

Hon. L. C. DIVER: They are given good conditions. The facilities are there if they like to work constantly and they can earn from £45 to £50 a week during shearing time. When the price of wool was high, some of them turned round and said, "No, we will not shear; we would rather pick up dead wool because we get a lot more money that way." But look at the conditions under which they live. I do not want to decry these people, but we must look at the realities of the situation. I have seen some of them with bundles of notes; some of the bundles too big for a person to hold in his hand.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: I have never seen that.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I have seen it in the country areas. But these same people will go into their little tin shacks at night—some of the shacks will not keep out the wind or rain—and the dogs go in and sleep alongside them.

Hon. E. M. Davies: The dogs keep them warm.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: There is no necessity for it. I know of one case where a native and his son were employed and they were getting £17 a week. They were living in a home that had been occupied by white people, and although these men were employed for several months, the local storekeeper demanded cash on delivery for his goods. When those men walked out of the job, they were broke. We have to educate these people.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Of course we do.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: And we cannot do that by concentrating on the old people. We have to train the younger generation, and I urge the Minister to make sure that the native children are allowed the same sum of money per head per annum as the white children in our institutions. What the Minister had to say as regards housing is quite correct and that is the only way to tackle the problem. But to give these people citizenship rights at this stage is just too foolish for words.

Let history not say that in trying to solve a problem of today we created a tragedy for tomorrow

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

House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 25th November, 1952.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke and Press Statement.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I wish to make a statement, Mr. Speaker, by way of personal explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no objection, leave is granted.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The Adult Education Board of Western Australia is sponsoring the forthcoming Festival of Perth. One of the plays to be presented during the festival is entitled "Dark of the Moon." The member for West Perth allowed me an opportunity to read a copy of the play on Thursday last and gave me his opinion about it beforehand, which opinion was very scathing. I sent him back the book with a note in which I stated my opinion, which was that, to my mind, there were some tough spots in the play but, generally speaking, I did not consider it to be too bad. In the "Sunday Times" of last Sunday there is quite

a lengthy statement from the member for West Perth in his capacity as Lord Mayor. Among other things he said this—

The play is nothing but low-down sex and filth and is actually one which abuses Almighty God quite a lot.

Mr. Totterdell claimed that his views on the play were fully supported by Premier McLarty and Opposition Leader Hawke.

Mr. Totterdell: That was not my statement.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I want to say that the last part of the statement, as reported in the "Sunday Times," is completely untrue.

Mr. Totterdell: That is right.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I did not state what is attributed to me in the paper by the member for West Perth in any shape or form. As the hon. member said, it is quite untrue. If that is so, and he did not give the second part of the statement to the "Sunday Times," I think he should take the earliest opportunity to make a correction in public. The statement appearing in the "Sunday Times" was a complete misrepresentation of my view and, in his capacity as Lord Mayor of Perth, the member for West Perth certainly had no authority from me to express any views I may have had in connection with the matter.

The PREMIER: By way of personal explanation on the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, the article he referred to also made reference to my attitude in connection with this particular play. The member for West Perth did mention to me in the corridor that he had an objection to the play, and the only comment that I made in reply was that I would try to have a look at it. I have not had a chance to do so. My attention has been drawn to certain passages but, of course, I have not had an opportunity to read the whole of the scrip. Obviously it would be extremely difficult to formulate an opinion based on just a fleeting glance at the play. I asked others to have a look at it and to advise whether they think some modifications should be made. They told me of the passages in this play. I come into this matter for the same reason as the Leader of the Opposition—we accepted the positions of patrons of the Festival of Perth. But, like the Leader of the Opposition, I was surprised to see the references in the "Sunday Times" to my own attitude towards the play, when I had not expressed it.

Mr. TOTTERDELL: If I am allowed to give any explanation, I would like to point out that no-one was more surprised than I at what appeared in the "Sunday Times." I did not say that my opinion had the full confirmation of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. What I said was

that I had spoken to both those gentlemen, and they would give an opinion later. If the "Sunday Times" liked to reconstruct that in its own way, that is not my fault. The statement I made was that in my opinion it was not a play that would be to the advantage or to the moral welfare of this city. As Lord Mayor, I expressed those views and I stick to them. I have no apology to submit to the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition. I gave a statement and, so far as I am concerned, the matter is closed.

QUESTIONS.

BETTING.

As to Tax on Winning Bets.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Premier:

(1) In connection with the proposal to impose a tax on winning bets, what amount is it anticipated will be paid in a full financial year to—

(a) W.A. Turf Club;

(b) W.A. Trotting Association?

(2) Is it considered that the services rendered by these two organisations will be commensurate with the amounts to be received?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) It is difficult to make a reliable estimate, but a broad anticipation is—

(a) £20,000.

(b) £15,000.

(2) Yes. It is expected that the clubs will use this money to provide better facilities for the public. For example, to increase stakes and better amenities.

SUPERANNUATION.

As to Authorisation of Contribution.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Treasurer:

At page 37 of Section "B" of the Auditor General's report, 1950-51, is a statement in connection with superannuation contributions paid by the Rural and Industries Bank and asking for the approval of the Governor in Executive Council. The present report states that this "has not yet been sighted." As the original request was dated October, 1951, can the Treasurer give the reason for this inordinate delay?

The TREASURER replied:

The Auditor General's report on the Rural and Industries Bank related to the year ended the 31st October, 1951. The suggestion by the Auditor General that approval by the Governor in Executive Council was necessary was dated the 18th October, 1951.

Discussion between the Auditor General and the Treasury was necessary as it was assumed by the Treasury that approval by the Governor in Executive Council was not required.

FREE MILK SCHEME.*As to Priority.*

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Minister for Education:

In view of the fact that powdered milk is in short supply in many outback centres for general public use, does any priority exist where school authorities are willing to provide free milk for children attending their schools, in accordance with the reply given on Wednesday, the 19th November?

The MINISTER replied:

No priority exists although I am advised that the Minister for Supply and Shipping has on several occasions made successful representations to the firms concerned in the supply of this commodity on behalf of districts where supplies have been difficult to obtain.

No specific complaints have been received from schools regarding inability to secure adequate supplies of powdered milk, and any brought to notice will be placed, in association with the Department of Supply and Shipping, before the companies concerned.

SAWMILLS.*As to Protection Against Fire.*

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Forests:

(1) Have regulations been promulgated providing for the inclusion of a condition in permits granted to sawmilling permit holders that they take such fire precautions deemed necessary by the Conservator, to prevent outbreaks of fire in mills?

(2) Is he satisfied that adequate fire precautions are taken in existing mills and that proper fire-fighting equipment has been installed?

(3) Will he name the mills which are not equipped with adequate fire-fighting equipment?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Regulations gazetted on the 19th January, 1951, made it compulsory for every person holding a sawmilling permit under the Forests Act to comply with the following:—

- (a) Equip the sawmill with efficient fire-fighting equipment;
- (b) maintain the equipment in working order and train men to work such equipment;
- (c) provide a sufficient water supply;
- (d) keep mill clear of debris and sawdust and burn not less than 1½ chains from the mill;
- (e) damp down mill by spraying after work ceases each night.

(2) Bush fire-fighting equipment and appliances shall be as approved by the Forests Department.

The Forests Department issued instructions to each permit holder setting out the minimum fire-fighting equipment required for the various types of mills. Constant inspections were carried out to ensure that this equipment was procured and installed in the correct place in the mill, and that an adequate water supply was provided. Sawdust heaps were shifted to a safe distance from the mill.

(3) All Crown land mills have been adequately equipped.

Private property sawmillers willingly co-operate with the department, and in their own interests have nearly all installed equipment as provided for under the regulations.

CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING LTD.*As to Tabling Report and Balance Sheet.*

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands:

I wish to preface my questions with a quotation from the Bulk Handling Act. Section 18 reads as follows:—

The company shall in every year not later than the thirty-first day of October take out a balance sheet showing all of its assets and liabilities, making due allowance for depreciation and such other reserves as are usual in respect of undertakings similar to that carried on by the company, together also with a revenue account for the preceding twelve months, and shall within two months after the thirty-first day of October as aforesaid, forward the balance sheet and revenue account to the Minister for presentation to Parliament.

The Minister shall cause a copy of the same to be laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament on the first sitting day after receipt thereof.

As no such balance sheet has been tabled this year, I wish to ask the Minister—

- (1) Has it been supplied to him in accordance with the Act?
- (2) Will he defer further consideration of the Bulk Handling Act Amendment Bill until this balance sheet is laid on the Table of the House in accordance with the requirements of the Act?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) and (2) I shall make inquiries and give the hon. member the information tomorrow. I might say that two months are allowed in which to furnish the report, and the two months have not expired.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, they have. I am referring to last year's report and not this year's.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will make inquiries and let the hon. member have the information tomorrow.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Will you defer consideration of the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will not give an undertaking to do that until I have made inquiries.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Chief Secretary.

- 2, Reserves.

- 3, Road Closure.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

- 4, Coronation Holiday.

Introduced by the Minister for Labour.

BILL—FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th November.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [4.52]: This is an important Bill which aims to give the State Government Insurance Office authority to invest funds, establish reserves, acquire property and do a number of other things. It is important enough to have justified the Attorney General in giving the House much more information than he was pleased to give when introducing the measure. That which he did give the House was very sketchy indeed. The whole of his speech, in fact, occupied only a short time and was gloriously general in every respect. I know that in the case of Bills of this description members of the Government have to be careful in what they say and perhaps even more careful about what they leave unsaid. Decisions in those directions have to be made with the purpose of making as sure as is possible that the Bill receives a favourable reception in another place.

The Attorney General: There were only three principles involved.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I agree that there are not many principles involved in the Bill but there is considerable past history associated with the State Government Insurance Office. As this measure is to have retrospective application the Attorney General might well have told us—unless he had good reasons for not doing so—what funds had been accumulated by the office up to the

30th June last and what property it had acquired up to that date. He could, and I think should, have put forward much more detailed argument in favour of the Bill than he did. The principles contained in the measure have my complete support and I agree that the State Government Insurance Office should have the right to invest its accumulated funds, acquire property and erect buildings in which to house its many activities. At the same time I feel that members would have appreciated the making available to them of much more detailed information regarding the progress of the office over the years and, in particular, the amount of the accumulated funds in the hands of the office at the end of the last financial year.

The Attorney General did say that the State Government Insurance Office has, over the years, invested some of its funds even though it did not have express legal authority to do so. In reply to an interjection, he gave the House to understand that the Treasury Department has the right to use funds accumulated by the State Insurance Office and, from memory, I think he said that the Treasury did not always—if at all—pay interest on any funds from that source used on a temporary basis for any particular purpose. The Attorney General could have told an interesting and informative story about the expansion of the activities of the State Insurance Office, and the large amount of funds that it has accumulated during the period of its operations.

The Attorney General: I thought that would have been more appropriate when speaking to the Estimates.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I think it would have been more appropriate in relation to this Bill. The Attorney General brought down a Bill to increase the powers of the State Insurance Office in three directions, and I think that was the most appropriate time to give members information about its activities along the lines I have mentioned. Members would have appreciated an indication of the amount of money that the State Insurance Office has available at present for investment—some of it is already invested and the balance is floating. Had they been given that information they would have known at first hand how much money the State Insurance Office will be able legally to invest as soon as the Bill becomes law, and the formalities in connection with it have received attention. I think it advisable that the State Government Insurance Office be given legal authority to invest its accumulated funds, acquire property and subsequently, when circumstances warrant it, erect such buildings as it considers necessary to house the many activities that it now carries on in Western Australia. For those reasons the measure has my full support.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—Mt. Lawley—in reply) [5.0]: I have some figures here which will answer the questions raised. Over the years funds have been placed into Consolidated Revenue, but I did not propose to raise this question deliberately because I consider the State Insurance Office to be a business concern and I did not wish to make its business public. The amount taken out of reserve and placed into Consolidated Revenue during the years from 1940 to 1945 was £223,000. In addition, £395,000 was transferred to Consolidated Revenue by annual statements of £25,000 to offset Treasury payments under the old Miner's Phthisis Act. That procedure since 1947 has been administratively stopped and no funds have been taken out of reserve by the Treasury, but it is considered that it was not altogether correct.

Since that date, however, £170,000 has been loaned to the State Housing Commission for its activities. I will give the House some further information on investments when I deal with the State Insurance item in the Estimates. As members know, a valuable block of land has been acquired in St. George's Terrace and it is intended, at a suitable time, to erect a building to house the State Insurance Office which, as members know, handles the bulk of workers' compensation insurance. I am glad the Leader of the Opposition supports the Bill because I think the reserve funds of this valuable organisation should be protected in the way suggested. As members know, they will be invested with the consent of the Treasurer and may not be withdrawn except with the permission of the Auditor General.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1952-53.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read transmitting the Loan Estimates for the year 1952-53 and recommending appropriation.

In Committee.

The House resolved into Committee to consider the Loan Estimates; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Departmental, £249,000:

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [5.7]: In introducing the Loan Estimates for this financial year, I make no apology for emphasising the difficulties

with which we are faced—I think the position is well known to members. Since my return from the two Loan Council meetings held this year, I have published statements setting out the position of our Loan Funds in relation to our requirements and, in addition, I have given information to the House, amplifying that which had already been published.

I do not propose, therefore, to cover all the ground that has already been adequately covered in previous Press statements and in information given to members. For some years past labour has been scarce and skilled technicians—both in the professional and manual branches of the Government service—were few in number. Materials were also in very short supply and it was extremely difficult to engage in a really progressive programme of public works. In view of these factors there had naturally grown up a fairly substantial accumulation of works waiting to be done.

Increase of Population.

In addition to this accumulation of work, our difficulties were increased by the Commonwealth Government's decision to embark on a vigorous migration policy. I do not wish to suggest here that this was not a wise decision. It was obviously necessary to increase as rapidly as possible the population of Australia for defence purposes, isolated as we are in this extreme south-eastern corner of the Pacific Zone.

The arrival of large numbers of migrants, however, did add substantially to our difficulties, because, though the adult male migrants provided a welcome increase to the labour force, their dependants merely increased the demands that existed amongst our own people for all those needs which a population requires. To meet the needs of our own people and of the migrants, we had to provide houses, schools, hospitals, water supplies, roads, light and power, and transport. These difficulties were more intense in this State than in any other.

The population of Western Australia increased during the year 1950 by no less than approximately 5 1/3 per cent., as compared with the population of the preceding year, whereas the over-all increase to the Australian population was 3 1/2 per cent. Even an increase of over three per cent. is a greater increase than occurred in America during the period of its most vigorous migration policy. I understand that students of population problems estimate that no community can absorb economically more than an increase of three per cent.

It is not surprising, therefore, that, with our increase of over five per cent., we were faced with extraordinary difficulties. As a result, the problems of the State since, say, the year 1949 have been mounting, and have become increasingly greater.

Oversea Contracts for Materials.

In an endeavour to cope with the demands for the various services which a Government is expected to provide, contracts for the supply of materials from overseas were entered into vigorously and, I may say, with the blessing and, indeed, almost at the request of the Commonwealth Government. The same reasons which presented Australia with the need to increase its population immediately for defence, also affected the ability of the overseas countries to provide us with adequate supplies of raw materials which were so badly needed. Although contracts were accepted by overseas contractors for various types of supplies, their own activities were interfered with by the need for these countries to provide all the materials for rearmament. In consequence, all States entered into heavy commitments for materials which could not be met in the years in which the contracts were made.

When the rearmament programmes in the overseas countries had been at least partially met, contractors were able to turn their attention to civil needs, and delayed orders commenced to be fulfilled and materials arrived in fairly substantial quantities. During the intervening period, Australia enjoyed a period of prosperity almost unprecedented in its history, when the price of our exports rose, as in the case of wool, to almost fantastic heights. In consequence of the inability of overseas contractors to fulfil their orders promptly—coupled with the huge incomes earned by Australian exporters—Australia's sterling balances accumulated to very substantial figures.

Upsurge of Inflation.

At the same time, Australia was caught up like the rest of the world in what can only be described as a vicious upsurge of inflation. Prices soared, and with the automatic adjustments of the basic wage, which apply throughout Australia, wages rose correspondingly.

Mr. Graham: Not correspondingly.

The PREMIER: Yes, I think they did rise correspondingly. The hon. member knows that with the rises there have been very substantial rises in wages as well.

Mr. May: They are a month behind.

The PREMIER: That is always said but, as prices have soared, wages have soared too. No doubt the hon. member has heard it argued that because of these quarterly adjustments of the basic wage, prices must continue to soar.

Mr. May: Put it the other way about.

The PREMIER: I have heard arguments on both sides.

Mr. Hoar: What do you propose to do about these rising costs?

The PREMIER: The hon. member opens up a very big question, and I suggest he might reserve himself for the time when he is making his speech on the Estimates.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Treasurer had all the answers a few years ago.

Mr. W. Hegney: He said, "We will keep prices down."

The PREMIER: I said, "Prices rise with Wise."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the Premier had better address the Chair.

Commonwealth-State Loan Programmes.

The PREMIER: So far as Governments were concerned, Loan moneys were apparently readily available, and at the various Loan Council meetings that I attended up till 1951, no serious discussions had taken place regarding the provision of the Loan moneys necessary to finance the ever-mounting Loan requirements of the States. This condition, unhappily, did not continue. Inflation persisted, prices for our exports dropped, overseas commitments commenced to be met in an ever-increasing volume, and our London balances were reduced severely. In an endeavour to correct the position, the Commonwealth Government felt it necessary to restrict imports, while, at the same time, the efforts made by the Commonwealth Government to counter inflation had the effect of severely restricting credit facilities within Australia. Loan moneys became more difficult to secure, and in 1951, the Loan Council was told by the Federal Treasurer that the Loan requirements of the States would have to be curtailed.

This announcement came at a most unfortunate time for the States who were already committed overseas for large sums for materials and equipment on order; many large and expensive public works had commenced and could be stopped only at the cost of great economic waste; while ever-growing needs of a rapidly increasing population were not being met. Endeavouring to assist the position, the Commonwealth Government undertook for the year 1951-52 to underwrite the Loan programmes of the States by providing funds from Revenue. When that undertaking was given, the total amount of the Loan programmes was fixed at £225,000,000, when the Commonwealth Treasurer anticipated that he would have to find approximately £100,000,000 from a Consolidated Revenue surplus for which he had budgeted. It was expected that public raisings would provide the other £125,000,000. Several unfortunate developments took place. The Federal surplus did not reach anticipations, while the Loan market, which was expected to provide £125,000,000, in fact raised only £63,000,000.

Mr. W. Hegney: They did not have confidence in the Government, that is why.

The PREMIER: As a result, the Commonwealth Government had to find from various sources, approximately £160,000,000 in order to fulfil its promise to underwrite the total programme of £225,000,000. To live within even this huge programme, some of the States had to curtail severely their Loan requirements, and in some cases, payments which were due to be made in that year, were postponed until this financial year.

