

Hon. C. G. Latham: A number of the inmates are not entitled to pensions, not having been here long enough.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Of the 114 non-pensioners, 64 are Asiatics. The member for Nedlands also made statements about the food. Whether he intended to do so I am not prepared to say, but he did convey that the food was supplied irrespective of any disabilities the inmates might be suffering from unless they were in hospital. The same food, the hon. member said, was put down for all outside the hospital, and a great deal of the food was wasted. There may be some argument that the food might be more varied or that the cooking might be better. I am not going to argue those aspects at present. The inference I drew from the hon. member's remarks was that the food was all of one kind and was put before men irrespective of their likes or dislikes and irrespective of whether they were able to eat it. Those statements are incorrect. There are special diets for diabetics and so forth. There are medical diets for the sick. Such inmates get whatever the medical officer orders. Mince and soft food are supplied for some patients. Special diets consist of mince, sago, rice, eggs, rabbits, bread and milk. Of the 535 inmates who were in the home when the hon. member spoke, 350 were on full diet, 102 on mince meat, 39 on sago, four on arrowroot, and six on eggs. Again, 247 were receiving milk morning and night; and 35 were on bread and milk, mainly because they did not like oatmeal. The 62 on rice were probably Asiatics. These figures show that all the inmates are not on the same diet.

Whilst I agree that probably some alterations can be made—they will be made if possible—yet generally speaking the inmates are a great deal more satisfied than one is led to believe. The hon. member asked why a committee could not be formed. I interjected that I had no objection to a committee. The leader of the movement came in the other day and produced the names of five members who were elected to the committee. In general, everything possible is being done for the health of the inmates. I omitted to add that a new unit hospital is being erected at King Edward Memorial. This we hope to have open by Easter next at latest. When it is opened, there will be another unit that Western Australia can be proud of, one

which will represent a considerable improvement on the unit or hospital there now.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.51 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 9th November, 1938.*

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

## BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.

*Third Reading.*

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [4.37]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.38]: When the Bill was under discussion at the second reading, several members indicated the opinion that the measure should be held until such time as we would have seen what was done in connection with the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill, as the one dovetails into the other to such an extent that they must be brought into line.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I thought the Minister was going to hold this Bill over until the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill had been dealt with.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Minister has never said so. The question now before the House is that the State Government Insur-

ance Office Bill be read a third time. If the Minister had said that he would hold the Bill up, I do not doubt that he would have held it up.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It would not do to pass this Bill now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: But the proposal before the House is that this Bill be now read a third time. If we pass the third reading, despite what this House may say, we shall have legalised State insurance, restricting the State's activities to miners' phthisis, accidents.

The Chief Secretary: That is the object of the Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Parker, however, pointed out that by deleting Clause 9 we were not doing anything of the kind. If we pass this Bill without bringing the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill into line with it, we shall find that we have created a monopoly for the State Government Insurance Office, as no company will be able to operate without the Minister's consent. If the Minister withholds his consent, as he has done in the past, I understand—

The Honorary Minister: As he has done in the past?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No company has ever been approved of, the reason being, "You have not approved of State insurance, and Parliament has not approved of State insurance, and the Minister will not approve of your company." The reasonable, logical thing is for someone to move the adjournment of this debate until the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill shall have passed through both Houses. I am opposed to monopolies, and especially Government monopolies, because we know that the Government cannot conduct any business concern at a profit, though business people handling such concerns can. We have proof of this in the matter of accident insurance. Government accident insurance has now become a losing proposition. It has been amalgamated with other insurance, so that we have not been able to dissect the figures. Regarding monopolies, I would refer to the Wyndham Meat Works. According to the Auditor General's report, for the year ended the 31st December, 1938, sales by the Government amounted to £403,000; the suppliers of cattle received £158,000, while the Government received £255,000.

The Chief Secretary: What are you quoting?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Auditor General's report, 1938, page 90. Recently, an increase was made in the basic wage. I doubt if the Government were in a position to carry on at a profit at the old rate. I am informed on the best authority that a proposal was made to increase the price of bricks. The Government desired to raise the price 5s. per thousand, but private enterprise would not agree. The result was that the increase was 4s., instead of 5s. I could quote other instances showing the result of Government monopolies. At present, however, it is sufficient to say that if we pass the Bill as it stands without bringing the Workers' Compensation Act into line, we shall give the State Insurance Office a monopoly of accident insurance, and I do not think anyone wants that.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [4.43]: The position regarding State insurance has become paradoxical. At present, the State Insurance Office has no legal standing and employers are not compelled to comply with the provisions of Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act. The State Insurance Office did all the mining accident insurance business, notwithstanding that it was unincorporated and had no legal status. No insurance company was approved by the Minister under Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act. Over and over again cases were mentioned in this House of workmen who had met with accidents and who, through no fault of their own, were deprived of compensation owing to the default of the employer, who had failed to effect the necessary insurance because the Minister had not approved an insurance company. Parliament has approved of the legalisation of the State Insurance Office. Whether or not the last clause of the Bill is retained is immaterial. Some members fear that a monopoly will be created, because Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act provides—

It shall be obligatory for every employer to obtain from an incorporated insurance office . .

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Approved by the Minister.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The section continues—

. . . approved by the Minister a policy of insurance for the full amount of the liability to pay compensation under this Act to all workers employed by him.

Some members fear that the Minister may approve only of the State Insurance Office.

in which event a monopoly would undoubtedly be created. Under Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act, it is possible for the Minister to create a monopoly, but I personally can hardly believe any Minister or Government would do so. However, there have been untoward happenings in the creation of monopolies. I cannot understand how the difficulty can be overcome by amending Section 10, unless the wording is so altered as to provide that incorporated insurance offices, as well as the State Insurance Office, shall be approved by the Minister.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Would you do that in the Committee stage of the other Bill?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If the other House does not agree, what will happen?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Then we shall lose the State Insurance Office.

Hon. J. J. Holmes interjected.

Hon. J. CORNELL: We must take into consideration whether an unscrupulous Minister would take advantage of Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act and say, "For the purpose of workers' compensation, I shall approve only of the State office." If other offices were approved, then the intention of the Act would undoubtedly be carried out. Mr. Holmes has pointed out that other courses are open. If any doubt is felt about the probity of the present Government or of Ministers, the Bill should be held up.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I am sure no one doubts the probity of the Government; it is a question of providing a safeguard.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is a question of doubting the probity of the Government, because some other Minister might take advantage of the position. Once other insurance offices were approved, I fail to see any reason for an alteration. The only remedy is to make sure that more than one insurance office is approved. We could even make provision that not fewer than a certain number of insurance companies should be approved. Other offices would consequently be included.

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

## **BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Assembly and, on motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, read a first time.

## **BILL—MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the previous day., Hon. J. Nicholson in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Fortnightly payment of wages.

The CHAIRMAN: Yesterday, on motion by Mr. Parker, the whole of Subsection 1 of the proposed new Section 55 was deleted, and the hon. member moved a further amendment—

That the following be inserted in lieu:—  
"Subject to the terms of any award or industrial agreement under the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1935, the Governor may direct by notice in the 'Government Gazette' that after the date of such notice the wages of all workmen employed on all mines shall be calculated up to the last Tuesday of each successive fortnight and be paid on the Friday immediately following: Provided that where a workman is employed as a pieceworker he shall be paid on the last Friday of every second fortnight any excess moneys earned by him up to the preceding Tuesday in every such second fortnight: Provided that the Governor may, at any time, by notice in the 'Government Gazette,' exempt any particular mine from the provisions of this section."

Amendments on the amendment were passed as follows:—

By inserting after the figures "1912-1935" the words "made after the passing of this Act"; and by striking out all the words after "mines" and inserting the words "shall be paid in two instalments in each month" in lieu.

The question is that the amendment, as amended, be agreed to.

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

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## **BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South - East) [4.56]: I did not intend to address myself to the second reading of this Bill, but the figures presented by Mr. Angelo and Mr. Bolton last night should make us pause before we approve of a measure that will im-

pose an increased burden on the industries of the State. I hope whichever party happens to be in power after the elections next year will introduce a measure having for its object the reducing instead of the increasing of this burden. Therefore I propose to vote against the second reading to permit of the question being further considered. We have before us a Bill designed to establish a bureau of industry and economic research for the encouragement of secondary industries in this State; and we would be wise to hold this matter over until the bureau has been established and given an opportunity to make recommendations to the Government that might enable the burden on industry to be reduced.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [4.57]: I hope the House will pass the second reading. The contention that the Bill will have the effect of placing further imposts on industry is not sufficient to warrant the rejection of the measure on the second reading. As I stated when speaking on the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill a few weeks ago, the lapse of time has revealed anomalies in our legislation. That applies to the Workers' Compensation Act just as much as to the Industrial Arbitration Act. This Bill contains provisions that will correct anomalies and will in no way increase the burden on industry. The House could with advantage and without loss of dignity pass the second reading and take the Bill into Committee, and thus probably regain some of the prestige lost by the rejection of the Industrial Arbitration Bill. Sufficient has already been said about other clauses of the Bill and reiteration of those arguments is not warranted.

Hon. A. Thomson: Then you will amend the Bill and leave practically only the title.

Hon. J. CORNELL: No, not at all. There are several features worthy of consideration which, if approved, will afford relief in certain directions. I have no desire at this stage to enter into the merits of those provisions, but I shall refer to a couple of anomalies. A worker, as a result of an accident, might have his eyesight impaired, but under the Act he would not be provided with glasses, although glasses are provided for under the Repatriation Act. If a worker, as a result of an accident, loses his teeth, he would not, under the Act, be provided with artificial dentures, though under the

Repatriation Act artificial teeth are provided for. If he has to be transported from the country to the city, he does not receive any consideration such as that extended to a soldier under the Repatriation Act who is given reasonable expenses in the form of a home-from-home allowance. Those two items will not increase the burden on industry at all, but if we agree to those portions of the Bill, defects in the Act will be remedied and thus relieve workers of disabilities from which they have suffered for a long time. I have always counselled that the consideration of legislation to amend an Act that is, say, 40 years old, is a totally different proposition from the consideration of a new measure such as the bureau of industry Bill. When dealing with old and essential legislation, the virtues of every amendment should be thoroughly considered and every possible constitutional avenue explored in an endeavour to arrive at an amicable settlement of differences between the views of the two Houses. If another place will not see eye to eye with the Council's amendments, a Bill may be lost, although due and proper consideration has been given to it. I counsel the House that a false move would be made if we reject the second reading of this Bill without giving what is essentially a Committee Bill consideration at the latter stage. I hope members will agree to the second reading and allow the Bill to go into Committee.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.2]: I support the second reading of the Bill, not as an indication that I favour all its clauses, but in the hope that an amendment will be made in Committee as a result of which insurance will be compulsory. One or two other amendments embodied in the Bill will, if agreed to, improve the Act. For these reasons I propose to support the second reading so that the measure may be considered in Committee.

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [5.3]: I appeal to the House to pass the second reading of the Bill. Surely it contains some clauses that members can support! I join with those who have suggested that only in Committee can the Bill be dealt with properly. One phase that appeals to me is the clause providing for a definite amount of compensation to be paid in the event of a worker receiving fatal injuries. As the Act

stands, the dependants may receive payments ranging from £400 to £600, and frequently varying payments are made to the dependants of workers who receive fatal injuries as the result of their work in the same industry. I do not think any member would contend that arising out of fatal accidents present-day compensation payments ranging generally around the £400 mark are adequate, and the proposal to increase the amount to £600 should find ready acceptance. Another clause deals with the deductions from lump sum settlements that have been agreed upon between the parties concerned. I do not quite concur in the provision in the Bill which permits deductions to be made from lump sum settlements, but although endeavours have been made to alter the principle involved, there has been no headway. When the Workers' Compensation Act was first introduced I do not think it was contemplated that deductions should be made from such settlements. Rather do I think the intention was that the lump sum, as agreed upon, should be paid to the dependants of the worker or to the worker himself. In the past certain deductions have been allowed, the result of which has been to decrease considerably the net amount payable. The Bill provides for the percentage deductions still to be allowed, but other deductions will be prohibited. The clauses to which I have referred are at least worthy of consideration and the House should, therefore, agree to the second reading.

**HON. G. B. WOOD** (East) [5.6]: I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, although I do not favour much of its contents. It may be desirable to consider some of the clauses in Committee. I am certainly not in favour of increasing the compensation payments from £400 to £600; nor can I support the part that relates to contractors, with which Mr. Holmes dealt fully. I shall certainly vote against the latter clause in Committee. I am also definitely against the proposal to add yolk boils to the list of occupational diseases, for which compensation will be payable.

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON**: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

**Hon. J. J. Holmes**: We have the other Bill to deal with, so why not deal with this now?

**Hon. J. NICHOLSON**: By way of explanation, I may inform Mr. Holmes that I have been endeavouring to secure some information that I have not yet obtained. If the debate were adjourned until to-morrow, my work would be facilitated.

**Hon. J. Cornell**: You can move to re-commit the Bill.

**Hon. G. Fraser**: Yes, do it in Committee.

**The PRESIDENT**: Does Mr. Nicholson intend to insist on his motion?

**Hon. J. Nicholson**: Yes.

Motion (adjournment) put and negatived.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.9]: I do not propose to say much on the Bill. In view of what has been said about the measure and the points that have been referred to this afternoon, there is room for some reply on the part of the Minister in charge. In the circumstances I feel that the Minister would be well advised to seek the adjournment of the debate so that he may be able to reply adequately to the points raised. I do not propose to enter upon a discussion of the merits or demerits of the Bill, but the House would be well advised to note what has been said by one or two members this afternoon.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Drew, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.10] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to fix the rates of the financial emergency tax. I do not propose to speak at any great length in submitting the measure. Members are aware that this form of taxation was inaugurated during the depression period and each year the tax has been continued. On this occasion the rates proposed are similar to those imposed last year.

**Hon. J. Cornell**: Plus 5s.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY**: I refer to the rates, not to exemptions. However, in accordance with the procedure followed since 1933, we are again fixing the commencing figure for persons with dependants at a level

slightly above the basic wage for the South-West Land Division.

