

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 12th July, 1949.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Fremantle harbour, as to improvement surveys	396
Railways, (a) as to Kalgoorlie-Esperance diesel service	396
(b) as to administrative appointments	396
Building supplies, as to shortage in South Province	396
Housing, as to Fremantle applications	397
Great Eastern-highway, as to completion of bituminising	397
Goldmining, as to production and shortage of requisites	397
Leave of absence	398
Bills : Marketing of Barley Act Amendment (Continuance), returned	398
Charitable Collections Act Amendment, returned	398
Plant Diseases Act Amendment (No. 2), returned	398
Tuberculosis (Commonwealth and State Arrangement), 2r.	398
Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment, 2r.	399
Wheat Pool Act Amendment (No. 3), 2r.	399
Plant Diseases Act Amendment (No. 1), 2r.	402
Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment (Continuance) (No. 2), 2r.	405
Adjournment, special	409

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Improvement Surveys.

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Chief Secretary:

Following on the answer to my question regarding the Tydeman report, will the Minister advise—

(a) Have the surveys commenced? If so,

(b) where are the surveys going on now;

(c) when are they likely to be completed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(a) No.

(b) and (c) Answered by (a).

RAILWAYS.

(a) As to Kalgoorlie-Esperance Diesel Service.

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Chief Secretary:

Will the Minister advise when the diesel coach on the Kalgoorlie-Esperance-Norseman line will start running?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

It is anticipated that a diesel-electric coach will be available for this service during August next, but the actual date is dependent on cessation of existing power restrictions and arrival of material still awaited from England.

(b) As to Administrative Appointments.

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the Minister aware that discontent is being caused among railway employees by the Government's importing senior officers to fill various positions?

(2) Is it the intention of the Government to fill the position of C.M.E. by the same method, or will it consider the promotion from within its own ranks?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) No.

(2) No. The Government will be guided by the recommendations of the Commission.

BUILDING SUPPLIES.

As to Shortage in South Province.

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Does the Minister for Housing realise that the shortage of building materials, such as timber, cement and asbestos, is causing grave concern in Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Norseman, Esperance and Merredin?

(2) Is he aware that the position is now worse than ever before?

(3) Will the Minister take urgent steps to see that supplies are sent to the places mentioned?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes. The shortage of materials applies generally throughout the State.

(2) Yes. The position has deteriorated considerably as a result of the present industrial trouble.

(3) Urgent steps have been taken by the Government to relieve the position generally by importing cement and asbestos and steel products from overseas and the appointment of Mr. Shedley, Assistant Conservator of Forests, as a timber liaison officer who is concentrating on improving timber production.

HOUSING.

As to Fremantle Applications.

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is it a fact that for some time past all Commonwealth-State rental homes at Hilton Park have been allotted to camp dwellers and key personnel of the South Fremantle power station?

(2) Should the answer to No. (1) be "Yes," will he state what provision is being made for other urgent applications in the Fremantle area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Urgent cases in the Fremantle area are provided with flat accommodation in converted army camps at Hilton Park East, Naval Base, Gun Park, and Leighton, as flats become available.

GREAT EASTERN-HIGHWAY.

As to Completion of Bituminising.

Hon. W. R. HALL asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the Minister aware that there is approximately 90 miles of road between Bulla Bulling and Southern Cross on the Great Eastern-highway which is not bituminised?

(2) Is he aware that approximately 70 miles of this road are badly corrugated and in a bad state of repair?

(3) In view of the above condition of the road, will the Minister give an assurance that such portions as are in a bad state will be graded regularly?

(4) When is it expected that the re-forming and bituminising of this unfinished portion of the Great Eastern-highway will be completed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

(3) Funds are provided annually for maintenance, and maintenance is carried out as machines and men are available.

(4) Construction of formation and graveling is proceeding at present and will be continued during this financial year. It is not possible to forecast when this remaining section will be improved to the bituminous surface stage.

GOLDMINING.

As to Production and Shortage of Requisites.

Hon. W. R. HALL asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the Minister aware that there has been a large decline in the production of ore in the goldmining industry generally throughout this State?