When the Loan programmes for 1952-53 were under consideration, the Prime Minister announced that the Commonwealth would not again underwrite the loans, but undertook to make special subscriptions to Commonwealth loans raised for the Loan Council programmes, up to a maximum of £125,000,000. Much discussion took place as to the estimate of what the Loan market would raise to meet the balance of the Loan programmes. When I say that the total borrowing programmes of the Commonwealth and the States for this financial year were set out at £345,000,000, it will be apparent that, even under the most optimistic conditions, something far short of this total would be available. The Prime Minister indicated that, in his opinion, about £50,000,000 might be raised in 1952-53. This compared with an amount of £63,000,000 raised in the preceding year. It was obvious, therefore, that the total sum to be available for Loan works, excluding semi-governmental and local governmental bodies would be of the order of £175,000,000.

Amount Raised from Public Loans.

When we have regard to the amount raised by public loans during the year, the anticipation of £50,000,000 seems a disappointing one. In this respect I think there is no doubt that the investing public has not found public loans attractive, particularly in view of the low interest rates fixed. While, during the stress of a war, it may be possible to float large loans for an interest rate of 3-1-8 per cent., it is quite clear, with competition from other investments and with rising costs, this interest rate is too low. In an effort to make public loans more attractive, the new Commonwealth Loan, which opened today, carries an interest rate of 4½ per cent., which approximates the present yield obtained from previous Loans, after allowing for the profit that will be made when the Loans mature. It is to be hoped that this substantial rise in the rate of interest will result in the success of the current Loan and other loans to be raised this financial year.

Western Australia's Loan Programme.

If, however, less than a total of £50,000,000 is raised this financial year, the States' programmes will have to be cut, and as they have already been pruned

drastically to bring them within the compass of the anticipated programme of £180,000,000, this cutting can only have painful and serious effects. The programme we submitted to the Loan Council for this year totalled £33,600,000, which was reduced to £15,600,000 and this was agreed to only after I had made a very strong plea for an additional £2,000,000 for housing. In addition, I secured Loan Council approval to the State Electricity Commission borrowing up to £3,000,000 as a semi-governmental body.

Mr. W. Hegney: Queensland and Victoria did that also.

The PREMIER: They have always borrowed extensively in regard to semi-governmental loans. In the light of our very much reduced programme immediate action had to be taken in several directions. The programme of works in progress had to be pruned in order that any work which could possibly be avoided would be eliminated. An approach had to be made to our contractors to see if it would be possible to cancel contracts, to defer delivery of materials, plant and equipment—if the contract could not be cancelled—or if this second course of action was impossible, then to request the contractors to accept a deferment of the payment due to them during 1952-53. Fortunately, our approach to our overseas contractors was met with a very reasonable appreciation of our difficulties. Thanks to the very good work done by the Agent General (Hon. W. H. Kitson), assisted by the Director of Works (Mr. Dumas), who was in London at the time, it was possible to defer payments due this year to the extent of nearly £4,000,000.

State Electricity Commission Loan.

Another action which had to be undertaken at once was to endeavour to raise part of the £3,000,000 approved by the Loan Council as a borrowing for the State Electricity Commission. Again, we were most fortunate that the first loan of £1,000,000 for the State Electricity Commission was an outstanding success. In all, about £1,300,000 was raised, and the other members of the Loan Council very generously agreed to allow us to retain these over-subscriptions. In this regard I may say that we have been more fortunate than some State Governments because the Loan Council has refused other State authorities permission to retain any over-subscriptions.

We still have the right to approach the market for the balance of the £3,000,000 programme approved—namely £1,700,000—and, if conditions are favourable, an approach will be made to the market early in 1953. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those investors who so willingly subscribed to the first loan. I had always felt that if a local loan

were raised it would be responded to by loyal Western Australians out of a patriotic desire to see their State progress.

Hon. E. Nulsen: They have a wonderful security in the Government.

The PREMIER: Yes, I think the Government is a good security. As a result of the success of the State Electricity Commission loan it has been possible for me to plan for a total loan spending of nearly £18,000,000. Of this sum, £1,300,000 will, of course, be met from the first State Electricity Commission loan, and will not form part of the Loan Estimates, which will be considered by Parliament.

Inclusion of Loan Repayments.

In addition to our Loan allocation of £15.6 millions, we are entitled to include the amount of Loan repayments which we anticipate collecting this year, and which will approximate £1,000,000. These Loan repayments come from a variety of sources, but one of the biggest items is the amount of depreciation which is regularly charged in the working expenses of the railways, and provides for the repayment of the capital cost of the assets over their estimated lifetime. The amount of this depreciation is provided from Consolidated Revenue and is repaid to the General Loan Fund, while, at the same time, the capital of the railways is reduced by the amount of the depreciation. Including the amount of these repayments, the total amount estimated to be spent this year is £16,597,000, details of which are set out in the Estimates in the hands of members.

In these Estimates I have arranged for a special section to be inserted, containing particulars of the expenditure which is expected to be incurred this year in the development of the Kwinana area. Individual amounts, making up the total of £1,812,500 to be spent on this project this year, are included under their respective departmental headings, and for easy reference I have arranged to have the item number quoted against the items in the summary appearing at the end of the Estimates. I shall now proceed to explain the major items of expenditure contained in the Estimates and give a broad outline of the expenditure incurred last year.

Railways.

Excluding an amount of £2,900,000 charged to Railway capital during 1951-52 by clearance of a Treasury Suspense Account, to which I shall refer later, the total loan expenditure of the department for last year was £5,124,000, or £542,000 less than the amount provided in the Estimates. Of last year's expenditure, £2,283,000 was for wagons, locomotives and other rollingstock, and the remainder—£2,841,000—was expended on track-works, buildings, workshops, equipment, water supplies, etc.

For the current financial year, the amount allowed in the Estimates for railway spending is £5,360,000, of which sum £3,520,000 will be expended on rollingstock and the balance of £1,840,000 on other works. It is well-known that the Railway Department has a large rollingstock rehabilitation programme in progress, involving commitments for wagons, motive power, diesel coaches etc., approximating £14,000,000. In ordinary circumstances, a large part of this amount would have been payable during 1952-53, but, due to the curtailment of loan funds, the Government has been faced with great difficulty in meeting Railway commitments and financing other loan works of an essential nature.

Of the total sum of £5,360,000 provided in this year's Estimates, £4,250,000 is required to meet railway commitments, chiefly on account of the rollingstock rehabilitation programme. Actually this amount of £4,250,000 is nearly £3½m. less than is due for payment under contract conditions, but through the good offices of British and Australian contractors, it has been possible to postpone payment by either deferment of payments, deferment of deliveries, or in some cases, partial cancellation of orders. Unfortunate as the need for these arrangements is, the limitation of funds left no alternative.

Mr. W. Hegney: Were any terms attached to the deferment?

The PREMIER: We have to pay interest on the amount deferred, as I explained to the member for Melville the other evening. These goods will be arriving from time to time, and interest must be paid on the amount which is about £4,000,000.

Stores, Materials and Equipment.

The purchase of stores, materials and equipment for railway purposes was previously financed by the Treasury, but, with increasing costs and the greater requirements of the department through its rehabilitation programme, the sum involved became too large to permit of continuance of this arrangement. It was, therefore, decided that the railways should be provided with working capital to the extent of £2,900,000 in order to finance the purchase of stores and that the Treasury account should be reduced by a corresponding sum. The adjustment, which was purely a book entry, was made during 1951-52.

Coogee-Kwinana Railway.

In order to comply with the requirements of the agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the sum of £75,000 has been provided in the Estimates for the construction of a railway to the refinery site. This sum represents estimated expenditure during 1952-53 and provides for any necessary land resumptions and surveys.

Rollingstock Programme.

Expenditure during the past year for rollingstock amounted to £1,370,000 and the actual number of new wagons delivered was 443 out of an aggregate number of 5,058 comprised in construction programmes. Deliveries will be accelerated this year. Since the 1st July, 1952, 311 new wagons have been placed into traffic, and it is anticipated that the total deliveries for the year will be in the vicinity of 1,500. The expenditure on wagons for the current financial year—under the reduced commitment arrangement—is £2,587,000.

Locomotives.

Forty-eight "W" Class locomotives were received from the manufacturers and placed in service last year, bringing the complement of these locomotives to 60—the total order. The expenditure on this account during last year was £884,000, and to complete payment, a further £191,000 has been provided in this year's Estimates. Provision for other expenditure on locomotives during the current financial year includes:—

For "X" Class diesel-electric locomotives, £506,000. Forty-eight of these main-line diesel-electric locomotives are on order and it is expected that delivery will commence in the first half of 1953.

Expenditure for "Y" Class diesel-electric branch-line locomotives is set down at £159,000. The first of the 18 units of this class is expected to be delivered early in the new year.

The "Z" Class diesel-jetty shunting locomotives are likely to be received by January next and expenditure for the year is estimated at £42,000.

Twenty-two diesel railcars, mainly for suburban passenger services and some for country running, will not be delivered until after June, 1953, and expenditure allowed for this year is £2,000.

Delivery of 24 "VF" heavy duty steam locomotives has been deferred until after the end of this financial year, but some expenditure for progress work will be payable and the estimated amount is £31,000.

The allowance for all of these motive power units and the railcars aggregates £931,000.

Railway Housing Projects.

During the year, loan expenditure on railway housing projects aggregated £919,000. This included—

£129,000 for work performed on buildings completed or commenced during the year.

£702,000 toward the purchase and erection of 500 Simms-Cooke pre-cut houses, and 150 Thermobau pre-cuts.

£59,000 towards the erection of 82 Nissen homes at Wexcombe.

£29,000 for extensions to departmental properties, and provision of cabins for emergency housing for New Australians in permanent-way gangs.

Fifty-six new houses were completed during the year, 10 more were purchased, and 135 were in process of construction at the 30th June, 1952. Fifty-two Nissen homes were completed at Wexcombe and another 30 commenced. For the current year, £440,000 is allowed for housing, and it is expected that upwards of 300 homes may be completed.

Track Work.

During the year, expenditure on track work amounted to £659,000, including the renewal of 369,000 sleepers. This rate of sleeper renewals was dictated by sleeper supplies and manpower considerations. Arrangements have been made with suppliers for improved deliveries, and for the current year it is expected that between 500,000 and 600,000 sleepers will be placed in the road. This work, together with renewals of rails, points and crossings, crossing timber, pipe-lines, telephone lines, some relaying and associated track work is estimated to cost £591,000. Provision of the sum of £125,000 for re-railing portions of the Eastern Goldfields railway and the South-West railway has also been made.

Midland Junction Railway Workshops.

Expenditure for new machinery, new buildings and re-organisation during the financial year amounted to £470,000 and the effect of the modernisation is to be discerned in the improved turn-out of the shops. To quote one direction only: In 1949, the average number of locomotives at the shops waiting for or receiving workshops' attention, was 68 per week. In 1950, the number had been reduced to 66.5; in 1951 to 49.2; and in 1952 to 40.9—a very creditable improvement. It is unfortunate that the restriction in loan funds must affect the continuance of the re-organisation programme, but this is inevitable to some degree. The total allowance for workshops this year is £250,000, a great portion of which is to meet commitments on machinery on order.

The foregoing comprehends the major items of estimated Railways expenditure for 1952-53, and the relatively small residue is made up of lesser amounts to complete important works approaching completion or for which contracts have been arranged.

Tram and Bus Services.

Actual expenditure by the Tramways for last year was £238,000, exceeding the estimate by a little more than £500. For

the current year, the provision is £117,000. Last year the erection of overhead lines on the Mt. Hawthorn section was completed, and the service changed over from trams to trolley-buses. The relaying of tramway tracks in Hay and Murray-sts., City, was completed, and work on the Hay-st., Subiaco, track was proceeding. The construction, under contract, of Guy omnibus bodies was also well advanced, only 10 bodies out of the order for 50 remaining to be built at the end of the financial year. During 1952-53, the relaying of the tramway track in Hay-st., Subiaco, will be completed and further deliveries will be taken of bodies for Guy omnibuses and Sunbeam trolley-buses.

State Electricity Commission.

Expenditure during the year ended the 30th June, 1952, was £3,342,000, including £48,000 spent from State funds on the change-over of consumers' appliances from 40 to 50 cycles per second. In this year's Estimates, provision has been made for further expenditure of £98,000 on the frequency change, and the Commonwealth will contribute a like sum to meet a total anticipated expenditure of £196,000. To date, over 20,000 consumers in the metropolitan area are being supplied with 50-cycle current, and during the balance of this year, the change-over will be speeded up to enable the maximum use to be made of current provided direct from the South Fremantle Power Station. For this financial year, it is anticipated that expenditure by the Commission will approximate £2,161,000, which excludes an amount due for payment this year under contract conditions of £797,000, which has been deferred for payment until 1953-54. The proceeds of the No. 1 Loan, amounting to £1,302,000, will finance portion of the Commission's programme for this year, and the balance of £859,000 has been provided in the Estimates.

South Fremantle Power Station.

The amount spent last year on the South Fremantle Power Station and associated works was £1,150,000. During the year, the second turbo-alternator of 25,000 kilowatts was placed on load, bringing the capacity of the station to 50,000 kilowatts. The second section of the station—known as "B" station—is under construction. This section will, like the first section, have a capacity of 50,000 kilowatts, thus building the station up to a total capacity of 100,000 kilowatts. Work proceeded satisfactorily during last year, and by the 30th June, 1952, "B" station foundations and the Nos. 3 and 4 turbo-alternator foundations had been completed, and the erection of Nos. 3 and 4 turbo-alternators had commenced.

Good progress had been made on the boiler section. The steel work on the building was almost completed and more

than half of the concrete work on the building had been done. During the current financial year, it will be necessary to meet further accounts from contractors, as final payments will be due on "A" station, and progress payments will have to be made on "B" station. Work will proceed on the installation of "B" station, and it is thought that by the end of the year, this section will be nearing completion and should be on load during 1953-54. A second 66,000-volt transmission line between the East Perth Power Station and South Fremantle Power Station is in the course of erection.

East Perth Power Station.

At the East Perth Power Station the work of installing the 66-kilowatt switchyard was completed for the first section. This is one of the important links in the interconnection of South Fremantle Power Station and the East Perth Power Station. Almost all of the work on the 66-kilowatt switchyard was finished, and satisfactory progress was made on the installation of a fire protection system at the Station. An additional boiler is being installed this year, and a coal handling plant will be erected to replace the present obsolete method of handling coal from trucks by manual labour.

Electricity and Gas Department.

To cope with the growing demand for electricity, the Commission has continued its policy of extending high tension transmission and low tension distribution mains and establishing new transformer stations. Over 13 miles of mains were laid to supply gas to new consumers. At the East Perth Gas Works, an additional carburetted water gas plant has been ordered and work on the foundation is well ahead. This plant will use Collie coal and will help to render the Commission even more independent of Eastern States' coal than it is at present. Expenditure last year on the metropolitan distribution system for electricity and gas and the erection of new gas plant and other associated works totalled £841,000.

Country Undertakings.

Expenditure last year on country undertakings totalled £733,000. This included expenditure on Collie Power Station extensions, the erection of high tension transmission and low tension distribution lines, the installation of additional units in country power stations, and the change-over of installations in country towns to 50-cycle alternating current. High tension transmission lines have been erected from Collie and now extend from Pinjarra in the north to Busselton in the South. This has enabled the Commission to close down the diesel generating stations at Harvey, Waroona, Donnybrook and Capel.

A 66,000-volt line is being erected from the metropolitan area to Northam and to York, and when this is completed, the existing power stations at these towns will be closed down. A start has also been made to connect farmers as rural consumers to the South - West Power Scheme's mains, and this work will be continued during the current year, together with the work of changing over country towns to 50-cycle alternating current. Orders have been placed for two additional 400-kilowatt sets for installation at Albany, and the installation of an additional boiler at the Collie Power Station is proceeding satisfactorily. It should be in operation before June, 1953.

Fremantle Harbour.

For improvements at Fremantle Harbour, £576,000 has been provided on the Estimates, or £46,000 less than the expenditure last year. The work proposed includes the purchase of mechanical equipment and sheds for the North wharf as part of the programme for equipping that wharf to handle general cargo. In this year's Estimates, proposed expenditure has been separated into two Votes; one to be administered by the Public Works Department, and to cover works carried out by that department on behalf of the Trust; and the other to be administered by the Trust in respect of the purchase of mechanical equipment. The object of this division is to simplify accounting procedure.

Dredges and Barges.

Provision has been made under the heading of Dredges and Barges for a final payment of £20,000 on the suction hopper dredge, "Sir James Mitchell," and for a progress payment of approximately £28,000 towards the cost of the new grab hopper dredge being constructed by Mort's Dock and Engineering Company, New South Wales.

Albany Harbour.

Last financial year, expenditure totalled £516,000 on the Albany Harbour principally through the extensive dredging operations carried out under contract by the Australian Dredging and General Works Pty Ltd. In addition, a departmental dredge was operating in the approach to the harbour. The sum provided in this year's Estimates is £386,000, which is required to meet final payments for dredging operations, and for drainage, levelling and other development of reclaimed areas. Wharf construction will also commence in this financial year.

Bunbury Harbour.

During last financial year, substantial works involving expenditure of £246,000, were in progress, including the extension

of the breakwater, by use of large stone quarried at Roelands, extension of jetty structure and dredging work. With the shortage of Loan funds, only £75,000 could be provided in this financial year, and, as a result, the work on the breakwater had to be discontinued and the Roelands quarry closed down. Work now proceeding consists of the extension of the jetty.

Cockburn Sound and Kwinana Area. Development.

For Public Works Department activities under the terms of the Oil Refinery Industry Act, two amounts, totalling £600,000, have been placed on the Estimates. The first provision of £400,000 is for works involved in the development of Cockburn Sound. A contract has been entered into with a Dutch dredging firm for the dredging of the channels through the *Parmelia* and Success banks to a bottom width of 500 feet and a minimum depth of 38 feet below low water mark. The contractors have one self-propelled dredge already on the way from Holland and a second dredge will leave Newcastle, New South Wales, for Fremantle before the end of December. It is expected that actual dredging work will be commenced early in January.

The Oil Refinery Industry Act requires that the dredged channels shall be completed within 4½ years from the commencement date as defined in the Act. Contracts have also been let for the supply of equipment for the necessary navigational aids in connection with the channels. The second provision of £200,000 is mainly for the development of a new townsite, which involves the purchase of land, surveys, planning, sub-division, clearing and the construction of roads. This work is already proceeding and is being pushed ahead to enable actual house construction to commence early in the New Year.

Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage.

Expenditure last year on the metropolitan water supply, excluding the Kwinana area, was £761,000, compared with the estimate of £876,000. In the current year, expenditure of £779,000 has been allowed for in the Estimates.

