Question thus negatived.
Bill defeated.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 7.30 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.55 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 26th November, 1952.

CONTENTS.

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

QUESTIONS.

TRANSPORT BOARD.

As to Approved Air Freight Charges.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Transport:

Can he supply information regarding—

(1) The air-freight charges approved by the Transport Board to all North-West towns on the following goods:—

(a) milk, medicines, baby foods, perishable foodstuffs, spare parts, etc.;

(b) the products of West Australian Newspapers, Ltd.;

(c) passengers' excess luggage?

(2) T.A.A. freight charges to Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane?

(3) Air distance fro Perth to Adelaide, Brisbane, Carnarvon and Wyndham?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a)

	Freight rate per lb. s.	d.	Subsidy rate per lb. s.	d.
Gascoyne Junction	1	4		8
Learmonth	1	5		7
Pt. Cloates,	1	6		8
Onslow, Roebourne, Pt. Hedland	1	8		10
Wittenoom, Nullagine, Marble Bar	1	8	1	0
Broome	2	0	1	2
Derby	2	1	1	3
Wyndham	2	6	1	7
Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek	2	6	1	10

The subsidy indicated applies to certain selected items only, including fruit and vegetables and is paid by the Government during the summer months. In respect of certain inland towns, the subsidy has applied throughout the year.

(b) Rates for bulk newspapers are:

By MacRobertson-Miller Aviation Co. Pty. Ltd. Services—

From Perth to points between Geraldton and Pt. Hedland—6d. lb.

From Perth to points north of Pt. Hedland—9d. lb.

By Airlines (W.A.) Ltd. Services—

From Perth to all points north of the 26th parallel—1d. per paper.

(c) Excess luggage rates are identical with those listed under (a), i.e., normal freight rates.

	per lb. s.	d.
(2) Perth-Adelaide	1	9½
Perth-Melbourne	2	1
Perth-Sydney	2	5½
Perth-Brisbane	2	9½

A minimum charge of 4s. applies in respect of all consignments.

(3) Perth-Adelaide, 1,415 miles.
Perth-Brisbane, via Melbourne and Sydney, 2,745 miles.
Perth Carnarvon, 508 miles.
Perth-Wyndham, 1,683 miles.

HOUSING.

As to Naval Base Flats.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the fact that the evictee houses erected at Naval Base flats, Woodman's Point, were built as temporary structures but will be occupied for some years to come—

(1) Will the Housing Commission give consideration to the lining of these buildings before the winter of 1953?

(2) Will baths or hand-basins be installed?

(3) As an alternative to No. (2), can bath heaters be installed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) The matters raised by these questions are at present receiving consideration.

RAILWAYS.

As to Sleeping Coaches, Albany Trains.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Minister for Transport:

Because of dissatisfaction expressed by passengers using the Albany train paying a first-class fare for sleepers and receiving accommodation equal to that paid by second-class sleeper passengers—

(1) Will he see that the "AZ" sleeping coach is attached to this train instead of the old "AQ" type as has been used of late?

(2) Should the Railway Department be compelled, owing to unforeseen circumstances, to use the "AQ" coach, will the department charge passengers using this coach the same fare as the second-class passengers?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) "AZ" sleeping cars are the normal 1st class complement of this train; "AQ" cars are used as 1st class accommodation only in cases of emergency. During the period under reference, there have been heavy orders for "AZ" sleeping cars to meet the demands of Eastern States travellers It is anticipated that the future requirements of "AZ" coaches for the Albany train will be met.

(2) When "AQ" cars are used in lieu of "AZ" sleepers, only the two lower berths of the "AQ" cars are booked, thus providing accommodation which is reasonably comparable with that provided in the two-berth "AZ" sleeper. In view of the booking of two berths only for "AQ" compartments, reduction of charges is not justifiable.

BILL—CATTLE TRESPASS, FENCING AND IMPOUNDING ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. E. M. Davies and read a first time.

BILL—MARKETING OF BARLEY ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: Members will recollect the events that led to the decision to introduce this Bill, which provides, firstly, that if the office of President of the House becomes vacant while the House is not in session, the Chairman of Committees shall fill the position until a new President is elected, and, secondly, that during the absence, for any reason, of the President, the Chairman of Committees shall undertake the duties of President.

These amendments were recommended by the Standing Orders Committee and, subsequently, on the 12th December, 1951, Mr. Fraser moved that the House request the Government to initiate legislation to implement the recommendations. Mr. Fraser's motion was agreed to unanimously and this Bill is the result.

The measure will meet a contingency that might possibly occur if a President should fail to re-nominate for his province seat, or if he should resign or die while Parliament was in recess. The Legislative Council would then be without a President until one was elected on the re-assembling of Parliament. As Mr. Fraser pointed out when speaking to his motion, this actually did occur in 1946 when the then President, Sir John Kirwan did not contest the Province election.

The Bill will also meet the necessity of electing a deputy whenever the President, for some reason or other, is absent from a sitting of the House, and will bring Council procedure into line with that of another place, where the Chairman of Committees acts on all occasions as deputy for the Speaker. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 13th November.

HON. C. H. HENNING (South-West) [4.45]: It is very pleasing to find that after six years a Bill has been introduced to increase the amount of compensation to be paid to dairymen whose cattle have been destroyed after they have been tested and have reacted to t.b. The Minister stated very truly that when the Act of 1946 became law, prices as low as £20 were operating for a wholemilk cow. That figure may be on the conservative side, and I was rather surprised to find that the Minister had given notice of his intention to move an amendment to increase the price to £35, the amount to be fixed by the Act. When the compensation was £20, the Minister said that it represented only one-third of the price ruling today, and yet he is proposing an increase of 75 per cent.

The Minister for Agriculture: I did not say that it was one-third.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I understood the Minister to say so. However, I cannot refer to "Hansard," as the Minister knows I am one of those who believe that the amount should vary annually according to the state of the market and that we should not fix the price for any very long period. The Minister quoted the price of dairy cows as being up to £40. This is a matter very difficult to judge, because we do not know the quality, and quality varies considerably according to whether it is an ordinary market or a clearing sale.

Let me quote some figures of prices. Last week at the Subiaco market freshly calved cows were quoted at £45 to £50, fair at £36 to £44 and medium at £28 to £33. Those are not quotations for really good cows. I daresay that 70 to 75 per cent. of the cattle sent to the market are being disposed of because of some defect, for no man would be fool enough to sell his better cows. According to "Elder's Weekly of the 2nd October, at a clearing sale of dairy cattle on account of Messrs. McPhail Bros., Mundijong, over £100 was secured for a forward springer, and £111 for a particularly choice cow which would be a very heavy producer. A sum of £110 was paid for another forward springer. These were not pedigreed stock. The report goes on to say —

> The 55 cows in profit averaged £57 5s. 1d., a State record, whilst 17 mated heifers sold to £55, and averaged £38 1s. 2d. Sixteen heifer calves sold to £22 and averaged £13 17s. 7d.

At the Subiaco markets in the same week, freshly calved cows brought £38 to £44 and odd animals to £63. Choice cows were quoted at Mundijong at £75 to £95; there was no choice at Subiaco. Fair cows were £50 to £60 at Mundijong; and at Subiaco, £32 to £35. Those figures indicate how difficult it is for members to fix a set price such as is proposed in the Minister's amendment. The price should be fixed by those who are extremely familiar with the industry, and I consider that the board could do this.

The present board has had experience since 1948 and has done an exceptionally good job. I believe it has the confidence of the Government; I am certain it has the confidence of those engaged in the industry. The members of the board know the problems ahead. They know the particular type of cow that is required, and they also know costs and problems as, through their inspectors, they are in constant touch with those engaged in the industry.

When I quoted those prices a little while ago, I did not mean to say what price should be fixed from year to year. I mentioned the figures merely to show the great fluctuation in values that occurs at particular places on any specific date. The Minister spoke of the sole right of the Government to determine the expenditure by means of parliamentary authorisation. So, far as I know, the board has control of all its finances. It certainly receives a £ for £ subsidy from the Government, and I believe it is trusted with the carrying out of the policy, of the Act.

The Minister for Agriculture: What policy?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I said "the Act."

The Minister for Agriculture: You said the policy.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I changed it to "Act." I know the Minister tries to collect the little pieces when anybody makes a slip.

The Minister for Agriculture: Like you!

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I suppose the Minister makes slips too. The board has administered the Act well; and if that is so and it is appreciated by all concerned, surely it should be able to fix annually a fair and equitable value. As regards what it will cost, at present the cost is based on the producer paying ½d. per gallon and the Treasury contributes on a £ for £ basis. I think the Minister stated there was £26,600 to the credit of the compensation fund at the 30th May. That was when there was a contribution by the growers of ½d. per gallon. In July last the contribution was reduced to ¼d. In the meantime, in six months, the fund has increased to approximately £29,500. Allowing for any outstanding accounts, the figure would be about £28,500, which, in six months, gives an overall increase of £2,000.

What are the liabilities of the board per year by way of compensation? According to the latest report of the Milk Board, the compensation paid to dairymen last year was £6,757 in respect of 348 cattle. That is an average compensation of £20 per head as provided for in the Act. But once we get the salvage value of those cattle and the value of the hides, we find that the compensation is £3,279 instead of £6,757, which is well under £10 per head. I am quoting those figures because we have a decreasing number of reacting cows. All the time testing goes on, a decreasing number will be found to be diseased. Naturally the call on that fund will become less and less.

During last year it was found that whereas, in the metropolitan area on the original test, 47 per cent. were reactors, only 2.5 per cent. are reactors now. On the Eastern Goldfields, where there were 50 per cent. reactors, the figure is now down to 2.5 per cent.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is for the same cattle being retested.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am giving the retesting figures.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are not allowing for new cattle being retested.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The total number was 378.

Hon. L. C. Diver: There would be young cattle coming in all the time.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: These figures are in respect of the subsequent tests; there may be additional cattle coming in. I would like to quote one of the Minister's sentences. I think I have got it right. If I have not, I am certain the Minister will tell me.

The Minister for Agriculture: I will not interject.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The Minister said:—

> Are we to hand the right to a board which might mulct any Government in a large amount of expenditure without the Government having any say whatever and without even having the approval of the Minister, who should have the power to approve or reject its authorisation?

I take it from this Bill that the Minister does have the right to approve. It states here, "an amount decided by the board and approved of by the Minister within thirty days of the beginning of the financial year." It must have the approval of the Minister. If the Minister does not like it, he can refer it back. I do not know what he would do, but I am certain that if there were anything with which the present Minister disagreed, he would let the board know, and quite rightly.

I do not think it is reasonably fair criticism to say that a board appointed by the Minister, and consisting of people who have no connection whatsoever with the dairying industry, would try to mulct the Government. I am certain it would not, and I do not think the Minister meant his remarks to apply in that way.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are only referring to the present board, of course.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Yes; but after all, the boards are appointed by the Minister.

The Minister for Agriculture: No.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am sorry. They are appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Minister.

The Minister for Agriculture: Some are elected.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am speaking of this board, the one with which I am concerned. With respect to the recommendations for payments that are made to the Minister, let us take the irrigation rates. We have a board that consists of Government officials and farmer-ratepayers, and they recommend rates to the Minister, and they have recommended increases, and in every case the Minister has accepted what they have put before him. It is not establishing a new precedent to pass a Bill which gives the right to recommend. I believe it is the normal procedure.

The Minister for Agriculture: I assure you it will not be done by me.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am only going on what I believe is right.

The Minister for Agriculture: I know it is wrong.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: That is simply a matter of opinion. I believe the fair and equitable way to the farmer is to allow this matter to remain in the hands of the Milk Board which has controlled the industry well. Last night the Minister said that most bodies had an organisation to work on their behalf. The milk producers have the milk section of the Farmers' Union, and the executive of that section is of the unanimous opinion that it could be well left to the board to fix the amount annually. I sincerely hope that in this respect the Bill will be carried without the Minister's amendment. I have given notice of an amendment to delete the words, "within 30 days of the beginning." My reason is that if the Bill is passed as it stands at present, it will be the beginning of the next financial lear before any difference can be made in the amount of compensation paid. I support the second reading.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [5.3]: I support Mr. Henning's remarks. I have always worried about the milk pro-

ducer and, unless we can keep him in the State, we will always have a shortage of milk. We have suffered from a milk shortage in the remote areas for a long time. We cannot get milk in our schools. If we make a fixed price, as is suggested here, we will not encourage the people.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why not make it £100; that would encourage them more?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: The board will use its judgment. It is composed of people who know the dairying industry well.

The Minister for Agriculture: Tell me their qualifications.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: These men will make a study of the position because it is their job. Some stock today is selling very cheaply. I suppose that among my relations there are, perhaps, some of the biggest buyers in the State, and I know that recently a very low figure has been paid for fair quantity of stock.

Hon. L. Craig: You are talking of beef cattle, are you not?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: No, I am talking about mixed lots, some of which have gone on to farms to be used for dairying purposes. Some of these cattle brought a ridiculous figure and, if the owners were to receive the fixed amount of £35 a head, they would have a lot more than they paid for them. On the other hand, people who go in for dairying with valuable herds would not be compensated at all with £35. I think the safest way to assist the producers would be to pass the Bill without amendment.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.5]: I ask to be excused for butting in on a primary producers' argument, but I have searched "Hansard" and I am a little puzzled to know the Minister's reasons for the alteration in tactics. The Bill gives the board the right to decide what compensation shall be paid but, before we have concluded the second reading stage, we find an amendment is to be moved to include a definite amount.

