educational matters is a reflection of the increased interest being taken in this activity by the general public. Any statement made by a Minister, a member of Parliament or anyone holding a responsible position in connection with education is very carefully digested by the people. It is because statements were made here the other night when we were discussing this department that I particularly address myself to the subject now. I refer to the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle in regard to the inclusion of the living away from home allowance to children in Class IV school areas. It would appear from the statement of the hon. member that in extending the benefits to those children the Government was actually doing the districts a disservice. I am concerned in this regard because I have unstintingly lauded the Government for what I consider to be a generous and wise action on its part, and I still stand where I stood prior to the remarks of the hon. member to whom I have referred.

I agree that the number of children who could attend a Class IV school would possibly be reduced because of the fact that some are encouraged to go outside their district to attend a school, and obtain the living away from home allowance. But I do not see that the school would be handicapped, because the department is undoubtedly aware of the home address of every one of those children. I see this position arising: If in a district the number of children receiving the living away from home allowance were such that their attendance would affect the school by enabling it to be raised to a higher standard, then undoubtedly the department must and would raise the standard.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: No, it would not.

Mr. LESLIE: I am not prepared to debate the point with the hon. member because

I have greater faith in the commonsense of the officers of the department than he apparently has.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: A school is classified on the average attendance over 12 months; not the supposed attendance.

Mr. LESLIE: I am prepared to agree that that is so, and the possible attendance may not in the past have been taken into consideration. But we can anticipate that we are progressing beyond the stage when we were guided by mere formalities. I cannot conceive of any department being content to pay out considerable sums of money by way of living away from home allowances when there is no necessity to do so.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Can you imagine any Minister for Education withdrawing, in the middle of the year, the allowance for children who were already receiving it?

Mr. LESLIE: I cannot imagine the Education Department raising the class of a school in the middle of the year, either.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That has been done.

Mr. LESLIE: Possibly, where circumstances have been, well, not ordinary. It would happen in exceptional circumstances, and I think that if the Minister then thought the number of children in a district, receiving the living away from home allowance would justify the school being raised in standard, some arrangement would be made for that to be done. If he withdrew the allowance, the people would know they would have the children the following year. The main thing is this, that every child must be accounted a little more as an individual than merely a member of a group. The children of these districts are not being deprived of anything worth while by this; everyone is getting a better education than he would obtain if we abided by something which in the past has been, I think, decided more on parsimonious lines than a desire to do the greatest good for the greatest number.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is definitely wrong.

Mr. LESLIE: I am guided by the facts as they stand.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It is done upon the advice of officers whose business it is to consider these matters.

Mr. LESLIE: I cannot argue that point, and I do not propose to do so, in regard to the qualifications of those officers, their vision and their outlook. They must to some extent still be advising the Government, but the Government indicates to them its desires, and that is how a circumstance like this is brought about. I have given the Government considerable praise for the action it has taken in this connection, and I do not for one moment consider that either I or the Government has done the wrong thing. I would not like the impression to be gained, in my district at any rate, that the wrong thing had been done. So I mention the matter here to put it right. I am quite satisfied that the member for North-East Fremantle could have placed the matter in a different light if it were not for his urgent desire to pick on any possible point with which to assail the present Minister.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Of course, that is not true.

Mr. LESLIE: I am not sure whether the medical examination of school children comes within the ambit of the present discussion, but I feel that it does because we are dealing with schools and school children. There has been—I speak only for my own electorate—some activity in the dental examination of children, but it has not been enough.

The Minister for Education: We are at present trying to get four more dentists from overseas.

Mr. LESLIE: I am glad to know that the Minister is alive to the fact that the present position is not satisfactory. I am concerned that more attention should be given to the examination of eyesight in our schools. I am sure the member for North-East Fremantle, or anyone else with a knowledge of education, will agree that defective eyesight can play a bigger part than almost any other physical defect in limiting the progress of a child's education. The child may suffer from some sight defect unknown to it or to its parents and the defect may be such as can be detected only by an expert. Even the ordinary medical practitioner might not be able to find it. I believe the eyesight of our children should be given a more thorough examination than can be given by the ordinary medical officer who makes the routine inspection of our schools.

