

have beaches where the smallest child can bathe, and we have surf for the strong swimmers. We also have rocky cliffs from which persons may fish. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. HOLMAN: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Question put and passed; the motion, as amended, agreed to.

*House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 14th September, 1944.*

	PAGE
Question: Vermin destruction, as to strychnine supplies	587
Bills: Dried Fruits Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	587
Local Authorities (Reserve Funds) Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	588
Northam Cemeteries Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	589
Main Roads Act (Funds Appropriation), 2r.	589
Industries Assistance Act Continuance, 2r.	590
Financial Emergency Act Amendment, 2r.	591
Life Assurance Companies Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	591
Plant Diseases (Registration Fees) Act Amendment, 2r.	592

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

### QUESTION—VERMIN DESTRUCTION.

*As to Strychnine Supplies.*

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

In view of the statement by the Acting Minister for Agriculture to the York Road Board, that supplies of strychnine are now available for the extermination of rabbits and foxes, will the Minister concerned announce where supplies are to be procured and in what quantity?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Strychnine can be obtained by vermin boards from either of the wholesale druggists in Perth. Both firms recently received portion of the 18,576 ozs. which have been allotted to Western Australia for delivery by the end of December, 1944. Boards who have lodged orders are being supplied on a *pro rata* basis. Further supplies ex Melbourne are expected at intervals until the close of the present year.

## BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT

### AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [4.36] in moving the second reading said: By this Bill it is proposed to continue the operations of the Dried Fruits Act for a period of two years as from the 31st March, 1945. The subject matter and aims of the principal Act are well-known to members. It was introduced at a time when the state of the dried fruits industry was chaotic and conditions were such that the industry was threatened with ruin. Under its provisions, planned marketing under the control of a Dried Fruits Board replaced the former haphazard system under which Western Australian growers, in an endeavour to dispose of their products, were obliged to sell in other States at prices which, in some instances, were below production costs. The effect of the operations of the Act has been to preserve and stabilise the entire industry, and prices generally have been maintained at reasonable levels.

The cost to the growers of the Dried Fruits Board constituted under the provisions of the Act was only £10,740 for the 15-year period 1929-1943, representing an average charge of only 5s. 5d. per ton. In recent years the cost to the grower per lb. has varied from .024d. in 1940 to .035d. in 1943, compared with a maximum statutory contribution of .0625d. per lb. The degree to which the industry has expanded in this State since the inception of the Act may be gauged from the following figures: The average annual production in the first three years of its operation (1927-1929) was 1,840 tons. Since 1930 the output has averaged almost 2,700 tons, representing an increase of about 50 per cent. above the quantity produced in the base-period. The peak was attained in 1939, when the total production of dried vine fruits exceeded 3,900 tons.

Of the total output, approximately 80 per cent. is comprised of currants. The export quota of this commodity last year was 72¾ per cent. It will thus be seen that well over half of the total yield of the industry represents exportable surplus. The Governments of Great Britain and Canada are most anxious that full supplies of dried vine fruits be maintained, and adequate shipping space has so far been available. It would be a matter for great regret if the future of an industry such as this were jeopardised

by the non-continuance of a measure which has proved to be outstandingly successful in its application. It is undoubtedly the wish of the producers that the benefits conferred upon themselves and upon the industry generally by orderly marketing should not be allowed to lapse. In these circumstances I commend the Bill to the House, and trust that members will give it their approval. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. C. F. BAXTER (East):** This is a Bill to which members can give their cordial support. The introduction of the parent Act some years ago saved the dried fruits industry from extinction and has placed it on a successful footing. It took about three years of continuous fighting to have the legislation placed on the statute-book. Even some of those engaged in the industry opposed it, but today I do not think that one producer could be found that is not strongly in favour of it. In those earlier days we were at the mercy of the Eastern States interests who were able to dump their excess dried fruits on our market at a price that growers here could not compete against. At that stage one could journey along the Swan Valley and note vineyard after vineyard going out of production. Properties could be bought for a few pounds. Now it is a different story. It is difficult to purchase one because the industry is thriving and is exceedingly payable—all due to the protection afforded by the Dried Fruits Act. Difficulties have been experienced and, as members are aware, one case was fought right through to the Privy Council. Notwithstanding the decision in the James case, the industry is progressing and I certainly recommend the Bill to the House. I regret that other Acts have not proved equally successful to the advantage of the State itself.