The Minister for Agriculture: It was not introduced here, but in another place because it is a money Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: When the Bill was introduced here its purpose was to delete a figure from the Act, and to insert certain words giving the board the right to say what the compensation shall be.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was the original Bill introduced in the other place.

Hon. G. FRASER: The amount was in the original Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes.

Hon. G. FRASER: Why has the Minister an amendment on the notice paper to reinsert a figure? It seems to me that the Bill as it stands is very fair. Under the Act we have a board whose duty it is to administer the Act and also to decide what compensation shall be paid. The Bill sets out to leave the question of the amount of compensation to the board, and, because of fluctuating prices and vaues, I think it is better to do that than to have a set figure provided. I would like some other compensation measures to be on similar lines to this. Perhaps when we are dealing with another compensation Bill, some of my primary producer mates will help me.

Hon. L. Craig: How would the board know the value of cattle it did not see?

Hon. G. FRASER: If the board is there to investigate claims, its members would surely have a knowledge of the value of the matters with which they are dealing. The Milk Board is appointed to take full control of the milk supply.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, the distribution of milk.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the board is not competent to deal with the compensation phase, why appoint it?

The Minister for Agriculture: They are two different jobs.

Hon. G. FRASER: If it is not a competent board to deal with compensation, why not appoint a separate compensation board?

The Minister for Agriculture. We have one—departmental officers.

Hon. G. FRASER: The compensation board is the Milk Board, according to the Milk Act, but apparently the Minister has no confidence in it. If that is so, it is time the board was altered. The Minister will have to put forward strong arguments to support his amendment, because I like the Bill as it stands now. The £20 in 1946 is to be £35 today. It does not seem fair and reasonable to me. I think it would be much better, because of the fluctuating values, to empower the board to decide on the amount of compensation.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: To recommend to the Minister.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, the Minister will control the price.

The Minister for Agriculture: No.

Hon. G. FRASER: Well, I cannot read English if the Minister will not.

The Minister for Agriculture: I can only say yes or no.

Hon. G. FRASER: What more does the Minister want? The Minister has power to say whether or not he will pay compensation, and if the board is incompetent and submits a false value for a beast, the Minister has only to refuse to pay the sum. I think that is a much better set-

up than would be achieved by any alteration to the Bill. I do not like to see any measure contain a set maximum compensation in these days, when prices and values are altering so quickly. It is only once in 12 months that Parliament has an opportunity to alter such a maximum contained in an Act, and that might not be satisfactory in view of the speed with which values change.

Hon. A. L. Loton: A Bill of this nature cannot be introduced in this House.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is an important phase of the argument.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am sure the Minister would be able to induce his colleagues in Cabinet to introduce the requisite Bill in another place if an alteration were found desirable. I think the present provision in the Bill, which would allow the board to decide the amount of compensation, is preferable to including a set maximum. In the hope that the measure will pass the third reading in the same condition as it passes the second reading, I support it.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [5.12]: I am surprised at the Minister's attitude on the measure, as the compensation fund consists substantially of the producers' money, though, of course, the Government does subscribe to it on a £ for £ basis. Naturally, in detremining what compensation shall be paid, the board will take into consideration how much it can pay out of the fund. I think the Bill underlines lack of foresight on the part of the Government in having constituted the Milk Board without a producers' representative on it. If the Minister wished to do the industry a good turn, he could once again place a producers' representative on the board, which would then have some practical idea of the value of animals. I assume that the capacity of the Milk Board, as at present constituted, to assess the value of condemned animals, will be one of the features on which the Minister will play.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are wrong. I will not raise that question, as it is not the point at issue.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: The point at issue at present is whether a maximum amount of compensation should be set at £35 or whether it should be left to the discretion of the Milk Board. If the measure is passed in its present form it may, over the years, be of advantage to the Government, for who knows that the price of such cattle will not fall below £35 in the years ahead?

The Minister for Agriculture: That is provided for.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Yes, by the maximum, but how can that be determined, in view of the present constitution of the Milk Board.

The Minister for Agriculture: Over the years there has been no complaint about the £20 maximum.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: It has been a case of Hobson's choice. The producers have contributed substantially to this fund and, as the years go by, owing to the excellent system that the department has for testing T.B. cattle, the calls on the fund will become less in number.

The Minister for Agriculture: It will become greater when we get more veterinary officers.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I do not see why.

The Minister for Agriculture: Because at present we have not sufficient officers to do the testing.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Many cattle in the State are being privately tested, and those finding their way from such properties into the dairying country will be t.b.-free, and will not be a charge on the fund.

The Minister for Agriculture: They will be of great value.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: The more testing that is done throughout the State, the lower will be the annual total of claims on the fund. I support the Bill.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [5.18]: I can see the Minister's point, because we are dealing not only with the producers' funds but also with Crown funds.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: And the health of the community.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Quite so. The position used to be that anyone selling wholemilk had his cattle tested, and anyone who sells milk to the public has no right to continue using a diseased animal, whether compensation is available or not. In order to avoid severe losses to owners of cattle, the Government agreed to contribute to the fund on a £ for £ basis, and at that time £20 was considered a fair sum as the maximum amount of compensation payable. It is desirable that the compensation paid should not be too high, because there is such a thing as the buying of diseased cattle at a low price in order to receive a higher price for them when they are destroyed. That can be, and I believe has been, done, and so it is desirable that the owner of cattle should not be compensated by a sum greater than the value of the animal destroyed, though, of course, some cows are worth £10 and some £60. The owner of the cow that is destroyed should not receive as compensation a sum greater than its value, lest in that way we encourage people to attempt to trade in diseased cattle.

Hon. L. C. Diver: I do not think anyone would dispute that point.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am sure it is accepted. The opposition to the Bill originally introduced was that the board should have the right to determine the value of the diseased cattle.

Hon. A. L. Loton: The maximum value.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, but in other words it means that the Government has to agree to an outside body determining how much Crown money shall be used.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Subject to the approval of the Minister.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I know that, but it is on the recommendation of the board.

Hon. H. Hearn: Who appointed the board?

Hon. L. CRAIG: The point is that if the Bill is passed in its present form, Crown funds will be appropriated by an outside body.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Does not the Director of Works recommend that certain work shall be carried out subject to the approval of the Minister?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Those who opposed the Bill originally said that £35 should not be the maximum.

Hon. C. H. Henning: No.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is the only difference.

Hon. H. K. Watson: They say the sky is the limit.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is quite right. That is what the Bill means as it stands.

Hon. L. C. Diver: No.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is what it will mean by the Act of Parliament even though it may not be your intention.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, it will mean that by Act of Parliament the board shall determine, within its wisdom, a sum to be paid as compensation.

Hon. L. C. Diver: You know that the sky would not be the limit.

Hon. L. CRAIG: No Government could allow an outside body to have carte blanche authority with regard to contributions to be paid by the Government. The only difference is in the maximum. The Bill says that £35 shall be the maximum.

Hon. C. H. Henning: It says nothing of the sort.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The Minister's proposed amendment says that £35 shall be the maximum and every member has been talking about that figure, but those who support the Bill as it stands say that there shall be no limit, and that is the only difference.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is the danger.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The Government has a right to say that there must be a limit and in this case the Government wants the figure increased from £20 to £35.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is not in the Bill.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I know it is not.

The Minister for Agriculture: But I hope it will be.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes. Everybody who has spoken has mentioned the sum of £35 as the maximum, so apparently I am not alone in my stupidity.

Hon. G. Fraser: We are all agreeing to the second reading.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Let us get down to fundamentals; let us not fool about with this Bill.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: What about doing it at the right time—at the Committee stage?

Hon. L. CRAIG: By that time the Bill will be through.

Hon. G. Fraser: You vote for it and so will I.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The hon. member is trying to make this the Committee stage.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I cannot talk for the number of interjections.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Are you supporting the Bill as it stands, or the proposed amendment?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I wanted to point out the dangers involved. I will support the second reading and let my interjectors have a go.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. Sir Charles Latham—Central—in reply) [5.24]: I pointed out when introducing the Bill that this is not the measure introduced by the Government in another place. An amendment was moved by a private member and was supported by the majority of members in that House; that is the form in which the Bill has had to be introduced into this Chamber. There is one clause to which I cannot agree, and when we reach the Committee stage I will explain to members why I want my proposed amendment carried.

The Government was anxious that this measure should have immediate effect, but because of the amendment moved in another place, the increased compensation cannot come into effect until July, 1953. Originally the Government's idea was to increase the figure from £20 to £35, but the amendment carried by another place stated that an unlimited amount might be paid. In order to give effect to the requested increase in the payment of compensation, I will have to agree to the

second reading, and depend on the judgment of members, in the hope that my amendment will be supported.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 61 amended:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

> That a message be sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting it to amend Clause 2 of the Bill by striking out all the words after the word "words" in line 4 and substituting in lieu the words "thirty-five pounds".

I have listened to the discussions that have taken place. It is not a question of the sum of money that is at stake, but the principle of allowing an outside body, with no power, to appropriate revenue. I cannot remember any other occasion where this has been done and the Government will not set up a precedent in that direction. Mr. Fraser is quite right when he says that in all legislation that involves the payment of compensation by the Crown, a maximum has always been fixed.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Would the money be paid if the Minister did not approve?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but it would leave it very loose; there may be a stubborn Minister who will always say no. I have looked through the files and have not seen any requests made for an increase from £20, but since becoming a Minister I have been asked to increase the amount to £35 and, on behalf of the Government, a Bill was introduced in another place to give effect to that request.

The Bill was brought down by Message from the Governor and I want members to bear that in mind. This House cannot amend a money Bill. I do not mind whether members increase the amount beyond £35 if they so desire. However, we are treating the dairy farmer very well, compared with the way he is treated by other States. In Victoria a contribution is made by means of a stamp tax on all cattle sold. The Minister contributes to the compensation fund for the destruction of tubercular cattle to the extent of £35, of which 60 per cent. is paid from the cattle compensation fund and the balance is paid from Consolidated Revenue. In N.S.W. the Government pays 20 per cent. of the compensation and the balance is paid by the dairy farmers. In Tasmania the contribution is three-quarters of the official valuation with a maximum of £25 for pure-bred cattle and £15 for grade cattle.

Hon. A. L. Loton: What is the date of that valuation?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am reading from telegrams I received today. I do not want to be niggardly with compensation and I am not averse to fixing any reasonable amount. However, members must appreciate that if the Bill is passed, it will establish a precedent that has hitherto been unheard of. That is the only objection to it. While I am a Minister of the Crown I will not give away the rights of the people.

Hon. L. C. Diver: In the final analysis, you have the power. You can say no.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The trouble is I am not initiating the expenditure. Surely the hon. member would not say to a man managing his farm, "You are to have the right to spend that money without my having the right to initiate it"!

Hon. N. E. Baxter: One of your officers would decide to initiate it and then pass the responsibility on to you.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have tried to be fair to members. It is a question of the right of the Minister of the Crown, no matter who he is, to initiate expenditure from Consolidated Revenue or loan funds.

Hon. L. C. Diver: I think the Minister is clouding the issue.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If it is a question of the maximum not being high enough, members can fix it at a higher figure within reason, and then it will be perfectly sound. The Minister could then say yes or no to £100, if that is to be the maximum. However, there will be no limit to the maximum fixed; that is the fault. I do not object to Mr. Henning's asking for a greater maximum. Evidently, it is the greater amount that is worrying the members of this House.

Members interjected: No!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Well, why are we taking it out? Is it to lower the amount? No, of course it is not!

Hon. H. L. Roche: The amount of £35 has never been in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but £20 has been and it has been deleted, and now we propose to insert £35 which is only a maximum in the same way as was £20. I have no objection to making the maximum £50.

Hon. G. Fraser: You cannot.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I know I cannot, but I think Mr. Fraser will see the point I have made, Parliament

has fixed a maximum, and members intend to take away the right of Parliament and hand it to an outside board. Do not let us do that! If members are not satisfied with the £35 maximum, let us try to have it increased in another place. I will leave the responsibility to members of the Committee.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: A lot has been said about how the money would be appropriated, and taken out of the hands of Parliament if we disagreed with this amendment and agreed to the Bill in its original form. Section 57 of the Act reads as follows:—

> 1. For the purposes of this Act there shall be established and kept at the Treasury an account to be called the "Dairy Cattle Compensation Fund."
>
> 2. The Compensation Fund shall be administered by the Board.
>
> 3. The following moneys shall be paid to the credit of the Compensation Fund, that is to say:—
>
> (a) All sums of moneys which by any express provisions of this Act are required to be paid into the Compensation Fund;
>
> (b) all penalties recovered under this Act in respect of offences against this Part of this Act;
>
> (c) all contributions payable to the Compensation Fund as hereinafter provided for by persons holding licenses under this Act, and by the Treasurer, respectively;
>
> (d) any advances received by the Board from the Treasurer for the purposes of the Compensation Fund.

Section 14 of the Milk Act Amendment Act passed in 1948 reads—

> 1. For the purpose of providing moneys for the Compensation Fund—
>
> (a) every licensed dairyman may contribute to the Compensation Fund at a rate to be prescribed by regulations, but not to exceed an amount equal to one-half of one penny per gallon for every gallon of milk sold by him;

The amount was reduced by regulation from ¼d. to ½d. The money that goes into this fund is under the control of Parliament, as will be seen from the sections of the Act I have quoted. I do not think that this is in any way an unlimited amount.