(2) Is he aware that the cost of production of ore has risen considerably during the last few years?

(3) Does he know that there is a very serious shortage of metal products, such as steel plating, structural steel, bar steel and truck rails, etc?

(4) Has the present Government made any plans for the future apart from making periodical requests to the Commonwealth Government to assist, both financially and otherwise, the goldmining industry of this State?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) The annual production of ore, from 1941 onwards, is as follows:—

	Ore Tonnage.
1941	4,210,774
1942	3,225,704
1943	2,051,010
1944	1,777,128
1945	1,736,592
1946	2,194,477
1947	2,507,306
1948	2,447,545
1949 (first quarter) ..	614,837

For the year 1941, Mines Department statistics record 13,106 men employed in the industry. In 1948 this had fallen to 7,178.

It is apparent that scarcity of labour has been greatly responsible for the reduced amount of ore forthcoming, together with the closure of three of the larger Murchison mines and the rising costs of production, which have particularly affected smaller mines.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes.

(4) The State Government is rendering all possible assistance, both financial and technical, to the industry with a view to tiding it over the present difficult period. It has already been greatly responsible in getting the Commonwealth Government, which controls all gold, to render some assistance to those mines which are most affected by the present high costs.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, leave of absence for twelve consecutive sittings granted to Hon. C. F. Baxter (East) on the ground of ill-health.

BILLS (3)—RETURNED.

- 1, Marketing of Barley Act Amendment (Continuance).
- 2, Charitable Collections Act Amendment.
- 3, Plant Diseases Act Amendment (No. 2). Without amendment.

BILL—TUBERCULOSIS (COMMONWEALTH AND STATE ARRANGEMENT).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th July.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Central) [2.26]: Although I did not desire to continue the debate at this stage, I do not think we have given sufficient consideration to the measure. We have ample time to consider it before this State ratifies the agreement. I am somewhat concerned about the implications of this and similar measures which have already been dealt with by the Commonwealth Government. I readily concede that we must look after the unfortunate people suffering from tuberculosis; but the Commonwealth Government has passed two similar Bills, and I am not sure what will happen when this measure passes.

Are we to have a tuberculosis clinic, a heart clinic, a head clinic and an abdominal clinic? If so, is this a method by which the Commonwealth is seeking to control the doctors? That is what I am opposed to. We must be very careful what we agree to in this House in this connection. We know that

the Commonwealth Government at the present time is endeavouring to control the doctors, but is not getting away with it. Consequently, it is trying other methods. I agree with Dr. Hislop that we should quietly and thoroughly consider this measure, which can easily stand over for quite a time until we know what the repercussions are to Commonwealth action. I do not think I need add more to what I have said, but I again say that we should act warily in connection with Bills of this type. We should know exactly what they mean.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th July.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Central) [2.28]: I am not opposed to the principle of the Bill, nor to the fact that the producer has to obtain a permit in order to sell outside of the board and pay a fee to the board. I think that is right. I am not altogether enamoured of the permit system. Where there is no board and no control, the permit system seems to create chaos in the industry. It was only recently that the secretary of the Egg Board and the producers' representative on that body came to my district and attempted to iron out some of the difficulties there.

I would impress upon the Minister the necessity for a board in my district, so that it may take complete control of the industry there. At present, some permit holders are selling for a sum between the retail price and the wholesale price; they are not playing the game and are rather spoiling it for the man who is sending his eggs to the board. They are killing the goose that lays the golden egg, I have spoken on this Bill only with the idea of trying to impress on the Minister that where there is no control he should either control the permit system to the full or cut it out altogether. He should at least make sure that an egg floor is set up in a centre where there is none. Admittedly, at the beginning such floors might be run at a loss. I think that the one at Narrogin and another were run at a loss for a start, but today they are showing a profit and are proving their

worth. I hope the Minister will take notice that in our area an egg floor is definitely wanted. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. H. A. C. Daffen, debate adjourned.