I ask the Government to investigate the possibility of including an eye specialist among its itinerant medical examiners. It may not be necessary to go to the extent of engaging a highly qualified man, but there should be many in this State, with a knowledge of that work over and above that of the average medical practitioner, whose services would be valuable in this connection. Surely such a man could be engaged, even if only for a portion of the year. The Minister referred to the difficulty that is caused by the separation of the Departments of Education and Works, and the Treasury. If that difficulty persists the Minister has no one but himself to blame, and I have absolutely no sympathy for him.

No less than three years ago I stated in this Chamber that it was time a new system was instituted—I knew only of the delays that occur due to the necessity for going from one department to the other—in order to overcome the difficulty. I know that very often the Education Department loses sight of its recommendations entirely while they are being passed back and forth between the Treasury and the Public Works Department. It is high time that the Education Department—the Health Department also for that matter—had its own works department. Surely officers of the Education Department have a better knowledge of what is required for educational purposes than has an engineer who is concerned solely with stresses and strains. They know much more about the requirements of hygiene and convenience in new school buildings or of additions, and extensions to schools, which at present seem to be matters for draftsmen and architects in the Public Works Department.

The average housewife knows what she wants in her home. She is prepared to be guided on the technical side by the specialist, but she is well aware of what she requires, and that applies equally to officers and experts of the Education Department. It is high time we departed from the established principle of laying down standards for building to be applied right from the North-West to the southern coast, regardless of climatic conditions or any other consideration. I have no sympathy for the Minister in any difficulties he may have in this regard, because he should by now have been able to inform members that he had established a works department of his own to deal with

the building activities of his department. Perhaps the Minister should read what I said in this regard three years ago.

The Minister for Education: What materials would you use for building today?

Mr. LESLIE: I cannot advise the Minister in that regard, but it would be of some encouragement if the Minister could say he was looking round to see what could be done in this direction.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Is not the housewife in the same relationship to the architect and builder as the Education Department is to the Principal Architect and the Public Works Department?

The Minister for Education: I will make the hon. member understand that later on.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That will save me the trouble of doing it.

Mr. LESLIE: No one blames the previous Government for the position that exists today, so far as it is due to difficulties that arose during the war. I agree with the member for Irwin-Moore that the present state of affairs would never have arisen were it not for the fact that the limitations of the war period aggravated a position that had already become very bad.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: We could not do anything during the depression.

Mr. LESLIE: There was a considerable lapse of years between the depression and the war.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Was there?

Mr. LESLIE: A period of at least six years. The depression and the war years were two very fortunate factors for the previous Government, which used them as an excuse—

Mr. Kelly: Surely there were also the shortage of materials and labour, and the 40-hour week?

Mr. LESLIE: Members on the then opposition side of the Chamber were as much aware—perhaps not to the same degree—as were members on the Government side of all the shortages, but unfortunately we were not told of what the then Government was attempting to do to overcome the difficulties that existed, and we saw no indication of its intentions.

Mr. Marshall: You are as blind as a bat.

Mr. LESLIE: I do admit that the shortages are there but at least this Government is attempting to do something about them, and that is the essential difference between the two administrations.

Mr. Marshall: It has never attempted to do anything but follow the policies laid down for it by the previous Government.

Mr. LESLIE: I have in front of me a file laid on the Table of the House this session in reply to questions asked by the member for North-East Fremantle in connection with the erection of school buildings by this Government. After hearing the hon. member the other evening I referred to the file. When the hon. member was speaking I was rather intrigued and thought that I had done a wonderful job because seven of the buildings referred to had been erected in my electorate.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Seven what?

Mr. LESLIE: New additions and extensions to schools. I considered that seven out of a total of 43 was a darned good average.

Mr. May: No wonder we're short!

Mr. LESLIE: In order to make certain, I decided to look up the file to check the figures. I intended to go out to my electorate in order to tell my people what a wonderful job the Government was doing, and how well the electorate had been looked after by having seven out of 43 of the buildings erected in it. Unfortunately I found that the member for North-East Fremantle had miscounted by 25, and the number of additions and new buildings was 68.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is a lot of nonsense.

Mr. LESLIE: When the hon. member was speaking and referring to this list, the Minister for Education, by interjection, said "How many" or words to that effect. The hon. member replied stating that there were about 43 and the Minister then said "That is not all on the list." That is what intrigued me, and on looking at the file I found that there were 68.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: There were 68 what?