The Minister for Agriculture: I do.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The amount is prescribed and passed by Parliament.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why did they put in £20, for instance?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I do not know.

The Minister for Agriculture: I have told you.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I do not think there is anybody in the Chamber competent to assess the value of those cattle. The members of the Milk Board can give advice to Parliament on the assessment of the value of the dairy cows as good as we are likely to get anywhere. Their job is connected purely and simply with wholemilk. At present I am not concerned whether it is £35, £50 or £100, but I do think the amount should be varied annually with the approval of the Minister; it should not go on for six years. In the Minister's own words the values in the past were half what they are today. The Minister also said that if the Bill went through as it is, we would have to wait until the next financial year before any compensation could be payable.

The Minister for Agriculture: Additional compensation.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am willing to stand by this. Practically every contributor to the fund would be willing to wait to have the matter completely administered by the board rather than have it at odd times—in this case an interval of six years—if the amendment is carried. I hope the proposed request to another place is defeated. If it is, I propose to move, if I am in order, for certain words to be deleted to overcome the Minister's remark that additional compensation would not be available till next July.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Minister said the only point at issue was one of appropriation. I have read the Act and cannot see how any appropriation of funds can be made by the board. Paragraph (b) of Section 14 of the 1948 amending Act reads as follows:—

> (b) the Treasurer, out of moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose, shall contribute to the Compensation Fund an amount equal . . . .

Parliament will say whether it should contribute or not.

The Minister for Agriculture: Parliament puts a limit on it.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Act lays down that Parliament will say what amount should be appropriated for the purpose and the Bill will not alter that.

The Minister for Agriculture: Of course it will. When I put in £35 it will appropriate the £35, if the other House will agree to it.

Hon. G. FRASER: The only other point is that Section 58 reads as follows:—

> If at any time the amount to the credit of the Compensation Fund is not sufficient to provide for the pay-

> ment of an amount of compensation which under this Act the Board is liable to pay, the Treasurer may advance to the Board the amount for the time being required by the Board: and the amount of such advance shall be a charge upon the Compensation Fund and shall be repayable to the Treasurer out of that fund.

There we have all the safeguards in the world. There is nothing in the Act which gives an outside board the right to appropriate money; that is left to Parliament.

The Minister for Agriculture: It appropriates a fixed sum; I agree with you. But there is no sum mentioned. What is being appropriated?

Hon. G. FRASER: There will be a request from the Milk Board.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are pushing it on to the Minister.

Hon. G. FRASER: Who else appropriates but the Minister? The board will have no power at all, only a power of request. If the board went berserk and awarded more compensation than could be met, Parliament could say whether the funds should be made available or not. Before any compensation can be paid it has to be approved by the Minister in charge and that seems to have been overlooked by the Minister for Agriculture. No power is given to the board in any shape or form, and the Act gives the final say to Parliament regarding the amount to be appropriated. The Act gives power to the Treasurer to say whether he will or will not make money available to the board. I am concerned that the money provided for payment by way of compensation will be a just amount, within the limits of the sum which the board can reasonably expect to receive from the Government.

Hon. L. A. Logan: What if it exceeds the appropriation?

Hon. G. FRASER : Then it will take a risk.

Hon. L. A. Logan: So would the Minister.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Minister would be wrong if he agreed to an appropriation that the board could not finance out of its fund. The Minister could easily ascertain the state of the fund at the time compensation was to be paid. Should the board recommend an excessive amount, the Minister, knowing the state of the fund, would immediately veto it.

The Minister for Agriculture: He could act only within the scope allowed by Parliament.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Act provides the necessary power and safeguards the position right through the piece.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Act refers to the amount received from the Treasurer for the purposes of the fund. The money has to be appropriated by Parliament, but there is no fixed sum. In this instance no sum will be fixed.

Hon. G. Fraser: There is an amount fixed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, there is not, Mr. Henning did not deal with the real point at issue. It is not a matter of compensation but of retaining to the Crown the right to control finance. What is proposed is an open cheque with no limit, and the Minister can merely say no or yes. On the other hand, Parliament has the right to say the limit shall be a stated amount. The Parliamentary Draftsman would not submit a Bill containing a provision of that sort.

The Bill has been before this House for some time because I have been trying to get round the difficulty, but the Crown Law officials say this is a money Bill and that it was received in another place with a Message from the Governor recommending appropriation for the purposes of the measure. When it comes to a question of the board fixing the amount of compensation to be paid, members should ask themselves whether those who constitute the board have a knowledge of cattle and their values. Mr. Stannard, who is chairman and secretary of the board, has rendered excellent service in that capacity, but he has no knowledge of cattle.

Hon. C. H. Henning: Mr. Stannard was good enough to be appointed as a Royal Commissioner to deal with the milk industry.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is all right, but Mr. Stannard would not know anything about the value of cattle.

Hon. C. H. Henning: He inspected the farms.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, to find out what the cost of production was. The hon. member should not raise bogies. Personally I am quite satisfied with the personnel of the board. One member, Mr. Robinson, would have some knowledge of cattle.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Why not put a growers' representative on the board?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill has nothing to do with grower-representation on the board.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What are Mr. Robinson's qualifications?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He is an agriculturist but I do not know if he has any cows.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: He has had cows for a long time and knows about values.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course, the hon. member knows everything!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggest that members deal with the question before the Chair and cease holding private conversations across the floor of the Chamber.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I appeal to members not to break down the system that has existed for a long time. For as long back as I can recollect, the idea has always been to retain the control of finance in the hands of the people's representatives who are elected to this and another place. Rather than give the board the right to initiate expenditure, members should leave that authority with the Government and Parliament. In the future there may be a change of Government and I am sure the new Ministers will not be anxious to hand over the control of the finances.

Hon. G. FRASER: I claim that the maximum is already laid down in the Act, which sets out that the moneys to be appropriated for the purposes of the board shall be limited to the amount of appropriation made from time to time to the fund.

The Minister for Agriculture: And that is £129,000.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then that is the maximum.

The Minister for Agriculture: I will not allow it to get away with £129,000.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I cannot understand the Minister.

The Minister for Agriculture: I am not surprised at that!

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That is just what I would expect from the Minister! Not surprised! I do not want to say anything that is out of place, but it is simply the Minister's ego that will not allow him to agree that the board shall decide this matter. He would allow departmental officers to say what was the value of a cow for compensation purposes. Would those officers know any more about the value of cattle than the members of the Milk Board, in whom I have every confidence? Last year amending legislation was introduced to alter the constitution of the Milk Board. This Chamber turned it down and approved of the present board. I cannot understand why the Minister should object to the clause when the final approval of the amount to be paid will rest with him. I oppose the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I take it members realise that, if the Minister's proposal is agreed to, it will not have the effect of actually amending the Bill. It will be a request to another place, if it thinks fit, to amend the Bill in that direction.

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

Ayes	16
Noes	12
Majority for	4

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. C. H. Henning
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. H. Hearn	Hon. H. C. Strickland
	(Teller.)

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

Bill reported with an amendment and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly requesting it to make the amendment, leave being given to sit again on receipt of a message from the Assembly.

BILL—BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY STEEL INDUSTRY AGREEMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 13th November.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [6.6]: This is an important Bill, and one would not have expected the Government, after having investigated the matter which will have such far-reaching effects for the State, to introduce a measure and say to members in effect, "This is the Bill; take it or reject it." I have been one of those who have always endeavoured, so far as lay in my power, to induce industries to establish themselves in this State. The local authority with which I am associated has been responsible within the last few years for inducing quite a number of industries to establish themselves here. I feel that when such action is taken, we must in the first instance protect the people of the State; and, secondly, must see that we obtain something worth while from those industries. Those who have established industries in the Fremantle area have complied with the terms of the agreements they have made with the Fremantle City Council, and have built certain factories and spent sums of money on them in return for land provided and assistance received.

I regret that in this instance the Government has signed an agreement and then has brought down this measure and said to members of this House and another place, "You either agree to this Bill or you do not agree." I believe it is our

duty to foster industry in this State; but, because we do not approve of certain parts of the agreement in this Bill, some of us will be compelled to record a vote against the legislation. That is not a true reflection of our opinion, because we do not desire to prevent industries from being established here. But we contend that whatever agreements are made, they should be equitable and should protect the assets of Western Australia.

Ours has been essentially a primary-producing State, and must continue to be; but in order to achieve a more balanced economy, it is necessary for us to have secondary industries. For that reason, I rise with a certain amount of disappointment, due to the fact that, because I cannot support certain parts of the agreement made between the Government and the Anglo-Iranian company, I shall not be able to record a vote in favour of the measure. The Government should have found some other way of achieving its objective than by bringing down an agreement already signed and asking Parliament to agree to it.

Some of the provisions relate to the amount of ore that may be made available to the State. From memory, I believe that it is provided that the Minister may remove from Mining Reserve No. 1258H at any time during the continuance of the agreement an amount of ore not in excess of 50,000 tons in any one year. If the proposed smelting and steelmaking plant were not established in Western Australia by this company, and another company decided it would like to start here, according to the agreement it would not be allowed to remove more than 50,000 tons of ore in any one year. To my way of thinking, that is not right. No company should be given a monopoly by way of a lease that will prevent another company from establishing the same type of industry here. I believe that the Minister may enter into an agreement for the construction and establishment of an iron-ore and smelting and steelmaking plant having a capacity of not less than 1000,000 tons of pig-iron per year. That is contingent upon Collie coal being suitable for the production of pig-iron. I agree that there is a provision that the company may investigate and conduct research into the suitability of Collie coal for smelting purposes.

Hon. A. R. Jones: "Shall," not "may."

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I think it is "may," As a matter of fact, it cannot be "shall." The company will perhaps make investigations, but there is nothing to say that it "shall" find ways and means of utilising Collie coal for smelting purposes.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Till such time as Collie coal is found to be suitable for the smelting of ore in furnaces, it does not seem likely that a steel-making plant will be established. By the agreement the company has undertaken to maintain and operate a steel-rolling mill having an aggregate capacity of not less than 50,000 tons of steel products per annum, operating on three shifts. Then we find further on in the agreement that the company will operate the mill as may be necessary. That appears to be contradictory because whilst one clause states that the mill will be operated on three shifts, which leads one to believe that it will be operating for the full 24 hours each day, the further provision states that the mill may be operated as is necessary. To my way of thinking one cancels out the other.

We feel that for making the leases of certain iron-ore deposits over to the company, we should expect to have something more definite than the undertaking that a rolling mill will be working. I notice that the company may not export from Australia any of the iron-ore won from the lease. This brings me to the question of the 6d. per ton royalty. If the iron-ore is not to be exported from Australia—and I am not raising any objection to that—it does appear that, unless the company utilises ore to be sent to the Eastern States, no ore will be used from these deposits until such time as the steel-making and smelting plant is erected.

Therefore I fail to see where the 6d. per ton royalty comes into the agreement, because the company will not pay royalty on the 50,000 tons a year that can be made available to the State. There appear to be a number of anomalies in the agreement, and that is the only quarrel I have with the Bill. There should be something more definite. The company will hold the island leases for a period of 50 years with extensions for a further 21 years. That does not mean that the period of the leases will be 71 years—it might be longer.

A question that arises in my mind is that unless the company—and I must come back again to the question of Collie coal, because that seems to be the basis on which these findings have been arrived at—can use Collie coal for smelting purposes, there seems to be no possibility of a steel smelting plant being established here. The leases, in my opinion, have been granted for too long a period altogether. There is nothing definite to say when the steel smelting works will be established. It seems that all we are endeavouring to obtain is a rolling mill that will, according to the agreement, produce 50,000 tons of steel products a year and, I believe, it must be capable of turning out up to 100,000 tons of such products, but there is nothing definite about that.

The leases are for periods that are greater than the biblical span of human life. They will cover at least three generations of people and possibly, like Ten-

nyson's brook, go on for ever. I feel that, in the interests of the State and the people generally, the Government should have taken some of these things into account. The iron-ore deposits in Western Australia are rather extensive. Australia, as a whole, is fortunate that that is so, and we want to use them for Australian purposes.

Hon. L. Craig: The Commonwealth Government can determine that at any time.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: That may be so, but there is nothing to say that it will.

Hon. L. Craig: It is always subject to the control of the Commonwealth Government.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: As I said when I commenced, the Bill has been brought down and the agreement signed, and we are now told we can either accept or reject it. It cannot be amended in any way. If we could have amended it, I have no doubt some small amendments would have been made. Because there are some clauses in the agreement that I cannot bring myself to agree with, and because of the drafting of the Bill and the signing of the agreement, I find I have no alternative other than to vote against the second reading.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South) [7.40]: After giving considerable thought to the circumstances surrounding the introduction of this measure, I cannot honestly bring myself to support the second reading. But such opposition as I have stems from a different line of thought to that expressed by Mr. Davies. As I mentioned when speaking to the Address-in-reply, I think that Australia's resources are strained to such an extent that we are not in a position to continue the development of secondary industries on the same scale as we have done in recent years and at the same time, develop or even sustain primary industries which to me, and to many other people in the community, are still the main bulwark of Australia's economy.

If that is so as regards Australia, I think it is much more so in respect of Western Australia. For my part, for the present and for some time to come, I think this country should adopt a policy of farms before factories; the stimulation of our agricultural industries would be more beneficial to this country than the continued stimulation and expansion of secondary industries. We have reached the stage where I doubt that our economy can continue the carry any further expansion in that regard.

Hon. L. Craig: You do not believe that money should be brought into this country and that private enterprise should be encouraged?

