

On motion by Hon. H. S. W. Parker, further consideration of the clause postponed.  
Clauses 185 to 255—agreed to.  
Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 11.53 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Wednesday, 6th October, 1943.*

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

### QUESTIONS (5).

#### ELECTORAL.

##### *As to Polling Booth at Claremont.*

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) Is he aware that one of the polling booths in the Claremont electorate is situated behind a line of barbed-wire entanglements?

(2) Has he any power to have this obstruction to voters removed, particularly in view of the injuries which may be inflicted on those who have to record their vote after dark?

(3) If so, will he take the necessary action?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No. If electors keep to the footpaths they will not contact the wire entanglements. This polling booth was used in its present condition at the recent Federal elections without any complaints being made.

(3) Answered by No. 2.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

##### *As to Provision for Railway Electrification.*

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it a fact that the East Perth Power House was originally constructed upon an operating basis which would enable the electrification of our railways from Fremantle to Northam?

(2) If this is the case, what are the circumstances which led to this plan being abandoned?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The heavy cost of electrification did not warrant the plan being proceeded with.

#### AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

##### *As to Presentation in Sections.*

Mr. McDONALD asked the Premier:

As it would be an undesirable precedent for the session to close before members have an opportunity of reading the Auditor General's Report, will he arrange for sections of the report now completed, and other sections as completed, to be laid on the Table of the House without awaiting printing?

The PREMIER replied:

I am assured by the Auditor General that the printed report will be available to be laid on the Table of the House on Friday.

#### DAIRYING.

##### *As to Improvement Levy Fund.*

Mr. WILLMOTT asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What is the total annual amount collected towards the improvement levy Fund of the dairying industry?

(2) What is the amount collected by each butter manufacturer and paid into the improvement levy Fund?

(3) What is the total annual expenditure from this Fund?

(4) What is the number of persons employed and the nature of their work?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 1942-43, £2,226 17s. 2d.

(2) I think it would be unfair to disclose totals of contributions of individual factories, because of the rate of contribution struck being known. This would give unfair advantage to manufacturers who should have no knowledge from departmental sources of the extent of their competitors' business.

(3) 1942-43, £1,728 8s. 2d.

(4) Three men. Supervision of production and quality in country districts. Farms and factories are visited regularly in order to check quality and advise methods for improvement.

### UNIVERSITY.

#### *As to Proposed Fees.*

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Whether the scheme that this morning's "West Australian" attributes to N. Fernie, Director of Industrial Development, in connection with University fees, was put up in his official capacity?

(2) If so, will he clarify the matter?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The scheme was put forward by Mr. Fernie in his capacity as a member of the University Senate.

(2) Answered by No. 1.

### BILL—LOAN, £350,000.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

### BILL—EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [4.35]: The Bill introduced by the representative of the Minister for Education in this House is really a two-way extension of our present Education Act. The first part makes provision for the control and initiation of what are known as kindergarten schools or classes, and to control the education of children under the age of 6 years. As members are aware our present Act makes no effort to compel children under the age of 6 years to attend school, nor has it any power to compel them to attend school beyond the age of 14, under its compulsory sections. This Bill is a step along the road that we, on this side of the House, have for some time urged upon the Government. The second intention is, of course, the extension of the school-leaving age from 14 to 15 years. If passed the Bill will come into force by proclamation, and by subsequent proclamations any permit to conduct a kindergarten may be cancelled or revoked by the Minister. I was inclined to attack the provision rather

severely, but the Minister very courteously notified me that he intends to give notice of his intention to excise that from the Bill. Any further criticism of the matter, therefore, would be superfluous.

When one harks back to 1938 and remembers the chilly and hostile reception accorded the recommendations made to this Government for the extension of the school-leaving age from 14 to 15 years one wonders what has come over it now when it blandly announces the introduction of this Bill, firstly into the Legislative Council and then, because of some technicality, into this House. It is pertinent to ask the Government why it has changed its mind from the attitude it adopted in 1938 when it refused to introduce the very Bill that is now under discussion. The refusal was made then in spite of the recommendation of a Select Committee that had gone exhaustively into this matter. After that recommendation had been put forward as the result of the advice and evidence tendered by witnesses, it was said in debate at the time that one representative of the committee doubted whether any expert evidence had been given. I remind members that of the 22 witnesses examined 12, including Professor Whitfield, could be classed as experts. Amongst these were:—The Director of Education, Mr. Hadley; Inspector Coleman, Superintendent Lynch of the Technical School, the Headmaster of the Junior Technical School, Newcastle-street, and Headmaster Elkins of the Correspondence School, Claremont. The committee exhausted the whole gamut of educational authorities in Western Australia.

The Premier: I think it was being attempted at the wrong time.

Mr. BOYLE: Is there a wrong time to attempt to extend the educational life of our children? The Premier would have us believe that the present is the right time. The year 1898 saw the compulsory age of 14 years introduced, and now, in 1943, or 45 years later, the Premier would say it is the right time to extend it. I do not agree with that. The Select Committee stated—and this has since been confirmed by the Minister—that the number of children affected would be about 5,000. I think the Minister put the number at between 5,000 and 6,000, but I have no cause to quarrel with his figures. This is a step in the right direction, but earlier provision for 5,000 extra children in the formative period of their lives would

have been fraught with good for the people as a whole. Somebody mentioned yesterday that this was probably a reconstruction Bill. I think it could better be described as a pre-election Bill. The Minister is taking power to bring the measure into operation by proclamation, but I have very little use for Bills that are brought into operation in that way.

In the country districts are many kindergartens being conducted by private people and doing very good work, and I should like the Minister to protect those institutions under this measure. In reading the Bill, one is struck with the fact that inspectors of schools will have the right to enter kindergartens, inspect them, and, I suppose, order all sorts of different conditions to be observed. This is going to be a little hard on the small kindergartens. At Albany, for instance, a long-felt want was filled by an English lady, whose husband was at the war and who opened a kindergarten attended by 40 or 50 children, but her kindergarten could not have measured up to all that an inspector of schools would require in the way of household accommodation. The Minister would be well-advised to make those conditions a little more flexible. On page 7 of the report of the Select Committee, the following statement appears—

The committee, from evidence placed before it, favours raising the school age from 14 to 15 years, the last year to be devoted to the vocational training according to the future career of the youth, and suggests the utilisation of existing buildings in the evenings for the furtherance of continuation classes for such training. The leaving age in the United Kingdom will be raised to 15 years from the 1st September, 1939.

That was deferred because the war broke out in that month, but today Britain is dealing with these proposals and the age is to be raised to 16 years. A sum of £80,000,000 is to be made available to enable the school-leaving age in England to be raised to 16 years.

In 41 out of the 48 American States, the leaving age is 16 or over; in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and South-West Africa, 16 years; in Cape Colony and Natal 15, and in most British Dominions 15 or over. The number of children affected in Western Australia would be about 5,000.

In South Australia and Victoria, the school-leaving age is also in process of being raised. I wish to refer to the member for Canning. I have no desire to cause him any inconvenience, but in looking over the report I

was struck with one line in raised black type, stating that Mr. Cross—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order; The hon. member must not refer to Mr. Cross.

Mr. BOYLE: Then I will say the member for Canning—though that does not appear in the report—dissents from this report and the recommendations.

Mr. Watts: Which part?

Mr. BOYLE: The whole lot. Still, I am permitted now to deal only with the question of raising the leaving age. The member for Canning doubtless will be just as eloquent in supporting this proposal as he was when he hitherto condemned it.

Mr. J. Hegney: Why not?

Mr. BOYLE: I should ask why, because the principles are the same and the attendant circumstances are the same, except that more money may be available now. I am aware that during the proceedings of the Select Committee, he showed a superabundant faculty for destructive criticism. He also complained that he had been gagged. I made a count of the number of questions asked by the hon. member and found that he had put 117 questions at 17 meetings, so that was not a bad tally for a man who had been gagged.

The Minister for Lands: What could he have done?

The Minister for Mines: He let you down lightly.

Mr. BOYLE: Perhaps so. Obviously, his complaint about having been gagged was quite wrong. I have a right as chairman of that committee—the other members were the member for Williams-Narrogin, the member for Subiaco, and the then member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie, though he did not attend after the first meeting—to say that the member for Canning in 1938 dissented from the findings, and that I am looking forward with a good deal of interest to the attitude he will adopt on this Bill. Horace Greely once said, "Consistency is an attribute of fools." Undoubtedly there are times when one may reasonably be inconsistent. Let me say that the member for Kalgoorlie supported us and made a really good speech. I wish the Government success with the Bill, for which I shall vote. I commend the Government for having introduced it, and am glad that the suggestion to wait for the issuing of a proclamation to bring the measure into operation is to be deleted.

The Minister for the North-West: I think you have misunderstood my proposed amendment.

Mr. BOYLE: I appreciate the courtesy of the Minister in informing me of it, and, if I have misunderstood him, I hope he will correct me. Looking at the psychological aspect of the question, who is there amongst us that was compelled to leave school at the age of 14 and has not felt handicapped in consequence during the rest of his life? I myself was fortunate. By the aid of a stick and a good mother I was kept at school until I was well above the age of 14 years. I assure members, however, that up to the age of 14 I had not taken school life seriously. I had not realised what it meant.

From the age of 14 years the average boy and girl are able to absorb knowledge that will remain with them. Teachers may do what they like up to the age of 14 years, but it is difficult to get the children to settle down to school work up to that age. Personally, I would prefer the school-leaving age to be raised to 16 years, but I am aware of the difficulties the Government has to face in that connection, and not only the Government but also parents. This measure will not be all benefit in the farming districts. It will be a sacrifice for many parents to be obliged to do without the services of their children for perhaps a year longer than formerly, but it is a sacrifice that will be gladly made. I do not feel I can at present speak longer on the Bill. There is no room for reasonable argument against it. I have found nothing in it to which I object. Certain health matters are referred to, but these can be the subject of amendment in Committee. The Bill will receive my wholehearted support, and I hope it will not be put into force by proclamation but will become law as soon as that can be reasonably done.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): This measure can be divided into two parts. The first provides for an extension of the age for compulsory attendance from 14 to 15 years. The second deals with the control of kindergartens. The member for Avon delivered a very interesting address on the measure and suggested that it dealt with the foundation of kindergartens, but I can see nothing in the Bill that in any way binds the State to contribute to the cost of the upkeep of kindergartens.

The Minister for Mines: The State is doing that now.

Hon. N. KEENAN: But without any obligation.

The Minister for Mines: That is so.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I will say a few words on that point when I have dealt with the first part of the Bill. That part, as I said, deals with the raising of the age for compulsory attendance at State schools and approved schools. That is a proposal which has been advocated from this side of the House for many years past. We have put it forward as one that should be received and dealt with at the earliest possible moment, subject to a possible proviso—a proviso which forms part of the English statute—and that is to allow exemption to families which can show that the compulsory attendance of a child at school would inflict hardship of a considerable nature. Those cases must arise and of course should be provided for. Subject merely to that qualification, we have always advocated and supported a proposal to extend the age for compulsory school attendance from 14 to 15 years and consequently we are supporting this measure. But before effect could be given to the proposal—there is not even the ghost of a hope of giving effect to it in the circumstances through which we are passing—school premises sufficiently large to accommodate the increased number of scholars, estimated by the Minister at between 5,000 and 6,000, must be provided. The present schools cannot possibly accommodate this increased number.

Mr. Withers: You would not make additions to the schools before the measure was proclaimed?

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the hon. member will listen for a moment he will understand. The school premises in the metropolitan area today are certainly not large enough to meet the requirements of the children attending them. In my own electorate we have for the past eight years been agitating to get the school premises enlarged, in order that children may not be obliged to carry out their school duties on a verandah, which they do at present. We have not succeeded. We have been told, as I suppose other members have been told, that money is not available for the additions. Today in winter-time at the main State school in Nedlands children are taught on the verandahs and are protected from the

storms merely by a small screen of canvas. Of course, they are inadequately protected. It is an absurdity to talk, therefore, of teaching an additional 5,000 or 6,000 children when it is not possible to deal adequately with the present number.

My second point deals with school staffs. I think it is an admitted fact that teachers at present are called upon to take charge of classes that are far beyond the capacity of any one man or any one woman to teach. I have been told by those who have a right to speak as experts on the matter—the member for North-East Fremantle will correct me if I am wrong—that the limitation of what is recognised as the right maximum for one teacher to control and attempt to educate is exceeded in almost every school in the metropolitan area, and sometimes exceeded to an enormous extent. If you add to that number the 5,000 or 6,000 additional children to whom I have referred, to what extent must the staff be increased? What provision is made for that increase? A school staff cannot be created except by laying down plans years beforehand and training the teachers in a college in order to make them efficient. None of those steps has been taken, much less has any start been made to give effect to the proposal. So, under present conditions, to talk of this extension is to talk of an impossibility. It can only be carried out when the school premises are added to and the school staff has been increased.

I shall now turn for a moment to kindergartens. Personally, I resent the absurd language in which kindergarten is defined. The definition reads—

“Kindergarten” means a school for children under six years of age conducted on the theory that education should be begun by gratifying and cultivating the normal aptitude for exercise, play, observation, imitation and construction.

All we want to say, without talking flamboyant nonsense, is that “kindergarten” means a school for children under six years of age. Then we shall know exactly what it means. There should be nothing whatever about construction, normal aptitude, imitation, etc. As a matter of fact, the kindergarten is mainly of use because it enables the shy child to leave its home and meet other children, and become acquainted with the larger world of which it will some day form a part. The kindergarten was the

invention of a professor in Germany. We all know from experience that children are exceptionally shy; they avoid one another. But that shyness can be broken down in the best possible manner by kindergarten schools where children learn to share their toys and their sports and to a large extent educate each other. That is what a kindergarten means—the very first stage in introducing a child to community life. But we do not want to pretend that it has anything to do with gratifying the child or cultivating its normal aptitude for exercise. I venture to say that from our point of view the amount of exercise it takes without education is inclined to be so excessive that we sometimes lose our tempers as a result.

The Minister for Works: This refers to organised play.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is called exercise in the Bill. However, that is only a minor point. I object to the measure being loaded up with this verbiage instead of our merely saying that a kindergarten means a system of school training for children under six years of age. All this Bill does is to give complete control to the Education Department of all kindergarten schools. Those schools are not to exist if the Bill becomes law, except under a permit which is to be given only on the recommendation of the Director of Education. The measure entirely ignores that very worthy and very efficient organisation, the Free Kindergarten Union. That union trains teachers for the special purpose of educating children in the kindergarten. Its members visit and inspect all kindergartens affiliated with the union and keep the standard of the various kindergarten schools as high as they can, and certainly up to a stage which must be achieved before the schools are allowed to share in any grants which the Kindergarten Union has at its disposal. The practice is for the State Government to make a certain sum of money available through the Kindergarten Union for these kindergarten schools, but in this Bill the Kindergarten Union is entirely ignored and a body that does not take and never has taken the smallest atom of interest in kindergarten schools—the Education Department—is put in its place. The Education Department is to be the sole judge of who is to conduct any kindergarten and where it is to be conducted.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think that is right.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not think it is right, either.