Hon. A. Thomson: What is that now?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: At £4 2s., which is the basic wage now, the figure is 5s. in excess of the corresponding exemption provided under the Act of last year. The schedule provides a commencing rate of £200 for income and £4 2s. for salary and wages, which is equivalent to £213. For salary and wages the Bill applies only to earnings from the 1st January onwards, while for income it fixes the rates to be applied for the full year of income, namely, 1937-38. It is necessary, therefore, to tax income earners who receive between £200 and £213 for the half year only to make them conform to the salary and wage-earners. This is to be done by way of a rebate of 50 per cent. in the rate of tax.

As members are aware, the Government's intention is to abolish the financial emergency tax, which was introduced at a time of emergency, and to provide for the collection of the taxation revenue required under the Income Tax Act. The measure seeking to implement this proposal will shortly be brought before this House for consideration. Deductions of emergency tax from salary and wages will cease from the date when the proposed legislation amending the Income Tax Assessment Act comes into force. Members will realise, of course, that the new method of collection will necessarily involve some increase in the Taxation Department's staff and accommodation, and that, even if the Income Tax Assessment Bill be passed almost immediately, some months must elapse before the department's arrangements can be finalised. I am advised that the very earliest date on which the new system can be put into operation will be the 1st July of next year. Meanwhile we have to continue the present financial emergency tax legislation, pending the proclamation of the proposed new part of the Income Tax Assessment Act. The collections for the current financial year are expected to yield £1,100,000 compared with £1,074,561 collected during 1937-38. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.15]: Members will recollect that each session when a Bill of this description has been introduced, I have taken a strong stand regarding exemptions. I have always contended that the

exemption rate should not be too high, and that those persons on the lower rungs of the ladder should contribute at least some small amount in return for the free services rendered to them by the State. At the same time, I have always been opposed to a starting point of 4d. in the pound. I consider that those on the lower rungs should contribute 2d. in the pound. That would amount to a little over £3 per annum for each person, and the payment of such a small sum would not occasion hardship. A very large number of men is concerned, and although the amount obtained from each individual taxpayer would be small, in the aggregate a substantial sum would be received. Apparently, however, the attitude of the Government to exemptions is supported by the House, and because the Council appears to agree with the Government's policy of exempting those on the basic wage, I do not intend to oppose the measure, or to suggest any amendments. I therefore support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—QUALIFICATION OF ELECTORS (LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL).**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

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

*Second Reading.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.19] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is complementary to the measure I have just introduced. It simply provides that the exemption in respect of wage and salary earners with dependants shall be £4 2s. As the Government does not intend to reintroduce the financial emergency tax next year, to provide an exemption figure for income earners in respect of the year 1938-39 is unnecessary. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

## BILL—BUREAU OF INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. A. THOMSON** (South - East) [5.21]: I desire to congratulate the Government on the introduction of this measure, because it is of a constructive type. Furthermore, the establishment of a bureau was one of the recommendations of Mr. Justice Wolff who, as Royal Commissioner, inquired into the youth employment problem. The findings of such a bureau must be very helpful to whatever party may be in power. Moreover, being an independent body, free from political bias or party feeling, it should be able satisfactorily to perform the tasks allotted to it under Part III of the Bill. In order that avenues for the investment of capital and the employment of labour may be found, mutual trust and understanding between capital and labour are essential. A true spirit of co-operation must prevail if the aim of the Government to establish further industries in this State is to be achieved.

I propose to indicate a few of the difficulties such a bureau could investigate—difficulties that have been responsible for the failure of some of our secondary industries. We must recognise that one of the greatest handicaps to the establishment of such industries in Western Australia is the dumping of goods from the Eastern States. I ask members to bear with me while I quote from the fifth report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. On page 40 are set out reasons why Western Australia has to approach the Federal Government for compensation for disabilities due to Federation. The first reason submitted by the Commission as to why Western Australia should receive compensation is—

The internal costs are increasing owing to the establishment of a high protected market within Australia which the primary producers of Western Australia are forced to patronise in view of the constitutional requirements in regard to interstate free trade.

We all realise that our farming industry has had to bear a very heavy burden. The high costs imposed upon the primary producers as a result of the existence of those protected markets could not be passed on by the producers, and meanwhile protection has enabled secondary industries to be built up

in the Eastern States. The Commission in paragraph (3) states—

The development of secondary industries is retarded in Western Australia owing to the inability of manufacturers to compete successfully with the more highly developed industries of Eastern Australia.

That is not the only reason for our inability successfully to compete. Our costs in Western Australia are very much higher. I believe that the workmen in this State are equal to those in any other part of the Commonwealth, and the fault therefore does not lie with them. Other causes operate, and they could be examined by the proposed bureau. As a result of its inquiries the bureau would be able to make recommendations to the Government that might be of considerable value. Another point made by the Commission is—

There is a relative lack of choice of employment as compared with the Eastern States, due to the smaller number of secondary industries.

Previous to the inauguration of Federation and the introduction of the high protection tariff, a number of the companies that had been manufacturing their goods in the Eastern States established branches of their factories in this State, thus providing employment for people in Western Australia. That was done because we had a small tariff on imported goods. When interstate free trade was introduced, those companies closed their Western Australian branches. They folded their tents like the Arabs and silently stole away. That meant there was less employment for men in this State. Many of our disabilities, therefore, are attributable to the fact that the attempt to establish secondary industries has not been as successful as formerly. On page 9 of the Commission's report, under the heading of "Introduction" appears the following—

There is an inevitable tendency towards maladjustment as between Federal and State Governments owing to the impossibility of relating finance to function in the distribution of constitutional powers.

**Hon. G. W. Miles:** Are these the findings of the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

**Hon. A. THOMSON:** Yes. The report continues—

The creation of the Commonwealth as one economic unit leads to concentration and specialisation in certain parts at the expense of others and is thus a factor of maladjustment; and from time to time, with economic depres-

sion, certain weaker States will be an embarrassment to the Commonwealth if not assisted.

That is the considered opinion of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. For those reasons the Commission considers grants are needed under a federal system. I endorse the Commission's conclusions. I say in all sincerity that the factor of maladjustment has seriously embarrassed Western Australia and the people who are looking for employment. The bureau can help in the establishment of new industries. If I thought otherwise, I would not support the Bill. I wish to draw attention to the disabilities that are facing manufacturers in this State. As a result of the recommendations of the bureau, the Government might even find it possible to reduce taxation.

The bureau may be able to submit to the Government, to trade unions, and capitalists generally, information showing that, by co-operation, costs can be reduced so that new capital may be attracted to Western Australia. Suppose a company desired to establish some venture within the Commonwealth. Because Western Australia is a young country and less developed than are most other parts of Australia, the directors might think it worth while to examine the local position. I presume that before they arrived at a definite decision, they would make inquiries as to the rates of taxation. They would find that the taxation in Western Australia was £6 16s. 7d. per head, in Victoria £5 16s. 10d., and in South Australia £6 2s. 9d. From the taxation point of view, Victoria would have the advantage of this State by 19s. 9d. per head, and South Australia would have the advantage by 13s. 10d. per head. The indebtedness of Western Australia per head of the population at the end of 1937 was £203, Victoria £95, and South Australia £181. Victoria, therefore, has an advantage in this respect of £108, and South Australia an advantage of £22 over Western Australia.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The bureau could not alter that.

Hon. A. THOMSON: No, but as an impartial body it may be able to produce such evidence and make such recommendations to the Government as will minimise the difficulty to some extent. I presume that if Mr. Miles wished to invest capital in some new industry, he would make such inquiries as I have indicated. I am endeavouring to show some of the difficulties that capitalists

would have to face on coming to Western Australia.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The bureau might with advantage investigate public expenditure.

Hon. A. THOMSON: My view for many years has been that the Government should establish a public works committee. By this Bill, however, it has submitted something that may be helpful to the State. The figures quoted by Mr. Angelo, and the astounding figures presented by Mr. Bolton with regard to workers' compensation, would convince anyone who wished to establish a secondary industry either in Western Australia, Victoria or South Australia, that he should do so elsewhere than in this State.

The Honorary Minister: There is an effective reply to what you say.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Honorary Minister may remark that if the State Government Insurance Office has a monopoly of that class of business, the rates may be reduced. There is reason to believe that if all workers' compensation business and third-party risks become entirely a Government function, costs may be brought down at least 15 per cent., and that the cost of collecting the fees may be only 1 per cent., should the work be done through the Taxation Department.

I have already referred to the high rates for workers' compensation in this State, and wish now to deal with the basic wage. The Arbitration Court has fixed for the South-West Division the highest basic wage ruling in Australia. South Australia supplies the Eastern Goldfields with a considerable quantity of goods, and is our nearest competitor. The Federal basic wage in South Australia is £3 16s. per week, and the State arbitration rate is £3 14s. In Western Australia the Federal basic wage is £3 16s., and the State rate in the metropolitan area is £4 1s. 1d., on the goldfields £4 12s. 2d., and in the South-West Division £4 3s. 3d. These figures indicate that South Australian factories or industries have an advantage of 7s. per employee over our metropolitan rate, and of 9s. over the South-West Division rate. We who are anxious to see secondary industries established here have so far been unable to prevent this discrimination between the two States. I am not urging that the basic wage should be reduced, but have quoted these figures because they have an important bearing on the position. The bureau will have to examine the figures and, by reason



of being an impartial and independent body, without any political leanings, may be able to suggest some favourable adjustment. Economists are the most impracticable people in the world, but on the evidence of one economist the Arbitration Court increased the basic wage by 5s. 1d. This witness appeared before that tribunal and gave his reasons why the increase should be granted. The court has thus placed an additional burden upon local industry. Its latest adjustment, based on statistics, was an increase of 1s., notwithstanding the effect upon the farmers whose prospects are far from bright and who find it exceedingly difficult to raise money with which to carry on operations. The bureau may be able to prove to the court that such an increase is not in the interests of Western Australians or of the workers. For many years I have asked, "Of what use is it to be awarded £6 a week if you cannot get the opportunity to earn it?" The bureau should be able to make recommendations that will be entitled to consideration.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Do not the employers put forward that sort of evidence themselves?

Hon. A. THOMSON: The employers are biassed in one way and the employees in another. Employers, in conducting their cases before the court, invariably urge that wages should be reduced, and employees generally ask for three times more than they expect to receive. When the decision of the court is given, the parties generally receive just about what they honestly expected to get. In stressing our disadvantages as I have done, I have endeavoured to show that an independent body such as the bureau would have much work ahead of it, and would be able to bring employers and employees together to discuss matters from a national viewpoint. The Minister for Employment, in another place, said that huge sums of money had been lost by Governments and institutions in financing the development of our primary industries. He said it may be that the heavy losses sustained in a direct way have been more than offset by the indirect benefits which have accrued from their development. "For some years it has been recognised," said the Minister, "and is becoming increasingly apparent, that our economy has been developed in a most one-sided manner." Recently I submitted a question to the Leader of the House

with a view to showing the enormous amount of wealth that had been created by primary industry. While we may have irrevocably lost a certain amount of money, nevertheless, as a result of the development of our primary industries, by reason of the people clearing and developing land, we have created substantial centres in the country—towns that to-day are supplying the requirements of the farming community. All this would not have happened had the State not carried out an extensive developmental policy. If we may use it as an illustration, we can also say that the development of our group areas in the South-West has meant a considerable loss to Western Australia, and that the greater proportion of that money was lost mainly because of the incompetence of the Government and the officials administering the scheme.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Due to refusing to listen to good advice.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Exactly. Blunders were made there that were similar to the mistakes in the Eastern States where the penalty had already been paid. This State, however, did not profit by those mistakes. If there had been in existence a bureau such as the Government proposes to constitute under the Bill, it would have been possible to show that the Government was not proceeding on right lines, and members of this House and of another place would have been able to applaud the work of the bureau, which doubtless would have consisted of practical men, because its advice would have been on sound lines. Many responsible officers in the departments drew the attention of the Government to the serious position that would have to be faced, but every warning that was then advanced went unheeded. The then Government had a policy to carry out, and that policy was adhered to. I repeat in all earnestness that if a bureau of the type proposed to be constituted under the Bill had been in existence, attention would have been directed to the serious difficulties that were being faced and public opinion would have been heeded.

I wish again to quote some of the astounding figures that were presented to another place by the Minister—figures dealing with the extensive imports to Western Australia in the year 1937-38. The value of imports in that year reached the colossal sum of £13,893,000, and the most amazing part is that we imported £190,000

worth of butter, £84,000 worth of cheese, and £62,000 worth of fish. Incidentally, when Mr. Angelo referred to the subject of fish last night, members twitted him regarding the failure of some of the companies to which he referred. Many years ago Mr. Angelo advocated bringing people from Great Britain to develop the fishing industry. I, too, submitted such a proposal to the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell. That was soon after my return from England in 1922. My proposal was part and parcel of the migration scheme that was being entered upon. Those of us who come from the Old Country are aware that there are parts of Great Britain where people have been born and bred in the fishing industry. They know no other occupation. One of the principal reasons why most of our fishing ventures in Western Australia, or indeed in Australia, have failed, is that we have attempted to carry on the business with incompetent people. Those people never knew their job, and made the position worse by attempting to carry on operations under Australian conditions.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And with insufficient capital.

Hon. A. THOMSON: We are aware also that the whaling industry and the shark-fishing industry were started, and that in those two industries as well as in the turtle fishing industry large sums of money were invested. All failed, not because there was no material on the coast, but because the undertakings were not carried out in the proper way.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Could not the C.S.I.R. advise on a lot of these matters?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I suggest that the hon. member study the Bill, and also study the work the C.S.I.R. is doing, and then decide whether that body could enter into the ramifications that the body proposed by the Bill will have power to investigate. Moreover, the C.S.I.R. is a Commonwealth institution, and while it performs duties for the State Government, it remains a Commonwealth body and could not make recommendations to assist us in establishing industries in Western Australia. It might say that we could establish certain industries here, but it could not concentrate on what we would require, namely, the establishment of more industries, because, as I have

already said, the functions of the C.S.I.R. are entirely Federal.

