

marking a beast. No alternative method has been devised to provide a greater measure of protection than firebranding.

It is well known that an earmark can be mutilated and completely destroyed, particularly in scrub country, but firebranding is a very permanent mark which cannot be destroyed. It is difficult to alter a firebrand for fraudulent purposes. There need be no doubt that compulsory branding should be the order of the day. It has also been requested that all cattle in the South-West Land Division be firebranded before they are six months old. This is desirable as a result of experience over the years, but more particularly in recent times because large numbers of baby cattle are marketed when they are six months old, and certainly before they are 12 months old when it is necessary to brand them. It is no hardship to a producer to brand his stock before they reach six months old, any more than it is to brand them before they are 12 months old.

The matter was brought to my attention by the Meat and Allied Trades Federation last year when they requested that firebranding be enforced on cattle in the South-West Land Division. Similar requests were made by the controller of abattoirs and by numerous farmers. If we bear in mind that a lot of baby cattle reach the market when they are six months old, and before they are branded, then when the animals are killed and a disease is discovered in any one of them, under the present method there is no means of identification. That is why it is so important to agree to this amendment. That would be most satisfactory from everybody's point of view and the owner of diseased cattle would be identified from the brand. Today that is not possible because it is not necessary to brand baby cattle before they are 12 months old. As it has been considered necessary by all those associated with the industry, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Watts, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.56 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 30th October, 1956.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

- 1, Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment.
- 2, Evidence Act Amendment.
- 3, Health Act Amendment.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

Retrenchment of Women Teachers.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Further to my questions on the retrenchment of women school teachers on supply, and as the Minister's reply was in the past and present tense, will the Chief Secretary inform the House whether it is the intention to retrench any of these teachers before the commencement of the 1957 school year?

(2) If so, for what reason?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) and (2) Schools will be kept fully staffed in accordance with the standards laid down in departmental regulations.

NATIVE WELFARE.

Medical Treatment.

Hon. A. R. JONES asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What is the procedure and medical treatment available to natives under the Native Welfare Act if they are in need of—

(a) medical advice;

(b) hospitalisation?

(2) What hospitals would they be admitted to, and what charge would be made?

(3) What fees would a native pay per visit to, or by a doctor?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The position varies throughout the State. In the North, where there are native hospitals and Government doctors, natives are not required to pay for medical advice or hospitalisation. Where there is a Government doctor but no native hospital, no charge is made against the native for medical advice, but he is required to pay for hospitalisation; if he is destitute, payment is made by the Native Welfare Department. Where there is neither a Government doctor nor a native hospital, the native is required to pay for both services, unless he is destitute.

(2) A native may be admitted to any Government or public hospital and would be charged at the same rate as other people. If he is destitute, the account is paid by the department.

(3) He would be expected to pay the same fees as other people are charged. Fees for destitute natives are paid by the Department of Native Welfare. Where medical services and hospitalisation are provided at no charge to natives, the Native Welfare Department recoups the Medical Department at the end of each financial year for medical and hospital services provided free of charge to natives.

ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL COMPANY.

Agreement Regarding Liquor Licence.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

Relating to my request to the Minister on the 24th October, 1956, to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the agreement between the State Government and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co., reference the building of temporary bar, and hotel licence—

(1) Does the Crown Law Department possess more than one copy of the agreement?

(2) If the answer is "yes," does he think it reasonable to refuse to table a copy in the House?

(3) Is he aware that provisions of the agreement were, that one week after a hotel was established in the Kwinana district, or on the

1st June, 1956, whichever was the earlier, the authority to carry on the wet canteen should cease and determine, and the State should wind the business up?

(4) Are the provisions of the agreement, as stated under question No. (3) the reason he refused to table a copy of the agreement?

(5) When is the legislation referred to in his reply of the 24th October likely to be introduced?

(6) Is it a fact that the temporary bar and hotel trading in the premises at Medina has been carried on illegally since the 1st June, 1956?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) There is only one copy of the agreement.

(2) I did not refuse to table a copy.

(3) Those provisions were part of the original agreement.

(4) No.

(5) It is order of the day No. 4 on the notice paper for today in another place.

(6) No.

I might add that I believe the papers were tabled in this House about the 26th November, 1953; therefore, they should be readily available.

CARNARVON WHALING STATION.

Proceeds of Sale.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Has the State Government made an application to the Commonwealth Government for any portion of the proceeds from the sale of the Commonwealth whaling station at Carnarvon, for the purpose of assistance to the fishing industry in this State?

(2) If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

TRAFFIC.

Motor Accidents, Newcastle and Stirling-sts., Perth.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many motor accidents have occurred at the intersection of Newcastle and Stirling-sts., Perth, during the last three years?

(2) What number of persons have been injured in same—

(a) pedestrians;

(b) others?

(3) How many deaths have occurred—

(a) pedestrian;

(b) others?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) The number was 37 from the 1st October, 1953, to the 30th September, 1956.

(2) Records of casualties are available only from the 1st May, 1955. Since then nine persons have been injured, six in the one accident.

(3) (a) Three.

(b) Nil.

JURY ACT SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extension of Time.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I move—

That the time for bringing up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Jury Act be extended to Tuesday, the 6th November.

I regret the necessity to do this, but the committee has been faced with a considerable number of witnesses and it has been impossible to take all the evidence and report today.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not intend to oppose this motion, but I hope that a further request for an extension will not be made on the 6th November, because it is getting rather late for a further postponement.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: It will not be as late as some of your legislation.

Question put and passed.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [4.43]: This Bill seeks to amend the principal Act in one respect only; and that is, to permit friendly society dispensaries to trade with the general public. I think it can be conceded that the friendly society movement not only in this State but also throughout the Commonwealth of Australia, and in other parts of the world—particularly in the British Commonwealth—has been a pioneer in social services. For a contribution per week it has been possible for a member of a friendly society to receive medical attention and medicine.

In the past, friendly society dispensaries in this State have been permitted to trade only with members of the friendly societies and not with the general public, one of the reasons being that these dispensaries were not taxable under the Income Tax Assessment Act. But over a period of years, in the Eastern States, these societies have been subject to taxation and have dealt with the general public; and I believe that Western Australia is the only State where this has not been the case. Now that the dispensaries in this State have been brought under the Income Tax Assessment Act and are required

to pay taxation on their business transactions—and they have always been required to pay rates to municipalities as well as land tax and so forth—they are on the same basis as chemists; and this Bill, if passed, will permit them to trade in the same way as other pharmaceutical chemists.

I believe that the Bill is justified, because there is no reason why these dispensaries should not be allowed to trade in the same way as chemists. It will cause no unfair trading, and I do not think any great objection can be taken to it. The dispensaries are fulfilling a requirement for the districts in which they are situated. There is not a great number of them; and as the friendly society movement in this State is catering for a large section of the public, and has been a pioneer in social services throughout the Commonwealth, this measure should be agreed to. These dispensaries are situated in quite good buildings, and registered pharmaceutical chemists are employed. In view of what I have said, I hope members will agree to the measure, and I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [4.48]: I have looked through the Bill, and it seems to me that this is an occasion when we will regret the absence of Sir Frank Gibson and the late Hon. Bob Boylen. They would have been able to speak with much more authority on this question than most members assembled here this afternoon.

The position as I see it is that the dispensing of medicine, and pharmacy generally in Western Australia, is governed by the Pharmacy and Poisons Act; and the whole idea of that Act is rigidly to enforce a high standard of professional ability and conduct, and also strictly to police the operations in the interests of the general public. The whole purpose of the Pharmacy Act is to maintain the professional status of chemists; to aim at the ownership of chemists' shops by individual and highly qualified chemists.

I understand that in this State there are some 248 chemists operating. Of that number, 78 are scattered throughout the rural districts, and 170 are in the metropolitan area. Incidentally, I may mention that the economic standing of the individual chemist in Western Australia is not all that could be desired. We know that for many years, and particularly before the introduction of the national health scheme, the chemist's profession was probably one of the poorest paid in the State. That position has altered substantially since the national health scheme came into operation. But the fact remains that in Western Australia the economic stability of the individual chemists' business is not nearly as sound or as substantial as it is in the Eastern States.

In other words, there are on the average in this State fewer people per pharmacy than there are in the Eastern States. I think that is a fact that should be borne in mind, particularly when we consider that in the interests of the community of Western Australia it is desirable that we should continue to attract to the profession of chemist young men who are prepared to become articled and, in due course, enter the ranks of that profession. We must bear in mind that the chemist of 10 or 20 years hence is the young apprentice of today.

It does seem to me that this Bill could well adversely influence the attraction to the profession of young men, if the only aim and end that they can see to their training is employment as a paid officer of a friendly society. I emphasise the fact that the Pharmacy and Poisons Act is concentrated with the sole aim of having dispensaries and chemists' shops owned and occupied by qualified chemists; and for that reason that Act was amended in 1937 to prohibit a company from carrying on business as a chemist.

There were certain companies then in existence that were carrying on business, and they were excluded. But the question of permitting any fresh company to carry on business as a chemist was expressly prohibited under the amendment of 1937. Members will recall that in 1954 Parliament further amended the Act to make it clear that a doctor could not carry on business as a chemist. You may remember, Mr. President, that a doctor in the metropolitan area had endeavoured to improve the shining hour by conducting a chemist shop in addition to his professional business as a doctor; and Parliament, again to emphasise the fact that chemist shops should be run by individual chemists, amended the law to preclude that doctor and make it clear that he could not run a chemist shop.

Hon. J. Murray: The individual chemists are the only ones entitled to claim membership. Is that right?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: That is the position. That is the whole basis of the law in this State, and I think it is a basis that should be maintained. This House should give further consideration before it permits of any serious infraction of that principle which has been proved and tested by time.

Turning now to the development of the dispensaries run by friendly societies. Many years ago the position was that the friendly societies had contracts with chemists, whereby members of those societies obtained their medicines at a discount; they were dispensed by the chemists and were given to members at a discount. I remember, in the days of my youth—

Hon. H. L. Roche: That was a long while ago.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: —going along with a bottle and informing the chemist of the friendly society to which the family belonged. But as the district and the business grew, the friendly societies themselves formed dispensaries to dispense medicines to their own members. Today, I understand, there are seven, or thereabouts, of these friendly society dispensaries in the metropolitan area and Kalgoorlie. I understand that they do not exist in the country or outback areas. The people in the country and outback areas have to rely on the private chemist; he services the vast outback of this State.

It is in the thickly populated parts of the metropolitan area where these dispensaries of the friendly societies have sprung up. I understand they exist in Perth, Leederville, Subiaco, Victoria Park, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie and Boulder. It does seem that in all those places the general public is more than well served by private chemists, and there is hardly any need to extend the operations of friendly societies in those areas. An interesting point, and a very important one, is that the seven dispensaries owned by the friendly societies I have just mentioned, have already dispensed medicines for the general public under the national health scheme. The National Health Act enables all friendly societies which were then in existence, and which have dispensaries, to dispense for the public under its provisions.

Therefore, so far as dispensing is concerned, and inasmuch as the medicine dispensed under the National Health Act forms 50 per cent. of the total medicine dispensed for the general public, the friendly society dispensaries have a wide scope today. They dispense for their own members, and for their own members and the general public in respect to all medicines under the National Health Act.

When speaking to this Bill, Mr. Davies mentioned that the friendly societies were the pioneers of social services, and I trust that nothing I may say against this Bill will in any way be taken as in criticism of the great work that friendly societies have done in their legitimate sphere for many years. I would go further than Mr. Davies and emphasise that not only were they the pioneers of social services, but they were also the self-supporting pioneers of social services. They were the pioneers of the ideal social service: the self-supporting social service.

The friendly societies have very restricted aims and objects. Their traditional aims and objects were, of course, to provide for relief and maintenance during unemployment or sickness; to provide a very small death benefit sufficient for a man to pay his funeral expenses; and to provide medical attendance and dispense medicines for any person who was a member of the society. Briefly, those three points are the basic and fundamental principles of a

friendly society; they are the basic and fundamental principles for which societies have been established so long as I can remember, and probably for 100 years.