Water Supply.

The more important of the works completed last year included—

Mt. Yokine Reservoir No. 2.—This reservoir of 30 million gallons capacity was completed at a total cost of £164,000.

Mt. Eliza-Swanbourne Main—1st Section.—The section from King's Park to Vaucluse-st., Claremont, was completed at a total cost of £80,000.

Kangaroo Gully Diversion Channel.—This project, which augments the supply to Canning Dam by approximately 500 million gallons per annum, was completed at a total cost of £120,000.

Reticulation mains to serve new homes and areas, and improvements to existing reticulation mains resulted in expenditure last year of £208,000, whilst £33,000 was expended in cement lining existing mains in situ. £55,000 was also spent on the purchase and fixing of new meters. An amount of £200,000 is included in this year's Estimates for further water main extensions and improvements, £25,000 for the cement lining of reticulation mains, and £87,000 for the purchase and fixing of new meters. Other works in the metropolitan water supply programme represent jobs in progress, and include provision for expenditure of £217,000 this year on the Gullford-Mundaring main, which will ultimately feed 11 million gallons per day from Mundaring reservoir into the Perth system.

Sewerage and Drainage.

In the sewerage and drainage section of the department, expenditure incurred in 1951-52 amounted to £289,000 compared with the estimate of £315,000. For the current year, expenditure of £268,000 is anticipated, comprising £62,000 for recurring works and services, such as minor extensions and house connections; £38,000 for the continuation of works in progress, and £169,000 for miscellaneous new sewerage works in the areas of Midland Junction (Midvale), Meltham, Victoria Park and Herdsman's Lake. During last financial year, 21 miles of sewer were laid in the Perth, Fremantle and Midland Junction districts at a cost of £188,000.

Kwinana Area Water Supply.

During the last financial year, work commenced on the laying of a 10 in. main to Kwinana from Fremantle, and the provision of a one-million gallon storage tank on Mt. Brown. Expenditure totalled £66,000 to the 30th June last, and a further £57,000 has been provided on this year's Estimates to complete the works. Provision has also been made on this year's Estimates for the construction of a 30 in. main from Kelmscott to Thompson Lake reservoir, which will provide the permanent supply to the Kwinana oil refinery and augment the supply to the Fremantle district. The estimated cost is £450,000, of which £200,000 is expected to be spent this financial year.

The Thompson Lake Reservoir will have a capacity of 20 million gallons and is estimated to cost £270,000. Expenditure this year, however, will be limited to £10,000 for excavation works. Other works associated with the Kwinana area water supply include the reconditioning of the Roleystone and Wongong pipe lines; the

purchase of casing for a bore at Kwinana to provide water for industrial use; and the provision of reticulation mains for the construction camp and housing in the area.

Country Areas Water Supplies.

Expenditure last year on country areas water supplies, including the Goldfields water supply and the Comprehensive Water Scheme, totalled £546,000 or £103,000 less than the sum provided on the Estimates. For this current year, anticipated expenditure is £572,000, of which £285,000 has been provided for the comprehensive scheme.

Comprehensive Scheme.

The direction of proposed expenditure has, to a large degree, been dictated by contractual commitments as these, of necessity, had first call on the limited funds available. On the southern section of the scheme, £58,000 is provided for the completion of the two electrically operated pumping stations on the Wellington-Narrogin main, and £69,000 for work on the pipeline. These pumping stations should be completed before the end of the financial year and well in advance of the completion of the pipeline, of which only 35½ miles, out of a total of 80 miles, has been completed to date.

Very little additional length can be expected this financial year, as virtually all remaining funds, after providing £20,000 for the purchase of large valves being supplied under contract, will be required to meet the cost of steel plates already delivered or rolled. On the northern section which is based on the existing Goldfields water supply main, the controlling factor in development is delivery of water along the trunk main, as the summer demand already exceeds the delivery potential. Increased supply can be given only by the installation of the electrically driven pumping station at Mundaring replacing the two steam stations, together with replacement of the main between Mundaring and Sawyers Valley and for two miles east of Cunderdin.

Provision has, therefore, been made for expenditure of £33,000 towards the pumping station and equipment at Mundaring; £60,000 for main enlargement between Mundaring and Sawyers Valley—on which an early commencement will be made—and £32,000 for the Cunderdin section, the first charge on these last two items being for the purchase of the steel plate for the pipes.

Bullfinch Enlargement.

Progress during 1951-52 on this work was well below expectations as only 5½ miles of main were laid out of a total of 21½ miles, at a cost of £39,000. Provision has been made for expenditure this year of £147,000 to cover completion of 16½ miles of 12-inch steel main, together with

a 500,000 gallon concrete reservoir. Work has proceeded rapidly in recent months and is now almost completed.

Country Towns Water Supplies.

Of the sum of £333,000 placed on last year's Estimates, £297,000 was spent on country towns water supplies, and provision has been made this year for further expenditure of £223,000 to continue works in progress.

Port Hedland Water Supply.

Due entirely to the shortage of pipes, the work on the Port Hedland water supply has been delayed, but it is anticipated that the laying of the pipeline will be completed in this financial year, and provision on the Estimates for expenditure of £33,000 has been made.

Irrigation and Drainage.

During last financial year, expenditure totalled £281,000, compared with the estimate of £260,000 due to work proceeding vigorously on the development of channel lining in the Harvey No. 2 irrigation district and at Wellington Dam where it was anticipated that a commencement could be made with the actual dam raising in a major way during 1952-53. However, financial restrictions caused an early close-down on these major works.

Provision this year could be made only for an expenditure of £85,000 on irrigation and drainage, of which £33,000 is mainly for the channel construction in the Harvey No. 2 irrigation district carried out in July and August of this year. The sum of £19,000 has been provided for work at Wellington Dam, which will be absorbed largely in meeting commitments incurred up to the end of last financial year, together with expenditure on closing-down operations and provisions for attention to the assets on the site during the year. For the Wilson Drainage District, west of Albany, £25,000 has been provided for essential work to protect developed farming land.

Mr. Graham: Do you think it will save his seat for him?

The PREMIER: I think his seat is safe enough without having to worry about that.

Country Towns Sewerage.

The total allocation for this year is £52,000. The major work is at Albany, where £21,000 will be spent on further development of the sewerage system and £4,000 in assisting owners to have connections made under a deferred payment scheme. Albany will be served by a gravitation main and reconstruction is well advanced to the stage where some 700 properties are able to be connected to the sewers when plumbers are available to undertake the house connections.

At Collie, expenditure of £15,000 is provided for, which will be absorbed largely in meeting commitments to the 30th June last, and the cost of completing certain works to the stage where they can be left without risk of damage and loss, until an improved financial position will enable the work to continue. Provision has also been made for expenditure of £8,000 at Geraldton to enable completion of the sewerage scheme to the stage authorised.

Development of Mining.

Expenditure during 1951-52 under the heading of "Development of Mining," totalled £287,000 as compared with the estimate for that year of £394,000. In this year's Estimates, provision has been made for expenditure of £250,000 to assist in the development of many important deposits, particularly coal, lead, gold, pyrite and tin.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The poor colliery proprietors want a lot of assistance!

The PREMIER: The mechanisation of the coalmines and the carrying out of a long-term development programme at Collie to ensure the supply of fuel to meet the State's ever-increasing power, gas and transport requirements, has been regarded as of high priority. A sum of £238,000 was provided last financial year, and in the Estimates for this year, provision has been made for further amounts of £120,000. Other assistance is being given by way of guaranteed bank overdrafts.

At Collie, a drilling organisation under the control of the Mines Department, has been established to drill the coalfield to bedrock and to bore ahead of mining operations. The two modern machines in use are providing information as to the life and behaviour of the seams and will assist greatly in the efficient development of the field. Expenditure on drilling at Collie this financial year is estimated to reach £49,000. A third drilling plant was purchased last year to operate in the Goldfields on ore bodies regarded as possible future suppliers of pyrite which is the source of sulphuric acid. Expenditure this year is estimated at £11,000. In addition, £10,000 has been provided in the Estimates for the erection of a State Battery at Northampton to treat lead ore produced in that now active centre.

Forestry.

Of the provision on last year's Estimates of £306,000, the sum of £298,000 was expended on pine and mallet plantations and houses for the department's field staff. For this financial year, only £83,000 can be made available from loan funds. It is anticipated that of the sum provided for this year, £20,000 will be applied to housing and £59,000 for the continuation of the pine planting programme.

Public Buildings.

For public buildings, a sum of £2,522,000 has been allocated in this year's Estimates. Last year, the corresponding expenditure was £1,337,000, compared with the estimate of £1,050,000. Included in the provision for this year is an amount of £476,000 for the purchase of pre-fabricated school buildings, of which sum £333,000 represents payments for deliveries made last financial year.

Provision is also made for the continuation of works in progress at the 30th June last, including such major works as the second section of the Royal Perth Hospital—£250,000; Midland Junction new hospital—£60,000; Carnarvon new hospital—£40,000; Narrogin new high school—£70,000; and new schools at Bridgetown—£40,000; Halls Creek—£21,000; Mt. Pleasant—£21,000; Toodyay—£20,000; Harvey—£26,000; Margaret River—£35,000 and Wongan Hills £16,000.

In view of the large amount involved to complete works in progress at the end of last year, it has only been possible to provide for a limited programme of new works during 1952-53, which will, in the main, comprise the erection of pre-fabricated classrooms and smaller timber-framed schools in country areas.

State Housing Commission.

Activities under the State Housing Act were confined last year mainly to the erection of local pre-cut homes in country districts under the leasehold and freehold conditions of the Act; the provision of shops in new areas being developed by the Commission; the maintenance of converted Army huts; and the erection of cottages for the housing of evicted families. The current year's programme provides for the completion of 254 Workers' Homes, including evictee cottages, which were under construction at the close of last year, and the erection of a further 350 pre-cut homes in country districts, and 90 cottages in the metropolitan area for evicted families.

Building operations under the State Housing Act will be carried out in 18 metropolitan districts and 60 country towns. This year's building programme will be financed by the provision on the Estimates of £1,183,000 and by a loan to the Commission of £170,000 from the State Government Insurance Office. Provision has also been made on the Estimates for the sum of £818,000 for the erection of 333 homes at Kwinana in accordance with the requirements of the Oil Refinery Industry (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Limited) Act.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: I shall next deal with the—

State Brick Works.

Although expenditure last year equalled the estimate of £331,000, only £245,000 was charged to the General Loan Fund, and the balance of £86,000 will be brought to account this financial year. In addition, it is anticipated that a further £320,000 will be required to complete the new pressed brick works at Armadale, bringing the total provision for the year to £406,000. The new wire-cut works have been completed and the first section of the pressed yard has now reached the production stage. The construction of the second section is progressing satisfactorily, considerable work having already been done on the No. 2 kiln.

State Saw Mills.

Expenditure for 1951-52 totalled £140,000, compared with the estimate of £147,000. Works carried out included the completion of a new boiler house and provision of equipment and plant at the Shannon River mill. A considerable number of houses and other buildings were erected at this centre, and electric lighting and water supplies were installed. The experimental slicing plant at the Pemberton case mill was brought to a stage of partial production, and a start was made on the installation of the necessary boilers to provide power. A number of houses were also erected to provide accommodation for employees.

Expenditure this year is anticipated to amount to £64,000, mainly for continuation of the works in progress at the Shannon River mill and the Pemberton case mill. In addition, the Estimates provide for the clearance from Treasurer's Advance of the sum of £250,000, which was advanced during the last two years to the State Saw Mills, to provide working capital, following rising costs and the expansion of the concern's operations. As this advance is of a permanent nature, provision has been made to transfer the amount to the capital account of the concern.

Curtailment or Suspension of Works.

That completes the summary of the major items of expenditure we anticipate meeting this year; also the explanation of the expenditure for the past financial year. It is unfortunate, but unavoidable, that many important works have had to be either curtailed or temporarily suspended. While it is undoubtedly that all the works in our original programme of £33,600,000 are desirable, it has been necessary to limit our expenditure to the funds available, and thus curtail our activities to those works which have the first order of priority. It has been possible to arrange the programme for this year only by deferring to next year some of the payments which are due this year. The position next year will also be difficult unless the

response by the public to the loans to be floated is very much better than at present is anticipated.

Hon. E. Nulsen: I would say that it will possibly be more difficult next year than this year.

The PREMIER: Possibly so.

Mr. May: What percentage of this year's Loan money will go towards paying for the work carried out last year?

The PREMIER: I have tried to indicate that throughout my speech.

Mr. May: I know that, but you did not tell the Committee what the percentage would be.

The PREMIER: I gave the figures for the expenditure last year, and I thought I gave a fairly detailed account of the expenditure anticipated for this year as well.

Mr. May: That is true, but I wondered if you have worked out the percentages.

The PREMIER: I have not done that.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Unless the inflationary trend is retarded, it will be more difficult next year.

The PREMIER: I think there is no question about that. With the huge volume of work to be undertaken by all Governments throughout Australia, it would appear that, as a community, we are endeavouring to do too much at once, and to strain our resources in so doing.

Capital Works of All Types.

It may be that the savings available in Australia for investment in capital works of all types—both governmental and private—are not equal to the task which faces us, and that if these large works have to be carried out speedily, we will have to depend on overseas borrowings to finance them. This would be regrettable, because, in the community's economy, it is undesirable to have a very large overseas debt. Such a debt places an undue burden on our exports. Most of our exports relate to primary production, which is notoriously subject to the variations of seasons, prices and demand. Fortunately, there appears to be an assured and ready market for all our primary products for many years to come, but seasonal conditions are quite beyond our own control.

Strain upon Financial Resources.

In this State we have several major projects, any one of which, under normal conditions, would be sufficient to strain our borrowing resources. For example, the rehabilitation of the railways, which will be a very costly matter, would be a major work in itself, without the addition of an extension of our electricity supply, extension of our water supplies, provision of schools, hospitals and other public buildings, and the development of the Kwinana area.

It will affect the State adversely if any one of these major works is unduly delayed, but if the requisite loan funds are not forthcoming, then it will be necessary to list the works in some order of priority, and apply the funds available to those having the highest priority.

Mr. Hoar: Do you believe in the judicious creation of bank credit for that work?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The Premier is already using it.

The PREMIER: We are, to a certain degree. If we could do without bank credit, the better it must be for all of us; there is no doubt about that.

Mr. Hoar: Why?

The PREMIER: If bank credit were used for works which would become immediately productive or productive within a reasonable period, there would be some justification in using central bank credit. On the other hand, if we are to use huge sums of central bank credit, there is no doubt it must have a severe inflationary effect which, in turn, must cause costs to rise in every direction. That would not only add to the cost of public works but to costs in every other direction.

Mr. Hoar: What is the difference between using bank credit and securing loans from overseas?

The PREMIER: There again, I said it was undesirable that we should be forced to use loan moneys from overseas.

Mr. Hoar: You said we might do that.

The PREMIER: I said that if we were to carry out this huge programme of public works which are so desirable, it might be necessary to endeavour to secure loans from overseas, but I pointed out that it would be an undesirable course to pursue.

Mr. Needham: And it would be inflationary in its effect.

The PREMIER: Yes. I tried to indicate that we were trying to do more than our resources would permit, and I mentioned the tremendous demand that is being made at present for public works of all kinds right throughout the Commonwealth. As I was saying, if the requisite loan funds are not forthcoming, it will be necessary to list the works in some order of priority and apply the funds available to those having the highest priority. The position can be eased substantially, of course, by all citizens investing generously in Commonwealth loans, and I hope that this will result.

The future for Western Australia is so bright that no investment could give better returns than one which aids in making the most of our opportunities for development. It would indeed be a great pity if, when we are on the eve of such far-

reaching and extensive developments, our progress were retarded through lack of the necessary finance.

Hon. E. Nulsen: That applies particularly regarding primary production.

The PREMIER: I agree that expansion in every direction is very necessary. I submit the Estimates for the consideration of the Committee.

Progress reported.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1, Nurses Registration Act Amendment (No. 1).

With amendments.

2, Main Roads Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

BILL—STATE (WESTERN AUSTRALIAN) ALUNITE INDUSTRY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th November.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [7.44]: The Bill now before us proposes to delete from the principal Act the proviso which was put into it in 1950. That proviso laid it down that no property at the State alunite industry at Chandler was to be sold without the approval of Parliament. If, as a result of the sale or any proposed sale, it would then be impossible to operate the industry for the production of potash. As explained by the Minister, this industry was established during the war for the purpose of producing potash so that potash supplies might be available in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia, to those primary producers who could not carry on their operations profitably without the assistance of that fertiliser.

Before the war, the whole of Australia's potash requirements were imported from overseas—mostly, if I remember rightly, from France and Palestine. The development of war made it unsafe, if not impossible, for further supplies to be brought into Australia. As a result, those primary industries that needed potash found themselves in considerable difficulties in relation to production and particularly in relation to substantial and profitable production.

The primary industries in Australia that depend mostly upon this fertiliser as an aid to production are, I understand, the sugar-cane industry in Queensland and the citrus-growing industry in the various States. In view of the fact that potash supplies were no longer coming into Australia, a move was made in this State, in the first instance by a private syndicate, to try to do something to exploit the deposits of alunite known to exist at Lake Chandler, 30 miles north-west of Merredin. The private syndicate was not able to pro-

gress to any great extent and the Government at that time came on the scene, finally bought out the interests of the private syndicate and, subsequently, following experiments carried out at our local University, decided to go ahead with the establishment of an industry at Chandler for the processing of alunite into potash.

The industry was established and carried on for a considerable time, producing large quantities of potash, not of the highest grade but nevertheless very acceptable to the primary industries concerned in Australia. After the war, the Commonwealth authorities allowed imported potash to come into Australia without restriction, and the potash supplies that came from overseas were of higher quality than those being produced at Chandler. I think that the price of overseas potash imported into Australia was competitive on at least equal terms in regard to price, if not on better terms. Subsequently the board of management of the industry and the Government in this State found that it was no longer economical to operate the industry and a decision was made to cease operations. At a later stage, as mentioned by the Minister, the Government leased the industry to a firm that was interested in the production of plasterboard, and that firm carried on its operations at Chandler for, I think, about 12 months.

The Minister for Industrial Development: For 14 months.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Then, as the result of lack of demand for plasterboard in the Eastern States and presumably, too, because of competition, it was decided that it was not economical from the company's point of view any longer to carry on operations at Chandler. That meant the end of all activity at Chandler. The Minister told us on this occasion, as he told us on previous occasions in recent years, that further experiments were being carried out at the University and also, I think, by the C.S.I.R.O. to try to find out whether the quality of potash produced at Chandler could be improved and whether more up-to-date methods of production could be introduced.