The Minister for Lands: I am referring to your statement, which is incorrect.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I cannot read the clause at present, but as I understand the Bill it means that unless a permit is granted in the form prescribed, which is on the recommendation of the Director of Education who is the head of the Education Department, no kindergarten school may be conducted. When we go into Committee on the Bill it will be seen whether I am under a wrong impression. The only objection which those who desire to see kindergartens established will take is that if the Education Department is going to take the responsibility of governing the kindergarten it should take the responsibility of finding the finance. In every instance where a kindergarten is established it is preceded by a struggle which is brought to a successful conclusion only as a result of individual support, and appeals made through private sources to all those interested—parents, friends of parents and public bodies who have land to give or in respect of which they can give the right to occupy. It is as a result of these things that kindergartens come into existence.

If the Education Department is prepared to take over the financing of kindergartens, then very willingly will those interested hand over the whole movement, but they certainly will not be at all pleased to hand over the movement to the control of the Education Department and still have left to them the difficult task of finding finance, assisted—it is only fair to say—by the Lotteries Commission, which on two occasions to my knowledge has come forward and distributed very large sums for the purpose of establishing kindergartens. Except for that help and for private donations and collections, no finance is available. If the Bill proposes to leave that position as it is today and merely give the Education Department control, there will be very little support for it. However, for various reasons—one of the principal being that the real purpose of the Bill is to extend the school leaving age—I intend to support the measure.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet): I support the Bill. Ever since I have been a member of this House I have, on every possible oc-

casione, voiced my opinion regarding education in Western Australia. I can remember that when I came into this Chamber educational facilities for the boys and girls, by and large, were very low, especially in the back country where facilities for education were not obtainable. On every possible occasion that I have been able to obtain literature dealing with higher types of education I have read extensively on this question, but never yet have I found two writers in agreement on the matter. Listening to the debate this afternoon I find the same situation existing. There is always reason for people's opinion to vary on the subject of education. Even higher authorities on technical and advanced education do not agree amongst themselves. But everyone agrees that it is totally wrong to take a child away from school before its mind is developed. One writer has gone so far as to say that it is as unnatural to take a child away from school at the age of 14 as it is for that child to die at that age. He is definitely of the opinion that it is totally wrong for a child to leave school at that age because his mind is not formed. Although he goes into the subject of higher education he does not give any particular grounds for educating children to a higher standard. We have followed out the old orthodox practice, he says, and enabled children to go from higher schools to universities, but frequently the product of the universities is of no value to the country when released, so we arrive at the position when we realise that it is necessary to educate children to a different standard than has prevailed in the past.

Many people consider that if a boy or a girl is sent to school and secures a leaving certificate he or she is of some value, but that is not so. Such children are unfinished products. They have the rudiments of education; they have minds cultivated sufficiently to accept the type of training they may be desirous of acquiring before going into the world, but that is all the education they have. Their minds are cultivated to a certain standard enabling them easily to assimilate knowledge they require in after life. All children cannot be educated on the same lines, because they do not want to follow the same careers when they leave school. I do not like quoting Russia too frequently, but I do wish to say that in my opinion the Russian system of education is the best. I read a book by an English writ-

er dealing with Russia, and he said he was dumbfounded with the knowledge possessed by the ordinary people of that country. On the Trans-Siberian railway he met a girl of 26 years of age who was employed as metallurgist of a steel-rolling mill. He made further enquiries and found that there were more people attending the Russian universities than were attending universities in the whole of America and Europe. He quoted the number of students and the number of universities, and the figures were phenomenal.

The Russian universities, however, differ from those elsewhere; they are really a higher type of technical training school. The method is to have the child's teacher decide for what industry it appears to be most suitable. It is then put into a training factory combined with a school. So the individual learns his future occupation and is taught other things at the same time. He is trained in theory and practice, and that is the only way in which people can be satisfactorily taught to be of use in the world after they have left school. In Western Australia we have some high-class training schools. There is the high school in Kalgoorlie and similar establishments nearer Perth. There is also the Kalgoorlie School of Mines which gives very efficient training to its students.

But the fact remains that quite a number of our young men and women who joined various branches of the Fighting Forces, and were called upon to indicate whether they had the type of training necessary to undertake work required of them, demonstrated that they had not the qualifications desired in spite of the fact that they had passed out of high schools. They were immediately required to undergo a special course of training extending from three to six months. They were given a specially planned course to fit them to do the work they were required to undertake. At the end of their period of training they were quite efficient. Some were trained as navigators and were able to plot maps and charts required in aircraft practice. They had a special course of training and became efficient. They proved that they had minds cultivated to an extent sufficient to enable them to grasp what they were taught but lacked the requisite training. But they were able to the satisfaction of the Air Force to complete the course they were

required to undergo. Today many of our young Australian airmen have proved themselves to be very efficient and capable of operating planes all over the world. Their achievements have been possible as a result of a special course of training. This Bill does not set out to do that but to give children one more year's education for the purpose of cultivating their minds.

Of course, the measure cannot come into operation at present. As the member for Nedlands remarked, that is impossible because we have neither the schools nor the teachers. Everybody realises that; but we have materials to build schools, and I am given to understand that when the war is over there will be plenty of teachers available, because hundreds enlisted in the Fighting Services and will later be available for that work. So we shall have both school accommodation and teachers, and shall be able to take 5,000 or 6,000 children and make them thoroughly competent by giving them a year of education they require. When that period comes, in an age of easy money, such as we have today—because we can talk in millions whereas we used to be afraid to talk in thousands—I hope sufficient funds will be available for higher education and that after children leave school at the age of 15 they will be forced to continue training to fit themselves for various avocations, no matter whether it be for business or crafts or trades, or anything else. I hope the opportunity will be there for them to have technical training as well as higher education.

I agree that the extra burden imposed on parents if children are to be kept at school for a longer period will be felt, but I think that when people realise that as a result their children will in after-life have better opportunities than they had, there will not be much of a grouch. The young people of this country have a big project in front of them. In seven or eight years' time the young people of today will be trying to run our country. It will be an age of young people and not old people. Young people will have a lot of say after this war is over and they will realise that there is a possibility for them to develop. The younger people will have their say in the days to come although the older people may be quite satisfied to continue as they have in the past. I quite realise that one commences to

get old when he reaches 50. I support the Bill as it stands and thank the Government for having introduced it. I trust that effect will be given to its provisions as soon as possible. I know that will not happen within three months or six months, but I feel sure that effect will be given to the legislation as soon as the opportunity arises.

I sympathise with the member for Avon who complained that he did not receive the support he anticipated when he presented the report of the Select Committee that inquired into our educational system. I do not know what the conditions were then or why he did not get adequate support for his claims. Possibly it was that in those days this House was fearful of talking in amounts that approached £10,000. It was useless to advocate such expenditure at that period because members were always told that no money was available. Men and women were starving, but funds could not be provided adequately to extend assistance that was necessary. In these days of easy money we can set out on a war loan of £125,000,000 and, in fact, money is no object. Seeing that we are spending about £1,500,000 every day for war purposes it must be obvious that after the war is over there should be no difficulty about securing the necessary funds for the object outlined in the Bill. If the requisite money is not forthcoming, the young people who are at present away on active service will have something to say about it on their return. Those who will advance the plea that funds cannot be obtained for such a purpose will be put in the background and others will take their places. I think everyone is keen on the provision of improved educational facilities for our young people, and I see no occasion to labour the question. The sooner better educational facilities are available the better it will be for Western Australia and for Australia as a whole.

**MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco): I support the second reading of the Bill, and am only sorry that its introduction has been so long delayed. Legislation of this type should have been introduced immediately after the report of the Select Committee was submitted to Parliament by the member for Avon. I regret that the Bill contains no provision whereby the Commonwealth Government would be urged immediately to release the institutions taken over

for use by the Fighting Services. If those buildings were returned to us we would at least have further accommodation for our school children. It is certainly a disgrace to our educational system—I do not know exactly where the blame lies and perhaps the member for North-East Fremantle can put me right if my impression is incorrect—that approximately only about three per cent. of the children who attend the State schools pass the Junior Certificate examination. To me that result is deplorable. We all know that most business firms require an applicant for positions to hold the Junior Certificate. I would have liked the school-leaving age to be raised to 16 years. I understand the difficulties involved, but nevertheless I would have liked the age to be raised to 16 and provision made for two years to be spent in technical training or in advanced education in matters affecting the sphere in which the child desired to find a livelihood. I think another provision that could have been included would be dealing with training in civics and more religious training.

It will be agreed that a high standard of education along those lines would be of the greatest value to our race, for the appreciation of the niceties of the life and the meaning of citizenship are apt to be lost in times such as the present. I was impressed by the remarks of the member for Nedlands and would certainly like some provision made for the assistance and maintenance of the Kindergarten Union. The word kindergarten simply means "children's garden." Therefore the system of education can be likened to a garden in which a child can develop naturally and its training be directed along appropriate lines. The task involves the provision of teachers specially trained to take charge of such young children and to direct their development along lines quite different from what is appropriate when dealing with children six years of age and upwards. I would like the Kindergarten Union maintained so that it can train teachers for this special branch of education. It would be of value if a kindergarten were associated with every State school, and the continuance of existing kindergartens at the church schools and those conducted by private people made certain. In these days kindergartens are invaluable because of the prevalence of those nasty flats that are to be seen everywhere.

Young children are being brought up under most restricted conditions, and the poor



little kiddies have to be sent on to the streets in order that they may play. There is nowhere else for them to go, and in the circumstances many mothers are only too glad to take advantage of the facilities offered by nearby kindergartens. In fact, kindergartens are becoming increasingly and urgently necessary in the metropolitan area. Another provision that could have been embodied in the Bill would be one relating to hostels for children who have to travel long distances to school, thereby ensuring accommodation for them. With regard to the medical examination of children, the Bill insists that parents who can afford to pay for such medical examination must do so. But if the parents cannot face the expenditure they are not obliged to have their children attended to.

Mr. Fox: Everyone will be able to afford that after the war is over.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: But that is not provided for in the Bill, which should contain a provision setting out that the Government would accept the responsibility for ensuring the medical examination of children whose parents were not in a position to pay for that attention.

The Minister for Mines: There is already provision for medical examinations in the schools.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The Government has only one doctor or so to attend to all the work and has no nurses at its disposal.

The Minister for Mines: Children whose parents cannot afford to pay are attended to now.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I do not wish to argue about that point at this stage. The member for Mt. Magnet mentioned what has taken place in Russia. No one seems to be able to refer to that country in this Chamber without creating the impression that he is Russia-conscious. When I was in that country I found that the educational system operating there was wonderful—especially on paper. I would like to see some aspects of that system applied in Western Australia. I took a great interest in educational matters when I was in Russia and wrote down all the details I could secure from time to time. When I re-read my notes nowadays I always feel that in Australia we have missed quite a lot through not adopting some of the features of the Russian educational system. I heartily support the second reading of the Bill, but trust that next year the

legislation will be thoroughly overhauled and what we neglect to do this time will be undertaken by the new Parliament.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly): I have been trying to fix upon some reason why the Government should have introduced such a Bill.

The Minister for Mines: You growl when we don't, and you growl when we do!

Mr. SEWARD: If the Government had brought down a decent Bill it would be quite all right, but this measure with just a few clauses represents merely a waste of time. As the member for Avon pointed out, two matters only are dealt with. One concerns the raising of the school-leaving age from 14 to 15 years and the other has regard to the assumption by the Government of control of kindergartens. The member for Mt. Magnet said that the Government could not expect to give effect to the Bill at present because neither school accommodation nor teachers were available for the purpose. I think that is generally admitted, and the Minister dealt with that phase in his speech when he moved the second reading of the Bill. But if the Government cannot give effect to what the legislation proposes, why introduce the Bill at all? Why not postpone the matter and introduce a decent Bill, one that is urgently needed? If that were done early in the next session, members would have an opportunity to legislate along lines that would be of value to the State.

This type of small amending Bill merely serves to clutter up the statute book and makes it difficult to follow the various Acts that have not been consolidated. I am not so much concerned about the school-leaving age at the moment as I am about the position of kindergartens. I am not willing to pass over the control of kindergartens to the Government unless the State accepts the financial responsibility involved. I know of one kindergarten established in a country centre by a lady who was formerly a teacher in England and who has retired on a pension. She has taken charge of about 15 or 20 little toddlers and, if some Government inspector is to be permitted to go along and condemn her little school merely because it does not contain all the facilities he may deem desirable, that will be giving the Government altogether too much power.

The Minister for the North-West: Your concern is about the teacher and the profit-

making aspect rather than the education and help for the child.

Mr. SEWARD: I am not saying anything about the profit-making aspect. That is not in my mind at all. As a matter of fact, the lady I refer to charges about 6d. or a 1s. a week for the children and takes charge of them in the mornings only. I am not concerned about that aspect at all. If the Government were to provide the facilities that it considers desirable I would be quite willing to give the move my support, but, rather than risk present arrangements lapsing and the children being deprived of the help they receive from kindergartens so that they would be without any such aid till they reached 6 years of age and could go to the ordinary schools, I would prefer the present system to continue. It is most desirable that we should allow persons who are suitable in every respect to continue their kindergarten work, and we should not do anything to prevent that being done. Just because some inspector might have an idea that certain facilities needed extending, the work among the kiddies should not be hampered.

If the Government is not prepared to make the funds available to enable suitable premises to be secured and various facilities installed, why not hold over the legislation until next year, and endeavour to come to some arrangement as to that before we grant authority to any inspector to go along and condemn particular institutions simply because they do not comply with certain conditions? The Education Act lays down that certain people must comply with the conditions specified in it. I do not know what those conditions are. They may be conditions that are not capable of being complied with in many cases of which I have knowledge. I do not know why the Government brought down this Bill at the end of the session. We have two pages of printed matter dealing with these particular phases of the education system. An all-embracing amendment of the Education Act might be supported, but I cannot support this Bill.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie): I have great pleasure in supporting the Bill, for I believe it to be a step in the right direction. However, much more is read into the measure than appears in the printed Bill. I fear that an extension of the school-leaving

age for another 12 months will not be of great benefit to many children. It must be realised that, unless the whole curriculum operating in our State schools is completely overhauled, an extension of the school-leaving age by 12 months will merely prove a waste of time. The children will derive no benefit from it. It will be purgatory for many girls and boys of 14 years to be kept for another two years at school under the present system. There should be a psychological staff attached to the Education Department for the purpose of examining children of about 11 years in order to ascertain what class of career they are best suited for. No matter how many years some girls and boys are kept at school, they will never make professional women or professional men. Many geniuses were regarded as sheer dunces while at school, simply because they had no natural bent for assimilating the teaching that was given them. The examination should take place, if not at 11 years, not later than the twelfth year.

