naval base. Three times I have seen Albany on the verge of becoming a naval base, but on each occasion there has been a swing, and a Labour Government has come into power, and that is how the position stands today. There is in this State a man who in 1928 was going to supervise the erection of fortifications at Albany because the Imperial Defence Council wanted that site developed as a naval port. I have here a litho. showing where the guns were to be placed. There was to have been a battery of 9.2 guns at Stony Ridge and two batteries of 6 inch guns. Had they been installed Albany would have been a strongly fortified base.

There is a little expenditure for tourist purposes. The tourist trade should be developed. In my electorate and that of the member for Nelson there are the Nornalup and Frankland Rivers. A modest request for expenditure in those areas has been refused. The late director of the Tourist Bureau, Mr. Hayward, said the tourist trade was something we should sell and on which we should never lose. Western Australia has a great future in developing that trade. I believe in facing facts, either pleasant or unpleasant. We should utilise our assets as far as possible, whether they are at Wyndham or Albany. We must see that borrowed money is spent wisely and that interest and sinking fund are provided for so that the debt may be progressively reduced. Had that policy been adopted all along, Western Australia would have been in a much happier position today.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Railways and Tramways, £1,117,000; Electricity Supply, £816,000; Harbours and Rivers, £131,000; Water Supply and Sewerage, £1,385,000; Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources, £282,851; Development of Agriculture, £100,500; Roads and Bridges, Public Buildings, etc., £800,000; Sundries, £219,811—agreed to.

This concluded the Loan Estimates for the year.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 28th November, 1946.

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

QUESTION.

STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT.

As to Easing Restrictions.

Hon. G. B. WOOD asked the Chief Secretary:

1, Is the Government aware that a very large number of people in the country received, during the recent railway strike, better road transport facilities than those provided by the railways in normal times?

2, Is the Government aware that a large number of people are quite unwilling to be obliged to return to railway transport for certain commodities?

3, In view of the aforesaid facts and the inability of the railways adequately to handle livestock and certain merchandise, will the Government consider immediately the easing of certain restrictions imposed under the Transport Co-ordination Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, No—not so far as low freights traffic is concerned.

2, For certain commodities—yes.

3, The facts referred to in Questions 1 and 2 are not considered to be a justification for easing restrictions generally but the Transport Board will consider each application according to its merits and will authorise road transport in cases where railway services cannot cater for loading offering.

MOTION—ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved:

That for the remainder of the session, the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Fridays at 4.30 p.m., in addition to the ordinary sitting days.

BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Honorary Minister and read a first time.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Vermin Act Amendment.
Returned to the Assembly with amendments.

2, Land Act Amendment.

Passed.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TROTTING ASSOCIATION.

Reports of Committee adopted.

BILL—CEMETERIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This small Bill originated in a desire on the part of the Geraldton Cemetery Board to build a residence on the cemetery reserve for one of its employees. The board was unable to finance the erection of the building itself, but was prepared to meet the necessary repayments if construction could be carried out by the Workers' Homes Board. The Workers' Homes Board, however, was unable to assist the cemetery board, as it was discovered that no statutory authority existed to set apart any cemetery land for the residence of an official, or to authorise the expenditure of cemetery funds for such a purpose. It is an advantage at many cemeteries to have an employee living either within the cemetery or in close proximity thereto, and, in fact, quite a number of cemetery boards have built homes for employees on their reserves. Such action, although taken without statutory authority, has not come under notice in the past, as the boards concerned have been able to finance the construction themselves.

The Bill will rectify the position by making legal the excision of cemetery land for the purpose of constructing a house and the financing of its construction from cemetery funds. It is not proposed to permit the tenant to buy the house, which will remain the property of the cemetery board. In order to cater for boards that cannot afford to finance the construction themselves, provision is made for the sale of such excised land to the Workers' Homes Board, which will then be able to erect a house under the Commonwealth-State Housing Scheme and rent it to the cemetery board for the use of a cemetery employee. In the course of time the cemetery board will be able to buy the house from the Workers' Homes Board, all previous payments of rent being applied towards the cost of purchase. An alternative would be the erection of a house under the freehold conditions of the Workers' Homes Act, but it is doubtful whether a cemetery board could be described as a worker within the meaning of the Act. It is likely that other cemetery boards will follow the example of the Geraldton board and apply to the Workers' Homes Board for assistance. In order that such help may be provided and that boards be permitted to use their land and money for building homes for employees, I feel sure the House will approve of the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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—TIMBER INDUSTRY (HOUSING OF EMPLOYEES).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.45] in moving the second reading said: Members will recall that during last session a Bill similar to this was introduced in another place and that the Minister in charge said that the Government proposed to defer further discussion until such time as a Select Committee had obtained

all possible relevant data on the housing of sawmill employees. During the Parliamentary recess the Select Committee was converted into an honorary Royal Commission, which made very full and extensive enquiries throughout the timber milling areas. The commission visited 13 different localities and examined witnesses representing all interests concerned. It submitted a report of 279 pages. The commission reported that generally the standard of housing was poor. Some houses were good, other old ones were of medium standard, and many were described as merely hovels.

It is a truism that a worker can neither give of his best nor be happy when living under sub-standard housing conditions, and this applies in even greater measure to the worker's wife and children. So it is that the Government has introduced this Bill as a result of the report made by the honorary Royal Commission. The principle of adequate accommodation for workers has been recognised in this and other States, and also in New Zealand, by the passing of legislation providing for satisfactory housing conditions for shearers, farm workers and others. During the course of its investigations the commission did not meet one person who was not prepared to pay a higher rent to the millowners in return for better living conditions. A pleasing feature of the commission's enquiries was the attitude adopted by most of the representatives of the larger sawmilling companies, who agreed that in order to attract a good type of employee to the industry it was necessary to improve existing living conditions and amenities.

Plans and specifications were submitted by the State Saw Mills, Millars' Timber & Trading Coy., Bunning Bros. and Whittaker Bros., estimating that they would be able to build houses similar to those specified in the Bill, for from £340 to £450. The industrial agreement, one of the methods by which a fair rental is assessed, allows a return of 9 per cent. on the capital invested in each house, and this I should say is a very fair figure. The rental on houses costing from £340 to £450 would average about 12s. 6d. weekly, and the commission did not encounter anyone who was not prepared to pay this amount. Members know that on many sawmills the houses occupied by the employees are let to them at a very low rental amounting, in many cases, to only 4s. or 5s. a week. So it is not surprising that the employees would be prepared to pay an increased amount, to 12s. 6d. a week, if they were provided with a type of house a long way better than they have been compelled to occupy for many years. It is an unfortunate fact that many mill houses have been allowed to deteriorate badly, and that at some timber settlements little attention has been given to sanitation and water supply. In addition, the lay-out of the houses has been most haphazard.

It has been stated that lack of good accommodation in the bush is one of the main reasons for the shortage of timber workers in Western Australia. I can quite believe that that is true. Most men are averse to returning to hovels after a hard day's work and, unless a radical improvement is made, the shortage of timber workers will continue. With the return of men from the Armed Forces and the expansion of the timber industry, the time is now opportune for a re-organisation of these living conditions. This Bill is designed to provide for the adequate housing accommodation of sawmill employees engaged in the timber industry, and it contains a number of amendments recommended by the Royal Commission. It provides for the appointment of a housing inspector who must have an adequate knowledge of the building trade and be fully conversant with health and sanitary regulations. This position will be no sinecure. It will demand the services of a man with considerable ability and the capacity to see that his recommendations are carried out.

The provisions of the Bill will apply to buildings erected for residential purposes on all timber holdings connected with sawmills, including State sawmills. It will not apply to any holding that may be within the boundaries of any city or town, and the Minister may also exempt the whole or any part of a holding from the operations of the Act. Such exemption may be necessary in the case of an existing mill, the future life of which appears to be too limited to warrant considerable expenditure on the improvement of housing. The Bill provides for the payment of rent based on the size and nature of the building and on the facilities and amenities provided. The rent will be determined in the manner provided by whatever award or industrial agreement applies to the employee. Where no award or agreement exists, the amount may be fixed by mutual consent, or when this is not successful, by a board of

reference. In no case shall the rent exceed one-eighth of the employee's salary. As it is estimated that the average rental will be about 12s. 6d., this proportion appears reasonable. Any millowner who refuses to provide accommodation for an employee will be guilty of an offence against the Act.

The Bill stipulates that all buildings or additions must be erected by competent and qualified tradesmen, and the reason for this is obvious. No building erected subsequent to the passing of the Act may be constructed within 200 yards of where sawmilling operations are carried out or within 300 yards of horse yards. The reasons for these provisions are also apparent.

The question of ceiling heights received considerable attention by the commission, and it was decided to recommend a minimum height of ten feet. Both Millars' Timber and Trading Company and Bunning Bros. have recently constructed houses with ten feet walls, and the commission, on inspection, was satisfied that they met every hygiene and health requirement.

Hon. L. Craig: That is a foot higher than the houses of the Workers' Homes Board.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In some cases, yes. With this opinion the Town Planning Commissioner concurred, and it must be borne in mind that the Institute of Architects considers that 9 ft. 6 in. is a satisfactory minimum. It was found that ventilation was sadly neglected when existing buildings were erected, and the Bill provides for the fitting of satisfactory ventilators in future. The compulsory installation of electric current was provided for in the measure when originally drafted, but this received stern opposition from millowners. The representative of Millars' Timber and Trading Company considered that it would cost £20,000 to instal lighting plants at all of his company's sites. The commission agreed that it would not be reasonable to expect owners to undertake such expensive work when current will be available in a few years from the South West Power Scheme. The Bill, therefore, has been amended to provide for the supply of electric current when it can be made available from an existing supply.

The problem of water supply was one of the most serious encountered by the commission. Among the various reasons for shortage of water were corroded pipes and inadequate storage facilities. Water should not be scarce in the timber country where the rainfall is usually heavy, and the Bill, therefore, provides for a constant supply of reticulated water in each building. Failing this, an adequate rainwater tank must be provided at each house. The crude sanitary conveniences were a cause for much complaint and it was found that many millowners and local health authorities were neglectful in this respect, and so the Bill provides for the establishment of adequate sanitary arrangements. It also provides that all houses shall be equipped with a bathroom, bath, shower and laundry. It is a remarkable fact that in the majority of mill houses which possess these facilities they have been installed by the tenants, as the millowners have apparently not considered that their workmen required such conveniences. Fortunately the recent plans submitted to the commission by the sawmilling companies include the provision of these facilities.

The Bill also includes provision for the satisfactory accommodation of single men, together with adequate bathing and washing facilities. In the majority of cases the accommodation of these men is deplorable, and it is not surprising that many persons are reluctant to enter the timber industry. The commission found that in most cases single men were living in small camps of about 9 by 8 feet without linings, ceilings or washing facilities. After a hard day's work they have to cook, eat, sleep and dry their clothing in these tiny dens.