Generally speaking, I think the results of those experiments were inconclusive. At any rate, they did not show clearly and beyond any doubt that new methods could be adopted that would guarantee a higher grade of potash. Nor did they demonstrate, so far as I know, that more economical methods of operation could be introduced on the basis of the plant and equipment as it then existed at Chandler. When introducing the Bill, the Minister told us that Professor Bayliss and his assistants at our local University had made some progress in the direction of further experiments, some of which were encouraging to some extent.

I thought the Minister told us one very significant thing, which was to the effect that a constituent had been discovered in the raw material which could possibly have some important relationship to atomic production. I am not asking that any detail be made available to the House in regard to this point but it could conceivably be a very important discovery if, as a result of subsequent investigation and development in regard to atomic production, this constituent was found to be acceptable to those who might engage in such production in Australia or possibly in some other part of the world.

I doubt if anyone knows the possibilities of industrial production upon the basis of the use of atomic methods and the use of atomic power in the future. If we look back over the period of our own lifetime we are able to see the almost unbelievable developments that have taken place throughout the world in regard to industrial and other production, and therefore we ought not to close our minds to just what might be the possibilities of developments in the next 50 or 60 years. It might very well be that the use of atomic power in industry will be commonplace in another 20 or 30 years. So, if it is necessary to make the suggestion, I think the Minister should follow this matter up with Professor Bayliss in order that the possibilities of this constituent that has been discovered in the raw material of alunite at Chandler might be placed before the expert authorities in Great Britain. They might regard the discovery as of considerable significance, and it might very well be that something substantial will flow from it at some time during the next 10, 15 or 20 years.

As a justification for the proposed deletion of this proviso, the Minister gave to the House the fact that the industry at Chandler is not now operating and the prophecy that there is no prospect of its again operating in the foreseeable future. I still think that the Commonwealth authorities could have shown far greater practical interest in this industry. During the war, when we were battling to establish the industry, and even after the industry had been established and was operating, I told the House on more than one occasion that the Commonwealth authorities had not given any practical assistance to the State of a worthwhile character in connection with the industry and, following the end of the war, had quickly moved in the direction of allowing imported potash to come into Australia without restriction of any kind.

It seems to me that the Government would have been doing the statesmanlike thing if it had looked on this industry after the war finished from the point of view of making sure it continued in operation, even to the extent of assisting primary producers to recover the difference in price which they might be called upon

to pay upon a comparable quality basis as between the imported potash fertiliser and the locally-produced article. I am inclined to think that if the industry had been established in N.S.W., Victoria, or possibly South Australia, or even Queensland, instead of in Western Australia, something much more practical and helpful would have been done by the Commonwealth authorities in regard to the industry after the war than was done.

In fact, it is true to say that nothing at all was done by the Commonwealth authorities for the purpose of trying to enable the industry to survive. It would also be true to say that the Commonwealth authorities rejected every suggestion and every overture made to them by the State Government in the direction of trying to obtain practical Commonwealth assistance to ensure the continued operation of industry. When I was on the Murchison goldfields recently, I was told more than once by local people who were interested in the revival of the goldmining industry that in their opinion the Commonwealth authorities would be showing a much more practical interest in maintaining the goldmining industry at the highest possible level if the production of gold were carried on in the Eastern States to the same extent as it is carried on in Western Australia, and I am inclined to think, on the basis of what happened in regard to the potash industry at Chandler, that there might be more than a small amount of truth in that claim.

Mr. Kelly: You are on the right lines now.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am not completely happy about the bare proposal in this Bill, which is to delete from the Act the proviso to which I referred earlier. In other words, it is a proposal to give the Minister complete authority to dispose of the assets at Chandler as and when he thinks reasonable. As far as I know, there is still in existence a board of management of this industry, and if that be so, the board still has legal responsibilities placed upon it by the parent Act. I think it should have operated in respect of whatever has so far been taken from Chandler and transferred to other parts of the State. I do not know whether the Minister has called meetings of that board of management to consider the question of taking from Chandler items of plant or equipment that have been taken, and to sanction that action.

The Minister for Industrial Development: Since the proviso was put in the Act by agreement between us in 1950 or 1951, nothing has been taken away from Chandler.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: If that be so, it answers the point I was raising, but there still remains the question of the standing of the board of management and its responsibility in regard to what is likely to be taken from Chandler in the future.

The Minister for Industrial Development: The board is regarded as having ceased to function, but the Director of Industrial Development was a member of it and he has made his recommendations.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I do not think that the board could be regarded legally as having ceased to function because its establishment, authority and powers are still provided for in the principal Act. It must, therefore, remain a legal entity and I do not know whether the Minister should, in this Bill, have made some provision to wind it up and transfer its authority and powers—perhaps to the Director of Industrial Development—in order to ensure the more expeditious handling of the present situation.

If no alteration is made to the provision for the board of management, it seems to me that it will still exist and have to be regarded by the Minister under the provisions of the Act as being a body which should be consulted as to what might be proposed at any time regarding the disposal of assets at Chandler, and as to any applications made for the purchase or transference of any plant or equipment now at Chandler. I leave that phase of the subject with the Minister because I think it might require some further consideration.

I have no doubt that there will be many applications for various portions of the plant at Chandler, as it is still difficult to obtain many of them. There are many firms in this State that I think would be anxious to obtain some of those items. The Minister should have available to him the best technical advice, not only as to whether any particular piece of plant or equipment at Chandler should be sold, but also as to whether the price offered is fair and reasonable, or whether some State instrumentality would not be able to make good use of whatever is available there for sale. The Minister did say that the manager of the charcoal-iron industry at Wundowie was anxious to obtain a considerable amount of the plant and equipment at Chandler, and doubtless the Government would give preference to an industry of that kind, seeing that it is owned by the Government. The fact that the Government proposes to expand the activities of the wood distillation and charcoal-iron industries at Wundowie seems to answer many of the stinking fish cries that were heard during the debate on the steel agreement, with regard to the charcoal-iron industry at Wundowie.

We have to take it for granted that the statement by the Minister, to the effect that the present plant at Chandler would not be capable of economic operation in the event of the potash industry being re-established there, is correct, but I hope that he has had the best possible advice in that regard. It is true that at

the time when the industry was established war conditions made it difficult to obtain many of the things that were necessary, and so we had to purchase a considerable amount of secondhand plant from the goldmining industry and improvise to a great extent so as to enable a complete plant to be established on such a basis as would make potash available as quickly as possible to the primary producers, in this and other States which then required it urgently.

I quite believe that much of the plant and equipment now at Chandler would not be capable of economic operation in the event of the industry being re-established, but some of it should be capable of economic use. I am sure that some of the major items of plant could still be used economically in the event of the industry being re-started at some time in the future. I hardly think it would be necessary to have caretakers there regularly to look after those large items of plant, as some of the things I have in mind are huge in size and I cannot imagine anyone who might be inclined to steal portions of them, being able to do so. If it were considered necessary to keep some watch over them, in the event of their being left there, surely some of the Government officers stationed in the Merredin district could visit Chandler—perhaps twice a week—for that purpose!

The Minister for Industrial Development: I said we would not dispose of those unless Professor Bayliss and his advisers are of the opinion that they are no longer serviceable.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I could not know at this stage what the views of Professor Bayliss might be, but I certainly think that the items of plant and equipment I have in mind would be serviceable in the future and should certainly be left at Chandler. The Minister admitted that the question of whether the houses at Chandler should be disposed of is a difficult one. We know that the demolishing of houses and their transportation and re-erection are a big and expensive job but, against that, we must bear in mind the deterioration that takes place in dwellings once they are no longer occupied. The question whether they should be disposed of now or in the reasonably near future seems to hinge on the possibility of the industry being re-established within a reasonable period. If it is likely to be re-started within perhaps five or seven years, I think the houses should be left there.

Mr. Totterdell: They would not be worth much if they were left empty.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: They would bring in no return while they were empty.

Mr. Totterdell: What about the deterioration?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I do not think it would be great in a five-year period provided there was some periodical supervision to ensure that they were not knocked about. We know that vandalism and theft could easily become rife at a place like Chandler, if caretakers were not there and it was without population. As I have said, Merredin is only 30 miles from Chandler, and at that centre there are two or three policemen and a number of Government officers stationed. I think that the police, together with some of the Government officials, could keep a close watch on the Chandler township and the vacant houses in it for the requisite period. The principal thought I have in mind is that the industry might be re-established. If, in the meantime, the houses have been demolished and transported away for re-erection somewhere else the Government will have to face immediately the expenditure of an extremely large sum of money for the erection of new houses.

There should be two possibilities as to the re-establishment of the industry. The first would be the development of more modern methods of production by which a much higher quality potash could be produced. As No. 1 proposition that might be regarded as belonging to the far distant future. The second possibility, which would be a very unfortunate one, but which might be much closer than we expect, would be the development of a third world war. If that occurred, soon after it started Australian primary industries would find themselves short of potash supplies. As it would be well known that potash had been produced in this State during the second world war there would be agitation and a demand for its production in Western Australia again to meet the needs of the primary producers concerned.

I would not dare to make any suggestion on the possibility of a third world war, although I think everyone of us, at the back of our minds, has a fear that it could happen.

Mr. Totterdell: Would you suggest holding on to all the plant and the houses in case of a third world war?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I think the Government would be justified in keeping the houses there for another three years provided it can organise adequate supervision to ensure that they are not knocked about during that period. A year ago, according to the Press and the best information that we can obtain, a third world war was very close and one could still develop from the Korean situation although the position there today, as far as we are able to judge, might be resolved by a peaceful settlement. As against that, if we are to believe all the things we read and are told about Russia—and I think we

must believe a great deal of them—the probability of a third world war is not altogether remote.

I do not want to argue the question as to whether a third world war is likely to develop during the next few years, because that is a little away from the Bill before us and is outside the scope of this Parliament. Nevertheless, we must have some consideration not only for the situation in Asia, but also for the situation in Europe. I think we know that Europe, generally, has been kept in a reasonably peaceful condition because of the great amount of financial help that America has rendered to some of the European countries. Without that it is more than possible that some of them would have fallen helplessly into the hands of Russia thereby greatly strengthening its hold upon Europe and greatly encouraging Russia, I would think, to initiate a third world war in the hope that she might be able to overcome the existing strength of Britain and America. However, I do not want to go any more deeply into that except to say that it does appear to me to be an important factor to keep in mind when the Government is approaching this matter after the Bill becomes law.

I know very well that the situation will establish for the Minister and the Government problems about which they could not be absolutely certain. They will have to take some risks in making decisions, the same as we did as a Government in making the decision to establish the industry during the last war. However, I sincerely hope that whatever risks are taken by the Minister and the Government when making decisions will be taken with a bias towards the possible or even probable re-establishment of the industry during the next five, or, perhaps, 10 years. In all the circumstances, there appears to be no option, unfortunate as the situation is, but to accept the Bill and therefore I propose to support it in all its stages.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [8.22]: I greatly regret the necessity for the Bill because this industry performed a wonderful service during a period when primary producers were poorly supplied with potash. There was every justification for its establishment at Chandler, and even though a loss has been incurred from a State point of view what has been accomplished will eventually be of great benefit to Western Australia generally. The Leader of the Opposition outlined most of the reasons for the establishment of the industry at Chandler and also gave a detailed account of its operations over a period of several years. There is no doubt in my mind that had it not been for the product obtained from Chandler during the war years, the section of primary industry that needed potash would have been seriously handicapped.

In discussing this matter on one occasion with the Minister, I understood that up to a late period in the operations of the industry he had hopes that some progress would have been made with the manufacture of by-products. Had that transpired it would have made a great deal of difference to the decision to close down the works. From the inception of the industry we were led to understand that there was a possibility that other by-products could be obtained from Chandler on a payable basis even if little potash had been marketed. Apparently, the type of plant that was installed, and the experience gained as time went by, made it evident that the industry was hardly likely to succeed with that type of machinery and the method of production adopted.

So, having exhausted the possibilities of success with the type of plant used, and as the product at Chandler suffered such severe opposition which arose in this State after the cessation of hostilities, there is now only one course left to us, namely, to make good, to the best advantage, some of the losses sustained and dispose of the plant the experts have determined is useless for the operation of this industry. Having arrived at the decision to dispose of this plant which has served such a useful purpose, even though it has been expensive in producing an article that was extremely hard to obtain, we must not now delay in making full investigation of every known method of extract not only of potash, but also the by-products obtained from that material. Who is to say that this may not become a vital product for primary production in Australia?

As the Leader of the Opposition said a few moments ago, within the last few years there has been a decided opinion that the world may again be thrown into conflict, and there is no doubt in my mind that the use and the quality of the product obtained at Chandler may again be in demand. So we should leave no stone unturned in an effort to investigate every avenue along which this industry could be re-established, if and when required. We should go into the pros and cons of the production of potash from a technical angle and make investigations oversea, in an endeavour to secure a similar type of plant which could be brought to this State to utilise the product to the same degree as it is in other parts of the world.

I remember that at the end of the war France was able to flood this State and, in fact, the Commonwealth, with potash at about half the cost of the manufactured product produced in this State.

The Minister for Lands: And twice the value.

Mr. KELLY: I do not think the Minister can substantiate that statement. As a matter of fact at one stage he answered

some questions of mine and he showed very little differentiation between the two from the point of view of value. I think he concluded his statement by saying that it had not been proved that the imported potash was twice the value. I speak as a grower and one who uses considerable quantities of potash.

The Minister for Lands: So do I.

Mr. KELLY: I use the French potash and our own manufacture. I am certain I would not be justified in saying, from my experience at any rate, that I was greatly in favour of the imported article. There was not that disparity between the two, and I do not think there were any conclusive experiments or data that would substantiate what the Minister said in reference to the imported article. I was on the point of saying that it was because of the excessive amount of potash imported that Chandler was finally thrown out of gear. We may again be faced—and quite easily faced—with the necessity of re-establishing the manufacture of potash.

Some time ago I understood from the Minister that some investigation which had been made by C.S.I.R.O. in connection with not only the type of plant that would be required if this industry were it again set in motion, but also the extraction of by-products, had claimed a considerable amount of attention. If the Minister is replying to the debate, I would be very pleased to know what advance has been made by C.S.I.R.O. because I think their findings will have a marked effect on the possible future of this industry. As it has been decided that the plant is totally unsuitable—that is the majority of the plant—I think the Government is wise to dispose of as much of it as possible. If it can be assimilated into other sections of the Government by merely a cross-entry from one department into another, so much the better, but I do think the matter of disposal is a very necessary one.

The houses and buildings are another proposition and whether it is right that they should be shifted at this moment is hard to determine. If there is no possibility of this industry being re-started, then there is the grave danger that deterioration will make it wise to have those buildings removed. No doubt there is an extensive demand for all the buildings that exist at Chandler. The Minister did not in his remarks give any indication as to the extent of the demand nor any indication as to the method that would be adopted in the valuation of those buildings.

The Minister for Industrial Development: There are any amount of potential customers but we have not worked in advance of the Bill; we waited to see whether Parliament approved of it before we took any steps.

Mr. KELLY: I quite appreciate that there would be no dearth of customers. The Minister has had approaches made to him on a number of occasions, not only on behalf of those at Bullfinch but also on behalf of those at Merredin. The requirements at Merredin have not only been brought before the Minister for Industrial Development, but they have also been referred to the Minister for Housing from time to time.

The Minister for Industrial Development: I think the Minister for Education may have heard of it, too.

Mr. KELLY: Being the same person as the Minister for Industrial Development, I have no doubt that the Minister for Education has heard of it also. The shifting of these buildings and the value that will be received for them is a matter of very vital interest to Merredin particularly, and because of the distance not being great and the road reasonable, the shifting of those buildings by jinker would certainly present a very attractive proposition from the point of view of the department when the matter of disposing of those buildings is considered. If this is done very little harm will come to the buildings; the cost of shifting would be very light if they are shifted to Merredin as against any other part of the State. So when the Minister finally decides about the disposal of these buildings, I hope Merredin will be marked in large letters on them because they can be transported very easily.

There is another type of building about which I would like to put in a word in connection with the same area. Some time ago the Merredin Road Board made a request that some of the smaller or poorer types of houses—I think they have even been referred to as sub-standard houses though I do not know whether they are quite sub-standard, but they are less imposing structures—be offered to the board for purchase for the purpose of establishing a native settlement. That is a very commendable idea and one which has great possibilities. The Minister will undoubtedly appreciate that the native and half-caste question is becoming a very live one in Merredin. A short while ago it was only at show times that the natives came to Merredin, but now they seem to be there permanently and the road board appears disposed to do something for them. Their purpose would be quite well served if some of those cottages were made available to the board. One final appeal I would like to make is in connection with the hall at Chandler. If the buildings are to be disposed of I can think of no more deserving section of the community that should be considered than the Merredin R.S.L. This organisation is a very live body and, in common with R.S.Ls. in many other parts, it is doing a very fine job

but is seriously handicapped in its work because of the fact that it does not possess a hall.

So I appeal to the Minister that if it is at all possible he will grant these requests in connection with those buildings, and that he will endeavour to see that Merredin is at least given the offer of first refusal at whatever price is decided upon. During the course of his comments, the Minister made a statement regarding the disposal of the plant and gave as his reason for disposing of it and the buildings the fact that he wanted to avoid the necessity of keeping on a caretaker. I think he rather contradicted that line of thought later in his speech by mentioning that some of the plant would not be disposed of, or that he had not any immediate prospects of disposing of a portion of the plant, and that it would need to have a caretaker or caretakers placed in charge.

The Minister for Industrial Development: You must have misunderstood me. My point was that the big items of plant would not require caretakers if they were left there.

Mr. KELLY: It is possible that I misunderstood the Minister, but at the time it struck me as being rather a lame excuse to offer. I feel the time has arrived when the Government requires to dispose of a majority of the plant and a great deal of consideration should be given to the disposal of the houses, having in view, particularly, the knowledge which the Minister should have in connection with the investigations of the C.S.I.R.O.

THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling—in reply) [8.42]: There is not much I wish to say in reply, except to thank the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Merredin-Yilgarn for their constructive contributions to the debate. I would say to the Leader of the Opposition that he may rest assured that close touch will be kept with Professor Bayliss and his associates in regard to these investigations, particularly on the point he specifically raised. Further, I would like to mention that while I can conceive of circumstances, as the Leader of the Opposition can, in which it might be necessary to commence the manufacture of potash again in the nation's interests, I would say that it should never be expected of Western Australia to undertake that responsibility alone, if the occasion ever arose. It should be a truly national matter, because it is by no means right that the circumstances which arose in regard to the manufacture of potash as a purely State liability should ever rise again, suppose as I have said that circumstances ever warranted it.