Within that sphere they have done an excellent job. But I do feel—and the whole basis of the Friendly Societies Act supports this view—that friendly societies should stick to their traditional objects. Mr. Davies mentioned that because they were now paying income tax, land tax, municipal rates and water rates on their premises, they ought to be permitted to enter into competition with the chemists. According to the same reasoning, a club ought to be permitted to sell liquor to the general public. A club pays taxes, municipal rates, water rates and land tax. But a club is not permitted to sell liquor to the general public; it is permitted to sell liquor only to its members.

The Chief Secretary: And visitors.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I suggest that the analogy is a fair one; that friendly societies should not expect to be permitted to cater for the general public any more than a club in its sphere should be permitted to cater for the general public. In any event, it seems to me that the Bill as presented to us goes much too far from what I can see, and goes further than what the friendly societies themselves appear to be seeking, if I am to take a letter which I received from the Friendly Societies Council of Western Australia as a guide.

Although Section 7 (2) of the Act as it stands at the moment provides that a friendly society may dispense medicines for any persons who are members, this Bill proposes to give friendly societies power to deal with any member of the general public in business which is ordinarily carried on by the Pharmaceutical Guild of Chemists and Druggists. The pharmaceutical chemists and druggists do not merely dispense medicine. They deal in everything from cameras, crockery and jewellery, and some of them have ice-cream and soda fountains.

All these things are implied in the expression "carrying on a business or trade ordinarily carried on by a pharmaceutical chemist." It does seem that it is not the legitimate function of a friendly society to invest its funds in the stock and trade of a business of that nature, any more than it is to go into the business of selling bread, meat or petrol.

The funds of a society are subscribed for a specific purpose. The Act is very careful to lay down the nature of the investments and the direction in which the funds can be invested; and, generally speaking, it confines the investment of the funds to trustee securities. There is no suggestion in the Act that the funds are to be available to any committee of any society which wants to start up in general business, be it as a chemist or otherwise. The Act also further imposes a personal liability on the

trustees of any friendly society who, in breach of trust, use the funds for any purposes other than those prescribed in the Act.

I think it is well within the bounds of possibility that, if this Bill were passed, we could find springing up within the metropolitan area a chain of pharmacies conducted by friendly societies in the thickly populated areas which would seriously compete with the private chemists. I suggest that is contrary to the whole principle of the pharmacy Act and I do not look forward to the prospect of a Royal Commission or inquiry into chemist shops, such as we recently had in respect of service stations. We had the prospect of service stations springing up all over the metropolitan area. We do not want a repetition of that with chemist shops and all the general chaos which follows.

Reference has been made to the fact that societies in the Eastern States have this power. I question whether they have the power which is proposed under this Bill; but, in any event, even though the power has been granted to them, it has been granted subject to restrictions. It has not been an unlimited admission as proposed in this Bill; it has been a restricted admission. For example, under the National Health Act of 1947, whereby the dispensaries of the friendly societies were given power to dispense for the general public, I think the power was limited to dispensaries which were in operation at the time of the passing of the Act.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: Doesn't that apply now?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: This Bill does not contain anything of that nature. The National Health Act limited the powers to those dispensaries which were then in operation. There is nothing in this Bill which says the power shall be limited to dispensaries now in operation; and to me, that is the serious weakness of the measure. Similarly, in New South Wales, they were pegged to the societies that were in operation at the time the Act was passed.

They were not pegged in South Australia when the permission was originally granted; but by 1947 there had developed in that State, amongst the chemists and friendly societies, a condition of affairs not dissimilar to that in Western Australia in relation to service stations. Therefore it became necessary in 1947 for Parliament to peg the permit to the dispensaries which were then in operation. Some of the Acts also contain provisions that the trust funds are not to be employed in going into extensive business.

They are a few of the observations which I desire to submit to the House for consideration. I doubt whether the Bill in its present state is really necessary; but I do feel that if it is given a second

reading, the weaknesses to which I have drawn attention should be dealt with in Committee.

HON. J. D. TEAHAN (North-East) [5.13]: If there is any organisation which more than any other has done an excellent job in Western Australia, it is the friendly society. Friendly societies were established many years ago for the purpose of trying to make medical attention to the ordinary public much cheaper than it might be, or to make it available to those less able to pay for it. They also endeavoured to provide medicine for those less able to pay for it.

These friendly society chemist shops have been operating for many years, and I do not know of any that has sprung up recently. Those that I know in Kalgoorlie and Boulder have been there for 50 years, and each has done an excellent job.

It was said that if we had members here who belonged to the Pharmaceutical Guild they would be able to tell us about them. But we are inclined to be selfish; we want to preserve our little trading sphere so that no one else can enter. I can remember that when I was a member of a municipal council certain people asked for the right to operate taxis. We said there were already sufficient on the road, but they told us that more were badly needed; and in the end we gave way, and allowed them to have more taxis on the rank. Within a few weeks, however, those same people came in a deputation asking that no more taxis be allowed to operate. There is a tendency for people to be selfish—

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is one of the laws of nature.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: If any group has upheld the high standards of the Pharmaceutical Guild, it is the friendly society chemist shops. They have observed the laws in regard to closing hours and so on under the Factories and Shops Act, so why should they not be allowed to trade the same as the others?

At one time chemist shops sold medicines only; but now, as has already been said, one can buy jewellery, torch batteries, cutlery and even ice-cream in those shops. I do not think they have a right to sell all those items, but should trade with the public only in the goods which would normally be expected to be found in a chemist shop.

It seems to me that the friendly societies are not asking for very much. If they make greater profits, that money will go into the funds of the societies in order that the contributions of members may be kept down. I do not think that the friendly societies will constitute any serious

opposition to the existing chemists because, contrary to what has been said, I do not believe there is an oversupply of chemists in this State; rather the reverse. Several chemists with whom I am friendly have told me that it is impossible to obtain the services of a relief chemist should they wish to go on holiday. They have sought far and wide for relieving chemists.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are you talking about chemists or chemist shops?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: It is necessary to have a registered pharmacist in a chemist shop. There can be others there who are not qualified, but at least one qualified person must be present. I think the friendly societies are doing an excellent job, and I hope the little they are asking for under this Bill will be granted. I support the second reading.

On motion by **Hon. J. G. Hislop**, debate adjourned.

BILL—CORNEAL AND TISSUE GRAFTING.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendments.

BILL (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment.
- 2, Factories and Shops Act Amendment. (No. 1).
- 3, Nurses Registration Act Amendment. Received from the Assembly.

BILL—POLICE ACT AMENDMENT. (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [5.22]: This Bill is one to which I ask members to give the most serious thought. When it was first introduced I took it to be merely a normal Bill seeking to cover some minor omissions in the Police Act, but I have had something of a shock.

Following inquiries and research on this Bill, I went to the Police Department and discussed various aspects of the measure. Apparently, from my remarks, the inspector to whom I was speaking gained the impression that I had read various reports in the Press and had heard something of the weapons referred to but quite obviously did not realise what they were.

The inspector asked whether I would like to see some of the weapons that have been taken from juveniles in the last couple of months. When I said that I would, he brought in a box containing a variety of weapons which, believe me, gave me quite

a shock. I had heard of spring knives, sharpened bicycle chains, and so on, but had never seen them. When I did have an opportunity to inspect these weapons I realised just how serious is the problem that this measure seeks to overcome.

For the information of members, I obtained some of the weapons that are in the hands of the police and have displayed them in the corridor outside this chamber. I believe that after a brief inspection of those weapons, members will agree that the carrying of them is far more than a mere expression of high spirits, as has been stated, in our juveniles and juniors.

The weapon most commonly in use at present, and the easiest to conceal, is that known as a knuckleduster or chopper, which may be seen in various designs, two or three of which are on exhibition in the corridor. They consist of metal in some shape to give added weight to the fist and cover the knuckles with some form of cutting or chopping edge. The weapon is a very old one and, in fact, is merely a modern version of what was known, in Roman days, as the cestus, which was a loaded leather and iron glove used by boxers and fighters in the gladiators' ring, and also in the olympic games.

It was as the direct result of the shocking injuries inflicted by the cestus that the original olympic games were discontinued many centuries ago. Today we have a modern version of that weapon, which can be hidden in the pocket and used at a moment's notice. We have also, as I have shown in the corridor, spring knives; home-made throwing knives; and bicycle chains, which are fastened to a handle, making a form of flail or flagellant. The officer who showed me the weapons assured me that one of these chains was quite capable of completely removing the scalp of a man if sliced around his head.

These are the weapons now found in boys' pockets; and at present a lad apprehended and searched as a trouble-maker can be found in possession of things of this type, and the police are helpless to do anything about it. While at the Police Department, I also saw some of the home-made guns which youths have been carrying. Of course the police can take action about that; but in the case of these other weapons, which are carried for braggadocio, they can do nothing. After seeing these weapons, no one can possibly believe that the carrying of them is not a sign of sadistic and brutal intention.

These weapons, I believe, were originally introduced by a leavening of undesirables who came here unnoticed among the many very welcome migrants that have come to make their home in this country. Those undesirables have found ready students among the young exhibitionists and larrikin types, as they were known in the old days, in regard to the making and carrying of these weapons.

I believe that very often the weapons are carried for reprisal purposes. A youth gets into a fight; and when such a weapon is used on him, he sets about making a weapon of his own. Some of these contrivances must have been made in well-equipped workshops, being fabricated by welding or turned on a lathe. They are made with no intention other than to inflict wounds of a very serious nature.

The type of lad who contemplates using weapons of this kind is the exhibitionist or delinquent adolescent who has grown up in a neglected home. When he is apprehended and found in possession of a weapon such as I have mentioned, nothing can be done about it. Recently when a piece of bicycle chain was taken from a young lad, he almost apologised for the fact that he had not had time to sharpen it. He was not all perturbed about having been caught with the weapon on him and apparently nothing could be done about it.

I do not want members to think I am criticising or being unfair to that large group of our young people that we call bodgies or rock-n-roll addicts who affect extreme and loud styles of clothing. This affection on its own is not indicative of any criminal instinct or aptitude. For my own information I attended a dance conducted in an upstairs dance hall in Hay-st., which was given over entirely to rock-n-roll. I spent some time there and spoke to the man who runs the dance; and, quite frankly, the contortions and gymnastics that some of those young people were going through were quite beyond me, even at my best.

However, the whole time I was there I did not see one single example of rowdiness or unpleasant form of exhibitionism. The man in charge assured me that he had never had any such trouble. The boys and girls who were present were definitely known as bodgies and widgees. I have learned since that the only time that anything of an objectionable nature did happen was when a young lad, who was obviously a bodgie and also of low mentality, had stood at one end of the dance hall twirling a bicycle chain and took on the appearance of looking tough.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What is the age of these young people?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Their ages range from 15 to 18. Generally, the ages of the Eastern States bodgies are in a slightly higher bracket; they are from 19 to 22 years old. It is at this age when the brutal attitude and the criminal tendencies are likely to be manifest.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It appears to me that they are inspired by the Press on some occasions.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not intend to laugh at that remark. The film, "Rock Around the Clock," is still showing

in Perth, and it has inspired all sorts of riots and trouble in other countries. I went to see that picture out of curiosity.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Are you sure it was out of curiosity?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, coupled with a liking for pictures. I find entertainment in most types of pictures. I wanted to see for myself the material in the film that stirred up these young people. I was not stirred up myself, although it was quite a lively picture. At the time I attended, the theatre was crowded and 70 per cent. of the patrons were young people. There was a certain amount of laughter during the performance, but there was nothing in the whole show to indicate that it would rouse the emotions. Subsequent to my attendance at the theatre, three or four youths and girls were arrested one evening for putting on an exhibition in the street. I am firmly of the opinion that the Press publicity that picture received was deliberate. It was intended to incite young people to perform such acts. However, I am glad to say that it failed miserably in Perth.