There is provision, too, for men who are employed at temporary bush camps, and it is specified that suitable temporary accommodation must be supplied, together with an ablution block protected from the weather, where hot water can be obtained at the conclusion of each shift. The provision of hot water is necessary, and a man can easily be detailed to see that coppers of boiling water are available when the men cease work. I understand that, at Nyamup, Bunning Bros. have provided a very suitable type of bush camp for their employees and that this could be regarded as an example for other localities. The Bill requires tenants to care for their premises properly and to be liable for any default in that responsibility. The owner or his agent

will be permitted to inspect and examine the property to ensure that the tenant is complying with obligations under the Act.

The housing inspector will have the right to enter and inspect any building or timber holding to see that employers are providing the accommodation required under the Act. If it is found that any millowner is not carrying out his obligations the inspector may direct him immediately to rectify the default. Should the owner object to such direction, the inspector may allow the objection or, if he does not consider it should be allowed, he shall report the matter to the Minister, who shall refer it to the local court or to an industrial magistrate for decision. Any tenant who ceases to be an employee of the mill shall take immediate steps to vacate his house, and if he fails to do so the necessary steps to remove him may be taken by the housing inspector.

I feel that this Bill contains a principle with which all members will agree; that is, the provision of adequate housing for workers who are engaged in a laborious and strenuous occupation and whose employment requires them to reside in areas where usually there are few amenities and facilities. It is a pleasure to me to know that the larger companies, such as Millars and Bunnings, agree that the time has come to improve housing conditions. They realise that to encourage and retain their employees they must provide them with better facilities than in the past. There are some members more closely associated with the timber industry than I am. I feel sure they will be prepared to agree with every provision in this measure.

There are a number of old established sawmills whose future life is likely to be somewhat limited on account of the areas they are working being almost cut out, and it cannot be expected that much money will be spent by them on these habitations. In all other instances where there is a reasonably long life for the mill, and in the case of all mills which are established in the future, this Bill lays down that there shall be at least reasonably decent accommodation provided for the employees, both married and single. In view of the fact that the timber industry means so much to the economy of the State I feel sure this House will be prepared to agree to the Bill in order that we may endeavour to make that industry a little more attractive for the men who have to do the laborious work associated with it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East) [5.12]: This Bill contains a vast number of amendments and proposed new sections to go into the Road Districts Act. I cannot understand why so comprehensive a measure, containing such far-reaching provisions, should have been brought down at this late stage in the session.

Hon. G. Fraser: We have another month yet.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Surely these proposals have not been the subject of suggestions that have only recently been put up to the Government. The Bill should have been brought down at least a month ago.

Hon. A. Thomson: The Road Board Association did not ask for it.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Not only that, but there are suggestions in the Bill that I believe are definitely opposed by the Road Board Association. We have our old friend again, the abolition of plural voting. Who asked for that?

The Honorary Minister: Thousands of people.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: It is most amazing that we should have this principle brought down to us every twelve months or so. I cannot understand the persistency of the Honorary Minister in bringing it down again. He may be hoping that at this late hour in the session we shall not notice it and that it may go through.

The Chief Secretary: Surely it is not too late to deal with the Bill.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: It is. The Bill should go back to the road boards for their consideration. It contains many clauses of far-reaching effect and these require much investigation. I have not been able to go into

them all myself owing to ill-health, but I have seen enough of the Bill to realise that parts of it are very undesirable, and in Committee I shall have to oppose them. Indeed, I wonder whether we ought to pass the second reading with a view to postponing further consideration of the Bill until next session.

The Chief Secretary: What are the points to which you are opposed?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: First of all there is the abolition of plural voting. I cannot see why a man who has property in two wards should not have a vote in each ward. Then there is the provision that requires a man who is seeking election for a road board to put up a deposit of £5. That may not be very harmful, but I do not know why £1 was not considered sufficient. Not many people rush forward to contest road board elections.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Sometimes no candidates come forward.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: It is not easy to get candidates, so why increase the amount by 500 per cent? I believe that two road board conferences ago that proposal was rejected. Mr. W. R. Hall will bear me out in that.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I remember it.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Why that provision was inserted I do not know.

Hon. G. Bennetts: A candidate for our municipal council pays £5.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: It is much easier to obtain candidates for municipal honours than it is for road board membership. I hope the hon. member will explain the reason for the alteration.

Hon. G. Fraser: To secure uniformity in both Acts.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Then there is the certificate of qualification for a road board secretary. That is a splendid idea. It is proposed, however, to set up a board to examine new road board secretaries.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Another board?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Yes. It is provided that the Minister may, if he thinks desirable, over-ride the decision of the board after it has examined the qualifications of the new secretary. How the Minister would know anything about it I fail to see. It is a most extraordinary provision.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: He over-rides decisions now; he is a big poo-bah.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I am not going to say that the Honorary Minister is a poo-bah, but I would not like to give him power to over-ride the decision of the board. There is another amazing provision. The Minister may appoint the board. He may appoint people he considers to be fit and proper members of the board. Would they be fit and proper only in the eyes of the Minister? I do not object to the creation of a board but there should be definite qualifications set down for membership. We might have as chairman the officer in charge of local government, or an accountant, people who would be fit and proper persons in the eyes of the Minister. He may, however, appoint three of his friends—I do not say that he would—who may have no qualifications. The Bill should lay down who will be the members of the board. Presumably they would have to be persons competent to examine eligible road board secretaries; they should be men well versed in accountancy or local government affairs.

The worst part of the Bill is that which gives power to the Minister to say whether an employee should be dismissed or not. I believe very few self-respecting members of road boards would agree to that. In the aggregate there are many such employees. Some of them are very desirable people, and others not so desirable but they were probably employed because no-one else was available. After a time the latter class of employee would begin to loaf on the job, and in the interests of the ratepayers it might be thought desirable to dismiss them. They might have been doing pick and shovel work or might even have been discharging more important duties. Such people may, it is now proposed, go before an inquiry officer who will have the powers of a Royal Commissioner and will determine whether they should be re-instated or not. All the expenses of the inquiry would have to be borne by the road board. That is an extraordinary provision. I have never heard of a road board that wrongly dismissed any employee. This Bill will apply to any employee of a road board.

The measure contains some good features, perhaps more than I have been able to find in the limited time I have had to peruse it. The measure is certainly a far-reaching one.

One good point in the Bill is the provision for road boards to pay the expenses of two delegates to the Road Board Conference. Although each road board has the right to send two delegates to a conference, it is authorised to pay the expenses of only one. This amendment has been requested by the conference and is a desirable one. Another satisfactory proposal is that relating to the expenses of road board members. A member attending a road board meeting may receive the maximum sum of 10s. per meeting. Some members, particularly in the North-West, have to drive as much as 100 miles to attend a meeting.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Some of them 200 miles.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Even in the closer settled districts, many members have to travel 30 or 40 miles to attend a meeting and give of their time, which is very valuable in these days when little farm labour is available. Yet they are allowed only 10s. for expenses. I commend the Minister for having introduced a proposal to increase the amount to £1. It is certainly a step in the right direction. As to whether I shall vote for the second reading, I shall reserve my decision, because I consider there is insufficient time to submit the measure to the local authorities, and therefore it might be desirable to postpone further consideration of it until next session.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [5.17]: I support the Bill and can commend it to the House. In it are embodied several very desirable amendments. I support the abolition of plural voting at road board elections. I see no reason why a man who owns 50 houses—I know of such cases on the Goldfields—should have more votes than any other man. I know some members will claim that, because such a man contributes a larger amount by way of rates to the road board revenue, he is more or less entitled to have a greater voting power. I know of people on the Goldfields who own dozens of houses and they are entitled to four votes which number, I consider, is three too many. The average person owns only one house and has only one vote, unless the rating be on the annual value when he has two votes.

The Kalgoorlie Road Board rates on the annual value, but this does not apply to all other local authorities. If it can be claimed that the person who contributes a larger amount of rates than another is entitled to a larger number of votes, we should bear in mind that one of the largest contributors to the revenue of road boards is the motorist, who has to license his car, but in many instances he has no vote at all. If he is the occupier of a house owned by somebody else and does not make application between the 13th January and the 31st January every year to be enrolled, he is denied a vote.

Hon. A. Thomson: That would be his own fault.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I agree. When a road board is receiving perhaps £10,000 or £12,000 revenue from motorists who have no vote at all, is it right that an owner of several houses should have four votes? If a man is fortunate enough to own 50 houses—

Hon. A. Thomson: Where are such men?

Hon. W. R. HALL: It is a well known fact that they are to be found in parts of the district where I live. However, I mention them only by way of illustration.

Hon. A. Thomson: And each occupier of those 50 houses could get a vote.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Yes, if he took the trouble to get on the roll, and he could also be enrolled for the Legislative Council. However, a lot of these people will not take the trouble to get on the roll. I have no other feelings regarding plural voting, though I remind members that each elector for the Federal Houses has only one vote. I have seen electors at road board and municipal elections given a fist full of ballot papers and half of those people have not known what to do with them.

The Honorary Minister: Quite right.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Mr. Wood referred to the increase of the candidate's deposit from £1 to £5 and was right in his statement that I would remember its having been discussed at a road board conference. I put an amendment on the agenda of a conference held in Perth many years ago, but did not get far with it. My reason for suggesting the amendment was that there are people who persist in standing for election and although they have not the remotest chance of being successful, by lodging a deposit of £1 can force an election to be held, thereby putting the ratepayers to an expense of per-

haps £20, £30, £40 or £50 for the poll. I think it time the amount was raised to £5.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Very few deposits have ever been lost at a road board election.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I admit that. This amendment, however, would put road boards on a similar footing to municipal councils. If a man is standing for election for any local authority, it should be just as easy for him to find £5 as £1. The fact of a man's putting up a £5 deposit shows that his intentions are sincere, but the same cannot be said of a candidate who persistently nominates although he has no chance of being successful and thus puts the ratepayers to the unnecessary expense of holding an election. There is no reason why road boards should not be placed on the same footing in this respect as municipal councils.

Hon. G. B. Wood: What about the poor man who can afford only £1?

Hon. W. R. HALL: That argument was hurled at me when I put up the proposal at the road board conference. I would rather forget many of the things that were said to me on that occasion. Another desirable amendment is that requiring secretaries of road boards to hold qualifications. Every road board secretary should have a standard of education to ensure his competency for the position. During the war period, road boards experienced great difficulty in securing men to act as secretaries. Some of these men have done a wonderful job; they have adapted themselves to the work and have proved quite as efficient as those who have held similar offices for many years. To require a secretary to hold a certificate would be quite fair, but I am not so keen about the proposal to have a board for this purpose. We have too many boards in this State.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. HALL: Almost every measure that comes before us seems to provide for the appointment of a board. I would rather see a standard laid down such as the holding of an accountancy certificate. There is no reason why a board should be set up for this purpose; it would involve the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. For many years road boards have had the right to suspend a secretary who proved neglectful of or unfit for his duties, and the Minister has had the right to approve or otherwise of the action of the board. Now that we have left the war period behind, the qualifications required of a road board secretary should be stipulated, and I consider he should be a fully qualified accountant. Those officers who had spent five years in the employment of a road board would be able to obtain a certificate of efficiency and would be eligible to fill any vacancy that occurred.