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—LOCAL AUTHORITIES (RESERVE FUNDS) ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** [4.45] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to extend to local boards of

health the advantages available to municipal councils and road boards under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Reserve Funds) Act. It is proposed further to enable the Minister to exercise, under authority delegated by the Governor, the power conferred by Section 7 of the parent Act to sign notices specifying the amounts which may from time to time be paid by local authorities into reserve funds. It will be recalled that the principal Act was introduced in 1942 at the instance of the Local Government Association to authorise local governing bodies during wartime to establish and maintain, from surplus revenue, reserve funds designed to provide monies for the purpose of carrying out, after the war, works which cannot be undertaken at present on account of shortages of materials and labour.

By this means it is anticipated that the raising of monies by way of loan for the execution of a post-war works programme will be considerably reduced. In normal times local authorities are permitted to levy rates sufficient only to enable them to equate the revenue of any year to the estimated expenditure for that year. The principal Act enables the transfer of surpluses to reserve before the determination of rates, thus ensuring that the rates are maintained at a reasonable level. Since the enactment of the 1942 legislation, 52 road boards and three municipal councils have established reserve funds aggregating £152,000, of which sum £113,000 has been invested in war loans.

Representations have been made that health boards should be enabled to create reserve funds in a similar way, the monies therein to be utilised on post-war projects. The Bill, therefore, seeks the necessary authority for this to be done.

The other proposal in the Bill seeks to amend Section 7, which provides that the Governor may limit the amounts of surplus revenue which a local authority may pay into its reserve fund. At present the Lieutenant-Governor must personally sign the required notices specifying these amounts. The amendment proposes that the Governor should be given power to delegate to the Minister the authority to sign. It is pointed out that the Governor's approval to the creation of a reserve fund will still be necessary under Section 4 of the Act. 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—NORTHAM CEMETERIES ACT  
AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** [4.51] in moving the second reading said: This Bill relates to certain areas of land comprising the Northam cemetery, its purpose being to bring these areas under the control of one authority. The Northam cemetery comprises Reserves 9497 and 13238 which have been declared a public cemetery under the Cemeteries Act and are vested in trustees appointed under that Act; also adjacent freehold land held by the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Congregational Churches; and, in addition, Northam Lot 47, which is portion of the Roman Catholic cemetery, and which was surrendered to the Crown some years ago, to be set aside as a cemetery reserve. It is proposed to consolidate these areas so that they can be proclaimed a public cemetery under the provisions of the Cemeteries Act, and then be placed under the control of the Northam Road Board as a board of trustees constituted under that Act.

The existing Cemetery Board desires to relinquish its control over the reserves held in its name, and the Northam Road Board is prepared to take over the reserves on condition that all of the areas I have mentioned are included in the cemetery. To achieve this, each of the denominations concerned must surrender the freehold, as provided for by this Bill. All the bodies interested in the matter have signified their approval to the consolidation, whilst the Northam Road Board is agreeable to the whole procedure. The Bill sets out that the freehold land at present held by the four religious bodies shall revert in the Crown and be added to Reserve 13238—after which the area will be proclaimed a public cemetery and placed under the control of the Northam Road Board.

In the event of the Bill being passed, further action will be taken under the Cemeteries Act to place Lot 47, previously

surrendered by the Roman Catholic Church, and also Reserve 9497, under the control of the Northam Road Board. That is a brief explanation of the necessity for this Bill, and I trust that there will be no objection to it. In order that members may be aware of the areas and their locality, a plan has been prepared, and this I will lay on the Table of the House for perusal. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. G. B. WOOD** (East): There should be no objection to the Bill. What it proposes is similar to what has been done in other localities. The secretary of the Northam Road Board asked me to assist the passage of this measure through Parliament. The only objection I see to it is that it proposes to vest the cemetery land in the road board. My personal view is that the Northam Municipal Council should have some such responsibility as exists in other places. Some years ago a similar measure was passed by Parliament vesting the York cemetery in the York Municipality; but after a few years the York Road Board wanted to have some say in regard to it, and the municipality agreed to this. So the relevant Act had to be amended. I support this Bill.