**BILL—WHEAT POOL ACT
AMENDMENT (No. 3).**

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th July.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (East) [2.32]: I would like the Minister to give us a little information about this Bill. I notice that it provides for two methods of determining what might be called the fair average quality. It states:—

Where in any contract made by or with the Corporation relating to the sale of oats a reference is made to fair average quality of oats or to the W.A. standard feed oats, . . .

I would like the Minister to tell me why we have two methods. I think that will cause a good deal of confusion, and I hope the Minister will agree to eliminate one of them. I do not know whether members are aware that for the first time in the history of Western Australia we have exported a shipment of bulk oats, which were sold on the Swiss market at a very profitable price and were very highly commended by the purchasers. Anybody who is dependent on the oversea market—indeed, most people who want to maintain their business do so—will see that the quality of the article exported is up to standard.

In the past, we have always sold grain of all sorts on a sample and, as long as the outturn has been in keeping with the sample, there has been no dispute about the quality. It is when the outturn falls below the sample that difficulty arises. I have no objection to the standard fixed a little later in the Bill; but if we exclude the words "fair average quality" and retain "W.A. standard feed oats," I think that is all that will be required.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Would it not be better to exclude the other words, because fair average quality is the accepted standard?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes, but there will have to be an alteration. The Western Australian standard feed oat is set out, is it not?

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Yes, but there is nothing legal about that; it is a gentleman's agreement.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: If the Minister will specify the fair average quality of oats and not the Western Australian standard feed oats, I will be agreeable. But I think the Minister can see that if we have two standards—

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: There would not be two; they all come into one. The two names come into one.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: To me, the Bill seems to provide for two cases. It says that—

Where a reference is made to fair average quality of oats or to the W.A. standard feed oats . . .

I think that is providing for two standards—unless a contrary intention shall appear in the contract, such reference shall be deemed to be a reference to the quality or standard following, that is to say—

There is no need to mention the two qualities.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: But supposing people do mention the two?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not know how we get Western Australian standard feed oats in it at all.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Personally, I would like to forget it.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The oats have been sold on a fair average quality basis.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I would like to confine it to that.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: We will create haziness in the minds of people overseas as to why Western Australia should have a different standard from other States.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Are you sure the other States have not a standard?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not think it would be called a New South Wales or a Queensland or a Victorian or a South Australian standard. I think it would be a fair average quality. The Minister knows that all grain has been sold on a fair average quality basis.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is what I just told you.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I have no objection to a Western Australian standard. We can produce the oats here. I do not think there is any country I know that can produce better oats than we on our good, sound, solid soils.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They do not come up to the New Zealand product. No oats in Australia are as good.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would not say they do not.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I would.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I dare say the Minister is right if we take a sample of all the oats grown in Western Australia. But the South Canterbury oats and our oats grown on good gimlet, salmon gum soil would be on a par. The weight would be considerably over 35 lb. to the bushel; probably more like 45 lb.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: That is not so at Popanyinning.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No. I saw a sample of oats which I would pass as very good fair average quality—really good quality oats—but it had not the bulk. Oats are totally different from wheat, because they have a sheath or covering and, when the grain is taken out, it can be small or big. Our Ballidu oat is a smaller grain than most oats, but the newer varieties, such as the Guyra and Mulga, are very big, and would weigh considerably more to a bushel than the smaller oats. I have no objection to the passing of the Bill, particularly if it will maintain a sufficiently high standard to ensure our being able to uphold the reputation we have established with the one shipment that was made recently. The pooling system is excellent, and I commend it to those who have not had an opportunity to test it. This year it has seemed to me to relieve the market considerably. A lot of grain was grown in anticipation of early rains which did not eventuate, and the market was being flooded with oats for which there were no purchasers.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I think it was a pity that shipment went away this year.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It could be the case, too. But what would have happened, as the Minister knows, is that the