Hon. G. B. Wood: More qualifications are required to get an accountancy certificate.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Perhaps so. Some road boards have not a large revenue and they are in a very unenviable position through having had to employ a man as a part-time secretary and to carry out the duties also of health inspector, traffic inspector, and even acting engineer, about which he may know nothing. Such cases have arisen during the last 10 or 15 years. When a road board has succeeded in obtaining increased revenue, it has been able to employ separate officers with qualifications to carry out these various duties. The Kalgoorlie Road Board has a secretary, a traffic inspector, a health inspector and an engineer, all full-time officers.

Hon. A. Thomson: Yours is one of the largest road boards in the State.

Hon. W. R. HALL: That is so. The secretary could not possibly carry out all those duties, but when a road board has only a small revenue, the secretary has to do the best he can to discharge them all. I am speaking of what I know myself, and to my way of thinking the majority of these amendments will be of great assistance to road boards and will result in the official staff of road boards possessing certain qualifications demanded of them. There is an amendment to Section 130A dealing with the right of employees to appeal against dismissal after one year's continuous service. I take it that when a man has had 12 months' continuous employment with a board he can be more or less classed as a permanent employee. If it is good enough for the secretary and other officers of a road board to have a right of appeal in such circumstances, to my way of thinking it is just as good for Bill Bowyangs. There are many other concerns in Western Australia whose employees, from top to bottom, have a right of appeal. Officers and employees

of the Western Australian Government Railways, for instance, have an appeal board, and it is something on which they pride themselves.

Road board employees belong to a semi-governmental organisation, and I do not see why they should not have a similar right of appeal. A board will be bound under the proposed amendment to give a reason for the suspension or dismissal of an employee. If I were an employee of a road board and were dismissed or suspended, I consider I should have the right, seeing that I would be classed as a permanent employee, to know why I was being dealt with in that way. An employee who had done something he should not have done and had accordingly been dismissed, would not desire to appeal, because he would know full well that he was in the wrong and that the action taken against him was justifiable. But employees should be given the right, if they so desire, to lodge an appeal.

An amendment of Section 160 covers the establishment of kindergartens, maternal health centres, dental clinics, ambulances, and so forth by one local authority, in conjunction with other local authorities. That is very desirable. On the Goldfields there are three local authorities and at times it is necessary for them to co-operate in the provision of certain institutions desired by people living in the three districts. Recently, for instance, the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council wrote to the Kalgoorlie Road Board with reference to the establishment of a kindergarten practically on the boundary of the districts controlled by the two local authorities. This kindergarten was intended to serve a great number of ratepayers in both areas, and the local authorities decided it would be in the best interests of all concerned if they worked together on the enterprise. If this amendment is passed it will enable local authorities to overcome the restriction against spending money outside their own particular territories. The amendment will give the local authorities power which they have not previously possessed.

Another desirable amendment is that which gives road boards the power to sell certain property. Road boards have very much more trouble in disposing of property on which rates are owing than do municipal councils. On the Goldfields there are dozens of blocks of land—I will not say hundreds—which form part of deceased persons' estates and the owners of which it has been impossible to locate, although extensive search has been made of the records. Some of that land has been vacant to my knowledge for 30 years. Seeing that land for home building is in such demand in all parts of the State, it should be made easier for local authorities to make such property available. There are numerous blocks in the heart of districts controlled by local authorities and there has been little or no chance of getting anything done to permit the local authorities to dispose of them. It is not so hard with regard to leasehold blocks, but there is considerable difficulty in connection with freehold land.

Hon. A. Thomson: There is a power of sale.

Hon. W. R. HALL: It is necessary to rate them for five years, and that is a long time to wait when the demand is greater than the supply, as is the case at present. My board has been taking certain action under the Road Districts Act with a view to disposing of land for rates owing, but it has taken the board over six months to go through the records at the Titles Office and at the office of the Clerk of Courts and in other Government departments, and it is still not in a position to submit the land for sale by auction. I hope members will give consideration to that particular aspect of the Bill because, if the amendment is passed, it will be easier for local authorities to sell such property.

The last point upon which I wish to touch concerns the provision for increased expenditure to be incurred to enable two delegates to attend the road board conference instead of one. This conference is held only every second year and it is one at which much good work is done. There are 127 road boards throughout the State. They take a great deal of interest in the gathering, and it is often as a result of that conference that amendments are made to the Road Districts Act which prove of great benefit to the people as a whole. It is quite easy to see that some members do not like certain parts of the Bill, but in my opinion there are many more amendments that could be made to the Act. Some of its provisions are obsolete. I could point to several sections which are out of date.

Hon. A. Thomson: What are they?

Hon. W. R. HALL: There is one particular section providing that the occupier of a house who wishes to be enrolled must make application between the 13th and 31st January at the road board office. Objection to such an application must be made during the same period. If a ratepayer walked into the office during the closing hours of the period, it is obvious that anybody who wished to object would be unable to do so, because he would not have sufficient notice of the intention of the ratepayer to seek enrolment. That is one of the obsolete provisions. I hope members will give serious consideration to the Bill and that it will be passed.

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

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

HON. SIR HAL COLEBATCH (Metropolitan—in reply) [5.43]: I cannot say that I am either surprised or disappointed at the reception the Bill has received. I recognised at the outset that from some quarters it would be criticised as not going far enough, while others would say that it went too far. That, I think, should be a strong recommendation for the Bill. At all events, it shows that I have avoided extremes. If I had introduced a Bill that completely pleased this section or that section, it would have had no chance of becoming law. Nor do I think such a Bill would be justified or useful. Let me reply in a general way to those who say the Bill does not go far enough and to those who say it goes too far. The aim of those who say it does not go far enough is the abolition of this House or the bringing of it into close similarity with the other Chamber. That is entirely contrary to my desire in introducing the Bill. My purpose was to strengthen this Chamber in the public estimation; to make sure of its continuance as an effective and recognised House of review; and to preserve for Western Australia the bicameral system which I believe to be so important for the good government of the country.

I would turn now to those who think it goes too far. In what direction does it go too far? First of all, there is the definition of a "flat." Surely we should have some definition of a flat in the Bill. At present, all the Electoral Department works on is some Crown Law ruling which prohibits the enrolment of many hundreds of people living in substantial flats, which are essentially houses, and who pay rent of up to and even over ten times the amount required of a householder. Mr. Fraser suggested that my definition will not do what I want. All I can say is that it is the definition suggested by the Electoral Department, and I cannot see any fault in it. I think he questioned the meaning of the words "structurally separated." That depends on the dictionary meaning of the word "separated," which I think is clear and easily understood—"divided from." However, if there is any detail in connection with my definition of "flat" that is not satisfactory, it could easily be thrashed out in Committee.

The third objection in one or two quarters was to the abolition of the plural vote, and to that I will make further reference later on. Then there are the two provisions regarding disputes between the two Houses. Of the first, that regarding money Bills, I have no hesitation in saying that it is meaningless; that is, that it merely expresses what is the law at the preesnt time. In offering that opinion, I have legal authority to back me up. I do not think any harm can be done in again quoting the existing law in regard to money Bills. First of all, there is the definition at page 134 of our Standing Orders, where the following appears:—

> The Legislative Council may not amend loan Bills, or Bills imposing taxation, or Bills appropriating revenue, or moneys for the ordinary annual services of the Government.
>
> The Legislative Council may not amend any Bill so as to increase any proposed charge or burden on the people.
>
> The Legislative Council may at any stage return to the Legislative Assembly any Bill which the Legislative Council may not amend, requesting by message the omission or amendment of any item or provision therein: Provided that any such request does not increase any proposed charge or burden on the people The Legislative Assembly may, if it thinks fit, make such omissions or amendments, with or without modifications.

If those words mean anything—I take it they would not be there unless they did mean something—it is that the Legis-

lative Assembly has the final say in regard to money Bills. If that is not the case, then the whole of that wording is meaningless, because the Legislative Council would have exactly the same power over money Bills as it has over other Bills, and that clearly was not the intention of the Constitution. There again I have legal opinion to back me up, and I have not heard any suggestion of legal opinion from the other side. The other provision has regard to the passing of Bills without the consent of this Chamber, under certain conditions, and as against that I have heard no objection, so I do not intend to refer to it at the moment. Last night Mr. Thomson quoted a number of figures, figures that I myself had quoted in even greater detail in opposing the Bill for a referendum. They are quite important but, like yourself, Mr. President, I failed to see how they could be associated with this Bill, or what reference they had to it, and it did occur to me that the use of those arguments by several members in opposition to this Bill would suggest an absence of any good reason that they might advance for opposing it.

I listened with close attention to the well-considered address of Mr. Simpson. I agreed with almost everything he said, but there were two points to which I should like to draw his attention. First, he referred to the difference between ordinary Bills and Bills to amend the Constitution, but he did not point out his great difference, that if a member considers there is merit in an ordinary Bill, but that it needs amending in certain directions, and if he votes for the second reading in the hope of getting his amendments carried during the Committee stage, and fails, he has then to face the position that the third reading of the Bill may be carried by an ordinary majority of the members who happen to be present. On the other hand, in the case of a Bill to amend the Constitution, if a member thinks there are some provisions in it that are good and some that should be amended and if, in Committee, he fails to get the amendments he wants, he knows that the Bill at its third reading still has to pass an absolute majority of the whole membership of the House; so that it is very much safer for a member who likes part of a Bill and dislikes other parts to vote for the second reading of a Bill to amend the Constitution than it is to vote in that way on an ordinary Bill.

There is another reference by Mr. Simpson to which I must call attention. He quoted from the writings of John Stuart Mill, and said, quite correctly, that Mill has always been regarded as an authority entirely free from any party political prejudice. He has been regarded as such ever since he commenced writing, nearly 100 years ago. That a member should quote John Stuart Mill and then proceed to defend the system of plural voting passess my understanding. John Stuart Mill was a great democrat, and foresaw what I think none of us can put out of mind at the present time, the difficulties in the way of the survival of democratic principles, and in one of his standard works he laid down this principle, that democracy could not survive excepting under a system of representative government. Two of the other matters that he urged as essential to the maintenance of representative government, were, firstly, proportional representation on the single transferable vote and, secondly, the full recognition of the equal rights of women, politically, socially and economically. The hon. member might have quoted that in support of one of the provisions of this Bill, to which I shall refer later on, but to quote John Stuart Mill, the most passionate advocate of democracy, the bitterest opponent of any suggestion that money should give a person political privilege, and then immediately to go on to defend the system of plural voting, is enough to make Mill turn in his grave, if that pastime is still indulged in.