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I do not care how much money is brought into this country but I do not wish to see our resources, in a financial and governmental sense, utilised further to stimulate secondary industries. Every country member of Parliament in Western Australia is complaining because essential public amenities and services required to keep people in the country districts satisfied and happy, are being starved for the want of funds.

Hon. G. Bennetts: You are right there.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I do not want any member to be under any misapprehension as to my attitude in this matter, neither do I wish any member to try to divert my thoughts. I think we have already reached a stage of unbalance and the continued call upon our national resources, for projects such as this, justified as it could be in some respects, will ultimately not be in the best interests of Australia.

I do not necessarily offer any criticism against the State Government for its action in this matter. As I stated previously when speaking on similar lines in a general way, I think we are faced with the necessity of a reorientation of thinking by the people of this country. We must get to the stage where we put first things first and we cannot do that by building up a cock-eyed economy that cannot last indefinitely. This agreement for the establishment of the B.H.P. works at Kwinana will not give to this State, or the industries that require it, any more steel than if the industry were not established; neither will it give them cheaper steel.

The only benefit that can accrue is another avenue of employment and a greater development of our secondary industries. But at the same time the semi-starvation of our rural areas will continue and such resources that will be diverted for this purpose will have to be diverted from the industries which, to my mind, should take prior place. Believing as I do that primary industries should take first place, and as there is a tightening up of our finances and a limitation of our resources, I find myself in the unfortunate position of being unable to support the second reading.

HON. C. W. D. BARKER (North) [7.45]: I cannot support the Bill in any way. I think the measure has been brought down in a most unfair manner. Before the agreement was signed we should have been given a chance to say whether or not it should be amended or agreed to. I warn members that if this Bill ever reaches the Committee stage we can do nothing about amending the agreement. Clause 2 states—

> The agreement entered into by the Treasurer for and on behalf of the State with the Broken Hill Prop-

> rietary Company Limited and executed on the seventh day of October, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-two, a copy of which is set forth in the First Schedule to this Act, is approved, ratified and confirmed.

We can do nothing about the agreement once we have agreed to Clause 2, and the more I study this measure the more I realise the value of this House as a non-party House of review. We can really get down to tin-tacks and give legislation which is placed before us our unbiased attention.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Mr. Fraser denied that the other night.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I would like it clearly understood where I stand in regard to B.H.P. I have no quarrel with the company; I think it is a most efficient and well-organised concern.

Hon. H. Hearn: I bet they are glad to know that!

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The company has helped Australia in its march to nationhood and during times of war met all the calls that were made upon it for the production of steel and other products. The company has done a great deal for Australia.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Then why not help it to help us?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I will point out a way that we can help it. I have no objection to B.H.P. coming to Western Australia and the proof of its efficiency is shown in the agreement. The directors of B.H.P. are the guardians of their shareholders and naturally they have tried to get the best possible agreement with the Government. They have done so in no uncertain manner.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They have put it over the Government properly.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The principal aim of the directors is to pay big dividends to the shareholders.

Hon. L. Craig: Do you know how many shareholders there are?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The directors have done an excellent job. I have no quarrel with the company but I have a quarrel with the Government which is the guardian of the people of this State and of the natural resources which belong to Her Majesty the Queen and the people who live here as well as those who will live here in the future. The Government intends to give that matter away and it is hard to imagine that any Government, entrusted with such an obligation could make an agreement such as this. I fearlessly say that the Government has given away so much for so little, in spite of holding the best bargaining hand it was possible to have. Let us take a look at this agreement. Paragraph (a) of the First Schedule reads as follows:—

> The State of Western Australia is desirous that an integrated iron and steel industry should be established in the said State and has requested the company whose principal business is that of iron and steel masters in the Commonwealth of Australia to assist in that objective.

I cannot see anything wrong with that. If anyone wanted to start an integrated iron and steel industry in Western Australia, this company would be the right people to go to, and they would be the right people to ask. If the B.H.P. had any intentions of starting an integrated iron and steel industry in this State, I would then say that the Government had made a fair bargain. But I maintain that B.H.P. will never establish an iron and steel industry in the State.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: What is your authority for saying that?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The facts as stated in the agreement. It is intended to use coke from Collie coal. Let us see what it says about that in the agreement. Paragraph (b) of the First Schedule reads as follows:—

> The company from its experience of smelting iron-ores and from investigations already made by its technical officers has advised the State that the company has satisfied itself and the State accepts that a practical and economical method of using coal of the type found in the Collie coalfield of the said State for the production of pig-iron has not yet been developed.

I know it has not been developed. There is no practical known method for coking coal such as is found in the Collie coalfields, so that it might be suitable for use in blast furnaces, with a view to turning iron-ore into pig-iron. Not only has it been tried in this country, but England and Germany have also found the same difficulty with the coal which they have, and which is similar to that found at Collie.

I might add that in this particular regard the Germans are the leading scientists. Everywhere it has been found that the type of coal mined at Collie is unsuitable for coking for use in blast furnaces, but—and I am afraid there are many ifs and buts in his agreement—we may get an integrated iron and steel industry in this State: Here, again, we are not bound to do so under the terms of this agreement. I will discuss that later. Let us have another look at the agreement. Paragraph (c) of the First Schedule reads—

> The company has agreed in collaboration with the State to continue investigations and research into the use of such coals in primary furnaces for the conversion of iron-ore into pig-iron.

We also find in paragraph (d) the following:—

> The company has at the further request of the State agreed to establish, maintain and operate within the said State a steel rolling mill having the capacity hereinafter mentioned and for that purpose to carry out certain works and to do certain things auxiliary to or connected with such establishment.....

I do not think there is any need for me to read any further in order to make the point I wish to explain. In my opinion, it means that if Parliament ratifies the agreement, all we shall get in return for a large proportion of the wealth which belongs to the State, is one small rolling mill, which will be established at Kwinana.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: And what will we get if we fail to ratify the agreement?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: We will come to that later. That is all the company is bound to do—to establish a small steel rolling mill which it is estimated will cost the company £4,000,000—

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: A tiny little thing.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: —and it is to have an annual production capacity of not less than 50,000 tons. Unfortunately the majority of the people in this State believe that at this mill B.H.P. will process iron-ore and produce steel. That is entirely wrong because the iron-ore will be shipped from Cockatoo and Koolan Islands, and possibly from Irvine Island.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is not so.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I heard the Minister for Agriculture say that the hon. member knew everything about everything, but this is one matter about which he knows nothing.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Is it something about which you know everything?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Exactly. Would the hon. member not make a better agreement than that?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I suggest the hon. member address the Chair.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: As I was saying when I was so rudely interrupted, ore will be mined at Cockatoo, Koolan and Irvine Islands; it will be shipped to Port Kembla and Newcastle where it will be reduced to iron and manufactured into steel billets; those steel billets will again be sent to Western Australia and rolled into steel products. That is what the company proposes to do—nothing more. It already has a plant at Port Kembla and at Newcastle large enough to produce all the steel we might want in Western Australia for many years to come. B.H.P. is not coming here for the benefit of Western Australia; it is coming here for its own benefit. There are other small things the company has contracted to do. It has to erect a retaining wall to hold the dredged material in No. 1 reclamation area as shown on the plan, to construct a wharf of the length of 600 ft. and pay the nominal sum of 1s. 4d. a ton wharfage up to 100,000 tons for inward cargo and a lesser amount for all tonnage over that figure. That is all the company has to do. To receive what? That is the most important question, in my opinion.

It is not a matter of whether or not this is the time to establish the industry; it is not a matter of whether we are going to have this industry in Western Australia. What matters is the price we have to pay for it. In the limited time I have had at my disposal to look into these matters, I have found that this is what the State proposes to do in return. It proposes to renew the leases now held on Cockatoo Island to work iron-ore and to extend the term of the mineral leases for 50 years with a right of renewal for periods of 21 years; it also proposes to hand over the leases of Koolan and Irvine Islands for a period of 71 years with the right of renewal for periods of 21 years. This means that B.H.P. is to have a virtual monopoly—

Hon. H. Hearn: The company has it now.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: —of all the iron-ore deposits in this State for a paltry sum of 6d. per ton royalty. Goodness knows, that is enough! But that is not all the State has to do. Under the agreement the State also has to supply 600 acres of land including an area for certain works which I have mentioned; to provide adequate power and water, rail and road services, to provide 4,000,000 gallons of water per week, to make available certain natural resources, and, to protect the company's rights, the State has to maintain, at its own cost, the railway to the boundary of the works, to keep suitable roads in repair, and to surface the roads with bitumen.

I remind members that we in the North-West cannot get bitumen for our roads. A section of the Rockingham-rd. is to be closed and the State has to undertake the dredging and ensure the berth being dredged to a depth of 30 ft. at low-water. That is the berth shown on the P.W.D. plan. The State has also to carry out additional dredging, giving a bottom width of 300 ft., and to maintain it at its own cost and deposit all the spoil in the reclaimed area shown on the plan. The company is to be exempt from price-fixing, which, in my opinion, means that if the company establishes a small steel rolling mill at Kwinana—

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Who said it would be a small one?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: A mill with a capacity of 50,000 tons is, in my opinion, only a small one.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Yours is not a very good opinion.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: When the mill is established at an estimated cost of £4,000,000, the State will not be able to interfere with the selling price of the company's products. If the company wishes to charge an extra 1s. on its products until the £4,000,000 is recovered, the State will not be in a position to prevent it.

Let us now consider the deposits of iron-ore at Cockatoo Island, Koolan Island and Irvine Island. These islands are situated in Yampi Sound in the Buccaneer Archipelago, approximately 90 miles from Derby. I know those islands well and appreciate the magnitude of the iron-ore deposits. As I have worked on those islands, I can claim to speak with some authority. The deposits are of sedimentary origin, and not sulphides as a lot of people thought at the beginning.

All the ore on the islands will be oxidised ore to any depth to which the deposits can be worked. That in itself is a very important matter, because the best ore for blast furnaces is oxidised ore. The sulphide ore is 50 per cent. sulphide, and the cost of smelting it is much higher than for oxidised ore, and it produces an iron of poor quality. This means that all the ore in the deposits on the three islands is of the very highest quality and has a metallic content of 67 or 68 per cent.

On Cockatoo Island alone, the estimated quantity in sight is 40,000,000 tons—20,000,000 tons above high-water mark and 20,000,000 tons below high-water mark—all of which can be mined. In other words, Cockatoo Island has 40,000,000 tons of high-grade ore. Some years ago the State Mining Engineer estimated that there were 92,000,000 tons at Koolan Island. Now that we know it is possible to mine the ore below high-water mark without entering the sulphide zone, it means that there are approximately 200,000,000 tons of iron-ore on Koolan Island that can be worked.

I have not the figures for the quantity of ore in the Irvine Island deposit. I have been there, and I should say that the lode in sight on the south end towards Cockatoo Island probably contains 20,000,000 tons. If there were only 200,000,000 tons of ore in Yampi Sound, it would mean that at the rate B.H.P. intends to use it, namely, 1,000,000 tons a year, there would be enough ore on Koolan Island alone to last the company for 200 years. On Cockatoo Island, there would be enough to last another 40 years. This is what the company is to receive, on condition that it establishes a small steel-rolling mill at Kwinana.

Would it not have been better had the Government said to the company, "We will give you a further lease or a perpetual lease and allow you to move all the iron-ore that can be mined on Cockatoo Island conditionally upon your establishing a steel-rolling mill at Kwinana, and if you establish an integrated iron and steel industry in this State we shall grant you further leases on Koolan and Irvine Island"? I ask members in all sincerity whether that would not have been a better agreement than this one.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What is the difference?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: We are giving away everything—all the iron-ore we possess in the North-West—for one small steel rolling mill.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You believe in a dog-in-the-manger policy?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Mr. Parker on the recovery of his voice, which he apparently lost last week! As I was saying before the shadow of my honourable opponent crossed my path, the hon. member asks me what the difference is! I cannot find in the agreement any penalty clause to operate against B.H.P., but I can find plenty of penalties against any other company wishing to set up here. It would be penalised to such an extent as to make it almost impossible to start in opposition to B.H.P.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: To what clause are you referring that imposes penalties on others?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I shall come to that later.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: With you, everything is to come later.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I can see that the hon. member knows nothing about the matter.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I can see that you do not.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Any other company intending to establish an integrated iron and steel industry in this State, would be required by the Government to enter into a bond of £100,000.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: The B.H.P. is putting up £4,000,000.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Could not the hon. member, as a business man, have made a better agreement than this?

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I would not wish to.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Then my idea of business must be cock-eyed.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I think it is.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Tell us of some of the attempts that have been made to develop these iron-ore deposits.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If any other company had the courage to start a steel industry in this State, it would forfeit its bond of £100,000 unless within 12 months it had made a start on the construction of the works. Yet there is no such provision to operate against B.H.P. Another company, too, would be able to obtain up to 200,000 tons of iron-ore and no more, and would have to buy it from B.H.P., except for 50,000 tons that could be obtained from Koolyanobbing. The rest of the ore required would have to be bought from B.H.P. and bought at the price asked by B.H.P. Can anybody imagine a company coming to Western Australia to start an integrated iron and steel industry under such a handicap as that? This agreement will have another effect; it will prevent any further expansion of the experiments being carried out at Wundowie.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: A big loss has been incurred there.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: At Wundowie, pig-iron has been produced from iron-ore by using charcoal as a fuel and a very successful experiment it has been.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: A very expensive experiment.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Members should appreciate that the Wundowie plant is merely a pilot plant that was installed in the hope of proving whether such an industry could be started in this State.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: And it has been costing us £30,000 a year.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Although it is only a pilot plant, the balance sheet this year will show that it is almost paying its way. I admit that some financial loss has been incurred there.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Great loss.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Can any member mention a company that has started to pay dividends from the outset? How many members have been interested in a business that has been able to pay dividends immediately?