I would not go so far as to say that the incident that was reported in the Press was deliberately inspired, but it would not surprise me if it had been. Can we blame young people for getting into trouble when that type of inflammatory material is dished up to them through the Press? Such publicity gives them a sense of importance if they do have some tendency towards performing such actions.

Ultimately a boy may be arrested for exhibitionism which might have been fired by a certain amount of larrikinism already in the lad. If such a boy is brought in by the police after this Bill is passed, and he has one of these weapons on his person, he can be made a criminal, because he will be liable to go to gaol.

I can quite understand a lad with a normal outlook and general good character being carried away as a result of his association with a group of young fellows. I suppose that when most of the members of this Chamber were boys they had their own little gangs and went to picture shows, parties or picnics; but, nevertheless, we were proud to call them our gangs.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: But we fought with our fists.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, if one did fight. I was the best sprinter in my gang. However, today these young people can be caught up in a group who are carrying these lethal weapons; and from now on, if they are caught, they will be liable to imprisonment. This is the aspect that concerns me gravely. So far as I know, there is no place where these lads can be sent other than to Fremantle gaol. If they are sent there, they are going to complete an apprenticeship which

they have commenced; and on their discharge, they will be hardened young criminals.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They are segregated.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That may be so, but it is common practice for them to associate with hardened and vicious characters, and they cannot help but see some merit in what they have done. In their own eyes they have achieved some fame for themselves. On leaving prison they would have learned a little more about crime and there would be a tendency for them to proceed a little further along the path to destruction.

I would like to see a provision inserted in the Bill which would provide that if young lads are sent to detention, they will be given a chance to appreciate the difference between working in youth clubs or in gymnasiums and associating with the gangs who carry such weapons. The authorities should not bother to teach them trades, but should teach them the benefit they can gain from club activities to encourage them to forget their tendencies to carry lethal weapons and to achieve the notoriety that generally follows. If these young people are sent to Fremantle, I fear that their initial criminal tendencies will become crystallised in their minds. I do not know what can be done to meet that problem, but it is of grave concern to me.

I can only give my support to this Bill, even with the provision of a penalty of six months' imprisonment for the first offence. I would go so far as to suggest that it is not sufficient. Can one teach a boy in six months to forget all the bad habits he has already learned? It is a very grave decision to make, but should there be any feeling towards leniency in this matter, I suggest that every member of this House should inspect for himself the display of weapons in the corridor which have been taken from boys in the last few months. The work that has been put into their manufacture definitely indicates that they are interested in what they are doing. They have no intention of picking their teeth with the sharpened files, or of building model railway tracks with the bicycle chains, because there is no doubt about their being deadly weapons.

Those who have gone through their training in the forces must realise that such a weapon has only to penetrate into the body for a distance of about two inches to cause death. Each one of those weapons that are displayed in the corridor could kill a man in a most dreadful manner. If these practices continue, they will create sadism among our youth. Therefore they must be stopped; otherwise we will have

more and more of these boys assuming this dreadful power which they take unto themselves. I support the Bill completely.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—PIG INDUSTRY COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [5.43]: The purpose of this Bill is to amend the principal Act, which was placed on the statute book in 1942, as pointed out by the Minister for Railways when he introduced the measure.

I do not wish the Bill to proceed to the Committee stage this evening, because I have been conducting some inquiries into some of its provisions and have not yet completed them. I will therefore say all I want to say at this stage, and I trust that one of my colleagues will move for the adjournment of the debate. If there is nothing further to add subsequently I shall advise the Minister accordingly. Even if the Bill does not go through and does not meet with the approval of all concerned, I shall still have to take that step.

During his speech, the Minister pointed out that the Bill provides for an increase in the maximum amount of stamp duty payable from 3s. 9d. to 5s. and an increase in the market value of the pig from £15 to £24. It was said that these increases have been put forward at the request of the Meat and Allied Trades Federation, but we have not yet been informed of the attitude of the Farmers' Union.

There is another point which I hope the Minister will clarify in his reply. The fund which has been in operation for several years is £34,253 1s. 6d. in credit; and I would like to know whether this sum has been invested. If it has, what are the details of the investment; if not, why has it not been invested?

I cannot say that I agree entirely with the Bill because, in 1951, when the Act was last amended and the amounts were increased, the range in the prices of the pigs was not unlike that of today. I would like to know the reason behind the move for creating such a substantial fund over the years. As a small producer of pigs I ask why it is proposed to further increase the contribution now.

The information given by the Minister in regard to the incidence of swine fever during the last war is quite correct. We all realise the extent of that loss, and I suggest no one in this House realises it more than Mr. Wise. I think he did a

remarkable job at that time in coping with the situation. The outcome was the creation of this fund, and it was being increased steadily. I would not like to see such huge sums of money accumulated under this fund lying idle. This money originally came from people who raised pigs and was deducted from their sales. Generally their financial position was such that they looked to every penny they could get.

I am not criticising this Bill unduly. It has been introduced as a result of representation; but as yet the Farmers' Union has not given any indication to members of Parliament as to whether or not it agrees to the proposed increases. That being the case, I cannot declare my attitude to the second reading.

On motion by Hon. H. L. Roche, debate adjourned.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.50]: As was stated by the Minister, this Bill proposes to increase the percentage in assessing the annual fees payable by licensees to an all-round 8½ per cent. of net purchases; and by clubs, brewers, and wine and spirit merchants from 5 per cent. to 8½ per cent.; where originally hotelkeepers paid 6 per cent. In the case of hotelkeepers, this means an increase of 38 per cent. on the present licence fees under this tax; and in the case of clubs, brewers and wine and spirit merchants, it means an increase of 66½ per cent.

We were informed by the Minister that the Government proposes to raise a further £120,000 per annum from the increased taxes, and that from one industry alone. At present the State receives a sum of £300,545 from licensing fees in this State. That is a considerable amount. With the proposed increase, the total collection will be over £420,000, and this means that every adult person in this State will be paying on the average £1 per head under this tax.

That does not seem very great in the year; but when we take that into consideration, together with the excise duty paid in this State—which up to the end of 1956 amounted to £12,000,000—it brings the tax paid by the adult population in this State to a large amount per head. There are approximately 400,000 persons over 21 years of age in this State; and according to the statistics, about 248,000 minors.

I maintain that the increase in this tax is vicious, in spite of the fact that the Government has told us that the Grants Commission has penalised this State because it is not getting as much as the other States in Australia out of the licensing

tax. After all is said and done, should we, with our small population, be expected to contribute to taxation the same amount that is raised by the other States?

Hon. L. A. Logan: The Grants Commission is trying to run the State.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: As the hon. member said, the Grants Commission is trying to dictate to this State what it should do in raising taxation as compared to the amount raised by the non-claimant States. During the second reading debate the Minister said that the amount raised in the non-claimant States was far in excess of the amount raised here. I admit that is correct; but when we look at the amount of tax reimbursement received by the non-claimant States from Commonwealth taxation, as against the amount received by Western Australia, the latter figure looks like chicken feed.

A fair way of assessing the amount received in taxes under our licensing laws, is to compare the amount raised in this State with that raised in another claimant State. Let us look at South Australia, which is a claimant State, and see the position in regard to liquor licences. Up till recently the total amount raised in that State was £55,000 per year from liquor licences. Over the same period in this State over £300,000 was raised. There is a big difference between those two amounts.

South Australia does not intend to take the extreme attitude taken by the Government here. It has certainly regulated for an increase in fees; but the proposed increase is only £100,000, which brings the total amount raised by licence fees to £155,000. Under this legislation, an amount of £420,000 per annum would be raised in Western Australia. Can the industry stand it? Looking at what has happened in the last few years one can well understand what the industry is up against.

With the imposition of increased excise duty, with increases in the basic wage, and now with the proposed increase in licence fees, I can assure this House that country hotels—which will have to pay the increases out of their earnings, because they cannot be passed over to the public, in spite of the fact that many people think that such increases are passed to the public—will deteriorate further. Their returns will not warrant any further expenditure. Great consideration should be given to this aspect.

If the increased fees are imposed, the average-size hotels with approximate takings of £363 a week—which seems to be the average of the smaller hotels—will be paying £457 per annum for a licence. That is well and truly above the maximum which will be paid under the new regulations in South Australia. The minimum fee in that State is £25 for small hotels, and £450 for larger hotels. I would read

an extract from the Adelaide "Advertiser" of the 21st September, 1956, which states in regard to increases in hotel licence liquor permit fees—

Of 583 hotels in South Australia, 134 hotels and 4 clubs will pay a licence fee of £450 a year.

That means those 134 hotels and four clubs, which are really large because their licence fees are based on local authority ratings, would be paying a limit of £450 a year, as against £150 under the old system. The extract states that no extra fee will be payable on 57 licences; therefore they will still be paying £25 a year.

The extract continues—

The increase will become effective when licences are renewed during February and March of next year.

That is quite different from what is proposed in this State, where the increased licence fees are to be retrospective. From my reading of the Bill, the increases to be paid by clubs, brewers, and wine and spirit merchants will be retrospective not to the 30th June, 1956, but to the 1st January, 1956. If that is the case how can one be expected to budget in a business for a tax which was not in existence when one put in one's return? That is what this Bill proposes should be done.

I am not saying that the brewers who will not be paying a great amount under this tax would be greatly affected; but the clubs, and wine and spirit merchants could be greatly affected by any retrospective payments. The other payments will be in respect of licences retrospective to the 30th June. In other words, between this time and the 30th June nobody had an opportunity to pass on any of this tax, even if he could have done so. Therefore the licensees have to bear that loss, which cannot be passed on to the public.

Today licensees do not wish to pass any extra costs on to the public; but they cannot be plastered with one thing after the other—such as excise rises, basic-wage increases, and increased licence fees—without doing something about it. I would like to read another extract from the Adelaide "News" of the 17th September, 1956. This is what the people over there think about increases, which are not in any way comparable with those in this State—

Once again the public is to be victimised for the extravagance of the State Government. This time it is an increase in liquor licence fees.

It is amazing how Mr. Playford can penalise by high licence fees and stringent State laws this section of the community when dozens of clubs and lodges get away with selling liquor after hours without having to pay licence fees.

If Mr. Playford is going to tax the hotelkeepers, he should see they are protected by demanding a thorough

supervision of the liquor laws and so prevent the sale of liquor through unlicensed channels.

I have gone to quite a fair amount of trouble to try to obtain figures from the Eastern States concerning these taxes, and it is surprising how little information is available here in respect of taxation on liquor in the other States. I am going to refer to South Australia as an example of taxation and in reference to the Minister's statement concerning the Grants Commission penalising this State on account of it. I have told the House that the proposed tax will net to South Australia a total of £155,000. From taxation on racing, the South Australian Government also takes, at a conservative estimate, a total amount of £796,000. Add to that the liquor tax collections and we have a total of £951,000 odd.

In Western Australia the fees collected at present total £300,000. With a total of £120,000 from the proposed increase, we have a sum of £420,000. From racing, the State is getting £450,000, some £300,000 below that of South Australia. The total in Western Australia is £870,000 from all sources. So we are not a long way behind South Australia with regard to collections from those two items of taxation. But we could be well and truly ahead if we taxed the bettor or the bookmaker to the extent that taxation is imposed in that direction in South Australia.

It may seem strange that the licensing people should object to this; but if one compares the figures for 1950-51 with those of today, it will be found that in 1950-51 the clubs paid £7,388 in licence fees, and in other licences an amount of £160,997 was collected, a total of about £168,000. Today the State is getting £300,000 from those same sources, almost twice as much, and that is mainly due to the increase in excise and certain price rises. Excise has been one of the biggest factors in bringing about the increases in spite of the fact that in this State excise is allowed when calculating the tax.

I have prepared a few figures from the profit and loss account of a medium sized hotel taking £363 per week. The total annual takings amount to £19,000, which sounds a lot. But purchases account for £11,662. The rental of licensed premises is very high, and one can pay as much as £1,600 per annum. There must be added to that rates, licence fees, electricity, firewood, insurance, repairs, telephone, postage and sundry expenses; and in meeting these charges, one is up for a further £900.

