

of their anxiety to support me, so I will not add anything more to the remarks I have already made.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	15

Majority against 3

**Ayes.**

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. W. R. Hall

(Teller.)

**Noes.**

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

(Teller.)

**Pair.**

<b>Aye.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. R. C. Mattiske

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

*House adjourned at 12.34 a.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 24th September, 1957.

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

**QUESTIONS.****UNFAIR TRADING AND PROFIT CONTROL.***(a) Fixing of Minimum Prices or Profit Margins.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Labour:

(1) Have any further cases, seeking to fix minimum prices or profit margins, been determined by the Unfair Trading and Profit Control Commissioner?

(2) If so, how many?

(3) If not, how many are under consideration, and when can a decision be expected?

(4) Will not the commissioner's decision have the effect of keeping retail prices at higher levels than would be the case without Government interference?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Labour) replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) One; but it is not certain that it will be proceeded with and consequently the date of a decision is uncertain.

(4) No. This has not been the experience in Great Britain or the U.S.A. where the same principles are being applied as in Western Australia.

*(b) Inquiry into Hire-Purchase Transactions.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Labour:

When will the current inquiry into hire-purchase transactions be completed by the Unfair Trading and Profit Control Commissioner?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Labour) replied:

Probably not earlier than the end of this year.

**CHASE SYNDICATE.***Progress Reports.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Does he receive regular progress reports on the development of the area held by the Chase Syndicate?

(2) If so, who is responsible, and how often is such information received?

(3) Will he table the latest report?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, the first report was received in July.

(2) The divisional surveyor, Mr. S. J. Stokes, and quarterly.

(3) Yes. I have the report with me and will table it.

**LANDS.***Survey and Development, West of Midland Line.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) What survey work is being carried out in areas west of the Midland line, between Moora and Dongara?

(2) Has any special report been furnished on these areas regarding soil classification and suitability for large scale development?

(3) Is any offer by private interests for development under consideration at present?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A general topographical survey and classification of a large area west of the Midland railway and between Dongara and the Hill River was recently completed.

(2) The report referred to in No. (1) is being studied with a view to determining suitability for large-scale development.

(3) One inquiry has been received for the development of 100,000 acres, in respect of which terms and conditions are under consideration.

**TRAFFIC.***(a) Position Regarding Unattended Cars.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is it a traffic offence in any State, or States, of Australia, for a driver to leave a car unattended, with the ignition key left in the car?

(2) If so, where?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) It is not an offence in Western Australia. The position in other States is not known, but inquiries are being made.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

*(b) Stop Signs and Parking Regulations.*

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Where stop signs are erected at road intersections, are there any regulations to prevent motor-vehicles from parking within a prescribed distance from the street alignment of an intersection?

(2) Will the department concerned consider having these intersections marked or indicated accordingly to prevent parking where stop signs are erected?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Unless otherwise marked, parking is prohibited within 20 feet of the building alignment at all corners whether or not stop signs are erected.

(2) It is not considered necessary for all intersections to be marked to prevent parking, because this regulation is one which should be known to all drivers of

vehicles since it applies to every intersection or junction throughout Western Australia in any municipal district or town.

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT.

##### *Prevention of Car Stealing.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Has the Police Department made any investigation into the field of suitable locking devices that have been or could be commercialised, for prevention of car stealing?

(2) If the answer is "No," will the department undertake to do so, and then issue suitable publicity to encourage motorists, where possible, to have such devices fitted to their cars?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

These questions were wrongly addressed to the Minister for Police. The answers are as follows:—

(1) Yes.

(2) It is understood that most leading motor spare-parts firms carry stocks of various types of locks at reasonably low prices.

#### HOTELS.

##### *Stamping Content on Drinking Containers.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Has the practice ever been adopted in Western Australia of ensuring that hotel drinking containers were numerically stamped according to their content?

(2) If so, why was the practice discontinued?

(3) Is it not now considered desirable to introduce or reintroduce this practice, similarly to that being followed in other States of Australia?

(4) Is it considered that the stamping of containers by the manufacturer would be expensive?

(5) If the answer to No. (3) is "Yes," would it not be desirable to ensure that as containers now in use are replaced, stamped vessels be introduced?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) No.

(4) The provision of stamped containers of standard quantity would be a considerably greater cost than the provision of the present type of drinking vessels.

(5) See answer to No. (4).

#### CIVIL DEFENCE.

##### *Establishment of Adequate Organisation, etc.*

Mr. BOVELL asked the Premier:

(1) What progress has been made in establishing an adequate civil defence organisation?

(2) What plan is envisaged for the protection of the civil population against attack by nuclear warfare and radiation therefrom?

(3) Have any appointments been made to the civil defence organisation of lay or other personnel qualified in planning and controlling the civilian population in an emergency?

(4) If so, what are the details?

(5) If not, when will action be taken on the lines indicated?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) to (4) Civil defence policy is based on an appreciation made to the Commonwealth Government by the defence committee, and provides for the planning of a civil defence organisation, but not at this stage, for the training or recruitment of personnel. Progress is being made in Western Australia in accordance with this policy.

(5) A meeting of the Civil Defence Committee held in Melbourne on the 12th September carried the following resolution:—

That the Civil Defence Committee is of the opinion that until the Commonwealth Government—

(a) makes a clear and precise declaration of its policy on civil defence;

(b) accepts the suggested division of responsibilities as submitted by this committee following its meeting held on 27th May, 1955, and

(c) indicates the extent to which it is prepared to provide finance to the States,

effective civil defence preparations and planning on an Australia-wide basis are impossible to achieve.

It is further resolved that the Minister for the Interior be requested to bring these matters before the Commonwealth Government as being of extreme urgency with a view to making a submission to the next Premier's conference.

#### ROTTNEST BOARD OF CONTROL.

(a) *Improvement of Resort, Finance, etc.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What is the policy of the Rottnest Board of Control for the development of Rottnest Island?

(2) What finance is required and from where will it be obtained?

(3) What are the estimates of visitors to the island in each of the years 1954-55; 1955-56 and 1956-57?

(4) Is the demand for holiday accommodation at the island increasing or decreasing, and to what extent?

(5) If increasing, what steps are being taken to meet demands?

(6) If decreasing, what are the reasons?

(7) Is any attempt made to publicise the island in other States and to attract visitors from outside the State to holiday at Rottneest, or is this contrary to the policy of accommodation allocation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) Development of the island is subject to the limits imposed by revenue derived from income. Since 1946, 14 tourist dwellings and seven houses for staff have been erected.

Water storage in the past three years has been increased from 500,000 gallons to 2,000,000 gallons.

A hotel and tea rooms have been built, and extensive alterations to the hostel have been carried out.

Facilities have been provided in the camping area. Several miles of sealed roads and bush-tracks have been constructed.

(3) No accurate check is possible, but an estimate is as follows:—

1954-55	....	....	25,000
1955-56	....	....	27,500
1956-57	....	....	26,000

(4), (5) and (6) Demands on accommodation have remained fairly static, although a decrease in school holiday bookings for 1957-58 has been recorded. It is thought that applications opening and closing one month earlier this year has been responsible for the decrease.

(7) Eastern States publicity is handled through the Tourist Bureau by way of distribution of brochures, weekly publications and publicity booklets. Many visitors to Western Australia from the Eastern States visit Rottneest.

#### *(b) Policy for Future Development.*

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines:

In No. (1) of my previous questions regarding Rottneest Island I asked what is the policy of the Rottneest Board of Control for the development of the island; and in No. (2) I inquired what finance is required and from where it will be obtained. The Minister's answer is a fairly exhaustive explanation of what has been done, but when I framed my question I meant what was the policy of the board for future development? Will he be good enough to re-examine the question on that basis and answer it tomorrow?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

#### COAL.

##### *(a) Companies' Indebtedness to Government.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Treasurer:

(1) What was the total sum owed to the Government by each of the coal companies as at the 31st August, 1957?

(2) Has the new agreement altered in any way the basis of repayments of any loans or requirements regarding bank overdrafts?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd.—Nil.  
Western Collieries Ltd.—Nil.

Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd.—£172,356.

The Government had also guaranteed certain bank overdrafts in respect of which it had the following contingent liabilities:

Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd.—£315,500.

Western Collieries Ltd.—£394,340.

Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd.—Nil.

(2) No.

##### *(b) Griffin Co., Purchase of Assets by Government.*

Mr. WILD asked the Premier:

(1) Has any approach by the Government been made to the Griffin Coal Mining Co. with a view to the Government purchasing its assets and leases?

(2) Has the Government, at any time, made approaches to stockbroking firms in Perth, with a view to the purchase of shares of the Griffin Coal Mining Co., and if so, with what result?

(3) If suitable water is found on the Muja leases at Collie, and a decision made to erect a power station thereon, is it the intention of the Government to acquire the Muja open cuts of the Griffin Coal Mining Co. with a view to having a State coalmine?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Some discussions took place early in 1956 for the purpose of trying to obtain an interest in the company for the State Electricity Commission.

(2) and (3) No.

#### WHOLEMILK.

##### *Solids-not-fat Content.*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is he aware that a recent survey of wholemilk production in the British Isles has revealed that for a period of three to four months of the year 70 per cent. of milk delivered by farmers has shown by analysis to be deficient in solids-not-fat?

(2) In this State, is the deficiency of solids-not-fat in wholemilk more noticeable in certain areas at particular periods of the year? If so, in what areas, at what periods, and to what extent?

(3) Is the standard for wholemilk in Western Australia adopted from the British standard?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. Many reports on milk production in the British Isles have been published and it would be appreciated if the hon. member would refer specifically to the one he may have in mind.

(2) Yes. In the area north of Pinjarra during the summer and autumn periods. The tabled schedule shows the extent and the comparison with other samples taken during the 12 months ended July, 1957, which were examined in the laboratory at the Department of Agriculture.

(3) No.

#### PERTH TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

##### *Details of Enrolments.*

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has the Perth Technical College been able this year to enrol all students desiring to attend?

(2) Has the number of students enrolled at the beginning of the year been reduced, and if so, by how many?

(3) Has the reduction been brought about by one or more of the following reasons:—

- (a) normal wastage;
- (b) a shortage of teachers;
- (c) a lack of classroom accommodation;
- (d) a lack of instructional equipment and material?

(4) If so, what practical steps have been taken to overcome the problem?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Education) replied:

(1) At the beginning of the year waiting lists had to be formed in certain subjects but all of these students have now been catered for except those in laboratory subjects.

(2) Yes. The figures are not yet available.

(3) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) and (d) It may be so, but it is impossible to ascertain.

(4) (i) Double shifts—5.15 to 7.15 p.m. and 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. have been worked in some subjects; and

(ii) additional classes have been opened in some suburbs.

#### SWIMMING CLASSES.

##### *Use of Crawley Baths.*

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is it a fact that the Education Department will need Crawley Baths for summer swimming classes even when an olympic pool is built?

(2) Will he ascertain how many olympic type pools will be needed before the river can be dispensed with for teaching purposes?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Education) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) At least six.

#### CANCER RESEARCH.

##### *Provision of Linear Accelerator.*

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) How long does the Anti-Cancer Council anticipate will be needed before sufficient funds are raised by the cancer appeal to provide the linear accelerator?

(2) What assistance is being given towards the erection of the necessary building to have this machine in operation when sufficient funds have been raised for its purchase?

(3) Is the space for such building already available at the Royal Perth Hospital?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The Anti-Cancer Council hopes that sufficient funds will be raised by the end of October.

(2) and (3) The type of building and the best site for it are at present under discussion. There will be no delay in building it as the Government will give substantial financial assistance.

#### METROPOLITAN LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES.

##### *Zoning and Town-Planning By-laws.*

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Has the Perth City Council any gazetted zoning or town-planning by-laws?

(2) If not, does this mean that an appeal against a refusal by the Perth City Council to allow any type of building to be built in any part of the municipality could be upheld by the Minister?

(3) What other metropolitan local governing bodies have town-planning or zoning by-laws gazetted?

(4) What other metropolitan local governing bodies are without town-planning or zoning by-laws?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied:

(1) Only a town-planning scheme covering the Lathlain Park area, and by-laws classifying into residential and business districts the endowment lands and Limekilns estate, i.e., Floreat Park and City Beach.

(2) Yes, subject to the provisions of the scheme and by-laws referred to in answer No. (1) and the metropolitan region interim development order.

(3) Town-planning schemes operate in the Cottesloe, Guildford and Nedlands municipal districts, the Bayswater, Belmont, Melville and Mosman Road Districts.

Town-planning by-laws operate in the Subiaco City, Claremont, North Fremantle and South Perth municipal districts, and the Bassendean, Canning, Kwinana and Perth Road Districts, and in parts of the Rockingham, Swan and Wanneroo Road Districts.

(4) The Fremantle City Council has prepared a town-planning scheme, which is now awaiting final consideration and approval. The Cockburn Road Board has town-planning by-laws in course of advertisement.

No town-planning scheme or by-laws are possessed by the East Fremantle and Midland Junction Municipal Councils, the Armadale-Kelmscott, Darling Range, Gosnells, Mundaring, Peppermint Grove and Serpentine-Jarrahdale Road Boards.

#### GOVERNMENT TRUST FUNDS.

*Brokerage, Etc.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Treasurer:

(1) When it is necessary to invest Government trust funds outside Western Australia, what brokerage arrangements are made?

(2) Are local stock brokers' services used?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) It would be general, in the case of new loans, to deal direct with the underwriters with a view to arranging sub-underwriting commissions. Purchase of existing securities would be arranged by lodging orders with brokers or by acceptance of offers made by brokers.

(2) If it became necessary to purchase existing securities, local stock brokers' services would be used wherever possible.

#### GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS. •

*Policy Regarding Structural Steel.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Works:

(1) (a) Has there been any change of policy in respect of tenders for structural steel work on Government buildings?

(b) If so, what changes have taken place?

(2) (a) It is proposed to have such work done by the State Engineering Works, and if so, will this be the result of competitive tenders or by allocation direct to the State Engineering Works?

(b) If the latter, will the work be done on a quota or cost-plus basis?

(3) (a) To what extent has the State Engineering Works undertaken structural steel work for buildings in the past?

(b) What plant, premises and other expansion will be involved if an extension of operations in this field is proposed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Yes.

(b) Supply of light structural steel work, such as trusses and columns, is placed direct with the State Engineering Works. Tenders are still invited for heavy structural steelwork.

(2) (a) See answer to No. (1).

(b) On both quote and cost-plus basis.

(3) (a) Light pipe trussing and columns, and light builders steelwork.

(b) One welding plant.

#### DRAINAGE.

*Comprehensive Scheme in Cannington-Gosnells Area.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What progress is being made with the comprehensive drainage scheme in the Cannington to Gosnells area?

(2) Has the survey been completed, and is it now on the drawing-board?

(3) Will such plan be made available to the Gosnells Road Board, with a view to future drainage work in the district being in accordance with the master plan?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Preliminary designs have been prepared.

(2) Surveys have been completed. No further drawing work is contemplated until loan funds are available for construction of main drains.

(3) Preliminary plans can be inspected at the department's head office by the board's officers when information for subsidiary drains is required.

## NATIVE WELFARE.

(a) *Departmental Files, Removal of Papers and Inquiry.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

(1) Will he give the Commissioner of Native Welfare a chance to prove that there have been no improper practices in regard to departmental files, or on the part of the Commissioner of Native Welfare, by tabling in this House all papers relevant to the parliamentary select committee inquiry on the Warburton Native Reserve and the file relevant to the body of the native which was found on the Warburton native reserve earlier this year and to which reference has already been made in this House?

(2) Will he conduct an inquiry into the alleged improper practices on the part of the Commissioner of Native Welfare?

The MINISTER replied:

The hon. member's allegations of improper practices have been referred to the Deputy Public Service Commissioner for appropriate inquiry.

(b) *Reconsideration of Decision re Inquiry.*

Mr. GRAYDEN (without notice) asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

Will he reconsider his decision to have this inquiry into the allegations in respect of the Native Welfare Department carried out by the Public Service Commissioner, and instead have an independent adjudicator from the Eastern States?

The Premier: What about one from England or America?

The MINISTER replied:

At the moment the Public Service Commissioner is ill and off duty. In the circumstances, the Deputy Public Service Commissioner has been asked to undertake the inquiry. I do not think there should be any opposition to that because I am sure he will be impartial, and will consider all the aspects and allegations and replies and responses of the Commissioner of Native Welfare. I am certain he will bring in an honest finding in regard to this matter.

(c) *Scope of Inquiry.*

Mr. GRAYDEN (without notice) asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

Will he ensure that an inquiry into charges made in respect of the Native Welfare Department includes an investigation into the following:—

(1) Whether certain papers were missing from the Warburton Range Select Committee files when the files were recently laid on the Table in another place?

(2) The accuracy or otherwise of statements emanating from the Native Welfare Department, with particular reference to the fact that the Commissioner of Native Welfare—

(a) condemned the report of the select committee as being grossly exaggerated when neither he nor his officers were familiar at that time with the position obtaining on the reserve;

(b) denied the report of the helicopter pilot to the effect that natives at Well 40 on the Canning stock route were starving on the same day as the report was received in Perth, even though the natives concerned were unseen by the commissioner or his officers?

(c) continues to vehemently and positively deny that the natives are starving even though some weeks have elapsed since the original report was published and the natives have not been seen since the initial contact was made with them?

The MINISTER replied:

I understand that the procedure in regard to the inquiry will be that the hon. member will be invited to repeat the allegations he has made in this House, and the matter will be investigated. The inquiry could quite easily embrace the matters to which he has referred this afternoon.

## AUTHORITY OF PARLIAMENT.

*Subservience of Public Service.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

(1) Does he uphold the principle that Parliament is the ultimate master of the Civil Service?

(2) Does he believe that members of Parliament are the watchdogs of the people as far as actions of civil servants are concerned?