Mr. LESLIE: There were 68 school buildings in the course of erection or whatever the hon. member was referring to when he stated that the number was 43.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You are adding two columns together.

Mr. LESLIE: I am not. On looking at the file I found that my balloon had been pricked because I had only seven out of 68. One of them was the Goomalling school which the member for North-East Fremantle will undoubtedly remember. That school was one mentioned in the Policy speech of the Leader of the Country and Democratic League who is now the Minister for Education.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I do not think that is right.

Mr. LESLIE: He referred to it in my presence. In a comparatively short time that difficulty was overcome. I have introduced deputations, read letters and made speeches in this House on the subject during the term of the previous Government, and within a short time of this Government taking over the difficulty was overcome. We have not got all we want there yet, I would remind the Minister, in case he should become complacent.

The Minister for Education: You will never be satisfied.

Mr. LESLIE: However, something was done. I offer that as evidence that something has been achieved.

Mr. Hegney: Did you have a look?

Mr. Graham interjected.

Mr. LESLIE: Had the hon. member given me notice of that question I would have directed him to copies of "Hansard" and correspondence which would give him an idea of how much I looked at it. Nevertheless I do want to refer to the fact that I have in my electorate seven schools which were all in difficulties and were badly in need of attention, and which came under this Government's construction programme.

Mr. Kelly: You got far more than your share.

Mr. LESLIE: No, I did not.

Mr. Kelly: You did.

Mr. LESLIE: I got what was necessary and in some cases I may have got something which is less than I might have had I been prepared to wait a little while longer.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. LESLIE: I am attempting to do so. Mr. Chairman, and if members will let me—

Mr. Yates: How many schools have you in your electorate?

Mr. LESLIE: About 40.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the hon. member ignore the interjections and make some progress towards finality with his speech.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESLIE: I intend to leave the question because I have satisfied the Committee on the point. However, I wish to take this opportunity of saying to the Minister that I do appreciate what has been done for education in my electorate, but in my opinion some of the buildings are temporary measures only.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Are not there buildings listed on the file which have not yet been commenced?

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: He would not know.

Mr. Kelly: You have not given an analysis of the figures.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: You had better read the list.

Mr. LESLIE: I do not intend to read the list.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. May: I think you should read it.

Mr. LESLIE: I think members are trying to get me off my high school and I do not intend to be put off in that way. If the Minister will look at the files he will find that Wyalkatchem had a fairly high priority for a high school. I think the member for North-East Fremantle, who is the ex-Minister for Education, will bear me out in contention that Wyalkatchem enjoyed high priority on the list for the construction of a post-war junior high school. I suggest to the present Minister that far from its having been lowered on the list, it should be put further up because of the development which has taken place in the district. A number of children have been added to the school, there are a number of prospective children to be added to it, and there are a number of prospective children coming into the district. That should justify the school being placed on a higher priority.

Mr. May: It will be scrubbed altogether.



**Mr. LESLIE:** I am satisfied that it is impossible for it to be scrubbed, because to scrub it would be a definite injustice. I am hoping that when the Government does commence with the junior high school programme—although I agree with the necessity for primary schools and that they should have first priority—the Wyalkatchem district will get consideration because both myself and the people in my electorate are most concerned and we are anticipating that the school will be not less than third on the list.

**HON. J. B. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [10.59]: I would like to say a word or two before the Education Estimates are passed. There has been a lot said about high schools during the debate and my Johnny-come-lately friend from Mt. Marshall has had a lot to say about a high school in his district. In my district we have been promised one for 19 years. We received a definite promise and still nothing has been done. I do not intend to blame this Government but I am going to blame a Government of the same colour, and that is the Mitchell-Latham Government and the Government that immediately succeeded it. I do not intend to make any political capital out of this matter. Both those Governments were to blame. In 1929 a deputation waited on the then Minister for Education and he told the deputation this—

He agreed with the deputation that a high school for Fremantle was long overdue. He said the request had his complete sympathy. He realised last year that the establishment of a Fremantle high school could not be long delayed, and for that reason had refrained from making additions to the central schools. Whether the new school could be financed at present was a matter beyond the control of either himself, or the Treasurer. However, Fremantle had waited patiently for a long time, and he would do his best.

He had had frequent requests from country districts, and in all his replies, he had given them clearly to understand that the next high school must be at Fremantle.