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Wundowie has been operating for 10 years.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Taking Wundowie and the sawmills, we cannot judge their worth by £. s. d. only.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: But you are doing that when you speak of B.H.P.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The work at Wundowie was an experiment to ascertain whether such an industry could be established in this State, and, as such, it has proved to be very successful. If we look at the Wundowie project from a broad viewpoint, we will find that it is a paying proposition. The time has arrived to expand that industry by the establishment in this State of an integrated iron and steel industry based on charcoal fuel.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: By whom should it be established?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: By the people of the State or by the B.H.P. I have no objection to that company coming to Western Australia, but I do object to this rotten agreement.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You have misquoted it all the way through.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I have already said that the hon. member knows nothing about the matter.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Re-read Clause 3 (a).

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: We have the finest timber in the world for the manufacture of charcoal with which to reduce our iron-ore to pig-iron.

Hon. L. Craig: And waste our good timber.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: No good timber is used for the manufacture of charcoal at Wundowie. All the good timber is put through the saws and sold, only the waste timber being used for the manufacture of charcoal.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: A lot of good timber goes through the furnaces there.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: B.H.P. could establish a charcoal-iron and steel industry in this State but have no intention of beginning an integrated iron and steel industry here. Surely no one thinks that this huge company, to which we are asked to give a monopoly of practically the whole of the State's iron-ore resources, is coming here for the benefit of Western Australia! No, it is for the benefit of the company.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Do you think it will benefit Western Australia?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I am sure it would if we had a decent agreement with the company, under which it would be bound to establish here an integrated iron and steel industry; but the present agreement contains nothing to that effect, being constructed of nothing but "ifs" and "buts." The company could start an integrated iron and steel industry here, based on charcoal fuel.

Hon. C. H. Henning: And how much per year would they lose on that?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: What will the North get out of this deal? Nothing at all. Measured in £. s. d., these huge iron-ore deposits are priceless. Iron-ore is the foundation and the basic material for the development of any country. The huge deposits at Cockatoo, Irvine and Koolan Islands are of immense value and that wealth would go a long way towards developing the north. In those deposits we have 200,000,000 tons of ore which would last B.H.P. for 200 years, and that is not

all; pig-iron today is valued at £20 per ton so that 200,000,000 tons of ore represent a huge sum of money.

Hon. R. J. Boylen. A mere bagatelle.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: The world's supplies of iron-ore are running out. The B.H.P. has only ten years supply left at Iron Knob and so the company would have to get ore from Western Australia when that was gone. Of course, we have to keep the company going, because it is the backbone of Australia's iron and steel industry. I have no complaint in that regard, but I repeat that we have made a rotten agreement with the company. If we exclude the Arctic as a source of iron-ore to meet world demands, the position is found to be extremely serious. The deposits in Western Australia are of immense value. I recently read an article in "The West Australian"—that worthy spokesman of ours—in which was discussed the North, its development and potential wealth. The article said that some day this wealth would be developed and would be of great benefit to the south; the people in the south would some day benefit by the great wealth that would be exploited in the North. It stated further that the people of the North, the pioneers of the North—the people who have lived there and guarded its treasures—would be entitled to a lion's share of the wealth—

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: A former Labour Premier did not think so.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: But all we have had up to date is a lot of broken promises, and now we are being given a slap in the face.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: You are going to get a lot of Broken Hill, as well as broken promises.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: What has this company done for the North?

Hon. L. Craig: What should it have done?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: It has done nothing but mine the iron-ore at Cockatoo Island. The ore from these deposits will be lifted in the company's own ships and not in State ships. It will be taken direct to the Eastern States from whence will be brought all the company's requirements of stores and labour. For this State it will do less and less—

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is utter nonsense.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: It will do nothing for the North but mine the iron-ore. Every time a State ship calls at Cockatoo Island with 10 or 20 tons of perishables—that is all the company buys from Western Australia—or a few passengers, it costs the State from £250 to £300. We are actually paying B.H.P. to remain in the North and mine our iron-ore.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The same applies to a lot of other people.

Hon C. W. D. BARKER: That happens two or three times a month, and then we wonder why the State Shipping Service is losing £450,000 per year. When will the Government wake up to the fact that the North is a vast storehouse of treasure that could be of untold value to the people of this State? It seems that that wealth is to be given to this company for nothing but a small steel rolling mill—

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: A mill costing £4,000,000.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: If the company would bind itself to establish an integrated iron and steel industry in this State, I would say the agreement was reasonably fair, but, under the present terms of the agreement, we will never see that industry established here and we shall remain for ever the Cinderella State. The star of Western Australia will always represent the poor relation in the flag of the Commonwealth, and simply so that the B.H.P. can pay big dividends to its shareholders. Surely the people who have worked and pioneered the North, living in remote areas and lacking all amenities enjoyed by those in the South, are entitled to something—

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Why did you go up there?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Those people have a right to some say as to what is to be done with all the wealth in that part of the State and whether it should be disposed of to B.H.P. Under this agreement the North will get nothing at all and as a representative of that area, I protest with all the force in my power that this is a rotten agreement. The people of the North have been ignored and sold out, and are now being asked to stand and watch the riches of the country handed over for practically nothing to B.H.P., because the company is legally bound to do nothing in return for these leases except establish a small steel rolling mill at Kwinana.

The agreement makes success impossible for any other company, which might intend coming to this State to establish an integrated iron and steel industry. The people of the North are known the world over for their hospitality, but this company is one guest that will not be welcomed to the North, because of the terms of this agreement. We, as a Parliament have no right to give away the wealth of the State, thus placing in jeopardy the future of our people, without first asking the consent of the people. Let us tell the Premier and his Government to call for a verdict from the people.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Would you fight an election on this issue?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Yes, any day. Let us go to the people and ask them to decide the issue. They should have a say in the matter and so I appeal again to members to ask themselves whether the Government has made a good deal or a rotten one in this instance. Personally, I say it stinks. Let us send this measure back where it came from and demand that a referendum be taken of the people before we give into the keeping of B.H.P. the future of the industrial development of this State.

It is quite easy to accept this agreement and say, "This is a good agreement", because it suits a few people, but does it suit the Western Australian people as a whole? I challenge the Government to go to the people and ask them their opinion.

If it does that, I am sure they will not sanction this agreement. Again I warn members that if the Bill goes into Committee we can do nothing with this agreement after we have passed Clause 2. This measure is one of the most cleverly-worded pieces of legislation ever brought to this House. I have no doubt or fear in saying that.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: How long have you been here?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: I have not been here long, as the hon. member knows, but I have always been interested in the legislation brought forward and in the politics of my country. Perhaps I am not as ignorant as the hon. member would have the rest of the House believe. It is only right and fair that this agreement should go to the people and let them decide whether we should hand these leases over to this huge company holus bolus, because once it spreads its net through Western Australia and we are grabbed up by it, we will never get away from it.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: You have broken your promise! You promised to tell me what would happen to this agreement if we did not ratify it, and you have not done so.

On motion by Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment.

2. State (Western Australian) Alunite Industry Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—PLANT DISEASES (REGISTRATION FEES) ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North—in reply) [8.36]: I am rather disappointed at the reception the Bill has received from some members of this House. It is only an amendment to the existing Act, and all sorts of excuses and irrelevant arguments have been put forward to detract from the real purport of the measure and the effect it would have on an urgent problem that is today expanding and becoming increasingly difficult as the years pass.

In short, it is developing into a racial problem, which is an artificial racial problem and not a natural one. It is a problem of mixed blood in aborigines; it is a problem that is growing through the application and definition of the Native Administration Act. Only by the definition set out in the Act are these people classed as natives. In fact, a great many of them are not black; some of them are even more white than black. Yet, because of the line that has been drawn by the definition, they are regarded as original natives of the country but are, by reason of the Act, kept down to the standards of those originals. All the Bill seeks is to free those people from the application of the Act.

During the debate on the Bill, we have been round the world once or twice, but the arguments put forward have had nothing to do with these people, with the exception of a few extravagant arguments submitted by some members that a catastrophe would befall the State if the natives were given citizenship rights. I contend that it would not make the slightest bit of difference. If we accepted these people, it would encourage them to live better and would certainly brighten their outlook, improve their morale and help them to become decent citizens. A great number of them have overcome that obstacle and grown away from their native habits. Why should a small section of them that does not live up to present-day standards keep the remainder from enjoying the privileges granted by this legislation?

There is no outlook whatever for them. They can acquire citizenship rights under the Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act; but to make application irks them. To them, it is something that is a perpetual annoyance and is always a chip on their shoulder, which they do not like carrying around with them. The Bill seeks to achieve what the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Moseley, suggested in 1935 should be done, but his recommendations were not acted upon. An extract from his report reads—

(3) That the definition of "half-caste," in Section 2 of the Act, be amended to include persons of aboriginal origin in a remote degree:

It will be necessary to insert a safeguarding provision that persons within this category who are properly cared for will not be brought within the ambit of this definition. It is suggested, therefore, that, before including a person of this category, an application should be made to a magistrate who would decide on the merits of the case whether or not such person should be subject to the Act.

That is the very essence of the Bill; that is what it is seeking to do for all castes. If the Bill is passed, the definition of "native" will read—

. . . . any person of less than full blood who is descended from the original inhabitants of Australia, or from their full blood descendants, and who is by order of a magistrate ordered to be classed as a native under this Act, or requests that he be classed as a native under this Act.

That complies with what Mr. Commissioner Moseley suggested in 1935, after a 12 months' tour of the State inquiring into the native problem. Members opposed to the Bill have said it is sudden and too wide in its application. They say it would be a catastrophe. The Minister even went so far as to say that the Police Force would have to be doubled. That is the most stupid argument that could be put up.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: To handle 3,000 people.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Yes, to handle 3,000 people spread throughout Western Australia.

The Minister for Transport: I said that that was the remark made to me.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is just kite-flying, as Mr. Roche has said on several occasions. To give members an idea of the number of people that this Act affects, I will quote some figures. The total number of adult males of mixed blood who come under the administration of the Act is 1,969, and the females total 1,662. There are 2,858 children, approximately 2,000 of whom are in institutions.

These people are distributed as follows:—In the East Kimberleys there are 120. East Kimberley has two towns, Hall's Creek and Wyndham, and, I think, includes 51 cattle stations. In West Kimberley there are 263. That area includes Derby and Broome, where I would say at least 95 per cent. of these people reside. In the Pilbara district there are 257, and the natives are spread through the towns of Port Hedland, Marble Bar, Nullagine, Wittenoom Gorge, Roebourne and Onslow. There are those six towns in that part of the State and I expect about 60 stations, as well as numerous mining leases. There are also some mines being worked including big ones like the Blue Speck and the Comet. There are also mines at Ragged Hills. The natives are spread throughout the community in those parts—257 of them.

In the Gascoyne area there are 171 and in the townships of Carnarvon and Shark Bay most of those natives are living. There are 90 sheep stations in the district and I very much doubt if those stations would average one native apiece. In the Eastern Goldfields district there are 333 and in the Murchison 774. In the Great Southern, which takes in the South-West, as well, there are 1,033.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Where do those figures come from?

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: They have been taken from the annual report of the Commissioner of Native Affairs, and that report has been on the Table of the House ever since the opening of Parliament. Strange to say, not one member, during the course of the debate on the Bill, has quoted from that report, apart from myself. That is the official report of the Department of Native Affairs and it embodies all the facts. The trouble with the opponents of this legislation is that they have based most of their adverse comment upon old-time prejudices. If that is not the position, then the opposition has been simply political.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Rubbish!

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It must be one or the other. I shall refer to portions of the report and from what I can make of it, I should say that the Commissioner of Native Affairs would welcome this legislation. I do not know whether that is his personal opinion, but, in view of his report, I should say that he would welcome it. To make such a stupid assertion as that attributed to a policeman by the Minister to the effect that the passing of the Bill would necessitate the doubling of the Police Force, simply means that that policeman does not know anything of what he is talking about and such a man should not be in the Force.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: He funked it.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Policemen have handled the natives in the North before they were tamed and educated as they are today, and they were young policemen who did that.

The Minister for Transport: Did the natives in those days enjoy citizenship rights, go into hotels and so on? I mean, in bulk.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The drink question has been brought forward, mostly by Mr. Baxter, and, of course, we had references to politics and plonk from Mr. Roche. I do know something about the

drink angle. I kept a hotel for four years in the midst of a population that was 50 per cent. coloured. I had no trouble whatever with them. The coloured people were good customers and equally as well behaved as any of the whites who came into the bar. The natives conducted themselves just as well and could hold their liquor equally as well as the whites. It is rubbish to say that an aboriginal goes mad if he has a few drinks.

Hon. G. Bennetts: There are certain types of white people who go mad from drink.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The natives did not cause trouble anywhere in the bush. I submit that if these people were allowed to walk into a hotel bar and drink as humanly as is possible in these days of what I may describe as the "great Australian swill," they would conduct themselves equally as well as the whites. I served many of these people in the railway refreshment room when the natives were in the Army. They were never debarred from the canteens and messes or anywhere else when they were in uniform. Later on, however, I experienced the humiliation of having to refuse to serve them after they had been discharged and were in civilian garb once more. I had to adopt that course because they had not got their citizenship rights and had not what have been described as their dog licenses. I say, without any fear of successful contradiction, that if these people were allowed to have their drink, we would get away from the blackmarketing and grog-running—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Hear, hear!