oats would have been bought up by the merchants and resold at a very substantial profit.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They could have stayed on the farms.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: But they do not.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: They should, though.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The shortage of bags is the difficulty, and we need bulk facilities on farms. I will admit that galvanised iron is difficult to obtain for erecting structures to hold oats, and galvanised iron or timber is needed.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Cement is all right.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: To secure any such supplies is a problem, as the Minister is aware. As soon as one asks for some, one is immediately up against the State Housing Commission, to whom we all have to give way.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: The oats had to be put in bags to be sent away.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No, they were despatched in bulk.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I mean when they came down here.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: They were all sent down here in bags, but we retained the bags in the State. I hope they did not rip them open, as they used to do with the old wheat bags. Bags are expensive at the moment—about 36s. a dozen. That is about the dearest they have been in Western Australia. I am glad to know that we have been able to sell our oats; and, if this Bill will assist to maintain the standard we desire to retain, I am prepared to support it. But before the Bill goes through the Committee stage, I would like the Minister to give consideration to the point I raised concerning the two methods of determining the standard.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South-East) [2.40]: The introduction of an f.a.q. standard for oats is long overdue because during the last few seasons, when there has been a strong demand for supplies, those of us who have taken the trouble to make an inspection of the oats coming on to the market

have been astounded to see the rubbish that has been put into some of the bags and labelled "oats." So long as there was not an excessive amount of smut it was acceptable to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., this season, and the year before to the Commonwealth oats scheme.

I, like Sir Charles Latham, am a little worried about the setting up of two standards. We have the f.a.q. and the Western Australian standards, and the requirements for both are exactly the same because we find the following in Clause 3:—

Such reference shall be a reference to the quality or standard.

A point I am going to take up with the Minister at this stage, in regard to the f.a.q. standard, is that I think the 37 lb. he has asked for is excessive. It is unfortunate that at this time of the year oats are not available—that is, a harvester sample—in sufficient quantities, if at all, to carry out any tests. Over the week-end I endeavoured to get some, but while I could get plenty of seed oats, clipped oats or milling oats, I could not get harvester samples.

The only samples that were available were some that I brought down myself. After showing them to the Minister he said that they appeared to be of f.a.q. standard. I can assure him, however, that they will not make the required weight. If, from an eye test, oats will pass the standard and will pass the various screening tests but will not make the weight required, it seems that the weight standard is a little high. The oats I referred to just now were part of a crop sown in March of last year. With the finishing rains in September and October, that crop matured and finally yielded nine bags to the acre. But the green oats appearing in it now are a second crop, and that is why it appears to be light in texture.

On the adjoining paddock, put in on wheat stubble, there is a mixture of wheat, and under the Bill four per cent. of wheat is allowed. The grain was a good deal heavier because it was stripped some time later—during December—whereas the other oats were ready to be stripped in the first week of November, which shows the difference. If we are to have a Western Australian standard, it will really be a feed standard. That is my interpretation of it. If we were buying

oats simply for feed purposes, I would have no objection to there being a lot more than four per cent. of wheat or barley, because the greater the mixture the better the feed.

If, however, the idea is to have an f.a.q. standard for export, I can understand that we want to keep out the other grains, such as rye, barley and wheat. This will be necessary because a large percentage of our oats today is grown on wheat stubble land. That is to say, ground that has had a crop of wheat this year is cultivated next year with oats. That provides early green feed, and then, if the season is favourable, a payable crop of oats may be harvested; and if the price is attractive, as it has been for the last two or three seasons, the oats are marketed.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You do not agree with Sir Charles that the standard should be kept up?

Hon. A. L. LOTON: The Bill provides that the standard shall be—

(c) not less than fourteen per centum of the whole shall be prime oats, that is oats held on a two mm. sieve;

(d) not less than seventy-six per centum of the whole shall be grade oats, that is oats held on a 1.5 mm. sieve.

That gives the grading of the oats. I do not think the weight makes all the difference, because it is in their breeding. A heavy skinned oat such as Guyra—almost a red-skinned oat—is always heavier than a white-skinned oat. Dale and Ballidu oats are two good milling oats, and they are of the white-skinned type, and they are always lighter than dark-skinned oats, such as Guyra and Mulga. I do know something about this.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: So do I.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I can learn, too. In most cases, the colour of the husk indicates the difference in weight between the heavy and the light oats. The kernel of the oat will not decide the weight per bushel.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: You have the grading with the millimetre sieve.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: When oats are graded, they run them through a screen. I am surprised that the Minister does not know how to arrive at the grades.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: I do. What about those that blow out because they are too light?