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—MAIN ROADS ACT (FUNDS  
APPROPRIATION).**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** [4.57] in moving the second reading said: Members should be familiar with the provisions of this Bill. Its purpose is identical with that of legislation enacted in the 1941, 1942 and 1943 sessions, namely, the transfer to Consolidated Revenue of 22½ per cent. of the Metropolitan Traffic Trust Account, which was previously payable to the Commissioner of Main Roads, with the exception that this Bill seeks authority for a continuance for three years in lieu of one year as in previous Bills. Approval is now sought for the transfer in respect of each of the three financial years up to the 30th June, 1947. The period

of operation of the proposed legislation is thus concurrent with the unexpired term of the Federal Aid Roads Agreement. I think it was generally agreed during the course of previous debates that legislation on this subject should not extend beyond the known term of that agreement.

It will be recalled that the Commonwealth Grants Commission previously withheld from this State substantial sums of money which would have been payable had this State's policy in regard to road finances been more in accord with that adopted by non-claimant States. To achieve this, it was necessary to apply a proportion of motor license revenue to the payment of charges on loan funds expended on roads. Following the passing of the 1941 Act, the Grants Commission has not penalised this State, as it had done before. The Commission stated that among the factors which influenced its decision was the action of the State Government in using part of the revenue from license fees to meet road debt charges, thereby bringing this State into line with the other States.

State expenditure from loan funds on roads was £3,444,000 to the 30th June, 1943; and charges on Consolidated Revenue in connection therewith amounted to £167,300 for the fiscal year 1942-43. The legislation of previous sessions, which was confined to licence fees collected in the metropolitan area during the years ended the 30th June, 1942, 1943 and 1944, resulted directly in payments to Consolidated Revenue of £30,000, £27,000, and £29,000, and indirectly, of more substantial amounts resulting from the Commission's recommendations in 1941 and subsequently. An appropriation from petrol tax funds equivalent to the amount transferred to Consolidated Revenue by this Bill will be made to the Commissioner of Main Roads for the purposes set out in Section 34 of the Main Roads Act, which provides for the improvement, reconstruction and maintenance of roads and bridges within the metropolitan traffic area.

Analysis of the amounts expended on roads in Western Australia during the ten years ended the 30th June, 1940, shows that 91 per cent. of the total expenditure of £5,406,000 from petrol tax, and 97 per cent. of the sum of £1,113,000 from General Loan Funds, relate to districts outside the metropolitan traffic area. It will thus be seen

that the country districts of this State have received that generous treatment in the expenditure of petrol tax allocations which is due to them under the road scheme, initiated as it was for the development of Australia as a whole, allocations being based on the factors of area and population. I believe I have given members sufficient information to warrant the passing of this Bill, which, as I have mentioned, is identical in its provisions with previous Bills dealing with this legislation, except that its term is three years instead of one year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

### **BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.**

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** [5.3] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill and the subject-matter of the principal Act, the life of which this measure seeks to prolong for a further 12 months, are familiar to all members. They are aware, I think, that, arising out of the drought conditions of 1914, the Government found it necessary to provide finance in order that settlers might carry on their operations. Authority was obtained from Parliament to do this by the passing of the Industries Assistance Act of 1915. That Act has continued since then with few amendments, and it is again necessary to bring forward this continuance Bill to provide the machinery whereby financial assistance can be granted to settlers, where necessary, and also to protect advances which have already been made. In 1934, operations under this Act almost ceased, but drought conditions which occurred during 1935, 1936 and subsequent years have resulted in the granting of further assistance.

For the year ended the 30th June, 1944, the advances amounted to £24,705, whilst the repayments amounted to £58,709. In the previous year the amount advanced was £56,430, and the repayments amounted to £150,709. Since 1935, to the 30th June, 1944, the advances made by the Industries Assistance Board amounted to £1,322,622. During that period the sum of £30,862 has been written off as bad debts, and the amount of principal and interest still out-

standing is £44,479. The total accumulated losses since the Act was passed in 1915 amount to £2,907,545, of which £2,606,683 comprise losses in relation to advances made up to the time the present Agricultural Bank Commissioners took over control in 1935. That amount has, of course, been written-off. During the year there has been a reduction in the number of accounts on the books from 672 to 412.

Members are aware that primary producers have found it necessary to seek assistance under the Act in order to purchase their superphosphate and other requirements. In 1941-42, 12,877 tons of superphosphate were supplied; in 1942-43, 7,983 tons; in 1943-44, 1,381 tons, and this year's requirements to date are only 373 tons. I think it will be generally agreed that the continuance of the Act is justified. It has enabled many farmers to remain on their holdings—some of them have achieved considerable success and financial stability—who otherwise would have experienced greater difficulty in carrying on.