Then there is cartage and freight, which amounts to £700 a year. Who is getting that? Mostly it is the Railway Department, or the Government. Again, there is the employment side. A hotel of this type would pay over £4,000 in wages per annum; and if this industry is going to be hammered, a lot of people will be

thrown out of employment. It happened with the increased excise and the consequent drop in sales, and it can happen in this instance.

The figures I have mentioned give a total of £18,930, leaving a profit of £70 for the year. That does not take into consideration wages for the husband and wife, who may be running the hotel as licensees. So these places are being conducted for the benefit of the Government and the public.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Some of the Hannan-st. hotels are not paying.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Quite a number are not paying. They are being transferred from licensee to licensee. As one gets out, somebody else goes in, and finds the same old story. There is another aspect. Since the Commonwealth Government abandoned entertainments tax, that tax has not been imposed in South Australia. But our Government levied the tax and is getting a considerable sum from it. There have also been increases in land transaction fees. I do not know where this is going to end. The Government seems to be hitting at quite illegitimate sources for the raising of finance to meet the demands of the Grants Commission which, I would say, is not very well informed about the situation in this State so far as taxation is concerned, although it ought to be.

The Government is prepared to let off very lightly one section of the community which I do not favour too well; whereas South Australia has taken steps to see that the racing community pays handsomely. In that State there is a huge return from the racing clubs. If we are going to carry on as we are doing, we shall find ourselves in a very sorry state before we are finished.

The Chief Secretary: Did you get any figures from New South Wales?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes; I have figures for that State and will be happy to give them to the Minister. I have not the total figures received in New South Wales but can tell the Minister the amount of the tax. I will give the Minister the tax for all the States. In Victoria it is 6 per cent. on gross; in New South Wales, 5 per cent. on gross; in Tasmania, 4½ per cent. on gross; in Queensland, 4 per cent. net; and South Australia has the lowest of any of the States including our own. There the minimum is £25 and the maximum is £450.

As I told the House previously, I do not think it is fair to compare what we are receiving as a claimant State with what has been received by the non-claimant States. If they like to tax their liquor licensees heavily, they will only get their dues. I understand that, particularly in the country in the non-claimant States of Victoria and New South Wales, there is

a very poor type of hotel, and there are high tariff charges in city hotels. The Minister ought not to forget that in order to meet the very high tax in Victoria and New South Wales, tariffs have to be increased to the sky.

But, of course, in cities like Melbourne and Sydney, with their huge population, a good deal of assistance is derived from the big turnover in the bar. That does help to pay the tax. As the Minister knows, because the population is so greatly in excess of ours, the turnover is much greater and the tax is not so heavy overall as it is here where the population is so much smaller.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They will get plenty during the Olympic Games. They will put it up 50 per cent.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: A few more items enter into this. For instance, there is the tax on spirits. In calculating the return for the 6 per cent. tax one is not allowed to deduct sales tax. One is charged on the cost of the liquor plus sales tax, less excise duty and cartage, and one pays tax upon tax.

The increase proposed here will mean 1d. per gallon on bulk beer and 1½d. per gallon on bottled beer. If the Government wants licensees to raise the price of bottled beer—and surely enough noise was kicked up about it before!—it will persist in its determination to levy this tax. There will be no alternative for licensees but to pass on the whole of the tax, and it will be added to the price of bottled beer.

What will be the ultimate result? It will be a falling off in sales, because the general public have normally only a certain amount to spend on liquor. If there is a falling off in sales through increased prices, there will be less employment in hotels, and in the establishments of wine and spirit merchants, and in breweries; and the Government will have to carry the responsibility of increased unemployment through having imposed this unreasonable tax. I would like the Minister to tell me what other industry is subject to such heavy taxation. After all, the liquor business is an industry, and quite a big one. It is one that helps to support the farmer.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Before tea, I was getting to the end of my story in dealing with these increases and what they would mean to the public if passed on. What other type of industry, I wanted to know, is subjected to such taxation as that which is imposed on the liquor trade? Some time ago an application was made to the Federal Treasurer for a reduction of excise to try to get the trade out of the doldrums and save passing charges on to the public, and the U.L.V.A. was told by the Treasurer that the excise could not be reduced, but it was

unlikely that there would be further increases, as taxation on the liquor trade had reached saturation point. That is a good pointer to show that there was no necessity for the States, which were up to a fairly high point of taxation, to impose further taxes.

I point out to the members of the Government that the small profits made by the State hotels could be compared with those of a large number of our country hotels; and when it is realised that the State hotels are not subject to rates and taxes or to this liquor tax, we can understand that they might be in a position where they would lose heavily if they were subject to the liquor tax as the private hotels are.

If the Government had proposed a scale of taxes whereby the smaller hotel, with a smaller bar trade, were to pay a reasonably fair licence, and the larger hotels were to pay a licence commensurate with their business, perhaps one could see fairness in it; but an overall tax such as this, irrespective of whether a hotel is in a position to make a profit, by reason of its situation, is totally unfair.

This is a strange way to amend the Act. The Bill refers to retrospective payments. I took the trouble, so as to thoroughly understand the amendments, to write the first section of the amending Bill into the principal Act, and I have a screed about four times as long as the first subsection in the Act. I feel that a simpler way could have been found to make this amendment than to have the lengthy draft that is proposed in the Bill.

If one looks at the economics in regard to taxation, one will find that it will indicate a spiral of increasing costs and that unstabilised economic conditions lie fundamentally at the door of the Government; and this Government is materially contributing to the spiral of costs by this ever-increasing style of taxation. At the same time, the Government continues to blame private enterprise at every opportunity. I believe the present tax shows a complete lack of judgment by the Government in deliberately selecting an overburdened community.

Perhaps the Government will consider that hotels already suffer financial loss in turnover by unfair trading—"unfair trading" is a phrase which has been used a fair amount in the past few months. We have unfair trading here when we compare the hotels with the clubs. This matter has not been put on a fair basis at all in the past; and even under this measure it will not be on a fair basis, when we remember that the hotels have to provide accommodation for the travelling public and lose hundreds—and sometimes thousands—of pounds in so doing. When we remember that, we realise how unfair this taxation is, and how unfair the further imposition would be.

Just to sum up, I would say that members should totally ignore the suggestion of comparing this State with the non-claimant States, but should make a comparison with one or other of the claimant States. The figures I gave previously indicate that in South Australia the Government receives from the liquor tax, with the increase proposed plus the racing tax, £951,000; whereas, in this State, the present liquor tax—without the proposed increase—is £300,500, and from racing the Government nets £450,000. The entertainment tax amounts to a further £225,000. This does not apply in South Australia. From these few sources alone the Government of this State receives £975,500, or some £24,000 in excess of what is received by the Government of South Australia, which has not the disabilities which we have in this vast State of ours. If the additional tax is imposed, this State will be getting at least £140,000 in excess of the amount obtained from similar sources in South Australia.

The Chief Secretary: That is why we want more money.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: So I believe that when the Grants Commission suggested that we were not getting as much as or more than the claimant States out of liquor tax, it was entirely unfair. I admit that this State gets a grant in excess of that received by South Australia. I believe that even this year the figure of £9,200,000 is quite a few hundred thousand pounds in excess of that of last year. Perhaps the Government needs it. I am not gainsaying that. At the same time, why pick one industry to bear the brunt?

I heard a reference in the Chief Secretary's comments to a statement from the Vice-President of the Licensed Victuallers' Association. It was not the Licensed Victuallers' Association but the United Licensed Victuallers' Association. This statement was to the effect that the members of the association would be able to meet the increase to 8½ per cent. I have an extract from that letter and it states—

I am a Vice-President of the U.L.V.A. (W.A. Branch) and have official authority to give you the following facts. The executive of the association met on the 11th October, in other words the day prior to the publication of the article in "The West Australian"—

The article in "The West Australian" was, I understand, signed by a person who called himself "spokesman"—

—in other words, the previous day, and in its inaugural discussion of the Bill in question it was unanimously resolved we would carry the increase from the present 6 per cent. to the proposed 8½ per cent.

Also, sir, we have no knowledge whatsoever as to the identity of "spokesman." You will conclude from this, sir, we have made no protest but

you will please bear in mind we are not in accord. You cannot in all fairness expect us to be. In recent times you will agree we have been rather hit to leg so perhaps in the not too distant future you will permit us an innings and even though we go in late to bat and barely reach double figures we would enjoy the change with thanks.

The letter is not what I would consider to be a business letter from an organisation to the leaders of the State. I am almost certain it was not written on a letterhead of the U.L.V.A. because I have here a letter addressed to me under today's date, from that organisation, on the U.L.V.A. letterhead, and it reads as follows:—

I am directed by my committee of management to convey to you a resolution carried at a special meeting of that committee held today: that this association objects to the proposed approx. 40 per cent. increase in the liquor tax; that the trade already has too many imposts to bear, including the October quarterly adjustment of the State basic wage and an anticipated considerable increase in rates and taxes and that when the full impact of all such imposts is known, then serious consideration must be given to a review of retail prices.

That, perhaps, is what the Government wants because it is what it has set out to do. It is going to force the U.L.V.A. into increasing prices. It will do what it has expressed its unwillingness to do; and that is, to increase the spiral of costs in Western Australia. It proposes to do something here which, under other legislation, it says will have the opposite effect.

I leave it to the House to decide whether the tax is a fair one on an industry, or whether a review should be made of the whole situation to discover what is a fair thing and what is not. I ask members to give this matter serious consideration, because we find that all the time the Government is increasing taxation. It does not matter in what direction it moves, its whole attitude seems to be towards an increase. I trust that other members will regard this as seriously as I do, because what is proposed here is just the way to increase the spiralling costs in Western Australia. I have no intention of supporting the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham, debate adjourned.

BILL—PROFITEERING AND UNFAIR TRADING PREVENTION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [7.44]: I believe that in all fairness to the people of the State we ought to adjourn the discussion in this Chamber until after the conference that the Prime

Minister has called with the Premiers of the States. The idea of that conference is to try to stop the inflationary trend. What transpires there will enable us to know whether this class of legislation is justified or not. Also, I understand that in another place an inquiry is being made by a select committee into this very matter. We might be putting something on to the statute book which we will be sorry for afterwards, and it might be proved to be completely wrong when the results of this inquiry which is being held are made known. I do not know whether it would be possible to hold up this legislation for the time being. I know that the Government does not want to have it rejected; but I cannot understand why the Government introduced the Bill.

I have been in politics for many years and I have read legislation which has been introduced in the various States; but I have never seen or heard of such unconscionable penalty clauses as were contained in this legislation when it was originally introduced. I am pleased to say that another place saw fit to delete those clauses.

Just fancy a man who is convicted of unfair trading having to place in his window a notice to show that he has been convicted and then having the further penalty of having to inscribe on his stationery the fact he has been charged and convicted for unfair trading! Luckily those clauses were removed from the Bill.

That sort of thing takes us back to the dark ages when men had to carry about their persons a statement to the effect that they had been convicted of a crime. We are living in more enlightened times; and once a penalty has been imposed and has been paid for in full, the matter should be dropped.

Legislation of this type will not help a State like Western Australia. This is a State that requires people and money for developmental purposes. I know that if I were a man of means and I wanted to go somewhere so that I could invest my money, I would not like to go to a place where I would have to leave it to the whim of any political party, or any individual, to determine what was a fair profit for me to take.

Although members on the Government side will not agree with this, I believe that a man should be able to make a profit which would enable him to carry on his business and set aside sufficient money for him to make further progress in time to come. For this purpose it is necessary for a man to accumulate some means. If it is to be regarded as a crime for a man to make a profit how will the State ever progress?

We have a syndicate which is coming here to look at a large tract of country—it is attractive country, too—but I am sure that if these people get some

knowledge of this legislation, they will be wondering what will happen if they make what some people might class as an unfair profit. I know that many people are sensitive to that kind of legislation, and I am sorry that the Government is attempting to introduce this sort of thing.