Hon. A. L. LOTON: They do not come in if they blow out.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: No, but a lot will also go through.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: Oats are graded with a revolving cylinder. They drop out as they go through, and what comes out the other end is the standard.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: Suppose a man bought some oats and when he came to grade them, some blew away. In that case he would not get what he thought he was getting, as he would lose a lot as they went over the screen.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: They would not be up to standard.

The Honorary Minister for Agriculture: According to you, they would be, because it would not matter whether the light oat went in or not.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: It would not be so very light if it blew over. However, I cannot conduct a conversation across the Chamber with the Minister. I am surprised at his making all these interjections. When we get to the Committee stage, I shall endeavour to have the natural bushel weight of oats reduced from 37 lb. to 35 lb. Oats are almost the first crop harvested in the country areas, and when, early in the season, the weather is not particularly hot, there is quite a lot of trouble in getting the tails of some of the tailed varieties. Guyra oats, in particular, are bad in that respect.

If the oats are harvested in the afternoon no trouble at all is experienced, and harvesting at that time of the day can make a difference of eight to ten pounds per bushel. That can be proved at any time by looking at the bags. The oats stripped last thing in the afternoon are the heavier. For an f.a.q. standard, the tails are not foreign bodies, but part and parcel of it. If we can reduce the weight from 37 lb. to 35 lb. I shall be perfectly happy, providing we have the one standard. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

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

BILL—PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. G. B. Wood—East) [2.50] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill, briefly, is to increase the levy from 3s. to a maximum of 6s. in order to finance what is known as compulsory community fruit-baiting. This compulsory baiting was commenced in the south-suburban district last year, under the present Plant Diseases Act. After a year's operations it was found that sufficient money to do the work was not provided, and the committee running the compulsory baiting scheme was in arrears, financially, to the extent of £500 at the end of the season's work. The committee had to go to the Government in order to get a guarantee for a loan with which to complete the work.

We do not want any committee that sets out to achieve such a desirable objective as this to find itself in debt at the end of its year's work. The Bill will rectify the trouble in that regard and will ensure that enough money is collected to do the job properly, without the committee running into debt. Members will agree that that should not be allowed to occur. I am grateful for the remarks of Dr. Hislop on this matter. It is not often that a private member goes to as much trouble as he did, particularly with respect to a matter such as fruit-fly, and I am glad to know that he will give his support to the department in any move made for the eradication of the fruit-fly pest.

This infestation is a very serious matter in Western Australia, and I believe the incidence of the pest here is worse than in any of the other States. At all events, it is at least as bad here as in any other part of the Commonwealth. After discussions that took place at the last Agricultural Council meeting I attended, the Commonwealth Government came to the conclusion that something had to be done to eradicate fruit-fly throughout Australia. I have here a letter from the Prime Minister to the Premier in regard to this matter. It was the outcome of advice that the Prime Minister received from the meeting of the Agricultural Council. Portion of the letter reads as follows:—

The Commonwealth Director General of Agriculture (Mr. Bulcock) and the Supervisor of Fresh Fruit Exports (Mr. Carne) have both drawn attention to the seriousness of the outbreak and the results that are likely to develop unless immediate action is taken to meet the situation. It is thought that little practical work can be done until next spring but it is deemed essential that preliminary action should be taken without delay to have the situation fully surveyed and plans outlined which could be put into operation as promptly as possible. In this regard my colleague, the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, considers the matter of such importance as to justify the immediate convening of a conference at which all States should be represented together with representatives from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Commonwealth Treasury and the Department of Commerce and Agriculture to consider and report on the action deemed necessary and including consideration of means for the financing of the project. Should such a meeting be called, it is considered that the agenda should include the following subjects for discussion:—

1. Control and/or elimination of fruit-fly (Queensland and Mediterranean).

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Have we any of the Mediterranean fly here?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. The letter continues—

2. Research into the possibilities of the destruction of fruit-fly larvae in fruits by cooling before and/or during transport.