Children having a natural bent for professional life should be removed from the ordinary curriculum of the schools and receive a class of tuition suited to their natural abilities; and children showing a tendency to become tradesmen should be sent to suitable schools and during their last three years at such schools taught something more beneficial to them in after-life than the ordinary curriculum affords. Things that happened 200 years B.C., or in the twelfth or thirteenth century of our era, might be of interest, but have no practical value for the child in earning its living and becoming an asset to the community. It may not be generally known that, whilst Australia boasts of its compulsory educational system, it is found in the Australian Army that three per cent. of the personnel are totally illiterate. Ten per cent. of Australian soldiers—and these are official figures, not hearsay—are not more advanced than the second standard.

It cannot be said that our educational system is sufficient when it turns out 10 per cent. of pupils who prove at ages between 18 and 25 years to be no further advanced than the second standard, and 2 per cent. of total illiterates. The children in the backblocks, living so far from schools that they cannot attend them, should be catered for by the correspondence branch of the Education Department. That should be made compulsory

for every child in the State whose home is too far distant from a school for him to attend it. It should be compulsory in the same way as attendance is compulsory for children living within reasonable distance of a school. The Australian Army Education Service at the present time is conducting schools for the purpose of teaching illiterates, and also for the purpose of improving the knowledge of soldiers who are found to be only about second standard. It is a deplorable state of affairs and a reflection, to my thinking, on the curriculum of our State schools, when that is the case. And that remark applies not only to Western Australia. Numbers of the men I have in mind come from Eastern States. They attend the illiterate schools just in the same way as do Western Australian soldiers needing such teaching.

Further, there is the question of country children. For those children I have great sympathy, particularly as regards their education. The class of tuition they receive is not necessarily so good as that obtainable in the cities. Going around the country one sees small schools where the children are housed in a room about 24 ft. long by about 14 ft. wide. There are just the bare walls, and a few forms and desks which are an abomination to sit at for hours every day. A much better idea would be to close many of these schools and provide the necessary transport service so that those children may attend a central school which provides better intellectual tuition. The parents of children living in the backblocks, many miles from our civilisation, have not the money to send a brilliant child either to the metropolitan area or to some other area where he can get higher education. There are many geniuses, or semi-geniuses, lost to this State for the simple reason that there are no facilities for higher tuition available in remote country districts—the parents being so deplorably poor that they have not the money to send their child to a city, where higher education is available.

The amount of money provided by the State for this purpose is lamentably inadequate. That phase also ought to be taken into consideration. Our whole system of education needs revolutionising. If the Bill does not provide for that, then from time to time we should amend the Education Act so as to ensure that every child has an equal

opportunity of becoming educated. In the case of brilliant children whose parents live in the backblocks it will be necessary for the State or the Commonwealth Government to provide funds for the keep of the child while it is living away from its home. To keep a number of children at school without varied curricula being available to them is merely waste of time. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, which will be a step in the right direction if it is administered properly.

**MR. TONKIN** (North-East Fremantle): I welcome the Bill. It cannot be said that the Government is pioneering an unexplored field, because many countries of the world are a long way ahead of us in the matter of education. We are, of course, not an old country, and whilst we do lag somewhat we can be well-satisfied with the signs of awakening to educational needs in Western Australia. It is true that there will be difficulties in the way of implementing the proposals that are made. Such difficulties have existed for years. There will always be difficulties with regard to education. In this State there has been a building trade lag for about 20 years, but circumstances have been such as to make it difficult to catch up with the lag. It is not for me to point out the difficulties, my hope being that this measure will not be prevented from being put into operation. The Government has indicated that it is prepared to go ahead with it. I have no doubt that the Government will need to take steps to encounter and overcome the difficulties to which I have alluded. I shall certainly not magnify them. I welcome the process which now shows signs of developing. In this country we cannot expect to maintain a superiority which we believe we possess over the workmen of certain other countries if we permit the other countries to have an educational system suitable for their artisans to acquire a greater efficiency than ours possess. So we have to do our best to keep up with the pace in the countries referred to. It is generally agreed amongst businessmen that every year's schooling after the age of 13 years is worth £1,000 in capital or £100 per annum in earning capacity to the pupil who receives that additional education. Therefore if we refrain from extending education to those children we definitely deprive them and the nation of that additional capital which is available.

We should have a school-leaving age as high as the country can afford. Our aim should ever be to raise the school-leaving age. In every subject which calls for reflection, such as history and science and languages, experience has shown that knowledge becomes more readily assimilable with the ever-widening intelligence of the child; and any great widening of the intelligence does not occur until after the age of 13. Children will learn quite rapidly after their thirteenth year, whereas learning is a comparatively slow process before that age. One year's schooling after 13 is worth several years' schooling before 13. There are many parents who fully appreciate the value of education, and who, without any compulsion from the State, make provision for sending their children to school well after reaching 15, 16, and even 17 years. Legislation is not needed for those parents. There is a type of parent who because of his own lack of learning and the state of his mental faculties is not able to appreciate the value that accrues from additional education being given to his children. Through a shortsighted policy such parents deprive their children of the opportunity to gain further education, and they send the youngsters out to work at an early age.

This legislation is necessary to protect such children from their parents so that the latter will not be able to take their children from school at the age of 14 but will be obliged to leave them there for another year; indeed, I hope for more than just another year. If we can ensure that the children who today are losing one year of schooling will presently gain an additional year, we shall have taken a great step forward and should support such a proposal. It will be recognised that all sorts of obstacles will present themselves when the State commences to implement this idea. The very same difficulties were encountered when education was first of all made compulsory for children between the ages of six and 14. Staffing and accommodation difficulties had to be met, and they will have to be met again in this case. When the Government is called upon to face up to these difficulties it will bestir itself to a still greater extent to meet the lack than would be evident in ordinary circumstances. The sooner this legislation is put on the statute book the better it will be not only for the children but for the nation as a whole.

I foresee an advantage that will accrue as a result of the passage of this legislation, namely, a change in the curricula for post-primary classes. We make a grave mistake today when we endeavour to fit large numbers of children for a University career. We waste a lot of time in that direction and put children to an unnecessary amount of useless study in following out that programme. If the Government extends the school-leaving age to 15 it will also be obliged to revise the curricula in order to set out certain programmes to be followed by children who have no intention of proceeding to the University, but who nevertheless wish to derive the advantage of an extra year at school. I should think that the new curricula would have a greater technical bias than at present. I hope that will be so, and will do my best to see that it is so. We are opening up a new field, and a very valuable one, for those children whose parents have not so far appreciated the value of education and have deprived them of the opportunity to gain it. This legislation when in operation will mean that so many additional children will be guaranteed an extra year's schooling at a time of their lives when they can more readily learn.

We spend a long while at school in teaching children how to acquire knowledge, giving them the processes and the methods by which they can concentrate and obtain the real kernel of the things they are studying. Not much of that can be done in the 3rd or 4th standards, the progress being very slow at that stage. When a child has passed through the 6th standard, which he normally does at the age of 12, and goes on to the 7th standard, he reaches the stage when his capacity for learning has greatly improved. It is to take the greatest advantage of the impressionable period of a child's life that the extension of the school-leaving age is so widely advocated by educationalists. It is a matter for regret that this was not brought about years ago. It is also a matter for regret that the present proposal is not to extend the school-leaving age to 16. We must, however, crawl before we can walk. I look upon this proposal as an indication of the broadening of the educational conscience in Western Australia. Although it has taken a long time to reach this stage there is nothing to say that the progress from now on will be as slow. I believe that when the benefits to

be derived from increasing the school-leaving age become apparent there will be agitations for a further extension of the age.

It is true that this proposal will bring some hardships upon certain parents whose income is very small, and who look to the earnings of their children to supplement the family budget. That will be a sacrifice that must be borne in the interests of not only the children but of the nation. I hope that in these circumstances, where it is fairly clearly demonstrated that the burden is far too great for parents, some assistance will be rendered in certain ways, either by special scholarships or by allowances, to enable the children to benefit from the additional educational facilities offered. I believe in equality of opportunity. Unfortunately there is not very much of it in these days, but there is more of it now than was the case some years ago. There will still be some children who will suffer a very severe handicap. That is unfair. To handicap children in their earlier years means that they start so much behind scratch that it is exceedingly difficult for them to make their way in life later on, although some of them are able to do so. No doubt members could quote examples of how children have overcome serious obstacles and made progress despite them. They are the exception rather than the rule.

I repeat that if it can be demonstrated later on that there are parents in such circumstances that the hardship is greater than should be borne, methods should be adopted to make it possible for such people to keep their children at school for the extra period. This Bill will, in my opinion, mark the commencement of an epoch in our history. When the proposal is put into operation and the additional period of education is given, it will mark the beginning of a definite improvement in the mental attainments of our young people, an improvement which will not be manifest for some years but will nevertheless be there. This State will itself derive immense benefit from the innovation. I whole-heartedly support the Bill and feel sure there will be no difficulty in its being passed by both Houses.

**MR. KELLY** (Yilgarn-Coolgardie): I am in complete accord with the Bill. The move will be a very welcome one in all circles. I join with other members, however, in expressing regret that the Bill does not go

even further. The extension of the school leaving age from 14 to 15 years is going to fill a long-felt want. I realise that the fulfilment of this proposal will mean the provision of additional accommodation and the building up of bigger teaching staffs to cope with anything from 4,000 to 6,000 scholars. It may be some little time before full effect can be given to this Bill. Because of that I feel that we might well consider at this stage increasing the school-leaving age not to 15 but to 16. It is understood that by increasing the school-leaving age there may be parents who will find a considerable financial strain put upon them, parents who perhaps are living on the basic wage and who could not afford to keep their children at school without their financial positions being seriously affected. The chance of such hardship being inflicted is very great. This question, however, is not only one of State importance, but of great national importance.

I hope some provision can be made by the Government to assist those parents who cannot afford to provide additional educational facilities for their children so that their difficulties in that respect may be overcome. Irrespective of the financial position of the parents, I consider that all children should have an equal opportunity to obtain a reasonable standard of education. It is the inherent right of every child to be given such facilities, not only in the case of those whose parents can afford them, but in the case of all parents. Whilst I welcome the introduction of this Bill I again stress the importance of availing ourselves of the opportunity to extend the school-leaving age to 16. In any event the proposal is not likely to be implemented for some time to come, so that we might well contemplate taking the additional steps I have proposed.

The measure does not make adequate provision for children in country schools. We have very few such schools where children can advance scholastically far enough to enable them to take a junior certificate. There are only five or six such schools in this State outside the metropolitan area. The possibilities regarding the general run of children in the country ever going higher in their standard of education is remote, because very little provision has been made in the past to bridge the gap to enable them to receive a higher education. Extra finance is required so that many parents in

the country may send their children to boarding schools in the city. The time has come when incorporated in our educational system should be some form of assistance to enable children, especially those of proved ability, in country schools to be given a greater opportunity to finish their education.

In these advanced times very few children who have not obtained their leaving certificate have much chance of establishing themselves in the business world. Far less is that so in the case of children who because of the financial position of their parents are forced to leave a country school at the age of 14. Either the burden is too great to enable the parents to keep their children at school until they have obtained a reasonable standard of education, or the youngsters are forced into some manual occupation at the age of 14 irrespective of whether they have proved their abilities or not. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle that very few children gain worthwhile knowledge until after they have reached the age of 13. On our present basis of education, a child has really only one year of profitable education left for him if the school-leaving age is retained at 14, as at present. If the age is 15 we give another two years.

I therefore advocate an extra year being added to the present provision. A scheme could be implemented to enable the country children to receive boarding accommodation in the city in the same way as do the children of many people in a position which enables them to send their youngsters to secondary schools. If a boarding school were established by the Government in the city, children with ability—the ability shown in their earlier years—could be given the opportunity to finish their education at that school. The number of scholars to be housed in such a school would not be very great. Whilst consideration is being given to the two aspects mentioned in the Bill, it might also be given to the establishment of a school on these lines. I stress the point that the city and country children are at least entitled to a reasonable standard of education based on the best we can give under this Bill.

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (in reply): Firstly, may I say I am very pleased at the enthusiasm displayed by all speakers for this move to improve our

educational system in Western Australia. It augurs well for the final passage of the Bill because it is a step forward, and the enthusiasm of members, as the member for North-East Fremantle claimed, shows an education conscience on their part. The member for Avon, who started the debate this evening, was under a misapprehension if he believed that I told him that I intended to move, when in Committee, to delete the clause which proposes to inaugurate this Bill when passed by proclamation. I am sorry if I misled him, because that was not my intention. The reasons for having this Bill inaugurated by proclamation were outlined by me when moving the second reading. I intimated to members that an alteration to the curriculum, and that an added number of teachers would be required. In addition, several of the already established schools in the metropolitan area would have to be extended before this scheme could be started. As members know, improvements to schools and buildings have been considerably delayed by the lack of manpower and materials.

The plans already formed by the Education Department will, when completed, give it the right to inaugurate this measure in certain portions of the State within a short space of time. Other areas will have to wait a little longer on account of the shortage of both manpower and material. Members are aware that we cannot immediately put into operation a proposition of this magnitude just now. The Government should have the right to proclaim certain areas to come under the operations of the Bill immediately facilities are available. The major complaint of the member for Avon was that this measure was some years late. He intimated that a Select Committee recommended the increase of the school age and other things in 1938. He also said that this Bill was what he termed "window-dressing." I do not know whence he gets his imagination, but my reply to his statement is that in the period to which he refers the difficulties were well known to the Government and to the Education Department. The schools were very over-crowded. The school teachers complained that as many as 60 children were crammed into one classroom, and that there was a shortage of both accommodation and teachers. During those years, too, finance was very difficult. They were successive

years of Budget deficits. The Government was hard pressed to find sufficient money for all free social services, in which is included education.

The Government of that day was not justified in spending huge sums of money on free education without providing for other free services. Those conditions have altered. The last two or three years have not been years of Budget deficits. In addition, the Labour Party has been in favour of this move. It has been part and parcel of its platform. Surely when the opportunity arises, and when times have altered so that the Government can introduce forward steps like this, it should not be accused of bringing these things in merely for the purpose of window-dressing. I resent the suggestion that that is the only reason why the Bill was introduced. Likewise the member for Nedlands castigated the Government for bringing down the Bill. Particularly did he refer to some clauses whereby unwarranted interference was made where no responsibility was taken. He was referring to the kindergarten schools and, by interjection, he was told that the Government of the day subsidised kindergartens, to which he replied, "Yes, through the Lotteries Commission." I am sorry the member for Nedlands should display such a lack of knowledge, particularly as he was associated with the previous Government and has been here as long as, if not longer than, most members in this House. He represents a large suburb in which there are many schools and children. For his benefit I will explain that the Government has, for many years, subsidised all kindergarten schools to the extent of £2 per annum up to 50.

Hon. N. Keenan: Up to £50?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No, up to 50 children.