I hope it will not be considered as in any way criticising the Chair if I make reference to the objections that you, Sir, as a private member, raised to this Bill, because your speech was almost the only one in which there was any comprehensive attempt to criticise the Bill. I would repeat what I said regarding those members who think the Bill does not go far enough; that my object is not to weaken but to strengthen the Council. You, Mr. President, agreed that there were large numbers of people qualified to be enrolled but who were not enrolled, and that of those who were enrolled seldom more than 50 per cent. went to the poll. That, to my mind, is convincing evidence of the necessity for action in some direction to obtain greater popular support for this House. You, Sir, also had something to say against compulsory voting, and I would remind you that the compulsory en-

rolment and compulsory voting for the Legislative Assembly were contained in a measure passed through this House in 1926 without a single objection from any member of this Council.

The only point raised was a request by our late dear friend, the Hon. James Cornell, that the Committee stage might be deferred so that consideration could be given to the wisdom of including compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting for the Legislative Council, and then, when the time came, nothing was said about it, and the Bill passed. That Bill was passed through this House without one single objection. Personally, I have always been opposed to both compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting, and it was in 1926, when I was not in this country, that the measure was carried. Then I was reproached for not bringing in a Bill to amend the constitution of the Legislative Assembly, and that reproach has been repeated by one or two members. I am not sure that it is within the province of this Chamber to attempt to amend the constitution of of the Legislative Assembly. If any member thinks it is, by all means let him introduce such a Bill, and I promise him my sympathy.

Then it was suggested that I might have brought in some provision for proportional representation. I have been an advocate of proportional representation for over 20 years. During my last stay in London, I visited a number of countries in which proportional representation applied, and that confirmed in my mind the general opinion that those were probably the best-governed countries in the world. Since my return eight years ago, on the public platform, in the Press and in this House I have spoken in favour of proportional representation, but I have never had any support. Of course, something has happened. The Liberal Party, of which you, Sir, and I are members, finds itself in this position—I am speaking of the Liberal Party of Western Australia—that it has not one single representative in either House in the Commonwealth Parliament, and so many of its leading members are beginning to think that there may be something in proportional representation, after all. But so far as the suggestion that I should have introduced it now is concerned, I think a great deal of spade work has to be done before proportional representation can be regarded as within the sphere of practical politics. I am quite prepared to do all I can regarding that spade work, but it will have to wait its time.

I do not know that this has much bearing on the matter, but it may be of interest that compulsory voting for the Legislative Council was employed in Victoria in 1937. In the five previous elections the numbers voting had fallen to 38 per cent. That is smaller than is customary in this State, but under compulsory voting it increased to nearly 78 per cent. What happened in the way of prosecutions of the 22 per cent. that did not vote, I do not know.

To return for the moment to the question of proportional representation, it is interesting to note that in England one of the strongest arguments against it was that it would probably reduce the Conservative majority. I have no doubt that today the strongest argument by the party in power in England would be that it would reduce the Labour majority, and there we have the great difficulty of bringing about any substantial reform in political constitutions. The party in power always thinks that the system by which it was returned is necessarily the best, and is loath to make any departure from it —until something happens. We have heard references to "stand-patters" and "die-hards." As a very humble student of history, let me say that I have never heard or read of a "die-hard" accomplishing anything except his own destruction, and that has happened over and over again.

This may be a convenient time to refer to certain remarks made by you, Mr. President, with regard to the practice in Great Britain. You told us, quite accurately, that the universities and the City of London exercise certain plural voting. I suggest there is no analogy between that and the plural voting we have in this State. What happens there is that the universities are granted special representation in Parliament. I hope the time is not far distant when our university in Western Australia will be considered of sufficient importance and have sufficient public appeal to be provided with special representation in the Parliament of the State. It is also provided in Britain that those who are enrolled as qualified to elect the university representatives may also vote in their respective constituencies.

When we come to consider the position regarding the City of London it is necessary to remember the whole set-up and the

constitution of the City of London. Let me give members one illustration. No property owner or ratepayer in the city has any voice whatever in the election of the Lord Mayor or the sheriffs from whom the future Lord Mayor will be chosen—no voice whatever. Yet I, who have not been in the City of London for eight years or more and have never owned a foot of land within its boundaries or paid rates, still receive periodically invitations to attend the Mansion House to take part in the election of the Lord Mayor and the sheriffs.

Hon. L. Craig: Do you think that is desirable?

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I do not say it is a good system, but I am relating that in order to show how unreasonable it is to quote the City of London in defence of our system of plural voting. I am entitled to a vote in connection with the election of Lord Mayor simply because I am a freeman of the City of London and a liveryman of one of the city companies. The Lord Mayor is elected by the city companies, many of whose members may not have any interest at all in the city. I pointed out when moving the second reading of the Bill that plural voting was abolished in Victoria some years ago. I have to thank Mr. Dimmitt for supplying me with the facts regarding the abolition of plural voting for the Legislative Council in that State. My opinion is that its influence is grossly overestimated. I cannot agree for one moment with the suggestion of the Chief Secretary that the plural voters number 50,000. There are less than 80,000 people on the rolls and if 50,000 were the correct figure as quoted by the Minister it would mean that the number of individual voters would be reduced to less than 30,000, which is not one quarter of the number of householders in the State—far less than the number of householders in the metropolitan area. In my opinion there are probably not more than 3,000 plural votes in the State and, from the point of view of an election, their wiping out would make no difference except that it would remove what is a nuisance and also a popular complaint against the Legislative Council, a complaint that I think is entirely unfounded.

Before leaving the consideration of British conditions I shall quote a case that is more germane to this Bill. Soon after the 1914-18 war a tremendous campaign was launched in London, supported by practically the whole of the Press of the city, for the reform of the House of Lords. The then Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, gave the movement his support, and it was understood that a Bill was being prepared—but nothing was ever done. The opposition of the "die-hards" and the "stand-patters" prevented any action being taken—with what result? The House of Lords has now entirely lost its influence and power. It is no longer an effective House of Review. In fact, it would not be going too far to say that Great Britain no longer has the bi-cameral system. Let me give the House another instance.

Eighteen years ago I was a member of a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Commonwealth Constitution. That commission unanimously recommended a revision of the method of electing the Senate. All the members—one made some sort of a qualification—favoured in general the adoption of proportional representation. I included in the report a paragraph on my own behalf pointing out that no amendment to the Constitution was necessary as it was open to Parliament to introduce proportional representation if it so wished. Here again nothing was done. The Liberal Party had control of the Senate. Its members thought that the method of election which had secured their return and their majority in the House, was too good to throw aside. What was the result? The Senate is no longer a House of review. It can no longer be said that in the Commonwealth of Australia we have the bi-cameral system. I think these matters are well worth bearing in mind.

Some reference was made by you, Mr. President, to the question of giving the vote to the housewife, and I think you suggested it was unnecessary because the housewife already could obtain the vote, as the husband could give her the money with which to pay the rates.

Hon. G. Fraser: And lose his own qualification.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: To my mind that amounts to a subterfuge. I want the position to be clearly set out and the wife's right to the franchise recognised.

The Honorary Minister: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I want her right to be recognised as a qualification. I

do not know that I am in order in referring to amendments I have placed on the notice paper but, as the President himself referred to them, I take it he can hardly rule me out for doing so myself. I refer particularly to the amendment which seeks to reduce the minimum age of a candidate for the Legislative Council from 30 to 21 years. You, Mr. President, not only argued the matter but quoted certain authorities on the value of age and experience. With that I agree; but let me read to the House what one of the foremost writers of today in England—Dr. C. E. M. Joad—has to say on this point. He says—

> If the country were handed over exclusively to the governance of men under thirty-five, and everybody over that age were forbidden to interfere on pain of being sent to the lethal chamber, it would be a happier and a better place.

I do not agree with him; I agree with you, Mr. President. What of these qualifications? If age and experience are to be of value and are to be accepted, it can only be in close co-operation with youth and by removing any obstacle standing in the way of young men working in the service of the country. It was suggested that if we did away with plural voting in connection with this House, it would follow that we must do away with that system in connection with municipal councils and road boards. I can see no analogy at all. Municipal councils and road boards are not law-making organisations; they are business concerns. They collect money in the form of rates and spend it in the interests of those that pay it. I would not suggest we should go to the other extreme and treat them as public companies in which the voting power of the shareholder is regulated by the number of shares he holds. To do that would be just as absurd as going to the other extreme and saying, "If you abolish it for Parliament, you must abolish it for these business concerns."

Let me remind members that no less than 62 years ago the Local Government Act of Great Britain prescribed single voting by ratepayers—no ratepayer had more than one vote. That was done in conservative England 62 years ago! I would suggest, although I am not supporting in an amendment any proposal for the reduction or alteration of the franchise for local governing bodies, what we really have to fear is not the introduction of single voting for ratepayers. What we have to fear is the overlooking altogether of the ratepayers and the election of local governing bodies on the Legislative Assembly franchise, as has been done for some years in Sydney and Brisbane with, I think, very unfortunate results.

I have already referred to the difficulties between the two Houses. I remind members again that so far as the second provision in that regard is concerned, a Bill came from another place providing for a method of settling disputes between the two Houses. I supported the second reading and placed on the notice paper a number of amendments closely resembling those now embodied in the Bill before the House. I still think that a golden opportunity was lost on that occasion in not passing the Bill with the amendments I refer to. It might have saved a good deal of trouble. May I in conclusion draw attention to a book published only this year by Robert M. Rayner, another recognised authority in Great Britain, who in the introduction to his book entitled "British Democracy, An Introduction to Citizenship" wrote—

> The Constitutions of the French and Swiss republics, of the United States or our own Dominions, of the Scandinavian monarchies and of the U.S.S.R. can each be printed in a neat little pamphlet. But ours could not be contained within the covers of any book, or put into any tangible form. For it consists in a mass of customs and traditions and statutes, always in process of transformation and development. It behoves us all to do our part in keeping the process going on the right lines. We shall be failing in our duty to our ancestors and our descendants if because we are lazy or uninterested or cynical we neglect or ignore it. And we have been warned: We have seen what happens to other nations who do so.

That is another way of saying that polities are not and can never be static; there must be movement. If there is no transformation and development and progress on right lines, there will be something worse. It is in that conviction that I commend this Bill to the House, believing it will strengthen this Chamber and help to preserve the bi-cameral system, which I regard as essential to the good government of this State.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: As this is a Bill to amend the Constitution it is necessary for

it to pass that there shall be a constitutional majority, and in the circumstances I shall divide the House.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	11
Noes	8
Majority for	3

AYES.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. F. E. Gibson	Hon. W. R. Hall (*Teller.*)
Hon. E. H. Gray.	