Thirdly, I want to say that the potash produced at Chandler was approximately 30 per cent. K_2O , but the potash that was

imported was approximately 55 per cent. K₂O, I understand, and that the price of the imported potash was no greater than the local potash and in some places in Australia lower than the local. In consequence, from the point of view of the agriculturist who was concerned in the production of potash, the local product in the post-war period became a most uneconomic commodity to purchase, because, to get the value out of it, he had to transport almost twice as much at more than double the cost. But this is not to say—and I do not say—that during the war period the manufacture of potash was not justified, and suppose the circumstances that the Leader of the Opposition suggested did arise, which God forbid, it may be necessary to make the best we can of it again, but I consider the responsibility for this should be a matter for the national Government. I do not think it is a question of taking it for granted, as the member for Merredin-Yilgarn said, that the plant cannot be used. I think I explained that that conclusion had been reached, not by me but by those persons who have been engaged in the investigations, the letter of Professor Bayliss having been read to the House.

The intention to enable the Wundowie industry to take from Chandler articles that would be useful to it, of which I have a list, is not with the idea of expanding the industry there, but with the object of making the industry as economical as possible to operate, so that its losses may be minimised so far as is practicable. I am sure that some of the gear at Chandler would have that effect in relation to the handling of ore, etc., at Wundowie, not for expansion but to enable some economies to be effected.

I have here a letter that might interest the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, because it arose out of the C.S.I.R.O. role. It is a copy of a letter from the Minister for National Development, Senator Spooner, in reply to a communication of mine. It reads—

In your letter of May 8th, 1952, you asked if the investigation of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation to discover an economical process for the recovery of potash at Lake Chandler will proceed as rapidly as possible. This is, in fact, the case, but the problem is a difficult one and no early recommendation is looked for.

The C.S.I.R.O. is of course not under my control, the Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey being Minister in charge of that organisation, but I have been informed about the work being done on alunite. The research is divided into two parts. One part on the chemistry of the mineral is being performed in Western Australia by an officer of the C.S.I.R.O.

under the direction of Professor Bayliss. The other part, on calcination in a fluidised bed, is being done in Melbourne in the laboratories of the Division of Industrial Chemistry of the C.S.I.R.O.

Good progress has been made, but it is too early to say if a suitable commercial process will be developed. Every effort is being made to expedite the work but it is unlikely that any definite results will be obtained for some time.

Mr. Kelly: When was that letter written?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: It was written in July, in response to mine of May. I think that answers the question raised by the hon. member as to the investigations on a Commonwealth level.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—PLANT DISEASES (REGISTRATION FEES) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 19th November.

MR. HILL (Albany) [8.51]: I support the second reading and, as a commercial fruitgrower, I appeal to the House to pass the measure. The member for Melville objected to the proposal because it would mean increasing the registration fee to the backyard orchardist from 1s. to 2s. We in the southern end of the State are practically free from fruit-fly. For this we have to thank the Fruit-fly Advisory Committee, the Department of Agriculture and its officers for their work. Another factor is that, at the southern end of the State, practically no citrus fruit is grown, and consequently there is no fruit to carry over the pest from season to season.

Periodically, small outbreaks occur, but the position is very different in South Australia. When I was there some years ago, I was talking to a commercial orchardist about the prohibition against imports of Western Australian fruit, and I told him that, if the fruit-fly ever got a hold in South Australia, it would be the ruination of the industry. Practically every backyard there has stone and citrus fruit trees and, in addition, there are vast quantities of African boxthorn growing wild, and boxthorn is a very fine host for fruit-fly. When I was there last year, I was told that there had been two outbreaks of fruit-fly and that the South Australian Government had spent something like £500,000 to eradicate the pest.

The member for Melville stated that if this Bill be passed, the backyard orchardist will have to provide 60 per cent. of the funds. That is not unreasonable. I can safely say that 80 to 90 per cent. of the cost of fighting the fruit-fly in this State is caused by the backyard orchardist. The backyard orchardist is of no value to the State, but the fruit growing industry is of great value. We not only bring into the State a return for our fruit, but we also spend a large portion of our revenue for fruit-cases and packing equipment.

About 1910, Mr. J. F. Moody was appointed fruit commissioner, and we have to thank him for the legislation that was passed in 1914. I became a fruitgrower in 1909. The main purpose of the Act was to fight the fruit-fly. I was appointed an honorary inspector under the Act, which provided that regulations might be made by the Governor, amongst other things, to provide for the charging of a registration fee. I believe that at the outset the registration fee was half-a-crown for all orchards, and later on it was made a flat rate of 1s. Before 1939, the fruitgrowers were constantly approaching the Government for more money, but the reply was, "If you want to fight the fruit-fly, you must finance it yourselves." In 1939, a Bill was introduced and passed by Parliament. On the occasion of the second reading in this House, I said—

I was present at the conference in Albany when this matter was discussed by the fruitgrowers of Western Australia, and also at the executive meeting of the Fruitgrowers' Association at Kojonup, when it was decided to ask that this Bill should be introduced. We fruitgrowers consider the Government should do all it can to stamp out the fruit-fly. We realise that is short of cash, and for that reason I and other growers are prepared to tax ourselves so that the necessary finance may be provided. I have been growing fruit for upwards of 30 years, but I had become a member of Parliament before I ever saw the fruit-fly. Some two years ago I bought in Perth fruit that was infected with the fly, and that was the first occasion upon which I saw the pest.

In Albany we are free from that trouble, but the metropolitan areas constitute a real danger to the growers generally. A motor car can travel to Bedfordale, buy fruit there, and in five hours land infected fruit in the Albany district. There are many orchards around Albany, and fruit brought by that means constitutes a grave danger to orchardists. I know how I would feel if members of a picnic party were to deposit infected fruit near my home. The Bill means

that my personal charges will be raised from 1s. per annum to £2 10s., but I am not concerned about that, as I feel it is better to fight the fruit-fly in the metropolitan area than upon our own orchards. I support the Bill.

The position is the same today, but the value of money has considerably decreased. A charge of 2s. has not the value 1s. had a few years ago, and in any event I can safely say that 2s. does not cover the cost of the Fruit-fly Advisory Committee and the Government entailed in policing this Act as it applies to the backyard orchardist. I went into one backyard orchard in Claremont and, under a fig-tree, there was a mass of fruit-fly on the ground.

In the Albany district, we have had an outbreak now and again, but it has always occurred in a backyard orchard. These orchards are a real danger. A person might be in Perth and might take fruit to Albany, find maggots in it and toss it out, and that is where the trouble occurs. I shall leave it to the member for Darling Range to speak about the metropolitan area, because he has had more experience of fruit-fly than I have had. Suffice it to say that I would sooner pay a few shillings to help fight fruit-fly in the metropolitan area than have to spend several pounds to fight it on the Kalgan River.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.58]: I listened with considerable interest to the remarks of the member for Albany, who claimed that 80 to 90 per cent. of the trouble arising from fruit-fly was attributable to the backyard orchards in the metropolitan area. If this is such a serious menace to fruitgrowers outside the metropolitan area, the onus definitely rests upon the Government to eradicate the pest by preventing people in the metropolitan area from growing fruit trees.

Mr. Hill: Would you support such a proposal?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: This is nothing more or less than a revenue-producing measure. Under its provisions, no attempt will be made to eradicate fruit-fly in the metropolitan area because the legislation is not policed effectively. An inspector might go around and visit half-a-dozen houses where one or two fruit-trees are being grown, but no real attempt is made to deal with the pest. If we want to eradicate fruit-fly, the problem must be tackled properly. The Minister contended that the burden should fall on general revenue. I agree with him. It should not be imposed on the people in the metropolitan area, who, it is shown, contribute 60 per cent. of the revenue, derived from those who plant fruit trees. Hundreds of young people who are starting off wish to grow some fruit trees, and immediately they do they have an orchard which they must register by paying 1s. before the end of July in each year.

The measure does not set out to eradicate fruit-fly. Whilst the department has the names and addresses of these people, no attempt is made to see whether there is fruit-fly on the properties. There is no doubt that fruit-fly is prevalent in some places. When I was election campaigning six years ago at the back of Morley Park I saw a chap whom I knew and he gave me some apricots from some trees that he had growing. Later that night my wife and I had a good feed of them, and in the morning we discovered they were full of fruit-fly. What happened there would happen in many places in the metropolitan area, and outside the metropolitan area too, no doubt.

If this proposition were for the purpose of eradicating fruit-fly it would have my whole-hearted support, but on the contrary it is to get another bob from the person who plants a fruit tree in the metropolitan area. In any case, the consumers of fruit in the metropolitan area, or those overseas who purchase it are, in the final analysis, the ones who pay for what we are discussing here tonight—the eradication of fruit-fly. As the Treasurer has indicated, he is confronted with financial difficulties, and consequently this proposition has to be stepped up. The Minister pointed out that it was his Government that introduced this legislation, but as a matter of fact it was introduced by a Labour Government in 1935 because fruit-fly was so bad then.

The difference between 1935 and 1952 is pretty definite inasmuch as we were at the height of a depression then and revenue could not be had. But today we are supposed to be in a bouyant financial period, although we have been in the doldrums for the last six or twelve months. This could more easily be borne by general revenue now than it could in 1935. This is one reason why the Bill was sponsored by a Labour Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Hill: He told us we would have to pay for it.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: On the hon. member's own admission here tonight he was appointed an honorary inspector, and he said that when he went as a delegate to some meeting he told the Government they were prepared to pay for this.

Mr. Hill: The Government told us definitely we had to pay for it.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The hon. member said tonight that the growers were prepared to pay for it.

Mr. Hill: Because the gun was put at our heads by the Minister.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: That is what they all say. This proposition should be borne by revenue. Young people who start off by buying a lemon tree become orchardists and under the Bill they will have to pay 2s. Is it fair that the burden should be placed on them?

Mr. Manning: Of course it is.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: "Of course it is," says the farmer from Harvey. I listened to the Treasurer saying how much of the taxpayers' money has been spent on drains and so on in the Harvey district. This wealthy farmer from there can talk, but now it seems that the young people starting off as backyarders in the metropolitan area will be called upon to pay double the amount they would ordinarily have to pay for just one fruit tree.

Mr. Hill: How much would they have to pay if they kept a pet dog?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That is away from the Bill.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I cannot connect up a pet dog with fruit-fly, consequently I cannot answer the question. In any case, I do not think too many people keep pet dogs, but some believe that a vine or fruit tree has a utility value. When I started to plant a few fruit trees where I live the Minister for Agriculture at the time, Mr. Ferguson, warned me about planting fruit trees in the metropolitan area. People do not know the ravages of the fruit-fly. I planted an orange tree as well as a lemon. It was only when I visited a sick friend in St. John of God hospital that I saw the effects of fruit-fly. On this occasion some oranges had been sent from Kalamunda, the district represented by the member for Darling Range, to the patient. One of the oranges was found to contain fruit-fly. This indicates that fruit-fly is not only in the metropolitan area, but outside.

It is the duty of the department to eradicate fruit-fly, but the proposition here is to get further revenue from those who, as a result of growing fruit trees in the metropolitan area, contribute 60 per cent. of the amount. It is not a fair suggestion. It would be well if nurserymen tendered advice about the ravages of the fruit-fly, and told people they should not buy certain types of fruit trees, such as late apricots, peaches and so on. If that were done we might effect some improvement, but the Bill will only mean that another one or two civil servants will be appointed, and they will collect money from the people who plant fruit trees to pay their own salaries. As the growers sell their fruit their fees are recouped through the prices they receive. The metropolitan grower is singled out for special attention. On their behalf I vigorously protest.

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [9.11]: I support the Bill and I was rather surprised to hear the member for Melville opposing it.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It is not fair or equitable.

Mr. OWEN: Because of his experience as Minister, and knowing what this fund means to the industry, I was surprised when he raised objections to the Bill.

Mr. Graham: Let the industry pay a bit.

Mr. OWEN: Quite a lot has been said about the registration of orchards, and the member for Albany gave us some idea of when registration was first invoked. Section 35 of the 1914 Act provided for the registration of all or any orchards containing one or more fruit trees or grape vines, etc. It also prescribed the matters in respect of which fees shall be payable under the Act, and it fixed amounts of such fees, and it stipulated, "provided that registration fees shall be graded from two shillings and sixpence upwards, according to area." At that time the object of the registration was to give the department some idea of where the orchards were situated so that they could be inspected at proper intervals, and action taken to control or eradicate any orchard pests.

Although the Act was not repealed, but was still in force up to 1935, it was never carried out. I believe there were some technical difficulties. I know that most people regarded it as a dead letter. But occasionally some newcomers into the industry thought they had to register and they brought their sums of 2s. 6d., and in some cases a lot more, to the department. It was rather difficult for the officer concerned to tell them to take the 2s. 6d. back home again, so he had to accept it. In 1935 the Act was amended to provide for a flat rate of 1s. for backyard orchards and commercial orchards. The money was to provide a fund which could be used for control methods against the fly.

In 1939 the Act was amended and the commercial growers' fees were increased to 1s. 6d. per acre with a maximum for any one grower of 50s. In 1941 the Act was continued, with some modifications, until 1944 when it was again amended to provide for 1s. for the backyard orchardist—that is, any area up to one acre, so actually a person could have 99 trees and pay 1s.—

Mr. Styants: You could pay 1s. for one grape vine, too.

Mr. OWEN: That is so.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: How could you get 99 trees on an acre?

Mr. OWEN: The Act provides that 100 trees constitute an acre when planted in close formation, so that 99 trees are not an acre. In 1944 the Act was last amended, and the then Minister for Agriculture, who was later Premier, said this:—

The fees collected during 1942-43 amounted to £4,114, and for the year 1942-44 to approximately £4,147. The balance brought forward from year

to year has been gradually diminishing and whereas the balance at the end of 1940-41 was £1,181, this year, as I have already mentioned, the operations promise to show a deficit in excess of £400. It would be detrimental to the industry to slacken off in any way the good work that is being accomplished, and it would certainly be improper to dispense with the services of inspectors rather than that the necessary amount should be made available from the Treasury. It was anticipated at the time of the appointment of an additional inspector that there would be a deficiency in the fund, and the Premier readily agreed to provide the requisite amount to meet this year's commitments.

By increasing the fees to the commercial orchardist at that time, it was anticipated that the fund could still maintain those inspectors.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What was it increased from?

Mr. OWEN: Since then those fees have been effective and we, as commercial orchardists, have been paying up to £3 per annum to the fund to provide for inspectors and for expenses in an endeavour to control the pest. Fruit-fly is a serious pest to the industry and at times, in certain districts in the State, it has threatened the existence of the industry and in particular our export trade. In fact, I think it was through the good offices of the then Minister for Agriculture, Hon. F. J. S. Wise, that we were able to continue our export to such countries as Ceylon and Indonesia. We had to guarantee that our fruit had been subjected to a certain period in cool storage so that the fly would be killed before the fruit was exported overseas.

As the member for Albany has said, over the last 40 years we have been constantly battling against fruit-fly and one Government after another refused to do anything about it until in the nineteen-thirties the Government was prevailed upon by the fruitgrowers' organisation to introduce the parent Act so as to provide a fund which would help to control the fly. The member for Middle Swan said that the fund should be used to help eradicate the pest but I say that is impossible. Fruit-fly has been eradicated, or apparently eradicated in South Australia but they spent in the vicinity of half a million pounds in doing it and that was for a small area only. In Florida, in the United States of America, some 20 years ago, it cost several million pounds to eradicate the pest from an area which was possibly 1/20th the size of the infested area in Western Australia. If it cost that sum 20 years ago it would cost in the region of 20 or 30 million pounds to eradicate the pest in Western Australia. After hearing the Treasurer

introducing his Estimates I do not think a sum of 20 or 30 million pounds will be forthcoming.

Hon. E. Nulsen: If this Bill becomes law will the extra shilling overcome the deficit?

Mr. OWEN: I am afraid not. However, it has been proved that with proper methods fruit-fly can be controlled. As one who has spent a lifetime in the fruit-growing industry, and in an infested area, I can assure members that although the fruit-fly is present in the area we can market the majority of our fruit and suffer little commercial loss, but it does involve the orchardist in heavy expenses to implement control methods.

In the debate which took place in the other Chamber, and from what members have said here, there seems to be a good deal of confusion as regards this registration and the compulsory community baiting which is in force in three districts in the State. Under that scheme growers pay a further tax of up to 6s. an acre to have the fruit-fly bait applied in their own orchards. This fund is managed by a committee and a team of sprayers is put on to the actual work. It can cost a grower 6s. per acre for one application and on occasions some growers have to have 12 to 15 applications each season. So it will be realised that the expenses involved are considerable. However, those schemes are doing a lot of good and although the general control methods are not completely effective, they do keep the fly under control in areas where only commercial orchards are operating. But in the metropolitan area and the outer suburban areas and in country towns, where there are many backyard orchards and some semi-commercial orchards, it is almost impossible for the commercial orchardist to obtain clean fruit unless all growers are compelled to take some action to control the fruit-fly.

Although the policing of the Act has been carried out vigorously on occasions in the metropolitan area, owing to a shortage of labour and money, and particularly during wartime, that policing has not been 100 per cent. effective. It would require an army of inspectors because it not a matter of merely calling into a house and asking a person, "Have you sprayed your trees?" The inspectors have to look and if fly is present they have to take action against the owner after warning him or giving him a chance to carry out the necessary control work. From my experience in the department many prosecutions were recommended but few were successful, because the magistrate would not impose a fine or convict a person unless the person had ample warning that he was committing an offence. To do that an inspector had to go two or three times to warn the owner of the premises. In cases of absentee

owners it was almost impossible and where a fine of £1 was imposed—which incidentally went into revenue and not back to the fund—it might cost the department £5 or £10 for inspectors' wages and other costs.

It has been proved that with an adequate number of inspectors fruit-fly in the metropolitan area can be kept down to a minimum. Inspections have been made and some prosecutions have been launched and a good deal of advice has been given to backyard growers. These people have been advised as to the varieties of trees which they should not grow and that has made the task of controlling the fly somewhat easier but there are thousands of new backyard orchards being planted, and the inspectors are called upon to give advice to all these people. Also, they have to make what might be termed door-to-door inspections to find out where orchards are because, although the onus is on the orchardist to register, the inspectors have to canvass the metropolitan area to discover whether an owner has registered his orchard or not.

Over the years that this scheme has been in operation a plan has been drawn up and almost every different type of tree has been pinpointed so that, say, in the late winter or spring months an inspector will know that in a certain street there are 20 loquat trees, which are a source of danger in spreading fly, and that in Subiaco or South Fremantle there are also a number of trees; in that way the inspector can keep a fairly close tab on them. But with new houses being built there is a constant job for the inspector, and although the Minister says there are sufficient inspectors to do the work, I know that if it is to be done efficiently many more will have to be appointed. The present Government has done more to help the orchardists in the war against fruit-fly than any previous Government.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What has it done?