Mr. McDonald: The free kindergartens.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I said all kindergartens.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Not every kindergarten!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Since the outbreak of hostilities several kindergartens have closed, but the Government did not stop the subsidy. It paid the full amount for the period during which some schools were closed and, in addition, it has this year made available a further grant of £800. The hon. member was quite wrong when he said that the only financial assist-

ance was given through the Lotteries Commission.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: He did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: He also objected to the definition of kindergarten. I am not prepared to enter into a debate on the phraseology that the hon. member mentioned, because we would not get along too well. The definition contained in the Bill was set out by education experts. I do not claim to be one, but I am prepared to accept their word for what they want. I also know that the Free Kindergarten Union conferred on this matter and approved of the measure. I wish to refer now to some of the other remarks made in connection with an inspector of schools dashing in to inspect the kindergartens, etc. The purpose of the Bill is to give that power to the Education Department. Surely someone should have control over any person, no matter what his ability or moral standing or character may be, who wishes to start a kindergarten! It is time the Government took charge of that matter. That is the reason why the Free Kindergarten Union agreed that the Government should give the control to some body, and naturally the Education Department will assume that authority.

I said, when introducing the Bill, that it was essentially a Committee measure during which stage further information could be given. I will then be able to explain the Bill, particularly to the member for Pingelly, who said he did not know what was meant by the clause which permitted the Education Department to assume the control of kindergartens. As a matter of fact, it does not do anything of the kind. All we ask is that the kindergartens, like other non-Government controlled schools, shall supply certain information to the Education Department. The member for Subiaco mentioned that this would be an interference with the Free Kindergarten Union. The hon. member was probably absent when I introduced the Bill, but in doing so I stipulated that it did not propose to interfere with the Free Kindergarten Union in any shape or form, and that the union had been consulted before the Bill was printed. If the hon. member makes further enquiries from that body she will find that, in principle, it agrees with this measure.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: What about the private kindergartens that are not members of the Union?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: They will come under the Bill just the same. They should be controlled, because it is that particular class of kindergarten that the Government desires to regulate. I instanced, when introducing the Bill, that it had been possible in this State for a sexual pervert to start a kindergarten. Unless this, or a similar Bill is passed, we cannot prevent such an occurrence happening again. That is the answer to the hon. member's statements; it is not deliberate interference, but merely permission to control these people.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee*

Mr. Marshall in the Chair; the Minister for the North-West in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 3:

Hon. N. KEENAN: On the second reading I commented on the definition of "kindergarten," which reads—

"Kindergarten" means a school for children under six years of age conducted on the theory—

not the practice—

—that education should be begun by gratifying and cultivating the normal aptitude for exercise, play, observation, imitation and construction.

Under the principal Act a school is a public school or an efficient school and, in the light of that, the definition of kindergarten seems to be absurd. If an undesirable person wished to start a kindergarten, he would be able to escape if it was not conducted on the theory that education should be begun in this way. We should adopt a commonsense interpretation by stopping at the word "age," and then it will be so wide as to include all kindergartens. If the Minister is not wedded to the wording of the definition, I move an amendment—

That in the definition of "kindergarten" all the words after the word "age" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The amendment should not be pressed. I am not an authority on education, but the wording has been determined by experts of the department who have conferred with the Free Kindergarten Union.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the Minister is not favourable to the amendment, I will not press it but ask leave to withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 13:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I understood the Minister in his reply to say that the application of the measure would be confined to certain portions of the State.

The Minister for the North-West: No; I was replying to a question as to why the measure should be brought into operation by proclamation.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the Minister has any idea of applying it to sections of the State, I point out that the proposed new subsection is applicable only to a proclamation covering the whole of the State.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I did not say that the Government wished to implement this legislation piecemeal. What I said was, in reply to a statement by the member for Avon, that there was no chance of implementing it for years. I move an amendment—

That in lines 9 to 11 of the proposed new Subsection (2) the words "and may cancel or revoke such proclamation by a subsequent proclamation" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The striking out of those words will necessitate a further amendment. The succeeding words "while a proclamation issued under this subsection remains in force" are no longer necessary or appropriate. The Minister wants the proclamation to be final and not revokable. I move an amendment—

That in lines 11 to 13 the words "while a proclamation issued under this subsection remains in force" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I oppose the amendment. If the words proposed to be struck out remain in the measure no harm will be done. The hesitancy of the member for Nedlands in making his explanation increases my doubt as to whether the amendment should be accepted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 8—agreed to.



Clause 9—Amendment of Section 28:

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I move an amendment—

That a further proviso be added to proposed new paragraph (m1) as follows:—"Provided further that in the case of a child coming under the above proviso the Minister will cause such child to be medically treated at the expense of the department."

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I oppose the amendment. The Education Department should not be asked to function for the Child Welfare Department. The latter department does assist by issuing a free railway pass to one of the parents and the child to proceed to the Children's Hospital for treatment. Parents without means are not asked to pay for such treatment.

The CHAIRMAN: The effect of the amendment would be to impose a burden upon Consolidated Revenue, and I accordingly rule it out of order.

Amendment ruled out.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—New section:

Hon. N. KEENAN: There would appear to be a doubt in the minds of some members as to whether complete control of kindergartens should be handed over to the Education Department. I move an amendment—

That in line 6 of Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 34A the word "Minister" be struck out and the words "Kindergarten Union of Western Australia" inserted in lieu.

I am not sure of the correct title of the Kindergarten Union, so have used the words of which I am certain. The object of the amendment is to allow a body specially organised for this work to carry it out. It is doing so efficiently at the present time.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Are the persons in control of the Kindergarten Union elected by the public?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I confess that my knowledge on the subject is limited. I recently attended a kindergarten training college in East Perth, because it was proposed that that college should decide not only upon the design of premises for a kindergarten at Nedlands but also upon the lay-out of the whole scheme. What I saw at that college thoroughly convinced me that the work was being most effectively carried out.

Mr. BOYLE: I have every respect for the Kindergarten Union, but I certainly would not like its powers to be extended so that

it could exercise inspectorial authority over other kindergarten associations. I have in mind the Montessori School at Mt. Lawley. There are other well-conducted kindergartens.

Mr. J. Hegney: But the school at Mt. Lawley is not a kindergarten.

Mr. BOYLE: I certainly cannot support the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I, too, oppose the amendment. Control of kindergartens is the business of the Education Department, which consults the Kindergarten Union with reference to kindergarten work. The union works in complete harmony with the department and voluntarily supplies it with the information which this Bill proposes the union shall supply to the department. The measure merely seeks to make legal what is already being done by the union, which does not object to this provision. In fact, the union prefers that control should be in the hands of the Education Department. We have had experience of unworthy people opening up kindergartens and do not want a repetition of it. I hope the member for Nedlands will not press the amendment.

Mr. TONKIN: The Kindergarten Union is a very worthy organisation and I doubt whether it would want the responsibility which the member seeks to impose upon it. The reason for this provision in the Bill is that there shall be somebody with authority to prevent persons, who should not have permits, from commencing kindergartens. There would be no more justification for giving the Kindergarten Union authority to issue permits for kindergartens than there would be to give the Royal Automobile Club the right to issue licenses to drivers of motor cars. The Kindergarten Union runs kindergarten schools and trains and provides teachers. It will still be permitted to do that without hindrance. It is right and proper that the Minister charged with the responsibility of maintaining the best interests of the people of the State should have control over the setting-up of kindergarten schools. Once a permit is issued and a school starts the Kindergarten Union will have as much control as it would desire to have. It will provide teachers to carry out inspections and see that the schools are properly conducted.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I could not hear everything the Minister said. Did I hear him

say the union had an opportunity to peruse this clause?

The Minister for the North-West: Yes.

Hon. N. KEENAN: And expressed no opposition?

The Minister for the North-West: That is so.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Then I will not proceed any further.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 12, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

### BILLS (3)—RETURNED.

1, Workers' Homes Act Amendment.

2, Bulk Handling Act Amendment.

3, Albany Cemeteries.

Without amendment.

### BILL—FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Marshall in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 3, Subsection (4) of proposed new Section 2B—Delete all words after the word "and" in line 22, down to and including the word "and" in line 27, and substitute the words "the Municipality of North Fremantle in regard to the supply of electricity to the municipality, or to the price, terms or conditions of such supply, the same shall be referred to and settled by arbitrators."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: These amendments by the Council limit the matter between the Fremantle Tramway Board and the North Fremantle Municipality, and delete the provision inserted by this Committee permitting the appointment of a private arbitrator. The position is still limited to arbitration under the Arbitration Act of 1895, but it is provided that the Electricity Advisory Committee shall be the arbitrator and a majority decision of that body shall constitute the award. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 3, Subsection (4) of proposed new Section 2B—Delete all words after the year "1895" in line 28, and substitute the words "and such arbitrators shall be the Electricity Advisory Committee appointed under the Electricity Act whose majority decision shall constitute the award."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

I have already explained that this authorises the Advisory Committee to be appointed arbitrator under the 1895 Arbitration Act.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1943-44.

#### *In Committee of Supply.*

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

*Vote—Mines, £112,307 (partly considered):*

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [8.12]: It is not very often that members representing agricultural constituencies have much to say in regard to the mining estimates. I am one of the few members representing agricultural areas that have in their electorates large deposits of mineral wealth, the extent of which I am positive would astonish many members of this Chamber. My authority goes back a great many years. The late State Mining Engineer, Mr. Montgomery, assured me in a conversation in his office, soon after I became member for the district I represent, that in Ravensthorpe there was untold wealth of gold, copper and other minerals about which few men in Australia knew anything. That wealth remains intact. It only awaits capital and energy for its development. Unfortunately the last war absolutely hung up the development of that area because the company at that time was controlled by a head engineer of foreign origin. That company employed 500 men. Owing to the conditions that obtained at the time, the man of whom I speak cleared out of Western Australia. Ever since then the district has never had a fair deal. I say that advisedly, and without any desire to cast a reflection upon any Minister of the Crown who may have occupied his position since that date. However, that does not

detract from the importance of the district and its potentialities. Instead of thousands of people being there as was the case in the years from 1911 to 1914, only a handful of the pioneers remains.

I wish to pay a cordial tribute to the present Minister for Mines and the Government generally. Why do I do that? I do so because in a conversation I had with the Minister for Mines today, he said that the small plant that had been sent down to treat the refractory ore was giving splendid results. I may explain that the ore represents a conglomerate mass of minerals such as few districts in Western Australia possess. There are large quantities of the ore, and the gold is difficult to extract on account of the presence of copper and other minerals. Difficulty is experienced in retaining the gold by the application of ordinary methods of treatment. A special process is required similar to that in operation on the Golden Mile. Twenty or thirty years ago companies operating there would not treat ore with a gold content of four or five dwts; today that low-grade ore is being treated successfully. I remind members of what the State owes to our mineral wealth, which placed Western Australia on the map.

Of equal importance is it that we shall continue the development of the mining industry. I am confident that the present Minister will maintain activities in that regard and that he will continue operating the small plant he has made available for the treatment of copper ore. He assured me only this morning that the report obtained from his officers was very satisfactory indeed, and that the first run of the plant a few days ago produced  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons of copper. On behalf of the pioneers who are left on the field, I assure the Minister that there is an immense quantity of ore of a quality equal to, if not better than, that being treated at present. As a representative of an agricultural constituency for many years, I desire to add in all seriousness that were it not for the flip given to Western Australia 30 odd years ago by the opening up of goldmines at Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Cue and other centres, agriculture would never have come to the fore.

If my memory serves me aright, the food supplies of this State in the early days were drawn from the Eastern States and other parts. I hope the Minister will give

the Committee his assurance that during the next 12 months the mining industry will receive the whole of his attention, and that the development of our mineral wealth will be promoted in accordance with the money available for that purpose. I appreciate all that the Government has done in rendering assistance to the mining industry and I hope that before long Western Australia will again be one of the most sought-after portions of the world. I commend the Minister's statement to the careful consideration of all members of the Committee.

**MR. KELLY** (Yilgarn-Coolgardie): In his introductory speech when he presented the Mines Estimates, the Minister gave a general review of the situation in Western Australia. It must be pleasing to members to learn that progress is being made in the development of our strategic minerals, but it is still with concern that we review the goldmining situation today. In doing that, we are in no better frame of mind than we were six or eight months ago. I realise that the Minister and the officials of the Mines Department have made every endeavour to stem the downward trend of the industry. Very great efforts have been made with the object of stopping the machinery drain that has been going on for a long time. The removal of huge quantities of machinery must be viewed with the greatest concern. In many instances synchronised units of plants have been removed, and from that irreparable harm will result unless the return of the machinery to the mines is given urgent and early attention. When the time for the re-establishment of the industry is reached, it is the availability of much of that plant that will accelerate the stepping-up into production again of many of our leading mines. I urge the Minister to make repeated efforts in an endeavour to secure the Prime Minister's assurance that, as far as possible and to a much greater extent than has been apparent in the past, the machinery that has been taken from a great many mining districts will be returned to the industry, because without that a very serious position will have to be faced eventually.

The efficiency of the mining industry depends upon the plant that will be here at the cessation of hostilities, for that will greatly influence the position as to the number of men that can be readily absorbed back into the industry when the war ends. At

present the condition of the industry is such that it will be impossible to put back in employment anything like 15,000 men, or to bring the number of men employed in the mines up to 15 000 as obtained before the commencement of the war. I have a firm conviction that, in view of the withdrawal of machinery and plant from various mining districts, it will take 12 or 18 months to settle the industry back into the condition in which it was prior to the outbreak of hostilities. It will take even longer as time goes on if the drift of machinery from those districts is not stopped very soon. Every month the increased mounting difficulties that will confront the industry when the time for its rejuvenation arrives, are becoming more and more apparent. Depreciation of plant and equipment is very heavy in the mining industry, particularly in times of idleness. It is reasonable to suppose that entire treatment plants on our Goldfields will have to be replaced when the time comes for the industry to be lifted back to its major position as affecting the revenue of the State.

Without enumerating the many items of mining equipment that will be required on the cessation of hostilities, I would say that practically every mine in Western Australia will need a new set of cables. Practically every other item that is in such demand, and is at present in such short supply, will be required to rejuvenate the industry with the return of peace. In some cases, owing to the plant having been partially removed or because of plant being run to a standstill through lack of the necessary parts for maintenance and repairs, huge replacements will be necessary, and I think those replacements must be considered at a very early date. A calibration of the required equipment should be made at the first opportunity. The substitution of various units that have been taken from the mines will be a task of great magnitude. In many instances where small units of plants have been removed by the military authorities or for some other reason, it will be found when the time comes that because of war conditions the manufacture of various units has been discontinued, and it will be necessary to substitute some other form of machinery so that synchronisation may still obtain; and because of that it will be necessary to make a very early start to ascertain the requirements that the industry will be in need of.