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. R. M. Forrest.	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. A. Thomson (*Teller.*)

PAIR.

AYE.	NO.
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. L. B. Bolton

The PRESIDENT: There not being a constitutional majority in its favour, the question passes in the negative and the Bill is lost.

Bill thus defeated.

Sitting suspended from 6.20 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL—HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [7.30]: After having carefully perused this measure, I wonder whether those who have so enthusiastically supported it have seriously considered its far-reaching effects. In my opinion, it is one of the most extraordinary measures that have ever been submitted to Parliament. A board is to be created consisting of employers and employees, who will have conferred upon them by Act of Parliament the right to form what might be called a close preserve of their business. The board will usurp the functions of the Arbitration Court and of the Health Department. As Mr. Parker pointed out, we have reached a stage when we are introducing measures which will prevent the people from doing certain things.

We have reached an age of restriction and regimentation. I admit the Bill has been introduced by the Government, but a perusal of its contents amazes one. A board is to be appointed consisting of five members. The chairman, who shall not be pecuniarily interested in hairdressing, is to be appointed by the Governor. Four other members, all appointed by the Governor, must be persons who have had at least three years' experience either as a principal or as an employee in any business in the practice of hairdressing. Of the four other persons so appointed, one shall be nominated by the Master Gentlemens Hairdressers' Association of W.A. Union of Employers, Perth; one shall be appointed by the Metropolitan Ladies Hairdressers' Industrial Union of Employees of W.A.; and two others, one of whom shall be nominated by the female employees and one by the male employees of the Metropolitan Hairdressers and Wigmakers Employees' Union of Workers.

The Chief Secretary: They should make a very good board.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. It sounds quite a good board, a very excellent board indeed. It is to be granted powers not usually given to boards of this description. A perusal of the Bill discloses that if any member has been absent from the board without permission, or becomes bankrupt or compounds with his creditors, or is convicted of an indictable offence, or becomes insane, his seat shall be declared vacant.

Hon. G. Fraser: You would not suggest such a person should sit on the board?

Hon. G. Bennetts: He might cut someone's throat.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The hon members interjecting might study the Bill and not make inane observations. The members of the board are to be paid for their services and are to receive expenses. The Bill provides—

> The several members of the board shall be paid for their services as members thereof such fees as are prescribed, and in addition the board may reimburse any member for any reasonable amount of expenses actually incurred by him in attending meetings of the board.

What a remarkable reversal on the part of the Government and of Ministers in this House! When we were considering the Bill dealing with trotting and it was suggested that the president of the association who, by virtue of his office, would be controlling

assets worth probably hundreds of thousands of pounds, should receive some remuneration, it was decided that he should be entitled to receive only his out-of-pocket expenses. The comparison is odious, especially in view of the action taken by this House yesterday in connection with the Trotting Association. The board is to have the following powers:—

(i) To hold examinations and to appoint examiners;

(ii) to decide upon the places where and the days and times on and at which examinations are to be held; and

(iii) to issue or cancel certificates of registration.

Hon. G. Fraser: Has not the Builders' Registration Board those powers?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I will deal with that board in a moment.

Hon. G. Fraser: I think you will find they are very similar.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Probably, but that does not carry us any further.

Hon. G. Fraser: But you supported that legislation.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Did I?

Hon. G. Fraser: Yes.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The board is also empowered to suspend the registration of any person and to annul such suspension, to take proceedings for offences against the measure or any regulation; and generally to do any other act or exercise any other power or perform any other duty necessary for carrying out the provisions of the measure. Mr. Fraser in an interjection mentioned the Builders' Registration Act. The main reason for the introduction of that legislation was because business people and others wished persons engaging in the trade to be men of financial stability. I supported the measure, although I say frankly that I did not altogether approve of it.

Hon. G. Fraser: That was the only qualification.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Nor do I approve of the results of that Act, at all events as far as its administration is concerned. We found that just recently a man who had the temerity to call himself a builder had undertaken to do work to the value of £100 on a building costing £600. He was brought before the court and fined £20. True, that is provided for in the Act, but I do not think it was the intention that the Act would be administered so severely and so strenuously in times such as these, when there is such a shortage of tradesmen of every description and people are almost begging to get repairs done to their homes or to get homes built. That is by the way, and in reply to Mr. Fraser's interjection. The board under this Bill may also appoint a registrar and such officers and servants as are necessary for the purposes of the board; may pay to any person so appointed such salary or remuneration as the board thinks fit; and may remove any person so appointed. I have no objection to that, but I do think that this is an industry which ought to come under the control of the Arbitration Court.

The Bill will place the industry far above any other trade union, although, of course, the people engaged in this industry may claim to be professional workers. Any person who applies to be registered under this measure must satisfy the board that he is a person of good character and that he has completed the appropriate prescribed course of training and passed the appropriate prescribed examination, or was bona fide engaged in Western Australia in the practice of hairdressing of that class or classes either as a principal or employee at any time during the period 12 months immediately prior to the commencement of this measure, and shall apply for registration within six months next following the date of its commencement.

Recurring to the Builders' Registration Act, I undertook to get a slight amendment to the Act passed. I am pleased to say I was successful. The amendment was designed to protect men who had been contracting in a small way for many years. It is the small man I am trying to protect and want to see safeguarded. The present policy in Australia seems to be that no man shall be permitted to step out of the ranks. He should always have to work for someone else, and that seems to me the principle governing measures such as this.

We are looking for more leisure; that is the cry today! We want fewer hours of work and more remuneration. Those who carry that principle into effect are seldom the ones who become anything but employees. I would like to take the members who are keen on sponsoring the Bill for a walk around the streets of Perth. I would ask them who

own the frockshops in the various portions of the city, and who own the machine shops? Is it the big man? Who own all the restaurants and eating-places? And who are running the fruit and vegetable shops in Perth? What hope has a small Australian got of competing against those people?

I can take members to Manjimup where I would ask then, who are growing the tobacco there, and who are growing the potatoes? Are they generally the Australians? I will take members to the vineyard areas and ask them, is it the Britishers or the Australians who are seeking work there? The same thing is happening at Osborne Park. I warn my fellow workers in Western Australia that it is time they woke up. Very soon there will be a howl from the Australians because of the control that is being exercised by the people to whom I have been referring, responsible citizens as many of them may be. Some of them have become naturalised and many of them were born in Australia, but they are mostly of foreign extraction.

The Chief Secretary: What application has all this to the Bill?

Hon. A. THOMSON: That state of affairs is brought about by the introduction of measures such as we have before us now. It seems to be the policy to stop the small man from launching out and trying to improve his position. By this measure no man will be able to enter into the hairdressing business unless he can satisfy the board that is to be appointed by the Government, that he is of good character. A man may not have enough money to establish himself in business, and, therefore, he has no hope of being able to enter into the sacred precincts of this particular industry.

I guarantee that many girls and men engaged in this business in Perth today did not have to go through what future generations will have to experience. The Bill provides that no person shall be registered for 12 months from the date of the commencement of the Act, or 12 months from the date of ceasing to be a member of the Defence Forces, unless he pays the prescribed fees; and we are told what the fees are to be. I am not much concerned about the employers, but I have a grave suspicion when I find the employers and the employees banding together to preserve the industry in which they are interested.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have already advocated closer co-operation between the employer and the employee.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Is there close co-operation between them in this Bill?

Hon. G. Fraser: Yes.

Hon. A. THOMSON: If the hon. member thinks that, I suggest he study the measure a little closer and look further ahead, in the interests of future generations. Anyone who is practising as a principal in any business is to pay a fee of five guineas, and the Metropolitan Hairdressers and Wigmakers' Union is to pay, for each and every one of its members, who is practising, a fee of 5s., and if any such person or union makes default in paying such fee, the registration of such person or member or members of such union may be suspended, but such suspension shall be annulled on payment of the annual fee together with such additional fee, not exceeding £1 1s., or 1s., as the board directs. So, if a man's employer omits to pay the 5s. it is possible for him not to be permitted to continue to work at his trade.

The Honorary Minister: You have read that wrongly.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That is, perhaps, stretching the meaning a little, but it is quite possible. The Bill provides—

> No person who is not registered under this Act shall be entitled to assume, take, or use, or shall assume, take or use (either alone or in combination with any other word or words or letters) the name or title of hairdresser or any name, title, addition or description implying that such person is registered under this Act or is qualified to practise hairdressing.

Therefore, if an employee does some work that is not quite prescribed in this particular clause, he is liable to a penalty, whether he is registered or not. We find also that—

> Every person who knowingly assumes or takes or uses any such name or title or addition or description or practises hairdressing of any prescribed class of hairdressing in contravention of this section shall be liable to a penalty of not more than fifty pounds.

Because a man may try to improve his position, he is liable to a £50 fine. Many other penalties are provided. If an employee or an employer commits a breach of any of the provisions of the Factories and Shops Act, or of any industrial agreement or

award, he is liable to a penalty of £50. It seems to me it is time to call a halt to this class of legislation. We have the Arbitration Court which was brought into being to protect the interests of the employees. Therefore there can be nothing wrong if those who are engaged in the industry apply to the court for an award and the award is looked after by the secretary of the union, such as is the position today. But we find that under this measure inspectors are to be appointed to police the Act. If anyone is guilty of failure, even to render up a certificate, he is liable to a penalty not exceeding £10. If a person fails or refuses to comply with any lawful order or direction of the board made pursuant to the Act or is guilty of the contravention of any regulations he will be liable to a penalty of not more than £10. That is not in connection with a regulation imposed by the Arbitration Court, but by a board which is to be given this special concession.

The board may, with the approval of the Governor, make regulations for, or with respect to, regulating its own proceedings; prescribing for the purposes of this Act classes of hairdressing; and prescribing the fees to be paid to members of the board, but such fees shall not exceed the sum of £50 per annum for any member of the board. I understood the Minister to say, when introducing the Bill, that it was to help to improve the hygiene of the hairdressing profession and to prevent the possibility of injury to people from the electrical appliances used by hairdressers. Have we arrived at the stage when the Government is going to admit that the central health authority of the State is not competent to see that the hygiene of the hairdressing profession is maintained at the highest possible standard?

We know that during the war, owing to the action of the doctors in the American Army, certain restaurants in the city were declared out of bounds to the American troops. Why was that so? It was because they were not hygienic; they were operating under improper conditions. As a result of the protest, the City Council took action and the restaurants were suddenly closed. They were eventually put in proper order to comply with the conditions of the Health Act. If it is necessary to ensure that the hygienic conditions of the hairdressing industry in the city are maintained at the proper standard, complete power to do so is in the hands of the Government. We may not have sufficient inspectors, but why place in the hands of an outside body the right to enter a hairdressing saloon and say, "You are not complying with the required conditions. You must do this, that or the other?" Can it be claimed that that is government of the people, for the people, by the people?