Western Australia wants more money and we want people with an ambition in life. We want to attract people who are prepared to accept risks; and to do that, we have to give them some opportunity of making a reasonable profit. I cannot think of one business in Western Australia which today is making huge profits. If we could obtain the taxation returns of all the business people in this State we would find that only a very small number could be said to be making big profits.

We also have to remember that over the last few months there has been a recession, and there is not nearly the same amount of money circulating as was the case a couple of years ago. Yet the Government of the day sees fit to introduce this sort of legislation.

I have read carefully the statement made by the Premier in another place, and I have also read the speeches of those who have supported this legislation. Not one of them has given an instance of where this legislation would apply. Nobody has mentioned one concern, whether it be in the timber industry, the mining industry or the petrol industry, or any other industry, where this legislation would apply. Some members might be thinking of one of the industries I mentioned; but look at the large sum of money that that industry has spent here! And look at the great improvement that has been made in this State as a result of that expenditure!

There is another feature of this legislation. Who will determine what are unfair trading methods? What are unfair trading methods? I might be in business, and I might put out a catch line that would attract a number of people into my shop. Would that be unfair trading simply because I deprived somebody else, who could not offer the same attraction, of the patronage? I certainly would not like to have to determine what are unfair trading methods. There cannot be any unfair trading where there is competition such as we have in Western Australia. If a person is not satisfied with the price in one shop he can go somewhere else. There are many businesses which are prepared to undersell. I know that in some cases people do get discounts while others do not get them. But there are few people, unless they be big purchasers, who are able to get large trade discounts.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Perhaps one class of buyer asks for discounts and the others do not.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That might be the case, too.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Is it a case of ask and you shall receive?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: There will be a great danger because of the power which we are putting into the hands of this commissioner. He would need to be a super man. Also we want to know what staff he will have.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would you like—

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would not like to accept the commissioner's responsibility, because he would need to be a super man to be able to carry it all. So far as I am concerned, this legislation will not be passed in its present form. I shall certainly vote against the second reading; but if the Government has sufficient support to have the second reading passed, then I hope those amendments which are now on the notice paper will be agreed to, because they will at least make it a more reasonable piece of legislation than it appears to be at the moment.

What a wonderful advertisement it is for Western Australia! What a thing to tell the world—that we have a lot of traders here who are not doing a fair thing! It is a shocking piece of legislation. Even during the war period the commissioner controlling prices did not have the same powers as the commissioner will have under this Bill.

During the war, the commissioner used inquisitorial methods; but how many people were found to be charging too much? Some were fined for charging $\frac{1}{4}$ d. more on some articles than they should have been charging. But I do not remember anyone having been charged for making unduly large profits. I know that in some country towns the inspectors found that some storekeepers were charging $\frac{1}{4}$ d. more than the list price. But they were the only cases I can remember. If there was no justification for the legislation then there can be no justification for it now. Unless a person really wants an article, he will not pay an excessive price for it; he will get it somewhere else.

After all, so long as we are in communication with the Eastern States we have an opportunity of obtaining our goods elsewhere. We must remember, too, that a good deal depends on the amount of capital invested in the business, and what number of shareholders there are. A business might have a large number of small shareholders; and although a big profit might appear to have been made, in the aggregate the profits gained are small because of the large number of shareholders among whom the money has to be distributed. After all, shareholders expect some return for the money they invest.

I would say, too, that some loans—even the Commonwealth loans—are not attractive. The money invested in some of these loans is down 13 and 14 per cent. in

value. That might be regarded as unfair trading. The people who floated the loans got the money all right; but if a person wants to redeem some of his bonds, they are not now worth nearly as much as they were when he invested his money. Governments have to be extremely careful when they start messing about with this sort of thing and they want to examine some of their own methods.

After all, if a person does make a good profit, he is caught up with by the Taxation Department; and the money received from taxation is distributed among the States by the Commonwealth Government through its grants. The money that the States receive has to come from somewhere. I tried to find out some of the things that are not taxed in this State; and from what I could see, the only thing that is not taxed is the air we breathe.

Even beer, as Mr. Baxter has just told us, is to receive a heavier tax, and all sorts of gambling are being taxed. I suppose that before the session is over we will be discussing legislation to license the one-armed bandits because the Government will want some money from that source. What we want in this State is a Treasurer who will see that we get value for our money. We do not get value for our money today in many directions. I have seen some of the waste that goes on, and I think it is about time we investigated some of our services to see whether they are overmanned.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Which services?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Government intends to pull up miles of our railways, and yet it does not intend to dismiss one railway employee. That is a service on which over £1,000,000 was paid in overtime last year. Surely the Government should turn its attention to that sort of thing and leave business people to run their own concerns in their own way! Competition will at least control them.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You know that that overtime was paid because of the 24-hour service which the railways have to provide.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I have never known the railways to pay £1,000,000 in overtime before. The employees always have a break. Even the men who drive the engines on the run from Kalgoorlie have a break at Merredin, or somewhere along the line. They are not expected to work beyond the normal working hours. Provision is made for them in the railway camps.

Hon. J. D. Teahan: A lot of that is for penalty rates and for Saturday and Sunday work.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes; and we are going to add a little more to that. The Government has been trying to run a bus service in this city for a long time; but it has been running at a loss. By that means the Government is pushing out

private enterprise; the Government will take the responsibility for it, but the public will have to pay. Deficiencies have to be made up; and of course, they are made up by taxing the people who do not use those services. It would not be so bad if the people that used them were taxed.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Like the petrol tax; the motorist paid in that case.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: But we did get something out of the petrol tax; roads were improved and we were liberally treated in that direction. If the Government wants to save and get more money, then it should appoint some kind of business doctor to go through the departments and see how we can save money. It is all very well to be generous when somebody else is finding the money! The worst thing that happened to Australia was when the responsibility for collecting taxation was taken away from the States; and if I were Federal Treasurer, I would certainly return that collecting power to the States.

Today the set-up can be likened to a mother treating her naughty boy; the more money she gives him to be good, the more naughty he is. That is what is happening; the Commonwealth Government is finding the money and the States are spending it. As soon as the States get short, the Commonwealth finds more money for them. Now we find this type of legislation being introduced with a view to helping us out of the difficulty.

To my mind this measure was not introduced at the will of the political parties at all. I am certain that some genius at Trades Hall put pressure on the Government to introduce this legislation. There is a gentleman there who holds two positions—he is the Australian president of the A.L.P. and also secretary of the Western Australian branch of the A.L.P. What right has he to hold two positions? Is he making an excess profit?

The Chief Secretary: Are you president of any organisation in this State?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am not; and I am certainly not paid.

The Chief Secretary: Nor is the gentleman to whom you refer. You are a member of Parliament and you are an official on a number of organisations.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is nice that somebody should rise in defence of the gentleman I have mentioned. I am sure he influenced the introduction of this legislation in order to endeavour to impress upon the people the dreadful type of business executives we have in this State. This legislation can only be used to curb unscrupulous people.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Those are the people the Bill wishes to control.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Who are they? Let the hon. member say who the unscrupulous people are. We must not forget that the Taxation Department makes a very careful investigation into one's accounts, and there would be no trouble in finding out who is making excess profits. Concerns like Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. make a huge profit in the aggregate; but when we consider the amount of capital that is invested, it would probably work out to a very low percentage by way of profit. There is a concern at Kwinana. Is it proposed to give that exemption? I think it would be easy enough to investigate that concern. This measure proposes to make a criminal of the man who is running his business successfully and well. It is very bad legislation.

One can imagine legislation of this nature being introduced in Russia or some other communist country; but I sincerely hope it will not be placed on the statute book of a community that is controlled more or less under British law. Our laws have their foundation in the Old country.

I am sorry that this Government has found it necessary to introduce this type of legislation. I suppose that now it considers that it missed its chance when those very high prices for wool were earned; when everybody got the benefit except the farmer himself, because he had to pay double tax in one year. I notice that when he found himself in difficulties, nobody rushed to help him; he had to go to the Federal Government for assistance. The State got the benefit of it, however. I would like an explanation as to what is to be considered an excess profit. Are we overpaid for the services we render?

The Chief Secretary: Are you asking me about yourself?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would be quite prepared to do so. I think I earn my share just as much as any other member does. But are we overpaid? Let us examine the matter. If we appointed a commissioner of my choosing to investigate this problem he would probably say, "Your pay is far too high."

The Chief Secretary: You would not agree to that. You would not have such a poor opinion of yourself.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I might. It is surprising what I can do at times. I remember when I first came to this House there was a rise of £300, and then a further rise of £400. I often wonder what is the use of saying that it is unfair for us to take these increases. After all, one does not know the responsibilities and the conditions of other members.

I dare say we can consider the people who bought potatoes in this State as profiteers. I understand the potatoes were purchased here for £60 a ton and sold elsewhere for £170; the freight, of course, had

to be added. Potatoes were selling in New South Wales at 1s. 6d. a lb. Let us examine how that affected us.

It put up the basic wage. Because of the cost of potatoes and onions, the rise in New South Wales was 11s. But how many people bought those potatoes at 1s. 6d. a lb.? I should say very few, because there were not enough to go round. This is not at all a suitable method of determining the basic wage. Even when the returns were submitted it was suggested that they increased the basic wage by 5s. on account of the price of potatoes and onions; and the normal increase was 6s.

The Government ought to take this legislation back to the people who prompted it, and tell them that when they introduce a Bill that will control and fix salaries and wages at the same time as they fix the price of goods, they will find a supporter in me. The method of tying down one section of the community while increasing the costs of that section is not good. If those costs were not added, it would mean the people running those businesses going bankrupt.

I hope that the conference of Premiers being called by the Prime Minister will help to make us more stable than we are. The only advantage I can see is that we will get more money. But it will not have the same value as it had last year. The people on fixed incomes are fast reaching a sorry plight. The person today on £1,000 a year could have done very well on £400 a year not so long ago. Those are the people who are suffering by this depleted value in the currency. All we are doing is to advertise Western Australia in a bad light; we are endeavouring to tell people that we wish to convert it into a police State. For that reason I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. McI. THOMSON (South) [8.10]: Had this Bill been introduced two or three years ago, when profits were considerably in excess of what they are today—judging from what has appeared in the reports of the various companies at the end of the financial year—I would have considered it to be a genuine attempt to curb the inflationary spiral and to help solve the problems which confront us, and which have confronted us for many years.

If this legislation is to be effective it must be on a nation-wide basis; it is no good applying it to only Western Australia. If we consider it as only a State measure, it will go haywire because we are not producing all our needs in this State. We know that we have to import a far greater proportion of our requirements from the Eastern States and from overseas. Because of this fact, we are dependent not on our own resources but on the resources of the Eastern States to which this legislation will not apply.

Businesses operating here, with their head offices in the Eastern States, will not be affected by this legislation. We are very conscious of the foremost plank of the Labour Party's platform which is socialisation of industry, production, distribution, and exchange. As the members of this Government are committed to that policy, it is with apprehension that many people, including myself, view the move intended by a Bill of this nature.

The power to be given to the commissioner is something that is causing many people considerable concern. A study of the Bill would indicate the immense power which the commissioner will receive, even though he is under the control of the Minister. Time and again questions have been asked in this House as to what particular section this Bill is directed at. Is it directed at the businesses in Western Australia, or are they going to be exempt possibly like other big businesses? No reply has yet been given to these questions.

Or is it going to apply solely to businesses within the State, both large and small? It could be mainly the small business. The farming interests have been excluded from the Bill; and we see, by an amendment on the notice paper, that it is the intention to exclude the professions. I ask: To whom is it going to apply? If we exclude these people—which I think is justifiable—we still cannot control the companies which have their head offices in the Eastern States.

The Chief Secretary: You should not anticipate amendments which appear on the notice paper before going into Committee.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: The Minister should have stated long ago who was intended to be affected by the Bill.