3. The trade implications of the incidence of fruit-fly.

4. The intra and interstate trade and movement of fruit from infected areas;

5. Financial implications of a campaign to achieve elimination or control.

6. Methods to be adopted to ensure co-operation between States, including transport and border inspections.

7. The general aspects of the entire question.—The Department of Commerce and Agriculture is desirous, in view of all the implications, of convening the necessary conference, which could be held in Melbourne. It would be appreciated if you would nominate a representative to attend at a date that will be fixed as soon as possible. It is considered essential that all States be represented and that the whole problem of fruit-fly infestation be examined.

A similar communication is being addressed to the Premier of each of the other States.

When I received that letter from the Premier I suggested to him that we should send to the conference two representatives, one on the horticultural side and the other on the

research side. I suggested that we should send Mr. Miller, Acting Superintendent of Horticulture, and Mr. Jenkins, Government Entomologist, to Melbourne for this purpose. I also wrote to Sir George Jenkins, the Minister for Agriculture in South Australia, suggesting that both aspects of the matter should be considered and that each State should therefore have two representatives. He replied, saying that he was fully in agreement with my suggestion and was going to ask the Prime Minister to have the conference called to deal with both the scientific and commercial sides of the industry.

The trade implications of the fruit-fly in Western Australia are considerable. At one time, in order to get rid of some tomatoes from the Geraldton district where there was a surplus, I made representations to Ceylon, but the people there would not agree to take any tomatoes from Western Australia owing to the incidence of fruit-fly in this State. That shows how far-reaching the question is. Although the experts say they have never seen fruit-fly on tomatoes, the Ceylon people would not agree to take any of our tomatoes.

Hon. L. A. Logan: But they would probably get them from Singapore.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so. The Singapore people are not as fussy as that, and hundreds of cases of our tomatoes are sent there every year. However, Ceylon would not take our tomatoes, which I thought was a great pity. A great deal of money has been spent in the other States of the Commonwealth on the eradication of the fruit-fly. South Australia has spent £300,000 for this purpose in the last three years, and in one district of Victoria—I think it was Gippsland—£40,000 was expended.

I do not think sufficient money has been spent on the project in Western Australia, where the funds have been found almost solely by the fruitgrowers. There is a fruitgrowers' registration fund, which is always in debt, and the compulsory fruit baiting fund. Apart from that, the Government agreed to my recommendation that two extra inspectors should be employed, at a cost of about £1,400 per annum. I feel that the fruitgrowers of this State have been the most modest of all our primary

producers in their demands for Government assistance. This measure will not create a charge on the Government but will give the fruitgrowers the right to tax themselves a bit more.

Hon. H. K. Watson: The Minister mentioned the expenditure of £300,000 in South Australia. Will he give the comparable figure for this State?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, we have spent practically nothing except £1,400 on the two extra inspectors.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Does that represent the total expenditure?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: No, there is the registration fund.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It represents the total, except for what the fruitgrowers have taxed themselves. There is, as I have said, the orchard registration fee, and the cost of the inspectors is borne out of those funds, with the exception of the two inspectors that were put on when the Government made a special grant of about £1,400 from Consolidated Revenue last year.

Hon. H. Hearn: Is the South Australian money provided by the Government or by the fruitgrowers?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: By the Government and also by the fruitgrowers. It is well worth their while to spend £300,000 because it is possible to eradicate the fruit-fly completely in South Australia. We might spend £50,000 in Western Australia and we still would not get rid of the pest, but at least that would go some way towards it. In 1947, when fruit-fly was first reported in South Australia, maggot-infested fruit was found over an area of two and a half square miles of suburban Adelaide. Before that they considered they were a pest-free State. In 1948 infested fruit was found throughout an area of 200 to 300 acres. In 1949 they discovered that only about 30 trees were affected in four separate suburbs, and they have gone to considerable trouble to stamp out the fly.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You have not done very much in the metropolitan area, have you?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Here?

Hon. E. H. Gray: Yes.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, very little. I discovered when in Victoria the other day, that that Government spent £40,000 in one district to get rid of fruit-fly. By getting rid of it, I mean that they were tearing up the trees and so on. They went to all sorts of ends and I think it was well worth-while.