(3) Does he believe that members of Parliament should have complete freedom to state in Parliament, what they believe to be true?

(4) Does he believe that a civil servant should state to the Press that he disagrees with a decision of Parliament?

(5) Does he believe that a civil servant should single out a member of Parliament for personal attacks?

(6) Does he believe that Parliament can carry out its functions if its servants refuse to recognise its authority?

(7) As the responsible Minister, what action does he intend to take to uphold the authority of Parliament?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, consistent with appropriate legislation.

(2) See answer to No. (1).

(3) Members have complete freedom to express anything in Parliament, true or otherwise.

(4) Every other citizen has this right.

(5) No, but where a civil servant is attacked by a member of Parliament he should have every right to reply, or to have a reply made on his behalf.

(6) As far as is known, the servants of Parliament recognise the authority of Parliament.

(7) The authority of Parliament is being upheld.

#### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ACT.

##### *Exemptions under Stamps Regulations.*

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is he aware that the regulations under the Agricultural Products Act, gazetted on the 28th August of this year, were received by all producers only in today's mail?

(2) Is he aware that the regulations have to be conformed to by the 30th September, which is only six days away, including the week-end?

(3) Is he aware that there are 1,400 permittees who have to conform to the regulations in having their stamps manufactured?

(4) Is he aware that there are only five stamp manufacturers in Western Australia?

(5) In view of the fact that the board states in its letter to all permittees that it has no power to grant exemptions, will he, as Minister controlling the board, see to it that if producers are caught not conforming to the regulations, through not having stamps, no prosecutions will be launched for three or four weeks, until they have had time to get their stamps manufactured?

The MINISTER replied:

It seems to me that the hon. member has put forward a reasonable case. I will have the matter fully investigated and will assist, if at all possible.

#### WOOROLOO SANATORIUM.

##### *Rail Freight Concession on Movie Films.*

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON (without notice) asked the Premier:

Following a question I asked last week, regarding the concession rail freights on movie films returned by the Progress and Pastime Club at the Wooroloo Sanatorium, has he yet reached a decision to reinstate the concessions?

The PREMIER replied:

Yes, it has been decided to continue the handling of these films on the same basis as previously.

#### FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT ACT, 1956.

##### *Tabling of Papers re Non-proclamation.*

Mr. HEARMAN (without notice) asked the Premier:

Will he lay on the Table of the House the files and correspondence leading to the Government's decision not to proclaim the Factories and Shops Act Amendment Act (No. 3) of 1956?

The PREMIER replied:

I will give consideration to this question.

#### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Interpretation Act Amendment (No. 2).

2, Chiropodists.

Transmitted to the Council.

#### BILL—BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of seven amendments made by the Council now considered.

##### *In Committee.*

Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.

Schedule, Item 1—Delete all words from and including the word "passage" in line 3 down to and including the word "prescribed" in line 6 and substitute the word "words."

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I must say that I disagree with all the Council's amendments. They all deal with one question, namely, regulations. The Bill, as introduced, sought to increase fees and to provide that in future they be prescribed by regulation. The Council does not object to the fees but to their being controlled by regulation. In 1948 the McLarty-Watts Government introduced quite a few measures prescribing control by regulation. For instance, there was legislation relative to the Auctioneering Act, the Bread Act, the Change of Names Regulation Act, the Factories and Shops Act, the Land Agents Act, the Marine Stores Act and the Second-hand Dealers' Act. Those measures provided for the alteration of fees by regulation. The Bills were passed by Parliament and in consequence, any alteration of the fees payable under those Acts can be effected by regulation. The Legislative Council concurred with those proposals in 1948 but now it objects to a similar procedure under this Bill. Is it because there was a different Government in 1948?

Hon. L. Thorn: Oh, no!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It is preferable to amend the fees by regulation rather than by seeking parliamentary approval, otherwise we would have to introduce a Bill to impose a small fee of 1s.



The Premier: There was a much more reasonable Opposition in 1948.

Mr. Bovell: You say that with your tongue in your cheek.

Hon. D. Brand: You can say that again as a matter of fact.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Most of the fees are only small, the lowest being 1s. If we wanted to raise the fee of 1s., as I have already pointed out, it would be necessary to bring a Bill before Parliament. It is an extraordinary state of affairs, considering there was no opposition in 1948 to the Bills I mentioned. On the grounds of the past, I strongly oppose the amendments introduced in another place. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. COURT: The attitude of the Opposition in connection with this matter has not changed from when the Bill was first before the House. The Minister will recall that at that time I did not oppose the increases in fees, although some of them were expressed in terms of percentage and were pretty steep. However, we did take exception to the proposition that, in future, the fees were to be fixed by regulation. It might appear of no consequence to the Minister because the fees in this measure are, in the main, small. However, there is no guarantee that at some time in the future the Governments of the day will fix these fees at a reasonable figure.

The Minister for Justice: They are laid on the Table of the House and there is some redress.

Mr. COURT: That is so, but they apply for months and months before Parliament has a chance to deal with them. The principle at stake is whether these financial measures will be fixed by statute or by regulation. I think it is a sound principle to return to, that they be fixed by Act of Parliament and not by regulation.

The Minister for Justice: Why did you do it in 1948?

Mr. COURT: The Minister is entitled to bring that up, but it could be that another place has reformed in the meantime and seen the error of its ways. At that particular time, I think we were regulation-happy. I oppose the Minister's motion and agree with the amendments made by the Legislative Council.

Mr. BOVELL: When the Bill was before this Chamber, I did not raise any objection to the increase in fees, but I did in regard to future increases if they were to be imposed by regulation. The Minister has referred to previous Bills introduced by the McLarty-Watts Government in 1948 to raise fees. That may be so, and, as far as I can remember, no objection was raised in regard to the fixing of those fees by regulation.

The Minister for Justice: We were a reasonable Opposition.

Mr. BOVELL: It must be remembered that since 1948 the position in regard to taxing all sections of the community has changed and, while the member for Nedlands says we may have been regulation-happy in those days, the Government is certainly tax-happy today.

Mr. Heal: The Federal Government?

Mr. BOVELL: The State Government. The Federal Government has not increased taxation for some considerable time. The trend has been to reduce it, and I hope it will continue.

The Minister for Transport: Diesel fuel, for instance.

Hon. D. Brand: What about reducing the licence fees.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member confine himself to the amendment.

Mr. BOVELL: In my opinion, the State Government has become tax-happy and taxing measures are getting out of hand. When speaking recently on another measure, I said that if any tax is to be imposed on the people now, together with the impositions on them already, the proposal should be submitted to Parliament by way of legislation. I feel the Minister would be well advised to accept the Council's amendments, which I support.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: This is a most extraordinary reversal of form.

The Premier: Especially by the member for Vasse.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Is it because there is a Labour Government in office? When we, as an Opposition, agreed in 1948 we could see the force, to a certain extent, of government by regulation. Fancy having to bring down a Bill to fix a fee of 1s. or 2s.! Even if it were £1, it would make very little difference to the person concerned. Collectively, they only run to a few pounds. I strongly oppose the amendment.

Mr. COURT: The Minister is inclined to treat this matter rather lightly. There is a principle involved, and it is whether this Parliament will deal with money measures or whether they will be dealt with by regulation and Parliament have a say some months later. It has been suggested by the Minister that undue inconvenience could be caused to Governments if they had to come to Parliament with Bills in regard to these fees.

The Minister for Justice: It was good enough in 1948.

Mr. COURT: I would point out that the fees in the measure now being considered were, in some cases, fixed in 1899 and in other cases 1914. It is now 1957 and this is the first time a succession of Governments has seen fit to amend these fees. Surely it is not a great hardship

if once in a period of 58 years in one case, and 43 years in the other case, it is necessary to introduce a Bill to this Chamber!

The Minister for Justice: We did not have the fluctuation in values before.

Mr. COURT: If a Bill had to be introduced to increase fees, it would be a deterrent and a good thing.

Mr. BOVELL: This legislation has been in operation since 1899 and the fees had been fixed by statute and not by regulation. The Minister now wants to alter that principle and that is what I am opposed to. With the infrequent increases that have occurred over the past 58 years, it would not be any hardship for a Government to ask Parliament to approve of an increase. Therefore, the principle should stand.

The Minister for Justice: Why not be consistent?

Mr. BOVELL: I am consistent in this matter and will be so about any taxing measures coming to Parliament, because every move today by the Government is to impose some form of tax, whether great or small. The Treasurer has foreshadowed an increase in stamp duty on cheque forms. I think the last increase was in 1931 or 1932 when it was increased from 1d. to 2d. by the Mitchell Government. It is not likely that the fees under discussion will be increased on many occasions in the future, and the Minister should agree to the principle of the existing legislation and have the fees fixed by Parliament.

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

Ayes	21
Noes	16
Majority for	5

Ayes.	
Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Brady	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Evans	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Gaffy	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Graham	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Jamleson	Mr. Toms
Mr. Johnson	Mr. May
Mr. Kelly	

(Teller.)

Noes.	
Mr. Bovell	Mr. W. Manning
Mr. Brand	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Owen
Mr. Court	Mr. Roberts
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Wild
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. I. Manning

(Teller.)

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Mann
Mr. Norton	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Tonkin	Mr. Ackland
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Perkins

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2.

Schedule, Item 2—Delete all words from and including the word "prescribed" in line 7 down to and including the word "rate" in line 10.

No. 3.

Schedule, Item 2—Delete all words from and including the word "the" in line 17 down to and including the word "prescribed" in line 20.

No. 4.

Schedule, Item 3—Delete all words from and including the word "prescribed" in line 4 down to and including the word "fee" in line 6.

No. 5.

Schedule, Item 4—Delete all words from and including the word "as" in line 5 down to and including the word "prescribed" in line 7.

No. 6.

Schedule, Item 5—Delete all words from and including the word "prescribed" in lines 4 and 5 down to and including the word "fee" in line 7.

No. 7.

Schedule, Item 6—Delete.

On motions by the Minister for Justice, the foregoing amendments were not agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Mr. Court, Mr. Johnson and the Minister for Justice drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

## BILL—OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS.

### *Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of four amendments made by the Council now considered.

### *In Committee.*

Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.

Clause 4, page 3, lines 3 and 4—Delete the words "who are approved by the Minister to represent" and substitute the words "who shall be nominated by."

No. 2.

Clause 4, page 3, line 6—Add after the word "Branch" the words "and approved by the Minister."

No. 3.

Clause 7, page 5, line 32—Insert after the word "attended" the words "which shall not be less than the curriculum laid down by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists."

No. 4.

Clause 8, page 6, line 26—Insert after the word "engaged" the words "and is competent."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I have considered these amendments and they are merely to dress up and improve the Bill. I do not oppose any of them.

On motions by the Minister for Health, the foregoing amendments were agreed to.

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

#### **BILL—UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Message.*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

*Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [5.27] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill is to give parliamentary authority to the Treasurer to guarantee the Senate of the University in regard to moneys which might be raised from time to time by the University Senate for the purpose of carrying out work at the university. The Bill comes up at this time because the Senate of the University recently made arrangements to raise an amount of £250,000 from an insurance company for the purpose of enabling an early start to be made on the proposed new engineering school building.

The proposed building is urgently required, firstly, because the premises in which the engineering school is now housed are very old and unsuitable, and are altogether inadequate; and, secondly, because of the considerable increase that has taken place in recent years in the number of students who are studying engineering at the university.

The Government, at the present time, could not possibly make any worth-while sum of money available from the General Loan Fund to assist in the construction of this proposed set of buildings. As the need is urgent, the representatives of the University Senate set to work to negotiate with one of the insurance companies for the purpose of getting a substantial sum advanced to enable the construction work to be put in hand with as little delay as possible, and, as I mentioned earlier, achieved success in that regard.

The Senate is now in a position to obtain £250,000 to finance building operations early in the new year, and the Bill will give the Treasurer the right to guarantee the Senate both in respect of the repayment of the principal, over a period of years, and also in respect of the payment

of interest for so long as interest shall be payable to the insurance company concerned.

In addition to this Bill being framed to meet that situation, it is also drafted to give authority to Governments in the future to guarantee, through the Treasurer of the State, any similar transaction which the University Senate might be able to organise and put in hand. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. D. Brand, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 12th September.

**HON. A. F. WATTS** (Stirling) [5.31]: It seems to me that the major purpose of this Bill is to make it easier for the Government to make it more difficult for the people to obtain emergency supplies of what are called requisites in the Bill—and, as a matter of fact, that is also what they are called in the parent Act. I have never been particularly enthusiastic about the measures that have been brought forward from time to time to amend and re-enact Section 100 of the Factories and Shops Act which deals with the question of the supply of requisites to owners of motor-vehicles and the like.

I remember very well the attempts that were made to regulate, in a manner somewhat similar to the proposals in this measure, the supply of those same requisites in 1945 or 1946, when the late Hon. A. H. Panton was in charge of the measure. I remember raising at that time exactly the same points that have always been in my mind in regard to these measures—that with the growth of the number of motor-vehicles and the greater extension of travel by the public, it is more and more necessary that there should be persons who are willing at any time to supply motorists with those things that are essential in order to enable them to complete their travel.

It is not only a question of fuel; that would be bad enough but it may be argued that, in a number of cases anyway, if not in all cases, it is possible to arrange to carry sufficient of that commodity to get from place to place, although it would be quite obvious in some cases, where longer runs were involved, as often happens in this State, even that is impracticable unless some provisions are made whereby people can lawfully keep their premises open for the purpose of supplying fuel. I remember, at the time I referred to, that we sought for quite a long time to find some amendment to the then proposal which would enable such people to obtain the requisites they desired without having to

go to the trouble of having to find someone, in the rare cases where they could find someone who was prepared to make those supplies available and going to all the trouble of making statutory declarations and the like.

As a result an amendment, moved during the last minutes of the debate in Committee in this Chamber, was accepted by the late hon. gentleman and for a long time it was possible in most places in Western Australia to obtain the supplies that were wanted in order to continue one's journey. But, as I was saying, it does not apply to liquid fuels of any kind only; it applies also to those many minor emergencies that can arise without any warning whatever and which cannot successfully be overcome in advance. One's headlights can blow out or one's fan belt can fall to pieces and the progress of one's journey comes automatically to an end, unless the trouble can be remedied in very quick time.

So the need for these things today is more pressing even than it was at the time to which I have referred, because the number of vehicles has multiplied many times in the intervening 10 or 11 years and the use of those vehicles has increased to an even greater extent than has the number of cars on the road. Yet we find all the time there is a desire to restrain and restrict the travelling public from obtaining what it requires, not for some unusual or extraordinary purpose but merely in order that it may go about its lawful journeys and complete them. Particularly does that argument apply in Western Australia where very long journeys have to be made because of the vast distances that have to be traversed in getting from place to place.

I have not the slightest desire to compel all the people who are engaged in the sale of motoring requisites to keep open outrageous hours if they do not want to do so. I have not the slightest desire—in fact, I would resist it—to see introduced any proposal which would compel their employees to work unusual hours, hours which are beyond those normally recognised as a full day or a full week's work. But I do contend that as there are people who are agreeable to make the necessary arrangements with their employees or, alternatively, to make themselves available to the public outside the trading hours proposed in this legislation, in the interests of the general public, to whom they desire to give service and which public is entitled to service, they should be allowed to do just that thing.

The measure we passed last year, I realise, went a considerable way towards regimenting this particular community of persons. But at that time it appeared to leave some reasonable loophole; it appeared to give some opportunities for

longer hours of service, without any restriction or regimentation, to be given by some persons to the general public, if they wanted it. So I think it will be found that, so far as that measure went, I had nothing whatever to say on it. But now, as I see it, another step is being taken—another step, as I said, to make it easier for the Government to make it more difficult for these people to do what they want to, and, as far as I am concerned, I do not intend to subscribe to it.

I am particularly concerned, as one will necessarily realise, with those people who live and have their travelling necessities a long way from the metropolitan district. I have on more than one occasion in the past, even under the existing provisions, not found it over easy to get the requisites which I required. Yet it has been possible because, apparently, it is not unlawful for people to sell them. This measure, in certain circumstances outlined in it, proposes to make it unlawful, and so the difficulties of the travelling public will be increased because there will be the resistance of the persons concerned in supplying these requisites, a resistance built up by the fact that not only are they offending against the law but they are also liable to be punished very considerably because the provisions in this Bill for a third offence are particularly hectic.

So I find myself in this position: The recommending authority, or the Governor without the recommending authority, can dictate to the people in any country centre as regards what they shall do. If they were allowed to trade for what are known as extraordinary hours—they need not necessarily be hours that are convenient to that section of the travelling people which has to go long journeys and cannot guarantee its time of arrival at a given place—it might easily be, if the powers in this measure were used to the full, that there would be no provision at all in some places. It would be just a case of their saying, "There is nobody here who can lawfully supply you and so you will either have to stay here until such time as we can lawfully supply you or you will have to get your supplies unlawfully somewhere else, if that is possible." That, I think, is a most extraordinary and unsatisfactory position in which to place any member of the travelling public.

If this measure left the citizens concerned—the businessmen concerned in the supply of requisites—in any given country area, the right to determine among themselves how the public was to be supplied at extraordinary times, I think it would pass muster. The decision would then rest with the local people according to customs and local problems, and it might work out all right. But it seems to me that under this measure they could be regimented totally and, under certain circumstances, they would have no redress whatever if the force of this Act was used

against them and, as far as I can see, it would be quite possible in any given circumstances for some section of the travelling public to find itself in a very difficult position. So I propose to oppose the Bill.