He could promise nothing immediately, except his vigorous support. He would interview the Treasurer as soon as possible, and he trusted he would have no difficulty in getting his sanction to the placing of a sufficient amount of money on the Estimates to make a start with the building.

Those words were spoken on 3rd July, 1929.

**Hon. A. H. Panton:** You will have the power house now, instead.

**Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN:** A few months after that Government went out of office, the Mitchell-Latham Government was returned to power and, although there were materials to burn, the high school was not built. That Government employed men to dig grass off the streets, providing two days work a week for them. The succeeding Government improved upon that arrangement a little, but still did not build a high school at Fremantle. Those were the days when the school should have been built. Plenty of materials and labour were available, but the Government told us there was no money.

I believe that, if the member for Murchison had had his way, he could have shown the Government where to get the money. When there is a depression, we are told there is no money for such works although there is plenty of material. I do not blame any Government for not carrying on such work during the war period because we know what the state of the material market was at that time, but I repeat that the school should have been built during the depression years.

Members have told us that they have waited three, four or five years for a school. Nineteen years ago we were promised a high school. We had been very patient up to that time and have been more patient since. I trust that the present Government, before going out of office in 1950, will see that a high school is built at Fremantle. If that is done, it will be merely a matter of honouring the promise of previous Governments. It is most important that a high school should be built at Fremantle; in fact, as I have stated, it should have been built 20 years ago.

**MR. REYNOLDS** (Forrest) [11.2]: I am afraid that I am not as happy about the school position in my electorate as the member for Irwin-Moore is about the position in his district. I should like to be able to congratulate the Minister for Education, but unfortunately I cannot do so. Brunswick Junction has been clamouring for a school for many years. Last year the Parents and Citizens' Association invited me to attend one of its meetings. I did so and, as a result, made representa-

tions to the Education Department and later asked questions in the House. I received certain promises, but unfortunately nothing has been done.

It appears that some move was made two years ago but that a decision could not be reached on the question of a suitable site. Last year I approached the department and suggested that suitable land might be resumed. This was done and the land was thus made available for a school, but apparently many years will elapse before a school will be built. The Minister will recall that I have approached him on several occasions, pointing out that the present school is over-crowded and in a bad state of repair and that the district is a fast-developing one. I should be pleased if the Minister could give me some indication when the school at Brunswick Junction is likely to be built.

The Donnybrook school is also in a bad state of repair. Last year I approached the department and the Minister and this year did likewise. While other members seem to be getting some of the good things that are going, my electorate is evidently being neglected, and this not through any lack of energy on my part. At the Mornington school, I have been endeavouring for some years to get repairs effected. I know the difficulty there because the school is owned by Millars' Timber & Trading Company.

The Minister for Education: I think that a majority of the 650 schools in the State need looking into.

Mr. REYNOLDS: I realise that the Minister is trying to do the best possible, but it appears to me that some of the schools in my electorate have been overlooked. Another urgent matter is the lack of accommodation for school teachers. The Parents and Citizens' Association of Jarrahdale approached me on the subject of the accommodation provided for the teacher. He is a married man and with his wife and a child of four or five months, is living in two rooms. He does not like complaining, but something ought to be done for them. Some places seem to have accommodation for teachers, but teachers are not occupying it. Surely some better arrangement could be made so that married teachers could be sent to schools where suitable accommodation is available! Single teachers should not be sent to schools where

housing is provided for married couples. I hope the Minister will have these cases investigated, and that something will be done. I could mention many more schools in my district, but I have already brought their needs under the notice of the department.

### THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

(Hon. A. F. Watts—Katanning—in reply) [11.8]: It is not my intention to allow the remarks of members on these Estimates to pass without some comment. It might be as well if I deal first of all with the larger question of school buildings. The position may be summarised in the interjection I made a few moments ago in reply to the member for Forrest when he asked that some particular schools in his area should be looked into. I told him that I was of opinion that the great majority of the 650 primary schools or thereabouts in the State required looking into. I must say that I agree substantially with the remarks of other members this evening that the situation now existing has not been and could not be the product of the last six or seven years, and certainly is not, and could not be, the product of neglect in the last 18 months, but has resulted from what appears to me to have been at one time a studied policy of leaving, and indeed creating, inferior premises and then proceeding to neglect them.