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: —that members seem so keen to set up. I have not heard one member refer to any good types, but only to the poorer class of native, who possibly could not fulfil the requirements and responsibilities of citizenship.

Hon. H. L. Roche: I referred to a lad I know in Perth.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That is correct. The hon. member referred to a steward working in a club. Possibly that is a coloured person whom I know as well. He belongs to a large family, the members of which conduct themselves very honourably. They live in their own homes, carry on their own businesses, have their own cars and are independent of anyone else. They have to be.

Hon. L. Craig: They have citizenship rights and are not restricted.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: But they can lose those rights.

Hon. L. Craig: Only if they misbehave themselves.

Hon. C. H. STRICKLAND: They certainly do not like the position in which they find themselves.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: A white man can misbehave himself, but he does not lose his citizenship rights.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: References have been made during the course of the debate to what the effect of extending these privileges to 3,000 adults would mean and members have talked of the catastrophe that would confront the community generally if the natives were granted citizenship rights. That talk was so much eye-wash and rot. Country members said that they would need more protection. Protection from what? Heavens above, the proposal is not to loose a lot of savages to roam round the country! What the devil do they want protection from! They will have more protection if these people are given the consideration that is suggested.

We, as white people, have our responsibilities. If we do not keep clean, the health authorities will be after us. If we go into a hotel and get drunk the police would deal with us. Men who conduct hotels have to comply with the requirements of the Licensing Act, and so the natives will have to comply with the requirements of the law as applied to them. I have had a lot of experience in conducting hotels and I have not suffered any prosecution.

I have been in that position for over 17 or 18 years and not in quiet places, but in centres where I had to deal with maddened troops going through in convoys. I never struck any trouble. There were plenty of arguments, but I had to put up with that. Mr. Craig claimed that the natives would lose the protection that they enjoy at present. I would like to know just what protection the Native Administration Act gives them. On the other hand, I know that it restricts them in various directions and certainly does not afford them protection. It is all right to talk about the full-bloods and even those of lighter colour who have never been in contact with civilisation.

Unfortunately the legislation applies to people who are living in civilised conditions, and that is quite wrong. There are many restrictions upon them. The articles that have appeared in the Press have provided a very fair outline of some of those restrictions. We know the position of the Police Force. Its duty is to keep the natives away from hotels in the city. No coloured man can go into a hotel unless he is known, because he is at once asked for his permit, and these people do not like it. They regard it as degrading. Mr. Logan said that the missions did not want citizenship rights granted to the natives and in that connection mentioned the Church of Christ. I do not think Mr. Logan was correctly informed in that regard.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I got the information from the head of that church.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The missions are training the natives in preparation for their gaining citizenship rights.

Hon. L. Craig : We all agree with that.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: But the hon. member will not give them a start.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Of course we will.

Hon. L. Craig: That is so.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Had the recommendation of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Moseley, been adopted in 1935, it would have saved us from the position we are now in with 3,000 of these natives, or a total of 6,000 including the children. Instead of that number, there would be many less. Mr. Craig argued that more protection would be required for the womenfolk. By this measure the native women will be protected from the bad whites. Mr. Moseley took a very serious view of cohabitation with native women and he suggested that the Act should be amended to read as follows:—

> That Section 43 of the Act be amended by inserting a new subsection as follows in lieu of the existing Subsection (1)—
>
> (1) Any person (except an aboriginal or halfe-caste)—
>
> (a) who habitually lives with aborigines or half-castes or with any aboriginal or half-caste not his wife or her husband, or
>
> (b) who cohabits with or or has sexual intercourse with any aboriginal or half-caste who is not his wife or her husband, shall be liable to imprisonment for a period not less than six months and not more than two years.

Thus he advocated straightout imprisonment for anyone found guilty of that offence.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That would have been sound legislation.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: When a Bill was subsequently introduced in Parliament based on the findings of the Royal Commissioner, it did not contain such a severe penalty. It provided for a fine of £50 or imprisonment for six months. Mr. Craig led this Chamber in action which removed that minimum penalty altogether. There is a maximum penalty of imprisonment for some years and a fine of up to £200, but there is no minimum penalty. Some very good stories were put up in justification of that, and I would advise members to read the parliamentary debates for 1936 and follow the passage of that Bill through this Chamber.

There are some very striking references there to what happened to Mr. Commissioner Moseley's proposed penalty which, had it been enacted, would have resulted in fewer than 6,000 half-castes with whom we now have to deal. Instead of these actions being discouraged, they were more or less condoned. Mr. Craig related two stories the other night which had been told him and which he used to get penalties reduced; but they are a little different in "Hansard" of 1936. Mr. Craig said then—

> I have heard of a boundary rider going to a windmill with a 20,000-gallon tank, seeing there a sylph-like figure rising from the water, with no clothes on —

Hon. L. Craig: I was very poetic then!

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The extract continues —

> and receiving an invitation to join her in the tank.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That was very kind of her!

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Mr. Craig continued—

> It is only natural that in such circumstances a young man would get into trouble. I have heard of men on Kimberley stations who sleep out to enjoy the cool air and who, on returning to their camps, have found young lubras under their blankets.

From what I have seen when travelling through the North for over 30 years I would say that if either of those two things happened, it was because these more or less half-serfs had been frightened into it, or else had been familiar beforehand; because the power of the stick—or the waddy as they call it—is still in evidence in many places.

I would not for one moment believe that any of these people would have been in either of those circumstances, or have been responsible for either of those actions, unless it had occurred before or they had been frightened. That is my opinion; I may be wrong, but I think I am right. To support the removal of protection for these women, Mr. Craig likened them to some of the women on our streets in Perth. He said—

> The station people have to batch or train natives or half-castes to do the work and in many cases they do it quite satisfactorily. Now here, in the metropolitan area, anyone of us can cohabit or have sexual intercourse with any girl indiscriminately, and there is no law to prevent us. Brothels are looked upon as a necessary evil. The fact that they are permitted to exist shows that they are a necessary evil. Yet when we come to the North-West where these, shall we say, facilities are not available,

> and a young man happens to fall—and it is only natural he should; if people do these things down here, they might easily do the same there—he is subject to a minimum penalty of six months imprisonment or a fine of £50.

And so it went on. Eventually the penalty was reduced to three months and £25. But that was not sufficient. So the Bill was recommitted later, and again all sorts of arguments were submitted, as you know, Mr. President, because you were here and listened to the debate. When the Bill got into Committee and Mr. Craig was successful in his attempt to reduce the penalty to three months' imprisonment, he said—

> If the Committee agrees to insert "three" months, I will agree, but certainly I think six months too harsh. I discussed this matter with Mr. Moseley, the Royal Commissioner, only a couple of days ago. He said he was not concerned with the behaviour of white men in the Kimberleys, except to protect them from disease, which is the main danger up there. I, too, am anxious to protect any youth that may be sent up there, and I say he should not be unduly penalised for what might happen because of his inexperience.

There is a strange thing! Mr. Moseley, as Commissioner, recommends straighout imprisonment for six months without the option of a fine, but when Mr. Craig discusses the subject with him, that does not matter: three months is quite enough, and six months is too harsh! Rather strange things occur. During that debate the then Chief Secretary went on to give some facts as to what was occurring up there and instanced many cases of white men living on stations with full-bloods and half-castes who bore many children. But the stations did not sack those fellows or send the women away. They kept them there having children year after year. The pastoralists did not care one iota.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Thirty bob a week and a gin!

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There was a Mr. Bolton in the House who was very perturbed, and he suggested that they should sterilise these unfortunate women. That was his way of approaching the problem. Then we had Mr. Hamersley, who represented the farming areas where the big majority of these people are now situated. He said—

> A lighter penalty should be provided. There is a tendency for young men to refuse to go into the back country. We know the difficulty of getting white men to go there, and a severe strain is being inflicted upon the people who are there. A fine of £25, or even of £10, would be fairly heavy, and we have to remember that a penalty of imprisonment would make it more difficult for stations to obtain the employees they require.

At that stage, Mr. Parker interjected, "You are not suggesting that the gins are an inducement?" Well, of course, Mr. Hamersley was not! Members talk about protecting these people and use extravagant language to justify a case against protecting them.

Hon. L. Craig: That Bill dealt with natives and you are dealing with half-castes.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Bill dealt with the production of half-castes.

Hon. L. Craig: It was a Bill for natives, and you know all about it. Your Bill deals with half-castes, and natives do not come into it at all.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That clause was to prevent the production of half-castes. I have no personal argument with members about this matter; but we do want to keep on the track, and I contend that the statement that the existing legislation protects these people is just rubbish. If they want a drink, they will get it. An attempt was made to keep drink out of America, but how did they get on? We cannot debar these people from obtaining drink.

Hon. L. Craig: We must not make it easy for them.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There will be control if they are allowed to have a drink. Then the argument has been submitted that the Bill merely gives them the right to vote. "The West Australian" accused me of looking for votes. I have never heard such a paltry argument, and from a paper which has on its directorate men who have become wealthy out of the industry of the very people with whom we are dealing and who have been good friends to them. As Mr. Craig said, they were good to his family for 50 years. Of course they were! They have been brought up very strictly, but I doubt whether any of them on the station could read or write after 50 years.

The Minister for Transport: That has nothing to do with that comment. You are referring to a footnote to a letter you wrote and the gentleman to whom you refer now had nothing whatever to do with that footnote.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I do not know who had anything to do with it; but I think that whoever did should have the necessary courage to put his name to it, so that people could know who is who. It is very fine to sit behind a big pad with plenty of paper and attack anybody willy-nilly, with nobody knowing who one is! I could be quite a good fellow at that myself. I want to say quite honestly that so far as looking for votes is concerned, it does not worry me one

iota whether the people reject me or not when the time comes. While I am here, I will try to do the honest thing.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I do not think there is anything against the caste people on this issue.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There has been plenty against them. Somebody wrote a letter published in yesterday's paper but would not sign his name. The Minister complained about natives writing on their own behalf and not signing their names, so that nobody knows who they are. I do not know who they are; but the same thing happened yesterday. Some country man wrote to the paper degrading them, and did so with only one object in view, namely, to have an influence on this Bill. But he would not put his name to his letter. I am not afraid to sign my name to anything I write.

However, we are getting away from the Bill. I was talking about the protection of native women from the bad white man. This 1936 Bill was recommitted, the minimum penalty was removed and there was a fine of £25. The late Mr. Mann tried to reduce that fine. He moved that it be reduced to £10 and he was quite surprised when the attempt was defeated. He said—

> I was amazed at the ideas expressed by some hon. members. For two hours we have been hearing about unfortunate jackaroos in the North paid only £1 a week and their keep. We have been told about the dire consequences the Bill would have upon them if they erred in any way.
>
> Now we are given to understand that the position is not quite the same, that for those men a fine of £10 would be a mere nothing, and that the minimum fine must be £25. However, £10 is a substantial penalty for a first offence. Any magistrate would certainly increase the fine substantially for a second offence.

Mr. Angelo immediately tried to amend it by imposing a heavier penalty for a second offence because he suggested that it should be imprisonment for a period of not less than three months nor more than 12 months, or a penalty of not less than £50 nor more than £100.

But that was bowled clean out. He was beaten 11 to 6, and the only members who supported him were the Labour members, some of whom are still in the House. The mind of this Chamber has not altered much since those days. From the remarks of those who have spoken on the Bill, it would seem there is still little concern for these unfortunate people whom Mr. Craig termed "pale niggers." Strangely enough, although the phrase was definitely used here, it was omitted from "Hansard." I am not saying the hon. member had it expunged. I do not know who edited "Hansard."

The Minister for Transport: I think you are wrong there.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It does not appear. I have read the "Hansard" notes and it is not there.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It was mentioned in an article in "The West Australian."

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It was in headlines in "The West Australian."

Hon. L. Craig: I did not do it.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I am not saying that the hon. member did. If members make such statements they should be prepared to stand up to them. I do not say the hon. member had anything to do with this, because I have had the same experience myself. In my Address-in-reply speech I made the statement that the Government was handing the people of the North over to an air monopoly. Although that was headlined in "The West Australian," it was not in "Hansard." I am sure I did not take it out because I wanted it to be there, and that is why I am repeating it now. It is not right that these things should happen. There was a three-cornered discussion on returned soldiers between Mr. Roche, the Minister and myself, and that cannot be found in Mr. Roche's speech, either.

Hon. H. L. Roche: I certainly did not take it out.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: No, but someone has taken it out.

Hon. L. Craig: My speech was printed while I was away.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Some amendments appear on the notice paper, and they would make a big difference to the Bill. They would meet the position that members complain about, that this is too sudden. The amendment would make the definition provide that a native is a person of less than full blood who is descended from the original inhabitants of Australia, or from their full-blood descendants and who may, on the advice of the Commissioner, be declared to be classed as a native. An appeal may be made to a magistrate against decisions made by the Minister. If the Bill were passed with the amendments on the notice paper, it would mean that the Commissioner would advise the Minister who should be placed under the Act, and the Minister would have power to act.

Hon. L. Craig: The reference to "pale niggers" appears in "Hansard."