I regret that this necessitates opposing the provisions dealing with the St. John Ambulance Association, which I favour, and the Royal Automobile Club. However, those matters could easily be rectified at some future time, if the Bill is not passed, and that future time could be in the very near future if the Government is bona fide in the desire to ensure that those organisations can carry on their present illegitimate operations. But I do not propose to subscribe to any further regimentation of the supplies of these requisites to the travelling public, believing that if they were left to themselves, particularly those in the country areas—and I want it to be quite clear that my remarks apply mainly to them—they would probably be in a position to make the necessary arrangements to give that service to the public which the public is entitled to receive and which, in many cases our modern legislation seems entirely to lose sight of. I propose, therefore, to oppose the second reading.

**MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.45]:** When considering the requirements of motorists we should not stop at the supply of petrol, oils and similar supplies. I cannot follow the reasoning of some members who oppose the measure and who contend that these requirements should be available to the public at all hours of the day. Besides those articles, there are others, such as headlight globes which may be required at any time. In that respect, I would also include motorcar condensers and half-a-dozen other parts which can go wrong at any time, and which may not be available at garages. That would necessitate the making of other arrangements.

When a motorist makes a journey of any distance he should make ample arrangements for his fuel supply. As to saying that trading hours should be left to the people in the country to decide for themselves, might I remind the member for Stirling of what happened in Bunbury? That was not so much the decision of the people engaged in the trade down there, as the decision of the oil companies as to what the service stations should do.

**Mr. Roberts:** You are not fair to the oil companies.

**Mr. JAMIESON:** The companies used their power to get the business their way. Let us not be blinded by the fact that only one party made the move. The fact is that the people who comprise the Automobile Chamber of Commerce are ordinary businessmen and, as such, are reasonable in their attitude towards giving a service to the public; but like the people who run banks or any other type of service to the

public, it is reasonable for them to expect regulated hours of trade so that they can enjoy, in common with people in other callings, the various social functions.

**Hon. A. F. Watts:** Why do you not apply the same argument to the telephone or tram services?

**Mr. JAMIESON:** They are more automatic.

**Hon. A. F. Watts:** People are required to work them.

**Mr. JAMIESON:** I see no reason why if at a later stage some means to supply fuel automatically through a slot machine is devised, the Government of the day should not allow the firm putting forward such a proposition to operate the machine.

**Hon. D. Brand:** Why not allow the service stations to operate the pumps manually until that happens?

**Mr. JAMIESON:** The manual operation of pumps is not all that it is made out to be. One member in this House made reference only a few days ago to a firm that has been giving a 24-hour service for some 30 years. If he was referring to the same firm that I have in mind, it has now refused to supply that service for 24 hours a day.

**Hon. A. F. Watts:** If that is your argument, you will stop all trams, trains and telephones at 12 noon on Saturday.

**Mr. JAMIESON:** There are certain things which a community can do without, and there are certain things it cannot do without.

**Mr. Roberts:** What is your opinion of the carpenter or bricklayer who works over the week-end?

**Mr. JAMIESON:** I do not think very much of him for doing that.

**Mr. Roberts:** In other words, you do not think much of anybody who works more than 40 hours a week.

**Mr. JAMIESON:** I do not.

**Mr. Roberts:** And also the farmers who work over 40 hours a week?

**Mr. JAMIESON:** Farmers may at times work over 40 hours a week, but they make up for that overtime during other periods of the year. In fixing the hours that they work, they are not compelled to do so by anybody.

**Mr. Roberts:** They are compelled by nature.

**Mr. JAMIESON:** They are compelled by nature, which is harder to control, but that depends of course, on the anatomy of the person. In so far as compulsion on many service stations to remain open is concerned, I would point out that many of the operators work under leases from the companies. At times it is found that operators sublease the stations outside the ordinary hours to other people who desire to make a little

money. Eventually that is where the shut-down occurs. In the moves made by the Government there will be some sort of guarantee that within reasonable hours, an emergency service will be available, and there will be some method to enable the public to find out where that service may be obtained. The position is not so bad as the Opposition imagine, when they claim that the public will be cut off from any service. It will be a matter of the public adjusting itself to trading hours, as is done in other respects.

Hon. A. F. Watts: If this Bill is passed there is nothing to indicate that such a service will be available.

Mr. JAMIESON: I daresay there is nothing to guarantee it, but is the hon. member not being a little unfair to the people who comprise the Automobile Chamber of Commerce, in assuming that they are not prepared to give such a service to the public?

Hon. A. F. Watts: I was satisfied with the Bill passed last year, and I am not prepared to go further.

Mr. JAMIESON: There are a few amendments in the Bill before us to make conditions more pleasant for the people who are in need of services which were not provided in the measure passed last year. If that legislation had been proclaimed, it would have been far more restrictive than the present Bill. Members opposing this Bill should examine it closely to see if they are not missing something. It only needs a proclamation to bring the legislation already passed into operation. The Bill before us grants certain amenities. It enables the R.A.C. to supply its members with urgent needs. It allows ambulances to secure petrol at any time, and that is a most desirable move.

All in all, this Bill will clarify the position which was not too clear when both Houses of Parliament dealt with a similar measure last year. Once again I reiterate that the people concerned are deserving of some protection under the law when it has become apparent that they have been coerced by certain forceful companies to keep the trading hours they now keep. There is no reason why they should not have the protection of Parliament in the regulation of their hours of trading. If they have such a coverage, they know where they stand. To expect traders to operate according to the whims and desires of the various oil companies is not a desirable feature in any industry in this or any other State. I support the Bill and hope it will be passed.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [5.55]: In considering this measure we must have regard for the atmosphere in which the 1956 legislation was passed by Parliament.

I venture to suggest that had it not been for the very definite undertakings given by the Ministers in this House and in another place, the Bill would not have passed in the form in which it did.

Several members interjected.

MR. COURT: Surely, this Parliament is entitled to expect that the assurances of two responsible Ministers in this matter, who gave an unqualified undertaking regarding certain things, would be honoured! Subsequently, the Government did honour those undertakings. It expressed itself publicly and said it would honour those undertakings but would resubmit the legislation to Parliament at the next session. We have, therefore, to consider this legislation on the basis that it is the means by which the Government of the day comes before Parliament and says, "In spite of what the Ministers undertook during last session, we do not intend that condition to prevail any longer; in other words, round the clock trading will not be permitted."

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The Government did not proclaim that legislation.

Mr. COURT: I have already said that the Government honoured the undertaking given by the two Ministers.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Now the Government has come before Parliament with this legislation.

Mr. COURT: The Government has now come before Parliament and said, in effect, "We want this legislation passed as an acknowledgment that we are no longer bound by the undertaking given by those two Ministers." Therefore, the verbiage of this particular measure, to my mind, is not of any great significance. It is purely a means to an end, whereby the Government can henceforth say, "We have been relieved of the undertaking given by the Minister for Labour and the Chief Secretary."

Mr. Oldfield: It was not an undertaking. It was an irresponsible utterance.

Mr. COURT: I am pleased to say that the Government saw fit to regard it as an undertaking on the part of the two Ministers. It would be a very poor show for this Parliament, if an undertaking given in such an unqualified manner as the Ministers gave it, were not honoured by the Government. We now have to regard the whole of the 1956 legislation in conjunction with the 1957 legislation, in the light of the changed atmosphere brought about by the Government's statement that henceforth it does not consider itself bound by the utterances made during the previous session of Parliament.

So we are thrown back on the two very vital definitions in the legislation, namely, that dealing with recommendation, and that dealing with representative body.

The recommendation means a recommendation made by the representative body, or where that body does not make a recommendation, it means a recommendation made by the Minister. The representative body means a corporate body representative of proprietors of shops having requisites for sale, and known as Western Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce Incorporated, or if that body is dissolved or becomes defunct, such body as the Governor appoints in its place.

When the legislation was before the House last session, I dealt at some length with the very restrictive nature of some of the provisions. In the representative body, we have only the members of the W.A. Automobile Chamber of Commerce. They are the resellers. Users of the commodity were just not represented. We tried at some length to induce the Minister for Labour to accept an amendment which would give representation to the R.A.C. We could not think of any other body more representative of the motorist than the R.A.C. If anyone can suggest one more representative of the motorist, I would like to hear of it.

The Minister for Police: The R.A.C. is not opposed to the proposition that is put up now.

Mr. COURT: It is opposed to the proposition. It is opposed most definitely to the restriction of trading hours.

The Minister for Police: Are you sure of that?

Mr. COURT: I am sure the R.A.C. is opposed to the restriction of trading hours. It naturally stands up for the maximum service to its members and to motorists generally.

Mr. O'Brien: Paragraph (a) provides for emergency service for ambulances likewise.

Mr. COURT: Dealing with the interjection by the member for Murchison, it is interesting to know that the Government has seen fit to include a provision in this measure which selects out of the community, the members of the Royal Automobile Club. It is provided under this amendment that the R.A.C. or any of its servants can provide certain services for the vehicles belonging to members of the club. We do not dispute the necessity for allowing that right, but it is rather interesting to note that the Government has selected that one body to provide emergency services.

Mr. O'Brien: There are also other shops mentioned which can serve ambulances requiring petrol.

Mr. COURT: It is rather amazing that we have to amend a piece of legislation to provide that ambulances may receive emergency service. Can members imagine any Government prosecuting people who gave service to a public ambulance,

whether there was legislation specifically mentioning it or not? It would be just unthinkable that any Government would prosecute such a person. Consider a fire brigade, also. Heaven forbid that any fire brigade would omit to arrange for sufficient petrol to be on hand. But suppose that happened, and somebody provided a service for that brigade. Surely the person meeting that need should be free from litigation! It is not possible to legislate for everything. My own view is that the reference to public ambulances was thrown in for good measure, to provide further window-dressing for this legislation.

When the Government made its announcement regarding the 1956 legislation, I felt that some sanity had returned to the situation and that people who wanted to give service would be able to continue to do so. However, it would appear that that was a short-lived period, because, if the Government has its way, the restrictive nature of this legislation will be brought to bear on this industry.

I was very disturbed last year when, prior to the announcement that the Minister's undertaking would be honoured, a Press statement appeared under the heading "First Bid to Cut Petrol Sale Hours." I wrote to the Minister about it. In that letter I pointed out—

In this Press statement reference is made to a circular being distributed to service stations by the Automobile Chamber of Commerce. Reference is also made to the fact that the Chamber says that any proprietor, member or non-member, who does not complete the form, will be recommended to trade at ordinary hours. Also, it says, "and that the Minister for Labour has told the Chamber that he will not consider direct approaches by any trader (member or non-member) who does not reply to the circular."

From the reported remarks of non-member traders, it would appear that such non-member traders had approached the Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops and yourself for permission to continue unrestricted trading but had been told to take up the question with the Automobile Chamber of Commerce.

At the foot of the newspaper report it states that you did not comment.

Frankly, the announcement surprised me as I could not for one minute imagine that you had told the Chamber that you would not consider direct approaches by any trader who did not reply to the circular.

I think you will agree that such an attitude would be a breach of the undertakings given by you in the House when the Bill to restrict service station trading hours was before Parliament.

The whole object of Parliament in giving you power to allow non-members to conduct unrestricted trading hours was to avoid any suggestion of compulsory membership and discrimination by the Automobile Chamber of Commerce.

Knowing the Minister concerned, as they do, members will not be surprised at the very brief reply I received from him, in which he said—

In reply to your letter of the 12th February I wish to advise that it would not be proper for me to consider individual applications with regard to service station trading hours pending receipt from the W.A. Automobile Chamber of Commerce of a recommendation which it was requested to submit.

The whole matter will be dealt with by Cabinet in due course.

Undismayed, I sallied forth a few days later.

The Premier: I can't believe this part of it!

Mr. COURT: I wrote to the Minister as follows:—

Thank you for your letter of the 19th instant in reply to mine of the 12th.

That was a nice courteous beginning. I continued—

It would appear that I did not make my main points clear in my letter of the 12th instant.

I did not mean to suggest that you should give immediate consideration to individual applications at this stage. What I was objecting to was the suggestion that you would not consider individual applications from people who did not complete the circular sent out by the Automobile Chamber of Commerce.

I would like your assurance that when you receive the recommendation of the Automobile Chamber of Commerce you will be prepared to receive and consider applications from individuals, whether members or non-members of the Automobile Chamber of Commerce, for the right to trade outside of ordinary hours.

Your early comments on this point would be appreciated.

Members will probably guess the answer. It was as follows:—

In reply to your letter of the 22nd February, I wish to advise that the matter referred to in the penultimate paragraph of your letter will be considered by Cabinet when the recommendation of the W.A. Automobile Chamber of Commerce is being dealt with.

So I did not make very much progress. However, I was pleased to note that subsequently the Government bought into this, and said that the undertakings given in this Chamber would, in fact, be honoured; and we thought that the matter would rest there. But here we are again on the merry-go-round of this question whether people will be allowed to service the public for longer than the ordinary trading hours prescribed, should they so desire.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They are not the only people who are restricted as to hours.

Hon. L. Thorn: What about the night you ran out of petrol and were not able to get a drop!

The Premier: What about the night you ran out of it?

Hon. L. Thorn: I told the member for Fremantle where he would be able to get some.

Mr. COURT: In reply to the member for Fremantle, I think we must regard the matter today as being in an entirely different category from ordinary shop and factory trading. There are certain emergencies that arise that have to be expected, and the tendency in serving the public today is to improve rather than decrease the service available.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Some people would like to have hotels open all night. How would you like that? Would it be okay?

Mr. COURT: I am not dealing with hotels at the moment. We will express our views on that matter when we have an appropriate amendment to the Licensing Act. So far as motorists are concerned, I do not want to compel anybody to open.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You are different from the oil companies. You have heard about what happened in Bunbury, haven't you?

Mr. COURT: I am coming to that. I would not for one minute make it obligatory for a service-station proprietor to remain open. If he conducts his business in such a manner as to obtain the trade he wants during certain hours, I say, let him close at the hour he desires. He should not be made to remain open. I would agree to an amendment to give him the right to remain open if he desires.

Mr. Jamieson: What about coercion from oil companies?

Mr. COURT: Nothing of the sort! It is their fault if they put themselves into a position where they can be coerced. That is an over-emphasised argument.

The Minister for Works: They were coerced in Bunbury.

Mr. COURT: We will deal with that now. The Minister has raised the question of Bunbury. That is another reason why the Bill should not be passed.



The Minister for Works: I happen to know beyond doubt that they were coerced by the oil companies.

Mr. COURT: There are certain proprietors who worked out an arrangement between themselves.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They were unanimous.

Mr. Roberts: They were not.

Mr. COURT: Those gentlemen for certain reasons want to trade at different hours at different times of the year. It is a well-established tourist centre with a big influx of motorists during certain times of the year. They were going to do what I consider a very sensible thing.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The oil companies did not think so.

Mr. COURT: I do not think that was an insurmountable difficulty.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They were made to open. The companies said, "You open or else!"

Mr. COURT: Perhaps the hon. member will listen to me for a moment, and he can carry on afterwards. I am finding it difficult, Mr. Speaker, to deal with interjections back and front.

Hon. L. Thorn: It is like the charge of the 600!

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr. COURT: These people have very good reasons, based on commonsense, for wanting to observe different hours during different seasons. That is what they wanted to do, and is what would be done if they were left alone. There are people operating service stations there who are engaged in other callings. Good luck to them if they want to do that! I do not say that a man should not work on the wharves, or drive a baker's cart, or be a butcher and run a business as well if he can make staff and other arrangements. Good luck to him!

Mr. Bovell: That is private enterprise and initiative.

Mr. COURT: Had they been left to their own devices, the matter would have worked out happily; and the seasonal and normal demands would have been met. It is implied by the remarks of some speakers—I refer particularly to the member for Beeloo—that there would be emergency facilities available under this legislation, and that there would be prescribed notices appearing in the different suburbs showing where those services were obtainable. But I think we have to be cautious on this matter. First of all, the whole question of extraordinary trading hours will be tied to recommendations which the Minister receives.

I remember very vividly the public utterances made in the Press by, I think, the present Minister for Police regarding the hours that would be observed. I cannot recall any machinery being announced whereby the consumer, would be sure of being able to get petrol 24 hours a day. One cannot be sure that one will meet an emergency between the hours of 7 p.m. one day and 1 a.m. the next day. With all the goodwill in the world, these emergencies do occur and they will occur between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m. If I remember correctly, the proposed extraordinary hours of sale were to be from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. on normal week days.

The Minister for Police: I believe that the Chamber was prepared to make emergency petrol available when required.

Mr. COURT: There was no announcement about that. The Minister's announcement was 7 p.m. to 1 a.m., and the question was raised as to what a person would do in an emergency at other times. The Government has had second thoughts on this point; because, apart from the undertaking given by the Minister, it has provided for some emergency arrangements to be made for members of the Royal Automobile Club. So there would be one point to which a motorist could go, under this legislation, if he were a member of the R.A.C.

Hon. D. Brand: And if he had enough petrol to get there!

Mr. COURT: But if he is not a member and objects to joining—

Hon. L. Thorn: That's the point! We would all have to join.

Mr. COURT: —he would not have the advantages of that service without breaking the law; and that is not a satisfactory state of affairs.

I would like to touch on one point raised by the member for Beeloo, who said that we were carrying this argument too far because it could be that there were things we would require by way of emergency services that a particular service station never carried anyhow; and he instanced some particular part. Of course, that could be carried to unreasonable limits. For instance, it is readily understandable that no service station of reasonable size, whether in the metropolitan or country area, would carry every size of tyre and tube—and it would not be expected to. But then, one does not expect to have a tyre and tube blow out every day, or to have a breakdown involving the replacement of major parts every day. No one suggests that service stations should carry all these parts. But we know with reasonable certainty that if we travel 100 miles or a longer distance, we will require a certain quantity of petrol or oil.