If the Government approves of this measure, all I can say is that the Administration is falling down on its job. As regards the electrical appliances used in this industry, if there is any danger of injury being done to a client, it is the duty of the Government to ensure that the risk is removed. I frankly confess that I have never known a Bill to be introduced into this House that proposed to give up the authority vested in the Health Department and the Arbitration Court to an outside body, as this measure does.

Hon. G. Fraser: What is there in the Bill to affect the conditions of employees in the industry?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I refer the hon. member to Clause 10.

Hon. G. Fraser: That does not deal with working conditions or an award. How can you link up arbitration with that?

Hon. A. THOMSON: If the Bill be passed, no-one may be employed as a hairdressers' assistant unless he passes the prescribed course of training and is approved by the board.

Hon. G. Fraser: That does not apply to working conditions.

Hon. A. THOMSON: It does.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have a wonderful imagination

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do not know about the imagination, but I claim to have a little common sense.

Hon. G. Fraser: Not too much of that, on this point.

Hon. A. THOMSON. That is a matter of opinion.

The Chief Secretary: Why stonewall the Bill?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I refer Mr. Fraser also to Clause 2.

Hon. G. Fraser: I do not care what you refer me to. There is nothing in the Bill dealing with wages or working conditions, and you cannot link it with the Arbitration Court.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member should not invite interjections.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Under the Bill, nobody may work in a hairdressing saloon unless he has the approval of the board. Whether that interferes in any way with the functions of the Arbitration Court is immaterial. I have given my views on this extraordinary measure as briefly as I can and hope the House will not pass the second reading.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [8.5]: I support the Bill in its entirety. The time is long overdue when the public should be afforded some protection in relation to those who attend to its hairdressing requirements.

Hon. A. Thomson: What about the health authorities?

Hon. W. R. HALL: I cannot see how the health authorities could undertake this work over and above what they have to do already. I am more concerned about protecting the public and assisting hairdressers to do justice to their clients. That is why I wholeheartedly support the Bill. At the same time, I should like to see more qualifications provided for hairdressers and fewer powers given to the board. As I said this afternoon, I do not like to see so many boards being appointed. Some person having special qualifications should be sufficient to issue a certificate to a man or woman after he or she has completed the apprenticeship course, or to examine anybody who desires to obtain a certificate to engage in this trade.

Hon. A. Thomson: I quite agree with that.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Women are more frequent patrons of hairdressing salons than are men, and the nature of the work performed upon women's hair demands more skill than in the case of men. A hairdresser who had not served his time and was not efficient might do considerable damage to a head of hair or a scalp. I am not an authority on the tinting or bleaching of hair, but I have heard womenfolk decry certain hairdressers who had ministered to them.

This trade requires skill and efficiency and a considerable amount of time is necessary to learn it. The public is protected in relation to most other callings, and I cannot see why it should not have protection in this respect. Provision is made for a class for hairdressers at the Perth Technical College. It is right that that should be so. Apprentices, after serving five years, will be entitled to receive a certificate if they are efficient. I cannot see why the Bill should apply only within a radius of 25 miles of the G.P.O. It should apply throughout the State. It is just as essential that people outside that radius should receive this protection as it is for those living in the metropolitan area.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There is no hairdresser in a lot of small towns.

Hon. W. R. HALL: Why should there not be hairdressers in small towns?

Hon. G. B. Wood: I think the idea is to enable hairdressers to practise on country people.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I do not think that is the object of the Bill. Many people are engaged in this trade, especially since marcelle waving has come in and the womenfolk have changed their mode of "hair-do." Consequently, more hairdressing establishments have become necessary. Some of the operatives are efficient, but others are not so good. By registering these people, we shall get a high class of worker to do the job under the best possible conditions. How many people have suffered as a result of being practised upon by inefficient operators?

Hon. L. Craig: Do you think it takes five years to learn to cut a man's hair?

Hon. W. R. HALL: I cannot claim to be an authority on that matter. I might take only three years. It takes an enginedriver five years to qualify, but not a parliamentarian. This must be a trade on its own. The measure is very desirable because it aims at protecting the public. The hairdressers themselves have asked for this legislation and have done so without littering this place with propaganda in favour of the Bill.

Hon. A. Thomson: What about the country people?

Hon. W. R. HALL: I come from the country and I think they will be protected.

A client pays a certain amount for receiving attention at a hairdressing saloon and is entitled to get service for it. That service should be rendered by somebody of whose efficiency and skill there is some guarantee. The need for this measure is not so great for the protection of men as of women. A man's hair might grow faster than a woman's hair, but most men at the age when notice is taken of these things pay pretty close attention to a woman's hair. I intend to support the Bill in its entirety. I think the board might be unwieldy and that there is no necessity for so many members; but as that figure is stipulated in the Bill, I shall vote for it.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [8.16]: I have gone through this small Bill very carefully and I consider it is an important one from the point of view of the general public and also from that of the people engaged in the trade. After considering the measure very closely, I have come to the definite conclusion that it will be of benefit to the public and of value to those engaged in hairdressing. I find nothing at all in any of the clauses to warrant the rather extravagant fears expressed by Mr. Thomson. Hairdressing is certainly a very important trade and, as Mr. W. R. Hall has pointed out, in recent years, with the increased tendency of the female population to have their hair attended to more regularly, hairdressing has grown greatly in importance.

All the Bill proposes to do is to set up a board to co-ordinate and regulate the trade. Four out of the five members are to be people from the industry itself. One is to be nominated by the Master Gentlemen's Hairdressers' Association—that, I take it, relates to men who have hairdressing shops; another one is to be nominated by the ladies; and two others are to come from the respective employees' unions. The chairman is to be some person not financially interested in the trade, and he is to be appointed by the Governor. The annual expenses are not to exceed £50 and are to be provided by fees recovered from people conducting shops and also from employees engaged in the industry.

I imagine that the principal functions of the board will be to establish proper standards of hygiene; to establish proper standards of training; and, in a general way, to increase the standing of the trade in which the majority of the members of the board are engaged. The other purposes assuredly will be to give the public better service; to see that decent people, who comport themselves properly, are engaged in the industry; and that some shops, of which all of us have had experience and which fall short of many standards with which the majority comply, are not tolerated.

Certain penalties are provided. There is one of £50, which Mr. Thomson mentioned; but that is only to be inflicted on a person who falsely obtains a certificate. If a person obtains a certificate by wilfully making false declarations, I do not think that a maximum penalty of £50 can be criticised. If someone falsely sets himself up as a doctor or a chemist or an electrician or as being qualified in some other vocation, he is simply imposing himself on the public and when found out deserves to suffer a pretty severe punishment.

The members of the hairdressing trade have nothing to fear from the other penalties proposed and the general conclusion to which I come is that the Bill should be welcomed, not only by the people engaged in the trade but also by the people whom we represent —the public. We hear a lot of criticism about boards, but it comes from the same type of people that shouts out these days about the unfortunate railways. Boards and railways are fair game for criticism, but I am satisfied that government by a board composed of members of a trade or profession is the best way to control many trades or professions. We have a Barristers' Board, and a Pharmaceutical Board; doctors have an association which polices standards, and builders and electricians and others have similar boards controlling them.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: And there is a Barley Board!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I see no reason whatever for this popular cry, "Oh, another board!" I would like to see a few more boards like this.

Hon. A. Thomson: Let them all come!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes. Then we will have the hairdressing trade and the milk industry and other trades and industries raised to a much higher standard, a standard brought about by decent people en-

gaged in the work. My regret is that the measure is confined to an area within 25 miles of Perth. Later on I hope that its advantages will be extended to the rest of the people in Western Australia. We have a technical school on the Goldfields capable of training people from that area. Another argument is that the Health Department should supervise hygienic standards. Apparently it has not done so in the past as we have all had experience of being wiped by towels and having sheets around us that could quite conceivably cause us serious illness. The decent members in a trade or profession do not want that sort of thing, because it only lowers the general standard. I give this measure my full support.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East) [8.25]: I intend to support the second reading in order to give an opportunity to those who disapprove of it to amend it in Committee. One observation I want to make is in regard to the set-up of the board. The constitution of the board is a primary producers' dream because, leaving out the chairman, it consists 100 per cent. of people engaged in the industry. But what is the position when primary producers come here and ask for a board of this kind? We have all the members on the other side opposing it, and Mr. Craig and Mr. Miles also voting against a majority of primary producers' representatives being on the board.

Hon. A. Thomson: They do not believe in it!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: On this occasion the Bill is brought down on behalf of friends of the Government and, eliminating the chairman, the industry has 100 per cent. representation. What inconsistency!

Hon. L. Craig: You cannot call hairdressers primary producers. They are takers-away.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: They are selling their work to the people the same as the man who is growing barley or potatoes or eggs or onions does. But those primary producers do not have 90 per cent. representation on the boards governing their activities. This House approved of the latest measure for primary producers but we were threatened that the Bill would be lost because the Minister in another place would not accept it. This Bill does not give the Minister the right to veto; but with regard to the various marketing boards, the Minister always has that right, which cuts across what the board does. That is not the position in this industrial Bill.

Hon. A. Thomson: Not even the Arbitration Court has the right.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: No. I do not want to say any more than that about the matter. But it seems to me to be most inconsistent. I just love the kind of board created by this Bill, and I hope that later on the Government will see fit to give primary producers similar boards.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [8.27]: I cannot see why an industry of this descriptions, which is after all a comparatively small one, should need to be governed by a board of five members. Three persons should be ample, particularly when they are going to be paid. As one reads the Bill, one can clearly see the inwardness of it. Though I propose to support the measure, I do not like it for one or two reasons. One is that the constitution of the board is lop-sided. There are five members, three of whom are definitely members of unions, and I do not see that that is necessary.

In addition, I notice that when the board is constituted and gets into its stride, no-one who is not a unionist will be able to practice hairdressing in the country. People who are engaged in this industry learnt it without having to pass examinations and without being regimented by unions, and I think the Bill connotes two things. One is it is a definite attempt to have established a partisan board; and the other is that it insists on preference to unionists. I believe it is necessary for some tribunal or authority to be created to see that the industry is carried on in a safe manner. Dr. Hislop referred to the fact that there is a great deal of electrical machinery used of such a character as might easily cause serious damage to clients or customers.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Perhaps there should be an electrician on the board.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Personally, I am not worried about it. I do not mind which way it goes. I think we should have persons on the board to look after the hygiene side, as well as the technical and machinery sides. I do not know that any of the persons on the board are likely to be expert

electricians or experts in hygiene. However, in the hope that we may be able to improve the Bill in Committee, I intend to support it.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [8.32]: I did not intend to speak on the Bill, as I endorse every word in it, had it not been for two extraordinary speeches that have been made. The first of them was that made yesterday by Mr. Parker.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do you think the Bill will pass?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, it deserves to, on its merits.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Then why thrash it out?