Stocks of every kind will naturally be depleted if the war lasts much longer. Already many mines have been forced to close down, either because of lack of manpower or of necessary equipment, the latter especially in replacement parts and other commodities necessary for the continuation of the industry. The efforts of every section of the industry must be co-ordinated if we are to achieve that end. Rigid control, too, will be necessary in respect of commodities when they again become available, in small or even large quantities, so that whatever is available will be directed into channels, small as well as large, that will assist to re-establish the industry. In fact, supplies should be given to all producing mines, and every mine should have its just share through orderly control. All elements of chance must be eliminated if we are to make satisfactory adjustments in the re-establishment of the industry.

Complete, definite plans must be prepared in readiness for the immediate implementation of many of the shows that were closed down through the exigencies of war. A thorough survey of all idle mines will be necessary. In fact, that survey should be kept up-to-date. I know that the Minister has in his department a large amount of highly valuable information and much data connected with the life of our mines; but I contend that there are many other mines of which the department has very little knowledge. There is sufficient evidence available to put the Mines Department's records in a much better condition than they are in today. I was very surprised recently to hear in this Chamber utterances from a responsible Minister regarding the formation of a committee to deal with post-war mining reconstruction. Indeed, I was particularly struck by the lack of reference to that industry. An indication was, however, given that numerous committees and panels had been formed, including the Public Works Post-War Reconstruction Committee. Among the panels were the alunite, iron and steel, sulphur and phosphate panels; but in all that long address of the Minister for Industrial Development very little mention was made of the mining industry. The Minister said regarding the committees he enumerated—

Those are the names of post-war reconstruction committees at present operating as suggested.

I listened attentively also to the Minister for Mines for some reference to this particular aspect. I am sorry to say that no mention was made of it. Whether it was an oversight of the Minister or whether there has been no such committee constituted I have yet to learn. There does not seem to be even a separate panel initiated for the purpose of dealing with mining problems. The only indication that the industry was receiving attention was given when the Minister for Industrial Development said, in connection with the Mines Department—

Under the jurisdiction of the Public Works Post-War Reconstruction Committee, which has been highly active in connection with other minerals and their greater exploitation in the post-war period. . . .

I am at a loss to know why one of our major industries, if not the major industry of Western Australia, has been relegated to a subsidiary committee, to a committee which, although competent for the purpose for which it was first formed was definitely an inadequate committee where the mining industry was concerned. I would ask the Minister how it comes about that he has overlooked the matter of a post-war mining committee?

The Minister for Mines: The Mines Department does not need any committee. It knows its job.

Mr. KELLY: That is a distinct reflection on all other Ministers, since it has been found necessary, even where well-informed Ministers were concerned, to appoint such committees. For instance, there is the Rural Reconstruction Committee, of which the Minister for Agriculture is chairman. I would not concede even for a moment that the Minister for Agriculture does not know his work, that he does not know agriculture from end to end; and the Minister for Mines—

The Minister for Mines: I did not say anything about the Minister. I spoke about the department.

Mr. KELLY: I would suggest there is a general impression abroad, that, until a mining reconstruction committee is created, the outlook cannot be satisfactory. There is available for such a committee a fund of information of which there is no evidence at present. This could be obtained in the same way as the Rural Reconstruction Committee gets its information—from the various towns and centres where it is available and where

alone it can be obtained. I know that the reports of the geological surveys and the various inspectors of mines cover a great deal of ground, but they do not cover the places I have in mind. Take a mine that has closed down and is not being maintained under the Federal maintenance scheme! Whether the mine is under company control or individual control makes little difference.

So far as the Mines Department is concerned, if the mine closes down no more inspections are possible because of water in the shafts or other things. Thus there is no information sent to the Mines Department, which therefore has no knowledge of what is necessary to re-open the mine. The committee I have suggested would obtain much information that would be most useful when the time came to re-open such mines to the best advantage. A general plan for the reconstruction of the mining industry should be laid, and now is the best time to lay it. I know a great deal of work has been done to this end already. I am in constant touch with the Mines Department through its excellent officers, and I know what has been done; but there is need for greater improvement. Only in this way can we avert chaos in the industry. Many mines have already ceased operations, and others are on the verge of closing down; plants are deteriorating; levels are flooded; timber has been dislodged; in fact, there has been deterioration in every department. It is time the Minister gave very serious consideration to the formation of a committee on the lines I have suggested.

Another highly important aspect which should receive consideration is the establishment of a very much wider range of technical tuition for the mining industry. We are faced with a serious shortage of adequate manpower, even after hostilities cease. Unfortunately the ranks of all sections of our pre-war miners and technicians are going to be seriously depleted. Many men who were stalwarts of our gold industry will not return. In some cases that may be so because of a more lucrative position or better environment offered to them. I venture to say that many hundreds of our miners who in the past have played a large part in the development of our goldfields will not come back to Western Australia. One can meet them in any part of Australia, men who definitely state that they do not want to come back to the West, con-

ditions elsewhere being better. So there will be a huge gap in the technical and general mining ranks of the State when the war ceases. The establishment of a school before demobilisation takes place, so that the fundamental knowledge and technical knowledge necessary to re-start the industry when the time arrives, is essential.

Again, I ask the Minister to give serious consideration to a prospecting scheme, which must eventually emerge if we are to place the mining industry in a sound position for the future. There are some 800 miners, elderly men who have returned to the industry in order to replace many of those who have gone into the Fighting Services. They form to a considerable extent the 4,500 men retained for the industry today. Most of those men, if not all of them, have in the past gained their livelihood by prospecting; but many of them are getting up in years. The plant and equipment have been scattered and deteriorated to such an extent in many instances that they will be of little use when the times comes for their release for the mines. When soldiers go back to prospecting, we want to make certain that we have a generous scheme for putting them back into their former pursuit, so that they may go out with a reasonable amount of adequate equipment. I think the Minister will agree that the prosperity of Western Australian mining has been rendered possible only by the efforts of prospectors—not the ones I speak of today, many of whom have crossed the Great Divide, but of men who 40 or 50 years ago made the discoveries that rendered it possible for our mining industry to be carried on in a successful manner over a period of years. It is necessary that a scheme be prepared before that time arrives so that these men will receive sufficient encouragement to go out again into the untried country in an endeavour to locate mines which will keep the industry virile in the years to come. If something is not done, I can see nothing but a bleak future for the industry, and I am not altogether a pessimist!

During the past two years, the majority of the mines continuing to operate have done so wholly and solely on the ground already opened up when these hard times struck the industry. Very little development has been done during that time. As a consequence, some of the companies are

operating on a fairly narrow margin of profit and have in some cases adopted a very unsound mining policy. The position has become so acute that instead of developing they have been forced to work on reserves only. In a violent attempt to continue operations they have adopted what is known as a salvage policy, which is sounding the death-knell of many of our small and medium-sized mines. It is time some scheme was instituted so that the future position of the mines now operating could be assured. If this drift is allowed to continue with no further development taking place, much leeway will have to be overtaken when these mines are re-opened. In fact, many of them will not re-open because of the unsatisfactory position into which they have fallen, due to lack of development. If the Government instituted a scheme whereby the mines that are operating did developmental work during 50 per cent. of the working time, some of them would still be in a successful position at the cessation of the war. The Government could subsidise the difference between that 50 per cent. of the development work and the 50 per cent. of work on the reserves. The amount necessary to finance such a scheme would be little more than is necessary to keep these mines going until they can re-open on a larger scale. The amount of the subsidy now being paid could be made available to keep these mines open.

I desire to bring another matter before the notice of the Minister and his Post-War Mining Reconstruction Committee. It is well known to the department that huge supplies of sulphide ore, of a very high grade in most cases, exist in the Yilgarn district. For years the want of a sulphide treatment plant there has been acute. Representation has been made to have one installed. At one stage the Big Bell Mining Co. sent several engineers, during a period of six months, to review the position. Their findings were quite satisfactory from the points of view of working and margin of profit, but the obstacle that then arose was that, as so frequently occurs, the holders of the various leases opened their mouths a foot wide. For the Big Bell to have acquired the sulphide ore leases extending from Marvel Loch in the south to 12 to 14 miles north of Bullfinch, it would have had to pay so vast a sum that it decided against the project. The Government should give serious

attention to the installation of a sulphide ore treatment plant because the field does allow of extensive and profitable work. It would ensure not only a satisfactory position being created in the district, but it would be of benefit to the State.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (in reply): I was interested to hear the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie, and particularly his remarks in connection with the removal of machinery from various mines. I assure him and the Committee that the Mines Department and the Government have been particularly active in regard to this matter. I am going to ask the Committee to bear with me while I read a proposal put up to the Prime Minister and now awaiting reply. Subsequent to forwarding this proposition, two letters have been sent. The scheme was framed after consultation with the Chamber of Mines and other mine-owners, and in agreement with the Mines Department. Motors, particularly, have been taken from the mines, and we appreciate the fact that unless the motors are returned within a reasonable time, there will be a lag in re-starting the mines. The following agreement was sent on the 7th July last to the Prime Minister, asking him to concur in it:—

**Memorandum of Terms of Resumption of Mining Equipment from Gold Mines.**

As it has become necessary to take valuable equipment from mines temporarily shut down, or operating at part capacity, the effect of these resumptions requires consideration. The terms of such requisitions are, in view of the sums involved, a matter of great importance to the companies concerned and it seems fair that the basis of resumption should be such that mines whose plant is used for national purposes should not thereby be placed in a worse position than those mines whose plant is not resumed. The most important units are the power equipment at the various mines, which are high-class expensive machines.

The mines are in this position, that the equipment, provided it is well maintained, which is generally so in the major mining companies, will in most instances outlast the life of the mines, and thus, unless the equipment being taken happens to be old or obsolete, it is equivalent to new equipment for the purposes of the companies concerned.

The resumed machines may be sent either to factories or mines, which it is hoped will continue in production after the war, or to Army workshops or munitions factories, which will cease operations immediately after the war, and from which the plant could, if in reasonable order, be returned to the mines.

In the former event, the Federal Government clearly would not wish to take plant

from an operating factory or mine and so cause unemployment in order to re-erect it on a gold mine to enable the gold mine to absorb men.

Apart from the question of whether equipment is damaged or not, there will be in many instances a serious delay in returning equipment. Where this is so, the mines will be faced with maintenance costs which may exceed the cost of the equipment itself.

To meet these various difficulties, the following procedure is suggested:

It is recommended that the plant be purchased outright on the following terms:—

The Government will purchase equipment on the site at a price determined by depreciating the present-day price of that equipment landed unpacked at the site where installed, at a rate to be fixed by the Munitions Department and not to exceed that allowed under Commonwealth Income Tax for electrical machinery and equipment.

Where the machines are to be sent to a venture which will continue in operation after the war, then the company may place an order forthwith for a similar machine to that requisitioned. The difference in cost between price received as above and the cost of the new machine installed on foundations at the mine will be met from the fund already constituted for the "Maintenance of Gold Mining."

Where the machine will go to works which will cease on the termination of the war, then the company shall have the right to repurchase the machine at a cost equivalent to the purchase price set out above, less the cost of re-installation on its site at the mine, and depreciation per annum for the period during which the plant has been requisitioned. Should, however, the plant be considered by the company to be in such bad order that it would not want it returned to the mine, the company may then place an order for a similar new machine, but any consequential loss sustained by the company due to such delay shall be for the company's account. The difference between the purchase price received by the company for the machine being replaced and the cost of the new machine erected on foundations at site will be met from the fund for the "Maintenance of Gold Mining."

The Government, in view of the number of plants which may become available, may be able to supply an alternative plant immediately which would suit the company's purpose. Where this is so, the terms would be subject to negotiation at the time.

The right to obtain a new machine, as set out above, is subject to the plant, when requisitioned, being in such order that it is equivalent to new plant for the purpose of the company. Where the Government considers the plant is not equivalent to new plant, either due to poor maintenance or age, then the percentage of cost of the new plant which the Government will allow would be determined by an independent arbitrator appointed by the State Government. The

terms under which the arbitrator shall value own initiative because there is not sufficient the plant are set out as follows:—

It is the intention of this arrangement that a mining company shall not be penalised by having had their plant requisitioned. In many instances the plant requisitioned is as good as new plant to the company since, at many mines, such plant would outlast the life of the mine. Any difference in value between the requisitioned and a new unit, from the company's point of view, would only arise from the difference in second-hand value of the units if and when the time came to sell them. Thus, where the requisitioned plant is in good order when requisitioned, the company is to obtain, on the terms set out above, a new unit.

If, however, the plant when requisitioned, were in such bad order, or so old, that it could not be regarded as equivalent to new plant for the company's purpose, then the company would gain an advantage by electing to get a new unit.

The duties of the arbitrator are to determine, in such circumstances, what portion of the price of a new unit the company itself should meet, on account only of the poor condition of the unit when requisitioned, subject to the intention of the arrangement as noted above.

In the event of a plant identical with that requisitioned not being obtainable, the company may purchase a similar unit as before. The difference between the price received for the old unit and the cost of the new unit installed on foundations at site will be met from the fund for the "maintenance of gold mining." It will be the duty of the arbitrator to decide whether the new machine is identical with the old and if not to adjust the payments to the company accordingly.

In the event of delay in the replacement of equipment preventing the company re-opening its mine, the question of assistance in meeting the cost of maintenance of the mine during such delay from the fund for the "maintenance of gold mining" will be given consideration. This arrangement shall apply to items with a purchase price as calculated above exceeding £250.

As the amount of plant, in the aggregate, is substantial, it is probable that the grant already made of £100,000 for the maintenance of gold mines will have to be increased to meet the requirements under the above heads.

Since then we have sent two letters to the Prime Minister on the subject. In many instances when requisitions have been made for machinery we have been able to prevent its being taken. On the last occasion I was in Melbourne I spent three days with the manager of the Big Bell assisting him to get a fair deal. I am referring to mines that have been closed down, particularly those that have done so through lack of manpower. Some of the mines have closed down of their

gold in them to make them payable. The grade has fallen so low that it would not pay to work them.

Mr. Patrick: Some of the mines cannot maintain their development.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It was not a question of development with most of the mines. Some of them were closed before the manpower position became acute, and I do not expect them to be opened again. Those mines have not been maintained. Any mine, such as the Big Bell, closed down through want of manpower is being maintained. Some of these mines have 12, 14 or 16 men doing nothing else but keeping the water out, maintaining the timber in repair and cleaning up the levels, and they are being paid out of the grant of £100,000 made available to the companies that have had to close down.

I am satisfied in my own mind that many of these mines will be ready within a very short period after the war ends to put on a fairly large complement of men. I believe that as the war position improves machinery will be made available, and I have no doubt that the machinery that has been taken will be replaced by other so that the mines can be started again. The Commonwealth is just as anxious as we are to restart the gold-mining industry. The Commonwealth received over £1,000,000 in one year by way of gold tax alone, and there is no reason why it should not be anxious to see the industry continued. The rehabilitation of goldmining depends upon the price of gold and upon the question whether gold is going to be a medium of exchange. Those are the two big factors that will have the effect of saying yea or nay to the continuance of the industry. If gold brings a poor price, which we all hope it will not, it will be very disadvantageous to the industry. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie knows that as well as, if not better than, most people. It is a somewhat extraordinary fact that, although the production of fine gold this year has been 500,000 ozs., the yield has been slightly over 5 dwts. per ton in the average for the State—the lowest ever obtained in Western Australia.