Hon. L. Craig: Do they have fruit-fly in Victoria?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, I think they have the Queensland fly there. I was chucked—if we can call it that—by Sir George Jenkins when he told the Council, and me in particular, about their getting the Mediterranean fly into South Australia and stated that it had come from Western Australia. It is not a happy position for a Minister to be in when things like that are said to him. I would do anything to get rid of fruit-fly in Western Australia, and the experts say that is not impossible to stamp it out, particularly in view of the fact that there is very little native fruit in this State and very little carry-over. However, I think it will cost a lot of money.

In a pamphlet that I have, concerning fruit from the various States, it says that in the New South Wales coastal district, clean and marketable summer fruits cannot be harvested between January and autumn. It then goes on to state that in Perth, Western Australia, a 40-lb box of apricots, bought this summer for jam, yielded only 3 lb. of clean, maggot-free fruit. It continued "In Adelaide fruit fly is not established and we expect perfect fruit throughout the year." I do not like that sort of thing to be said about our fruit, and I would like to be able to say that we can grow fruit that is free from fly in this State. Whether that happy position can be brought about, I do not know, but it is well worth trying.

I would like once more to endorse the remarks of Dr. Hislop when he read letters from the Mumzone jam factory. I have been in communication with the firm and every word mentioned by the hon. member was quite correct. That factory had to give up the processing and tinning of apricots and plums because of fruit-fly, and that is an undesirable position for Western Australia. I do know that the firm brought

fruit from South Australia for tinning in Western Australia and for the making of jam.

The extra charge to the fruitgrower for compulsory baiting, cannot be levied without a poll of growers first being taken, and that poll of growers must give an affirmative vote before anything can be done. I have asked fruitgrowers in other districts why they do not have compulsory baiting and they have said that they regarded the whole business as being more or less of an experiment. However, they are watching with interest what is happening in the south-suburban fruit district. Personally I would like to make it compulsory for everybody to bait his trees whether he likes it or not. One has to be harsh and tough in these matters.

I believe that until there is a certain amount of regimentation, by way of compulsory baiting of trees and stripping when the commercial fruit is taken off, we will not get a clean start each year. The rubbish taken off must be burnt and we must make a desperate and determined effort to get rid of the fruit-fly in this State. It is extending to southern districts where it has not been before and where the growers have thought themselves immune because of the cold. However, I have no doubt that the fruit-fly will adjust itself to that condition unless drastic steps are taken and it is obliterated. The Bill is a very simple one and it really alters the levy from the maximum of 3s. to 6s. per 100 trees. Generally speaking, an acre of land has about 100 trees.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why does the Bill state "plants"?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Why does it refer only to orchards?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It says orchards and it has the word "plants," but I think that word is a misnomer.

Hon. W. J. Mann: A 10-year old tree is not a plant.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Do you call the place where they grow bananas an orchard or a plantation.

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Generally speaking, it is called a plantation, and I have never heard of a banana-grower being called an orchardist.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Is it an orange orchard or an orange grove?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I suppose most of the orchards in tropical countries are called plantations, and I think that is the accepted word. I feel sure that members will do everything they can to help stamp out the incidence of fruit-fly in this State and the Bill, in my opinion, will help in some way towards achieving that end. I would tell Dr. Hislop that it does not go all the way, or as far as I would like, but it is definitely a step in the right direction and will be of tremendous help. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—BUILDING OPERATIONS AND BUILDING MATERIALS CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE)
(No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.8] in moving the second reading said: The proposal in the Bill—to continue the operations of the parent Act for a further 12 months, until the 31st December, 1950—is being submitted of sheer necessity and not by any particular desire of the Government. While the supply of basic materials is not equal to the demand, it is essential that the distribution of such materials be controlled. Close attention is paid to production so that control over any particular material can be lifted should production permit. Increased output has allowed control over bricks, nails, paint, cement and timber, to be relinquished, and this has proved of great assistance to builders.