To revert now to import figures, bacons and hams were imported last year to the extent of £76,000, and meat to the value of £69,000, and the most surprising item of all is dried and condensed milk, £130,000. Other animal foods were responsible for £180,000, confectionery £171,000, preserved fruits—and we produce some of the finest fruits in the world—£87,000, jams and jellies £126,000, and other vegetables and fruits £550,000. We have spent millions in fostering our primary industries, and yet in 1937-38 the value of those products imported to the State was no less than £1,825,000. All of them could have been produced in Western Australia, and there can be no excuse for the importation of any one of those lines.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Beyond the fact that some people will have a particular brand.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The advancement of the German nation to-day is, I believe, due to its spirited propaganda, in season and out of season, respecting its own products. The bureau proposed to be appointed in this State will be in a happy position. I give credit to Mr. Kenneally who, when Minister for Industries, worked very hard with his committee to encourage the consumption of local products. Mr. Kenneally and his committee were handicapped to a considerable extent by having no funds at their disposal. They worked in a purely honorary capacity, but at the same time achieved a certain amount of success. We have arrived at the stage when the Government must take a hand. Day in and day out we have been drilling into the people that their first duty is to Western Australia, and that local goods must be bought. By insisting on securing locally-produced articles we can increase their sale. The value of goods of all description imported into the State last year was £13,893,000. I agree with the Minister who introduced the Bill in another place when he stated that no citizen was really worthy of the name unless he was prepared to buy locally-produced articles wherever possible.

Let us take the £13,000,000 as a basis. On a conservative estimate we can say that 25 per cent. of that import value represents labour and wages paid outside of Western Australia. Thus we have a fourth of the value of the imports which represents approximately three-and-a-half million pounds.

Averaging the rate of wages paid at £4 per week, this State could provide employment for 16,698 of our own people in the work of producing those commodities. I congratulate the Government and the Minister for Employment particularly on the honest endeavour now being made to accomplish something. It is of no use saying, "The Minister can do it, or the Government can do it." I believe that every Minister, irrespective of the party to which he belongs, is sincere in his desire to bring about an increase in the purchasing power of the people and an increase in the production of the commodities within the State. Even if we could produce only half of the commodities to which I have referred, we could find employment for 8,000 more people in Western Australia instead of providing employment for workers in the other States. People in the Eastern States have not much sympathy for Western Australia. When we draw attention to any of our disabilities, they tell us that we are always crying, begging at the door of the Federal Government, and asking for a special concession for something or other. We can increase employment for our own people, but only by establishing industries. If we could succeed in that direction our loan indebtedness per head of population would come down and we might even be in a position to reduce taxation. I have been dealing entirely with employment in the manufacture of goods.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We will have Jones's jams and other commodities, no matter what happens.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That is because the facts are not properly brought home to the people. I have already spoken about the marvellous effect of the propaganda in Germany. That propaganda was responsible for rebuilding the nation. If we insisted upon our people purchasing local products there would be a noticeable result.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You want a dictator for that.

Hon. A. THOMSON: We want someone to hammer it home day after day. That would have some effect. In the past, whatever work has been done has been carried out in an honorary capacity. Again I should like to quote the remarks of the Minister who introduced the Bill in another place. He said—

The number of men depending upon the Government for employment has been far too great for several years past, and is too great even

to-day. The necessity for providing Government employment for such a large number of people forces the Government to use loan funds in a manner that is less economical than would otherwise be resorted to.

Hon. J. Cornell: Where did the Minister say that?

Hon. A. THOMSON: In his speech.

Hon. J. Cornell: But where did he say it?

Hon. A. THOMSON: In the course of his speech in another place. I suggest to the hon. member that he read the speech, and then he will find out exactly where it was delivered.

Hon. J. Cornell: Where shall I find it? I think the hon. member is quoting from "Hansard."

Hon. A. THOMSON: With all due respect to Mr. Cornell, I am not quoting from "Hansard." Even if I were quoting an extract from "Hansard," which strictly might be against the Standing Orders of this House, we could still exercise a certain amount of commonsense and deal with questions in a practical way. I desire to thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to make these quotations.

The PRESIDENT: I understood the hon. member to say he was not quoting from "Hansard."

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, Sir.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member is quoting from a newspaper.

Hon. A. THOMSON: No, I am not. I desire to repeat an important sentence that I quoted just now—

The necessity for providing Government employment for such a large number forces Governments to use loan funds in a manner less economical than would otherwise be resorted to.

I am delighted that a Labour member should make such a statement, which shows that he realises his responsibility to the State. I wish to commend the Minister for making that statement. He continued—

From every point of view it would be far better if many of those depending upon the Government could obtain employment in private industry.

There is another statement delightful to hear as coming from a member of the Government. We know that it is part of Labour's policy to foster State enterprise. Yet here we have a statement showing that the Minister realises it is time we fostered private

industry and afforded it an opportunity to employ our people. He goes on to say—

More talk about the problem of youth employment, of unemployment, or the problem of unemployed adults is not enough. Unceasingly to call upon Governments to deal with these problems is insufficient.

I commend the Minister also for making that statement, and I congratulate the Government on having realised that it is impossible for the State of Western Australia to carry the whole of its people in governmental activities.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You are turning the House into a mutual admiration society this afternoon!

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have always endeavoured to be fair, and not to offer unjustified criticisms. In this Chamber, as in another place, I have been fearless in my comments on Governments and individual Ministers. I desire to exercise the privilege of congratulating a Government or a Minister when right, instead of merely being what is called a carping critic. I am delighted to find a Labour Minister facing the facts of Western Australia's present position.

Too frequently members of this House are accused of opposing industrial legislation. In opposing it I am sincerely desirous of protecting the interests of the workers from what I consider a broader angle. Many of us who have knowledge of both sides of the fence are just as honestly anxious to protect the interests of the workers as are those who maintain that we are opposed to the workers' interests. Most gratifying to me is the Government's recognition that the success of private industry is essential to the State's well-being. In my opinion, that success is the keystone of the State's prosperity.

I hope in Committee to succeed with one or two amendments. Clause 18 authorises the appointment of a director for a period not exceeding seven years. This requires careful consideration. I agree with Mr. Angelo that a probationary period should be fixed. Furthermore I consider that Parliament should be placed in exactly the same position regarding the gentleman who will occupy so highly important a position as it is relatively to the Commissioner of Railways. When a Commissioner of Railways is selected, his appointment has to be approved by Parliament. I hope that

in the case of this Bill the Government will agree to a similar provision. I also suggest that there should be an indication of the amount of salary which the sponsors of the measure have in mind, and that there should be an estimate of the total cost involved in the passing of the Bill. We should not give the Government—upon the members of which I cast no reflection—an absolute blank cheque in regard to expenditure on the bureau.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The man to be appointed will want paying well. It is no use quibbling about the salary.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I agree with that interjection; but before a director is definitely appointed, at whatever salary may be determined, Parliament should be satisfied that he is the type of man who will make good.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does the hon. member think a good man would submit to a period of probation?

Hon. A. THOMSON: A man who is convinced of his own fitness and feels that he can comply with the conditions laid down will have sufficient confidence in his ability to take the job on. If he lacks that confidence, he is not worthy of the position and should not be appointed. Plenty of men would be only too pleased to have the opportunity of winning their spurs in such a position. I do not suggest any mistrust of the Government in relation to the appointment. I believe the sponsors of the Bill to be actuated by a sincere desire to give effect to the report of Mr. Wolff, now Mr. Justice Wolff. Clause 6 of the Bill provides—

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member is not going through all the clauses. Incidental references may be all right, but a discussion of particular clauses may well be left to the Committee stage.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am merely indicating some suggestions, Mr. President. The Bill provides that in addition to the director there shall be not less than nine members composing the bureau. I think that should read "not more than nine members." Personally I do not think even nine members are necessary. If we phrase it "not less than nine," nine will be appointed. Moreover, we have to bear in mind the power to co-opt men who may be of assistance to

the board. In another place the Minister said—

The greatest hope of providing employment for our young people lies in the direction of substantially increasing our manufacturing operations.

I hope that in the Committee stage ways and means will be found to enable our young people to become skilled in our industries.

I desire to touch briefly on two other subjects. In a recent "West Australian" appeared a statement showing how much Western Australia is behindhand. Mr. G. Ellis, visiting technical instructor of General Motors-Holdens, Ltd., during an address to members of the Perth Legacy Club on the subject of the automotive section of the industries said—

I strongly urge that if a scheme is ever propounded in this State for a thorough training course for coming automotive engineers, you give it every support.

Later he said—

I charge the technical instructional colleges with falling down on their job.

Mr. Ellis was speaking of Australia as a whole.

They have no established scheme by which their men can keep pace with engineering developments year by year, and neither is their equipment up to date. It is no excuse for the Government to plead lack of funds.

The newspaper report continues—

Mr. Ellis could see no scheme in the Australian car industry for making a skilled personnel available . . . He predicted that the shortage of a skilled personnel would be felt acutely within a few years, and it would be a sorry day when Australia had to send abroad for it. Sending abroad for skilled men was quite as likely as it was illogical, considering the number of young men available here for this type of work.

Mr. Ellis also expressed himself as follows—

One of the greatest problems facing the motor industry in Australia to-day was the lack of highly-trained mechanics, probably due to the lack of training of apprentices during the depression years. The position was made more acute by the rapid development in automotive engineering overseas.

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

Hon. A. THOMSON: I had practically concluded my remarks before tea. I was referring to a statement made by Mr. Ellis. I noticed that one other visitor, Mr. Holden, who is interested in the construction of motor bodies, has something to say about the

bureau. He thinks the principle is good, although he does not quite agree with the Bill. I look upon the measure as being entirely non-party. It is for each member to decide whether the proposal is in the interests of the State. Personally, I think it is, and am therefore willing that the Government should be given an opportunity of establishing the bureau. I hope the Minister, when replying, will give some indication of the estimated expenditure. Members should know what salaries the Government proposes to pay to the director and the members of the bureau. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill. I hope it will reach the Committee stage; if it does, I shall place one or two amendments on the notice paper which I believe will, if carried, enable the bureau to function in a broader way than is indicated by the Bill.

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [7.33]: I listened carefully to the Minister's speech when he introduced the Bill, and I have since had a chat with him. I am bound to say that both the speech and the chat have convinced me that he made the best of a bad job. The position in which we find ourselves to-day is due in no small measure to the part played by the Government in the past six years, during which the Government has bolstered up State instrumentalities and trading concerns, while at the same time interfering with private enterprise. Every piece of legislation placed before us this year has for its object the penalising of industry. Now it is proposed that industry shall be further penalised by the appointment of a bureau to recommend what industry shall do. That will not get us anywhere. The Bill proposes to appoint a director of the bureau; but his qualifications are not set out. He is to be appointed for seven years and must, I assume, be a highly-qualified man. Whether he is to be a qualified engineer, a competent business man, or an expert politician is not apparent. Reference is made to a board of nine members to be appointed to the bureau. Their salaries, like that of the director, are to be fixed by the Government. The bureau is to have power to co-opt an unlimited number of persons to assist the members, and the travelling and other expenses of the co-opted persons are to be paid by the bureau.

In the past, we have had recommendations from capable men, but no notice appears to

have been taken of those recommendations. How can we lead ourselves now to believe that, if this bureau makes recommendations, the Government will adopt them? That is beyond my comprehension. The trouble is this—I do not say it with any disrespect—that during the past 15 years our Ministries have included members who were not the most capable men in the party, but were able to obtain sufficient support to get into the Ministry, irrespective of whether they were suited to the portfolio or not. This remark, of course, applies to all Ministries during the period referred to. It is generally admitted that during the one or two terms when Sir James Mitchell was Premier, he included in the Ministry men who he thought would do as he desired them to do; if they did not, things became uncomfortable for them.

We shall never get out of our difficulties by appointing a bureau of this description. We have to get people of the right mind, and a Government that will do the right thing. I tell some business people of Perth, "All you are concerned about is whether the Government will borrow and spend money, so that you can sell galvanised iron and fencing wire. You are not concerned as to whether the money is repaid or not." That is a wrong outlook from the public standpoint. If we are to achieve any good, we must get the public to think right and get a Government that will do likewise. If this bureau is established, what will be left for Ministers to do? I am at a loss to understand. In pre-Federation days, Sir John Forrest had four Ministers, each receiving a salary of £1,000 a year; he himself received £1,200, making the total £5,200 a year. When we federated, we handed over to the Commonwealth three big departments—the Customs, post and telegraphs, and the army and navy, such as they were. To-day, notwithstanding the transfer of those departments to Federal control, we have seven Ministers, of whom six receive £1,500 a year each, or £9,000 a year. The Premier receives £1,700 a year, and the Honorary Minister £600 a year, making a total of £11,300 a year, as against £5,200.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The Honorary Minister does not draw a salary.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes. The Honorary Minister is paid, just as we are.

The Honorary Minister: I wish I did draw a salary.

Members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind the hon. member that he is discussing the Bill, and I would like him to connect his remarks.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I connect my remarks in this way: I was pointing out that we ought to have enough men in the Ministry capable of dealing with the problems of the State. We should not appoint an outside body to make recommendations to Ministers that they may or may not accept. I trust I have established the connection. Think of what Ministers did in pre-Federation days. I shall mention two great works, the Coolgardie Water Scheme, and the Fremantle Harbour.

Hon. T. Moore: And the Fremantle dock!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes, and the Geraldton harbour works.

Hon. T. Moore: That is a good work.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The works I mentioned were completed without the aid of an advisory committee or bureau. We had Ministers of capacity in those days who tackled such jobs themselves. We shall never accomplish as much as was done in those days by the appointment of this bureau. If the director and nine members are appointed, what is to become of the permanent heads of our various departments? Have they been weighed in the balance and found wanting? I think not. The heads of our departments are men of capacity; they are honest men, men with whom anyone would be pleased to associate. Are they not capable of making recommendations to Ministers? Must some outside body do so? We have recently heard much about the development of the North. Could we have two more capable men than are Mr. Tindal and Mr. Drake Brockman, who know all about the North and what to do and what not to do there? Are they to be superseded by this proposed bureau, which—I impress upon members—can only make recommendations that may be adopted or rejected?