Mr. Kelly: Is it not thought that the value of gold will be maintained?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We have information in the department leading us to believe that gold will bring an even higher



price. If this happens, I have no doubt what the result will be. There will be lots of people wanting to invest in goldmining. Only last week I, as Minister for Mines, had a request from London to permit of a certain reservation being taken up with a view to some prospecting being done so that goldmining could be opened up at the end of the war. Of course we knew quite as much about that reservation as the gentleman who wrote to us, and we were not prepared to give any reservation to him or anyone else. We have closed down on the granting of reservations for the time being, at any rate, the policy being that any lease taken up must be worked. That request is an indication of the way the wind is blowing. There are people who are already prepared to invest money in the goldmining industry in this State.

I know of at least three shows that were well developed and just about ready for the installation of machinery when operations were stopped by the outbreak of war. Those three mines would provide employment for 1,500 to 2,000 men. The Golden Mile during the last 12 months has done several miles of development work, which constitutes a record for many years. When I made inquiries as to the reason, I found that the mines had proceeded with development work in order to conserve as much as possible their stocks of the commodity necessary to treat the ore, and they are just treating a sufficient quantity of ore to keep the plants working. Luckily for the State, those companies had three years' supplies of commodities in hand when the war broke out; otherwise we would never have got the minimum of 4,500 men required for the industry. I think we are very fortunate in having got that minimum and having been able to retain it, notwithstanding all the drives that have been made to reduce the number. We still have that number working in the industry.

I appreciate all that the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie said on the question of training men, but how are we going to train miners? If this were undertaken, we would require young men. We do not want to train old men; they have already been trained and, unfortunately, some of them are breaking down. When we talk of training men for mining, however, we have to bear in mind that we need young men and that they are not available.

Mr. Kelly: But could not a start be made before demobilisation?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The young men will be members of the Defence Forces until they are demobilised. With ordinary luck, there will be a large number of comparatively young men who will return to the mining industry, provided they are not suffering from tuberculosis. I am quite satisfied that we shall be able to get a large number of men to engage in the industry. A Cousin Jack once said that it would take ten years to make a miner of a man. Well, it does not take ten years nowadays to teach a machine man his job. I am not greatly concerned about the position regarding underground men, but there is a cause for worry about the men on the surface. In this direction we are doing our best. We have a School of Mines at Kalgoorlie, another at Wiluna and another at Norseman. These schools have been training a lot of men for the Air Force and many of them will be useful to the industry as mechanics after they have left the Air Force. I say candidly that I am as optimistic as I can be that the industry will be able to absorb a large number of men quickly, and every provision is being made to this end.

I ask the hon. member not to confuse minerals with gold. When the Minister for Industrial Development was speaking the other night, he was referring to minerals. His objective is to get the minerals for manufacturing in the State. My job as Minister for Mines is to encourage the production of minerals. There is a vast difference between minerals and gold. We are producing a tremendous quantity of minerals, particularly in the North.

I conclude by informing the member for Wagin that we have sent a plant to Ravensthorpe and only today I received a report which is very encouraging. There has been a trial run through to determine whether charcoal and wood or charcoal alone would be preferable. A 24-hour run with that very mixed mineral resulted in the production of 1½ tons of pure copper. That is a very satisfactory trial. We were asked whether operations should be continued, to which of course we agreed. I agree with the hon. member that the Ravensthorpe plant, after a few more trials, may be organised on a bigger scale.

Mr. Kelly: Was that picked ore?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, it included sulphide and oxidised ore and a lot of screenings. It was about as rough a trial as could be imagined. That was the extraordinary part—to get such satisfactory results. It was intended to send the concentrates to Kembla for treatment, but it has now been proved that we can extract the pure copper.

Vote put and passed.

*Votes—Medical, £41,157; Public Health, £58,863; Mental Hospitals and Inebriates, £144,000; Chief Secretary, £22,870; Registry and Friendly Societies, £16,229; Prisons, £13,861; Observatory, £1,526—agreed to.*

*Vote—Education, £842,000:*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** [9.12]: The estimated expenditure for the year is £842,000. Of this amount £754,000 will be expended in the payment of salaries of approximately 2,800 employees of the department. The salary vote provides for an increased expenditure of £5,680. The additional expenditure is mainly due to increases in the basic wage and to payment of increments for higher classifications gained by teachers. The incidental vote is £83,000, which is an increase of £22,881 on the expenditure of last year. This vote covers expenditure on furniture and equipment of every kind required by all schools, including technical schools, household management and manual training centres, and also such items as driving allowances and driving contracts, travelling expenses, rent, water supply for schools and firewood. The bulk of this increased expenditure is required for very necessary expansion in technical education. The department's policy of technical education expansion is in a large measure designed to conform to the anticipated development of the State's secondary industries. To this end a long-range policy of technical education is being prepared. Briefly, the steps to be taken this year to implement this policy are as follows:—

(1) Engineering and other day diploma courses.

(2) Country apprentices correspondence classes.

(3) New classes.

(4) New equipment for trade and science classes.

In addition to the expansion of technical education, the department has increased the facilities for manual training and domestic

science in the primary schools; during the past two years six additional centres have been opened. The number of schools now opened is 716, of which 21 are assisted schools. A Government school is maintained when an average attendance of eight pupils is assured, while an assisted school may be established for five pupils. The correspondence classes continue to give excellent service for approximately 2,500 pupils who are out of reach of a school.

These estimates in no way provide for expenditure on school buildings or grounds. That activity is controlled by the Public Works Department. I am not in a position to give members information with respect to what is proposed to be done in the way of increasing school accommodation, except that I know the department is at all times pressing for such increased accommodation. Unfortunately, owing to manpower difficulties and lack of building materials it is more or less impossible to carry out such work. As time goes on it is possible that some materials may be made available and that carpenters and other artisans will be free to engage in this work. The department will then take steps to have the additional accommodation provided. I wish members to understand that I am unable to make a definite statement as to what particular school will first receive attention in this respect, owing, as I have said, to manpower difficulties and shortage of building materials.

**MR. TONKIN** (North-East Fremantle): For a number of years I have been endeavouring to get the Education Department to vary the regulations controlling the admission of children to schools. I do not think I have previously brought the matter up in the House, but I have not made any progress by having talks with the Directors of Education from time to time. I therefore propose to raise the matter now. One regulation provides that a child may be admitted to school during the half-year in which it turns six years. In country schools a child may be admitted at any time during the year in which it turns six—and in some cases when it is only five—in order to make up the number of children for a school. Therefore I propose to deal more particularly with city schools. The effect of the regulation is that if a child is born in the first half of the year, say between the 1st January and the 30th June, it is admitted to school in February

of the year in which it turns six, but if its birthday is in July, even though the child turns six in that year, it cannot commence school in February, but must wait until July. That might not appear to be any disadvantage at first sight, but actually it results in a tremendous handicap to a large number of children who are born in the latter part of the year.

We have a scholarship regulation which provides that a child may sit for a secondary school scholarship during the year in which he turns 12. Unless the child is in the sixth or a higher standard, he has a very small chance of obtaining a scholarship in competition with children who are in the sixth standard. There may be a very bright child in the fifth standard who is 12 years of age, but he will not have received the necessary class teaching to give him a chance of successfully competing for a scholarship. I know of a number of instances where bright children, because they were born in the latter half of the year, have lost their opportunity to sit for a scholarship. Such an instance was brought under my notice this year. A boy in a certain school had been at the top of his class from the first standard right through to the fifth. He is at the top of the class in that standard and is 12 years old this year. It would be ridiculous for him to attempt to win a scholarship in competition with children who have been in the sixth standard. On analysing the reason why such a child is in the fifth standard, we find it is not through any slackness on his part or through incapacity; it is simply because he was born in the wrong half of the year. He was not permitted to commence school in February, but had to wait until July. Because of certain circumstances which I shall detail he is retarded 12 months.

The regulation, apart from being unfair, is in my opinion entirely ridiculous. This is what it says, in effect, to the child who will turn six in the first half of the year: "You commence school in February." To his male next door, who will not turn six until the latter half of the year, it says, "You wait until July." The second child, therefore, commences school in July and then we have two alternatives; we make him accelerate in order to catch up to the boy who has six months' start and who is older, or we retard him. If we accelerate him we impose upon his brain a strain which it should not be called upon to bear, because we set him the

task of catching up to the older child who has had six months more schooling. That is very unfair. If we do not accelerate him then we must retard him, because there are no interim promotions. A child is not promoted from the second to the third standard in the middle of the year; promotions are made at the commencement of the year. Therefore we find the children going from the second to the third standard and so on regularly, irrespective of the time when they commence school, whether it was in February or July. It must be one or the other; the child is either retarded or he is accelerated. But why impose upon his brain this additional strain? Why keep him at home for six months and then make him catch up to the older child who has had six months' start?

That policy cannot be defended. There is no sense in it. By retarding a child we impose upon him a handicap because he was born in the latter half of the year, and so he loses all chance of sitting for a scholarship. The normal progression through the school is a standard per year. A child will in two years pass through the first standard; he will spend the first 12 months in the lower and upper infant classes, the second 12 months in the first standard and so we should expect to find him in the second standard in his third year, which is the year in which he turns eight. We expect to find him in the sixth standard in the year in which he attains the age of 12. If he were born in the second half of the year, he would lose a year and, although he might be an extremely bright child, he would only be in the fifth standard in the year in which he reaches the age of 12, and so would lose his chance of obtaining a scholarship. Most parents look forward to their children obtaining a scholarship; it is the hall-mark of distinction. It certainly has attractions and every child ought to have an equal opportunity to sit for it.

For the life of me, I cannot see why the department should deliberately put this handicap on children who, through no fault of their own, were not born in the first half of the year. One reason that has been urged is that if all children were admitted to school in February in the year in which they turned six there would be a lack of necessary accommodation and additional teachers would be required, as well as additional buildings. I

point out there is very little substance in that argument. That would be the case for six months. A difficulty would arise in the first year in which the regulation was altered, because instead of having half the children starting in February and half in July they would all start in February. But under existing conditions a certain number of children is admitted in February and when July comes an additional number is admitted. Consequently, after July all the children who have turned six during that year have been admitted and that is all we would have if we admitted them all in February. The same accommodation difficulty would remain.

I repeat that it would only be in the first half of the initial year when trouble would arise with regard to staffing and building accommodation. As I have said, I have taken this matter up over a number of years with various Directors of Education. I have argued it but could make no headway. As the Government now contemplates extending the school-leaving age to 15 years and as that would involve additional staffing and further accommodation, this is the time to give attention to this anomaly. Surely we all stand for equality of opportunity and a child born in the second half of the year has not equality of opportunity with a child born in the first half of the year. I hope the Minister representing the Minister for Education will take notice of the points I have raised and endeavour to get the Minister for Education to have the anomaly rectified. Unless we do this and make it possible for these children to commence school at the beginning of the year, thus giving them a chance to sit for a scholarship, so that they will have equality of opportunity, we should alter the scholarship regulation, and permit the children who commence school in the second half of the year to sit for the scholarship when they have turned the age of 13. But the present regulations definitely exclude children who are born between July and December. That is unfair and we should not stand for it any longer. I hope the Minister will go into the matter, that he will tell the Minister for Education that the question is one worthy of investigation and that as a result the regulation will be altered.

**MR. McLARTY** (Murray-Wellington):

A matter that has been exercising my mind is what is going to happen to those young boys that are being taken into the various

services at the present time, when they turn 18 years of age. I certainly think this comes under the heading of education. These boys sit for their examinations, pass the Junior and qualify to enter the Public Service, banks, stock firms and other such institutions that demand a certain standard of education. But as soon as they are 18 years of age they are taken into one of the armed services. I consider that this will create a very serious problem for the Government in the post-war period. Does it mean that because these boys will then be over 18 they will be prevented from entering the Public Service or any of the firms I have mentioned? If so, a grave injustice will be done. Again I think that parents should know. Many parents are making a great sacrifice at present in order to keep their children at school so that they can qualify for some of these positions, and we should let them know how they stand in this regard. We should ask ourselves whether these boys and girls are to be thrown out to seek any positions which may come their way, and whether they are to be deprived of what certainly is the main chance of their lives. I ask the Minister to give this question very grave consideration, because I regard it as being one of the pressing needs that will have to be dealt with in post-war times.

The Minister for Mines: They are the lost legion.

**Mr. McLARTY**: The Minister is perfectly correct. They represent a lost legion and will not have much prospect of advancement. I consider that all political parties should take up this matter and give it serious consideration. I understand it is the policy of the Government, again particularly during the post-war period, to centralise schools in certain country districts. If the Minister representing the Minister for Education is able to indicate where those centralised schools are likely to be established I would be glad to have the information. The member for North-East Fremantle referred to centralised schools. There is some opposition to the project. Certain people in smaller centres seem to think that if the schools in their area close that is a retrograde step and adversely affects the district. Some claim it decreases land values and does not tend to bring further settlement. Considerable opposition is raised. I know the argument is used that centralisation provides better education, and I think

it does. In the country at present we want better education which will give more of our boys and girls a chance of passing the higher standards and taking the Junior Certificate, and thereby being enabled to enter the Public Service. The member for Greenough said the other day that he did not consider country children were getting a fair crack of the whip in regard to the Public Service, and I think he is right.

The Public Service today offers attractions for boys and girls. There is a permanency in it with definite advancement and superannuation at the end, but under present conditions there is no question but that the country child is at a disadvantage and anything that can be done by the department to advance education in the country should be wholeheartedly supported. I draw attention to the fact that educational properties, particularly buildings and fences, are deteriorating in parts of this State. No doubt the Minister is aware of that. It is a foolish policy. I have seen windows broken, roofs leaking, and fences falling down, whereas the expenditure of a few pounds would have put them in order and saved a lot of money. Even in these difficult times it would pay the Government handsomely to attempt the small repairs and endeavour to keep educational property in good order. I want to strike a parochial note before I sit down. I know we all have difficulties with regard to education. Many of us want additional buildings and I know the difficulty of providing them.

I want to draw the Minister's attention to one town in my district. I refer to Waroona, which is one of the fastest growing country towns in Western Australia. At present, educational facilities are totally inadequate and repeated requests have been made by the people of Waroona for additional accommodation. At present we have two small rooms and certain classes are compelled to use the public hall which is also used almost every day for entertainments, meetings and for such other purposes as public halls are used for. The result is that the school desks are very often piled up. School furniture is knocked about and the whole position is unsatisfactory. I think it is the infant classes that use the Waroona public hall, which is situated a considerable distance away from the main school. I do not see how, under those conditions, it is possible for the head teacher to exercise the necessary supervision.