When I review the fact that in the last 24 years there have been 20 years of a Government comprised of those who lend adherence to the party opposite to me to-night, and 4½ years of those who lend adherence to those with whom I am associated, then, as I have frequently said, and again repeat, the preceding Labour Governments must accept 20/24ths of the responsibility and that is a substantial proportion. If 500 schools require attention at present, I suggest that about 450 were the direct responsibility of these previous Governments. It will not be an easy matter to try to meet a fraction of the claims put forward, because, even if we had no other problems to deal with, even if we were able to take from other types of activity all the building forces available in the State and all the building materials available in the State, and concentrate them upon school buildings, it would not be possible under five years to

comply with the demands made by members of this Chamber and by their constituents.

We must therefore face up to the fact that much remains to be done. I very frankly face up to that fact. I do not claim by any means that it is possible to remedy the position, but I do say without fear of successful contradiction that much more has been done in the past 18 months to remedy the position than was done in the 20 years which preceded the war. I have left out the war period, because I do not wish to be unfair in the slightest degree. There were isolated cases where, in that long period, some monument was erected. I can, for example, cite the monumental effort of the Perth Girls' School. Even at that time it was the subject of some criticism in this House, as to whether it did not extract from what pool was then available too great a proportion for one undertaking, in view of the fact, as the member for Forrest himself indicated, that there has been a long period of years when some districts with which he was associated required better treatment. But that school stands today as a monument both to its originators and its architects and builders. It is serving an extremely useful purpose and my only regret is that we have not more of such schools.

Having all these things in mind, and also remembering what I thought was a very reasonable approach—entirely without party political bias—to this question when I introduced the Estimates, I was surprised that the member for North-East Fremantle did not refer to the matter in somewhat different terms from those that he did; because obviously it was his intention to indicate to the Committee and the public that such efforts as had been made to make a start to proceed with a partial remedy of the situation I have just discussed, were virtually negligible. He was good enough to quote from a list which the Premier, in my absence, tabled in response to a question from him. The list was made up by officers of the Department of Education and if their veracity is to be impugned, or my own veracity impugned, it does not very much matter, because I say that the statement tabled was correct. There were 68 names of schools upon it. The member for North-East Fremantle claimed that I had said at Bunbury that 39 new schools were being erected.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Not only did you say it, but the Premier said it. He said it in Perth.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Was the hon. member at Bunbury to know what I said?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: No. You were reported as saying it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is better.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The Premier is reported as having said it in Perth.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We will come to the point in a moment. I shall deal with the Press statement. I told the hon. member what I said when I was replying to a subsequent question.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I accepted it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I said there were 39 new buildings in various stages of completion.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: And I suggest that the stages commenced when we got Treasury approval and finished when the buildings were finished.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: They were not under construction.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: My words were, "towards completion."

Mr. Kelly: They were only approved.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Certainly. They can make no progress until they are approved. If the hon. member will look at the "Government Gazette" for the past few weeks, he will find that tenders were called for one work and another.

Mr. Kelly: Why did you not call for tenders in centres where the work is most likely to be carried out?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Very often they are advertised in those areas.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: And very often no tenders are received.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is true.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Would you say those buildings were under construction?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I did not say that. The hon. member said he accepted my assurance, and that was my phraseology, that the buildings were at

various stages towards completion. That, I suggest, was a truthful statement.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Very misleading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Not at all, as I will prove in a minute or two.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Very misleading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I would remind the member for North-East Fremantle that it is quite possible for the Press to leave out words even from written statements that are given to it, as I indicated to him yesterday in a small matter that came under our joint notice. That was the position. I shall now analyse this matter. The list tabled by the Premier sets out the names of 68 schools. It excludes, however, six small jobs which have just been finished and for which approval was given during the months of April, May and June of 1947. Those small jobs were at Pithara, Kojonup, Gnowangerup, Kellerberrin, Marvel Loch and Kalgarin, and their total cost was £3,000. Of the 68 schools, 17 were approved prior to the 1st April, 1947. They were—

	£
Cadoux .. .. .	2,396
Haig .. .. .	1,523
Carnarvon .. .. .	24,448
South Bunbury .. .. .	11,121
Pantapin .. .. .	595
Widgiemooltha .. .. .	405
Leederville Technical .. .. .	46,570
Leederville Trades Block .. .. .	17,200
Narrogin .. .. .	850
Merredin .. .. .	1,945
North Kalgoorlie, South Kalgoorlie and Eastern Goldfields High .. .. .	7,500
Bridgetown .. .. .	899
Busselton .. .. .	11,060
Koorda .. .. .	495
Big Bell .. .. .	1,102
	<hr/>
	128,109