Apart from that aspect, we have in power a Government that will not enforce our laws. I mention the betting laws and licensing laws, apart from several others that I could enumerate. Acts of Parliament passed by the Legislature of this country are set aside and ignored by the Government. Is such a Government likely to accept the recommendations of the bureau—this Government, which is a law unto itself, and will continue

to be until the electors have the opportunity of putting another party in power?

Something might be said in favour of the Bill if it set out what the qualifications of the director should be. There is no reference at all to that matter. I emphasise this point because the intention is to appoint the director for seven years and it will rest with the Government as to what his qualifications shall be and what salary he shall receive. We had a somewhat similar Bill submitted to us a few years ago—a Bill to amend the Agricultural Bank Act. A similar proposal was put over us on that occasion; we were to get the right man and pay him the right salary. We were led to believe that, at all events, an expert banker would be appointed to the position. But after the Government had got the Bill through Parliament, we know what happened. A political appointment was made for seven years at a salary of £2,000 a year. In view of those happenings, I ask members to be careful what they do with this measure. If a bureau is to be established, and a director is to be appointed, this House should satisfy itself that the right man will be obtained for the job. Otherwise we should not consent to the Bill. Mr. Thomson, for some unexplained reason, has fallen all over the Government. He has found nothing but good in the Government; he has nothing bad to say of it. He will hear all about that when the general election occurs next year.

Hon. A. Thomson: You will allow me to be fair to the sponsors of the Bill without attributing any other motive?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is all I ask.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When we consider this appointment, we can only judge the Government by its actions in the past. Take the Lotteries Commission: that shows political appointments, with the exception of one member, a returned soldier. Take the Licensing Court: political appointments again. So one could continue. Surely when the Government has done those things in the past, we can only expect it to act similarly in future. That is the view I take. Coupled with that is the fact that Labour has been in office for six years. If I remember rightly, youth employment was the cry six years ago and again three years ago, but practically nothing has been done. Now, to cover up the tracks, as it were, the Government proposes to appoint this bureau, go

to the country and say to the electors, "Look what we have done. We have appointed a bureau with a director, and everything will be all right." I object to a Bill of this sort being placed before Parliament on the eve of a general election. The clear duty of the Government, after having fallen down on the job for six years, is to take its gruel. Labour could go to the country and say, "This is what we propose to do. Send us back and we will give effect to legislation of this kind." Then the Government would be entitled to put up a Bill with the objects set forth in this measure.

If this Bill passes the second reading, I would respectfully suggest that we include certain amendments. One is that no member of Parliament, past or present, shall be qualified for the position of director. Members can ask themselves whether they know of a member of Parliament, past or present, fit for the position.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is a reflection on Parliament, anyhow.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is not a reflection on Parliament. If the Government will not carry out the laws that Parliament enacts, I should not expect the Government to accept the recommendations of the bureau. We might include another amendment to show whether the Government is genuinely concerned about the industries of this State. This amendment should provide that the measure shall not be assented to before the 1st July of next year, and that no appointment of any description shall be made before that date. Then, if the Government survived the elections, it could go straight ahead. If not, the incoming Government would have to decide whether the measure should be assented to or otherwise.

I repeat that this bureau will only be able to make recommendations and it will be optional for the Government to carry out those recommendations or reject them. In view of our experience, do members think that a Labour Government would take action, as suggested by Mr. Thomson, if the Workers' Compensation Act was found to be penalising industry? We do not want a director of a bureau of industry to tell us that. Mr. Bolton told us sufficient yesterday evening to justify some action being taken. Yet we have Mr. Angelo and Mr. Thomson telling us to support the establishment of a bureau because the director will make recommendations to the Minister

and the Minister will give effect to them. The whole thing is so much eyewash, and I have yet to be convinced that anything worth while will be accomplished. Our experience would be the same under a National-Country Party Government. If something were recommended by the bureau that would penalise industries, the Government would refuse to adopt the recommendation. A Labour Government would not grant relief to the employer and a National Government would not tolerate the imposition of any more burdens on the employer, and thus any recommendation would find its way into the waste-paper basket.

Hon. J. Cornell: My reading of the Bill is that the bureau is only to collect statistics. That is about all the power it will have.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Craig said he was prepared to give the bureau a trial. I hope it will not be a seven years' trial. Considerable damage can be done in the space of seven years if a wrong appointment is made. A good many of us have tried something once that we are not prepared to try a second time. I want to know exactly where we stand regarding this measure before we start. We have had various Royal Commissions appointed by the Government consisting of men who have done their job. How many of the recommendations submitted have been given effect to? Few, if any. If the Government appoints a Royal Commission with special qualifications and will not carry out its recommendations, what possibility is there of the recommendations of the bureau being adopted? We are told that thousands of pounds would have been saved in the South-West if we had had a bureau of this kind. In the early stages of the Peel Estate, the Government was advised that to continue with that settlement would be a waste of money. I was instrumental in securing the appointment of a select committee which was subsequently converted into a Royal Commission. Every man on the Commission knew something about the job. As a result of our first visit to the Peel Estate, we presented a preliminary report, pointing out that 70 houses and 70 dairy farmers had been located on an area consisting of 8,000 acres of land—120 acres of sandplain to each. We recommended that those people should be put upon good land and not allowed to waste their time and energy there. That was a special report submitted at once, and no notice was taken of it. We

subsequently submitted a report that would have saved the State a million of money on the Peel Estate expenditure, and the Government went on spending it until Mr. Troy came in and set to work to straighten matters out. On the Peel Estate the Government had board after board. A board was appointed for one purpose and if the recommendations did not suit the Minister, the board was disbanded and another board was appointed. Ultimately, the Government got a board to carry out its wishes. That was not a Labour Government; it was a Government comprising the other parties. If I thought the establishment of a bureau would alter that position in any way, I would give the Bill the same blessing as Mr. Thomson gave it this afternoon.

Hon. H. Tuckey: In that case it was so bad that a board was not necessary.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: True, the proposed bureau is the outcome of a report by a Royal Commissioner. But that Royal Commissioner has had legal training. I have not met many lawyers who knew anything about business. I do not include the Royal Commissioner who prepared the recommendations on which this Bill is based. Some solicitors do not seem to know much about law. In all my experience I have met only three business lawyers in this State, one of whom was a distinguished member of this House.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Thank you.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Angelo yesterday broke out in a fresh place. He referred to the Auditor General's report and to the money he considered could have been saved had a bureau of this description been in operation earlier. I do not think it would have made any difference. Governments have not taken any notice of Royal Commissions or boards in the past, nor are they likely to do so in the future.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Perhaps if a more capable Minister had been in office at the time, the position would have been saved.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That may be so. Governments come and Governments go, but there is not much difference between them, so far as I can see. They do not attempt to arrive at a proper conception of the public point of view; nor do they attempt, in my opinion, to do what is right.

Mr. Angelo referred to what has been done in connection with the Carnarvon freezing works. Seeing that he dealt with



that undertaking, I claim the right to discuss that proposition as well. A meeting of pastoralists was convened in Perth, and I was in attendance. I was appointed chairman of the meeting, and I did my best to persuade those who attended not to go on with the project. I could not see that there was any possibility of success, and I told the pastoralists why. They would not accept my point of view.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: I suppose they called you a pessimist.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not know what they called me, but they would have saved a lot of money had they listened to me. Mr. Angelo informed members that the proposition was to can mutton.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: That was the first one.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I can inform Mr. Angelo and other members of the House that, strange to say, the public are not too partial to canned mutton; they prefer canned beef. Even when they are prepared to buy canned mutton, the best mutton is necessary for canning and not any old ewe. The pastoralists proposed to kill and freeze, and I asked them, "How are you going to get your frozen mutton away? Where are the boats with sufficient freezer space?" They intimated that they intended getting the Singapore boats to ship the frozen mutton to Singapore or to Fremantle. I knew there was only limited space for the conveyance of frozen meat, and I took the trouble to see a ship's husband, Mr. Clark, and asked him whether his company would increase its refrigerated space on the Singapore boats. He replied, "No, certainly not. I will tell you why we won't. We are here under sufferance. The Commonwealth Government may order us off the coast at any time; so we could not embark upon huge expenditure in providing additional freezing space in anticipation of being left on the coast when we might be pushed off any day." Then the pastoralists said they would get it distributed by means of overseas ships. I told them that overseas ships would not get within miles of the Carnarvon jetty to begin with. I also pointed out to them that they would have to convey the frozen meat from the works to the jetty in insulated trucks, and from the jetty to the ship. Once frozen meat goes off the freeze and becomes soft, the refrigerating engineer on a ship would never give

the shippers a clean bill of lading because his responsibility is to receive the frozen meat in good order and to deliver it in good order. I told the pastoralists that if they got their frozen mutton to London under those conditions, they would have to take what the buyers in London chose to offer. Then they went further into the matter, and decided upon insulated lighters. They proposed to take the meat from the works to the end of the jetty in insulated trucks and from the end of the jetty to the ship some miles off-shore in insulated lighters. When they went into the question of costs they found it would involve an enormous expenditure. No body of men ever received better advice, although I say so myself, than did those pastoralists, but they would not take any notice of me, and they went on with the proposition.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: They had signed the contract.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They had not signed the contract. They wanted me to carry on as chairman, but I would not do so.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: You were a prophet without honour in your own country.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Auditor General's report contains a reference to the manganese proposition. That scheme was endorsed by a man who, I think, had he lived, would have been qualified to fill the position of director of this bureau. I refer to the late Mr. W. N. Hedges. He took an active part in the manganese proposition and he lost a lot of money in consequence. He thought it was all right, and so did everyone else. On the other hand, the overhead expenses at this end and the collapse of the market at the other end were two factors he could not foresee. The man who will be in charge of the proposed bureau will not be able to foresee such tendencies as was indicated in the case of the manganese scheme, whereas business men who continually watch trade in its various avenues can, and do, succeed in their operations. Mr. Hedges submitted a scheme for the development of the South-West that would have saved Western Australia millions of pounds, but the Government did not approve of it.

Hon. L. Craig: Do you know what his recommendations were?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I know he proposed to clear the land by contract.

Hon. L. Craig: I saw a number of them, and they would make you weep.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I saw a lot of settlers down in that part of the State trying to clear land and put up fences under conditions that would make the hon. member weep.

Hon. J. Cornell: One sensible suggestion Mr. Hedges advanced was that no man should be settled on a holding before a water supply had been provided.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Under his scheme clearing was to be done by contract and water supplies provided so that the settler who took up a holding could start producing straight away. That scheme represented recommendations from an outside person, and his recommendations were turned down by the Government, just as those that may be furnished by the bureau will probably be turned down.

Hon. A. Thomson: The Government would have to justify its action to the House if it turned down a recommendation of the bureau.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Why would it have to justify itself?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We have reached the position where so long as the Government has a majority of one in the Legislative Assembly, no question of justification arises; the Government simply carries on. Then when a general election is due, something like this Bill is put up to sidetrack the public.

To revert once more to the position of the Carnarvon meatworks and the Singapore boats, to give members another indication how the proposition was inquired into, I may mention that it was suggested the Singapore boats could go alongside the jetty at Carnarvon and ship the frozen mutton for Fremantle, where it would be transhipped to London or else taken to Singapore and thence transhipped to London. The difficulty was that small quantities only could be shipped away by those boats and tremendous expense would be involved at Carnarvon if effect were given to the scheme. On the other hand, the pastoralists were told that if they wanted frozen mutton shipped from Carnarvon to Fremantle, the Singapore boats would have to charge the full storage rates from Singapore to Fremantle, because the chambers would have to remain empty from Singapore to Carnarvon so that the meat could be taken aboard there. I am also bound to

mention that there was another section at Carnarvon that was not interested in the freezing works, but was peculiarly interested in the expenditure of money there. A large amount of money was spent there that should not have been expended.

The Honorary Minister: The banana industry has been established.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That industry may be all right, but I have had a look at the Auditor General's report, and I notice he has something to say about the banana industry. I will leave that matter for another time. What interests me is that if there are all these sound proposals awaiting development in Western Australia, and if there are so many sound opportunities to be availed of, why has not some business man of Australia or of Perth commenced developing or producing on a large scale? The answer to that question is that, although there is any amount of money available in the banks and elsewhere in Perth to-day, the shrewd business man is not prepared to put his capital into industries that depend upon labour for profits. Members can think that out for themselves. Business people are not prepared to put their money into propositions that depend upon labour for their profits, because even when the Arbitration Court fixes wages and conditions we have a Government that intervenes, and has intervened, to upset the court's decision. That is what concerns the business people of Western Australia, and I do not see how the establishment of the bureau will overcome that difficulty.

I admit there are opportunities here, but I have indicated the difficulty. No one knows when he is likely to be attacked. I understand that some years ago McKay, of the Sunshine harvester concern, was prepared to instal a plant and manufacture for the requirements of Western Australia. An agreement was desired that the men employed would operate under piecework conditions as obtained in the factories in the Eastern States. That agreement was never concluded, and the McKay concern was not established here. To use an everyday expression, the carcass is here but the bones have been picked bare by taxation, the imposition of workers' compensation payments, and so forth! Men who otherwise would be anxious to commence manufacturing here are not prepared to do so. If I could see that the Bill would achieve anything along those lines, I would have something to say

in its favour. On the contrary, surely we must judge the Government by the appointments it has made in the past. On that basis must we decide what the future appointments may be? If we review the past actions of the Government, then we can decide what its future actions are likely to be, and I need not enumerate what has been done in the past. I honestly believe the same course will be pursued in the future. I do not consider that the government of the country will be much better unless we have the public thinking right and the Government doing right. If the Bill could make the Government do right, it would have my wholehearted support, but the only provision it contains is that recommendations shall be made by the bureau that the Government may accept or ignore as it thinks fit.