Hon. A. Thomson: Have you any information about the money that has been advanced for the establishment of secondary industries?

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** I have no information on that point at the moment. The doing of what I have just mentioned has been of great benefit to the farmers and the State generally. I hope, therefore, the House will agree to the passing of the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** [5.9] in moving the second reading said: This is another continuance Bill. It aims to extend operations of the Financial Emergency Act for a further period of twelve months. The Act was passed in 1931, was re-enacted in 1934, and partly repealed in the following year. Originally it made provision for 22½ per cent. reduction in salaries and also for the control of interest rates. That portion of the Act dealing with salaries was repealed in 1935, but it was deemed necessary to retain authority to deal with interest,

and for this purpose a continuance Bill has been brought forward each session for the approval of Parliament.

All mortgages existing prior to the 31st December, 1931, are subject to the Act, by which the interest rates are reduced by 22½ per cent. or to a maximum of five per cent., whichever is the greater. It is agreed that during recent years interest rates have been generally reduced, but it is felt that statutory protection must still be afforded to mortgagors who are affected by this legislation. I trust that there will be no objection to the Bill, and that Parliament will authorise continuance for a further period of twelve months. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. S. W. Parker, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** [5.11] in moving the second reading said: By this Bill it is proposed to simplify the requirements of the principal Act in regard to the supply of statistical information by life assurance offices to the Registrar of Companies. Printed statements in the form set out in Schedules 1 to 5 of the Act must be submitted annually by all life assurance offices. The information set out in these schedules relates to the accounts and balance sheets of the companies, and detailed particulars of the number and value of the various types of life assurance policies initiated and discontinued during the year, and those existing at the end of the year. The Life Assurance Offices' Association of Australia, at whose instance the Bill has been introduced, considers it desirable, owing to the depletion of staffs consequent upon the application of National Service Regulations, to make considerable modifications to official requirements in relation to life assurance statistics.

By a resolution carried at the 1942 conference of Australian statisticians, it was agreed that the requirements of the individual States in this regard should be merged, during wartime, in a uniform return designed to effect a considerable saving of labour. It was further agreed that the collection of returns in the modified form and the tabulation of the details thereon should be the responsibility of the Common-

wealth Statistician who would supply to each State the results of the tabulation, together with any individual particulars required by States. The statistical return, recently adopted, includes almost all the information called for in the present schedules of the Act. It is now desired to give the Governor authority to substitute this modified form for those contained in the schedules, that being the purpose of this Bill.

The State Governments concerned are satisfied that the information so obtained will meet all their requirements and that the compilation to be undertaken by the Commonwealth Statistician will be sufficiently informative to the public. Approval of the plan has been given by the Governments of each of the other States with the exception of New South Wales, which has no legislation analogous to the Act in this State. Schedules 6, 7 and 8, to which no amendment is being sought, are those which in the opinion of the Government Actuary afford the real protection to the public since they prescribe the actuarial methods to be adopted in the valuation of the liabilities. The right of the State Government Statistician to call for any statement or return required under the Act, should such action be deemed necessary, is preserved by a provision in the Bill.

The Bill empowers the Governor to authorise and direct, by Order in Council, the use of the abridged forms whenever there exists an emergency which, in the opinion of the Governor, justifies their substitution. The Order in Council, in addition to prescribing the form of the abridged statement, must specify the period during which it may be used. The State Government Statistician and the Registrar of Companies must first be satisfied that the form so prescribed is sufficient to meet their requirements. It is provided that every office, when furnishing returns to the Registrar of Companies, shall deposit with him an additional copy of each statement for transmission to the Commonwealth Statistician. In anticipation of parliamentary approval some offices have already lodged returns in the abridged form, and it is sought, by a provision in the Bill, to authorise the acceptance of such returns. That is the explanation of this small measure, for which approval is requested. 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—PLANT DISEASES (REGISTRATION FEES) ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** [5.18] in moving the second reading said: This measure seeks to amend the principal Act which authorises the collection of fees used in combating the fruit-fly. The Act was passed in 1941. It contains a schedule setting out the fees to be charged for the varying types of orchards. It is proposed to increase these fees in order that the necessary finance may be available to combat the fruit-fly menace with continued vigour. In the last few years much has been accomplished by the Agricultural Department's inspectors in enforcing the adoption of precautionary methods designed to reduce the incidence of fruit-fly in the fruitgrowing areas of this State. Not the least valuable part of their work has been the supervision of backyard orchards in the metropolitan area.