Hon. L. A. Logan: The hire-purchase companies.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: Yes, hire-purchase companies could well afford to receive legislative action in order to curb them. Local businesses in the State, both large and small, employ staff; and in many instances, apart from their wages and salaries, they receive bonuses which come out of the profits. Industry also provides numerous amenities, and the cost of these amenities must be derived from the profits.

I would also point out that the profits from businesses within the State are responsible for alleviating the distress of people, who from time to time give calls for assistance. The A.L.P. unemployment relief committee calls for assistance, and businesses readily come forward and pay into its funds to meet the distress and catastrophe confronting the community from time to time.

There is only one source from which this financial assistance can come, and that is from the profits made by a business over

the years. Are we to discourage them and kill the hen that lays the golden egg? When we introduce such legislation as this I venture to say we are doing so. What good purpose can be expected to be gained by curtailing or endeavouring to put impositions on a business in making a profit is very hard to understand.

We would like some indication as to the ability of the proposed commissioner. From all accounts, and from opinions expressed by various speakers in the House up to the present time, it is very dubious as to whether we would find such a person within the State who would be fully qualified to give an unbiased opinion on such important matters that would come before him.

If we bring into being another department, board or commission, it is going to cost a tremendous amount of money to the State, particularly when we recall the cost of the prices commission in its last year of operation. I think it was in the vicinity of £90,000. But apparently the cost is of no concern to the Treasurer. I do not say that we should condemn the appointment or the creation of a department just purely and simply because of its cost to the taxpayer or Treasury; but in this particular instance I am sure it will be very costly in view of the increased costs since we last had a commission.

It will cost considerably more, and those people who will be appointed to it—the commissioner, and his retinue and informers—will have to justify their existence. In addition, there will also be clerks, typists and so on; and it will be necessary for them to justify their appointment and, in so doing, they will harass and intimidate the honest and conscientious business people in the community.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: It would be interesting to see how much the Treasurer will provide in the Appropriation Bill.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: Of course we will not know that until after the appropriation Bill is brought down. We have little chance of amending that, because it is not within our province in this Chamber.

The full title of the Bill indicates that it is "to prevent undue profit taking; unfair methods of trading; and unfair trade competition". If it had been "to prevent unfair methods of trading and competition" I am satisfied that it would have received a far greater measure of support and been far more acceptable to many more people than it is in its present form, because there are many of us in this House and in the State who consider an investigation into unfair practices and methods is warranted. But the only way to deal with them is by passing the necessary legislation to enable it to be done.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Then we would know what was wanted.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: Last session an attempt was made in another place by the Leader of the Country Party to place on the statute book a Bill aimed at this very purpose, but it was killed in the Committee stage by the Minister for Labour because of the absurdities contained in the amendments he submitted. That was a genuine attempt to do something last session and pass legislation dealing with unfair practices on similar lines to the Bill that has now become law in Great Britain.

The Act in Great Britain does not empower one person to deal with the matters that would come up from time to time, as does this Bill. In that country they have seen fit to have a panel of experienced commercial men presided over by a judge, and I think that in fairness to the commercial prosperity of this country, similar action should have been taken in regard to this Bill and an attempt should have been made to work along those lines.

We have a select committee appointed this session to inquire and report on unfair trading practices in business, and one would imagine the logical thing would have been to wait for that committee to submit its report to Parliament in order to have a genuine guide on which to base the necessary legislation. I was surprised when the Premier, in agreeing to this select committee in another place said, "We will agree to this—"

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must not keep referring to debates in another place.

The Chief Secretary: He is struggling a bit hard.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Don't you know you should not interject?

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: Not only is the first section of the title of the Bill objectionable to the business community of the State, but I have found a very strong resentment by many people in country areas engaged in various businesses and occupations, and even some who are not affected by the Bill. They resent the methods which cut across the average person's ideas of common justice. They consider there is far too much power placed in the hands of one human being, who will possess all the frailties which are in a human being at all times.

It would be most interesting and amazing to see the replies if members of this Parliament were asked to submit in writing a definition of undue profits. No doubt the divergence of opinions would be amusing.

Hon. L. A. Logan: There would be 30 different opinions in this House.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: I should imagine so. Some would be well-reasoned and logical and some unrealistic and, no doubt, absurd. But it is all a matter of opinion; and it is going to be the opinion of those people we are empowering under

this Bill that will incriminate, or otherwise, individuals who, by their own temerity, initiative, honesty and enterprise, have received the confidence of the people amongst whom they have built up a goodwill through their business dealings.

Under this Bill, we are going to subject them to inspectors who, by lack of ability, will not appreciate the attributes that are in the make-up of a successful person in business; namely those attributes to which I have just referred. All this can be applied equally to the commissioner, for he could be lacking in that ability.

The measure, if agreed to, could cause grave injustice. We have been told that only those who were making an unfair profit would have reason to fear the legislation; but that is a matter of opinion. I am dubious of the ability of the commissioner and the other officers to be appointed and am therefore apprehensive of what would come about if the measure became law. I would like to ask the Minister what the commissioner would consider to be an unfair profit.

I have here a letter from a farmer who is very concerned about the Bill and wants to know how it will apply to certain people. He is aware that the farming community are not intended to be brought under the Bill and so is not concerned personally. This man lives to the east of Narrogin and decided to have the water laid on from his dam to his house. As he was supplying his own material he could not secure the services of a master plumber; and as he also intended to do some carpentering work, no master builder was prepared to take on some building work that he wanted done. He therefore found it necessary to approach two young tradesmen, a plumber and a carpenter, to do the work. To his utter amazement, both these men said, "Our rate of pay will be £12 per day, plus keep, plus travelling expenses to be paid in cash and no tax deductions."

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: £12 per day each, or for both?

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: For each tradesman. Would the Minister instruct the commissioner that that was a case for investigation and appropriate action? I hope the Minister will not disregard the example I have given, because a similar state of affairs exists in many instances in country areas. It is all very well, apparently, for the working man to make an excess profit; but on the other hand, if a person sells some article at an excess price, he is to be dealt with. How are we going to declare a workman who does the kind of thing I have mentioned?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Does the Bill cover that sort of thing?

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: We are waiting for the Minister to tell us what it does cover. I wish to deal now with those

who invest their money in companies, some of the profit of which goes into revenue by way of taxation, because all our loan works are paid for out of profits made somewhere and taxed. Are we seeking to curb the profit made; and, if so, what will be the impact of that action on revenue and loan works? From time to time our loans are not fully subscribed and the necessary money can only come out of profits made by someone. Are we to discourage people with capital from coming to this State? If so, the outlook will indeed be forlorn.

Is it the purpose of the Government to further the policy of State ownership, under which everyone is employed by the State? That is the fervent desire of socialism today, and I am wondering whether this legislation is a means of implementing socialist policy. There is room for investigation and legislation in regard to unfair trading practices and methods throughout the State; but to be fully effective, both the investigation and the legislation should cover the whole of the Commonwealth.

I will vote against the second reading as a means of protest mainly in regard to the provision dealing with undue profits. Should the Bill pass the second reading I will endeavour, during the Committee stage, to amend it to a form more acceptable to the people of the State. At this stage I will not support the Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [8.40]: I originally intended to make a rather lengthy reply to the debate on this measure; but, realising that no matter at what length I replied, each member would have his mind made up as to how he intended to vote, I decided to answer only the one or two points that occur to me while I am speaking.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Some of them might be very interesting.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Are not my observations always interesting? I am surprised that a Bill of this nature should have resulted in a debate which, if the numbers were checked, I think it would be found has had more participants than the Address-in-reply debate. I have wondered how it is that members can become so hysterical about a measure of this nature.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: Who became hysterical?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members have been running around in circles for the last month or six weeks and making some of the most extravagant statements that I have ever heard in regard to the Bill.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is an extravagant Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members say that if we had done this or that, they would have supported the measure; but I would remind the House that every attempt made in recent years in this State to do anything to control prices has been just as hotly contested by the very members who now say that if we took certain action they would support the Bill.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: We dislike controls.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Neither I nor my party like controls any more than the hon. member does, but the difference is that when we consider controls are necessary we do not shirk the job.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Why, controls are part of your platform!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are prepared to face up to the position. Tonight Sir Charles Latham said that we should hold the measure over until after a conference is held in Canberra. That is the kind of criticism that is being made in relation to the measure, but the hon. member knows that the conference is being called not to discuss this question—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What is it to discuss?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Wages.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Wages only?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think so. The difference between us is that no one in Australia today is satisfied with the way things have gone in the years since the war, and the Federal Government decided to tackle the problem from the point of view of wages and wages only; and it froze the basic wage—

Hon. C. H. Simpson: The Federal Government did not do it. The court did it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Federal Government supported the idea and made no other move. That is the only way that Government can see of tackling the problem. We take a different view and consider there are other ways of tackling it, and so we have brought forward this Bill. I am astounded that members here will take up the attitude of defending those who indulge in unfair trading and the making of unfair profits—in other words, defending people who are robbing the community.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Who are they?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Would the hon. member or anyone else, when introducing a measure to make something an offence, say who the people concerned were? Of course not! One does not know who they are.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: We were told about the bodgies carrying knives—

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We will discuss that issue when dealing with other legislation.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Do not worry about them. The widgees will look after the bodgies.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: So we find right along the line that the whole defence has been against this Bill. Who are we protecting? Who are the people it will get? Who are the only people it will get?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Who are they?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Those people who are engaged in unfair trading and who are extracting unfair profits from the public. That is all the Bill seeks to deal with. Yet we find this defence being put up.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Will it keep the cost of living down?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know what it will do; but at least it is an attempt to try to get somewhere near a state of sanity. Members of the Opposition in this House have always objected to anything the Government puts forward to improve the conditions of the masses in this State. Members criticise a Government that has the courage to tackle this vital question, and all the criticism that has been put forward has been destructive and not constructive.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: There is nothing to construct on. It is a mythical piece of legislation. Who are these people and where are they?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If we believed what members opposite say, there is no one in the State practising unfair trading and unfair competition.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I can give you one or two examples, such as the wood merchant who delivers short weight; but he is generally caught.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Thomson referred to investigating unfair methods. What is the Bill for?

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: It is to control unfair profits.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Does not the hon. member believe in that?

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: No, I do not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Therefore the hon. member believes that traders should take what they like from the people. We should let them have an open go and allow them to rob the community of this State, and the Government should stand by and do nothing! The Government is not prepared to do that, however. We do not care whether the Bill is popular or not. We are prepared to do something along the lines proposed in the Bill. I ask members: Who can be injured if the Bill is passed? The Bill can apply only

to those who are guilty of unfair trading and of making unfair profits. Therefore, why should we have all this opposition to the measure? We have the large advertisements in the Press complaining about it, and we have heard the protests that have been made over the air.

Members of the Liberal Party have said that it was such a terrible Bill that they would not attempt to amend it; but look at the notice paper today! The members of that party apparently realise that the public of this State are behind the Government on this issue, and they want something done along the lines of what is proposed in the Bill. That is why members of the Liberal Party have changed their tune. I saw some reference in the Press about shaking hands with a cobra; but apparently they are willing to extract the fangs of the cobra, if they cannot kill it completely. This is a genuine attempt by the Government—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: To find somebody!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: —to do something towards preventing spiralling costs. I would have thought that every member in this State would be behind this legislation, because the farmers are the people who can suffer the most if this Bill is not passed. They are the ones who must compete on the world's markets. They are not like the manufacturer who sells his goods either in this State or in other parts of the Commonwealth. The farmer must sell his produce overseas, and he must keep his costs down in order to compete on those markets. Therefore I would have thought that every member—

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Tell us how this Bill will bring down the cost of living.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If this will not do it, what will? There is no reply from the hon. member. Members of the Opposition are destructive in their criticism, and they do not suggest anything to take the place of this legislation. We expect that if any member complains about a Bill he should be prepared to suggest something that will take its place.