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

Mr. COURT: Before tea I had almost completed what I wanted to say during this debate and I was referring to the speech of the member for Beeloo, who said that a service station could not be expected to carry everything and that there might be an emergency demand for something which it probably never carried at any time. We agree with that but cannot accept it as a complete answer. One has to consider this question with a certain amount of commonsense, and I instanced the fact that no service station of normal suburban size would be expected to carry every size of tyres and tubes.

There are many other large and important components which one could need in the middle of the night but which we would not expect a service station to carry. These things are unpredictable, but it is certain that if one travels by car, one will need certain supplies such as petrol and oil. Therefore, if these service stations are allowed to give that emergency service, should they so desire, they will carry a range of supplies in keeping with the normal out-of-hours demands of the motoring public. I think we can allow for them to exercise commonsense and judgment based on their experience.

I oppose the measure. I have, I trust, made my grounds for doing so clear. I consider this Bill purely a piece of window-dressing to enable the Government to have a piece of legislation brought before Parliament to release it from the two commitments made by its responsible Ministers—

The Premier: Surely this is not window-dressing!

Mr. COURT: If the Premier was satisfied with the legislation introduced last session and did not feel himself bound by the undertakings given by the two Ministers, that legislation could have been proclaimed.

The Premier: But we did feel ourselves bound.

Mr. COURT: I acknowledged that, and gave the Premier great credit for it.

The Premier: You say this Bill is window-dressing in connection with the undertakings given. It is a legitimate approach to Parliament.

Mr. COURT: The Government could not very well come to Parliament and say, "We gave certain undertakings last year and we want to be relieved of them," unless it brought down some legislation. and this legislation does not seek to achieve much more—apart from the ambulance clause and the R.A.C. clause—than did the legislation of last year, which was passed on a distinct understanding given by the two Ministers. The Government, as explained by the Minister for Labour when introducing the Bill, no longer considered itself

bound by those two undertakings. I think there is ample opportunity for traders to sort this thing out for themselves. There are country and suburban districts where traders have got together and worked out a happy arrangement, giving ample service to the districts concerned, and some relief to those who did not want to trade consistently long hours.

When introducing the Bill the Minister did not explain what emergency provisions the Government proposed, apart from the provision that the R.A.C. could service its members. The R.A.C., of course, is not everywhere and it is not everyone that belongs to it and so there must be a large body of the motoring public who would not be covered by the legislation at present before the House. I oppose the Bill.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [7.36]: The circumstances surrounding the measure before us remind me of a famous saying by Abraham Lincoln, who is quoted as having said, "It is quite possible to please some of the people some of the time. It is quite possible to please all of the people some of the time but it is always impossible to please all the people all the time," and this measure, in my mind, embraces democracy because it aims to bring about the greatest good for the greatest number.

I have pleasure in reporting that the Eastern Goldfields Service Stations Association, which is comprised of the garages in Kalgoorlie and Boulder, is 100 per cent. in favour of the Bill. Only last week I received from them a letter reading as follows:—

This letter is written to keep before you our desire that the Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts be included in amendments to the Shop and Factories Act by which the zoning and rostering of service stations is controlled to prevent after hour trading and to this end I attach a copy of my letter of the 18th December, 1956.

That original letter reads—

I have been instructed by a meeting of the association to place before you a request that consideration should be given to support a measure at present before Parliament by which the retailing of motor spirits will be controlled. As you are aware, this association controls, by the mutual co-operation of members, the zoning and rostering of trade outside normal business hours and this system has proved satisfactory to ourselves and the public. Serious inroads have been made in our trade by outlets at grocery establishments where only petrol is sold and no provision is made for service. These outlets operate at night, on Sundays and holidays and are fostered by one oil company who appears

to have no regard for the legitimate trade, whose continued service to the public must be lowered by reduced gallonages. If the increased gallonage continues to be put through these pumps the standard of our service stations must fall as the return for capital outlay for necessary equipment would not warrant the expense. We would be pleased if you can consider supporting the measure and ensuring that Kalgoorlie and Boulder be included in the scope of the Bill. Further that the measure requires that a petrol outlet should be equipped with full service facilities. This does not necessarily exclude the grocery shops from participating in the trade, providing they are equipped in a manner to afford service to the motoring public.

Both those letters are signed by the secretary, W. B. Walker.

It will be seen from the letters that the garages on the Goldfields are in complete agreement with the Bill, that garages should be controlled and that the oil companies should be controlled. Reference to the control of oil companies brings to mind a situation which arose in Bunbury a few weeks ago and I have pleasure in claiming that such a situation could never have arisen on the Goldfields, because the service station proprietors there would have stood together to a man and defied the oil companies in their banditry.

Hon. D. Brand: What do you mean by saying it would never have occurred in Kalgoorlie? What is the difference between garage proprietors there and in Bunbury?

Mr. EVANS: I say the Goldfields service stations would have defied the oil companies. The fact that they are asking for the control of the oil companies shows they are not afraid of big business combines. As regards the control envisaged in the Bill, I point out that Kalgoorlie has a huge population compared with the surrounding districts and naturally among that population is a large number of motorists. Most of the cars on the Goldfields, apart from use in transport to and from the mines, are used in the week-ends when many people go out shooting and so on, or perhaps to collect a bit of wood.

In this Bill I see an opportunity for those people to obtain supplies of petrol when they require it after hours on Saturday or even on Sunday. There is a large motorcycle club on the Goldfields and its members whole-heartedly support the Bill. The provision for R.A.C. membership appeals to me as I know that body has a big membership on the Goldfields. I support the Bill and hope that a majority of members in this Chamber will also support it.

MR. MOIR (Boulder) [7.42]: I cannot agree with some of the observations by members on the other side of the House. The Leader of the Country Party stated that the businessmen should decide their own hours and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said many traders have got together and made arrangements which they found mutually satisfactory. For many years the service station proprietors on the Goldfields—they have an association—have worked out a scheme that has been mutually satisfactory to them and to the public, as it gives the motoring public a very good service.

Under the arrangement a roster system operates outside the ordinary trading hours and in the Press, probably about Friday, they advertise which will be the duty service station to operate at the week-end. It is an excellent arrangement, but we find that, when recently something of that nature was desired in Bunbury and was decided on by the local association there, pressure was brought to bear on one of the service station proprietors who was told by the oil company concerned that he had to trade or else something would be done to him.

We also find that that sort of pressure operates on the Goldfields. I was told as late as yesterday that one of the members of the association had been informed by the supplying oil company that it wanted him to trade outside the hours laid down by the association. When he pointed out that he was a member of the association, and was abiding by the agreement into which he had entered, he was told that it would be better for him if he got out of the association. That is how the business people are allowed to decide their own conditions!

The oil companies are going to do the deciding and if the man who is running the business is in the unfortunate position that I have mentioned, he will have to do what he is told by the oil company. When the member for Beeloo was speaking, there was an interjection in relation to the hours of petrol trading and the matter of placing certain limits on the service stations. It was pointed out that there was no limit on people operating telephones and other services for the public. I do not think an analogy can be drawn along those lines. We know that there are some services which must operate 24 hours a day. For instance, we are aware that the nursing service must operate for 24 hours a day, and that medical attention must also be available to the public during this time.

Reasonable conditions and reasonable hours of trading can be established in petrol, or in any other commodity, provided that reasonable hours are laid down. It is true that we will always find the person who is in need of petrol, in conditions which by no stretch of the imagination can be described as an emergency; there are people who will still require

petrol at 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning, or, for that matter, at any hour of the day or night. On the other hand, we know that emergencies do arise.

Mr. Hearman: Why did not the Government proclaim the Act last year? What was wrong with it?

Mr. MOIR: I am discussing the Bill before the House at present.

Mr. Hearman: What is the difference?

Mr. MOIR: As I pointed out, I am discussing the measure that is now before this House. I have already said that good facilities are available to people on the Goldfields; but even with restricted hours of trading, nobody can imagine a service station proprietor who happens to live adjacent to his service station refusing anyone petrol in an emergency. I would like to say at once that recently we had an emergency on the Goldfields during which a little child was lost in the bush and hundreds of people turned out to search for her, a search, which, I am happy to say, was successful.

One of the service stations in Boulder and, I conclude, also in Kalgoorlie, opened at the request of the police and sold petrol till midnight; they made it available to the people who went out to search for that little girl. I do not think there is any question that people will be able to obtain petrol in an emergency.

Mr. Roberts: That would not be legal under this amendment.

Mr. MOIR: Even under this measure, if some sudden emergency arose and there was no R.A.C. operating in the district, I cannot imagine any person who happened to be selling petrol not allowing another to have it if it were for a genuine emergency.

Mr. Roberts: I agree, but it would not be legal.

Mr. MOIR: I cannot imagine anybody suggesting that some action would have to be taken because the law was being broken. I am sure that the people outside Parliament would use their commonsense to a large extent, even if those inside it do not. A situation is fast arising in relation to the service stations where they are bound hand and foot.

It is all very well for members on that side of the House to say that these people please themselves; that they are the masters of their own destiny—and mention was also made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about accessories being provided by service stations—but the position is fast being reached where we will not be able to get much in the way of accessories at some service stations, because the wholesaler who supplies these accessories will not be able to make them available to the service stations, because so many of the latter are in such a precarious

position that it is not a proper business risk for the wholesalers to supply them with the accessories.

As we all know, credit has got to be given, and I am told on very good authority that situations arise where, owing to the fierce competition today, some of these service stations get into such a precarious financial position that the oil companies step in and take them over. The nature of their agreement is such that they can take over the goods and the shop, thus leaving the suppliers of these accessories lamenting. I believe that has happened. Accordingly, we can see what is going on today with some of these service station proprietors. These people are entitled to decent conditions of work and hours of trading; they should not have to scramble 24 hours a day to make a living.

The oil companies do not care one jot for the welfare or well-being of the station proprietors, and when they exert the pressure to which I have referred, I would say that legislation such as that we are now considering is very necessary. We cannot live under Rafferty rules; there must be order in our community. The position has arisen where I think it would be safe to say that at least 90 per cent. of the people concerned desire this legislation; I would say that 90 per cent. of the public is agreeable to it, and there is no earthly reason why we should not have it. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

**HON. D. BRAND** (Greenough) [7.53]: I want to say only one or two words on this measure. Firstly, I doubt very much whether the member for Boulder is right in saying that 90 per cent. of the consumers are in favour of the Bill. I would assume that 90 per cent. of the retailers are in favour of it; that is a natural assumption, because they have fought for it all along the line. By and large, the legislation favours them and I can readily understand their supporting it and fighting for it. But we cannot only consider the retailers; we must also consider those most concerned, namely, the motorists.

It cannot be denied that because of the improvement in our roads, and because of our vast distances and our prosperity, the number of motor-vehicles on the road is increasing rapidly. I understand the figure works out at about four people to a motor-vehicle. Therefore, I believe that we are faced with the proposition of ensuring a service to the motorist throughout 24 hours of the day. In any case, I do not think we should come to Parliament and try to introduce a measure to enforce a law that hours should be severely restricted.

In my own part of the world, when motoring from Perth to Geraldton, it is still very difficult to obtain petrol. It was not until recent years that one could rely on obtaining the necessary petrol after dark

to enable one to get through to one's destination. It was a case of having to carry one's petrol requirements with one. At the present time about halfway between Perth and Geraldton, there is a service station which provides a 24 hour service, and I should hope that it would receive the patronage of all people who travel in that direction, because it is quite a relief to know that such a service is available all the time.

I oppose this measure on the principle that in these times we should be extending hours of trading, taking care, of course, that the hours worked by the employees are strictly adhered to, and that if we are to have the services we require, the people who work shifts and overtime should be paid for the extra work they put in. The member for Boulder and, I think, the member for Kalgoorlie, referred to the satisfactory position that exists in Kalgoorlie as a result of a roster system. The public is only interested in obtaining a service and if service stations in any section—particularly in a built-up area—are wise enough and co-operative enough to get together to provide a service and at the same time to offset the conditions that would make it uneconomical for all of them to trade, then that is the condition that should obtain; it should certainly not be cut across by the introduction of a law.

Of course, I know the member for Boulder put forward the argument that the oil companies had intruded on this arrangement, but I am quite satisfied that the oil companies would be logical and reasonable enough to appreciate a local arrangement among several service stations as a voluntary measure. It would be better than having one governed by an Act of Parliament restricting the hours of trading to certain limits.

Mr. JOHNSON: You have been reading fairy tales.

Hon. D. BRAND: As a matter of fact, I have not read any of the speeches made by the member for Leederville for quite a long time.

Mr. Roberts: They are horror comics.

Hon. D. BRAND: The fact remains that the Bill before us aims to restrict the hours of trading of people who are willing to render a service, and I think it should be the objective of Parliament to allow and encourage people to work longer hours if they so desire; it being understood, of course, that the service station proprietors welcome an arrangement whereby they are limited to certain hours and where the consumer is forced to buy his petrol within those hours. No matter at what hour one travels on the roads in the country, or in the metropolitan area, these days, there are always motor-vehicles moving about. Apart from the emergencies mentioned by the Leader of the Country Party, more and more travelling is being done during the

hours of darkness and we should ensure that if there are service station proprietors willing to work longer hours to provide a service for motorists, they should be permitted to do so. I oppose the measure.

MR. JOHNSON (Leederville) [8.0]: I could not help feeling that what the Leader of the Opposition had to say on this measure has made it almost necessary for me to draw attention to some fallacies in his expression of opinion. First of all, I think petrol stations are sometimes called service stations. However, customers do not go for service; they go for petrol.

Mr. Court: Rubbish!

Mr. JOHNSON: They go for goods; something real; something tangible that can be handled and measured.

Hon. D. Brand: That is a fairy tale, if there ever was one.

Mr. JOHNSON: The petrol pump is there solely for the purpose of measuring petrol, and the other things for which one goes to a service station are those directly connected with a vehicle such as spark plugs and tyres. Members will admit that these things can be measured, although there is some difficulty in measuring free air. However, that is about the only requirement one cannot measure.

Mr. Roberts: Not here, anyway.

Mr. JOHNSON: When I listen to people professing the mythology of private enterprise, that service is the objective they are—

Mr. Roberts: The same as you put up on the banking Bill.

Mr. JOHNSON: The things people go to a business for are the goods which the business supplies. Let us be realistic about it.

Mr. Court: Is not the provision of these goods a service in itself?

Mr. JOHNSON: It could possibly be stretched to be called a service, but it is a misuse of words. The reason is for goods.

Mr. Roberts: If that business does not give service, he will still go there, will he?

Mr. JOHNSON: If the member for Bunbury were to follow the theory of his own free enterprise, he would discover that it is not service which takes people to one business or another; that in the theory of free enterprise, price is the attraction.

Mr. Roberts: Not necessarily.

Mr. JOHNSON: Don't tell me the hon. member is wriggling away from that.

Mr. Court: It is the value of goods and quality. The greater the service, the greater the support from the public.

The Premier: They tie up parcels with stronger string.

Mr. JOHNSON: It seems to me that the member for Bunbury is aware that his argument is weak.

Mr. Roberts: It is not weak at all.

Mr. JOHNSON: Just as he knows the argument of the Leader of the Opposition, who likes to trust oil companies, is weak, because in Bunbury they have had some experience of it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What are you trying to prove at the present time?

Mr. JOHNSON: Nothing that the member for Cottesloe would understand; just something the intelligent members of the House can follow. The position is at Bunbury—as demonstrated in the Press—that service station proprietors of that town got together and decided they would trade certain hours, and it is coincidental that the hours relating to their agreement were the same as those provided in the relative legislation.

Mr. Roberts: For how long did they agree to trade those hours?

Mr. JOHNSON: They agreed to trade them.

Mr. Roberts: For how long?

Mr. JOHNSON: They tried them for about two days and then an honest, kindly gentleman from the oil companies got hold of one man and put on the pressure—what is generally called “twisting the arm.”

Hon. D. Brand: You should know something about that.

Mr. JOHNSON: In polite business circles, it is called “applying a little pressure,” but in criminal circles it is called “blackmail.”

Hon. D. Brand: What is it called in Labour Party circles?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are confusing them with a certain Mr. Chambers, are you not?

Mr. JOHNSON: They told one man that he must trade hours different from those to which he agreed. He advised other members of the group committee, or whatever it was that made the agreement, that unfortunately against his will, he was required to trade other hours and could not get out of it.

Mr. Roberts: Were any other people in Bunbury trading outside those hours at the time?

Mr. JOHNSON: Reports in our local Press—

Mr. Roberts: Do not take any notice of them.

Mr. JOHNSON: —are not reliable, but when they are contrary to the arguments of the Liberal Party, I take it that the situation is a good deal stronger than that indicated in the paper.

Mr. Court: That is twisted thinking.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Fair enough coming from you.

Hon. D. Brand: Just about mirrors your mind.

Mr. JOHNSON: One of the reasons why I believe the Press on this occasion is because something not dissimilar took place in my own district, of which I have full chapter and verse.

Mr. Roberts: That is better.

Mr. JOHNSON: Members can find particulars of it in Hansard of last session. I would like to comment on the Leader of the Opposition's statement that the service station proprietors were willing to give the service. The one thing that is obvious is that they desire not to be forced into giving service for such extremely lengthy hours.

Hon. D. Brand: Are they?

Mr. JOHNSON: There is not the slightest doubt about it. The pressure which has been applied to members on this side of the House is from suburban service station proprietors in the form of a request to do something to make it possible for them to at least get home to Mum occasionally. In fact, from what they tell me, their situation is such that their wives see as little of them as the wives of hard-working politicians see of their husbands.

The Minister for Transport: It might be good for them.

Mr. JOHNSON: I do not know whether that is so or not, but service station proprietors would like to get home more often and it is contrary to the truth for the Leader of the Opposition to say these people are anxious to give the service. They are not; it is just a fairy story.

Mr. Court: There are some who are prepared and most anxious to give the service, and we want to make it possible for them to do so.

Mr. JOHNSON: True, in relation to the sale of petrol, but let's be honest about it.