Soft fruits, which are the most susceptible, are those commonly grown by the householders in this area. The neglect of such growers in the past to take the steps recommended by the department to keep their trees free of the pest constituted a very real danger to the fruit industry. However, the inspection of such properties, and the consequent destruction of neglected trees at the order of the inspectors has had a salutary and beneficial effect. The department's publicity programme has also been of great benefit. If this valuable service is to be continued it is essential that additional funds be made available. The department has under consideration an improved plan to combat the pest. This plan cannot be implemented unless further finance is forthcoming for this purpose. It is pointed out that, unless an increase in revenue is provided, the whole project will be vitiated.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Why do you not get some money out of the metropolitan people?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We get quite a lot. A large sum is collected from the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. Cornell: Most of them ought to be abolished.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not think so. The prescribed fees payable under the 1941 Act and the proposed amendments in the Bill are as follows:—

	Present Fees.	Proposed Fees.
(a) Orchards of 4 years and greater age	1s. 6d. per acre	2s. per acre.
(b) Orchards under 4 years of age	1s. per registra- tion	No alteration.
(c) Nurseries	do.	do.
(d) Orchards not in compact formation	1s. 6d. per 100 trees, or 1s. 6d. per 400 vines	do.
(e) Vineyards growing grapes solely for winemaking	1s. 6d. per acre, with a maximum of £2 10s.	2s. per acre, with a maximum of £3.

Hon. G. B. Wood: How much more money will this amendment produce?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I can get that information at a later date. The new rates are those recommended by the Fruit Fly Advisory Board, of which ten of the members are grower representatives from all parts of the fruit-growing districts. It is interesting to recall that the fee of 2s. per acre is the same as that suggested by the Western Australian Fruitgrowers' Association when the legislation was under review in 1941. Although this body represented, in the main, growers of apples in districts hitherto absolutely free from fly infestation, its members realised that continued immunity could not be guaranteed. Recognising the value of control they volunteered to make a contribution at this rate towards a service which, though not at the time of direct benefit to themselves, was felt to be of great value to the industry as a whole.

Fees collected for 1942-43 amounted to £4,114, and for 1943-44, £4,147. The balances carried forward from year to year have shown a substantial decrease from £1,181 in 1940-41, to £189 in 1943-44. Of this sum, a large proportion represents registrations for 1944-45 effected prior to the 30th June last. It is estimated that at the end of this financial year there will be a deficit of £400 in the fund. However, this has been covered by a provision being made in this year's Estimates. The proposed increases will enable the retention of the present staff of the department and will possibly permit of the employment of temporary officers during

the period of the year when the greatest vigilance is required.

The improvement achieved in recent years in the control of fruit-fly has been considerable. Relaxation of present measures would undoubtedly result in a rapid increase in infestation, with possibly disastrous effects on the State's export trade in fresh fruits. This I think will be readily appreciated by all concerned, and I trust that no objection will be raised to the proposals. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

*House adjourned at 5.24 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 14th September, 1944.*

	PAGE
Questions: Kalgoorlie-Perth express, as to allocation of sleeping berths	503
Infant health centres, as to increase of Government subsidies	504
Motion: Commissioner of Railways, as to extension of appointment, point of order, passed	504
Bills: University of Western Australia Act Amendment, 1A.	504
Shearers' Accommodation Act Amendment, 3A.	621
Testators' Family Maintenance Act Amendment, 1A.	621
Fruit Growing Industry (Trust Fund) Act Amendment, 2A., Com., report	624

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

### QUESTIONS (2).

#### KALGOORLIE-PERTH EXPRESS.

*As to Allocation of Sleeping Berths.*

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What method is adopted by the railway booking section at Kalgoorlie, in the allocation of sleeping berths on the Kalgoorlie to Perth express?

(2) Are any sleeping berths reserved for passengers joining the express at intermediate sidings?

(3) How many days prior to the departure of each day's express does advance booking commence?

(4) Are telegrams requesting sleeper bookings, acceptable to Kalgoorlie booking