Hon. G. FRASER: I have heard the hon. member talk a great deal on certain matters, yet he objects to my saying a few words.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Take no notice of it.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know whether Mr Parker, yesterday, was endeavouring to burlesque the Bill, but his form then was the worst that I have heard from him. He made a statement about leaving nature to itself. I do not think he has practised that all his life, even as to himself or his possessions. A little bit of paint and a little bit of tittivating make a lot of difference.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It would not make much difference to me.

Hon. G. FRASER: Our womenfolk throughout the years have found that, to improve their appearance, establishments such as are catered for by this Bill are essential. I do not think Mr. Parker would like his wife to go about without some attention from the people that this Bill seeks to cover. I do not know by what extraordinary stretch of imagination Mr. Thomson could suggest that this board would usurp the functions of the Arbitration Court. To my mind that was an outrageous statement. One would think this was the only board to which employees had to pay a fee in order to be registered, but, in fact, there is a number of them. A plumber, for instance, has to pay a fee in order to be registered, but that does not mean that the board prescribes his working conditions. That is the function of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do carpenters and bricklayers pay such fees?

Hon. G. FRASER: No. I did not say so. I referred to plumbers and others. These people will be in the same position as the plumbers and will pay for registration in order to work in the industry, but their conditions of employment will be decided on an application by the union to the Arbitration Court. During this debate we have heard a great deal about boards, but I adopt the same attitude as Mr. Heenan. The more boards there are, where necessary, the better, and I defy anyone to prove that the creation of boards in this State has not resulted in an improvement, both from the point of view of the public and of those engaged in particular industries.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You are always slinging off at the Barristers' Board.

Hon. G. FRASER: Since the barristers saw fit to establish a board and proved how good it was from their point of view, quite a lot of others have seen the benefit of it and have endeavoured to have boards established.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I knew you would boost me, sooner or later.

Hon. G. FRASER: How would the primary industries get on without the egg board, the onion board and many others? I think this is one of the trades that should have such control. In years gone by we saw fit to introduce boards dealing with those in the optical trade, the dental trade and so on. The old type of hairdresser, who was purely a gentlemen's hairdresser, did not, in my opinion, require such a board, but the trade is now vastly different from what it was in past years, and it is necessary to ensure that those engaging in it are competent to do their work. What better could there be than a brass plate outside, or a certificate on the wall of an establishment, to show that there was someone there competent to do what was required. That is only right and proper.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Brass plates do not always indicate that.

Hon. G. FRASER: There are specialists in this trade, as in others, and therefore I think it is necessary to protect the public against those who would impose upon them.

At one time we could get a medical man for any ailment, but today there are many specialists in various branches of medicine, and so it is throughout industry. No doubt there are specialists in hairdressing, and I feel sure that when ladies want the attention of this profession they would like to know that they are dealing with people who are competent to do what is necessary. I raise no objection to the many points in the Bill setting forth penalties for certain offences. I think it is right and proper that, when we create a board, we should give it the necessary power. As the Bill meets with my wishes, I intend to support the second reading.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [8.40]: We seem to be spending a lot of time on this Bill, possibly more than we will spend on the wheat stabilisation measure in a week or two. We are living in an age of specialisation, and therefore I will support the second reading. All forms of activity today are becoming specialised. Even agriculture, in which a few years ago there was no specialisation, has now reached a stage where there is no product that has not a board controlling it. Wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, onions and so on are all controlled. Even in the wool industry, which involves millions of pounds annually, control was found necessary.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Can you link the wool industry up with this Bill?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, it is most appropriate. I think it is necessary to give some measure of control in an industry that is becoming specialised, though I see no need to exercise control over men's hairdressing. The business of looking after the hirsute adornments of men does not require many years' training, but women's hairdressing has become specialised. Before the days of Christ the Egyptian women devoted almost as much time to their hair and to the painting of finger nails and lips as is devoted to those matters today. The painting of nails is supposed originally to have been introduced to cover the signs of Asiatic origin in some women. It is in the finger nails and the lips that signs of Asiatic ancestry are visible.

Hon. A. Thomson: Painting the face is not hairdressing.

Hon. L. CRAIG: This Bill deals with more than hairdressing. It covers massage of the face and neck. I am surprised that hairdressers are allowed to become masseurs, but not vice versa, and it may be necessary to do something about that in the Committee stage. I think it is essential that one should stick to one's trade. I see the danger of a board of this kind becoming a closed corporation, or of its making the trade a closed corporation as has been done before where the setting of examinations has passed into the hands of people engaged in the industry. In some cases they have made the examination so difficult as to confine the trade to those who can spare the years and the money necessary to pass the examination.

Hon. A. Thomson: That has already happened in the case of several Bills that have been passed in this House.

Hon. L. CRAIG: In many cases the examinations have become more and more difficult, thus excluding many people. The long time and the expense involved in training have kept many people out of the industry. To my mind we should, in the Committee stage, ensure that someone outside the profession shall have a say in the setting of the examinations and the determination as to who shall be registered. I think the second reading is warranted, and I hope the House will support it and that we will be able, with perhaps a few amendments, to ensure protection for the public and see that unskilled people shall not force their way into the trade as so often happens when an industry becomes profitable. When one sees the bills that one's wife pays for her "hairdos" and, incidently, gets the life knocked out of her hair, one realises that the business must be very profitable. There is always the danger that unskilled and unhygienic people may come into the business, and we must protect those in the trade from that type of competition. In the circumstances, I support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [8.46]: I oppose the second reading because, in my opinion, we have too many boards altogether. We are developing in Australia a situation similar to that which existed in Rome over 1,000 years ago. Soon we will have nothing but boards under bureaucratic control. Under such a system, who pays? It is the taxpayers that have to foot the

bill. Every year there seem to be more boards, and the taxpayers have to pay all the time. There has been no outcry about the conditions in the hairdressing business.

Hon. L. Craig: You do not move in those circles.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I get my hair cut, and my barber tells me he knows nothing about it.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The more hair you have, the more you pay!

Hon. G. W. MILES: We are drifting slowly into the position where nearly one-quarter of the people are being paid by the producers of the country, and soon we will reach the stage where there will not be enough producers to pay for all the boards we establish. It is just like it was in Rome in the ancient days. Here we are to set up a board of five people to control the hairdressing industry, and who will pay for the board? Invariably the taxpayer will do so. Mr. Craig will find that his wife will have to pay still more for her "hairdos" in future.

The Chief Secretary: Do you know what it costs now?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Whatever it costs, he will have to pay more tomorrow. We are drifting so that very soon 50 per cent. of bureaucrats will govern the rest, and it will mean that we will drive people out of the country.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Where will they go to?

Hon. G. W. MILES: That is the difficulty. The hon. member and his party have nailed them down because they cannot take their capital out of the country. I contend we are ruining Australia with the legislation that is being passed. I shall certainly vote against the Bill.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West—in reply) [8.48]: I do not intend to reply to all the opinions that have been expressed by members during the course of the debate. I think the parties concerned are to be congratulated upon bringing the legislation forward and providing the cost for the undertaking themselves. The Bill has been introduced primarily in the interests of the public and with the object of maintaining a high level in the profession.

Hon. A. Thomson: Oh, yes!

Hon. G. W. Miles: And the public has to pay every time.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I know a little about the hairdressing saloons, and I know there is room for improvement. It will be the duty of the board and its officers, working in co-operation with the central and local health authorities, to raise the standard of the saloons very appreciably. This legislation has nothing to do with industrial conditions or wages, and does not interfere with the functions of the Arbitration Court. It is an attempt upon the part of the employers and the workers alike to raise the standard of their profession and to provide reasonable protection for the public. There may be some discussion on various points in Committee, but I trust the Bill will be passed with but little amendment.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [8.50]: The two water supply Bills that are now before this House have been brought forward, in my opinion, too soon, and paradoxically the scheme they deal with is advanced too late. In part of the areas to be covered by the scheme the people have already provided their own water supplies. I claim that the legislation is introduced too soon because Parliament should have an opportunity of considering the report and decision of the Federal representatives who are to investigate the matter. Mr. Loder has been sent across by the Commonwealth Government to inquire into the scheme, and I think it would be better to have his decision before proceeding with the Bill. I congratulate the Government and its officers on the preparation of such a comprehensive scheme, and particularly do I congratulate the present Minister for Works, Mr. Hawke, and his predecessor, Mr. Millington, who really set the ball rolling during his regime in charge of the Public Works Department. In addition to those two Ministers, great

credit goes to their officials who no doubt were really the sponsors of the scheme in the early stages. In the southern portions of the State we have periods of too much water when it runs to waste, and at other times we have too little. The proposals that are placed before us represent an honest endeavour to provide for the lean periods. Possibly the Government awakened to the necessity of doing something when it was discovered that we could not evacuate people from the metropolitan area during the war scare. It was then found we could not send them to the country districts because of the lack of efficient water supplies. Unfortunately, a great part of the country is salty, yet it has been amply demonstrated that in normal years the catchment areas should hold large quantities of water that are absolutely fresh. In front of my own home at Katanning millions of gallons of water run to waste every year. One of today's main problems is to secure efficient reservoirs and we are suffering from lack of covering to prevent evaporation. It is worth while having regard to the official statement issued by the Minister for Works, regarding the comprehensive water supply scheme, particularly the portion in which he deals with evaporation and says—

> Evaporation on the western side of the mixed farming areas is approximately 60 inches per annum, whilst on the eastern boundary this figure averages 80 inches so that a mean evaporation of 70 inches per annum is reasonable to assume for the area as a whole. This high figure represents a serious handicap when it is remembered that at the beginning of the summer maximum conservation should have been obtained and be stored for consumption and not partially returned to the atmosphere. As a case in point, on the few occasions when the 77 million gallon reservoir at Narrogin has filled to overflowing, in the ensuing summer 24 million gallons have been lost by evaporation.

It is at least pleasing to find, by an examination of the map on the wall of this Chamber, that the reservoirs to be provided are to be covered. I hold that the Bill before us is far more important from a defence point of view than the expenditure of £9,000,000 upon the provision of a uniform railway gauge to Fremantle. Without water, our people and our stock will die. It is therefore essential that a proposal for water conservation must have priority of construction. Today we hear of much talk in both Great Britain and in Australia as well regarding the nationalisation of industry as being essential. I consider that the water supplies of the State should be pooled and consolidated so as to save cost and to spread the charges evenly upon the whole of the people. The measure we are dealing with seeks to consolidate the water supplies of the country districts only, and I am suggesting that the whole of the supplies of the State should be consolidated and brought under control. If members will look at page 78 of the Auditor General's report they will find some most interesting figures. I shall not quote the figures themselves but the report refers to the following water supplies:—

> Barbalin, Big Bell, Brookton, Bruce Rock, Brunswick, Collie drainage, Collie irrigation, Cue-Day Dawn, Derby, Geraldton, Harvey drainage, Harvey irrigation Nos. 1 and 2, Kondinin, Leonora, Meekatharra, Menzies, Naremben, Pingelly, Port Hedland, Reedy, Serpentine, Waroona drainage and Waroona irrigation.