Mr. Court: They are prepared to sell goods at a time when the public wants them.

Mr. Wild: You tried to tell us banking was not a service industry.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Nobody gives service to the community!

Mr. JOHNSON: Service in the commercial world is just boloney. It is just a lot of window-dressing and, if I were outside this Chamber, I would call it by a ruder name. Various members seem to know the word I would use by the way they grin. The Leader of the Opposition does not believe that 90 per cent. of the consumers favour the Bill. He would be hard put to find 10 per cent. actively opposed to it. The majority do not need petrol stations but there are a number

who make use of service stations, no matter what hour they are open. I have even obtained petrol myself on Saturdays, once or twice.

Mr. Hearman: Shame on you!

Mr. JOHNSON: I agree it is the wrong thing to do. I disagree with Saturday trading for anybody, but the point is one can operate on far fewer hours, particularly as the Bill agrees to cover exceptional circumstances, a matter which is well catered for. The object of living in this exceedingly active world of ours is not to work all the time. It may be all right for Liberals to work all the time, but human beings like some rest.

Mr. Bovell: We are industrious; that is something.

Mr. JOHNSON: The Liberal Party supports everybody working for 24 hours a day, which is implicit in the whole of their argument and is something which needs to be combated. Work is not a virtue; possibly, it is a necessity. However, to work more than 40 hours a week does not appear to be a good thing for anybody. If anyone does work a full 40 hours—really work—he is really not fit to do any more.

Mr. Hearman: How many hours a week do you work as a member of Parliament?

Mr. Jamieson: You will have to be careful, or the Premier will bring us back in January.

Mr. JOHNSON: I am inclined to disprove my own statements, but consider myself exceptional.

Mr. Hearman: We consider you are exceptional, all right!

Mr. JOHNSON: It is nice to know that at least on that we are in agreement. The point that I am trying to make is that life is something more than money-making; something more than work, and garage proprietors are entitled to be given some help to reach that situation. Members may remember a poem that had some publicity and was fashionable in the days when life was not quite such a rush—

What is this life, if full of care?

We have no time to stand and stare;  
No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare—as long as sheep—or cows;  
No time to stop at beauty's glance  
And watch her feet—how they can dance.

A poor life this, if full of care.

We have no time to stand and stare.

Mr. Oldfield: This is not the King's Park Bill!

Mr. JOHNSON: It is a philosophy which should not be lost; it is a philosophy which even garage proprietors are entitled to subscribe to, and it is a philosophy everybody in the retail trade could have some regard for. The folk who stand behind

retail counters—and garage proprietors are to some extent in somewhat the same position—are entitled to some leisure. The object of work is leisure, or—to make it simpler for the member for Cottesloe—the object of work is to achieve sufficient income to have some leisure.

The proposal of the Leader of the Opposition that we should not protect people in the retail trade from the pressure of the inhuman oil companies is something we must oppose. It is up to all of us who believe in the rights of human people and in the rights of folk who have families and family life, to protect them. Anyone with accountancy training must be aware that it is impossible to load the price of petrol with the cost of keeping staff at service stations for the hours which are necessary under the current conditions. This means we are requiring the families of service station proprietors to do the job, and we are exploiting them so that they are not getting a proper return and so that they are kept away from their homes for far longer than the proper hours.

For humanitarian reasons alone the Bill should be supported. For the reason given by the previous speakers and for the reason that the Liberal Party is opposed to the measure, and for reasons of pure humanity, I support the Bill.

MR. NALDER. (Katanning) [8.16]: It is easily seen that the previous speaker has little experience of the service given by people engaged in the petrol trade. If the member for Leederville had, from time to time, travelled in the country, he would have realised the necessity for these service stations and he would not have said what he has tonight. I believe that anyone who has had to do a lot of travelling must know of the need for the service station proprietors who give service to the motoring public.

Much evidence was given last year by different speakers to prove the necessity for service station proprietors to remain open for longer hours than would be usual for, perhaps, other types of business. One has only to travel in the country to realise that motorists journeying long distances must have the service that is given by the petrol distributors in order to be able to continue their journey. I know that many people who travel find of necessity that it is not always possible to carry sufficient supplies to enable them to complete their journey.

Mr. Jamieson: Some of the farmers carry enough to go round the continent.

Mr. NALDER: That is interesting information, but I am talking about the ordinary person who goes from his farm or town in the country to the metropolitan area and back. That is done on many occasions—not normally, but because of sickness or urgent business.

I know of one particular centre in the country through which many people travel when going to Lake Grace and then to Esperance. By going through this town they take a short cut, and a lot of farmers in the area prefer to do that rather than go to Esperance through the Goldfields. When travelling through this centre, they do so at all hours of the night and I know it is impossible for some of them to carry sufficient petrol—or to fill up in the daylight hours—so as to be able to complete their journey.

So we find them at odd hours of the night going through this centre, and they rely on the service station proprietor there to give a service for 24 hours; and he does so. I know that many hundreds of people would not in any way like to see this man forced to stick to, say, 8, 10 or 12 hours a day. If there is a section of the community prepared to give a much-needed service, why interfere with it at this stage? Why should not these people be allowed to continue to give to the travelling public the service that is so much required? If it was not required, we would soon find that the service stations giving the service, would close.

I would like to mention an experience I had when going home from the House about a fortnight or three weeks ago. I left here about 10 o'clock in the evening, thinking I had sufficient petrol to complete my trip home, but when I got over the Causeway I realised I would need another gallon or two in order to complete the journey. I travelled right out to Kelmscott before I found a garage that was open. The rest of the service stations had closed for the night. I presume they found it was not necessary for them to remain open because people, apparently, were not calling on them to secure petrol at that time.

The garage at which I purchased the petrol happened to be open only because of an emergency. This man did quite a bit of business during the night hours and someone with a truck wanted certain repairs done to it, and he was attending to this person. That is the reason I was able to get the petrol. The time was about 10.30.

Mr. Jamieson: It was your carelessness that caused you to require the petrol.

Mr. NALDER: That may be so. I should have checked up, but I am only giving this instance to show that there are not a lot of garages open at all hours of the night. The only ones open are those that have proved they can give service to a certain section of the community at a certain time.

I do not think there is necessity for the legislation. If there was a hue and cry from all parts of the State, or from a section of the community then we might be called upon to give con-

sideration to the question, but when people quite voluntarily are prepared to serve not only petrol but the other requirements of the motorist, I think they should be allowed to continue to do so; and if there is any benefit to be derived from this service, they should get it. I do not think there is any force availed of by the oil companies to make this person or that person remain open.

Mr. Johnson: You would believe anything if you believe that.

Mr. NALDER: I know that in the case I have mentioned, it is absolutely voluntary. No force whatever is put upon this man. He remains open because it pays him to do so. He is giving service to the travelling public.

Mr. Potter: He probably lives on the premises..

Mr. NALDER: He lives opposite. As a matter of fact, there are other service stations in the town I have mentioned that could be forced, if force were being used. But this particular man has taken on the responsibility of serving this brand of fuel and I would say, without going into the details of his business, that he has supplied probably 80 per cent of the petrol requirements of the travelling public.

Mr. Johnson: I think you would find he has not, otherwise the oil companies would be taking action.

Mr. NALDER: They do not seem to be doing so at this stage. He has a commanding position in the town and, because he lives in close proximity to the garage, is able to provide this service.

Mr. Roberts: Do they force them to do it in Kalgoorlie?

Mr. NALDER: As my own experience tells me, only a fortnight ago there were very few service stations in the metropolitan area that were not closed all night. I had to go from the Causeway right out to Kelmscott before I found one that was open. So I feel we should not interfere with those individuals who are prepared to serve the motoring public. Therefore I oppose the measure.

MR. OLDFIELD (Mt. Lawley) [8.25]: Actually the Bill is only a minor amendment to a measure that was debated at length last year and subsequently carried in this House without a division and by a majority of two to one in another place. I think that we in this House and those in another place have already decided the principle involved. It was said early this evening by the opponents of the measure that the Bill last year would not have passed in the form in which it was agreed to had the Minister not misled the House—to use the words of the speakers—by certain statements.

By way of interjection, I suggested that was an irresponsible utterance for the undertaking given in both places. If we



read the debate that took place not only here but in another place last year, we find it is obvious that that irresponsible utterance had nothing whatever to do with the ultimate passage of the Bill because those who raised the fears about what would happen to the service stations that were giving round-the-clock service, still continued, despite what the Minister said, their opposition to the measure; and when the division was taken in another place, they recorded their vote accordingly.

We must, in dealing with this matter, recall the Royal Commission which comprised five members of the Legislative Council and which sat and took evidence during the first half of the year 1956, and about October of that year presented a report to the Government. One of the strongest recommendations amongst many that it made was in connection with the question of trading hours—an issue that had never raised its head when the Bill was before this Chamber or another place. As a result of the evidence put before the Royal Commission, the five members who comprised that commission deemed it necessary to recommend, for stability in the industry, that the hours question be dealt with by Parliament.

That is what ultimately happened last year. Unfortunately, we had the remark passed by the Minister in charge of the Bill in this House and repeated by the Minister in charge of it in another place, which led to a lot of kerfuffle later, and certain sections claiming that it was never intended that everyone should be subject to the Bill. If we exercise any common-sense whatsoever, we must realise that we cannot pass legislation concerning only some of the people. We must pass it in respect of all the people within a given area.

I realise we make allowance in the Licensing Act in respect of certain districts. Likewise under the measure that was passed last year, a lot of people would not be affected. Those with wayside stations along the main roads in country districts and those situated in the small country towns would not be subject to it. After all, the people who would be charged with the responsibility of drawing up the roster and creating the zone, would be people of responsible thought and they would realise that they had a responsibility towards the community to provide essential fuel supplies.

We also know from the roster that was arrived at ultimately and the zones that were arrived at, that this system would work quite satisfactorily for those people who found it necessary on odd occasions to purchase petrol during hours which could be considered as being outside the normal trading hours. But, as usual, there were one or two who felt that they should be granted the privilege of being completely excluded from the provisions of

the Act and given a benefit over all their competitors in the industry. They felt that whilst it was good enough for hundreds of service station proprietors in the metropolitan area to be restricted to the hours prescribed in the measure, they should be permitted to continue with round-the-clock trading.

There were, I understand, only three service station proprietors interested in round-the-clock service and two of them were prepared to accept the provisions in the Bill regarding hours, provided everyone else was forced to do the same thing. I am quite sympathetically disposed towards their point of view; they felt that they should not be restricted as to hours while somebody else was allowed to have an open sesame. That is what would have happened if the Government had tried to put into operation the provisions of the legislation passed last year, and we would have had the spectacle of one, if not two and possibly three service station proprietors engaged in round-the-clock trading whilst every other service station proprietor in the metropolitan area was precluded from doing so.

The principle remains unaltered. We have the Royal Commissioners' report still before us in which they strongly recommended that something be done regarding hours. We have the records of the debate which took place last year and we know, as I said earlier, that both sides of this House—certainly the Opposition had some reservations and qualifications—supported the second reading. We also have the evidence in Hansard where the Bill was carried in another place by a majority of two to one. That is no mean majority for that House, and we realise that, no matter what was said or what happened, if the basic principle is the same—the question of hours—that Chamber cannot help but pass the legislation. That can only be so because five members of that Chamber comprised the Royal Commission and if they voted against the legislation, they would be voting against their own recommendation.

I feel that I can only continue to give support to this measure as I have done to similar measures in the past, due to the fact that the circumstances surrounding the whole issue remain unaltered, and the fact that it is necessary to adopt some commonsense attitude and try to preserve some sanity as regards the reselling of motor spirits. For those reasons I feel that this Chamber can do nothing else but give this measure its support.

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

Ayes	.....	26
Noes	.....	15
Majority for	.....	11

## Ayes.

Mr. Andrew  
Mr. Brady  
Mr. Evans  
Mr. Gaffy  
Mr. Graham  
Mr. Grayden  
Mr. Hall  
Mr. Hawke  
Mr. Heal  
Mr. Hoar  
Mr. Jamieson  
Mr. Johnson  
Mr. Kelly

Mr. Lapham  
Mr. Marshall  
Mr. Moir  
Mr. Nulsen  
Mr. O'Brien  
Mr. Oldfield  
Mr. Potter  
Mr. Rhatigan  
Mr. Rodoreda  
Mr. Sewell  
Mr. Sleeman  
Mr. Toms  
Mr. May

(Teller.)

## Noes.

Mr. Bovell  
Mr. Brand  
Mr. Cornell  
Mr. Court  
Mr. Crommelin  
Mr. Hearman  
Mr. Hutchinson  
Mr. W. Manning

Sir Ross McLarty  
Mr. Nalder  
Mr. Owen  
Mr. Roberts  
Mr. Watts  
Mr. Wild  
Mr. I. Manning

(Teller.)

## Pairs.

## Noes.

Ayes.  
Mr. W. Hegney  
Mr. Norton  
Mr. Tonkin  
Mr. Lawrence

Mr. Mann  
Mr. Perkins  
Mr. Ackland  
Mr. Thorn

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

# **BILL—BEE INDUSTRY COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

## *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 20th August.

**MR. OWEN** (Darling Range) [8.37]: This Bill proposes to make several amendments to the Bee Industry Compensation Act and although on paper they appear to be small, they can be of considerable importance to the bee industry; and although there are several amendments they are nearly all based on the one—the others are consequential.

The **SPEAKER**: Order! I cannot hear the member for Darling Range.

**MR. OWEN**: When introducing the Bill the Minister gave us a lot of information about the workings of the Act. It is comparatively new legislation as it was proclaimed only in March, 1954, but in essence it is somewhat similar to other Acts under which industry trust funds have been established to provide money to be used for compensation to groups of primary producers when they incur certain losses.

I think the general purpose is a very commendable one and even though it is compulsory for primary producers to subscribe to these funds, they realise that when they are in difficulties, they will receive some compensation and so their losses are spread over the whole of the industry and are not suffered by the few. In effect, it is a form of insurance against losses due to various causes, and in the bee industry it is an insurance against loss occasioned by certain diseases.

The American foul brood disease is one which causes the most losses in the bee industry and causes the destruction of

many hives and bees. Under the present Act only those hives that are destroyed because of the disease, are the subject of compensation. Even with the introduction of the sterilising method, proposed under this Bill, it will still be necessary in cases where hives are severely infected, to destroy the hives, the bees and the honey therein.

But in other cases it is felt that sufficient protection will be given if the hives, frames and other appliances are sterilised. It has been found over the past three years, since the Act has been in operation, that the beekeepers have responded very well and they have, off their own bat, reported any outbreak of American foul brood. I believe that in every instance the report has come from the beekeepers themselves and the disease has not been discovered by inspectors or anyone outside the industry. I feel that that in itself is proof that the compensation Act is well regarded by beekeepers. They are quite willing—in fact, they are anxious—that it should continue and they are happy to subscribe to it.

One can readily understand that in the first year, because there were no reserves, beekeepers were willing to pay a maximum rate of 6d. per hive per annum. But after the first year, when there were no claims for compensation, it was felt that the rate of payment could be lowered and it was reduced to 1d. per hive for that year. However, during that period there was a considerable call on the compensation fund and it was depleted to such an extent that they agreed to increase the rate of payment to 3d. per hive, as it is for this year.

At present there is over £700 in the fund while a total of £550 has been paid out in compensation. I think that £550 has been well spent in compensating those beekeepers who suffered considerable losses through the American foul brood disease. I am told that most of the compensation was paid to one or two growers and I think they deserved it because if action to destroy the hives had not been taken, the disease could have spread throughout a big section of the State and could perhaps have wiped out a great part of the honey industry.

The Minister did explain that the proposed method of fumigation was one by which superheated steam was to be used to kill spores of the disease or any active disease in the hives themselves, the frames or any of the appliances that are used in extracting the honey. By this method it will be possible to save much of the valuable equipment which, under the old system, would have had to be destroyed by fire. As one member in this House will appreciate, in order to replace equipment and appliances, much capital is needed. That expenditure can be saved by sterilising the equipment rather than by destroying it by fire.

It was also stated that the cost of disinfection could be high. When an apiary was infected, an inspector would examine all the hives. Those badly infected would probably be destroyed by burning, but when it was considered that the hives, boxes, frames, combs and other appliances could be sterilised, they would be transported to undergo the process of disinfection at the place where the autoclave was situated.

I take it that transport would be by road vehicle because disinfection has to be carried out quickly. In spite of what the Minister for Transport might say, this phase of transport must be carried out by road because there is too much danger of railways trucks being infected by the spores of this disease. Consequently the cost of transport would be fairly high, as would be the cost of steam sterilisation of hives and other equipment.

Although the Bee Industry Compensation Act provides for the payment of two-thirds of the value of hives or equipment destroyed, it is felt that this Act should also limit compensation to two-thirds of the cost of disinfection or two-thirds of the cost of replacement of appliances, whichever amount is the lesser. That is a wise precaution and it will tend to keep the cost of treatment within limits.

Getting back to the treatment that is necessary, under the Bee Act, which was amended a month or so ago, the treatment is specified by the inspector and the relevant provision reads as follows:—

The officer may include in the direction a provision that if the beekeeper causes any beecombs, hives, beekeepers' appliances, and other infected articles, specified in the direction, to be disinfected in the manner and within the time specified in the direction and to the satisfaction of an officer, the beekeeper shall be exempted from the necessity of destroying the things so disinfected, and if the beekeeper does so he shall be exempted accordingly.

It does not say what the treatment shall be, but the Minister outlined the method. I trust this will be tied up so that no mistake will be made under the regulations or by the inspectors, because this disease is very infectious. If the disinfection process is not carried out properly, it would be useless.