The figure for Carnarvon was, I think, originally larger; the figure I have now stated is the present proposed expenditure. The amount of £128,109 represents expenditure for works some of which had not been started, some of which had been commenced and some of which were shortly afterwards completed, while some are still in course of construction, including the finalisation of the Leederville school blocks, which are almost finished. The ones I have quoted were the 17 which were included in the list and were

those outstanding for which Treasury approval had been obtained prior to the 1st April, 1947.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What about Cunderdin?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Cunderdin is not included in the list because the school was at the time well on the way to construction.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: On what date was it well on the way to construction?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: On the 1st April, 1947.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I do not think it was.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Then I have been misinformed. I think, anyway, the tender was let. My belief is that when that is done, it is well on the way towards completion.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That is one method of reasoning.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Those are the 17 to which reference was made in an earlier speech. The following are the ones subsequent to the 1st April, 1947:—

	£
Glenorchy .. .. .	900
Burracoppin .. .. .	1,350
Quairading .. .. .	28,262
Tuart Hill .. .. .	23,200
Tambellup .. .. .	14,000
Chadoora .. .. .	309
Cleomine .. .. .	474
Wanneroo .. .. .	455
Miling .. .. .	553
Meekatharra .. .. .	921
Bencubbin .. .. .	1,325
Newdegate .. .. .	1,250
Katanning .. .. .	8,750
Denmark .. .. .	1,300
Brookton .. .. .	1,434
Balingup .. .. .	533
Graylands .. .. .	7,500
North Inglewood .. .. .	8,700
Claremont Infants .. .. .	4,000
Eden Hill .. .. .	4,225
Applecross .. .. .	800
Rivervale .. .. .	6,395
Bicton .. .. .	3,314

Of those, Quairading is well on the way towards completion, and so is Tuart Hill. Contracts, to my knowledge, have been let in respect to Newdegate and North Inglewood, which is well on the way to completion, and Eden Hill and Rivervale are in the same position. Others are in course of erection, as members representing the

various districts will be well aware. Of the 68 in that list, 17 were approved prior to the 1st April, 1947, leaving 51 that have since been approved up to the time of tabling the statement. There can be added another eight approved since then, making a total of 59, and of that number, 33 are major works each involving more than £2,000. Of the 59, the number of entirely new schools is 20. The additions in 19 others are quite substantial and range in cost from £2,000 to £13,000. The remainder comprise smaller additions, although there are many cases of more than £1,000 in value.

The total approvals since the 1st April, 1947, amount to £373,753. Every effort is being made to bring them to completion. For example, a tender was let this week for something over £30,000 in relation to the school at Collie, in which the member for Collie has been interested, and we are doing our best to speed up the work in regard to the Boyup Brook school, which is one of the remaining works approved at a cost of £28,000 on the 8th December, 1947. Approval has also been given in respect of the following:—

	£
Hilton Park .. .. .	8,750
Manjimup .. .. .	9,200
Darkan .. .. .	2,181
Carnamah .. .. .	17,182
No. 5 Pumping Station ..	693
Warooka .. .. .	4,020
Bruce Rock .. .. .	21,500
Newdegate .. .. .	2,030
Innaloo .. .. .	8,100
Morawa .. .. .	4,515
Applecross .. .. .	5,600
Jolimont .. .. .	13,170
Wundowie .. .. .	12,600
Derby .. .. .	1,885
Merredin .. .. .	6,303
Chowerup Creek .. .. .	1,390
Como .. .. .	7,750
Corrigin .. .. .	7,350
Beverley .. .. .	12,500
Reid .. .. .	1,950
Midland Junction Infants	17,500