Hon. H. K. Watson: We have filled the notice paper with amendments to the Bill and you grizzle about that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because they are nothing more or less than an attempt to destroy the Bill. That is what the amendments aim at. If the Bill gets on to the statute book in a form which will enable the Government to deal with the present situation, those members who now decry the Government for introducing the Bill will in a few months be saying, "This was a jolly good move by the Government!"

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: It is an experiment and it will be a very costly one.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is nothing experimental about it. It merely aims at granting certain powers to someone to perform certain acts if necessary. If the Bill is not passed, what will members do? Leave the field wide open to traders to continue unfair trading practices?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Can the Chief Secretary give an instance of how the Bill will operate?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Thomson asked what the commissioner would do. How can I say what he will do? The hon. member suggested that there would be 30 different versions put forward in this Chamber. Of course there would be! We are not competent to do what the commissioner will do because we are not trained in these matters. However, the man who will be appointed commissioner will be one who will have a full knowledge of trading. He will be the man who will administer the legislation. He will not ask me what to do.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Where has he been hiding all this time?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Dr. Hislop can be assured that a most capable man will be appointed to the position. A man who knows thoroughly all the ramifications of trade and business. He is the one who will say how and when this legislation will be put into effect. We merely construct the framework for him by means of this Bill, and the practical work is then left to him. I will not venture to say what he will do.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Do we salute the commissioner with a "Heil Hitler!"?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member knows that we cannot expect a man to do the job unless he is given adequate powers. The power of this man will be nothing compared to that of the Commissioner of Taxation.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Except that one can appeal against the decision of the Commissioner of Taxation.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Anyone can appeal against the decision of the commissioner under this Bill. There is not much right of appeal against the decision of the Commissioner of Taxation. If members calmly consider the Bill, they will discover that what I have said is true: that the only person who need be afraid of this legislation is the one whom this Bill sets out to prevent from practising unfair trading or from making unfair profits. That being so, I have every confidence that the measure will be agreed to.

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

Ayes	15
Noes	12

Majority for 3

Ayes.	
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. M. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. E. M. Davies
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	(Teller.)

Noes.	
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
	(Teller.)

Pair.	
Aye.	No.
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. A. F. Griffith

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title and citation.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I move an amendment—

That the words "Profiteering and Unfair Trading Prevention" in lines 9 and 10, page 1, be struck out and the words "Unfair Trading and Profit Control" inserted in lieu.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to this amendment. The short title is the best description that can be applied to this measure. It is not intended to control profits or prices; the Bill does not set out to do that. The Government does not like the word "control" to appear in the title of the Bill, nor does it want prices control.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I thought you said it did.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member's imagination is running away. All that is desired is the prevention of undue profit taking, unfair methods of trading and unfair trade competition. No matter how great the profit is, so long as it is fair, the Government will not interfere.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: The amendment is to alter the short title, because the one appearing in the Bill is too cumbersome. If the other amendments are agreed to the short title will not truly represent the purpose of the legislation. The amended title is much neater.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I agree with the amendment. While we on this side do not like the Bill and hope it will be defeated, we feel that if it is passed the amended title will be much more suitable. It becomes a profit-control rather than a prices-control measure.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I suggest that this clause should be deferred. It might well be found that the title suggested by Mr. Murray, defining it as a Bill to socialise all industries in Western Australia, would be much more appropriate.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I ask for your ruling, Mr. Chairman. Standing Order 197 states that no question shall be put on any clause printed in italics.

The CHAIRMAN: I would say that the clause is not printed in italics.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Whilst the title of the Bill is not very important, because what is contained in the Bill is what really counts, I would ask that the title be left unaltered. I cannot allow the suggestion made by Mr. Watson to go unchallenged. Such extravagant statements do not get us anywhere. What is there in this Bill to socialise anything?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: In answer to that, I would say that a person has only to be a declared trader and thereafter his business is under the direction of the commissioner. If that is not socialisation, what is?

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

Ayes	15
Noes	11
Majority for	4

Ayes.	
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Cunningham
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	(Teller.)

Noes.	
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	(Teller.)

Pair.	
Aye.	No.
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. R. F. Hutchison

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

Clauses 2 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—This Act applies to the Crown in right of the State:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I would like the Chief Secretary to explain how it is proposed to apply this clause. Are we to be so naive as to assume that the commissioner will declare the State Saw Mills or the State Engineering Works, or take the Minister before a court to be fined double the amount of excess profits, because the State Saw Mills have at times made excessive profits?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That provision will be applied as it stands. Any Government instrumentality offending against this provision will have to stand the brunt of punishment if the Government considers it is acting against the law.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: How can the Crown take action against the Crown? Surely the clause is not right. If action were to be taken against the accountant or manager I could understand the reasons for this clause. I cannot understand the present wording of it. I want to know how the Crown can take action against itself. I think this had better be struck out.

The Chief Secretary: I have no objection to that. But we do not want it struck out; we are prepared to let it stay in.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know a man who had some land taken from him by the State Housing Commission for which, to the best of my knowledge, he has not yet been paid. The Crown sold it for £3,000. Would the Chief Secretary suggest that the Minister in charge of this measure would take action against the Minister for Housing for making an unfair profit in such circumstances?

The Chief Secretary: If you leave this in, yes.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is just stupid. Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Interpretation:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move—

That in the definition of "combine" all words after the word "public" in line 4, page 4, be struck out.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We have not had a chance to see the amendment yet.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The purpose of the amendment is to delete the exclusion contained in the words it is proposed to strike out. If the bulk of the general community are to be included under this measure, and if the Crown is to be included, why should any board be excluded?

Hon. H. L. Roche: You want the farmer in the Bill!

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I want everyone in it. If the Crown is in the Bill, should not the farmer, and the butcher, and the baker all be happy to be in it, too? Let us consider some of the items, governed by boards, which affect the cost of living and the producer's opportunity to produce. I will mention three—onions, potatoes and eggs. It may well be that the activities of the boards controlling those commodities require investigation. As a matter of fact, within the last 12 months a Royal Commission did inquire into their activities. If I remember rightly, the commission's report on the Onion Board was extremely adverse.

I therefore suggest that if the commissioner found the Onion Board or the Potato Board or the Egg Board was unduly increasing the cost of the commodity under its control, he should act accordingly. Likewise, he should act if he found that a board was restricting production, whether as a means of keeping up prices

or as a personal vendetta against producers. The Potato Board appears to be against the producers. It is severely restricting production and putting producers out of employment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I intend to protest against this method of submitting amendments. It is not fair to members to have handed round amongst them five sheets of paper with amendments on them. The notice paper contains 53 amendments; and now, when we are considering them in Committee, we are handed five typewritten sheets of paper containing more amendments. Three of those sheets bear the name of the hon. member submitting the amendments, but the others contain no name at all. I do not think we should be asked to do business under that system.

Hon. H. L. Roche: I have only three pieces of paper.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have five. I suggest that members have conscientiously looked through the notice paper and checked the amendments appearing thereon and they know what is intended; but to have these fresh amendments pushed in front of them is something which is unreasonable.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: This notice paper was printed on Friday.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That was as much for members' convenience as anything else, in order to give them a chance of going through the amendments before today. There might be nothing of any consequence in the amendments on these five sheets of paper; but I do not know, because I have not had a chance to look at them. It is not fair to ask us to consider them.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Then report progress.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. We can go on with the amendments on the notice paper, and later the Bill could be recommitment, and members could consider these further amendments tomorrow night after having had an opportunity to look at them. I hope members will adopt that course.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I support the Minister. If he would agree, it would probably be better to postpone the clause or recommit the Bill so that members could have their amendments placed on the notice paper. I have only got two of these sheets with amendments on them.

The Chief Secretary: I have five, and some of them do not even contain the names of those who intend to move the amendments contained on them.

The CHAIRMAN: I would also like to point out that I am at a disadvantage in having these amendments submitted in this way after the Bill has gone through the second reading. I hope that after tonight members will have their amendments placed on the notice paper. The

clerks have drawn up the notice paper in order to make it as easy as possible for amendments to be taken in order of sequence.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I would like to point out that we find by the notice paper that the Chief Secretary is amending his own Bill.

The Chief Secretary: That is nothing unusual.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: No.

The Chief Secretary: This has been done because it was promised in another place.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not suggesting it is unusual. I have seen amendments circulated in this way previously, and we have not been given an opportunity to study them. What I am pointing out is that the Chief Secretary is amending his own Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: So far as I am concerned, we can proceed; but I hope that after tonight members will hand in amendments so that the clerks can place them on the notice paper.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In order to save further trouble, I will ask that progress be reported.

The CHAIRMAN: There is an amendment before the Chair.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Progress reported.

BILL—BETTING CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 25th October.

HON. J. MURRAY (South-West) [9.27]: I find myself in rather a peculiar position in regard to this measure. It is on the notice paper; but there are other items on the notice paper which we thought would take up some little time of the House, and I considered that probably I would have had much longer to study certain aspects of the Bill.

In the first place, I would like to revert to the introduction of the measure. When it was brought down, it was understood that it was to be trial legislation. In many of the speeches made on that occasion, it was stressed that members wished to see what the effect would be and, at the first opportunity, review the situation if that were thought necessary.

It was also stressed that a lot would depend on the board set up under the Act and whether it accepted the responsibility that was envisaged by the Act of controlling s.p. betting. It was fully understood by most members that the legislation was an attempt to break down a

situation that had got out of control. But we find that under the Act the board accepted the responsibility of turning an undesirable and chaotic situation into a smooth-running machine.

Hon. H. K. Watson: A profiteering machine.

Hon. J. MURRAY: No one can deny that a smooth running machine has been set up in such a manner that instead of restricting s.p. betting it has encouraged it, and that all efforts have been made by the board towards that end. In other words, it would appear that the Government, through the Betting Board, has set up another taxing authority to bring in further revenue; not to help racing in any shape or form, but to help to build up still further our over-burden of civil servants.

When introducing the Bill the Chief Secretary had something to say about the claims made by the W.A. Turf Club and the W.A. Trotting Association in connection with the attendances at their meetings. He had this to say—

Licensing in this State of betting shops has been said to be responsible for the reduction in attendance at racing and trotting meetings. While the principal spokesman for the Trotting Association is adamant that this is the sole reason for reduced attendances, the W.A. Turf Club officials do not agree with this. The Turf Club concedes that the economic conditions have affected attendances and patronage of bookmakers and the totalisator. This fall in attendance has been experienced in other States where licensed off-the-course betting does not exist.

I am one who supports the contention of the President of the Trotting Association as to the effect s.p. betting has on attendances at trotting meetings. Likewise, I agree with the remarks of the Turf Club. The present system does not affect it as greatly as it does the Trotting Association. The trotting authorities are finding that since the commencement of s.p. betting, people who have the urge to bet and who, in the ordinary course, prior to the legislation coming into being, of necessity used to go to Gloucester Park to invest their money, unless they wanted to commit a crime, which they did not want to do—

The Minister for Railways: Which was not hard to do.

Hon. J. MURRAY: —are now able to avail themselves of the convenience that the s.p. man presents. Practically at every hotel in the city, or closely adjacent to it, there is an s.p. shop; and the people who want to bet can now stay in the city without spending the requisite money on fares and entrance fees, and they can bet to their heart's content.

The result is that if they have a bad day there is no money left for them to indulge in betting at Gloucester Park. Despite the ease with which they can get there, and the spectacular nature of the sport, they just cannot afford to bet in two places. So the Turf Club may be right in that the present set-up does not affect its attendances to any great degree, whereas it is affecting the attendances of the Trotting Association.

During the debate on the original legislation, other remarks that are worthy of repetition were made. When we were asked to pass the legislation in the first place, the numerous occasions where the Commissioner of Police had pointed out in his report that without definite legislation his officers could not control s.p. betting, were mentioned. The various reports of the Commissioner of Police had a large influence on the vote in support of the legislation to give the commissioner some definite authority to stamp out illegal betting.