The total capital invested in those concerns is £1,963,696. The net surplus taken into Consolidated Revenue from those concerns amounted to £11,479, but the Auditor General reports as follows on page 78:—

> The concerns detailed in the statement are not charged with interest and sinking fund upon Loan Fund and other borrowed money used in the construction of the works, therefore the amount of £11,479 represented a contribution to the Revenue Fund in respect of such charges. Interest and sinking fund for one year at a combined rate of say, 5 per cent. upon the total capital (£1,963,696) would equal £98,185.

Therefore, those concerns shows a substantial loss. At page 79 of the report, we find that the capital of the following concerns is as follows:—

	£
Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage	8,111,810
Goldfields Water Supply	3,163,835
Albany Water Supply	115,782
Bridgetown Water Supply ..	33,334
Collie Water Supply	73,342
Narrogin Water Supply	81,410

The accumulated loss on the Goldfields Water Supply is £2,130,967; but if we peruse the return which was submitted to us by the Minister for our consideration, we shall find, at page 6, paragraph 23, the following:—

> Reference to paragraph 40 of the attached data will show that the Commonwealth Government received during the years 1940 to 1944 a net revenue of £2,562,857 by means of the gold tax. Most of this revenue was obtained from mines wholly dependent on the Goldfields

Water Supply Scheme for their ability to operate. In one year alone—1940—gold tax contributed by these particular mines amounted to £583,000—approximately equal to the estimated total annual charges on the comprehensive water project now under review.

On the same page, we find the following paragraph:—

21. From a defence aspect, the crisis in 1941-42 stressed the lack of water supplies and storages inland. This project will provide for the construction of a number of inland storages, the filling of which would make possible the evacuation of the civil population from the coastal strip should this ever become necessary.

I quote those extracts to show that, although the Goldfields Water Supply shows an accumulated loss of £2,130,967, we must realise the huge amount which the Commonwealth Government has received by way of gold tax. Therefore, it seems to me that the Government certainly should receive adequate consideration from the Commonwealth Government, which should bear a considerable portion of the cost of this scheme. The total capital cost of the following undertakings:—

Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage,
Goldfields Water Supply,
Albany Water Supply,
Bridgetown Water Supply,
Collie Water Supply,
Narrogin Water Supply,

is £11,579,513. The other undertakings which I quoted previously, Barbalin to Waroona Irrigation, have an aggregate capitalisation of £1,963,696. The total accumulated loss on the undertaking of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Goldfields Water Supply, and Albany, Bridgetown, Collie and Narrogin water supply undertakings is £2,191,679. I admit the figures look very bad, but we have to consider what the Minister said, namely, that without the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme there would have been no gold tax. That scheme has paid the State of Western Australia very handsomely indeed.

My reason for quoting the above figures is to back up what I propose, namely, that all our water supplies should be brought under a trust or a body of commissioners, whose duty it would be to administer them on lines similar to those of the Electricity Commission that has been recently constituted. When the Minister was speaking last night, I noticed that he pointed out the saving the Government hoped to effect at the various pumping stations where the water would be pumped by electricity; but I hope we shall have no more hold-ups, either by the coalminers or by the railwaymen, such as we suffered during the past few weeks. The total money invested in our railways, according to the Auditor General's report, is £30,543,206. The estimated cost of this scheme is £23,500,000, which is less than the total cost of the railways.

If we placed our water supplies under a body of commissioners, we would, in my opinion, get continuity of policy and we could aim at spreading the interest and sinking fund charges over the whole of the people. By increasing the attractiveness of our country districts, we may be able to enter upon a policy of decentralisation and build up populations in country towns. We would also encourage the establishment of industries in country districts, instead of driving them, as we are doing today, into the metropolitan area. I support the second reading of the Bill in the hope that at least it will be made acceptable to the farming communities that have already provided their own efficient water supplies.

I suggest to members that they turn to pages 1591 and 1592 of "Hansard," No. 14, where they will be able read for themselves some very sound reasons why many farmers are objecting to this scheme. I have received several communications protesting against it, but shall read only one, from the Wagin section of the Primary Producers' Association—

At a recent public meeting of farmers of the Wagin Road Board district, opinion was unanimously against the proposed agricultural water scheme in its present form, it being pointed out by many speakers that the farmer was being forced to bear the brunt of the cost, and that the added burden would result in many farmers being unable to carry on.

One speaker (Mr. P. J. Toll, of Jaloran) declared that just to have the scheme pass his property was going to cost him £170 a year. If he decided to make use of the water, which he did not need, and provided his own reticulation pipes, taps, etc., it would mean a bill of £500 a year for water, after interest and sinking fund on initial expenditure was included. It would be cheaper to cart water every year.

I can assure members that I personally have received many communications protesting against the scheme. I have received protests from Gnowangerup, Tambellup, Katanning, Woodanilling, Wagin and Kulin, all widely separated areas in my province. I do not propose to quote these protests. I hope we shall be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. If we had a public works committee in existence, we would be able to refer the matter to it. It is my intention at a later stage to propose that these two measures be referred to a Select Committee to inquire into the scheme and report before the session ends; but last year we had the example of Select Committees that were appointed and subsequently made Royal Commissions.

This is a matter of vital interest to country areas. The farming communities are strongly objecting to the scheme and I asked some of them what they proposed as an alternative. They replied, "We have got our own water supplies. We have expended hundreds of pounds in constructing dams and have had ample water each year. We have never had to cart water since we have been on our farms, and unless some provision is made to relieve us of the cost which the Government is proposing that we shall incur under this Bill, we shall find it impossible to meet it." They have sound reasons for objecting. Therefore, I feel that there is much that a Select Committee, such as I suggest, could do. We might be able to evolve some scheme whereby the position could be improved. I know that the Minister for Works took notice of some of the objections raised in another place, and moved an amendment which partly improved the position. Instead of the charge being 5d. per acre he was given discretion to reduce it to 3d. per acre, or £2 whichever should be the higher amount. The average holding in the areas that I have mentioned is over 1,000 acres, so that the charge there would be considerably over £2. The figure, in respect of 1,000 acres, would be £12 10s. for something that is not wanted.

While I am making these statements, I am not objecting to the scheme. I am in favour of a comprehensive scheme but we must arrive at some solution of the problem in relation to the charge to be made to the farmers who are to contribute most of the money, because the towns are to pay a small portion only. If we could consolidate and nationalise all our water supplies we might arrive at some answer to the difficult problem which we, as members of the Legislative Council, are facing. I propose to read the amendment which the Minister for Works hoped would meet the difficulty that I have mentioned. It is to be found in Clause 66, and is as follows:—

> Where the owner of any holding of country land has at his own expense before his holding has become ratable provided thereon a sufficient water supply for his own exclusive use and the Minister is satisfied that such water supply is adequate for all the purposes of such owner including domestic purposes, the Minister when assessing the amount of water rate to be charged against and be paid in respect of such holding, shall in each year during the period of seven years next following the commencement of rating of the said holding under this Act, take into account the fact of the existence of such water supply on the said holding, and make to the ratepayer a concession of such amount as the Minister considers reasonable, but so that the amount of the water rate to be paid by such ratepayer in any one year during the said period shall not be less than a sum computed at the rate of three pence per acre of the area of the holding or the sum of two pounds, whichever shall be the greater amount.

That is not very satisfactory because many of the holdings are quite large and, as I have pointed out, I could quote many letters on the matter but I have no intention of doing so.

Hon. L. Craig: Some acres are worth twenty times as much as other acres.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, and the unfortunate part of the scheme is that it is not one to provide for irrigation. It is really only to make available a domestic or stock supply. Therefore, while it is an excellent scheme it will not materially assist towards increasing the population of our country areas; particularly those that have already got their own water supplies. If we could provide for irrigation under this scheme we would be in the happy position of saying that we could double our population and production in the lower Great Southern. I wish to refer briefly to some of the evidence submitted by Mr. Davidson before the Select Committee dealing with the uniform railway gauge. The evidence I refer to deals purely with water storage, and is one reason why I am suggesting that we should have this Bill referred to a Select Committee. If, by

investigating what has taken place in the Eastern States where there are huge schemes, we can submit something to overcome the objection of the farmers we will have achieved an excellent result. I simply quote this to show that there is a possibility of increasing the water supplies in the metropolitan area. Mr. Davidson had this to say—

I will outline briefly the Avon project as submitted by me to the Government some years ago. I drew attention to the possibility of at least three large storage areas on the Avon between Toodyay and the edge of the coastal plain where the Avon River breaks through a narrow gorge at the foothills. I have walked from Northam to Midland Junction and followed the original trial survey of the transcontinental line finding the pegs and bench marks. Following my submission of the scheme to store the seasonal and periodic flood-flow of the Avon, with which was coupled a suggestion for harnessing part of the 486 ft. drop from the river at Northam to the Swan at Midland Junction, the Director of Public Works, Mr. Dumas, and Mr. McCullough, the Assistant Chief Civil Engineer of the Railway Department, and myself, visited two of the dam sites and made an inspection of the transcontinental trial survey.

Mr. Davidson believes that water could be easily and cheaply stored so that it would be available to irrigate the West Swan. I commend to the Government my suggestion to consolidate, instead of our country and Goldfields water supplies, all our water supplies because I think to do so would be of benefit to the State. At a later date I shall submit for the consideration of the Committee of the House a request that a Select Committee be appointed that could later be made into an honorary Royal Commission. I do not intend doing that with a view to holding up the work. The Government has already started to raise the bank of the Wellington Dam, and also of the one at Mundaring. That work can proceed. We know that at the beginning of next year a general election is to take place.

It would be in the interests of the State if we could give this scheme closer consideration than is possible under present conditions. I admit that this project has been talked of for many years, but when I look at the map I believe suggestions to improve it could be made although I am not going to criticise the work of the engineers. It is possible that we could arrive at a solution of the problem facing country members, and also the Government, brought about by the strong opposition to the present water scheme by the farming community owing to the cost which will be imposed on them.

On motion by Hon. G. B. Wood, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 3rd December, 1946.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 28th November, 1946.

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

QUESTIONS.

SOLDIER LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Dairy Holdings Purchased, etc.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Lands:

1, As to the 495 dairy holdings (offered by the Rural and Industries Bank for War Service land settlement purposes), which number was later reduced to 300, and ultimately to 225, was the position stabilised