Mr. OWEN: It has provided funds for the compulsory fruit-fly baiting areas and for the purchase of machinery so that they can carry out the work at a reasonable cost. It has provided more funds for the appointment of inspectors and research work and the member for Melville pointed out that on the Estimates this year there is a sum of £12,000 set aside for fruit-fly control methods. I believe that the onus is on the fruitgrower himself, and that includes the backyard orchardist, to do something to help the industry. The fact that the backyard orchardist has to register and pay something commensurate with the cost of collecting the fee makes him realise that he has a responsibility to the industry. In many cases it does not pay to collect the shilling registration fee; it does not pay the department to send out a notice because it costs 3d. on each oc-

casion and it would cost another 3d. to post a certificate back to the grower. So the department has to rely on the good faith of the backyard orchardist or the activities of the inspector to collect the shilling registration fee.

I believe that under this Bill it may be possible to allow a backyard orchardist to pay several years in advance and in that case it will be possible to notify him that his registration fee is due. That would save the orchardist a good deal of trouble and it would be easier for the department to administer. If a fee of one shilling was considered worth while in 1935 then, with the present inflationary tendencies, the fee should be at least 3s. now. Thus the increase in the registration fee to 2s. is by no means out of place. With the funds thus provided, one or two extra inspectors could be appointed, and the work of fruit-fly control made much more effective. The fruit-growing industry is worth possibly £2,000,000 annually to the State and its existence will be seriously jeopardised unless the fruit-fly is adequately controlled.

As I mentioned previously, it is practically impossible to eradicate the pest altogether, because it would mean the rooting out of fruit trees as far north as Carnarvon and east as far as Kalgoorlie, while the normal infested fruitgrowing area extends as far as Yarloop and Narrogin in the south. Either many thousands of trees will have to be rooted out or the fruit will have to be stripped off the trees for several years in succession, to ensure the existence of no medium enabling the fly to breed. It would possibly cost an enormous amount of money to carry out this work. Nevertheless, the pest can be controlled if all those concerned in the growing of fruit, including the backyard orchardists, do their bit and assist the department in its efforts. The Bill will contribute towards that objective.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. L. Thorn—Toodyay—in reply) [9.33]: The member for Middle Swan referred to the inspectors who, he said, would go around the districts and collect the fee of 2s. in order to pay their own salaries. The hon. member used to be an advocate of this type of legislation. In his electorate there are quite a number of fruitgrowers and that applied particularly before the electoral boundaries were altered. I point out to him that, in the course of their collecting the fee of 2s., the inspectors police the backyard orchards and therefore are carrying out the functions, to deal with which they were appointed. I did say previously that I felt—I stressed that it was my own opinion—in respect of diseases and pests that affect production, the cost involved should come out of revenue.

On the morning after the earlier debate in this House on the Bill, there appeared in the Press a report dealing with

Argentine ants and it stressed the fact that £36,000 had been made available for the eradication of that pest. That money is to come from revenue. So the Press report simply backed up my argument. I certainly got a little hot under the collar when I was dealing with this subject, and I remarked that I did not know why the fruitgrowers should be compelled to raise the revenue to police the control of the fruit-fly pest, whereas respecting other branches of agriculture in which diseases and pests affected production, the money necessary for the work of eradication or control was provided from revenue.

Mr. Styants: And you have introduced legislation to double the fees to be paid by fruitgrowers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: After all, that is not such a serious matter because we expect to raise only £2,700 as the result of the extra 1s. to be charged.

Mr. J. Hegney: What about asking the householders to pay a fee of 1s. in order to assist in getting rid of the Argentine ants?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Now the member for Middle Swan wants to impose a further tax on the metropolitan householders! There are 55,239 backyard orchards that have been registered and the owners are to be asked to pay an extra 1s. That will produce another £2,700 to enable us to police the fruit-fly pest more effectively. That should prove of great benefit to the consumers of fruit.

Hon. E. Nulsen: But it will not cover the whole of your deficit.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Actually there is no deficit. The point is that we have not sufficient funds to carry out the work as we would like. A certain amount is placed on the Estimates to assist in the work of controlling the fruit-fly pest and we endeavour to raise, by means of the small tax dealt with in the Bill, sufficient to enable us to police the work in an efficient manner. The member for Darling Range said quite correctly that, although I did say the other night that the number of inspectors was adequate for the work, when we take into consideration what is involved in policing 55,239 backyard orchards, it is obvious that the task is quite impossible for the two inspectors. The member for Darling Range was an inspector when I was also an inspector, and he will agree with me that if we did 10 or 12 inspections each day we did very well. The householders visited were interested in the control of the pest and would require explanations as to the best methods to be adopted.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Are the commercial orchards policed?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, very carefully. The inspector in charge of a district has his roster and he carries out the work accordingly. He does not

have to deal with thousands but with hundreds of orchards, and such inspectors are carrying out their work properly.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Is the Minister serious when he states that the inspection of 12 premises in the metropolitan area would represent a fair day's work?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the people are at home and desire advice from an inspector, I would say yes.

Mr. Styants: I have one tree in my backyard orchard which I have registered for the past 12 years, and I have never seen an inspector on the premises.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is not the point. I say that the people are anxious to know something about the pest and want to discuss the position with the inspector.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Every year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know why the member for Melville persists in cross-examining Ministers like this. I have told him before that we are not in school here. I say that a householder would like to ask for advice and discuss the matter with the inspector and the hon. member says, "every year"! There are 55,239 of these people and an inspector would not call upon the same individual every year.

Mr. Styants: When will my turn come round? I have been registered for 12 years and have never seen an inspector.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will make a note of that and will endeavour to ensure that the hon. member's property is inspected. The member for Melville raised several points last week and I intend to reply to his contentions. First of all, as regards the figures he mentioned, the hon. member was quite correct in a good many instances. I was certainly misinformed as regards the annual payments by the Government. As members know, there is only one way by which I can secure information and it is from the department concerned. To-day the officers of the Agriculture Department expressed great regret to me that they had furnished me with wrong figures, with the result that they had misled me. Certainly there was no intention on my part to mislead the House. However, I must admit that the member for Melville was on pretty sound ground in some of his contentions.

As members know, I represent the Minister for Agriculture in this House. I do not know all about the work of the Agricultural Department as I do about the operations of the Lands Department. Whereas I may know something of what goes on in my department, I must depend on the Agricultural Department to provide me with accurate information for presentation to this House. I am in-

formed by the department that the Government, at the request of the Fruit Fly Advisory Board, which has been established for the purpose of advising the department each year with regard to the programme necessary to deal with the fruit-fly and the extra funds that are necessary to assist in improving its control, agreed to make available extra funds to assist in securing more effective control of the fruit-fly. Commencing from the 1950-51 financial year, an annual grant of £10,000 was approved. This amount included £1,000 for a fruit-fly baiting scheme.

Subsequently two more schemes were instituted and the amount provided was increased to £12,000. However, the grant of £12,000 has never been fully availed of, which was one of the contentions raised by the member for Melville. I desire to make the position clear to the House because it was not my intention to mislead members deliberately. The collections, which are paid into a trust fund, are used to cover the salaries and travelling expenses of inspectors. Those expenses amounted last year to approximately £11,000. The additional amount required to meet this expenditure is taken from the grant. The estimated amount to be paid into the trust fund from fees for 1952-53 is roughly £5,400. There have been two rises in the basic wage since the 1st July last and the department anticipates—I do not know whether the department is correct in its anticipation—that there will be two more rises before the end of June next year. Wages and travelling expenses will, therefore, be more than they were last year. Assuming this to be so, the subsidy to the trust fund from the grant will be in the vicinity of £6,000.

The three baiting schemes in operation will cost £3,000, while an additional £1,000 is required for further payments to the eastern hills scheme. Publicity is estimated to cost £1,000 and research a further £1,000. These amounts make up the total of £12,000, which is the estimated expenditure for 1952-53. It is difficult to say whether the latter amount of £1,000 will be fully utilised, but I am informed that a film on fruit-fly control is nearly completed and its cost will be debited this year. It is expected that the film will do much to publicise fruit-fly control methods. The charge on revenue is growing each year, and I hope members will support the second reading as expenses are increasing all the time.

The member for Melville was critical of the fact that increased fees apply only to non-commercial growers. In all, 16 inspectors are employed, of whom seven are on full-time inspections in the metropolitan and outer suburban areas. Four of the remaining nine are stationed in areas predominantly non-commercial. Only five inspectors out of 16 are working in areas

which are predominantly commercial fruitgrowing areas, and it seems reasonable that the greater percentage of fees should come from the areas where the greatest number of inspectors are employed.

Attention was drawn by the hon. member to the difference in the collection of fees from year to year. This can quite easily happen when people renew their registrations before the 30th June. As much as £900 of one year's registrations can be paid prior to the 30th June and this amount is then credited to the financial year ending on the 30th June. In such circumstances, the fund for one year would be higher than estimated, but in the following year it would be lower. This, in fact, does happen and is the reason for differing figures each year, as apart from cancellations and new registrations.

The years 1948-49 and 1949-50 were particularly mentioned by the member for Melville. In 1948-49, £5,501 was collected, but in 1949-50 only £4,622 was collected. The hon. member stated that someone must be falling down on the job. This was not the case and the position was the same as I instanced, with the amount of £900 being paid in the wrong financial year. Figures from the accountant show that if payment for the two financial years under discussion had been made during the correct period, the figures would have been £5,083 and £5,087 respectively. That is the department's reply to the points raised by the hon. member.

As the member for Darling Range has stated, there has been quite an improvement in the control of fruit-fly since this system has been in operation. I have the file here, which gives some indication in that direction. In 1948-49, 950 cases of fruit were condemned in the Metropolitan Markets. In 1949-50, the figure was 880; in 1950-51, it was 690; and in 1951-52, it was 376. That clearly indicates that the endeavours to control this industry are having good effect. I know that is so. We as growers know that if we send in infected fruit, it will be condemned. The whole lot is condemned and we get nothing for it. One may send in 10 cases of peaches. They are submitted with the name of the grower and his orchard. If one case is found to be affected, the whole 10 are condemned. That makes growers careful about what they are packing and it is definitely in the interests of the consumers.

Mention was made by the member for Darling Range and the member for Albany of what South Australia has spent on eradicating this pest. I have a note that South Australia took drastic measures last summer in this connection, and the cost exceeded £500,000.

Mr. McCulloch: What happens to the fruit?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is supposed to go to an incinerator. All affected fruit, both on the orchard and in any market, is supposed to be destroyed either by being buried deeply, boiled, or burnt; and I think I am right in saying that the most desirable method is to boil it.

Mr. McCulloch: What happens to the grower?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He loses the lot and he does not get any compensation.

Mr. McCulloch: Is he prosecuted?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. At the first offence he is warned, and the second time he is prosecuted. I hope the House will agree to the measure. I explained that the commercial orchardist is paying quite a reasonable amount. Most of us pay an average of £2 to £3 a year, so we are contributing to the control of the pest. The 55,000 odd backyard orchardists will provide us with another £2,700. One point that I missed is that, according to the Minister for Agriculture, many people have expressed the wish to be able to pay five years in advance. They say, "Why not let us pay a ten-shilling note and be done with it?" I believe the department is going to undertake to do that and that it can be done by regulation. There is no need to include it in the Bill.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Why is not a similar increase imposed on commercial growers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think, though I am not sure, that when the registration fee was first imposed, the commercial grower paid only a nominal amount of 1s., the same as the backyard orchardist. This was not returning sufficient funds. As a matter of fact, it is ridiculous in a way. If we are going to tackle the situation earnestly we must have funds. Accordingly, later on a Bill was introduced to increase the registration fee for commercial orchardists to 2s. per acre, and that considerably increased the sum paid by them. This time we are asking backyard orchardists to find an extra 1s., and I do not think they have any objection.

Hon. E. Nulsen: The commercial orchardist is the person who is affected financially.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the hon. member is fair enough to agree—

Hon. E. Nulsen: I am trying to get something equitable.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know the hon. member is quite fair, and I think he will agree that if we get clean fruit on the market that can be consumed with confidence, the purchaser knowing that it is not affected with this disease, it is well worth while and the consumer benefits to a considerable extent instead of having to throw away half of the fruit he buys.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You are only going half way. This will not give you all the money you need.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am afraid it will not. I believe that if we made the registration fee 10s. for each backyard orchardist there would be a far better effect.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You still want to get it from the backyard orchardists!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, I do not. I want to be fair. I think this is a matter which the Fruit Fly Advisory Committee has considered and made a recommendation upon.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Did they recommend that the whole of the money should be raised from orchards of under one acre?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I could not say, because I have no definite information on that point. But I know these matters are referred to the committee, and that is what it is there for. That is why I said that I took it the committee considered this point because all matters dealing with registration fees and the control of fruit-fly go before it.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: But surely the Minister will appreciate it is important for us to know whether the Government has acted in accordance with the recommendation of the Fruit Fly Advisory Committee or whether it has changed the recommendation to suit its own purpose.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a very small amount, and I do not think we need worry very much about that. The Government is quite willing to contribute out of revenue, and if we can get a little more towards the cost of controlling this pest, I do not think we should quibble. If it were necessary, on the advice of the committee, to increase the fee imposed on the commercial orchardists, I do not think they would complain, because they know the nature of this pest and in their own interests they want to see it cleaned up.

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

Ayes	29
Noes	14
Majority for	15

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Oldfield
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Read
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hill	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Tottardell
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Watts
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Wild
Mr. Manning	Mr. Yates
Mr. McCulloch	Mr. Bovell
Mr. McLarty	

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Graham	Mr. Needham
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Johnson	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Brand	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Griffith	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Mann	Mr. Coverley

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr Yates in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 4 amended:

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This clause seeks to increase the registration fee and I think we are entitled to know what the Fruit Fly Advisory Committee recommended, as I do not think it would recommend an increase that would not result in sufficient revenue to do what is necessary. The Minister mentioned the desirability of having clean fruit and inferred that this extra £2,700 would make that possible, but of course it will not. As several members have said, the increased cost of inspections and postal notifications will absorb a good deal of it. One member said that even an increase of 2s. would leave no surplus after meeting the cost of policing.

If the Fruit Fly Advisory Committee recommended an overall increase and the Government has declined to impose it on commercial growers, I think it must have had regard to the political consequences, in that it has not been prepared to raise the money that the Treasurer knows is necessary. That is my objection to the measure—not that a 2s. fee would impose hardship on anyone. It would be inequitable to levy an increase on one section of the people when it will not be sufficient to finance the necessary work. I think it would be only logical for the Fruit Fly Advisory Committee to recommend that an overall increase be made, yet the Government has brought down a Bill that seeks to raise only a proportion of the money necessary, in spite of the fact that the Treasury is very hard up. I believe the Government has had regard to the political implications—

The Premier: No, not a bit.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Will the Premier give an assurance that the Fruit Fly Advisory Committee did not recommend an all-round increase?

The Minister for Lands: You do not know whether they made that recommendation or not.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We should know, as it must have been on the file before the Bill was drafted.

The Premier: In Cabinet the Minister for Agriculture said this was the recommendation of the advisory committee.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If that is so, it makes a difference.

The Minister for Lands: Will you not accept that?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Premier would not give the assurance I asked for, so I think I am entitled to entertain some doubt. He might subsequently say his memory was at fault, as has happened on more than one occasion.

The Premier: Yes, I am not infallible.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not think the Treasurer will blame me for not accepting his statement unreservedly. I would like him to look it up and, though it will be too late for anything to be done about it in relation to this Bill, let me know, subsequently, if an overall increase was recommended.

The Minister for Lands: I will let the hon. member know.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I hope members of the public who have fruit trees will not pay 10s. in advance, for a five-year period, as has been suggested, because the present Government will spend the lot. It has already raided the trust funds.

The Premier: That was done by Governments of which the member for Melville was a member.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Not to the extent that this Government has done it.

The Minister for Education: I would refer you to what Sir James Mitchell said when he took over in 1930.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The use of trust funds and the overdrawing of the Advance to Treasurer Account have never before in the history of the State occurred to the extent that has taken place under this Government.

The Attorney General: We have not raided the State Insurance Office's funds as you did.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting away from the Bill.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This has a bearing on what the Minister said about the department accepting five yearly 2s. subscriptions in advance. I hope the public will not pay the 10s. subscription—in the interests of the incoming Government—because we might find that an impecunious Treasurer has spent in advance money that should have been available for fruit-fly eradication in the next four or five years.

The Premier: To whose detriment would that be—

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That of the incoming Government, and that is what I am concerned about.

The Minister for Lands: But that will not happen.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We do not know what will happen, but we will not remain long in doubt.

The Premier: I am anxious to introduce the next Bill in order to raise more money.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I hope members of the public will not pay in advance.

The Minister for Lands: If what you expect happens, it will be under your control.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, the Minister will have spent the money.

The Minister for Lands: But we will not collect it until after next June.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What about those who pay in advance?

The Minister for Lands: They will not pay until then.

The CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in the Bill about 10s. to be paid in advance.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The 10s. is obtained by multiplying 2s. by five.

The CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in this clause about 10s.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There does not have to be.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The matter was referred to the advisory committee but I cannot find their final decision. It was referred to them, however, as was also the question of the five-year period.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [10.12] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to raise additional revenue and augment the funds of the State.

Mr. Graham: Without camouflage, this time.

THE PREMIER: I have tried to indicate how we are placed in regard to the functions of Government and what we have to face in the matter of rising costs. As members know, in its latest grant the Grants Commission has provided £8,041,000 for this State, but when I was giving evidence before them they indicated plainly that they expected the State to do something to help itself. We cannot expect to continue to receive these huge grants unless we show our willingness to obtain revenue for ourselves. As members know, our taxation is compared with that levied

in the standard States, and if they are doing something to obtain revenue that the claimant States are not, the claimant States are penalised. Another reason why we seek additional funds is that we want to do something to achieve a nearly balanced budget. A winning bets tax is in operation in Victoria and South Australia, and I am informed by the Treasurers of these States that the revenue derived from this tax is of considerable benefit in augmenting their respective revenue funds.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Two wrongs do not make a right.

The PREMIER: I do not admit that it is wrong. The Bill proposes to amend the Stamp Act and thereby permit the Government to tax all winning bets on all racecourses throughout the State.

Mr. W. Hegney: Is betting legal?

The PREMIER: I will quote a number of opinions on that.

Mr. W. Hegney: One would think so, according to the number of people betting on Saturdays.

The PREMIER: I am talking about betting on racecourses.

Mr. W. Hegney: I am talking about S.P. betting on Saturdays.

The PREMIER: Each winning bet will be separately taxed and no set-off is allowed for losing bets.

Mr. Hutchinson: Why not impose a tax on losing bets, too?

The PREMIER: They do that in South Australia or Victoria, but we do not propose to do it here. The tax will be at the rate of 2½ per cent. on all winning bets, if the amount of the winnings is 5s. or over.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: On all winning bets?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You do not impose a tax on the stake as well?