Since the introduction of the Betting Control Act, illegal betting has practically ceased in the State. It is unfortunate that the Betting Control Board, when it was set up, failed to take into consideration the views of local authorities as to the placement of shops. Had it done so, many of the undesirable features of the situation of these places would not have arisen.

Earlier I said that, through the Betting Control Board, the Government seemed to have set up another taxing instrumentality. The amending Bill, plus the measure which will follow, shows clearly that the Government and the Betting Control Board have been influenced, not by the people who are running the sport but by the s.p. bookmaker. The first thing the board did when it was set up was to license premises. It is strange that in licensing these premises, the layout which the Board required was practically standardised. That was done on the advice of people who are interested in encouraging a continuance of this trade. When the board was licensing premises, but while no licences had yet been issued, it was well-known who was going to occupy the premises. These things could not have come about except by a certain amount of collusion between the s.p. bookmakers and the Betting Control Board.

It is also remarkable to look at the split-up of revenue that is coming in from betting—betting not only on the course, but also off the course. We have to study both to see that if certain members of the Government are not directly interested in s.p. betting, they are definitely interested in these people, because the loading is strongly against the on-course bookmaker and in favour of the s.p. bookmaker.

When the Act first came in, Parliament in its wisdom tried to ensure that the licence fee would be pretty stiff. There

were several reasons for that, one of them being to ensure that the small man who had been illegally operating around the corner, and so on, would not get a licence; the fee was too stiff for him. The fee was fixed at £500. The Government in its wisdom now says that Parliament was wrong in fixing £500.

Well, I may be wrong in saying that Parliament fixed the fee. It might have been fixed later by regulation. The point, however, is that the high fee of £500 was the agreed amount. Now the Government considers that £500 is too heavy and it has promptly decided that the fee should be reduced, notwithstanding that the course bookmaker still pays in the vicinity of £1,500 for the right to bet on the course.

The Minister for Railways: He has no rent to pay, staff to employ, or telephones to pay for, like the off-course bookmaker has.

Hon. L. C. Diver: He has other things to pay for.

The Minister for Railways: But he is better off.

Hon. J. MURRAY: The Minister has raised a point in relation to this profession, as some people call it, when he says that the course bookmaker has not the large salaries to contend with, nor does he have to pay a rental. I agree that the rental on some of these premises would be stiff. There are a number of premises which must have been expensive to erect; and the other night I asked a question as to how many off-course bookmakers' premises are owned by the occupants. The answer was rather interesting.

Over and above that, it is interesting to note the large number of staff that the s.p. man is employing at present. The members of his staff are highly paid, and some of them are paid for doing almost nothing. The reason why they are there is so that those bookmakers can have a good argument—as the Minister has just told us—that their costs are so high, and that they need added protection for their industry. So they say, "if you are going to raise any extra money from this source, you cannot get it from the s.p. men."

The Minister for Railways: But it will be increased by this legislation.

Hon. J. MURRAY: If this legislation is passed—and there is no doubt that it will be passed, because we cannot do much about it—there will be a cutting down of the staff in those places, and a bigger percentage return will be shown than is the case today. When this legislation was discussed last year, some people said that the profit of the s.p. bookmaker—that is the illegal s.p. bookmaker—was 25 per cent. on turnover. I do not say that his profit is 25 per cent.; but it is strange how the defenders of the s.p. men in the Government are saying that he cannot afford 2 per cent.

The Minister for Railways: Nobody said that.

Hon. J. MURRAY: But the Government says that these men cannot afford to pay any more than that. One Minister said "The question really is: What is a fair and equitable tax to impose on the book-makers having regard for Government needs, the needs of the racing clubs and the necessity to prevent the system of betting reverting to what it was before the legislation was introduced?" Nothing is more fallacious than to try to make the public believe that the method of betting would revert to what it was before the Act was passed, irrespective of the tax charged. There are such heavy penalties in the Betting Control Act, placed there at the request of the Commissioner of Police, that any attempt by the s.p. men to revert to the illegal method of betting could quite easily be controlled. It was regrettable that the Commissioner of Police did not take more definite action to control it before the Act was passed.

Whilst I do not believe that the book-makers' profit is 25 per cent., I think that they can pay anything between 3½ to 5 per cent. without turning a hair, and still show a handsome return. The Government says that it is so short of money that it must get funds from here, there and everywhere else—and Mr. Baxter told us how the Government intends to increase the licensing fees in regard to hotels and so get extra revenue in that way. Yet in regard to s.p. betting, the Government is hesitant—in fact, it is not hesitant but it refuses to take what it can get—about doing anything which will affect these people. The extra tax to which I have referred would not concern these people one iota.

The Minister for Railways: That is not right.

Hon. J. MURRAY: It is right.

The Minister for Railways: It is not. The tax will be increased.

Hon. J. MURRAY: The tax will be increased by an infinitesimal amount. The Government must realise that a tax on these people is not affecting the general public in the same way as all other taxing measures.

Hon. W. F. Willesee: You believe in sectional legislation.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: This is sectional legislation.

Hon. W. F. Willesee: It certainly is.

Hon. J. MURRAY: Does the hon. member mean the taxing side of it?

Hon. W. F. Willesee: Yes, definitely.

Hon. J. MURRAY: I believe that anybody who is in a protected industry should pay for the privilege of being in it.

Hon. W. F. Willesee: Up to a point.

Hon. J. MURRAY: Will the hon. member tell me what the point is?

Hon. W. F. Willesee: When my turn comes I will be glad to answer you.

Hon. J. MURRAY: If a person is given the privilege of being in a protected industry, he should pay for that privilege; I think they do in most cases where they get protection. As I have already said, we in this House cannot do much about this legislation.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You can do anything you like with this Bill.

Hon. J. MURRAY: No, we cannot.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You can if you have the numbers. It is not a taxing measure.

Hon. J. MURRAY: This Bill states where the money will go and we cannot do much about it. It has been said frequently by both the racing and trotting clubs that they provide the sport and therefore they should get a bigger proportion of the tax raised. Neither the W.A.T.C. nor the W.A. Trotting Association provide the sport. The public provides the sport by providing the wherewithal to enable it to be run.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I could not agree with you more.

Hon. J. MURRAY: In effect, the clubs are the managing directors of the sport, acting on behalf of the public. Once those managers get out of step, they deserve just as much severe criticism as the directors of any other show if they fail in their duty.

The falling-off in attendances is in many ways a reflection on the management of the sport by the clubs concerned. Frequently we see drastic action being taken by the stewards at these meetings, and just as frequently we see where the penalties have been lifted when the pressure comes on from the big owners. In this regard I refer particularly to trotting.

The Minister for Railways: Who would be the biggest owner of trotters?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You will have to give notice of that.

Hon. J. MURRAY: I would say that the answer to the question is so well known that the Minister does not want an answer on the floor of the House. But there are other big owners—

Hon. E. M. Davies: It ought to be in cold print.

Hon. J. MURRAY: —besides the one referred to—

The Minister for Railways: Who is he?

Hon. J. MURRAY: —who wield a big influence on the running of the sport. So it is also fallacious to say that the owners and breeders provide the sport. They say that but for the money they put into the game it would not be worth a candle. I say to some of these breeders that if it

were not for the money they are taking out of the game they would not be in it at all.

Only recently a big breeder took exception to having his driver-trainer cautioned or irregular running. He took so much umbrage at it that he more or less threatened the association that he would not start his horses again. That was three or four meetings ago, and his horses have not started since; and he has some of the best horses in the State. So far as I am concerned, those horses could remain in the stable until they died before I would accept them.

The Minister for Railways: No luck with them?

Hon. J. MURRAY: If the clubs cannot provide good clean racing with the money they get through this legislation, the Government might as well keep the lot, because the public would find ways and means of betting even if horse-racing went out of existence altogether.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It would not be so enjoyable.

Hon. J. MURRAY: I agree. But it is not much good Parliament taking steps to prevent an evil in our midst—which it did when it passed the previous legislation that was introduced to prevent the illicit gambling that was going on—if on the other hand we are going to encourage as big an evil as is encouraged by some people on the registered trotting tracks, and registered racecourses.

Don't say that they are not aware that these things are going on! It is so obvious even to the casual visitor to racecourses, even though he may have no real knowledge of the sport; so how much more would it be known to the committee of the Trotting Association, the members of which have been brought up with trotting and know most of the tricks of the trade! Yet these people shut their eyes and let this sort of thing continue. I have to sympathy for them at all.

It was suggested by the Minister that the s.p. man was loaded with heavy costs such as rental, etc. He indicated that he was also confronted with several problems and he endeavoured to point out that this legislation did not favour the s.p. man against the course bookmaker. Amongst the many expenses which the course bookmakers pay is a 3d. stamp tax as against the other man's 1d. tax. Apart from this, he has to pay a very heavy licence fee, and he usually carries all the risk attached to s.p. bookmaking.

When a big stable wants to back horses, it is the man on the course that carries the money. There might be a small amount of wagering done on a particular horse through s.p. channels. Sometimes it gets a little out of hand, but it is never

of very great moment; and by the time the race is run, the s.p. man finds that the odds have shortened considerably as compared with what has been paid out on the course. Again we see that everythink favours the s.p. man against the course bookmaker.

Not so long ago somebody suggested that we should attract people back to the courses. It was proposed that the Turf Club should reinstall two telephones that were put in after the original legislation was passed. In the first place those two telephones were installed in the belief that s.p. bookmakers operating in the city might want to channel some of their money through to the course thus benefiting the course by this additional revenue from the increased turnover by course bookmakers. It was a natural assumption that s.p. operators might feel that they wanted to unload some of what we might term their unhealthy money.

But shortly after the telephones had been installed, it was found that there was a gradual decline in the money that was coming over those telephones back to the course, and I do not think I would be wrong in saying that the only purpose those telephones served was to supply certain bookmakers with information they desired, as to which of the small men wanted to lay off money they could not afford to carry. Having got that information, these small men became the tools of the big operators.

Parliament was very conscious that this sort of thing could happen when the previous legislation was passed, and provision was made for there to be no dummying; it was to be an offence against the Act. What is going on today, however, is nothing but dummying to a large degree, and the people who are benefiting are the very people the Government is protecting, with the assertion that they cannot afford a larger slice out of their turnover.

There is another point I want to raise, and that is an item which many of us stressed when the previous legislation was before the House. It was suggested that s.p. shops should close at 1 o'clock on the day of racing especially in country districts where country meetings were held. That, of course, was not given effect to when the board was set up. In fact the board made a regulation compelling them all to keep open on race days.

This is still a matter of some concern in country districts. We have the almost farcial position of country race meetings being held in country districts where there is only one licensed s.p. man who did not even live in the town; he had to travel some 60 miles from Perth to carry out his s.p. operations in that country town. But when there is a race meeting there he is compelled by the Act to attend and

open his premises, and to pay his staff wages for being present, even though he does not take one bet.

So in administering this Act, it is a pity the board should have become so dictatorial in its methods. It is dictatorial in the setting up of betting shops in locations where they are not wanted. The board's attitude to the general public and to the various local authorities is, "You are going to have a shop here and like it." The same thing applies to the question of the opening of shops to which I have just referred where the operators are compelled to open during country race meetings and to remain open on that day.

The position is farcial. If the people are at all interested in racing in the country districts they attend the courses because it is considered the patriotic thing to do. I will not weary the House any longer because I know there are other speakers who have facts and figures to produce, and I will leave it to them to comment on the measure.

On motion by Hon. L. C. Diver, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 30th October, 1956.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER

Members Smoking and Use of Speaker's Chair.

The SPEAKER: Before the commencement of today's proceedings, I wish to refer to the practice that has grown up of members smoking in this Chamber. It is known that in the years that have gone by, members have had the concession of being allowed to smoke immediately behind the Speaker's Chair, but during last week's proceedings some of them were smoking right in the Assembly Chamber. As a matter of fact, one member was sitting in the Speaker's Chair in the corner of the Chamber and smoking.

It has been drawn to my notice that the public in the gallery sometimes desire to smoke and when the ushers tell them they