Of the above works, the one at Carnamah is in progress; those at Bruce Rock and Newdegate will shortly commence; the chances are that the work at Innaloo will be transferred to Double View because of the Housing Commission's operations in that area; the contract at Morawa has been let and the contractor is waiting to start work; a tender has been let at Wundowie, and substantial additions will be carried

out at Merredin. The member for Guildford-Midland referred to the infants school at Midland Junction. The approval for that job has been granted only in the last few weeks, and it is hoped it will be put in hand in the early future. Additions have also been approved in respect to Collie, Pemberton and Denmark. We have under consideration, activities at Wongan Hills, Double View, York, Harvey, Toodyay, Moora, Floreat Park and Bullsbrook where we have, because of the aerodrome, had difficulty in finding a site in a safety zone.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: What about Halls Creek?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, also at Halls Creek. I promised the hon. member when I introduced the Estimates I would say something about that. Everyone knows that the townsite is likely to be removed now that the referendum held there has been so successful. The question of erecting a suitable school for the 20 or so children, and making some provision for their residence there, has, with the assistance of the Australian Inland Mission, been receiving our attention. The expenditure will be fairly heavy, but we have decided to meet it, and what we have to do now, as the hon. member will know, is to arrange for the best type of building to accommodate the children available, and select a site upon which to erect it. Many of the pupils, I believe, will come from a considerable distance and will have to be maintained in suitable premises, and I am glad to know it is quite likely the A.I.M. will supervise them. I personally think we should undertake the work, and I was glad when the Treasurer agreed that it should be put in hand as soon as circumstances permitted. Much has been done in the matter of these building programmes. I do not want credit for anything more than is right, but neither, on the other hand, do I wish it to be believed that our activities have been so negligible as to warrant nothing but strictures on their feebleness. That is why I have raised the question this evening.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Of course, you were in Opposition a long time, and you know what Oppositions do.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, but at the same time I do not think it is necessary to controvert facts to the degree that one or two members have at-

tempted in this instance. I have noted the items referred to by the member for Swan and will give them consideration. I will examine the regulations mentioned by the member for Nelson and will seek advice on them. I will take up the point he raised in regard to the inability of British children who come to this country to obtain the benefit of these regulations with less than two years residence in Australia. I am prepared to look sympathetically into that question and will let the hon. member know the result at some future date.

I come now to the remarks of the member for Roebourne. So far as I can gather from the papers available in the department, it does not appear ever to have been intended that the supervision allowance should be paid to a mother as recompense for teaching her children. I understand that it was intended—and still is—that the payment should be made either where some person is employed, though not specially for the purpose of looking after the children, or where there is some relative who is prepared to exercise supervision, whether that person is paid or not. I do not think it was ever contemplated that the mother should be remunerated for teaching her children and I am doubtful whether that would contribute substantially to the better education of the children, if at all. The aim of the department is to expend its resources in such directions as are likely to better the opportunities of the children.

Mr. Rodoreda: This system is not doing that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is doing what it was intended to do. Merely paying the mother would not improve the child's opportunities. The present policy was put into operation two years ago by the preceding administration and has not been changed. I will be happy to discuss with the hon. member the question of a school teacher's residence at Onslow, if he will give me the opportunity.

The member for Guildford-Midland referred to the enormity of the School Sites Committee having suggested that 10 acres might be sufficient for a high school. He thought it should be 20 acres, and apparently his correspondents thought it should be 40 acres. I will not undertake to try to reverse the decision of that committee. I

would be surprised if it did not appreciate to the full the essentials for such a school, in view of the positions its members have occupied and the knowledge they have. If every proposed new high school in the State—and particularly in the metropolitan area—were to seek such a large area the problem would be great indeed. I do not think it is necessary that any high school should provide two separate football grounds, as the hon. member's correspondents apparently suggested. I feel convinced that members of the School Sites Committee have given consideration to all aspects of the matter. I do not say they would not take advantage of a larger area if it were available and in their opinion necessary.

The matter of the Wongan Hills school, referred to by the member for Irwin Moore, is now receiving consideration. I agree that it would be desirable to have another school similar to the Narrogin School of Agriculture, or its Denmark prototype, in some part of the wheatbelt. The hon. member need not despair, though he may have to wait a long time before that project can be put into effect. It is a matter upon which we might reach ready agreement, but its implementation would probably take a much longer time. Generally speaking I wish to thank members, including the member for North-East Fremantle—with whom I have many friendly arguments from time to time—for the reception accorded the Estimates and the contributions made by them in the suggestions they tendered. I will look into those suggestions as far as possible in order to see if anything can be made of them.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Town Planning, £3,050—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.40 p.m.

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