Increased population is desired by Mr. Craig. We all want it. There are only two means of obtaining it. One way is to bring migrants to this country. If industries are to be established on a large scale we must have properly trained men, and we are not training men to-day. If, however, we introduce trained labour into Australia, we are likely to find ourselves up against some powerful organisation. I cannot perceive much hope of our breaking down that opposition. The other alternative is more babies and, so far as I can judge, the great majority of our women folk are not inclined to have babies. This bureau will not help in that direction; it will provide neither increased population nor increased production. I do not like the Bill, because I think it is unlikely to do anything except lead to a lot of unnecessary expense and to set up another buffer between the public and the Minister. The proposed bureau will never get us anywhere and I propose to vote against the second reading.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.18]: The Bill is said to have been introduced for the purpose of improving the conditions of the people. In other words, it is designed to provide for the good government of the State. But when I look through the Bill I cannot find anything in it that will assist the Government in any way. The Bill does not make provision for the Government to obtain any more assistance than it is able to secure at the present time without an appeal to Parliament. The Government can assist industries without this

Bill; and, without coming to Parliament, has the power to exercise all the functions suggested for the proposed bureau. Clause 27, the main clause of the Bill, defines the powers and functions of the bureau. Curiously enough, all the powers of the bureau are subject to the directions of the Minister. The first words of the clause are, "Subject to the directions of the Minister the powers and functions of the board shall be—." The bureau, therefore, will be able to do nothing unless the Minister directs it. So far as I can judge, the Minister may direct the bureau while it is actually doing things. He has complete and absolute control. He is to be the chairman and the bureau cannot act without his direction. The fact has been mentioned that industries may require money. I would like to refer members to Section 24 of the Industries Assistance Act, Subsection 1 of which reads—

It shall be lawful for the Colonial Treasurer to render financial assistance by making advances, or guaranteeing the repayment of advances to be made, to any persons engaged in mining or any other industry, if it is proved to his satisfaction that in the interests of the State such assistance should be given, and that it is not practicable for the applicant to obtain assistance through the ordinary financial channels.

That section epitomises the whole of this Bill, and gives greater powers than are provided in the Bill because the section I have read enables the Government to render assistance immediately. The Industries Assistance Act came into force in 1915, and has been in operation for 23 years and during that time various Governments have advanced money to assist different industries. I presume that full and complete inquiries have been made before money has been advanced. All the Bill provides is that inquiries shall be made. For some reason or other the Government says, "We cannot make inquiries; we must have a board to do it."

If members will study Clause 27 of the Bill they will find that every paragraph sets out as a function of the bureau what is really a duty of the Government, namely to foster existing industries, to interpret statistical and other essential facts, to obtain from Government departments certain information, and so on. Every paragraph sets out in detail what is part of the ordinary everyday duty of Cabinet. The suggestion has been

made that the bureau will prevent waste. I do not know how. Mr. Holmes has dealt fully with that matter. I would point out that all the bureau can do will be subject to the direction of the Minister. It may advise the Minister, but if he is a strong man, he will do things without seeking the advice of some understrapper. He will do the job himself. He may, if he is wise—and no doubt a strong man would be wise—fortify himself by obtaining information from the proper quarters. He will not be likely to wait for an inquiry to be held in camera, go through all the evidence that the proposed bureau will take, and then wait for a report from the bureau. He will use his own judgment and his own knowledge of a particular subject. If the matter is highly technical, he will obtain highly technical advice. To secure the advice of a really good man might involve a considerable amount of money, but that sort of thing has been done in the past without a Bill of this kind. I would refer to the Fremantle harbour as one example. A bill of this description is not required to enable the Government to undertake that kind of work.

One clause of the Bill provides in effect that the Minister, instead of the Government, may appoint a Royal Commission. We know very well that a Royal Commission is virtually appointed by a Minister because the recommendation of a Minister is presumably accepted by a Government and the Governor-in-Council then appoints the man or men selected. But for some reason or other, this particular clause definitely sets out that the Minister may appoint someone to make inquiries and to have all the powers and authority of a Royal Commission.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You know the reason for that. At present a Royal Commission reports to the Governor.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The whole Bill is designed to aid the Minister by providing for a bureau to do a job the Minister himself should do. No provision is made for any member of the public to see the reports that the bureau makes. What the bureau is to do, under Clause 33, is to give a summary of the work done each year. According to that clause the director of the bureau at the end of each financial year will make a report containing a summary of the work done and the researches and investigations made by or for the bureau or for other

purposes under the measure during the preceding year. All these reports will be matters to be dealt with by the Minister. One can readily understand that if a report were adverse to the wishes of the Minister, the Minister would probably not act upon it. The Minister has such a hold over the bureau that it will be rendered practically useless.

The Bill is entirely innocuous except that it adds to the expense of government. The reason for this desire on the part of the Government to create another organisation at the end of its term of office I do not know. I have a vivid recollection of what happened at the end of the last Parliament. A position was created, carrying a very handsome salary, and a former Minister of the Crown was appointed to it. I sincerely hope that if this Bill is passed, that action will not be repeated. There is nothing to prevent its being done; the Government has been perfectly within its rights in making such appointments as have been made. I do not like the idea of giving the Government power to create a bureau that will do work that Ministers themselves should be capable of doing through their executive officers. The Government has all the advice in the world at its disposal and the funds to pay for it; and there is no necessity for this Bill. If a matter of some political significance is to be investigated, is the Minister likely to seek the advice of the bureau? Certainly not, if he thinks that advice will be adverse. We have heard of Governments—and I am not now referring to the present Government—doing certain works on the eve of an election in order to obtain the votes of people in that electorate so that it may remain in power. That has happened in the past and it could happen again if this Bill became law.

Member: Those were the bad old days.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That sort of thing could still happen. The Bill will not prevent any waste. All the bureau would be able to do would be to collect and collate evidence subject to the direction of the Minister. He could even go so far as to instruct the bureau as to what witnesses it should call. The bureau is not to be allowed to publish anything. Therefore the meetings will be in camera.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It may be a secret service institution.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It can become anything; though I do not know about its

being a secret service organisation. I have no objection to meetings being held in camera because certain matters might have to be discussed that should be kept secret. That can be done in a more efficacious and expeditious manner by the Minister and his responsible officers than it could be done by the members of the proposed bureau. This Bill will merely create another department and will relieve Ministers of their responsibility. It represents a very serious admission by the Government of its inability to govern the country in respect to all those things set down in Clause 27. Being unable to do those things itself, the Government seeks to create a bureau to carry them out. I wish to read portions of the speech delivered by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) when Leader of the National Party, on the 29th September, 1936. He said—

The only sound foundation for any community to base its continued existence on is the wealth produced by the industry which it engages in from day to day, distributed on some equitable basis amongst all its citizens . . . During the year ended 30th June, we imported from the Eastern States goods to the value of £10,579,000. We exported to the Eastern States goods to the value of £1,496,000. Thus there was on a balance of trade a loss of over £9,000,000 on the part of the people of the State. Considerably more than half the total represents goods which under favourable conditions could be grown and/or manufactured or supplied within the State.

This is very like the speech that was made in another place. One almost feels that it must have been before Cabinet and that, to implement the ideas contained in the speech, Cabinet decided to frame this measure. Apparently, however, the speech was misunderstood. The hon. member went on to refer to certain items that were being imported, and, continuing his speech, said—

In fact, it needs only a casual perusal of any list of the goods imported to be fully satisfied that at the very least goods to the value of £7,000,000 of £10,579,000 imported during last year could be produced locally. The value of the industrial output of the secondary industries of Western Australia is to-day £1,000,000 less than it was ten years ago, and the gross value of Western Australian production (leaving out of account mining) is £4,600,000 less to-day than it was ten years ago.

It can safely be assumed that if we reached the point of supplying from Western Australian sources and of Western Australian manufacture £7,000,000 worth of £10,579,000 worth of goods imported last year, this would

mean the distribution in Western Australia directly and indirectly of at least £2,000,000 in wages, or enough directly and indirectly to keep over 10,000 workers in full-time employment at a wage sufficient to provide reasonable comforts. In fact, assuming no increase in our industrial population, it would be sufficient to solve the unemployed problem.

The real obstacle in the path is the futility of small and financially weak industrial concerns in Western Australia attempting to compete with the large and financially strong industrial concerns in the Eastern States. It is the financial weakness of local enterprises which under the provisions of the Federal Constitution, have to meet the impact of competition from other States absolutely without any protective agencies, that foredooms such enterprises to perdition.

What I commend to this party for its consideration and examination; what I commend to the public of this State for its determination, is the abandonment of the present policy of living from hour to hour, of drifting aimlessly from year-end to year-end, and that it should embrace in lieu thereof a great constructive policy and devote all its resources to making that policy a success. That policy is to create a great public trust, as strong financially as resort to our very last penny can make it, and to use the resources of this trust to supply the financial sinews to all approved industries in Western Australia.

Of course the money might conceivably be thrown away or wasted, but it would also be administered with prudence, and at the same time with all the initiative required. In many cases a mere standing behind an industry of the trust without the expenditure of a single penny would be sufficient. In other cases it might be that only generous financial support would produce a beneficial result. Whatever might be the conduct of affairs which the moment called for, the trust must be sufficiently strong to meet all demands upon it.

That is what the Industries Assistance Act allows. These comments were made two years ago.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No election was pending then?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: No.

Hon. T. Moore: The hon. member was a Minister for some time. It is a wonder he did not do something.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Very often members overlook the conditions prevailing when the last National-Country Party Government was in power. Since then the revenue of the State has increased out of all knowledge.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And the taxation, too.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, and the Government has borrowed a great deal of money. It has had a great facility for spending money but, if I can help it, no

money will be spent in connection with this Bill. For the last five years Ministers have devoted themselves to matters of minor importance. Had they devoted their time to major matters those things that are referred to in the Bill might have been accomplished.

Hon. T. Moore: The member for Nedlands did not suggest in his speech that the Government should do anything.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: He said we should go to our last penny to do it.

Hon. T. Moore: He did not say the Government should do it.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: He was not in office. He set out what the National Party would do. Apparently the Government found it had its hands full, and desired to pass some of the work on to this bureau. It should have devoted all its time and attention to obtaining such advice as is available in the departments, and to securing from outside sources advice that was not available within governmental circles. How strange that the Government should now admit that it cannot do what it ought to do without the aid of this new organisation, and how extraordinary a sign of weakness that it should bring down this measure within a few months of the general election! The Bill will serve only to create another job for someone and fulfil the time-honoured slogan "spoils to the victors." I can see no need for the expenditure on the appointment of a director. His duties as set out in the Bill include such matters as the examination of inventions. The Government can secure most of the assistance it requires from members of the Civil Service, and if necessary can obtain the advice of outside experts on other matters. I submit there is no need for the Bill.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [8.42]: It is refreshing to be able to discuss something of a non-party nature.

Hon. G. Fraser: The debate sounds like it!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Bill has been severely criticised by members of the Labour Party in another place, and that justifies my remark that this is a non-party measure, and should be discussed on its merits. I have a great admiration for the speech made by Mr. Thomson. He has frequently referred to the dereliction of duty on the part of the Government in respect of youth employment. In view of his opinions, the

hon. member could not have spoken otherwise than he did. I had the pleasure of listening to a speech made at luncheon to-day by Mr. Holden, a member of the Legislative Council of South Australia, and one of the visiting delegates to the Congress of Chambers of Manufactures. He said he had attended a luncheon given by the Government on the preceding day, and had met the Premier and his colleagues, and discussed this particular Bill with the Minister for Industries. He made some kindly references to the Minister and to his sincerity. I have read the special brochure issued by the Minister, and the reports of speeches made in another place. I feel that the Minister is absolutely sincere in his desire, even at this late stage of the regime of the Labour Government, to do something for local industry. The Government can certainly go to the people with the slogan "Something attempted, nothing done."

When listening to Mr. Parker I was reminded of a statement made by the Premier. Let me say with all respect to the hon. member that the Minister would not dare to do what he suggests. Whether advice was given by the bureau or not, the Minister would do what the Premier, his leader, told him to do. He would carry out the instructions and the policy laid down by the Triennial Labour Conference which is held in Beaufort-street every three years. If I disagree with Mr. Parker on that, I am 100 per cent. with him in his contention that there is not the slightest necessity to take up the time of Parliament with this Bill, for the good reason, as stated by him, that we have a Minister for Industries. What does that mean? Is it just an empty phrase or is it really something that has substance? Mr. Holmes just now looks the picture of contentment after having delivered pearls of wisdom. I can remember many years ago the slogan, "Vote for J. J. Holmes." That was when he was a Minister and when he represented North Fremantle. Every man then was expected to do his duty and to vote for Mr. Holmes. Mr. Holmes is a man of wide business experience, and various Governments in the State have had the benefit of the advice of men like Mr. Holmes, who have been in business and have made a success of it. But not much consideration appears to be given to any such advice that may have been offered. If Governments had wanted to do something, not only in the

interests of the metropolitan area, but in the interests of the State generally, they always had ample opportunity to do it. I should like to be permitted to quote from the "Primary Producer" of the 29th September—

Last year the State Government had at its spending command four million pounds more than the Government of the day possessed in 1931-32 and still there was insufficient money to go round. And, although even more money is expected to be obtained during the current financial year, the Government has outlined a programme of spending which will more than account for every penny, loan and revenue, to be collected.

In the story of Ministerial optimism which the Treasurer gave to Parliament in his Budget speech, there are some very marked deficiencies. For instance, a few days after he had presented his estimates, and had expressed gratification "to note that the number of persons engaged in secondary industries, calculated on a percentage basis, is greater now than it was in the peak year (1929) of our boom period," the Chief Secretary informed Parliament that the number of persons who received sustenance or other unemployment relief during the past four months was as follows: May, 6,574; June, 6,634; July, 6,627; August, 6,681.

The only conclusion to be drawn from those figures is that although private enterprise has absorbed more men in secondary industries than at any time since 1929, the Government has so far fallen down on its job that it still has to pay sustenance to over six thousand people each month, despite the fact that it received and spent within last year a total of £13,000,000—four millions more than the Government of 1931-32 had to spend.

The Government had the money available but failed to do that which every Government in the Commonwealth, as well as throughout the Empire, has done, namely, to put in hand an active building programme. Everywhere throughout the Empire Governments have concentrated on the building of homes. All the present Government in Western Australia has been able to do is to bring down a hardy annual in the form of a Fair Rents Bill and, by the way, I supported that Bill because I considered that in some instances it would have afforded relief. We were told by some members in this House the Bill would have had just the opposite effect it was intended to have. I supported it, however, because it would have provided easement for some people. We in this State have everything we need with which to build homes for the people, and it has been said by men that

know more about this than I do, that nothing creates so much employment as a building programme. The Government, however, has failed to do anything in that direction.