The PREMIER: No, the tax is on all winnings. The tax will not be claimed on the punter's own stake, but winnings only.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: If a man gets £10 to £2, he is only taxed on the £10?

The PREMIER: He is only taxed on the winnings. Provision is made in the Bill for bookmakers to keep their betting books in duplicate; the carbon copy or duplicate to be lodged with the raceclub after each race. Bookmakers will be required to deduct from the punters' winning bets the tax at 2½ per cent., that is, 3d. for each 10s. or part thereof. The Bill provides that within a period of time—the proposal is seven days—to be fixed by regulation, bookmakers will be required to lodge a return showing the total amount of winning bets on each race and to forward the return, together with payment

for the grand total of the winning bets tax, to the racingclub conducting the meeting. The raceclub will check the return and forward each week the total amount of all bookmakers' taxation collections, less 20 per cent., to the Commissioner of Stamps, Treasury Department.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It is a pretty high commission, is it not?

Mr. J. Hegney: This will drive them away from the racecourses!

The PREMIER: I do not think it will drive them from the racecourses.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What is the justification for 20 per cent. commission being paid to raceclubs?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They are short of money!

The PREMIER: It has been decided that to collect this tax will entail a considerable amount of expense by the raceclubs.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: To the bookmakers.

The PREMIER: The raceclubs will be responsible for the tax collection and, as I will explain, from this 20 per cent. commission certain amenities and perhaps increased stakes will be provided by them.

Mr. W. Hegney: You are giving them a fair trot.

The PREMIER: The Bill allows for 20 per cent. to be retained by the raceclubs and used at their discretion for the promotion and betterment of racing in their respective districts. Provision is also made to enable the Commissioner of Stamps to check all the bookmakers' returns as and when necessary, and thereby satisfy himself that the full amount due to the revenue of the State has been paid. The Commissioner of Stamps at present controls the issue and use of betting tickets, and the totalisator tax collections. This proposed betting tax is closely allied to these collections, and therefore can be collected by the Commissioner with a minimum of cost to the Government. The co-operation between the Commissioner of Stamps and the racingclubs in the collection of the various taxes is good, therefore, and it is expected that the collection of this additional tax will not present any difficulties. It is estimated that the tax will, in a full year's operations on the present scale of betting, produce approximately £200,000 towards the State's revenue. The member for Mt. Hawthorn said something about the legality of this tax. I am not quite sure of the time, but for over 20 years there has been a stamp duty on betting tickets.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is that legal?

The PREMIER: If it is legal in that case, it is legal in this.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The Premier should ask his colleague sitting next to him if it is legal.

The PREMIER: It has stood for over 20 years and has never been challenged.

Mr. W. Hegney: The clubs will get about £40,000 out of this.

The PREMIER: It is estimated that the clubs will get £20,000.

Mr. W. Hegney: Twenty per cent. of £200,000 is £40,000.

The PREMIER: That is so.

Mr. W. Hegney: They are being treated as generously as B.H.P.

The PREMIER: We will not indulge in any side issue, but the clubs will get 20 per cent. of the tax.

Mr. Johnson: Why not allow the Stamp Office to increase its staff and collect the tax?

The PREMIER: At present, the Taxation Department is dealing with it and it is much more satisfactory to allow the racing clubs to accept responsibility for it.

Mr. Hoar: You are setting yourself up as a bookmaker with an assured income; £200,000 a year without any risk!

Mr. May: Do not you think the Government is getting pretty low by getting money this way?

The PREMIER: No, I do not think so.

Mr. May: It is setting a very bad example.

The PREMIER: The Government must obtain money some way and, if the hon. member can suggest to me a better way, I will gladly hear it.

Mr. Graham: The abolition of the Legislative Council would help.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: A man could have a losing day at the races and yet, under this Bill, still pay a winning bets tax.

The PREMIER: Of course he could. I do not know how we could avoid that. It would be impossible to provide that a punter would pay tax only on his total winnings for the whole day. That would be completely out of the question. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—Mt. Lawley) [10.26] in moving the second reading said: The Bill proposes to amend the Electoral Act, and the first amendment is to Section 70. That

section provides that the date fixed for the nomination of candidates will not be less than 7 days nor more than 45 days from the date of the writ, provided that the date fixed for the nomination of candidates for any election in the North Province or any district situated therein shall not be less than 35 days from the date fixed for the polling day. The Act also provides that the polling day in a general election shall be the same for each district. That is provided for under Section 66. The result of that is that the minimum time between the issue of the writ and the polling day is 42 days, and that period may be too long for a general election.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It could be awkward, could it not?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It could be very long.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Did we not tell you that when you altered it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member did, and personal experience in this case has proved that the advice was right. It is now proposed to alter Section 70 by deleting the words "or in any district situated therein," so that proviso will apply only insofar as it relates to the Legislative Council elections.

Hon. E. Nulsen: This will now apply only to the Legislative Council, according to the old Act.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the amendment is agreed to, the proviso relating to Section 70 will not apply to an electoral district, but only to a province. The next amendment of importance relates to postal or sick votes. At present they must be forwarded to the returning officer for the province or district for which the elector is voting. It is proposed that all postal votes shall be forwarded, if time is available, to the Chief Electoral Officer, but if time is not available, to any electoral or returning officer in any province or district.

Mr. W. Hegney: In the appropriate province or district.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, in any province or district. Such returning officer or presiding officer has then to forward the postal vote to the Chief Electoral Officer and it will be counted under his supervision.

At the present time many votes that are cast may not reach the returning officer for a district in time to be counted. For instance, a man who is a constituent of Vasse may be in Kalgoorlie and if he votes on the day of the election, or the day before as a sick vote, there is no possible chance of its getting to the returning officer in time because it has to get there before the close of the poll as members know, but under the proposed amendment the postal vote officer

could hand in the vote to the nearest returning officer or presiding officer. In other words practically the same system will apply in the case of postal votes as now applies to absentee votes.

Absentee voters can vote subject to certain restrictions at any polling place and the vote is forwarded to the Chief Electoral Officer where it is counted. The same system will apply in respect to postal votes. If there is time for the vote to reach the Chief Electoral Officer in the ordinary course of post or transit it is sent to the Chief Electoral Officer, but if there is not time for it to reach then it is sent to the nearest returning officer or presiding officer. The next amendment is to Section 141.

Mr. W. Hegney: What about Section 96?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That only deals with postal voting. Section 141 provides as follows:—

The Governor may appoint assistant returning officers to count the votes at any one or more polling places—

- (a) In outlying portions of a province or district; or
- (b) where the polling place is so far distant from the chief polling place that such appointment is necessary to ascertain the result of the election with expedition.

It is proposed to add an additional paragraph which reads as follows:—

Where in the opinion of the Chief Electoral Officer the appointment will expedite the ascertainment of the result of the election.

As some of the electorates or provinces grow it is thought that counting of the votes will become so onerous that if the counting is to be completed within a reasonable time it may be desirable to appoint an assistant returning officer who will be authorised, as is the returning officer himself, to count the votes.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Did not they have recounting centres for the Murchison electorate?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That probably was done under the other provisions that I have read out. But the other provision cannot possibly apply to the metropolitan area because, as I pointed out, the present section can only apply in outlying portions of the provinces or districts or where the polling place is far distant from the chief polling place. Those are the three main amendments proposed in the Bill. There are some others of a consequential nature, and there are a few which are purely of an

administrative character, and which can be more appropriately dealt with in Committee. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

BILL—ABOLITION OF DEATH PENALTY FOR MURDER.

Second Reading—Deferred.

Debate resumed from the 21st November.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—Mt. Lawley) [10.36]: This Bill proposes to abolish the death penalty in respect of murder. As members are aware, under the Criminal Code there are three findings that a jury may decide upon in connection with the death of a person which has been caused by the accused. It may be wilful murder, or it may be murder or manslaughter. Before a verdict of wilful murder may be found the jury must be satisfied that there was a wilful intention to cause the death of the person in connection with which the charge has been laid. It is murder if the death is caused in the course of an illegal act without intending to cause the same. But where it is caused in the course of an illegal act or, as an example, where it is caused in the case of robbery or by using a lethal weapon for an unlawful purpose, there seems to be very little distinction morally if a man's death is caused recklessly as a result of using a lethal weapon, or in the course of a crime where a man intentionally means to kill another. So to treat a person who kills someone, not caring whether the act kills or not, seems to me to be to all intents and purposes equally as reprehensible as wilful murder.

I suggest that if the death penalty for murder is to be altered, serious consideration must be given to the definition. The definition of "murder" is a wide one and there are possibly some instances that would come within the definition for which the death penalty could be abolished, but there are many instances in which it should be retained just as for those crimes for which the death penalty is intended. Let me instance the case of the robbery at Caris Bros. where the unfortunate caretaker was recklessly killed by persons attempting to rob the place. Not caring whether he killed the caretaker or not, a savage blow was struck by the thief.

Mr. Graham called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In the course of a robbery, a lethal weapon may be used on a person, perhaps a householder,

a woman, not with the absolute intention of killing but recklessly in order to aid escape, not caring whether the act resulted in the killing of the person or not.

Hon. E. Nulsen: I do not think that would be quite as reprehensible as the act of a person who deliberately killed another.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is arguable, but robbery that results in the death of a person is a very serious matter and one that in my view would need serious consideration before the death penalty was retained for wilful murder and abolished in a case like that. The protection of citizens and the deterrent to committing this most dreadful crime of killing a person is the main object of the penalty, and I believe that if we could save the life of an innocent man or woman by retaining this penalty, it would be worth while to do so.

Too much sympathy can be given to those unfortunate people—and they are unfortunate—who live by violence and are prepared to use violence in the course of the way of life they have chosen. It is a well known fact that persons who burgle houses deliberately refrain from carrying lethal weapons because they are afraid of being charged with murder if, when attempting to escape, they yielded to the temptation of using those weapons.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Although without any desire to kill anybody.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Such persons do not care whether they kill or not. They do not plan to kill; they do not intend to kill, but they use force which they know may kill, recklessly disregarding the possibility of killing. There are women on farms, lonely places, who need all the protection that society can give them, and psychiatrists, police and others know that there is a class of criminal who fear only violence to their own persons. How many times have the police and other people been told "I can do five years or 15 years on my head" and they take a chance, but not so where the death penalty may be imposed?

As the hon. member who introduced the Bill said, the death penalty puts fear into the heart of every criminal. The hon. member made a point of that. He stated that when a man is being taken to execution, the whole gaol is in fear. So it is and so it should be, and that fear alone is the deterrent that keeps many of these callous sadists from committing crime. I wonder how many lives of innocent police and others would have been saved had the criminal known for a certainty that the death penalty would be inflicted. I wonder whether Rowe would have been alive had the young fellow known for a certainty that, if he committed murder, he would be executed.

Hon. E. Nulsen: I do not believe he thought so at the time.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: But criminals do think.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Not at that moment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: But this man had many minutes to think because he asked his wife to get the revolver. It was not done on the spur of the moment; he had planned it. Then, when he was with the policemen in the car, he shot him. That was a deliberately planned murder, and I suggest that if the guilty man had known for a certainty that he would be hanged, he might not have committed the murder. There is not the slightest doubt that the greatest deterrent to people of this type is the hangman's knot. No man can face the thought of that with equanimity. He will take a chance of 5, 10 or 20 years in gaol. He will gamble on that, but not on the death penalty. I would like to point out that there has been a most exhaustive inquiry into this subject by a Royal Commission in England. Unfortunately the report is not yet to hand, but the evidence is. I have looked at it.

Mr. Graham: I bet you have not looked at all of it!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have not. It consists of something like 1,000 pages. It was the most comprehensive inquiry ever held. The members of the Commission were very distinguished: they consisted of—

Sir Ernest Gowers, G.B.E., K.C.B. (Chairman)—M.A.; Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge; Chairman National Hospitals for Nervous Diseases; Barrister of Inner Temple, 1906; Permanent Under Secretary for Mines, 1920-1927 and other very important Government positions; Regional Commissioner of Civil Defence, London, from 1939 to 1941 and Senior Commissioner from 1941 to 1945; also an author.

Mrs. A. C. Cameron, C.B.E.—In private life is Miss Elizabeth Dorothea Cole Bowen an Honorary Doctor of Literature, T.C.D. 1949, and is an authoress of many works of fiction.

Mr. N. R. Fox-Andrews, K.C.—Is Recorder at Bournemouth.

Miss Florence Hancock, C.B.E.—Now D.B.E.; has been Chief Woman Officer of Transport and General Workers Union since 1942—a prominent trade unionist.

Sir William Jones, C.B.E.—Part-time Director of Wales Gas Board since 1948; South West Regional Coal Board, 1949; a solicitor since 1922; Clerk of the Police, 1930-1949; a Regional Commissioner Wales in Ministry of Fuel and Power, 1942-1945.

Mr. Horace Macdonald (no information.)

Mr. John Mann, C.B.E., J.P., (no information.)

Sir Alexander Maxwell, G.C.B., K.B.E.—Now K.C.M.G.; Chairman British Tourist and Holidays Board; Director of many tobacco companies; Adviser to the British Government and Chairman of Tobacco Advisory Committees; is Chairman and Governor of University College Hospital, Gower Street, London.

Professor G. A. Montgomery, K.C.—Is Professor of Scots Law at the Edinburgh University.

The Earl Peel—Seventh Bt; B.A. of Balliol College, Oxford; President of Lancashire and Cheshire Association of Boys Clubs; Director of Sun Insurance Company, of the Lancashire Steel Corporation and other companies.

Mr. Leon Radzinowicz,—Is an International Lawyer and Jurist; Professor of Law; author of legal works.

Dr. Elliot Slater, M.D., F.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.,—No further information.

That Commission consists of these very distinguished persons.

Hon. E. Nulsen: I think their status of learnedness is too high for them to come down to the psychological level of the criminal.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There are some very ordinary people on the Commission as well. Evidence was taken from the following:—

Home Office.

Prison Commission.

Scottish Home Department.

Chief Constables' Association of England and Wales.

Police Federation of England and Wales.

Director of Public Prosecutions.

Panel of Prison Governors.

Panel of Prison Chaplains.

Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Superintendents Central Committee of England and Wales.

Crown Agent.

Director of Public Prosecutions.

Panel of Prison Medical Officers.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Denning.

Mr. Hector Hughes, K.C., M.P.

Mr. Basil Nield, K.C., M.P.

The Central After-Care Association.

The Hon. Justice Byrne.

Howard League for Penal Reform.

Dr. Denis Hill and Dr. F. H. Taylor.

British Medical Association.

Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Simon.

Medical Superintendent of Broadmoore Institution.

The Rt. Hon. Sir John Anderson.

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Samuel.

Chief Constables' (Scotland) Ascn.

Scottish Police Federation.

Scottish Superintendents' Council.

The Rev. J. McM. Campbell and the

Rev. D.McA. Chalmers.

The Hon. Lord Keith.

Scottish Prison Governors.

Lord Justice General.

Faculty of Advocates.

Scottish Central After-Care Council.

Muir Society.

Dr. C. D. Bruce.

Dr. A. T. Sloan.

Professor Sir David Henderson, F.C.R.P.

Royal Medico-Psychological Association.

Institute for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency.

Sir Norwood East, F.R.C.P.

The Rev. J. Walker.

Mr. Henry Yellowlees.

Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Simon.

Society of Labour Lawyers.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Frankfurter.

Mr. H. N. Gedge and Mr. J. W. Wilson.

Mr. A. Pierrepont

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Templewood, G.C.S.I., G.B.E., C.M.G.

The Rt. Hon. Sir John Beaumont, K.C.

Professor Thorsten Sellin.

Hon. E. Nulsen: What would they class themselves as—diagnostical psychiatrists?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They are people with very wide knowledge of the subject. Information was obtained from the United States and all portions of the British Commonwealth. So a vast amount of knowledge was embodied in a thousand pages and that is available to this House.

Hon. E. Nulsen: You cannot get it now.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes, it is available to members and they should study it before they come to a decision. A determination on this matter should not be influenced by sympathy or feeling. It should be reached only after sound study of the subject. It is easy to be sympathetic and to feel that we should do this or that, but that is not the way to deal with this matter. Unfortunately the report of the Commission and the summary of evidence is not available because they have not yet been completed. My view is that we should wait until they are before making a decision on this Bill. That this subject is one of difficulty must be admitted, because there are divergent views upon it. Here is the opinion of the Lord Chief Justice of England, Lord Goddard, given to the Commission.

Mr. Graham: That is the butcher of Britain!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is a very unfair and unjust statement.

Mr. Graham: He is world-renowned for his viciousness.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He is not. That is just a reckless statement made by the hon. member without knowledge or care for the truth.

Mr. Graham: You do not know the first thing about the subject.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do, because I have studied the matter probably a lot more than has the hon. member, as it comes within my profession.

Mr. Graham: This man is notorious, and you know it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He is not. He has the reputation of being one of the ablest lawyers in the British Commonwealth. He occupies one of the most senior judicial positions in the Commonwealth, and to talk like that just lowers the hon. member.

Mr. Graham: The British Parliament showed what it thought of his efforts later.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It did not.

Mr. Graham: Apparently you have to be told history.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not, because in all probability some of these things are being restored in Britain at present. The death penalty in England has not been done away with. This is what the chairman says at page 248 of the examination of witnesses—

As you know, we have not to consider the question whether capital punishment should or should not be abolished, but whether it should be limited or modified. That does raise, of course, the same sort of issues as we should have to consider if we had to advise whether it should be abolished or not, and on the threshold it raises this question: what is the justification for capital punishment? More than one theory has been put before us by witnesses. Most of them stress the deterrent value of capital punishment. Some, as for instance Lord Justice Denning, who gave evidence at our last meeting, go further and say that it is also the expression of society's abhorrence of the crime. What is your view about that?

This is Lord Goddard's reply—

My view is that the justification for capital punishment is both. I think it is undoubtedly a deterrent. I think all police experience shows that. I think there is among the criminal classes a real fear of capital punishment and that is why among

professional burglars and so forth it is not considered desirable to carry weapons. One comes across that again and again. I think also that the person who commits the supreme crime should pay the supreme penalty. Judging by the enormous post-bag I received after the debates in the House of Lords on capital punishment, I have not the least doubt that there is a very strong feeling among people in general on the subject.

Later he stated—

I think some of the crimes one comes across and has to deal with, some instances of which I gave in the debate in the House of Lords, show that you have to deal with a great number of very wicked people in this world. It is quite a mistake to believe that all criminals are misguided or uneducated or unfortunate people. I think there are a great many very wicked people in the world, some of whom commit murders of the most horrible description and do it quite deliberately.