The treatment outlined the use of what is termed an autoclave or, in other words, a steam chest and, in more common language, a large pressure cooker. In this, the appliances are subject to superheated steam at a pressure of 20 lb. to the square inch for 20 minutes. This pressure is most important because with boiling water under normal pressure, the temperature is 212 degrees Fahr. or 100 degrees cent., but when steam is confined in a chest or pressure cooker, the pressure develops and

when it reaches 20 lb. per square inch, the temperature of the steam and everything else inside the chest rises to 228 deg. Fahr. or 109 deg. cent.

We can all appreciate that a much higher temperature would be reached than in the case of steam under normal pressure. Unless the disinfection process is carried out fairly strictly, the temperature required to kill the bacteria and the spores of the bacteria may not rise sufficiently high to be effective. Some beekeepers, particularly those in that section of the Farmers' Union, are anxious to see that every precaution is taken to ensure that sterilisation is carried out effectively. They have asked for a provision in the Bill to safeguard that aspect of the disinfection treatment.

There is one point about which I am amused. The Bill refers to, "Bee combs, hives, beekeepers' appliances or other infected articles are disinfected." It will be realised that bee combs are made of beeswax, and one can imagine what will happen if bee combs are put into an autoclave. The wax will melt much below the boiling point of water. If they are put into an autoclave at 280 deg. Fahr., they will melt. We can therefore discount any method of disinfecting bee combs by this method. What happens in practice is that when bee combs become infected, the frames are subjected to heat treatment. I presume it is appreciated that if bee combs are disinfected as combs in an autoclave, they will not be usable afterwards.

The Minister for Agriculture: That term applies to the frames.

Mr. OWEN: The provision I referred to will ensure that the frames on which wax adheres are disinfected. Mention was made by way of interjection of the need to disinfect hives, frames, etc., periodically, to make sure that they are not infected with American foul brood. That would be impossible because to do that would necessitate the transfer of bees to other hives, to extract the honey and then to disinfect the equipment by heat. In that case, the bee combs would be lost. It could be possible that even after being in use again for only a week or so they could be infected from an outside place by bees returning with diseased honey or wax if that source existed within flying range of the bees. There is no object in sterilising hives, etc., before they have become infected with American foul brood.

In other industries, various disinfectants are being used, some being very powerful and penetrating. Presumably, they cannot be used for disinfecting bee combs and hives because of the possibility of some of the poison being left behind and infecting the honey so as to make it unfit for human consumption. It would appear that sterilisation by steam pressure is the only safe and effective means.

In the past, in cases where the infection was not severe, the hives were sterilised by flame. They were stacked one on top of another in the form of a chimney, and a petrol flame was placed in the middle. The flames rushed up the chimney and surface sterilised the boxes, but there was no chance of applying that dry heat to other than the shell of the boxes. The lids, the frames and the bottom boards had to be destroyed by burning. The sterilisation method outlined in the Bill will overcome that difficulty, and I support the Bill in that respect.

With regard to the amendment proposed by the honey section of the Farmers' Union, I have discussed the matter with the Minister for Agriculture. He informs me that, according to his advice from the Crown Law Department, there might be difficulty in giving effect to the amendment. It was suggested that disinfection should be carried out under the supervision of an officer of the Department of Agriculture. The Minister suggested this would not always be possible because at present the big autoclaves are located in only two places, at Northam and in the metropolitan area. At a later date such autoclaves will no doubt be found in other parts of the State where it will not be possible for an officer of the Department of Agriculture to supervise the treatment.

The Minister claims that if the Bill were to become law, and this process of sterilisation were not carried out under the supervision of a departmental officer, then the payment of compensation could become void. That is the last thing I would wish to do; and, I think, the last thing any member of this Chamber would wish to do. But in the short time I have been acquainted with that aspect, I have not been able to contact any of the officers of the Farmers' Union interested in bee keeping; and so, for the present, I do not propose to move the amendment which I have placed on the notice paper.

If, after consulting the Farmers' Union about it, I discover that the union feels it is really desirable that the amendment should go into the Bill, and beekeepers are prepared to face up to the possibility of being deprived of compensation because no departmental officer was available to supervise the work, then the inclusion of an amendment can be dealt with in another place. On that understanding I do not propose to proceed with my amendment, and I support the second reading.

**MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [9.2]:** The member for Darling Range has outlined the position very clearly. I would like to emphasise that as primary production progresses, we have the strange phenomenon that diseases seem to increase and methods have to be adopted to try to combat them. In the process, some producers suffer more than others; and the

wise precaution has been taken in the pig industry, the cattle industry, and the bee industry of having a compensation fund drawn from payments by producers, to provide an insurance against loss by disease.

The bee industry is a particularly interesting one; and the more we study bees, the more interesting they become. The working life of a bee is approximately three weeks; and its total life, I should say—if it lived to a great age—would not be in excess of five weeks. Therefore, any action to combat disease has to be taken fairly quickly because of the short life-duration of bees.

**The Minister for Health:** How long does the queen live?

**Mr. BOVELL:** I could not answer that question.

**The SPEAKER:** This is not question time.

**Mr. BOVELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker! I can only presume from the knowledge I have, that, like any other bee, the queen is not endowed with long life, although she has to do quite a bit in the short time she is on this earth. But, as the member for Darling Range has said, the beekeepers' section of the Farmers Union is rather concerned in regard to the fact that any sterilisation or disinfection should be conducted under departmental supervision; and I can quite see its point of view.

The position is that the fund is not very wealthy; and if wrong methods are adopted, greater claims may be forthcoming, and the fund may not be able to withstand the demands. I can appreciate the concern of the Beekeepers' Association that the fund should be protected; and if disinfection and sterilisation are to be undertaken without professional and technical supervision, it might mean the depletion of the fund, and this form of insurance for beekeepers would disappear.

If the Minister can indicate that the fund will be fully protected, I shall be quite in accord with the proposal of the member for Darling Range to allow his amendment to be postponed for the time being. But I reiterate that if wrong methods of disinfection and sterilisation are adopted, it might cause such losses that the fund would be depleted and the purpose of the Act and of this Bill would be defeated. With those comments and reservations, I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

**Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.**

Clause 1—agreed to.

**Clause 2—Section 12 amended:**

Mr. OWEN: I had proposed to make an addendum to this clause; but as I explained, the purpose was to make sure that the process of disinfection was carried out under the supervision of an officer of the Department of Agriculture. The Minister explained that there would be difficulties in implementing the provision; and I unsuccessfully endeavoured to get in touch with Mr. Meadows, secretary of the beekeepers' section of the Farmers' Union, who is unfortunately confined to bed; and I have not been able to consult any other members. Beekeepers are away in the field, I understand. Consequently, I propose to withdraw the amendment; and, if necessary, to have it moved in another place. I ask leave to withdraw the amendment of which I have given notice.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member does not have to ask leave to withdraw. He merely does not move it.

Mr. BOVELL: I hope the Minister will make some comment on this matter, because I am concerned about the fact that wrong methods of sterilisation and disinfection may lead to a depletion of the fund. If the Minister can give me an assurance that that will not be so, and that the compensation fund will be safeguarded, I will be quite happy with the proposal of the member for Darling Range not to go ahead with his amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is speaking on the wrong clause. This clause has nothing to do with compensation.

Mr. BOVELL: I do not want to disagree with your ruling; but it has a great bearing on compensation. It has to do with supervision of sterilisation which would safeguard the compensation with which this Bill deals. Anyhow, I have made the contribution I wanted to make.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: To clear up the point once and for all, although the member for Darling Range explained the whole matter very clearly, I thought I would like to indicate that the Act as it stands provides compensation for the destruction of equipment, and nothing else. This Bill provides compensation for equipment which has been sterilised instead of being destroyed. The member for Darling Range wanted to make sure that when the equipment was sterilised, a departmental officer would be present. However, the way in which the amendment is worded, joining it up with the section dealing with the destruction of equipment, would mean that compensation could actually be refused to a beekeeper who had his equipment destroyed, not just sterilised, for the simple reason that there was not an Agricultural officer of the Department present when it occurred.

The idea is all right, but was proposed in the wrong place. Furthermore, it is unnecessary because, as the hon. member pointed out himself, in the amendment to the Bees Act passed a few weeks ago, there is provision in this regard. I claim that that provision gives abundant power, and protection to the beekeeper so far as his equipment is concerned. It would definitely be the responsibility of an officer—and I imagine it would be done under regulation—to instruct as to the type of treatment equipment must receive.

As we well know, there are one or two centres already established which are working very well indeed on the basis of the 20 lb. pressure the hon. member referred to, and it is doing the job of sterilisation satisfactorily. But if we attempt to make that stronger by including in the appropriate section reference to the presence of a departmental officer, covering the destruction of equipment as well as sterilisation, then, if an officer were not available to go from, say, Perth to Esperance to see a couple of bee boxes destroyed, the owner unfortunately could be denied compensation because the Act had not been complied with. I discussed it on that basis this afternoon with the member for Darling Range and he saw the wisdom of it. I repeat that the purpose of the measure is to assist beekeepers to obtain compensation.

Mr. OWEN: I take it from the Minister's remarks that where the inspector discovers the disease and issues the B form, there is not necessarily supervision to see that the beekeeper destroys the hives, and if he were unscrupulous, he could scrape them over and put them back in use. I think that they should be disinfected and/or destroyed under supervision. If the inspector is present to issue the order, he could have it carried out forthwith and witness the destruction of whatever had to be destroyed.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 5, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

**BILL—CEMETERIES ACT  
AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH** (Hon. E. Nulsen—Eyre) [9.20] in moving the second reading said: This small Bill is non-contentious and I think even the nigger in a wood-pile has been buried in it. I do not think there will be any objection from the tombstones. The Act is due for reprinting as it is now out of stock and it is necessary to incorporate several Acts in the reprint, as is the custom. The reprint in this instance requires an enabling Bill as some sections of the amending legislation, whilst being read in

conjunction with the principal Act, are homeless. No change whatever is made in the existing law.

One clause seeks to reconcile a section in the principal Act with the provisions of Sections 9, 10 and 11 of the amending Act of 1902. Another clause brings about an adjustment concerning the scale of fees. The scale of fees referred to in Section 17 of the principal Act is not prescribed by that Act as Parliament apparently intended, but by by-laws made pursuant to the Act. This opportunity is therefore taken to extend the application of the word "scale" to include a scale of fees prescribed pursuant to the Act. A further amendment in Clause 4 merely brings the principal Act up to date. The Bill has little purpose other than to find a home for the homeless amendments, in order to facilitate the reprint. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Crommelin, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—BETTING CONTROL ACT CONTINUANCE.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

**MR. WILD** (Dale) [9.22]: This is a most important piece of legislation and I was surprised at the sketchy way in which the Minister introduced it the other evening, his speech being comprised of only about 48 lines. He had nothing to say about the Bill and he summed it up by stating that as the present off-the-course system of betting has proved an unqualified success, there is every reason for the continuation of the Act. He told us little about what has happened in the past three years to enable him to assert that the legislation has been an unqualified success.

We, on this side of the House admit that the present system is, without doubt, better than the position which obtained prior to the legislation becoming law in 1954. The Act has done away with the backyard s.p. bookmaker and the man who used to bet under the trees, but it has, as has been proved by the number of prosecutions launched by the department, certain undesirable features.

In the first year after the legislation became law, there were no less than 128 prosecutions launched against minors for betting in s.p. shops and that is some indication that the fear that we, on this side of the House, felt about the legalising of s.p. betting was justified, inasmuch as we thought it would give people an opportunity to do something which we do not say is wrong, because Parliament has now legalised it, but in relation to which we maintained that those people should not be given more opportunity than they

had hitherto. The legislation possibly has one redeeming feature in that in the succeeding 12 months the number of prosecutions dropped to 35, indicating that the police have been on the job.

**Mr. May:** It is a big improvement on what the position used to be.

**Mr. WILD:** Yes, it has some merit, although I still believe that with the exception of country people who cannot get to the races, the only right place for betting to take place is on the racecourse.

I wish now to indulge in some criticism of the Betting Control Board since it has been in operation, and I would first refer to the question of changing ownership of s.p. shops. The Minister, in introducing the measure, made no reference to that but all members who keep their ears to the ground know that today large sums of money are being paid for the change-over in s.p. shops. It is difficult to put one's finger on the pulse of this question, but I think we can believe that where there is smoke there is fire. I know of two or three fairly large betting shops in the metropolitan area that have changed hands in the past 12 or 18 months and in relation to which it has been freely rumoured that sums as high as £8,000 or £9,000 were paid by the ingoing man to the bookmaker who decided to vacate his s.p. shop. Such rumours may or may not be true—one cannot prove it—

**Mr. May:** They cannot do it under the Act.

**Mr. WILD:** No, but when the Minister was introducing the original Bill in 1954, that was one of the things which we tried to ensure could not happen. Without being able to prove it, however, we know this is happening, and I am afraid that, however long the legislation is on the statute book, we will not be able to catch up with those who are doing this sort of thing.

**Mr. O'Brien:** A number of bookmakers have gone out of business.

**Mr. WILD:** There have been a few, but I think many more punters than bookmakers have gone by the board, as I think the member for Fremantle will agree.

**The Minister for Justice:** But you would be in favour of a widow taking over on the death of her husband?

**Mr. WILD:** That would be fair enough, but in the instances that have come to my notice, they have been fairly large establishments and it has been freely said around the streets that the persons concerned received some thousands of pounds for the outgoing of the shops of which they were the occupants.

**Mr. May:** If a bookmaker hands in his licence, there is no guarantee who will get it.

**Mr. WILD:** That is what I would have thought, but if the hon. member reads the answer given by the Minister to a

question I asked, he will see that is not the case. I asked if applications were called for, and I had in mind two shops where overnight one man vacated and a new man came in. In one instance, it was well known long before who was to take over the shop when the other man vacated it. In answer to my question as to whether applications were called, the Minister said that when licences are relinquished voluntarily or are cancelled by the board, applications are not called for by the board to replace the licensee. He said further—

In the above circumstances, the following procedure is adopted: Where a licensee desires to surrender his licence and dispose of his business chattels to another person who wishes to acquire the licence in his stead, the present holder advises the board accordingly. The other person concurrently applies for a new licence and supplies proof that he will have the right to occupy the premises and if he is a suitable person, the board will grant the licence.

Mr. O'Brien: That is fair enough.

Mr. Wild: Yes, but if the member for Collie desires to vacate a betting shop and has the plant and so on, and the member for Murchison decides he wants to buy the chattels, that is all he has to do, according to the Minister's answer. He has to write in making application and if he is an approved person and is able to get a lease of the place, he can take it over. As I said earlier, it is very difficult to police this matter. When this Bill was introduced mention was made that we should watch this aspect, but I regret to say it is something we cannot overcome.

Another feature about which I have a considerable amount of criticism to offer is the proximity of betting shops to hotels. In this respect, I think the House should expect the full support of the Minister who administers the Betting Control Board. Quite a number of speeches were made when this measure was before the House in 1954 which emphasised this point that betting and beer should be kept as far apart as possible. Mr. Styants, who was the Minister in charge of the Bill, made himself perfectly clear on this point. His views were well recorded in Hansard, not only on the second reading debate but during the debate in Committee, to the effect that the board would be anxious to see that s.p. betting shops were kept as far from hotels as possible. Experience has proved that they cannot get closer. It would be impossible for them to get closer.

I could cite many instances, and there must be hundreds of cases of which I do not know. One example I would like to quote is that of the Ozone Hotel which is situated at the western end of the Causeway. Before the measure became law

a shop was erected with one of its walls abutting the hotel premises. The man concerned must have had a pretty fair idea that he was going to get a licence. There is another instance at Bunbury. Only 12 months ago I was holidaying there with my good wife and we found that the betting shop that had been in premises about 50 yards away from the Highway Hotel was re-erected after demolition, and one of its walls was built abutting the hotel.

When we take similar examples in the city, we find that near the Wentworth Hotel there is one shop on William-st. and another round the corner in Murray-st., and neither of these could be closer to the hotel. I know it constitutes good business, but now that we have a Minister who has said that he does not agree with this, I would like to see him put some of his ideas into operation. I find that the present Minister had the following to say on the 11th November at p. 2863 of Hansard with regard to betting shops being close to hotels:—

Personally, I consider one weakness under the existing set-up arises from allowing betting shops to be located alongside hotels. To my mind, hotels are a greater evil than is betting; yet we have legalised hotels and permit people to drink alcohol to excess and lose their senses. On the other hand, if a man has a bet, he must have his senses about him; he knows how much money he has paid the book-maker and how much he is due to receive if he has a win. I repeat that one of the abuses at present is that of allowing betting shops alongside hotels, and this is a matter that could be controlled under the measure. If it is the desire of members that betting shops should not be permitted within a certain distance of hotels, they will have the right to say so.

Now that we have a Minister who has expressed himself in no uncertain terms on this matter I hope that he will put his views into practice. I know that there is a board in existence but, of course, the Minister must keep his finger on the pulse of all that is happening. I trust that he will honour what he has said about his disagreement with the close association of booze and betting.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They are pretty close on the racecourse.

Mr. WILD: That is so, but, as I have said so often before, on the racecourse one is out in the fresh open air where one meets one's friends.

Mr. May: And some of one's enemies also.

Mr. WILD: There is not quite the same atmosphere there.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about the summertime, when you are thirsty?

**Mr. WILD:** In the summer it is hot and one gets thirsty.

**The Minister for Justice:** Would your remarks apply to the wineshops?

**Mr. WILD:** To be perfectly frank, I do not like the wine shops at all; in fact, I have never entered a wine shop in Western Australia. The type of hotels that we have here are far more to be commended than any of the wine saloons established in this State; I do not think that too many of our people are addicted to wine. Most of them prefer a glass of beer. The two should, however, still be kept apart. My main objection is the closeness of these betting shops to licensed hotels.