Hon. G. Fraser: This House would not allow the Government to do it.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: In this House I read extracts from a speech made by a Labour member in the Federal Parliament regarding what was done by the Government of New South Wales, and I was repeatedly asked by the Chief Secretary what that had to do with the subject under discussion.

The Chief Secretary: I was right, too.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Chief Secretary thinks he was right. The Government is now, at the end of the session, endeavouring to increase the capital of the Workers' Homes Board. Really, it has taken the Government six years to wake up to the need for the Workers' Homes Board to extend its building programme. Only recently I asked a question in this House as to the number of workers' homes built on the Murchison goldfields compared with the number on the Kalgoorlie goldfields. The reply I received was that none had been built. We were told that the mining companies had built homes for their employees. An important question that the present Government has failed to tackle is that of child endowment. If we give people money to spend, they will surely spend it.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Where will the Government get it?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Where does the hon. member get his butter?

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Not from you.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: May I refer to a valuable industry that we have in the Geraldton district—the tomato industry. I am pleased to be able to say that no fewer than 150,000 cases of tomatoes have recently been sent from Geraldton to the Eastern States. Thus it will be seen that we in Geraldton have something that we can dispose of to the wise people of the East. But when we ask the Government to let us have the services of an officer from the Agricultural Department so that a little supervision might be exercised over the product about to be exported, we are told that we can have the services of an officer provided we pay his expenses. Surely that is paltry. When

it is a question of encouraging an industry such as that to which I have referred, and which brings us money from the Eastern States, we are treated by the Government in the manner to which I have just referred.

Reverting to factories, I obtained from the Minister's speech these figures: In 1929 we had 2,422 factories employing 26,660 people. In 1931 there was a drop in the number of factories to 2,382, and also a fall in the number of employees to 19,461. In 1937, however, the figures jumped up to 2,848 factories and 27,630 employees. That shows that we are improving and I consider that if the Minister for Industries desires to do more, he has the required power and authority. In our anxiety to settle the wheat lands of the State, we were inclined to go a little too fast. Now we are paying the penalty for it. We have no wish to find similar mistakes being made in the establishment of our secondary industries. The Commonwealth delegation that returned from the Old Country a little time back insisted that it was necessary for us to concentrate more and more upon the development and expansion of our secondary industries. There can be no doubt about the wisdom of following that course. We are all agreed it is necessary it should be done. I am wondering why the present Government has not adopted the policy followed in many countries of the world of assisting a movement that has long passed its initial stages, and has proved successful—I refer to the co-operative movement. May I ask members to bear with me while I read this brief extract—

#### Preparing for a Great Occasion.

In 1944 many world countries will celebrate the centenary of the registration of the Co-operative Society of the Rochdale Pioneers. In the British "Co-operative News" its former editor appeals for a demonstration worthy of the event. He asks that "it should be the grandest thing in co-operative history; a thanksgiving festival."

In writing on this theme he points out that the Rochdale movement for co-operation has developed until at the present day in the United Kingdom it has given into the power of the masses the direction and control of trade amounting to nearly £100,000,000 per year: the regulation of the wages (in harmony with the trade unions) of 320,000 workers by hand and brain; and made them the owners of capital resources amounting to more than £260,000,000. All this comes through societies in which the principle of one member one vote

holds, while the whole operation yields the financial return of £33,800,000 to the 8,000,000 men and women who have taken advantage of this means of mutual aid and service.

The other instance is a strikingly different nature. Fifty members of the British Medical Association, who had been attending the annual conference of that association at Plymouth, visited the premises of the co-operative society of that town to inspect the pasteurising plant at its dairy and to take a look over the model farm that it runs. At the dairy the party of doctors witnessed the entire process of preparing 50,000 gallons of milk for distribution, after which they proceeded to the model farm where more than sixty cows were being milked simultaneously by machinery.

At a subsequent reception the president of the society informed the visiting medical men that during school term time between 10,000 and 11,000 Plymouth school children are supplied by the co-operative with bottles of milk containing one-third of a pint at a half-penny each. This is not a profit-making service, but is regarded as a humanitarian one, and during holidays those children who cannot get away and still need the milk, of whom there are 2,000, have it distributed to them by members of the Co-operative Women's Guild, who have undertaken that task voluntarily.

In the United States, Japan, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and India, great things have been accomplished for the masses by the fostering of the great co-operative movement. Here we have something to which the great Labour movement could have held out a helping hand during the past few years. Why did the Government not do so? It is pertinent to ask that question. I do not speak of the co-operative movement as applied to farming only; there are many other directions in which the Government could have shown initiative and a desire to improve the lot of the people instead of trying to develop new-fangled ideas that were not likely to be successful. I wonder whether members are aware of these figures? At the risk of incurring the displeasure of members I ask them to bear with me for just a while. We cannot hear certain facts too often. As a Western Australian born I consider that we do not show loyalty to this State as we should do, and as we could afford to do. If we did our duty in that respect, Western Australia would not last year have imported from the Eastern States some £13,500,000 worth of goods, as the Minister has informed us. However, I can alter the picture somewhat by quoting the latest official figures on the subject, for the year



1936-37. Those figures of exports from Western Australia to Eastern States are—

	£
Cheese .. .. .	1,821
Egg pulp .. .. .	491
Fish .. .. .	1,191
Bacon and hams .. .. .	925
Pork .. .. .	652
Sausage casings .. .. .	19,057
Milk, dried and condensed .. .. .	1,247
Biscuits .. .. .	11,985
Confectionery .. .. .	14,091
Dried fruits .. .. .	11,105
Tomatoes .. .. .	22,647
Fruit juices .. .. .	1,517
Pulp fruit .. .. .	3,389
Flour .. .. .	647
Pickles and sauces .. .. .	1,062
Potatoes .. .. .	59,214
Tobacco .. .. .	54,726
Tobacco, unmanufactured .. .. .	19,228
Cigars .. .. .	7,416
Cigarettes .. .. .	9,037
Horses .. .. .	11,150
Hair .. .. .	3,111
Skins and hides .. .. .	137,391
Wool .. .. .	105,405
Tanning bark .. .. .	13,521
Tanning extract .. .. .	15,514
Clothing .. .. .	51,600
Scrap metal .. .. .	8,204
Furniture .. .. .	5,122
Timber .. .. .	222,549
Casks, etc. .. .. .	38,084
Cigarette papers .. .. .	31,451
Arsenic .. .. .	102,391
Essences .. .. .	6,118
Glycerine .. .. .	4,932
Essential oils .. .. .	6,835
	<hr/>
	£1,004,826
Gold .. .. .	1,426,404
	<hr/>
	£2,431,230

The figures show that we are doing something to hold our end up. I consider the record as highly creditable for so small a population. It is wonderful that we should have been able to send exports of that value to the Eastern States, which enjoy tremendous advantages over the West.

To-day I made it my business to interview two people in the city who for years have been putting up stiff fights in order to develop two industries. One of them is an Englishman who had not been here long when the depression came. Being unable to get employment he set to work to make toys. If members have not yet done so, I should like them to visit the exhibition promoted by the Government and see there that man's most creditable display. I do not wish to mention his name. He was a stranger

to me until I called on him to-day. I asked him had he received any assistance from the Government. His reply was, "No, I have not had any assistance from the Government; but on the other hand I have received all sorts of pinpricks." He turned to the very vexed question of apprenticeship, saying, "If I get a good boy, after a while I pay him more than the Arbitration Court award; but here is the difficulty. When he reaches the age of 18, 19 or 20 years he receives up to 35s. per week." I think that was the amount mentioned. "The jump that takes place as soon as the youth attains the age of 21 is to 70s. What can I do?" I should mention that the man employs six or seven adults. "I have no chance of keeping all the youths on, because the wage is too high." That is something which should be known to the Minister. In fact, it is known to him, because he has more information about that subject than I have. Right here in the city, not at Geraldton or Wiluna, the information is available. Have Ministers ever taken the trouble to ascertain the position?

Member: That sort of thing happens in most industries.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: But here is something the Government can rectify without asking Parliament to approve of the bureau. Next, I went to a lady. She specially asked me not to mention her name. She has put up a magnificent fight and has won out. Having started on a small capital of only £35, she now has a business in one of the main streets of Perth. She showed me over her establishment. Her wages bill is from £300 to £350 a week. It was a source of pride to me to see the crowd of people she had at work. "Not once," she said, "have I ever stood any of them down. I have kept them in full employment." I had previously known of the fight she had put up, but had never before had the pleasure of meeting her. When I went to see her to-day I told her that I would like some particulars from her for the purpose of speaking on this Bill to-night. I asked her had she ever received any assistance from the Government. She answered, "None whatever. If you send some members of Parliament here, I'll tip them out as quickly as they come up." I wanted to know how she was getting on in the battle she had fought practically single-handed, up against big firms with Eastern States inter-

ests. That brings me to the vexed question of dumping.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: What help did the lady want?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Oh, Mr. President! That interjection—

The PRESIDENT: I wish the hon. member would ignore interjections and proceed with his speech.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I think that is worthy of notice—"What help did she require?" Is the hon. member serious?

Hon. J. Cornell: Ask him to give notice of the question.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have tried in connection with the apprenticeship question to show that it is open to the Government to assist people who are putting up a fight to establish industries. The Government could help in many ways. Those of us who have had experience in trying to start industries here, unfortunately know that instead of receiving assistance from the Government one seems to get any number of pinpricks. I can speak from personal experience. If there is one man that I blame, it is Mr. Baxter, previously Chief Secretary. When in office he treated himself to a little trip to South Africa, and on his return, renewed in health and spirits, he told us what a wonderful opportunity there was for the canning of crayfish. A company was formed in Perth accordingly. Mr. Dimmitt is smiling: he got out of it very well, and I got into it. The Perth company soon got fed up, and the mug from the bush fell in. I battled along with the enterprise single-handed. I asked for no assistance. I established contact with the Eastern States. The company was exporting to the Eastern States, and it gave one a fine feeling to know that Western Australia could sell something to the Eastern States besides Geraldton tomatoes. The Federal embargo on Japanese crab gave the company a chance, and so I asked the Federal Government to maintain that embargo. I put the request to the Minister who has just resigned, Mr. White, through Sir George Pearce. The reply I got was that the Federal Government was anxious to make a trade treaty with Japan. So the embargo was lifted. What was the result? We were charged full prices for everything. We were trying to establish a little industry outside the metropolitan area, but nobody cared. At Geraldton a Perth businessman of many years' standing, Mr.

Akroyd Stewart, built a factory, which I understand from people in a position to know is second to none in the Commonwealth for canning fish. That factory closed down long before my company did. We were operating on the island, and Mr. Akroyd Stewart operated on the mainland. He was prepared to go up to Shark Bay, to Mr. Angelo's province, where, as that hon. member has quite correctly informed the House, fish abound, to can any sort of fish, his factory being able to do this. However, the establishment closed down and nothing has been doing there for some years.

That brings me to this point: instead of establishing a bureau of ten members subject to the approval of the Minister, why not adopt the suggestion thrown out by Mr. Angelo, who has given the Bill very fair treatment? If there is a business in connection with which expert advice is required, why not get the expert? Surely the Minister has power to do that. Let him send for the expert. Who was it told me only a few weeks ago that in Kalgoorlie beer is being made of which the miners cannot get enough? Upon being told that, I asked, "Where are they getting it from?" The reply was, "It is being made at Kalgoorlie thanks to the wonderful scheme Lord Forrest made possible." I wondered why that was, because in Wiluna they must have Richmond beer from Melbourne. I was told the secret of success at Kalgoorlie was—"Tell it not in Gath"—that they sent to Germany and got a German brewer. The Kalgoorlie people are drinking beautiful lager beer brewed in Kalgoorlie. No Melbourne beer is drunk in Kalgoorlie, I am told. I recollect when Plaistowes started making chocolates here. They could not sell them. However, they sent for experts.

The same remark applies to Mills and Ware's biscuits. It is no use asking people to buy Western Australian products unless we can give them the right goods at a reasonable price. Let members take notice of one successful undertaking. We had the pleasure this afternoon of listening to a gentleman who said—although I cannot find any reference to it in the report of the Minister's speech or in the special pamphlet that he issued—that there had been established for some years in South Australia what I would term, although he did not so term it, a small brain trust.

Hon. J. Cornell: General motors!

**Hon. E. H. H. HALL:** No, I may inform Mr. Cornell that some members of the Chamber of Manufactures in South Australia have given their services to the Government of that State and that the Government has assisted them in their efforts. The gentleman to whom I refer gave us instances this afternoon of the excellent work that had been done by this honorary committee, drawn from the Chamber of Manufactures, in putting small industries, that had been struggling for existence, on their feet and in a fair way. If that can be accomplished in South Australia, surely we have men who would be only too pleased to perform the same office here. Some few years ago the present Government called on certain men in this city to assist it in an advisory capacity in establishing our industries. I commended the idea. Although it was condemned by some people—in fact, the Leader of my party in another place condemned it, because he contended the Government should have the ability or the experience to look after such matters itself—I favoured it. Mr. Holden told us this afternoon that what was required was not capital so much as technical advice. Mr. Angelo heard him speak and can verify this, but I recall he spoke to the Bill last night. Mr. Parker also heard Mr. Holden. Mr. Holden suggested that we required constructional engineers who could advise on the lay-out of factories.

**Hon. L. Craig:** Industrial engineers.

**Hon. E. H. H. HALL:** Yes, industrial engineers. I feel if we had had the advice of some such persons, we could have made a success of the venture I mentioned. Many people have said to me, "That ought to have been all right." Members of this Chamber have said the same thing, but we were short of technical advice, advice which I think the Government should be in a position to make available to persons about to embark on new industries. I do not favour the appointment of a bureau of nine or ten members to roam at large all over the place in an attempt to do something, but accomplishing nothing. I give the Minister and the Government every credit for good intentions. The Minister, however, got a little heated and made accusations of pessimism against people. I claim that I have done my share in endeavouring to establish industries in this State. If the Minister will put down a £10 note, I will do likewise—although I

have not too many of them—and I undertake to say that all other members of Parliament will subscribe the same amount. In that way we shall have the nucleus of a fund to start some industry and we shall show that we are prepared to do our best in our private capacity.