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Then I withdraw what I said about "Hansard." I read it but did not see those words. The Bill would also mean that the native himself could make application and the Minister could consent to his being classed as a native. It would also mean that on the advice of the Commissioner the Minister could declare any one of them to be no longer a native. That would mean it

would cover everyone. Those in institutions could all be declared natives. Those unfit could be declared to be natives, and those who became fit could be declared not to be natives. There could be nothing wider or more easily applicable to the situation as it is today.

Members should give the Bill serious consideration and allow it to go into Committee. Citizenship rights are not available to all. They are not available to orphan children whose parents had not previously had citizenship rights. They are not available to illegitimate children who have no parents to get citizenship rights for them. The rights become available only when they reach the age of 21 —adult age.

I can quote a case that is in existence at present of a half-caste girl, 19 years of age, who was reared in a convent in Broome. She is married and has two children, but she cannot come south of Broome. She cannot come below the leprosy line because she has no citizenship rights, and an exemption from the Act does not exempt her from the leprosy line. She applied to the department 12 months ago to come south but under the Act she cannot come south of that line—the 20th parallel I think it is. These are the people who need the attention of Parliament. The Act needs rectifying so that some discretionary power is included. In this instance there is a well educated and nicely brought up girl who is married and has two children, but she cannot get out of the place, and her husband cannot get her out, either.

There are other anomalies that arise when a quarter-caste marries a half-caste. The father is a citizen, but the family he raises is not. They are all under the Act. The same thing applies right through. That is why the Commissioner finds such difficulty in seeing who is who, and trying to separate the different ones to find out what percentage of native blood they have. It is only on the percentage that these people are classed as natives. The Commissioner, at page 4 of his report, says—

> My department is seriously hampered in its welfare work because of this and similar legislation which is inexplicable and not understood by natives or, indeed, by many whites. The State Electoral Act, for example precludes people "of the half-blood, or with a preponderance of aboriginal blood" from exercising the franchise. In many instances degrees of caste, because we are now dealing with the third, fourth and even fifth generations in some instances of mixed blood natives, are now expressed in fractions as small as 1/128ths.

Imagine anyone with that small fraction of native blood, below the quadroon, not being able to come south of the Kimberleys!

Hon. L. Craig: You can adjust that.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It cannot be adjusted.

The Minister for Agriculture: Who would question it?

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: This is the Act.

Hon. L. Craig: He is quibbling if he says that.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: This family has been refused permission for 12 months.

Hon. L. Craig: Has he recommended it?

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I do not know. I am not talking of discretionary powers, but am quoting the Act. The report continues—

> Thus it has happened that natives have been declared ineligible for the abovementioned social services benefits and for enfranchisement because he or she may have that fractional proportion of preponderence of aboriginal blood! The plain truth is that in attempting to discriminate between black and white or near white, the architects of Federal and State legislation and their successors have created a hopelessly muddled situation, one that has already required the services of the Full Court of Appeal to unravel in some circumstances.

He went on to say that legislation was introduced during the year but had not yet been discussed. Those two Bills died on the notice paper. Therefore, whatever the Commissioner wanted was not done. I could go on quoting from the report for hours in substantiating my case, but it would do no good if members have already made up their minds. It is just hooey and rubbish to talk about catastrophes and the people not being ready when every officer says that many of them are. If members will study the report, they will see that is so.

In the course of his speech Mr. Cunningham apologised to me for not being able to support the Bill. He should not apologise to me; I do not come under the Act. He should apologise to some of the returned soldiers who volunteered for the sixth and seventh A.I.F. Divisions. They were the first to go oversea, and they fought in Greece. They helped turn back Rommel, and Mussolini's Facists. Some of these men returned here and then went to the Owen Stanley Range where they turned the Jap back.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I will support any Act that will give those men, individually, citizenship rights.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member said in his speech that if it were a non-party measure he would support it, which indicates that it is a party measure.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Who said that?

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Mr. Cunnigham. It will be found in his speech. It is the Liberal Party Whip who said it. Then the Minister in charge of the House told us that he was opposed to the Bill, which means that the Government is opposed to it.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The Government has to come into it.

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: This is a non-party House. Mr. Craig begged us to treat the Bill as a non-party measure. In other countries the problem has become international, but here it is an artificial problem. This would not be a problem at all for half of the natives or so-termed natives in Western Australia if the castes were taken out of the Act. There are many castes, other than full-bloods, under the Act. We have 6,000 full-bloods beyond the confines of civilisation—that is estimated. This makes a total of only 20,000 mixed and full-bloods in the whole State. If anyone cares to go to the Native Affairs Department he will be told that only 2,000 of them are receiving any assistance.

Ten per cent. of the natives in the State are receiving assistance from the department; the rest of them are standing on their own feet and are getting along all right. To say that this measure would interfere with the economy of the country —and by that I take it to mean the economy of the stations—is absolutely ridiculous. It would not matter to the stations because this measure does not deal with full-bloods; it deals only with the castes and there would not be an average of one half-caste on every station in the northern areas. A lot has been said about this native problem but little of what has been said is actually factual. We have to consider this problem because we do not want an artificial race growing up in our midst. There is no need for these people to be battered or hounded around to roam about like gypsies. They deserve better than that because they have done a lot for this country and I suggest that the House allow the Bill to pass through the second reading so that amendments which I have on the notice paper can be made to it.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	16
Majority against	5

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. W. R. Hall	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. C. H. Henning	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. Sir C. G. Latham	Hon. H. Hearn
	(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 13th November of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Section 71 amended:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

> That in line 3 the word "subsection" be struck out and the word "section" inserted in lieu.

It is necessary to move this amendment because there is no subsection in Section 71.

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

Clause 10, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 13th November.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [9.45]: I rise to say a few words in support of the Bill although I do not feel much progress will be made as regards the amendment contained in it. Amendments to the Constitution have been proposed over a period of years. Nearly every year I have been in the House that has happened, and the result has not been good. There are one or two points in the Bill which should receive the favourable consideration of the House.

The provision in the principal Act is that a man must be 30 years of age before he can stand as a candidate for the Legislative Council. Having regard to what has been said by other members, I think that 30 years is out of the question. Some people think that to reduce the age limit to 21 years, which this Bill proposes, is

going too far. On the other hand, we find that numerous recruiting rallies are conducted and men of 21 years of age are expected to fight and do their bit for their country. Since this is the position, surely they should be eligible to stand as candidates for the Legislative Council of Western Australia.

I feel when one attains the age of 21 years one has generally seen enough of life to give one a proper outlook. A man of that age should be intelligent enough to deliberate and to do such things as are necessary for the future well-being of this country if he were successful in being elected to the Legislative Council. Despite the arguments which members have brought forward in the course of the debate, I think the time is long overdue for the age limit to be reduced from 30 to 21 years. If 21 years is considered too young let us make it 25, 26 or even 27 years. Surely a man is fully matured when he has reached that age.

On the other hand, it is possible for a foreigner to arrive in Western Australia, become naturalised and at the age of 30 to stand as a candidate for the Legislative Council. At the same time, we deny the right to our own kith and kin to stand till they are 30 years of age and I do not think that is right. There have been quite a few who would have welcomed the opportunity of standing as candidates but were unable to do so because of their age. I do not think they should be debarred. Another point is the question of giving a vote to both the husband and wife who occupy a dwelling-house. Members have guarded very jealously the position relating to the qualifications of electors to this Chamber.

We have had debates on this question since time immemorial, but I do think that the time is overdue when we should make the electoral qualifications more simple. The qualifications for enrolment for the Legislative Council are very open. It has been said on numerous occasions that a person should have a stake in the country and that he should have property qualifications before he should have a vote for this Chamber. If we look at the Road Districts Act and the Municipal Corporations Act we will find that it is not necessary for a man to have a stake in the country or for him to pay £17 a year before he can have a vote for the Legislative Council.

Under that Act if a person is enrolled between the 13th and 31st January each year it is possible for him, if he is the occupier of a dwelling, to make application on the prescribed form to the local authority and so have his name included on the Legislative Council roll for the province in which he lives. That particular phase covers attorneys and managers of various companies who pay no rates and have no stake in the country as regards property qualification, and yet they are eligible to have their vote. I have no quarrel with that. It would be just as simple to give the vote to a husband and wife who are occupying a dwelling-house, and be done with it. To go around enrolling people involves a lot of trouble and extra work.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Make it compulsory.

Hon. W. R. HALL: That would be a good idea and there are arguments for and against it. We know that over the years people would not vote at elections for the Legislative Council if they were not transported to the polling booth to enable them to do so; a large percentage would not go if they were not taken there. So it would be simpler to give the right to vote to a husband and wife who occupy a dwelling-house.

Hon. H. Hearn: How would that make it simpler?

Hon. W. R. HALL: It would not be necessary to enrol them year after year.

Hon. H. Hearn: Why have you to enrol them every year?

Hon. W. R. HALL: Because under the Road Districts Act they have to be enrolled each year between the 13th and 31st January if they occupy a dwelling-house. That is quite true, and I defy contradiction.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Do not they stay on the roll once they get on?

Hon. W. R. HALL: That is not so; the Road Districts Act simply sets out that they must be on the roll between the 13th and 31st January; they must be on the roll between those dates if they want to vote at an election in the district where they pay rates. We have to go to a lot of trouble to put people on the municipal and road districts rolls, so that they will be entitled to vote for the Legislative Council for the province in which they reside. Would it not be simpler to give a vote to both the husband and the wife and be done with it, when they are occupiers of a dwelling-house?

Let us consider the stupidity of some of the qualifications necessary for the Legislative Council. A man and wife go to Kalgoorlie, decide to rent a house and by virtue of that fact they are entitled to be placed on the ratepayers roll because they are paying rates. They come in to pay the health rate or the sanitary rate or electric light rates and this brings them into the category of ratepayers. The husband goes to work on Monday morning. The rates are paid in advance; the wife perhaps pays them and the receipt is made out in her name. So the wife goes on to the roll and the husband does not because he is at work.

Unless it was stipulated that the husband desired to be enrolled, the wife's name would be put on the ratepayers' list because, by virtue of her paying the rates, she would be regarded as the ratepayer and, in turn, would be enrolled for the Legislative Council. Would it not be better if members let their heads go a little and made enrolment for this House much more simple? The voting strength for the North-East Province was very small, but when the boundaries were altered, the province was enlarged and the numerical strength of the roll was increased. Not many men are prepared to put the property in the name of the wife so that she may be the freeholder while he is the occupier of the house, thereby entitling each of them to a vote, but the fact that that may be done shows how a horse and cart may be driven through the qualifications laid down in the Act.

Having carefully considered the position, I cannot see anything wrong with the proposal to give the vote to both husband and wife. What is there to be afraid of? Would such a change make any vast difference to anybody? I cannot believe that it would. On the other hand, I consider that it would have the effect of inducing more people to take an interest in public affairs and gain a better appreciation of what Parliament means to the community. As the polling at Council elections has been so low, an opportunity is now presented to obtain a much larger poll in future.

In the past, various members have endeavoured to get the Constitution amended, but they have not made any progress. However, the time has arrived when consideration should be given to broadening the franchise for this House. Having regard to the time and expense necessary to keep the rolls in order, would it not be better to broaden the franchise? Then people would have an opportunity to vote, if they so desired, without our making voting compulsory. Let us give the idea a trial. We have nothing to hide and nothing to fear, and all the present expense and trouble of filling in cards to keep the roll in order would be obviated.

The number of electors for the North-East Province dwindled to about 3,000 but, with the enlarged boundaries, the number is now 5,000 or 6,000. However, if we went to the trouble and expense, I venture to say that we could double the number of voters for the North-East Province. A member, however, cannot be expected to tramp along street after street interviewing people in the hope of keeping the roll in order. The Government does not undertake this duty, and neither does the Electoral Office. The Suburban Province is a large one and I daresay that, with the expenditure of the necessary time and money, the number of electors enrolled could be doubled or trebled.

I have enumerated the various points in favour of the Bill, and members should consider them carefully with the object of increasing the enrolment for the various provinces. I point out to members that when a big mine closes down, the workers and their dependants move to other parts, probably to other provinces, and all the time and labour and expense of getting them enrolled has to be done again. This is essential in order to keep the roll somewhere near the mark. There is no denying the fact that before a candidate can win a seat in this House, he must get the roll of his province in order. Otherwise, he has not much chance of winning an election, irrespective of the party to which he may belong.

On several occasions I have refrained from speaking on similar measures designed to broaden the franchise for this House because I realised beforehand that their fate was a foregone conclusion, but I have spoken on this occasion because the time has arrived, in my opinion, when members should take a broader view of the whole question.

The Bill also proposes to abolish plural voting. The party to which I belong has always been opposed to plural voting. The claim has been made that a person should have a stake in the country in order to be entitled to a vote for this House, but I maintain that that is not necessary. One-man one-vote is quite a satisfactory basis. Personally, if I possessed the qualifications, I would have no desire to exercise a vote in more than one province. I impress upon members that the time has arrived when some reform is necessary and I hope that on this occasion they will relent a little and make it simpler for occupants of dwellings to be enrolled for Council elections.