**Mr. Ross Hutchinson:** What does the Minister think?

**Hon. D. Brand:** He is strangely silent.

**Mr. WILD:** Another point I would like to mention is that it is most disappointing that no relief whatever has been given to the racing and trotting clubs. While I intend to support this measure, in the Committee stage I intend to move—and I hope the Minister will agree—to let this measure have another run of three years, as it has in the past, to allow Parliament to have another look at it. If we agree to the contention of the Government that this should be a permanent measure, no private member, whether he be on the Government side of the House or on the Opposition benches, will be able to do anything to assist the racing clubs if it affects the monetary position of the Crown. If this were to be a permanent measure on the statute book, the Government of the day, no matter what its political colour, would be able to do what it liked in this respect and we would not be able to do anything about it. Legalised betting is something that has been tried for three years, and found reasonably successful, but I insist that it is something at which we should have another look after a further three years have elapsed.

I repeat: I am most disappointed that the Government has not decided to do something for the racing and trotting clubs because without doubt they are experiencing difficult times. The Minister might say they have a jackpot tote and that everything in the garden is lovely, but I am not so sure that it is. Up to the introduction of the jackpot tote by the W.A.T.C., we find that in 1956 the amount of money taken by way of attendance dropped approximately 35 per cent. and, strangely enough, the totalisator also dropped about 31 per cent., I understand.

Since the introduction of the jackpot tote the position has certainly improved, particularly on the occasion when it was not selected for some eight or nine weeks and eventually rose to about £20,000, at which stage there was a fight to see who

should get the amount. As members know, up to that time the attendance at the racecourse was not very great.

**Mr. May:** That shows that the racing clubs had not made it attractive.

**Mr. WILD:** That is not fair comment; they made it attractive by providing the jackpot tote; it was an innovation in Western Australia. But the moment the £20,000 was won, and the moment the amount got back to £1,000, the attendance dropped considerably. I am not in possession of the figures but I am sure the member for Fremantle and the member for Pilbara will bear me out when I say there were probably not half the people there on the Saturday following the £20,000 jackpot win.

**Hon. J. B. Sleeman:** The £20,000 drew a lot of them.

**Mr. WILD:** There is no doubt about that. There were people at the racecourse on that occasion who had never been there before.

**Mr. Rodoreda:** And probably will not go there again.

**Mr. May:** Not if they have any sense.

**Mr. WILD:** The introduction of jackpot totes by the trotting clubs at Gloucester Park and Fremantle are recent innovations; we also have the Bestwords and the Timeswords, but I think the novelty is over and though it might settle down to something better than it was before, there will not be anything like the large crowds that we witnessed in the first weeks that the jackpot was introduced. One must look at this matter squarely and ask oneself whether the trotting and racing clubs are receiving sufficient out of the betting tax to allow them to present reasonably attractive programmes. After all is said and done, it is a funny sort of dance if there is no orchestra; and the same thing applies to racing.

If there is not going to be good racing and if we reach the point where good horses are not competing, I do not know how the betting shops will get on. The racing clubs which provide the sport should be given every encouragement and assistance to put on decent programmes to induce the people to attend the racecourses. If there were better stakes and better horses we would probably be able to attract Eastern States' interests to this State. But the clubs must have the wherewithal to provide the stakes.

**Mr. May:** They do not treat me very kindly when I go there.

**Mr. WILD:** The hon. member is not the only one. I understand the W.A.T.C. recently made representations to the Premier for increased finance to be made available to the club, but the Premier did not see his way clear to meet that request. I would refer the Premier to South Australia where the racing and



trotting clubs receive all the takings from the on-course wagering. In Western Australia we find they receive only 40 per cent. Racing in South Australia is flourishing but unfortunately the same cannot be said of the sport in this State. It all comes back to the question of finance being provided for better programmes.

Mr. Rodoreda: Racing has not flourished in Victoria.

Mr. WILD: I am not in a position to say.

Mr. Rodoreda: Nor in New South Wales.

Mr. WILD: It has in South Australia, and it is a fair comparison to draw between that State and ours. Recent reports of stakes available in South Australia show that they are almost double or treble those offered here. When I supported a similar measure in 1954, I quoted figures to show that the smallest race in the South Australian metropolitan meeting carried a stake of £600. Yet here the biggest stake on a Saturday afternoon is only about £400, unless there is a Railway Stakes carnival or something like that.

I am prepared to support the second reading of this Bill, and hope that in Committee the Minister will agree to the amendment I have on the notice paper giving Parliament the opportunity to review this legislation. I do so, firstly, because it is still only in the experimental stage and, secondly, because I think some private member may want an opportunity, if possible, to do something in the interests of the racing and trotting clubs by arranging for more money to be made available to them—or retained by them—instead of it being paid into the Treasury. If we do not have the opportunity of reviewing this legislation three years hence, no private member will be able to do anything by way of providing relief for either of these two clubs. With those reservations, I support the Bill.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [9.46]: I must admit that I was greatly surprised that the Minister introduced such important social legislation as this with so few words. Gambling is a social problem which must be faced, and whilst I expressed the view, in speaking on the original Bill some years ago, that Australians were natural gamblers by the environment in which they live—they have to gamble with the elements and their forebears took a great gamble in coming here initially—I do not think we should take gambling in our community for granted. Therefore, it is necessary, in my opinion, to guard against the spread of gambling to the best of our ability.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: All gambling?

Mr. BOVELL: Therefore, the Bill now before us—if it is passed by Parliament—will make this a permanent measure on the statute book. I think that principle

is completely wrong. Parliament should have the opportunity, from time to time, to review this legislation. I will admit that the conduct of these betting premises is as good as could be expected in the circumstances. I have never entered one of them to place a bet, but since the Minister introduced this Bill, at the invitation of some of the proprietors I have been around and seen the operations of the betting shops. I must say I was agreeably surprised with the efficient way in which the businesses are being conducted. That reflects credit on the proprietors and the Betting Control Board.

The Minister for Transport: And the foresight of the Government.

Mr. BOVELL: However, it must be remembered that there should be strict control and we, as the legislators of this State, should see that that control is continued. Furthermore, we should have the opportunity to review the position from time to time. It was with that thought in mind that I said the Minister should not have introduced this as a permanent measure.

I was also surprised that the Minister did not inform Parliament of certain facts regarding the operation of this legislation. I would say that the Minister should have indicated to Parliament particulars such as the number of betting shops throughout Western Australia that were licensed originally; the number of premises that have changed hands; the revenue of those premises that have changed hands, and the goodwill and price paid, if any, on the transfer of one licensed premises to another person.

It would also have been interesting for Parliament to know the number of persons who have been delicensed, and the reasons why they have been delicensed; the number of persons who were originally licensed or have been licensed from time to time during the operation of the Act, and the number that gave up their licences and the reasons why they gave them up. It would also have been interesting to Parliament to learn of statistics regarding investments by investors, or punters as they are more familiarly known. It would also have been interesting, I think, to know the revenue, although we can get this from various publications.

However, I think the Minister should have advised the House of the amount of revenue the Government has derived from this source. It would also have been interesting to learn of the amounts paid to racing and trotting clubs over the period under review, as this is the first time that a continuance measure has been presented to Parliament. I say that the Minister has failed in his duty in not advising Parliament of every detail pertaining to this legislation since it was enacted some three years ago. Not only

is Parliament entitled to this information, but I think that the people as a whole throughout Western Australia are entitled to know. I think they would be interested to know the replies to all the questions I have asked, and possibly a lot of other information, too.

Mr. Nalder: I do not think the Minister is very enthusiastic about it.

Mr. BOVELL: Generally speaking, the legislation has proved satisfactory and, as one who opposed it in the initial stages—I opposed it on one principle that I thought it would add to the encouragement of gambling in the community, which I say is a dangerous feature in any community—it occurred to me at that time, and the thought still exercises my mind, that the betting shop has become established just as have been the baker, the butcher and grocer, and is part of our social system. Those were the reasons why I opposed the measure in the first place.

Mr. May: It shows how wrong you can be.

Mr. BOVELL: However, I still think that Parliament should be given the opportunity to review this legislation from time to time.

The Minister for Justice: Don't you think that the Stock Exchange is almost comparable?

Mr. BOVELL: I certainly do not, and neither does the Minister for Justice.

The Minister for Justice: Don't you think there is just as big a risk there? I have lost more on the Stock Exchange than on the racecourse.

Mr. BOVELL: That comparison is not worthy of the Minister.

Mr. May: Too right it is!

Mr. BOVELL: There is one comment I wish to make in regard to the need for this legislation to come to Parliament from time to time. In 1933, legislation was enacted in regard to the conduct of lotteries and our State lottery was established for the principal reason of providing funds for worth-while charitable causes.

The Minister for Justice: It has done a wonderful job in that direction.

Mr. BOVELL: That legislation was not enacted as a permanent measure and it went on for many years before Parliament decided that the Lotteries (Control) Act should be made a permanent measure. As the Minister for Justice has used the word "comparable" by way of interjection on a number of occasions when I have been speaking, the Lotteries (Control) Act, its administration and the need to keep it a temporary measure for so many years, might be comparable to this legislation we are discussing now,

and the need to have it referred to Parliament is one of its most important phases.

The Minister for Transport: What did that achieve in connection with the lotteries? Nothing, except that it interfered with the proper working of the Lotteries Commission.

Mr. BOVELL: That is where the Minister for Transport and I disagree.

The Minister for Transport: It is perfectly true.

Mr. BOVELL: It is not the first time I have disagreed with the Minister and most likely will not be the last.

Hon. D. Brand: It was readily renewed.

The Minister for Transport: The commission could not enter satisfactorily into long-term contracts.

Hon. D. Brand: What has it done since that it did not do before?

Mr. BOVELL: The Lotteries Act has provided very great support for many worth-while charitable organisations, but the fact still remains that Parliament considered it necessary to review that legislation from time to time.

The Minister for Transport: Chicken-hearted legislators.

Hon. D. Brand: Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

The Minister for Transport: Fools opposed this three years ago.

Mr. BOVELL: The Minister for Transport will have an opportunity, if he so desires, to contribute to this debate. I have outlined my opinions in regard to this legislation. I agree it is being conducted as well as expected and feel that we should support the second reading, with a view to seeing that Parliament has an opportunity to review it.

MR. PERKINS (Roe) [9.58]: I was one who opposed this legislation when it was originally introduced. I predicted then—as did most of us who opposed the legislation at that time—that once it was placed on the statute book, there would be very small chance of its being deleted. Of course, the longer this type of control of gambling carries on, more and more vested interests come into being and Governments tend to rely more and more on the revenue they receive by reason of the legislation being in existence. Therefore, I think the fact that so many members now take it for granted that this legislation is certain to be continued, is an indication that the fears some of us expressed at the time were fully justified. The board has probably administered the Act as well as one could expect up to this point. But, at the time the legislation was introduced, some tacit undertakings were given which, I believe, were not carried out.

Although I am unable to find where any actual undertaking was given by any Minister that betting shops would not be established close to hotels, the fact remains that the impression was certainly left with the House and with the public generally that it was unlikely that betting shops would be established close to hotels. But, of course, we realise that in most instances the licensed betting shops are very close to hotels—in many cases almost adjacent to them. I consider it would have been much better had the Betting Control Board licensed the shops some distance from premises licensed to sell intoxicating liquors.

The Minister for Transport: Why?

Mr. PERKINS: I am not frequently in Perth at week-ends, but it is common knowledge that there is a tendency for those who gamble in betting shops to wear a track from the betting shop to the hotel bar between races.

Mr. Evans: Is there any harm in that?

Mr. Jamieson: Have you ever been out to headquarters?

Mr. PERKINS: The interjection of the member for Beeloo raises all the arguments that were discussed at the time the legislation was introduced. Those who go out to headquarters, or other racecourses, are people who have either a genuine interest in racing or are very keen to gamble on horseracing. I have no wish to interfere in that direction, but the question arises, when we license betting shops in the suburbs, whether some young people who might like a drink on a Saturday afternoon gravitate from the hotel, or wherever they are meeting in the suburban area, to a betting shop. I believe this has the effect of encouraging to start gambling on horseracing many young people who, if the facilities were not readily available, would not become so interested in doing so.

The Minister for Transport: I think that is only conjecture.

Mr. PERKINS: I am simply expressing my opinion. Other members can express theirs. I do not think any member will try to make a case for the encouragement of young people to gamble on horseracing. I believe that if young people—young men and women up to 30 to 35 years of age—can take an interest in some form of recreation other than spending their Saturday afternoons in betting shops or hotels, they should be encouraged to do so.

This question was thoroughly discussed when the Bill was originally before the House. The opinions of many prominent leaders in the community who were living at the time, and of some who had gone before, were quoted then. We had quoted to us the opinions of some members who had sat on the other side of the Legislative Assembly and probably the most eminent was the late Phil Collier who had a great

hatred, so far as I was able to learn from the speeches he made and the opinions he expressed on numerous occasions, of gambling in any shape or form.

In my opinion, gambling can have a more serious effect in sapping the moral fibre of the community than almost any other single factor I can think of. I consider it is far more serious in this regard than are intoxicating liquors. Many of us have seen instances of people with very good brains who, because gambling has got hold on them, have tended to lose interest in worth-while things; and their whole character has been adversely affected.

The Minister for Transport: What percentage of the population would that be—.0001 of 1 per cent.?

Mr. PERKINS: I do not see that the percentage matters very much.

The Minister for Transport: You cannot legislate for that minute fraction.

Mr. PERKINS: I am not suggesting that we should legislate to prevent gambling. I think legislation for that purpose would go much further than any of us would be prepared to support.

Mr. Hall: You would have to legislate to control matrimony.

Mr. PERKINS: All I am suggesting is that we should not put facilities in the way of people to encourage them to gamble, where, in other circumstances, they would not be attracted to this form of recreation.

The Minister for Transport: But does that occur? In a suburb of 5,000 people, you would not find more than 50 in a betting shop at any one time on a Saturday.

Mr. PERKINS: I very much doubt that.

The Minister for Transport: You get about and have a look.

Mr. PERKINS: Judging by the figures released so far as to the actual turnover in the betting shops, it seems that there would be more than 50 persons betting. The figures indicate that a considerable number of people support the betting shops in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Rodoreda: The phone business is the big thing.

Mr. PERKINS: I have very little objection to the phone business. The people who do their betting by phone are probably genuinely interested in betting on horseracing. It is not something that they just get led into on the spur of the moment.

Mr. Bovell: Is not that the English system of betting?

Mr. PERKINS: I do not know that it comes into the debate tonight, but I do know of concrete instances of young people who have no interest in gambling on horseracing but who have been told of a so called "good thing" and were attracted

into a betting shop, and unfortunately had a win. If people lose, no damage is done, in my opinion. I think they gain their experience very cheaply, but if on the other hand the "good thing" comes home, then I think some damage does occur because we are all anxious to make money as easily as possible, and in these circumstances the individual concerned is liable to believe that he has found the ideal way to supplement his income and is thereby encouraged to support gambling to a greater extent than he would otherwise.

All this discussion arose from my comment that betting shops had been located adjacent to premises licensed to sell intoxicating liquors. In my opinion this, I said, was undesirable, and I believe it broke faith in some degree with tacit undertakings given at the time the legislation was before the House.

For some time it appeared as though the racing clubs were going to be in considerable financial difficulties because of the number of people who were patronising licensed off-course betting shops in preference to attending the courses. It seems as though because of the introduction of jackpot totes, the racing and trotting clubs are now in a more fortunate position. Whether this is likely to be a permanent feature of racing, I leave it to others who may be in a better position to judge than I am, to decide.

Had it not been for the recent increase in attendances at racing and trotting courses, I believe a serious position could have developed in that the sport on which this betting is done, could have easily got into an unsatisfactory position. We all realise that unless the racing and trotting clubs have sufficient revenue to control racing and trotting effectively, a great many malpractices can creep in, and a serious position develop, whether or not we favour gambling.

I do not wish to say any more at this stage other than to indicate my preference for this type of legislation being retained on a temporary basis. It has the advantage that it comes up for review by Parliament from time to time, and I believe that is all to the good so far as the Betting Control Board is concerned, although I think it has administered the Act reasonably well. If that control deteriorated, it would be desirable for the legislation to be reviewed by Parliament as a matter of routine rather than have it introduced either by the Government or by a private member in this House. So I think we might very well leave this legislation on a temporary basis for some further time at least, and my preference is in that direction.

**HON. A. F. WATTS** (Stirling) [10.16]: Everyone knows that when the parent Act came before this House as a Bill, I

did my best to defeat it. Were the circumstances today precisely similar to those that existed then, I would do just the same now. However, I cannot but subscribe to some degree at least to the points of view expressed by the member for Dale when he said that the two years of experimentation having passed, there was at least some understanding that legislation of this nature, unless the position was found to be more objectionable by far than the circumstances which preceded it, would be renewed for a period and I therefore agree with him wholeheartedly that the period should be a limited one.

I do not suppose that the situation has developed today as badly as a great number of us expected it would. Nevertheless, I agree with the member for Vasse that the Minister did not give us a great deal of information; in fact, he gave us so little that it would be fair to say that he gave us none at all. The Act provides that the board shall prepare and submit to the Minister not later than the 30th September of each year a report on the exercise and performance by the board of its powers, functions and duties under the Act during the 12 months ended on the preceding 31st July and a copy of such report shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

In view of the fact that in the two preceding years, the reports of the board, for what they are worth, were laid upon the Table of the House on the 21st and 25th September, respectively, in the years 1955 and 1956, I should imagine that, as it is the board's duty to bring a report to the Minister before the end of this month, as it has done in previous years a week or 10 days before the end of September, it would have been reasonable for us to have expected the report of the board to have been laid on the Table of the House prior to the introduction of this measure. In the absence of any information from the Minister, the only means that members have of ascertaining from official sources what the board has been doing, or what has happened under the Act during the preceding 12 months, is from the reports of the board.