**HON. J. M. MACFARLANE** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [9.19]: I shall not speak at length, but, as an industrialist, I feel I should contribute to the debate because of my interest in the subject matter of the Bill and the speeches that have been made on it, especially the speech of the Chief Secretary when introducing the Bill. What I have heard makes me wonder how we shall overcome the difficulties in our way and make some change in our industries that will be of real benefit to them. I am associated with industrialists, and this matter has come up for discussion from time to time at various places. We recognise that a bureau, properly constituted and financed, will be of great value to the State, provided the persons controlling it have the right ideas and intentions; but, on looking back over past years, and knowing the burdens placed upon industry by Labour Governments, we cannot believe that any good will result from the establishment of the bureau. Notwithstanding what the Minister said, we feel that the actions of the Labour Party in the past condemn the proposal. It should not be necessary for me to give instances of the imposts, such as the shortening of working hours, laid upon industry during the last few years. Those imposts are restricting the development of our industries. The bureau, if established, might well take in hand the matter of explaining to the Labour Party how those imposts have prevented the full development of our industries. The industrialists of the State therefore look askance at the Bill, and the Labour Party has only itself to blame for that attitude. Any recommendation that the bureau may make to the Government will not be accepted if it is not to the advantage of the worker. Nor can the bureau function successfully unless it is supplied with sufficient funds. There is a feeling of distrust against the proposed bureau. I feel we should do better if we established an honorary committee on the lines of the South Australian committee about which Mr. Hall spoke. The load placed upon in-

dustry by legislation introduced by Labour Governments is such that there is no hope for the successful development of our industries. I shall vote against the second reading. I recognise the Bill has some virtues in it, but there prevails the feeling of distrust I have mentioned. It is thought that the Bill may put another burden on to industry, instead of assisting it. A body has been in existence here for some little time—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Economic Council.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: It was brought into existence largely with the support of the Government. Some of our most capable men were enthusiastic about it, because they thought good would result from it. They are, however, losing heart as the years pass. I congratulate Mr. Thomson upon the consistency of his views, and free him from the criticism levelled against him to-night for the way in which he spoke to the Bill.

The question of youth employment has been before us for some years. The Government could have handled that matter in a different way. I agree with Mr. Hall's remarks about the apprenticeship question and how difficult it is for present-day youths to learn trades. Another thought recurs to me as I think of the future of legislation of this character. Last session or the session before, at a time when we were extremely busy, the Government introduced a Bill for the purpose of concentrating the Government offices in one area. We wasted much time in discussing the Bill, which was said at the time to be a matter of great urgency. We have not heard of it since. While I am fully in sympathy with the Government's intentions in bringing down this Bill, I think it a waste of time to discuss it further; it should be put to the vote at once.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Wittenoom, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. H. V. PIESSE** (South-East) [9.28]: First, I wish to say how pleased I was to hear Mr. Drew introduce the Bill. We all know Mr. Drew and honour the great work he has done in Parliament. We realise

that before he introduces a Bill, he gives it very careful consideration. His explanation of the Bill was certainly to the point. This Bill has been brought down mainly at the request of road boards and because of the actions of hawkers in country districts. At the outset, let me say that road boards have very little, if any, control of hawking, and this amending Bill does not take away the powers vested in them under the Act. The Hawkers and Pedlars Act debars a road board from making satisfactory by-laws and regulations. A legal opinion has been obtained on Section 204 (41) (i) of the Road Districts Act, and suggests that the words "any articles of merchandise" refer only to the articles of fruit, fish, meat, poultry, game, vegetables, etc. The amendment to be inserted is "any goods, wares or merchandise." The term "hawker" is not defined in the Road Districts Act. Members have received many letters, and the main contention seems to be that the members of the Grocers' Association are the people responsible for the introduction of this legislation. That is not so. I should like to refer to a circular letter sent out by the Grocers' Association on the 25th August. I shall not quote it, because other members have been supplied with copies, but it speaks of the inroads that hawking is making into legitimate business. That letter was doubtless the one dealt with by the W. T. Rawleigh Co., Ltd. As a country business man and farmer, it has been my pleasure on many occasions to recommend young men to join this firm, and I have witnessed the excellent work they have done in the country districts. I have nothing to say against the work being carried out on behalf of Rawleigh's and other firms in the country. The amendment contained in the Bill, to my way of thinking, is not directed against those particular firms. In another place, the statement was made that the Bill was designed to regulate the hawking of goods in mining towns. Many residents of the country are taken down by hawkers, not for those firms, but for other businesses. Often an advertisement may be seen in the newspapers, "Wanted men to travel country districts" almost guaranteeing them £12 to £14 a week for their services. Too much hawking is coming into vogue, and those engaged in general business in the country districts have to consider it from that point of

view. I propose to refer to one or two statements made by Rawleigh's—

Let us examine just what this menace amounts to. We know exactly our sales in Western Australia per annum at wholesale prices. We can therefore estimate very accurately the sales at retail prices. They amount to £28,000 a year. A large part of this remains in Western Australia as profits of the dealers and overhead expenses.

We have heard many statements to-night about the need for supporting local industry. Why not support local industries before giving our patronage to those developed in the Eastern States? We have people making these goods, and salesmen could be employed to vend them in the country.

The Honorary Minister: This Bill will kill that local industry business.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I was not aware that the Honorary Minister was a lawyer.

Hon. J. Cornell: Not a lawyer but a prophet.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I cannot see that the Bill will have the effect of putting off the roads any man who is selling goods on commission. The road boards have received legal advice, and they are not desirous of putting those men off the roads. The firm that has taken up such an attitude against the Grocers' Association has given good service in many ways by supplying horse medicines and other medicines in the country, and the farmers appreciate the services of the young men travelling in the country districts. We are not up against them and their particular lines. Still, members of the firm have definitely made an attack upon the Grocers' Association of Western Australia. When I received the letter from Rawleigh's I submitted it to the Grocers' Association. As most members have received a copy of the other circular, I should like to read part of the reply. It states—

I am returning the telegrams from Rawleigh's Brunswick, Victoria, dated the 21st and 25th ult., and their letter of the 14th ult. I regret that I have not had this letter before, because I am unable in the short time at my disposal, to give you some of my ideas as a reply to Rawleigh's letter, but I will endeavour to do this later.

Just one view of the matter which they have not dealt with is that they are only one of a number of firms or companies which are adopting the house-to-house hawker's system of sales in this State. If Rawleigh's were the only firm concerned, and the future did not give anxiety as to a considerable increase in house-to-house sales, too much notice would not be

taken of the position, but this competition with the retail trade has been growing for many years past, and no doubt is due to the example set by Rawleigh's and their expanding operations in this State.

Watkins, Ltd., is another firm who employ house-to-house salesmen, and their methods are similar to Rawleigh's, except apparently that Rawleigh's sell direct to their district representatives, whereas, I am told, Watkin's have some commission arrangement with their district salesmen, who, however, have to purchase the samples provided by Watkin's.

The objection to hawkers, from the retail point of view, is not therefore confined to Rawleigh's, nor even to Watkin's, because the advertisements in the "West Australian" situations vacant column almost daily point to many other wholesale firms who are apparently adopting the house-to-house sales methods. Even some of our legitimate wholesale firms are beginning to follow the practice adopted by Rawleigh's, Watkin's and other firms.

Rawleigh's suggest that legitimate retail trade is not being menaced, but this is only camouflage, for anybody who knows anything about house-to-house sales by hawkers in this State must realise that the system is expanding, and is therefore a menace to the retail trade.

If Rawleigh's, Watkin's and these firms are to be permitted to compete with the ratepayers, and with established retail business firms in this State by using perhaps American "go-getter" systems of retail distribution, the position must eventually be a serious one for the road boards and municipalities, as well as for the State Government, because of the reduced rates and taxes that have always been expected from such retail firms.

I could read much more along the same lines, but to do so is unnecessary. Let me revert to the road board position. The secretary of the Road Board Association, Mr. E. H. Rosman, wrote to the Grocers' Association saying that his association was in accord with the action taken to approach the Minister to request that the law regarding hawkers and pedlars be amended to provide for adequate control of hawkers generally. I was rather surprised to hear Mr. Dimmitt say the other evening that the Bill was a wolf in sheep's clothing. I cannot see that there is much of the wolf about it. It states straight out what is wanted, and merely seeks to maintain a reasonable position for the men who are earning their living at work of this kind. Mr. Dimmitt also said that he saw danger in giving the local authority power to license, and would vote against the Bill. The hon. member also referred to members of road boards who were connected with business. Those remarks only show

that the hon. member's lack of knowledge of road board members is very great.

Hon. G. B. Wood: I think he is sorry for it, too.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Should any member of a road board speak or vote on any business with which he is connected, he is liable to a fine not exceeding £50. In the town of Katanning there has lately been quite an argument about an electric lighting proposition. I quote this as an illustration. Seven or eight members of the board are shareholders of the local concession. Not one of those men was permitted to speak or vote on that concession. Had any of them done so, he would have been liable to a fine not exceeding £50. Can anyone by any stretch of imagination believe that any local body would attempt to hinder men travelling around the districts and carrying out their duties in a reasonable manner? To suggest that road board members are men of that type would be absurd. Let me give another illustration from Katanning. There has been a proposal to remove petrol pumps from the footpaths. Seven or eight members of the board are associated with businesses controlling petrol pumps, and they were not permitted to speak or vote on the question.

Hon. J. Cornell: How could the board get a quorum?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The rest of the board consist of farmers; they number as many as the business men. From time to time I have come into contact with "dud" travellers. One of them entered my office a few months ago and tried to sell me a suit length. He said he was a steward on one of the boats and had brought it in duty free, and for that reason could sell it to me cheaply. I observe that Mr. Cornell is trying to estimate the length that I would require for a suit. I looked at the cloth and noticed that it bore the ticket of a local firm and so I rang the telephone. The man asked me whom I was ringing, and I replied, "The sergeant of police." He cleared out very quickly. Protection is afforded to hawkers who hold licenses from the local authority. I can speak with considerable knowledge of travelling in the Great Southern where, as a commercial traveller, I covered 250,000 miles in seven years. I know that if a man is travelling for a reputable firm and has a license, his work is much more pleasant and he has nothing to hide.

The Honorary Minister interjected.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: It does not follow that the limit of £10 laid down in the Act would apply to each license. Mr. Dimmitt referred to various road boards, but I have yet to learn that road boards are determined to go to the lengths he mentioned in order to collect license fees. They certainly consider the welfare of the people in the district.

Hon. G. B. Wood: But they desire revenue as well.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The main object of the amending Bill is not revenue production but the right to control those who hawk goods in the country districts. What better control could be exercised than that by the local governing authorities? I support the Bill because the object is sound and the measure will legalise what has been done illegally for a long time.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central) [9.46]: In supporting the Bill, I wish first of all to deal with the propaganda indulged in by a certain firm. The attitude adopted by that firm—W. T. Rawleigh Co. Ltd.—is untenable. In the circular letter that has been issued to members, the firm sets out to show that the grocers were responsible for the opposition to the concern, and were agitating for legislation to control hawking. During last session a Bill of a somewhat similar nature was introduced in another place by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). That was done at the instigation of local governing bodies whose representatives meet at Cue once a year.

Hon. A. Thomson: Members received a letter then asking for their support.

Hon. T. MOORE: That is so, and that indicates the origin of this legislation. I happened to be in Cue at the time when the road board conference was held and I attended the gathering. The question of hawking was discussed and it was pointed out that the storekeepers in the outback areas operated all the year round and met their liabilities. They were good citizens and for years had assisted in carrying the mining industry during the depression period. Then, when conditions were flourishing and local traders hoped for increased returns, they were confronted by opposition from certain individuals who hawked various goods in the country towns. Those hawkers were not associated with the Rawleigh Company and dealt in wares that the Rawleigh Company has not on its list. During the discussion

at the Cue meeting, I found that the delegates desired repeal of the Hawkers and Pedlars Act and as I knew that was not at all likely, I suggested they should frame what amendments they desired and either Mr. Marshall or I would introduce amending legislation accordingly to meet their requirements. That is how I came to be associated with this matter. If ever a company has set out to antagonise others, the Rawleigh Company has in the letter that members have received. Here is one extract from their circular—

On behalf of our Western Australian dealers we respectfully ask you to consider the position of these men and the injustice they would suffer through being ruthlessly put out of business by any legislation sponsored by selfish interests seeking to create monopolies for themselves.

The outside people are prepared to defend their own position. The general storekeepers were the prime movers in the introduction of this legislation, the men who have carried on the mining industry and backed prospectors who have proceeded into the parts further back. At Yalgoo, Magnet, Nannine, Meekatharra, Cue and Wiluna the storekeepers kept the mining industry going. As the result of their assistance some wonderful shows have been opened up; and yet this company talks about legislation sponsored by selfish interests that seek to create monopolies.

Hon. H. V. Piessé: The country storekeepers are also in the same position.

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes, the country storekeepers have carried the farmers all the year round. Some time ago Parliament passed an Act that gave storekeepers a rotten deal, and I have been ashamed ever since of what we did. What has happened is that these hawkers always arrive in a town on pay day. When they have finished at one centre, then they go on to catch the pay day at the next place. No wonder this firm antagonises any fair-minded person. The hawkers take advantage of the pay days, and enter into unfair competition with the local storekeepers who are operating all the time and have incurred liabilities over the years in supporting the mining industry. The competition that arises from the hawking in such circumstances is unfair. Then the company in its circular says—

The aims of the Grocers' Association violate the principle of free channels of trade. The interests of the great buying public should be

paramount, but these Hitlers of commerce wish to dictate to consumers where they shall buy household commodities, and from whom they shall buy. They are frankly on the warpath to squash their small competitors, who are in a poor position to defend themselves. The convenience of the people cuts no ice with them.

The convenience of the people cuts a lot of ice with storekeepers in the outback areas. I shall quote one or two more extracts from the company's letter in order to indicate the foolish attitude adopted by the firm. For instance, there is this statement—

There are hundreds of small shops in Western Australia which are one-family shows and don't employ union labour. The owners of these shops evade the basic wage and employ sweated labour by using members of their families as shop assistants on a remuneration known only to themselves.