HON. J. McI. THOMSON (South) [10.12]: I cannot endorse the remarks of Mr. Hall. Not only many members but also many electors take the view that the constitution of this House has existed for many years and has stood the test of time, and I for one should be fearful of any move to alter the Constitution in a manner that would make this House a mere echo of another place. If ever we reach that stage, we as a Legislative Council will lose our usefulness.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Then you do not believe in democracy.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: I believe in democracy just as much as does the hon. member, but it has been clearly shown that this is a House of review and a non-party House. Therefore I claim that if we broadened the franchise for the Council, even to the slightest degree, it would be a step in the wrong direction.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You might give us your reasons for that statement.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: I intend to do so, but I shall not expect them to coincide with the views of the hon. member. Reference has been made to plural voting. I am strongly of opinon that if an elector owns property of value in more than one province he should be at liberty to exercise a vote in each province irrespective of how many votes he may have because he has a stake in each province which he should be given opportunity to protect. It is only British justice that a man should have the right to defend that which is his and I would deplore any move to take from a voter the right to vote in any province for which he had the qualification.

In all my experience of parliamentary elections I have never met anyone who complained that he was not eligible to enrol to vote for or contest an election for this House because he was not over 30 years of age. Provision has been made for the people to exercise their votes for another place on universal franchise, and I have not heard any complaint—except from members speaking in opposition to legislation of this nature—to the effect that there should be an alteration to our franchise.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Then you have not had much experience.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: I venture to say that I have had as much experience as the hon. member, or even more. The Bill proposes to extend the vote to the husband or wife of the householder and I see some virtue in that, but because I am jealous of our Constitution as it stands, I will vote against the second reading.

HON. H. HEARN (Metropolitan) [10.16]: I do not wish to record a silent vote on this question because I believe that any legislation affecting the Constitution of this House should be initiated within this Chamber. The Government was informed to that effect before the measure was brought down during a previous session and I cannot understand why members of another place should be allowed to dissect the body politic of this Chamber. Unless legislation to deal with any of the anomalies that we feel should be rectified originates in this House, I will consistently vote against it. One has occasionally to go to another place and listen to the debate there on the question of the general membership of this Chamber and when one does that one cannot help feeling that members there are not the people to approach this question from a broad point of view. For those reasons I oppose the Bill.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East—in reply) [10.20]: I am amazed at the specious reasons given by the various opponents of this measure for their opposition to it. Mr. Hearn's argument is fresh in the minds of members. He said he would consistently oppose any measure seeking to alter the franchise of this House unless it originated here. No matter what merits such a Bill might have or how worthwhile the provisions it contained, Mr. Hearn would oppose it simply because it followed the course of the majority of Bills, inasmuch as it had its genesis in another place. He said that the merits of such a Bill would not receive his consideration —for the childish reason that he gave. If a measure has substantial merit the difference is that between tweedledum and tweedledee, as to whether it was introduced first here or in another place. How could that alter its merits? I almost give up hope when I hear an elected representative of many thousands of people putting forward an argument such as that.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Ignore him and let us get on with the business.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I only wish that the people who have votes for the election of members to this House could have heard the argument Mr. Hearn submitted tonight when he wiped off the measure now before us for that reason. Mr. Thomson said that the Constitution of this House has stood the test of time and he is fearful of any move that might make this Chamber a mere echo of another place. What he means by that I do not know, because an echo, to my mind, is the direct repetition of a voice or sound.

How can this House ever become the direct echo of another place? In the Assembly there are 50 members, who are elected every three years, and at times different from our elections. Here we have 30 members, elected on the bicameral system and representing entirely different parts of the State. Even if the franchise for this House were exactly the same as that of another place, how could we become a direct echo of it? Has our Constitution stood the test of time? We have not amended it since 1899, when there were very few people in this State.

The Minister for Agriculture: There have been a few amendments to it since then.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: There have been no amendments to the main qualifications entitling people to vote at elections for this Chamber, although remarkable changes have taken place in this State since 1899. Are we to take literally Mr. Thomson's argument that because the Constitution has stood the test of time, we should never alter it?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Has not the franchise been broadened?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: In what way?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: In regard to the qualifications for householders.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Thomson is fearful of any change. When I was at school, in 1916 or 1917, boys of up to 19 years of age were still at boarding school and did not pass the Junior Examination until they reached that age, but nowadays they go to the University at a far earlier age than that. Men and women qualify for the various professions at an average age of 25 years at the present time.

At the Royal Perth Hospital and the Princess Margaret Hospital there are many doctors aged 24, 25 or 26 years. In our lifetime there have been two world wars and we have made considerable progress in many ways. Mr. Thomson's argument seems to be that we should never make any changes, and that is what is wrong with the world; too many people are clinging to the ideas of the past and lack the courage to keep abreast of the times.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What about the 10 Commandments?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I do not know what analogy there is between the 10 Commandments and the clauses of this Bill, but if Mr. Watson applies the 10 Commandments to the setup which some members here are apparently going to support tonight, thus denying to the wives and mothers of electors the right to vote, I think his quotation is out of place. If members think of the 10 Commandments, they will agree that the wife and mother hold such a vital place in our community that they have in the country a stake tantamount to that of a person who owns a block of land worth £50 or who pays an annual rent of a certain sum.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I hope they tell their wives that they do not agree with that provision.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Thomson also wants to continue the setup whereby, for instance, some old man who has a great deal of money and property scattered all over the State, which might be all he has in the world, will have 10 votes. Yet, a working man and his wife who have four or five children are only permitted to have one vote.

The Minister for Agriculture: He will be old and be by himself some day, so he will still enjoy those favours in the future.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: He is also in favour of continuing the setup which precludes anyone under the age of 30 years from being a candidate for election to this House on the ground that he has never heard a complaint. So long as no one ever complains about something it is apparently all right so far as Mr. Thomson is concerned. The question of permitting persons of 21 years to become eligible to be elected to this House is only one of principle.

Anyone of 21 years of age can be elected to the Legislative Assembly, the House of Representatives, the Commonwealth Senate or to any road board or municipal council in the State, but he must not be permitted to stand for election to the Legislative Council. Candidates must be 30 years of age. It does not matter whether they have been officers leading troops in Korea or on some other battle-front. It does not matter if he is a doctor at a Government hospital. I am dealing with a matter of principle. Following the lines of his reasoning, I can understand Mr. Thomson voting against the Bill.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Or the lack of it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: But I cannot understand members in this House who are over 60 years of age, voting against this proposition. Some years ago Mr. Craig introduced a Bill into this House to limit the age—

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No, he tried to.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: —of persons eligible to sit in this House but he did not get very far with it. I am not looking at anyone when I make the following remarks, because I have the greatest respect for old age. I am rapidly becoming old myself. But I say that if a man of 70 years of age is allowed to stand for election to this House or to continue as a member of it, surely a man between 21 and 30 is also entitled to be a member. This portion of the Bill does not amount to much, but there is a principle at stake, and if any member condemns the Bill on that ground, I shall be surprised.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: I will not.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I now intend to deal with Mr. Parker. I regard the Bill as being very important. Those opposing it have tried to defeat it by treating it as a joke and referring to it as a hardy annual. Facetious remarks have been made and some of the members making them have not had the courage to debate the Bill. I do not include Mr. Parker when I make that statement. This is what Mr. Parker said when speaking to the Bill—

> Members will probably be surprised when I tell them that I intend to vote against the Bill.

He was very truthful when he said that—

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I gave you the reasons why.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: —because in 1948 he was the Chief Secretary and the Leader of the Government in this House. He introduced a Bill in that year and this is what he had to say on the 1st December, 1948, about one of the clauses in it—

> The idea behind the franchise of this Chamber is that the elector should have a stake in the country and it is considered that the wife, who has a vote in the Assembly, and who

> often does infinitely more work than the husband and works much longer hours, should be entitled to a vote. As the one who brings up the family, it is felt that she should be encouraged to vote in view of the present state of affairs. The wife carries a great responsibility and, as I have said, does a great deal of the work. It is felt that she should, therefore, if the wife of a householder, be given a vote. It is true that she does not earn the money to keep the home going, but she does, in fact, keep it going.

I say to Mr. Parker that the only provision of any consequence in the Bill now before us is that which proposes to extend the franchise to the wife.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Except those who occupy flats.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I will come to that. I will be very surprised, therefore, if Mr. Parker votes against this measure.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Well, you will be surprised.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Parker, when recently speaking to this measure, also said—

> In this instance I am against the Bill—

Mark these words, Mr. President!

> —because it is not by any means anything like the one I introduced, nor does it have behind it the sincerity which backed my measure.

One could take offence at those last words, but I am not going to deal with that angle. Fortunately, I have before me a copy of the Bill introduced by Mr. Parker.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Do not lose that Bill because I have been trying to get a copy of it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I want to debate this measure on logical grounds, and then members can vote how they wish. I remind members that Mr. Parker said, "It is by no means like the one I introduced". The Bill he introduced contained a provision relating to the £17 qualification, which is of no consequence. Another clause dealt with the abolition of plural voting and a further one proposed to give a vote to the wife.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Did he bring that Bill down when he was Chief Secretary?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Yes, he did.

Hon. W. R. Hall: And did the Labour members all stick to him on that occasion?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: In that Bill Mr. Parker also inserted a definition of a self-contained flat.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That is it! That is what you have not got.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Parker now intends to oppose this Bill, yet it contains a provision to abolish plural voting, similar to the one he introduced as Chief Secretary. This Bill also proposes to give a vote to the wife of the householder or freeholder, yet because nothing in it refers to a self-contained flat. Mr. Parker feels justified in opposing the measure, and apparently is going to adopt that attitude when he votes. Like the remarks made by Mr. Thomson, that leaves me beaten.

Comparing this Bill with the one introduced by Mr. Parker, we have not added anything, but because we have omitted a provision relating to self-contained flats, the hon. member intends to vote against the measure. I find his attitude very difficult to justify. I can understand Mr. Parker's desire to have the franchise extended to flat-dwellers in Perth but he and every other member knows that the present definition of a householder covers the great majority of flat-dwellers, especially as they are known in the country. There is some technical argument about flat-dwellers in a building called Lawson Flats. I would favour giving them a vote.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Bring down a special Bill for it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes, or Mr. Parker could even amend this Bill.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: No.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: In my opinion, the definition of householder would cover flat-dwellers as we know them throughout the country. Unfortunately the big rows of flats that have been erected in different parts of the metropolitan area have not main entrances to the street and, owing to a technical flaw in the Act, the flat-dwellers there are deprived of the franchise. Surely the proper thing for Mr. Parker to do in that respect is to bring down legislation to deal with the situation, and I will support him if he adopts that course. In fact, I will support any measure that will extend the franchise to them. Mr. Dimmitt on this occasion has not spoken to the Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do not encourage him!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: He did deal with the Bill that Mr. Parker introduced in 1947, and this is what he said—

> So far as I am concerned the Bill is condemned in view of the fact that it discriminates between the householder and the freeholder. It seeks to give the wife of a householder the right to vote, but it does not give that right to the wife of a freeholder.

That was Mr. Dimmitt's objection in 1947. Members will recall that Mr. Parker's Bill proposed to extend the franchise to wives of householders, and I have given Mr. Dimmitt's reason for opposing the measure.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Did I give any other reason?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: That was the hon. member's main reason. I made a strong mental note of it at the time, and I interjected asking the hon. member why he did not move an amendment.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I remember it well, but I raised other objections that you have not referred to.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The one I have mentioned was the predominant objection, as I have gathered from a perusal of the hon. member's speech in "Hansard." What conclusion could members draw from that extract from Mr. Dimmitt's speech? The only rational conclusion to be drawn is that if the clause in that measure had been altered to include the wives of freeholders, Mr. Dimmitt would have been won over? On this occasion we have done what he urged. The wife of any person who owns land worth £50 or more will be entitled to exercise a vote. Therefore I really think Mr. Dimmitt should support the Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think you could claim his support in view of that statement.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: If members think that a man of 21 years of age is too young to be elected to this House, I can appreciate their attitude although I disagree with it. In view of the advance in education and the advantages available in many other directions, I think the young man of 24 or 25 today is a long way ahead of the young man of that age 40 or 50 years ago. However, if that clause is defeated, I shall not be upset about it. As to that relating to the abolition of plural voting, I have told members that it is possible for a man to have a vote in each of the ten provinces. I shall be frank and say that I do not think that would happen.

As I intimated when I introduced the Bill, I myself am qualified for a vote in three provinces. I do not think that principle is a good one but nevertheless, if that particular clause goes overboard, I shall not mind. I put it to members in all sincerity that we have something really worth while in the remaining clause that seeks to extend the franchise to the spouse of a householder or a freeholder. After the long lapse of years during which attempts have been made to extend the franchise, I think members should agree to that provision. I agree with Mr. Hall who said that he did not think the provision, if agreed to, would make any difference to members in this House. By devious methods availed at present both husband and wife can be enrolled, so why not make it all open and above board. It will make the position for members much easier; it would prove less expensive than the present system, and the qualifications would be easily understood by the people. The proposition is one possessing a lot of virtue. Both the Premier and the Minister for Education announced the principle embodied in it as part of their policy, and I believe they were sincere in their attitude. I urge that the second reading be passed and if members amend the Bill in Committee I shall not be broken-hearted.

Finally, I would refer to Mr. Craig's remarks which were just typical of some of the arguments that have been advanced. He said, I believe quite sincerely, that if the property franchise were abolished altogether, he would support a Bill having that objective in view. That would be going much further than many people desire at present.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Mr. Craig well knew that that would not happen.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: If Mr. Craig was sincere in the proposition he put forward, I fail to see why he should vote against the Bill, which merely proposes to take one step in that direction.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: As the Bill will require an absolute majority to be passed, it will be necessary to take a division. The bells will be rung.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	....	....	....	10
Noes	....	....	....	17

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. R. J. Boylen *(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. C. H. Henning	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. Hearn
Hon. A. L. Loton	*(Teller.)*

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.