It would have been quite easy, seeing that the report of the board for 1957 is due before the end of this month, for it to have been obtained and tabled before the introduction of this Bill. I could express the hope that in view of the board having had by that time its second complete year of operation, it might have been able to favour both the Minister and Parliament with rather more information about what has been going on than it saw fit or was able to do in its report for the period ended the 31st July, 1956. I have examined from time to time the reports of the Betting Control Board of South Australia which used to operate in

that State during the period in which this type of licensed betting was in operation there, and the information supplied by that board as compared with the information supplied by our board, for last year anyway, is, I think, comparable to an encyclopedia as against a very small notebook, because there is precious little in this document to guide anybody.

One of the major questions in which we are all interested, and, in my view, which would act as an excellent guide as to whether or not this legislation is contributing to an increase in betting, would be the comparative figures in regard to turnover. There is nothing about it in the report. So even if there were figures for this year, there is nothing to compare them with so far as last year is concerned, and it seems to me that it is very necessary that those figures should be given each year.

I have always been of the opinion, and I still am, that by lending starting price betting the cloak of respectability by licensing it, we encourage people, it being lawful and respectable, to go in for it, whereas otherwise they would probably avoid doing so and therefore we run the risk, as I think the member for Roe indicated, of increasing and not decreasing the number of people who are engaged in this type of betting and thereby increase the social evil that it obviously represents.

But there is nothing in these reports to assist us, even at some future time, unless the method of compiling the information is changed; and I think it ought to be. Nor does the report give us any information as to the board's opinion on the operation of betting shops. The first page of the report informs us the date of the commencement of the Act and of the gentlemen who were appointed to the board. The next page tells us how many meetings they attended and then makes a complimentary reference to the staff; it discusses the fact that it made regulations dealing with the hours of business and other matters connected with Eastern States and Western Australian racing. That covers some three or four pages. It refers to the fact that there were 28 disputed bets and says that the liaison between the board and the Commissioner of Police was excellent; and then proceeds to give us a list of the applications for licences, numbers only, and the numbers of and disposition of registered premises.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is there anything about licences that were cancelled?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Not in this volume. There is a page devoted to penalties and a few lines to the receipt of fees, but I can find nothing about licences that have been cancelled. It does not give us the board's opinion as to the operation of the Act nor any data to indicate to us, for our own satisfaction and by our own method of calculation, just how the Act

is operated. It is more conspicuous for the lack of information rather than for the information which it supplies. I am certain that that was not the intention of the legislature when it inserted this paragraph—

A report on the exercise and performance of the board of its powers, functions and duties under this Act.

I hope that the Minister in future times will take up with the board the fact that Parliament wants this information.

As I have said, I am prepared to support this Bill providing the Act is not going to be renewed for a period greater than three years. If, at the end of that three years, I am still in this legislature and the reports of the board supply us with the information which I say we ought to have, and which I certainly require, I shall be in a position to consider whether or not I should vote against a further renewal. If the data supplied to us verifies certain beliefs which I still hold in this matter—that as a result of this legislation starting price betting and its patrons will increase—I shall hold a different view to the one I now hold and I will undoubtedly vote against any further extension of the measure.

But in the absence of this data, and because there is no evidence yet supplied to me—because it is not given to anybody, not being available in these reports—that there has been an increase in betting, and because, in actual fact, although Parliament gave this Bill a three years' lease of life, it has had only two because of the time taken to put it into operation, and although I have not changed my views on it and on the evils that can easily be associated with this business, I am prepared to support the second reading.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [10.28]: There is no doubt this Bill seeks to give the Act a permanency that is quite unwarranted. The subject, to say the least, is a controversial one and the Act was passed originally in order to control an evil which had grown to awkward proportions and which could not be satisfactorily controlled under the legislation then existing. It was not passed because it was something that was really desired, but because it was thought to be the lesser of two evils—and that is about the most that one could say about the Act in the first place.

There is no doubt that the Betting Control Act has encouraged people to spend their money in this way when they did not do so prior to that time. We can see men and women, who under normal circumstances quibble over a few pence, handing over pounds in money with not much prospect of a return. They are induced to do that week by week.

Mr. Jamieson: That is a wild statement.

**Mr. W. A. MANNING:** It is not; it is a fact. One can see that happening any time one goes into a betting shop on race days. Not many weeks ago, I stood outside one betting shop in Victoria Park, situated almost adjacent to a hotel. I saw people continually going backwards and forwards from the hotel to the shop. Although I was not a member of Parliament when this legislation was first passed, I understood it was not the intention to place betting shops adjacent to hotels, yet they have been established adjacent to them in many cases. If the Betting Control Board will not implement that intention of Parliament, then the Act should be amended to compel the board to act in accordance with the wishes of Parliament.

The Act provides that the proprietor of a betting shop shall not bet with any intoxicated person. On the occasion when I stood outside a shop I noticed that bets were made with people who were intoxicated. That is in fact a contravention of the Act. We have now before us a Bill seeking a permanent extension of the Act. Because the provisions are not being carried out in accordance with the intention of Parliament, and because the Act is really a means of controlling undesirable betting, Parliament should watch the legislation very closely.

We should not build up a vested interest in s.p. betting licences, or in the shops that are being used for betting; we should not encourage those who are financially interested to assume that this institution is permanent and that they can make demands on the community or purchasers of s.p. businesses in respect of licences granted. We should safeguard against such a situation arising by providing that the Act is reviewed periodically. The term of three years set down in the Act in the first instance is quite long enough.

From the remarks that we have heard tonight, it seems that the board has much to account for in respect of its actions. The shorter we can make the period for the Act to be reviewed the better. Parliament should keep this legislation under surveillance frequently so that members can see what has been done and be sure that the provisions are carried out in the spirit in which they were passed. I am opposed to this legislation. However, an extension of the Act for a short time would be warranted, but Parliament should keep its fingers on the pulse of the whole situation.

**HON. D. BRAND** (Greenough) [10.35]: As one of the members who joined forces in opposing this legislation originally, I am compelled to say a word or two on this continuance Bill. As the Leader of the Country Party said, if this measure came before the House again, those who opposed it originally would do so again because they firmly believe that it is not

a good thing to legalise s.p. bookmaking in this State. However, so far as the legislation has gone, it would appear that the present system is preferable to the uncontrolled betting which existed at the time of the introduction of the original Bill. I am prepared to support the measure before the House provided that Parliament is given the opportunity from time to time—in this case it has been suggested every three years—to investigate the whole situation before endorsing further the legislation to legalise s.p. bookmaking.

The Leader of the Country Party pointed out that the reports given by the Betting Control Board so far do not give any worth-while indication as to what has taken place regarding s.p. betting. It would appear that the Minister in control of the legislation has followed suit, because he has said exactly nothing. In view of the great social problem which gambling is recognised to be, he should have put up a strong case in support of the Bill, particularly as he was asking Parliament to endorse this legislation as a permanent measure. It seems to me that the Minister himself felt that the least he had to say on the matter the better, and he was leaving the whole affair to Parliament. I am strongly opposed to the suggestion for making the legislation permanent. It certainly should be limited. At one time I did think it would be a good idea to have a review every 12 months, but seeing that the legislation was passed as a three-year experiment, perhaps, it is logical to renew the term for three years.

Another point referred to by the Minister was the peculiar situation under which the Commissioner of Police continues to retain the appointment as chairman of the board, and there has been an Acting Commissioner of Police controlling the Police Force. The time has come when the Government should face up to the position, for I fail to see why that situation should continue. The Minister might have explained to the House the proposals of the Government, because quite recently the Premier said that Cabinet was giving this matter consideration from time to time. It seems strange to me that Cabinet has not reached any decision.

The Minister for Transport: That will be attended to within the next few weeks.

**Hon. D. BRAND:** That will be in keeping with the Premier's undertaking. His third in charge has now given us the information and I trust that it will prove to be correct. I do not propose to delay the House. I have no great love for the legislation itself, but I am prepared to recognise that as an experiment, it could be continued. I sit down in the hope that the Minister will tell the story, even though it is the last on the list.

**MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [10.40]:** I wish to make a few comments before this measure is put to the vote. It did surprise me to learn from answers to questions that not all the regulations made by the Betting Control Board have come before this House for approval. It is true that the board did submit quite a number of regulations to us, but it also passed other regulations appertaining to shops and to what should transpire within the shops, which were not put forward for approval. I feel that this action on the part of the board was not intended by Parliament when the legislation was passed.

The Minister, I suggest, should make a note of the fact and inform the board that it is most desirable that regulations essential to the welfare of the betting board should come before both Houses of Parliament. Many of the regulations which have been framed have escaped the scrutiny of Parliament, and that is not in the best interests of everyone concerned. It was not intended that the Betting Control Board should be able to dictate terms in regard to the control of this legislation. It should be, as in the case of most Government departments, a caretaker for the Government of the day in administering the Act under its control. Some consideration should be given to this matter.

The contention that the licensing of betting shops would have an effect on the attendances at racecourses has not been upheld in the last few years. It is true that attendances have dropped, but they have dropped to a similar extent in other States where s.p. betting is not legalised. As proof, I would refer to the figures supplied by the Treasurer relating to the attendances at trotting meetings. They fully bear out the position as I have explained. When the broadcast of trotting meetings was abandoned by the W.A. Trotting Association, the attendances did not increase as was anticipated. If anything, it helped to discourage off-course betting. That would indicate that people cannot be forced to attend racecourses unless there is some attraction.

The free money that was around just after the last war has mostly been swallowed up, and, in the main, people are on a more realistic and sound footing. They have taken on responsibilities, and have accepted their position in the scheme of things, more so than in the years when free money was in circulation. I suggest that more of the complaints from the Opposition against this measure when it was first introduced, such as the contention that it would increase betting and that it was not in accord with the welfare of the community have been proved to be ill-founded. If any party has encouraged the more tender-age group to indulge in gambling, it is the Trotting Association which has reduced the minimum age for entry from 18 to 16 years, and not the s.p. bookmakers. It may be of interest for

some members to learn that it is an offence in the Eastern States for any person under 21 years of age to bet on the totalisators on racecourses. Members may recall seeing a notice in the tote windows to that effect. It would appear that we have an encouragement here that does not exist in the Eastern States for people of the teenage group to gamble if they so desire.

It has been my pleasant experience to show around Western Australia, members of Parliament from other States when they have been visiting here and on no occasion have I heard any criticism of the system of starting-price bookmaking in vogue here. As a matter of fact, they have all been very pleased with the standard of premises; and, indeed, I feel that that is the crux of any good administration in this matter—the maintenance of a good standard of premises. The impression made upon these visitors has been such that they would like to prevail upon their various Governments to copy our style of legislation. However, we well know that different States have different ideas about many things, and to get a concerted opinion upon a topic such as this is as difficult as to obtain one on the matter of a general form of taxation.

To limit the continuance of this Act for three years would not, I suggest, be of any great advantage; for after the trial period in which it has been in operation, we have found that it works a great deal more satisfactorily than was probably imagined in the first place. It is true, as some have said, that there are undesirable features, if they can be called such, in that on occasions betting shops have been licensed quite close to premises licensed for the sale of alcoholic liquor.

However, that has not been consistently so. The member for Narrogin chose Victoria Park as an instance. But of the three shops in that suburb, one is quite close to the hotel, but the other two are situated in or near Albany Highway at quite a distance from any licensed premises. It would appear, therefore, that the incidence even in that suburb is only one in three; and I know of cases where the betting shops are a considerable distance from licensed premises.

It is, of course, sometimes the availability of premises that causes people to have shops so close to the hotels. Probably nobody in this Chamber is so naive as to imagine that before the licensing of such premises took place some operator or other was not quite close to a hotel and occupied his premises for some other purpose other than was apparent from the outside. Consequently in most cases, those premises were the easiest—and probably the only—premises available for this kind of business.

Unlike the member for Narrogin, I have not seen a great number of intoxicated people gambling at these places. On many

occasions I have noticed people under the influence of liquor being refused admission to such premises; and the licensees very quickly deal with anyone who is carrying liquor and attempts to approach the shop with it in his possession. In the main, I think that these people appreciate that they are entrusted with these licences, and the fines that have been imposed for breaches of the Act have clearly indicated that the Government does not intend to permit any funny business in connection with the operation of such premises.

While a strict control can be maintained in such matters, I feel that little harm can come to the community at large by our continuing to support a measure such as this. The Eastern States do not seem to have been able to perfect any means of ridding themselves of the illegal bookmakers or legislating in any way to give people the facilities they seem to desire in respect of horse-racing. So I suggest that to extend this Act indefinitely would not be doing anything immoral. I suggest, too, that the Minister might make sure that the Betting Control Board presents a far more elaborate report than has been the case up to date. Then everybody associated with the maintenance of this legislation will be quite satisfied that it is being administered satisfactorily.

It would appear that to extend the life of the measure for only three years would mean it would have to be brought before Parliament once again and there would be a rehash of the same debate we have had on this occasion. If at any time any person or persons in this Legislature deemed it necessary, they have the prerogative of moving to amend the Act. So I feel there is little justification for a limitation of the period of operation of the Act at this juncture, and I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

**THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. J. J. Brady—Guildford-Midland—in reply)** [10.53]: I will be brief in my remarks, but I want to cover as fully as I can the points raised. I thank members for their contributions and assure them that they have been quite helpful.

The trend of the debate tonight seems to have indicated that most members are of the opinion that the Act has provided a vast improvement on the conditions that were operating prior to its being passed in 1954. The only point that seems to be in doubt is whether the measure should be made permanent at this stage or whether there should be another trial run of three years. I am inclined to think we should stick to the original idea of permanency. We know that the old conditions lasted for 30 or 40 years and showed no tendency to improve; if anything, there was a tendency to a worsening of the situation.

In connection with the report of the board, I assure the House that I will try to get it within the next few days so that it will be tabled before the Bill passes through Parliament. That will provide members with all information the board has available at this stage.

In introducing the Bill, I declined to go into details because members will recall that in October of last year the Treasurer introduced several amendments to the Betting Control Act and to the taxing Act, and quite a lot of information was given on that occasion. I thought there would be a certain amount of repetition if I went over those figures again. However, briefly, the position is that, as the member for Dale will recollect, the Treasurer introduced amendments to the taxing Act to step up the rate of turnover tax for on-course bookmakers from 1½ per cent. to 1½ per cent. and for off-course bookmakers from 1½ per cent. to 2 per cent. In addition, he agreed that the racing clubs and the trotting association should get 40 per cent. as against 20 per cent. previously. Unfortunately, as Minister, I do not handle the revenue side, so am not in possession of many of the details the hon. member requires. However, if he wishes, I will endeavour to obtain the information in reply to questions.

I feel the House would be well advised to make this measure permanent rather than have a drawn-out debate each time the Act comes up for renewal. I do not think there is anything more I can say except to reply to the hon. member who spoke of betting as not being a social habit it was advisable to encourage. I would remind the House that this is a Bill to continue a control measure. The idea of Parliament is to control betting, and it devolves upon Parliament from time to time to decide whether the Act is being abused or being acted upon reasonably.

Members who might care to read my original contribution to the debate will know that I have never had a great deal of regard for betting as such, and was one of those who spoke at length in regard to betting shops being near hotels. While there are some shops near hotels, there are quite a lot some distance away from them—some of them as far as a mile away. It is natural that people who are in the business, and whose premises are half a mile or a mile away, should pester the board to allow them to change their location. But the board does not agree. It says, "There is your location, and you will have to continue there." The result is that some men have gone out of business, finding that their activities are not such as to draw patronage.

Mr. Wild: Has the Minister looked at the new shop which is being erected adjacent to the Willagee hotel?



The MINISTER FOR POLICE: To be quite frank, I did not know there was one there. I have not any particular interest in betting shops as such; but as Minister, I do my best to do what is desired by Parliament. The remark of the hon. member reminds me that he referred to several matters in regard to premises changing hands. I assure him I will have a look at that matter, and it may be necessary to introduce amendments later on.

I assure the member for Beeloo that I will have a look at the matters he raised in regard to regulations. I know that the board is desirous of tightening up on some aspects of general control, and it is possible that it will be necessary to introduce further amendments. In the meantime I do not think the House would do any harm in making this a permanent measure, and it would be in the hands of Parliament to propose any other amendments that would improve the Bill, keeping in mind the idea of control, which was originally intended.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 11 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, 25th September, 1957.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### DIVISION ON PUBLIC SERVICE BILL.

##### *Correction of Report in "The West Australian."*

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM (without notice) asked the President:

(1) Has he seen the article appearing in "The West Australian" of today's date (the 25th September, 1957), on page 17, headed "Vote by President saves Bill in Council," reading as follows:—

Minutes earlier, he had barred F. D. Willmott (Lib.) from voting on the grounds that he was technically not in the Chamber when the order was given to lock the doors for a division.

Willmott was at that moment stepping from behind a panelled screen at the rear of the President's Chair?

(2) In view of the statement he subsequently made to the House will he request the editor of "The West Australian" to make the necessary correction?

The PRESIDENT replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

#### GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

##### *Manning at Lunch Hours.*

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

Following answers to questions I asked on the 15th August, I have been informed that the request I made has gone unheeded, and I therefore ask the Minister to inform the House on the following:—

(1) Are the counters of Government offices of—

(a) The Electricity & Gas Department;

(b) The Water Supply Department;

(c) Titles Office;

(d) Treasury Stamp Office;

(e) Railway Booking Office, manned fully and sufficiently to cater for public needs between the hours of 12 noon and 2 p.m. on each day that the offices are open for business?

The MINISTER replied:

Inquiries at each of the departments concerned have revealed that the counters are adequately manned to deal with those members of the public who can transact their business only between 12 noon and 2 p.m. The Treasury Stamp Office does not open between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. and there has been no public demand for it to do so.