Parents also strongly object to the children having to use public lavatories and I think they have good reasons to object. Some feel so strongly that they have told me that they would keep their children away from school. I have not encouraged them in that direction because I do not feel I would be justified in asking parents to break the law, but the Minister should bring this matter under the notice of the Director of Education who I think will agree that it is not a fair thing for boys and girls to have to use conveniences that are thrown wide open to the public. I am told that a new school at Waroona is on the urgent list of public works that we hear so much about.

The Minister for Mines: A first priority.

Mr. McLARTY: It does not give me much confidence. This urgent list might be urgent for years and we have seen building programmes juggled about. Sometimes it may be necessary to change the order of priority, but as I said the other night there should be some information available to members so that they can see how the building priorities stand. Under present conditions we do not know the priorities. I have heard considerable criticism, not only in my own district but also in other districts in regard to the Kent-street school. I am not going to say for one moment that the spending of £14,000 on that school is not justified but it is difficult to make country people understand. One says to them, "You know what the present economic conditions are. We cannot get money for expenditure on buildings, and material is tied up under National Security Regulations." They say, "You can get £14,000 to spend on a city school. We are in just as bad a position and probably in a much worse position." It is hard to convince them that justice has been done and I would ask the Minister to bring before the proper authorities the acute position of the Waroona school. I trust something will be done to alleviate the position at an early date.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan): There are one or two matters I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister for Education. The member for Murray-Wellington has spoken of the need for improvements to school buildings in his electorate. As the representative of another part of the State it is my duty to bring to the notice of the Minister the needs of my electorate, particularly in relation to school buildings. For a

number of years the sewerage system has been in existence in the metropolitan area and it passes certain school grounds in my electorate. Parents want to know why schools are not connected with the sewerage main and why the antiquated system continues to exist. It is pointed out that private residents are served with notices requiring them to connect their properties with the main and they have to undertake to carry out certain work in a specified time. On the other hand, the department can go along willynilly and take no notice of the fact that the main passes schools.

I bring to the Minister's notice the large infants' school at lower Inglewood, known as the Normanby-street State School. The parents of the children there have asked me to take this matter up with a view to having the school connected with the sewerage main as early as possible. I understand there is a possibility of some work being undertaken in this direction very soon. I realise that the shortage of plumbers and of materials vitally affects the position. The same difficulty arises at Bassendean. The local authorities wrote to the member for Guildford-Midland and to me asking us to ventilate the position on the Estimates, with a view to the Minister for Education seeing whether it would not be possible to obviate the difficulties associated with the school there.

The CHAIRMAN: I am doubtful whether this discussion is relevant on the Education Vote.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I submit that these matters have a direct bearing on the health of the children.

The CHAIRMAN: The opportunity to discuss matters regarding school buildings has been lost. This Vote deals only with education.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The questions I am raising are relevant to education. However, I have mentioned most of the matters to the Minister and I will merely refer to the inadequacy of some of the school buildings. At Middle Swan a considerable increase in the attendance has overtaxed the available accommodation, and the verandahs have had to be used for classes. Additions to the school building there are necessary if effective teaching facilities are to be provided. When I was in the district recently, the parents spoke to me about the inadequate accommodation and asked me to bring

the position under the notice of the Minister. I hope attention will be given to the matters I have referred to.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth): I was very pleased to hear some time back a reference by the Minister to the committee that has been considering technical education, especially in relation to the post-war period. Apparently the inquiries of the committee have covered a fairly wide field, and I would like to know if consideration has been extended to other spheres of education. For instance, there are the academic, commercial and other phases, including manual training, domestic science and such like features of the curriculum of our public schools. It would be most acceptable to the teachers in the Education Department and to the public generally if some pronouncement could be made at an early date as to what the Government has in mind regarding the future trend of education. In England, Scotland and the United States of America investigations are being made and decisions arrived at regarding the basis of the educational system for the future. They are not waiting, but deciding now the lines upon which the teaching of children shall proceed in the future. There is one particular investigation carried out in America known as "The Half Million Dollar Inquiry." The Americans are prepared to spend money not merely on education but on investigations as to the right type of education to be imparted.

I realise there are difficulties just now in many directions with regard to the provision of buildings and the availability of teachers, but I regard it as within the compass of the Government and its expert advisers to make plans for the future and to inform the teaching fraternity and the general public something of the conclusions that have been arrived at. I raise this question because it relates to a school in my constituency—the Junior Technical School in Newcastle-street—which is playing a vitally important part in connection with the technical training of boys who, in many instances, gravitate into one or other of our war industries. Deputations have been taken to the Minister with regard to that school, but nothing has been done. In 1941, in reply to representations made by a deputation, the Minister wrote—

The department has under serious consideration the accommodation and facilities at the Junior Technical School, but at the time of writing no definite action has been decided on.

I do not wish to dilate on this school, but a few words may be devoted to the subject because what may be said regarding this school may also apply to other schools. The accommodation is designed for from 420 to 450 pupils, and at times it has accommodated more than 600. These 600 boys who are active lads of from 13 to 15 years of age, have about a quarter of an acre as an exercise yard. The facilities for teaching science are primitive to a degree. The teaching staff carries on under the greatest difficulty, and this does not assist the boys to make adequate progress. The present science room consists of a cubicle that has been partitioned off, but the partitions do not extend to the ceiling, so that what is said outside can be overheard, and the noises from other classes penetrate to the room. Another is 18ft. square, and that room has to accommodate 25 boys. I believe the present arrangements at the school are not to be compared with those that existed there even 13 years ago.

The Minister for Mines: It was never intended for use as a technical school.

Mr. McDONALD: No. I urge an early decision as to what the future policy is to be. I am aware that there are some big problems. One is whether our schools are to be one-purpose institutions at which one type of education is to be adopted or are they to be multiple-purpose schools, such as the Kent-street institution, where technical, academic and other branches of education are taught in the one establishment. Another question that remains for determination is whether the schools are to be co-educational—that is, schools where boys and girls are in attendance. I understand that the multiple-purpose and co-educational schools are the more favoured, as being indicative of the most modern developments in education. These matters of policy are of great importance to the State and to the rising generation. The sooner we have some light on them and some idea of what is in contemplation, the more reassuring will it be not only to the teachers but to the public generally.

In connection with a number of schools like the Junior Technical School, a decision is demanded as to whether they should be built up as worthy of rendering service to the community and whether the buildings cannot be maintained at the requisite standard or whether sites for such schools must

be selected elsewhere. Under existing conditions the pupils are discouraged, and that applies also to the teaching staff. That is because matters tend to drift along, whereas an indication of future policy and hope for better conditions would be reassuring to all concerned. In view of the present educational trends, institutions like the Junior Technical School must claim very high priority in the expenditure of Government money and in the application of Government policy.

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (in reply): The member for North-East Fremantle can be reassured that I will bring under the notice of the Minister the remarks he made regarding the school-leaving age. The member for Murray-Wellington seemed to have an erroneous idea about the position of lads 18 years old who have enlisted and are not able to join the Civil Service. So far as my knowledge goes, a lad is too old to join the Civil Service once he has turned 16. I understand that those lads who joined at 16 years of age and enlisted when they were 18 are having their positions retained for them so that they may resume them on their return. Most firms have undertaken to re-employ their former employees on their return from active service.

Mr. McLarty: I referred to boys of 17 or 18 years who, on leaving school, have no opportunity to join the Public Service.

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST**: Such boys have no chance of joining the service.

The Premier: They cannot even become apprentices.

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST**: As the member for West Perth knows, I am merely representing the Minister for Education in dealing with these Estimates and I am unable to give him the information he sought regarding the work of the committee he mentioned. Matters dealing with school buildings are dealt with under the Loan Estimates. It is not so much a question of money as the provision of manpower and materials that affects the position. When he delivered his Budget speech, the Premier said that a certain amount of money had been placed in a trust account for the renovation of public buildings. Thus it is not a question of finance. Where can we get the necessary manpower

and materials to carry out what members desire? I realise that all members are in the same boat and, in fact, throughout the State we are short of school accommodation. The Government is not able to promise to revolutionise the position in a very short space of time. The various requests made by hon. members will receive consideration.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Police, £296,574:*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** [10.0]: This is another of those departments which are more expenditure than revenue departments. There is a slight increase of £4,504 in the expenditure. This is for the purpose of annual increments and increases in salaries and wages. Like all other departments, it has had a very busy time; in fact, there is much more work to handle than the officials can comfortably deal with. Besides its ordinary duties, the Police Department has many other activities placed on it by the Commonwealth Government. It has been unable to get new recruits, the young fellows who probably would follow the life of a policeman having now enlisted. Therefore it is not opportune for the department to endeavour to increase its manpower. True, it has been able to bring back various retired members of the Force, who have discharged very competently the duties assigned to them. However, the Commonwealth Government has taken over many of them.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Crown Law Offices, £95,574:*

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE** [10.3]: The revenue to be derived from all sources, namely, Probate, Law Court, Departmental, Land Titles, Crown Law and the Public Trust Office, is estimated at £286,000, compared with an actual revenue of £278,266 for 1942-43. The estimate represents an increase of £7,734 on the actual revenue for the previous financial year. For probate duty, the estimate is £185,000. Last year the revenue received under this heading was £179,288. For Law Courts the estimate is £70,000, and it is estimated that revenue under this heading will show a small increase of approximately £1,600 over the actual collections for the previous year. The estimate for Crown Law is £10,000. A reduction under this heading of approximately £2,000 is anticipated when com-

pared with last year's collections. Land Titles revenue has steadily fallen off during the war period, but is believed now to have reached the lowest point and is expected to show a slight increase during the current financial year. For the Public Trust Office the estimate is £5,000. The revenue from this office is derived from commissions received from estates dealt with. The office was only established last year, and the revenue collected totalled £3,667. The business of the office is expected to increase rapidly and steadily, and no difficulty should be experienced in obtaining the amount estimated. I should like to bring to the attention of the Committee a comparative statement of figures showing the general improvement of business since the Public Trust Office was established—

CURATOR.	PUBLIC TRUSTEE.
For the year ending the 30th June, 1943, the Curator handled 523 estates of deceased persons The assets under the management and control of the Curator at the 30th June, 1942, totalled £218,222	For the year ending 30th June, 1943, the Public Trustee handled 754 estates of deceased persons The assets under the management and control of the Public Trustee at the 30th June, 1942, totalled £563,756
At the 30th June, 1942, the Curator had 1,182 estates on hand	At the 30th June, 1943, the Public Trustee had 1,721 estates on hand
	For the first business year which terminated on the 30th June, 1943, 324 wills were made with the Public Trustee
	For the year ending 30th June, 1943, contributions to Commonwealth loans by the Public Trustee totalled £214,000.
	Although this office has only been established for a very short period the common fund is paying interest at 3 per cent.

The greatest difficulty of the office will be accommodation. If the business expands next year as it has done this year, it will probably be necessary to secure privately-owned accommodation for it. The officers have done wonderfully good jobs. The Public Trustee himself has gone out after business, and is still looking for more. I feel proud and grateful to have such an excellent officer. He has issued a small brochure for public information. There is not much matter in it, but what is in it is understandable. It shows how easy it is for any person to make a will. Under Contingencies may be noted the item General and By-Elections estimated expenditure £21,300, as compared with £11,090 last year. The Crown Law Department, generally speaking, has carried out its duties excellently. I have here letters of commendation, which however I shall not read. I feel that our



officers, with the great amount of work placed upon them, have done a wonderfully good job. There have been no complaints; each and everyone have worked together.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Native Affairs, £47,500:*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** [10.15]: The Estimates have increased by a few thousand pounds. The reason is that the department has been put to greater expense. It is playing an important part in the war situation. Up to 5,500 natives are now employed and we have 400 in the Services. Quite a number have been and still are oversea. These figures indicate the vast improvement in the native population. One in every three of the civilised natives, both men and women, are in employment. The majority are working in the farming and pastoral industries. Several have found jobs under award rates in and around the main towns. We have had some difficulty in keeping the natives employed in the pastoral and farming areas. Like everyone else they have been attracted to the better conditions and wages. The department has taken upon itself, under the National Security Regulations, the right to prevent the natives from leaving the particular industries in which they were employed prior to the war. The department has done its best to keep them employed where they are of most benefit. Criticism has been and always will be levelled at the Department of Native Affairs. In many cases it is made by people who do not know much about the subject, but are prepared to accept any hearsay evidence and run to the Press with it in order to express their knowledge of native affairs. That misleads the people in regard to the good work done by the department.

The natives are breaking away from their nomadic habits and improving their living conditions. Quite a number in the early days of the operation of the child endowment scheme—in fact 70 per cent. of them—were found to be spending their money foolishly, and not improving their living standards by buying the better class of food for the children for which this money was made available by the Commonwealth Government. The department had to assume control of the matter. It made arrangements to control the child endowment payments and since doing so, by issuing orders on the grocers in the country districts for

the needs of the various native families, about 50 per cent. of the natives have acquired an understanding of child endowment and are worthy of controlling their own affairs. When we feel that they are able to control their money, we will release them from the present departmental restrictions.

Mr. Doney: Do you anticipate a permanent breaking-away from their nomadic habits?

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST:** In the case of the half-castes, yes, but I would not say so in reference to the full-bloods. The department has also, under the post-war programme, put forward a proposition to the Commonwealth Government—which has been making inquiries in regard to homes for the natives—that certain portions of the South-West Land Division be converted into a national housing scheme to provide about 300 homes for natives.

Mr. Mann: Would that be on a settlement?

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST:** No. The department has also been under a severe strain by virtue of enlistments of its senior and experienced officers. A lot of young men who had early training in the department have enlisted and, as a result, the department has to rely on female and other labour unused to the work. This has thrown a great responsibility on the remaining senior staff. Our hospitals, likewise, have been denuded of labour because the nursing staffs had to be evacuated from certain portions of the North-West. We have recently been given permission to reopen those hospitals and the nurses have returned. Similarly, the doctor connected with the Native Affairs Department had to be stationed in Derby because the civilian population there had no doctor closer than Broome. No civilian doctor was stationed at Wyndham and so the Native Affairs doctor, for the past 12 months, had to carry out that work. Arrangements have now been made to relieve him so that he will be able to return to his own job.

The department has been hard pushed to find other markets for the products of the meat works. Last year 400 cattle were overlanded along the Canning stock route. They arrived in fair condition and were sold. This season 500 head of cattle are on the way down at present. The latest information is that they are travelling fairly well

and should arrive in reasonable store condition. They will be of some benefit to the beef market which is very short at the moment. In conclusion I want to record my appreciation of the extra work done and loyalty shown by the senior staff. Unlike most departments, this is a difficult one to administer because, owing to the occurrence so many vacancies in the mining areas and so many other attractions, the natives, particularly the half-castes, are running away and leaving their ordinary avocations in an endeavour to find something better. As I said, the department in conformity with the National Security Regulations has done its best to keep them in the farming and pastoral areas. In my opinion it has done a very good job.