This is the evidence of one of the most distinguished men who appeared before the Commission. I have not the time to quote all the evidence, or any appreciable portion of it, but some consideration ought to be given to it. I feel that at least the report of this distinguished Royal Commission should be available to the House before the decision is made. I, therefore, move an amendment—

That all words after the word "that" be struck out with a view to inserting the following words in lieu:—

the Bill be not proceeded with until the report of the Royal Commission appointed by the British Government to inquire into this subject is available to this House.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth—on amendment) [11.6]: Needless to say, I oppose the amendment. I am, to say the least of it, bitterly disappointed at the attitude of the Government since the Bill was first introduced. Surely it cannot be claimed that the purport of the measure is not of anything but the utmost importance, yet we find that the Government has so arranged the business that in dealing with comparatively minor matters it has made it possible for a Bill to be introduced by a private member on one day and passed through all stages in 48 hours. My Bill was introduced a month ago, so I feel I have not been given a proper opportunity to deal with it. Not many members could recall the arguments and evidence which were adduced on that occasion; and here let me say it was evidence rather than argument that was submitted.

I do not know how far I am permitted to go now, but it is certainly not my intention to recapitulate what I stated then, other than to mention that for periods, in some cases in excess of 100 years, in a total of 36 States or countries, the death penalty has been entirely abolished. Yet in not one single case has there been an increase in the murder rate of those countries. Accordingly, it is not theorising, or a question of emotion, but a matter of historical fact that the removal entirely of the death penalty has not detrimentally affected the situation so far as the protection of the public is concerned; and here I am talking of countries where the death penalty has been abolished entirely and not to the minor extent suggested by the Bill.

The Attorney General: That is not proved by the evidence of this Royal Commission.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Attorney General apparently places much store by the Royal Commission.

The Attorney General: I do.

Mr. GRAHAM: That body of distinguished people was thoroughly investigating the situation from many angles but, incidentally, not with regard to the abolition of the death penalty, and basing its findings, which will ultimately be delivered, upon evidence and experience of the laws and customs primarily of Great Britain.

The Attorney General: Of the whole British Commonwealth!

Mr. GRAHAM: Primarily those of Great Britain, because the customs and habits of people in different countries vary in many ways. Why should we depend upon the decision of a tribunal in Great Britain? As has previously been pointed out, there are only two countries in Europe, west of the iron curtain, that still retain the death penalty.

The Attorney General: Murder is prevalent in Europe and we know—from the New Australians here—how lightly they treat life.

Mr. GRAHAM: We know nothing of the sort. Figures given frequently by the Commonwealth Minister for Immigration show the opposite to be the case and that in the matter of serious crime Britishers and ordinary Australians have a bigger ratio of serious offences than have the New Australians.

The Attorney General: Our own experience of crimes of violence in this State has lately been terrible.

Mr. GRAHAM: Admittedly there have been several cases of crimes perpetrated by persons of alien origin but those who have studied criminology know that there are periods during which a great number of serious offences occur, followed by corresponding slack periods. No one would

pretend that the position is better or worse in one country than in another, and the only fair test is to take a period of years in a particular country where the death penalty has obtained; and then an equal period in that same country after the removal of the death penalty, and observe whether the trend of the former period has been disturbed. In not one single case have the figures supplied by history shown an upward movement in serious crime following the abolition of the death penalty.

The Attorney General: That is inconclusive. You are relying on Templewood.

Mr. GRAHAM: To a great extent, and on evidence submitted by the Howard League for Penal Reform.

The Attorney General: If you take Templewood's evidence before the Royal Commission you will find it was not nearly so conclusive.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have read several books on this question and waded through scores of pages of the evidence before the Royal Commission, but I confess that I could not owing to limitation of time, go through the whole of the voluminous evidence submitted to that tribunal. The Attorney General would like to wait and find out what Great Britain intends to do on the question.

The Attorney General: No. I want to see the findings of that Royal Commission, which is the widest ever held in the British Empire.

Mr. GRAHAM: Surely we can make up our own minds on the evidence available from so many parts of the world, including two Australian States, our sister Dominion of New Zealand and all the countries of Western Europe except France and Great Britain.

The Attorney General: New South Wales has a nasty record.

Mr. GRAHAM: We know that where there are large congregations of population there is a tendency for the incidence of serious crime to increase. In 1941 a Bill dealing with this subject and introduced by the then member for Subiaco, was agreed to in this Chamber on a division, the voting being 25 to 10 in favour of it. Since that time a number of countries have completely abolished the death penalty. Among them are Austria, Finland, Iceland, Switzerland, Western Germany, New Zealand, parts of India and, so far as murder is concerned, but not political crimes, the U.S.S.R. The vote here on the question was overwhelming 11 years ago and there is still no evidence to show that the trend—in many cases over 100 years—has been reversed, notwithstanding the most terrible war of all time and its consequential effect on the mental balance and general attitude of human beings towards human life.

The Bill to which I have referred sought to abolish entirely the death penalty for treason, wilful murder and murder, but all this measure seeks to do is to abolish the death penalty for the crime of murder. There would still remain life imprisonment as a penalty for those found guilty of murder. I do not pretend that murder or the taking of life under any circumstances is anything but a most serious matter. The Attorney General suggested that there are many people in the community who are potential criminals—people who are vicious and who would, but for the death penalty, go about taking life right and left, but experience in this country and in Great Britain shows that only in very rare cases has the person found guilty of taking the life of another had any criminal tendencies. As a rule, he has never previously confronted a court of law.

The experience of Great Britain over the last 50 years has been that of all the hundreds who have gone to prison for murder, the average period spent in gaol has been seven years. That means that there are hundreds of convicted murderers at large in Great Britain today, yet I can find only one case in the last 50 years in which such a person has committed a second serious crime. It is possible to answer by experience and historical fact the various arguments that the Attorney General has sought to raise. There is no theorising in respect of this matter; I am not stacking my opinion against his. I must confess that it was surprising to see the list, and to realise that in many countries of the world there has been no such thing as the death penalty for over a century and no agitation to restore it.

Perhaps I should say a few words with regard to Lord Justice Goddard whom the Attorney General trots out when speaking against my Bills which seek to achieve some legal reform. I stated, by interjection, that Lord Justice Goddard is notorious throughout the British-speaking world as a man who is as hard and bitter as it is possible for a man to be. Notwithstanding the position he occupied until recently, the House of Commons, in 1948, was prepared to ignore his advice, and agreed to a Bill for the abolition of the death penalty in its entirety. That was only defeated by a vote in the House of Lords, and in the same year, notwithstanding Lord Justice Goddard, both Houses of the British Parliament agreed to abolition of the penalty of whipping.

The Attorney General: But it looks as though they are going to bring it in again.

Mr. GRAHAM: Nothing of the sort!

The Attorney General: Yes it does.

Mr. GRAHAM: I will not proceed further on that line because I have another Bill which deals with the question. But

surely it establishes my point that in his own country, where renown and respect for him should be greatest, the House of Commons, in two all-important matters, has found itself, on the grounds of argument and logic, diametrically opposed to him.

The Attorney General: Do you not think you should see this report? Do you not think it is of value to the House?

Mr. GRAHAM: I believe there is sufficient evidence without it. What sort of country are we becoming if, before we bring about reform of our law, we must look at what some other country has done? If we do that, we shall never lead; we shall always follow and trail behind.

The Attorney General: Not at all, but do you not think we should get all the information available to us? You have not even read it.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have read a considerable portion of it and, to be perfectly frank, I would prefer to hear evidence and argument in this Chamber from representatives of the public.

The Attorney General: What experience have we had in this matter? None at all!

Mr. GRAHAM: I wonder what experience a number of those who appeared before the Royal Commission had. After all, they cannot all be right because there is a good deal of divergence of opinion in many respects.

Mr. Hoar: I think the Attorney General is afraid to face the real issue on this matter.

The Attorney General: No; it is so serious that one should give it every consideration and have all the information available.

Mr. Hoar: But other countries have abolished this penalty and have not wanted the evidence of a Royal Commission.

The Attorney General: Definitely decided on the spur of the moment!

Mr. Hoar: They decided for themselves, and so should we.

Mr. GRAHAM: The last thing the Attorney General can say with regard to this matter is that it is being decided on the spur of the moment because there has been deliberate delay by the Government.

The Attorney General: That is not so.

Mr. GRAHAM: As I pointed out, it is five weeks since I introduced the Bill. Eleven years ago, the House, by a majority of more than two to one, agreed that the death penalty should no longer pertain in Western Australia for any offence, however diabolical. Yet the Attorney General makes out that I seek to upset the legal arrangement in Western Australia by making a comparatively minor amendment to the Criminal Code. I think

it is mere cowardice, this desire to tuck into a pigeonhole the proposition I have put forward. If the Attorney General is honest in this matter, I think he will agree with me that there might be two or three, but probably no more, members of this Chamber who would go to the trouble or perhaps even be aware of the decisions and arguments used by the Royal Commission when it ultimately does deliver its findings.

How many Royal Commissions have been held? There was one lengthy document, of which I have a copy, in which is reported the evidence and findings of an inquiry into the activities of the Press in Great Britain. I wonder how many members read that. This is an important and serious matter and I suggest there is a measure of urgency about it. Unfortunately, members appear to have preconceived notions in respect to the question instead of regarding the matter coldly in the light of statistics, experience and history and are prone to follow instincts of their own, based on prejudice and the like. Very many people, without thinking and without having an argument to support them, say the death penalty is a deterrent. I repeat that that has not been demonstrated in any country in the world.

The Attorney General: I think you are wrong there.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yet the argument is still being advanced. My reason for stating that there is a measure of urgency about this is based on an earlier assertion of mine. I do not think anybody can argue against the fact that it is wrong, no matter from what angle the question is approached, that the life of a person—admittedly he may be a murderer but not a wilful murderer—should depend upon the political complexion or beliefs of the occupants of ministerial portfolios for the time being.

It is a fact that many organisations and individuals are appalled at the prospect of hanging. This Bill seeks to give legislative effect to what has, by and large, been a regular practice in Western Australia since we had responsible Government. Instead of the Smith Government deciding that a man should hang, and another man, under identical circumstances, should not hang because the Jones Government is in power, the whole question could be cleared up. Surely we cannot tolerate this state of affairs any longer. I am not criticising any particular Government; all Governments make their decisions with the highest motives, and they do not intend to deviate from their duty.

This is perhaps a trick amendment that has been submitted, one that is designed to gain the support of some of those members who sit on the Government side of the House and, would be prepared to support this Bill of mine. However,

because apparently the Attorney General would not like to be defeated on this matter he seeks this way out. I can see no reason whatsoever for this procrastination. We have experience from our own observations in Western Australia. I ask members to agree with me and reject any suggestion of an amendment because of the abhorrence of so many people to the carrying out of the death penalty.

Notwithstanding the seriousness of the crime that has been committed there is almost invariably an agitation for a reprieve of the accused person. Accordingly, the sympathy of the public is being generated unconsciously in support of the accused person; in support of the criminal. Surely any law that has that effect is bad. The sympathy should be for the victim's family and the opposite feeling should be directed towards the person found guilty. However, we have reversed things which surely shows that we, as a Parliament, trail a considerable distance behind public opinion. Again I express my keen disappointment at the treatment this measure has received at the hands of the Government.

The Attorney General: It is a private Bill and the Government had nothing to do with it. It found its way into the list in the ordinary way.

Mr. GRAHAM: That statement is not in accordance with fact.

The Minister for Education: Until a week ago.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, and on other occasions prior to a week ago. Private members, particularly those sitting on the Government side of the House, have been permitted to proceed with their Bills on days other than private members' day. They have been permitted to introduce them and within several days the Government has answered them and allowed them to proceed through all stages. I appeal to members to reject the amendment and allow this House to make a determination on a comparatively minor matter when one has regard for the much greater step that was taken in 1941 and carried by 25 votes to 10.

Amendment (to strike out words) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	21
Noes	19
Majority for	2

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Bearman	Mr. Totterdell
Mr. Hill	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hutchingson	Mr. Wild
Mr. Manning	Mr. Yates
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Nalder	

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Molr
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sewell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Kelly
Mr. May	

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Brand	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Griffith	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Mann	Mr. Coverley
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Needham

Amendment thus passed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

Amendment (to insert words) put and passed.

Mr. GRAHAM: I want to make one final observation. I think the Attorney General might have had the courtesy to pass a copy of the amendment he intended to move to the member who introduced the Bill.

The Attorney General: I had only two copies.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have not seen a copy of it.

The Attorney General: I am sorry.

Question (as amended) put and passed. Bill deferred.

BILL—PUNISHMENT BY WHIPPING ABOLITION.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 21st October.

MR. MANNING (Harvey) [11.38]: I oppose the Bill. Whipping is a form of punishment that is rarely used; it is only applied when no other suitable substitute can be found. The Act as it stands provides for the whipping of children, and that such whipping be done under the supervision of a police sergeant. Therefore, we could well leave this provision in the Act. There are few alternative forms of punishment that could be meted out to children who had committed a crime.

Mr. Styants: You think that flogging is the only punishment that could be given?

Mr. MANNING: Yes, supervised flogging.

Mr. Styants: It is a pity the hon. member could not get a flogging to see what it is like.

Mr. MANNING: There is no other suitable form of punishment for a child that has committed a crime. That is my contention; that flogging is only used in those instances when no other form of punishment can be found, especially in the case of children, and that is my reason for opposing the Bill.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth—in reply)

[11.40]: I was amused by the last member who addressed himself to this measure.

The Premier: I was impressed by the length of his speech.

Mr. GRAHAM: If there is any merit in brevity, he certainly scored a point, but I do not think he has bothered to read the Bill or that he knows anything about it. That is as kind as I can be to the member for Harvey, and rather than argue with him I would suggest that he get a copy of the Bill and see which sections of the Criminal Code it seeks to amend.

Mr. Manning: I have done all that.

Mr. GRAHAM: Then the hon. member has not understood what he has read. In view of the attitude of the Government and some of its supporters on the previous Bill I am not particularly hopeful of success in this case. I must agree with the well known psychiatrist who informed me that it is the established opinion of psychiatrists the world over that those who believe in administering violence are themselves sadists or potential sadists, and that there is in their make-up something which will lead them to countenance the ripping, maiming and mutilating of those unfortunate people who have already suffered.

Mr. Styants: The veneer of civilisation is very thin.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. The Attorney General in speaking on this matter made out a case, I think, in support of the Bill because he described some of these people—that is the perpetrators of the crimes for which whipping may be the punishment, speaking particularly of brutal crimes—as sadists and, in fact, half animals. Surely he does not believe that a person who is mentally unbalanced and suffers some sort of mental aberration is a complete human being and should be bashed, beaten and whipped! Surely it is sufficient that he suffers these mental blackouts or these outbursts of violence without the State with all ceremony inflicting further pain upon him!

The right treatment is to put those individuals into institutions for whatever period might be determined or, perhaps, the term should not be specified and they should remain in those places until observation and check, and double check if need be, have demonstrated that they are fit and that they have been healed, and are therefore able to go back into civilian life and mix with human beings in the ordinary way. When we get to the question of sex offences anybody who has made even the slightest study of the subject knows that if there is anything that aggravates the

minds of those individuals—minds that are already warped—it is physical violence of any kind.

It is an unsavoury subject to discuss in a Chamber like this, but if I can go thus far, in my study of the question in very many cases where the abnormal excesses are indulged in, whippings with straps and birches and the rest are carried out for the purpose of stimulating the sex urge. Yet those people, those unfortunate individuals, who are warped to the degree that they incur the extreme displeasure of the judge of the court, are to be whipped. This will have the effect, I repeat, of aggravating this weakness of theirs.

The Minister for Lands: What nonsense!

Mr. GRAHAM: The Minister for Lands knows exactly nothing about nothing.

The Minister for Lands: You are a funny man!

Mr. GRAHAM: However simple the Bill, the Minister for Lands must stand up and read every single word of it. I am prepared to say in regard to this matter that he has not given it a moment's serious thought, and that he has not endeavoured to carry out any research into it. He will not make a speech on his own accord, and all he can do is to throw silly gibes across the Chamber to try to ridicule a member who is endeavouring to put up a few arguments in support of his case.

The Minister for Lands: Rats!

Mr. GRAHAM: We now have the Minister for Lands describing himself. The important thing is that it is only a matter of time unfortunately—under the law of the State—before these half animals of which the Attorney General spoke are released after having undergone the whippings. So, however bad the man was two years ago when he committed the crime, following his incarceration and his lashing with the cat-o'-nine tails he goes out into society and his sexual disease has been aggravated by the violent form of punishment he has suffered. As it stands at present, the law does nothing to protect the individual; it only makes the position far worse. It is true that during the present generation there have been very few whippings administered in Western Australia. From questions asked recently there have been four in the past 30 years which, I venture to say, compares exceedingly favourably with earlier periods in this State's history or in other comparable States.

Surely that suggests that the judiciary is in advance of the legislature so far as violent punishments are concerned. We read, unfortunately far too frequently, of men interfering with children of the tenderness of years. There are many other cases of fathers having forgotten themselves in respect of their daughters and so on. Irrespective of how gruesome these

particular cases are the court is undeterred and will not administer the floggings because presumably those who sit on the benches have made some study of this question, and realise they will be rendering a public disservice if they gave that additional penalty. Of course, nobody is suggesting that those who have committed serious crimes against people should escape scotfree.

It is all very well for some members to ask, "What would you do if some fiend interfered with your young daughter and forced his unwholesome attentions upon her?" In given circumstances, all of us lose our tempers and become a little irresponsible, but that only goes to show how fine is the balance between complete sanity and slight mental derangement. Some members seem to think that on the decisions we make at the moment when passion overtakes us, the law of the land should inflict somewhat similar penalties. That does not make rhyme or reason.

Twelve months ago I might have felt like punching somebody on the nose because of a certain dispute, but now I may have completely forgotten the incident, even the name of the individual who had insulted or upset me. What a person might feel disposed to do on the spur of the moment is no criterion as to what the punishment should be. I have no desire to delay the House further, except to say that, from the speech of the member for Canning, I was not quite able to grasp whether he was opposed to the Bill, but he revealed unmistakably that he was opposed to the member for East Perth.

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

Ayes	18
Noes	..	20
Majority against		2

Ayes.

Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Molr
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Sewell
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May	Mr. Kelly

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Doney	Mr. Owen
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hill	Mr. Totterdell
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Watts
Mr. Manning	Mr. Wild
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. O'Brien	Mr. Brand
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Griffith
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Mann
Mr. Needham	Dame F. Cardell-Oliver

Question thus negatived.
Bill defeated.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

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

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.55 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

TRANSPORT BOARD.

As to Approved Air Freight Charges.

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

Can he supply information regarding—

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

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

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

(c) passengers' excess luggage?

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

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

The MINISTER replied:

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

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

(b) Rates for bulk newspapers are:

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

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

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

By Airlines (W.A.) Ltd. Services—

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

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

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

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 26th November, 1952.

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