Members will agree that that is pretty low down. We do not stand for those people who deal in sweated labour. On the contrary, these small shopkeepers who are operating in the back country have performed a very important function in the interests of the community. On the other hand, how do we know what labour this firm employs? The employees may work 24 hours a day chasing the pay days. After operating in one centre they may drive all night in order to reach the next centre in time for pay day there. I am afraid if we looked into that position, the firm might be found wanting. At any rate, that was a foolish statement to include in the circular. Unfortunately, in the city, the bigger shops are having an effect on the small shopkeepers, because they have opened up so many different lines that the small men are always confronted with a struggle.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are too many of them.

Hon. T. MOORE: The bigger shops deal in cut lines that the small shops cannot cope with. There is one other reference I want to quote from the company's letter. The following appears:—

We feel confident that your sense of fairness—

The company is confident of the fairness of Parliament, but apparently considers road board members are not fair.

—will influence you towards reasonable legislation which will not only give the desired regulation and control of hawkers—

Apparently they think that is all right.

—but will also protect them from vindictive treatment by local municipalities and road boards.

There is surely no call for that suggestion of vindictive treatment by local municipalities and road boards. To my knowledge the road boards have done wonderful work. In some instances I know of, the road board members have travelled upwards of 80 or 100 miles at their own expense to attend meetings. They have made great sacrifices in order to carry out their duty as citizens, and have done splendid work. I take my hat off to the country road board members. I have attended functions at which Ministers and others have eulogised the work of road boards, and have expressed the opinion that the boards should have greater powers. I endorse that contention, and yet this particular firm claims that men of that description would be capable of vindictive treatment. I notice from the heading of the circular letter that the company was incorporated in Canada. Perhaps in that Dominion road board members of the type suggested by the firm have an opportunity to act vindictively, but in Western Australia the position is quite different. Mr. Nicholson, in discussing the Bill, said he could not regard it as an innocent measure, and Mr. Dimmitt described it as a wolf in sheep's clothing. That is to say that the men who are instrumental in launching the agitation for the introduction of the legislation are wolves in sheep's clothing. On the contrary, the very men I refer to would laugh at such a suggestion. The chairman of the meeting that I attended at Cue went there 52 years ago, and walked with his family from Geraldton. He had little when he went there, but now he is the owner of a big station. To say a man of that type would act as a wolf in sheep's clothing is simply ridiculous.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I referred to the Bill, not the man.

Hon. T. MOORE: What can be said of that gentleman can be said of other road board members. Mr. Parker talked a lot of airy nothings about the Bill, but he did not commit himself regarding the principles embodied in the measure. He did not say whether he was in favour of them, but ridiculed the idea by contending that there would be a lot of trouble if the road boards exercised the power. I do not think anyone would get into trouble, and Mr. Parker, as usual, clouded the issue by quoting the Road Dis-

tricts Act, the Hawkers and Pedlars Act, the Factories and Shops Act, and case law. I am sure he tried to throw everybody into a state of confusion, but I hope he did not succeed. By quoting those Acts one can provide all the conflict of opinion one likes. Members know that by referring to those Acts any measure brought down can be held up to ridicule. I do not want members to be frightened by the idea that road boards are likely to get into trouble. There was some doubt under the present Act whether they would find themselves in difficulty if they did take action, and they were careful. They have not rushed into law.

Are members prepared to allow the people that know the conditions to say what shall be done in their own particular districts? I am prepared to do so, and I think it is fair to allow those people to impose their own conditions. The charges for hawkers' licenses have been 10s. or £1. The men travel over wide areas and come into competition with storekeepers that are paying rates and taxes. Surely it is worth their while to pay such a small amount. If not, they should not be allowed to enter into competition. These men are permitted to go right through an enormous area that extends over thousands of miles, and all they have to pay, in some cases, is £1. I need not mention what the local storekeepers pay in a year by way of rates and taxes. I hope members will not allow themselves to be influenced by the argument that has been raised. I do not believe that the companies that have put up propaganda of this sort will be affected one iota. I do not wish to see them interfered with, and I do not think they need worry at all. They should, however, be rapped over the knuckles for sending us stuff like this.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. MOORE: I hope that members will realise that all the Bill seeks to do is to give to local governing bodies the power we thought they always had. The aim is to make clear the intention of previous Parliaments that desired them to have this power. What harm can be done by an innocent little Bill like this?

**HON. J. M. MACFARLANE** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [10.2]: The speech of the member who has just resumed his seat reminds me that last year I received from the road boards of the province he repre-



sents communications in regard to hawkers. The writers spoke of the bad times they had had and pointed out that now conditions had improved they were being largely deprived by these hawkers of any benefit that was likely to come to them as a result of the changed circumstances. I told them I would give them my support. I am quite prepared to do that to-day, but circumstances have changed. The members responsible for the Bill, both in this House and in another place, and other speakers have put up a good case for their particular districts, and one that deserves sympathy. If the Bill were to provide for those areas alone, and the metropolitan area were exempted, it would have my wholehearted support.

Hon. T. Moore: Then move an amendment.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Since last year the agitation has spread until the metropolitan area is now affected and the grocers are bitterly protesting. I would like to quote a passage from the "Retailers' Budget," the official organ of the Grocers' Association of Western Australia, dated October, 1938. An article headed "Hawkers," reads as follows:—

Country storekeepers and metropolitan retailers, whether grocers, drapers, tailors, chemists or hardware retailers, are all concerned in the house-to-house trade carried on by those canvassing hawkers who are taking advantage of the legislature to take from the legitimate trader with his considerable capital invested in stocks, plant and fittings or freehold property, the trade which has been his or hers ever since the public looked to the shopkeepers for all retail supplies.

The deputation which waited on the Hon. Minister for Works as the responsible authority for the administration of the Hawkers and Pedlars Act, and also the municipal and the road boards Acts, which are concerned in the licensing of hawkers, was told that the State Government does not rely on the Hawkers and Pedlars Act, 1892-1897, which is inoperative and obsolete, but depends for the control of hawkers on the municipal councils and road boards. In fact, the Government may decide to extend the powers of those local bodies in the matter of hawkers.

Since then the G.A.W.A. Executive has interviewed the Council of the Road Boards Association at a recent quarterly meeting of that body. The following requests were made:

(a) Prohibition by amending legislation of direct sales from house to house of hawkers of foodstuffs or general merchandise not including meat, fish, poultry, game, fruit, vegetables, bread and milk.

(b) Failing the acceptance of this principle, the license fee for such hawkers to be

increased to an amount equal to or similar to the annual rates (municipal particularly, but also water) paid by the average shopkeeper of the municipality.

(c) That the use by hawkers of their licenses outside the boundaries of the municipalities which issue such licenses be prevented.

The following is a copy of the letter received by the G.A.W.A. from the Road Board Association of W.A., dated 15th inst., conveying the decision of the executive committee of that association on the above requests:—

Mr. M. E. Pye,

Secretary, The Grocers' Association of W.A.,  
Economic Chambers, Perth.

Dear Sir,

Re Hawkers.

Referring to your recent conference with the executive committee of the above association regarding the control of hawkers, I advise that I have communicated with the Under Secretary for Works on behalf of the association, pointing out the menace of hawkers in country districts, to the detriment of the State generally and legitimate traders who had to provide shops and were involved in considerable expenditure with rates and taxes and should be protected against the itinerant hawkers, and after consideration it was decided to communicate with the Under Secretary for Works asking that the law as to hawkers and pedlars should be amended to provide for adequate control of hawkers generally.

Yours faithfully,

E. H. ROSMAN.

Secretary.

The 21 municipal councils throughout W.A. have also been written to by the G.A.W.A., asking for their co-operation in restricting or prohibiting if possible the house-to-house hawking system, which is so detrimental and unfair to the shopkeepers, who pay high rates and taxes, rent, lighting, wages, and State and Commonwealth taxation, and the usual business expenses, which the hawkers more or less do not have to pay.

Replies have been received from Bunbury and York Municipal Councils, who support the opposition to hawkers by fixing license fees of £40 and £10 respectively.

Acknowledgments of the G.A.W.A. letter and promises of full consideration of its request and a later reply were received from the municipalities at Cottesloe, Collie, Fremantle, North Fremantle, Subiaco, Wagin and Perth.

The campaign against the hawking system of competition with the legitimate shopkeepers is still progressing.

The G.A.W.A. proposes, if satisfaction be not received from the present approach to the municipal councils and road boards, to call a conference of representatives of all retail trades concerned as well as other supporting organisations and members of Parliament interested, so that an attempt may be made in

Parliament before the general elections to obtain amending legislation to restrict hawkers.

I urge the mover of the Bill to have the metropolitan area excluded from its provisions, or else I must oppose the Bill. The point I am trying to make is that the Grocers' Association has become very active. It has been told by the Minister that it has to rely on the road boards and the municipal councils to police the Act and the local authorities are sympathetic and are imposing the maximum charge for licenses. In my province there are many small road boards handy to one another. A scheme has been established by certain companies whereby men who have been out of work and are imbued with the desire to do something for themselves have an opportunity of making good. They have fallen in with the suggestion of the organisations to which I have referred, namely, that they should carry goods from house to house in fixed territories. Those men will be detrimentally affected by the Bill, because we have evidence from the agitation that has been taking place that the road boards are prepared to meet the demands of the grocers and impose a maximum charge on hawkers. The result will be that some of these people who are trying to earn a living in places like Bayswater and Bassendean will be faced with a maximum charge by each road board.

These people do not want to be thrown out of employment. Previously they were sustenance workers, but they have been able to make a success of this new occupation. They are making not a big wage but one that is satisfactory to them. They are their own masters and are able to make a living without the fear of being out of work next day or next week. I have a list of the lines these firms sell, and I find that they consist of extracts, flavours, spices, nectar syrups, medicinal preparations, toilet articles and soap products. Nearly all these are proprietary lines that could not be called legitimate groceries. The travellers do not cut prices, which are fixed. They have asked me to assist them in this matter. I have a couple of letters from two of them which I propose to read to the House. The first is from K. H. Edwards, Rawleigh dealer of 25 Swansea-street, Victoria Park, who writes—

In reference to the proposed amendment of the Roads Districts Act (Hawkers), I would

like to briefly state my case. I first started direct selling of Rawleigh products in February, 1934, after a period of unemployment, Rawleigh's supplying me with products which are paid for as sold. Their treatment of me has been exceptionally fair and their help in all matters has been greatly appreciated by me.

In June this year, after a good four years, I got married, and looked forward to continued success with the company. The legislation asked for by the Grocers' Association would probably put me out of business, cause me financial loss, and again place me on the greatly increased unemployed list.

The deputation to Hon. H. Millington pointed out failures in the ranks of direct salesmen, a thing seen in every walk of life, even in grocers themselves.

My annual sale of groceries in our line is roughly £70, say 30s. per week amongst 500 families, and I fail to see how this small amount would greatly inconvenience the grocers in my district.

Therefore, I respectfully request you to consider these points when discussing or voting on the aforesaid amendment.

I have another letter dated the 22nd October last. The writer is a married man. He was getting sustenance work, but was unable to remain at home because of his small earnings. He had to go away from his wife and children to earn what he could elsewhere. He was trained with 50 or 60 other people to make a living in this other way, and has succeeded sufficiently to enable him to maintain his family. I know this matter affects a good many people. Some persons have condemned these bodies, and they may have done so with some justification. A good deal of the trouble has occurred through the faults of those concerned. I have no sympathy with the people who have been circularising members: they can look after themselves. I have, however a lot of sympathy for those who have been educated to this work and have found employment in it for some time. They are now running the risk of losing their positions and being thrown on the labour market. I know that the grocers have the ear of a number of public bodies, and hope to defeat the object in view. The amending Bill contains one strange feature to which I direct the attention of Mr. Drew. Mr. Moore spoke about motor cars. I wish to refer to Clause 2 paragraph (b).

Hon. G. Fraser: That clause does not debar the use of motor cars.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: They are not mentioned in the Bill. The paragraph says—

For the purposes of this paragraph the term "hawker" means any hawker, pedlar or other

person who, with or without any horse or other beast, etc.

No reference is made to motor cars, and I told my people that was so. Horse-drawn vehicles are not employed by travellers in the city, and the clause would, therefore, not apply to them. I think it is a mistake that no reference is made in the Bill to motor cars.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you think a motor car constitutes a shop?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: No. I hope Mr. Drew can see his way to having the Bill amended to deal with the back country hawker separately from the hawker doing business in the metropolitan area. I am in duty bound to protect these workers in the metropolitan area so that they may not lose their occupations at a time when work is so hard to get.

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

*House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Wednesday, 9th November, 1938.*

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

### QUESTIONS (2)—NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT.

*Sister Kate's Home, Classing Inmates.*

Mr. NULSEN asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: 1, Have the

children in Sister Kate's Home been ordered by a magistrate to be classed under the Native Administration Act? 2, If so, who was the magistrate that so ordered? 3, Were the relatives of the children given the opportunity to appear?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Answered by No. 1.

### *Remuneration of Natives and Half-castes.*

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: 1, What remuneration is paid to natives and half-castes at the Moore River Native Settlement engaged in the occupations of—(a) woodcarting, (b) kangaroo hunting, (c) farm work, and (d) other occupations for and on behalf of the settlement? 2, What remuneration is paid to natives and half-castes for similar work at the Mount Margaret Mission?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, In addition to food, clothes, boots, bedding, housing, medical and hospital attention and other requirements, pocket money up to 10s. monthly. Able-bodied adult natives are not compelled nor encouraged to remain at Moore River Settlement unless committed under Section 12 of the Native Administration Act. 2, This information is not known to the department.

### QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

#### *Chief Mechanical Engineer's Accrued Leave.*

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the total period of holiday leave due to the Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. Broadfoot? 2, What period of leave is due to him under the respective headings of—(a) accumulated, current, and *pro rata* long service, (b) accumulated and current annual leave? 3, When did he last clear all leave due to him?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, See answer to No. 2. 2, (a) 9 months accumulated and 56 days *pro rata*; (b) 132 days accumulated and 12 days current. 3, Portions of leave have been cleared periodically but for some considerable time it has been more convenient to the department to allow a certain amount of leave to accumulate.