This vote also includes the Harbour and Light Department, about which, for obvious reasons, I am not permitted to divulge much information. It administers the North-West ports which have been called upon to meet a number of contingencies. It is not possible for me to give the full details of some of the things that have happened along that coast. I also commend these officers and the staff for the work done. They have had to work very long hours, and in some cases have had to resort to bachelor tactics and get meals here and there for themselves. The department has had to make many financial concessions to the pastoral industry and to various people on account of the unforeseen circumstances in regard to the storage of cargo, etc. We have also had to forego harbour dues in the case of many of our Allied vessels which called at the various ports. This affects the department's finances. What the Australian Government should have done has been done.

The department also administers the Jetties Act of 1926, covering the departmental working of the jetties and tramways at Carnarvon, Onslow, Point Sampson, Broome and Derby. It deals, too, with the Navigation Act, 1904-26 and the Boat Licensing Act, 1878-1936. It also has control of all ports and harbours in the State—exclusive of Fremantle—including pilotage services at Albany, Bunbury, Esperance and Geraldton. The revenue and expenditure of the department fluctuate in accordance with the volume of shipping and tonnage of cargo handled. In peace times the work of the department does not fluctuate a lot, but it has done so during the last 12 months. An-

other point which affects the revenue is the increase in the number of officials who have temporarily to be employed. This item shows an increase on the estimate, but, as with other departments, that is due mostly to the rise in the basic wage paid to the staff in general. The Estimates also provide for a further grant of £50 to the Trout Acclimatisation Committee at Pemberton and Collie. Most members know that the Trout Acclimatisation Committee has made great progress and has been successful in its work in acclimatising trout in the south-west streams at Pemberton and in the Collie River.

The Government has made another annual grant of £100 in order to encourage that activity. Fishermen's general licenses issued for 1942 show a decrease of 121 compared with the previous year. Many men operated only part-time, mostly week-ends, with the result that there has been a further decline in fish production. Inquiries have been made by returned soldiers and others desirous of operating in the fishing industry. The main difficulty in most cases is the inability of these men to obtain the necessary gear. No nets are available in Perth. Under the Games Act, royalties on skins of marsupials amounted to £836. Although, in connection with canning, the canneries have been somewhat restricted by the shortage of labour, there has been a large increase in the production of canned fish.

During the year 300,000 lbs. of Perth herring and 10,600 dozen crayfish were canned. It is claimed that the Perth canned herring is the equal of any similar product imported from outside Australia. At present experiments are progressing in the canning of south-coast salmon. This species forms the mainstay of the Eastern States fish canning industry, but it has not so far been exploited in this State. A distinct step forward in the research side of fisheries operations was made this year when, as the result of representations from the State, the Commonwealth Council of Scientific and Industrial Research at last opened a branch of its Fisheries Division in Western Australia. Dr. D. L. Serventy, a graduate of the University of Western Australia, and of Cambridge University, who has had experience of fisheries research in England, Europe, America and the Eastern States, was placed in charge and he will have with him from time to time other work-

ers from the headquarters' laboratory at Cronulla, New South Wales. At present Mr. G. P. Whitley is here on a shark survey, and already distinct successes have been attained. The school shark, the basis of the Victorian fishery, desired not only for its food value but also because of the vitamin content of its liver oil, has been found in payable quantities at Albany.

As a result of an earlier survey by Mr. R. J. Ferguson Wood of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, a local agar industry has been started, it being generally agreed that the species from which the Western Australian product is prepared is definitely superior in quality and yield to that of the Eastern States species. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research fisheries officer, Mr. S. Fowler, during most of the year has been engaged on an aerial reconnaissance of Western Australian waters in co-operation with the R.A.A.F., and he has located fish shoals of surprising extent in both the northern and southern sectors. These will demand ground investigation in the future when facilities become available.

Active research is proceeding now on the Perth herring and the crayfish. In all of these activities the State Fisheries Department is playing a very prominent role by the fact that its field staff, boats and accommodation have been made available for the use of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research officers. There is a cordial co-operation between the two services. We realise that there is a shortage of facilities for net fishermen, but we cannot help them in any shape or form. We have done our utmost to ascertain where the fish disappear. Members know that if they go to any fishing resort, they are met with the statement, "You ought to have been here last week." It reminds me of the problem, "Where do the flies go in winter?" Well, we simply do not know. But the C.S.I.R. is trying to find out where the fish go.

**MR. DONEY** (Williams-Narrogin): In 1941 the House passed the Broome Tramway Extension Act. I think it dealt with the construction of 50 chains of light railway to link the jetty with some freezing works. Speaking from memory, I think the Government had advanced an amount of £6,000 to the venture, and when the Bill was going through the Government was finding it necessary to advance a further £2,500 to

safeguard the guarantee. The Minister was very enthusiastic as to the future of the venture. I should like to know what the position is and whether any prosperity attended the venture. I realise that the war will possibly have interfered with it considerably, but perhaps the Minister can give us an assurance that, when the war is over, there is reason to expect a measure of progress.

**MR. HILL** (Albany): The Minister referred to the fact that he controls the Department of Harbour and Lights, which administers some of the ports of the State. I think I am correct in saying that this is the only vote upon which our ports can be discussed. I am reminded of an experience I had in the office of the Geelong Harbour Trust three years ago. The chairman of the trust asked, "What sort of port administration have you in Western Australia?" I replied, "We have not any. Our harbours are under the control of the Harbour and Lights Department and our jetties are under the control of the Railway Department. If we want anything done, we have to go to the Minister for Harbours and Rivers." The comment was, "Efficiency under those conditions is absolutely impossible."

One of the most wonderful port organisations in the world is the Port of London Authority. I have a copy of "The P.L.A. Monthly" for June last in which the following appears:—

Transport is the sole reason for the growth of the tiny London of pre-recorded history into the mighty Metropolis and world-centre of twentieth-century London. Geographical and meteorological conditions favoured the Thames Estuary and the Pool in London River is a rendezvous for ships; and the ancient British trackways naturally focussed upon this junction for sea and land transport. Lighterage for local distribution and other river services soon developed into important industries. Trade accordingly prospered. Later the railway systems automatically focussed upon the same centre of activity and commerce; and in due time arterial highways provided for the flow of goods and passengers to and from London by modern motor transport. Each form of transport became complementary to the ever-growing needs of the expanding metropolis and the Port of London where the requisite accommodation and characteristic requirements of each branch of transport was adequately provided for.

There was a time when London neglected to keep abreast of transport and "for a time failed to keep pace with the developments of modern population and commerce." Near the

end of last century neglect to provide for the increasing size of vessels and their requirements soon resulted in the diversion of trade. The Royal Commission appointed to consider the matter diagnosed the malady and, "convinced that if in this great national concern, energy and courage be shown, there is no reason to fear that the welfare of the Port of London will be permanently impaired," recommended the creation of the Port of London Authority. Regular readers of this journal are well aware that, as a result of the enterprising policy of the Authority to provide all the facilities required by transport in its widest meaning, the Port of London immediately before the war was handling a record volume of shipping and cargoes.

Before 1909 the Port of London consisted of many dock companies, many railway companies and something like the port administration that we have in this State. The Port of London Authority took over everything and the whole port was placed under one administration. In this State because of our natural advantages we have progressed, in spite of the neglect of transport administration, but have created points of congestion which limit our capacity and entail heavy expenditure. Eighteen months ago the Premier sent a circular letter to Fremantle members in which he referred to the congestion at Fremantle. In other words, he admitted the failure of the port zone system. If we wish to keep pace with modern improvements in transport we must have sound port administration. If the Port of London was losing trade through lack of modern facilities, the same thing must apply to the ports of this State. I do not say that Albany is to be compared with the Port of London, but some of the ships that call at our ports are the same ships that call at London.

In this State we have one port doing 90 per cent. of the trade, and the reason for this is that we have only one port which has been kept up-to-date. When the Premier was appealing to members to suggest how the congestion at Fremantle might be relieved, Commodore Collins showed definitely that it could be relieved by using the port of Albany. Unfortunately, owing to neglect, that port cannot play the part it should for the benefit of the Empire today. The fishing industry has a great future. There are vast quantities of fish off the southern coast, and I hope the Minister and his department will do their best to develop an industry there.

**MR. WITHERS (Bunbury):** I wish to refer to a matter which I have already discussed with the Minister relating to the Fisheries Department. For many years we have had a considerable number of fishermen at Bunbury, and the regulations are greatly hampering the industry. I pointed out to the Minister what I had in mind. I would like him to urge the Chief Inspector to investigate the question of the size of the mesh to be used and the length of the fish permitted to be taken. In theory it might work out all right that with a  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inch mesh a fisherman may catch mullet 11 inches long. Anything smaller has to be thrown away. Every year hundreds of dozens of fish are thrown away in the Bunbury Estuary. As a fisherman goes along his 700 or 800 yards of net he dare not take the smaller fish and market them because they are below the size permitted by the regulation.

For some time there has been a serious dearth of fish. I want the Chief Inspector and his staff to consider not so much the length of the fish in comparison with the size of the mesh. The mesh is intended to catch the pilchard, which is similar to the mullet, except that it is flabby. It has a smaller head, and there is less flesh on a 12 inch pilchard than there is on a 9 inch mullet. The fishermen are allowed to catch the pilchard in a net of that mesh. The mullet, however, is not supposed to go into a net of that sort unless it is 11 inches in length. Surely a way can be found to overcome this difficulty! We have had a good deal of trouble in connection with the confiscation of nets because the fishermen are using haul nets of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inch mesh as set nets.

The fishermen claim that for the purpose of catching a quantity of fish they would rather haul the net than set it. That is a net set across or at an angle. Only fish going that way are caught in the net. If the net is hauled and fastened at one end, the fisherman can go round the fish with the net and, by splashing the water, frighten the fish into the net and then haul it. If the net is caught set—and that is detrimental to the fisherman himself—an inspector may pick it up and allege that it is a set net, although the fisherman may have only set it for the purpose of getting himself a cup of tea, for which purpose he must leave the boat. The principal complaint relates to the size of the fish. I hope the Minister will persevere with the Chief Inspector in that connection,

so that we will at least be able to make use of the fish that are now destroyed. They may be dropped to the bottom of the Estuary, and so would be lost even to the shags and pelicans. It is sad to think we are catching so many fish inadvertently and, because they are undersized, they must be destroyed and good food wasted.

Progress reported.

### **BILLS (2)—RETURNED.**

1. Electoral (War Time).
  2. Coal Mine Workers (Pensions).
- With amendments.

### **RESOLUTION—MEAT, SUPPLIES AND RATIONING OF MUTTON.**

#### *Council's Message.*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made to its resolution by the Assembly.

### **BILL—COAL MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS).**

#### *Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Withers in the Chair; the Minister for Labour in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 21, Subclause (4)—Delete all the words contained in lines 16 to 22, inclusive, on page 27 and substitute the following:—"If in any year the proportion of the contribution deducted from dividends under the provisions of subsection (6) of this section is found to exceed the amount which would result from an impost of two pence on each ton of coal sold by the company in that year the amount of such excess shall be refunded to such company to be distributed amongst the shareholders to whom the dividend would be otherwise payable."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This amendment will give the tribunal the right to estimate the amount which the companies shall provide from dividends, but where the amount estimated and collected is greater than the sum required then the excess amount obtained from the companies out of dividends shall be refunded to the companies, and be distributed by the companies among the shareholders to whom the money would

otherwise have been paid as dividends. The proposed wording ensures that not only shall any excess collected from the companies over 2d. a ton for each ton of coal sold be refunded to the companies, but shall in turn be paid by the companies to the shareholders to whom the money would otherwise have been paid had it not been collected in the excess amount by the tribunal. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. McDONALD: I do not propose to question the wisdom of the Legislative Council in making this amendment, but I am not altogether satisfied that it is completely practicable. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the companies may not be able to pay a dividend in any year. If in a year it received a refund under this clause then that refund would be distributable as a dividend under this amendment. It seems to me, however, from a hasty examination of the amendment, that the amendment may not always meet what is really desired. I merely mention this to safeguard myself should trouble arise in the future.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 21, Subclause (6), line 20, page 28—Insert after the word "payable":—"Provided that a company shall not, in any year, make a deduction from dividends under the provisions of this subsection which shall exceed the amount which would result from an impost of two pence on each ton of coal sold by such company in that year."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This proviso will ensure that where the companies use their power under Subclause (6) to reduce dividends, they shall not in any one year make a deduction from the dividends payable either to preference or ordinary shareholders that would be in excess of 2d. a ton on each ton of coal sold. Members will recall that on the second reading debate I explained that the Government had altered this part of the Bill from what was contained in a previous Bill. The alteration was to the effect that the maximum contribution by the companies from profits or dividends payable to shareholders was to be 2d. a ton on each ton of coal sold. There could be no greater, nor any lesser, deduction than that. The present proviso makes it clear beyond doubt that the companies shall not be permitted to make a deduction of more than 2d. a ton on each ton of coal sold from the

dividends payable to the shareholders. ]  
move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3. New Clause—Insert after Clause 21 in Part 4 a new clause, to stand as Clause 22, as follows:—

Restriction upon increase of price of coal.

22. (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of any Act, award or agreement to the contrary no payment to the fund by any owner may be or be deemed to be included in the cost of production of coal and no owner shall in consequence of any payment to the fund increase the price of any coal supplied to any consumer (including the Government or any State instrumentality) except as hereinafter provided.

(2) (a) Where the payment by any owner in any year does not exceed four pence per ton of coal sold by such owner in that year, such owner may include one half of such payment in the cost of production of the coal and may increase the price of coal accordingly;

(b) Where the payment by any owner in any year exceeds four pence per ton of coal sold by such owner in that year such owner may include the amount of such payment which exceeds two pence per ton of coal sold in the cost of production of the coal and may increase the price of coal accordingly.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This amendment sets out clearly the right of the companies to pass on in the price of coal the balance of any contribution which the tribunal may call upon the companies to make to the fund, that is, the balance over and above the 2d. per ton which they will be called upon to meet from the shareholders' dividends. The amendment is necessary, otherwise the companies would not be given direct legal authority to pass on the balance of their contribution in the price of coal. Members are aware that the total contribution which the companies may be called on to make per ton of coal may be 4d. a ton. The Bill provides that 2d. a ton shall be paid from the dividends of shareholders while the balance of 2d. per ton will have to be paid by the companies. This amendment makes it clear beyond any shadow of doubt that the companies will have the right to pass on that additional 2d. per ton in the price of coal sold to consumers within the State. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

*House adjourned at 11 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 7th October, 1943.*

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

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. H. Seddon (North-East) on the ground of ill-health.

### MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved:

That during the remainder of the session so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Bills to be passed through all stages in one sitting, and all messages from the Legislative Assembly to be taken into consideration forthwith; and that Standing Order No. 62 (limit of time for commencing new business) be suspended during the same period.

### MOTION—ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved:

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

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance.

2, Mine Workers' Relief Act Amendment.  
*Passed.*