The situation is being watched closely, however, and the Government will not fail to reimpose control on any material should it be warranted. With regard to bricks, there is a shortage at present, but I am informed that up to the time of the present

power stoppage, this was not seriously retarding the building rate. The present diminution in production is directly due to the interruptions in power supply to which we have been subjected. Members will be interested to know that since January, 1946, when the production of bricks was only 47 per cent. of the pre-war output, it had risen by March this year to 102 per cent. of the pre-war figure. In 1944 we were producing 6,000,000 bricks per annum only, as against the present annual rate of 54,000,000. During the war only one brickyard was in operation, and this at half-production. Now there are 12 yards producing in the metropolitan area and 11 in country districts. In addition, four plants in the metropolitan area are making concrete blocks.

The Government, through its newly-appointed Buildings Material Division of the Department of Industrial Development, has assisted brickyards to a considerable degree. Some six yards have been given financial aid to enable them to mechanise and improve their plants, and others have received valuable technical advice and assistance. Modern equipment is being obtained as quickly as possible, including power earth-moving equipment, crushing rolls, hydraulic lift tractors, additional kilns and drying sheds. These improvements will increase both the volume and quality of production, but members will realise the difficulty and time lag in obtaining new plant.

It is a regrettable fact that the equipment at the State Brickworks is out of date and should have been replaced many years ago. Since it came into power the present Government has been fully alive to the great necessity to modernise the State yards. The then manager was sent abroad in 1947 to inspect modern plants oversea and interview manufacturers to ascertain the position in regard to the availability of new equipment. Unfortunately, he died while away, thus occasioning a serious delay. In order to secure a new manager, it was necessary to go oversea. Since his appointment the output of the State yards has increased; last month it improved by 100,000 bricks over the previous month, and plans are being finalised in regard to new plant. This new manager has now flown to England to obtain the most modern plant available. Members may be interested to learn that of the present annual output of bricks,

namely, 54,000,000, only 4,210,000, or less than eight per cent., are being diverted to Government undertakings. This cannot be regarded as extortionate in view of the large building programme with which the Government is faced.

The position in regard to timber is looking brighter. By the end of this year it is hoped that there will be six new mills, in operation, and it is considered by the Forests Department that these will ease the timber position to a great degree. A large number of displaced personnel will be employed at these mills. The unseasonable winter has been responsible to a considerable extent for the shortage of timber in the metropolitan area. Many locomotives had to be allocated to water haulage, with the result that timber accumulated at country mills. With the break of the rains it will be possible to provide more locomotives for timber haulage.

That was the thought when I prepared these notes, but, as members will appreciate, all that advantage has gone owing to the present industrial trouble. When we will be able to get enough coal to bring that portion of our building programme up, we do not at present know. Of course, until we get the requisite coal, the position goes from bad to worse in regard to all lines of building material, and one can see how it is affecting the haulage of timber. Close attention is continually being given to the question of timber exports. The timber industry in this State was built up over many years on an export basis and it is most essential to our economy that we retain our oversea markets.

During the five years preceding June, 1939, no less than 46 per cent. of our production was exported. Timber merchants had made contracts for interstate and oversea exports up to June, 1948, and no action could be taken, even if desired, to cancel these contracts. The timber merchants are most co-operative and have agreed to reduce exports so far as possible to meet the needs of the State. The construction of a large timber mill is most expensive and the capital outlay takes 30 to 40 years to recoup. Unless positive future markets are assured, sawmillers will not be prepared to lay out the large capital cost necessary to expand the industry.

The production of cement in March this year, the latest month for which figures are available, was 107 per cent. of the best pre-war figures, this having risen from 66 per cent. in 1946. When further plant, which has been ordered, arrives, cement production will be stepped up by 50 per cent. at first and later by 100 per cent. It is estimated that the annual production for 1948-49 will be 60,000 tons. Some 40 per cent. of this amount will have been diverted to Government undertakings, mainly for country water supply which must be given a very high priority. In order to ease the burden on private enterprise, the Government is importing oversea cement at double the price of the local product. This is being used wholly in Government work, so that private enterprise may have the benefit as much as possible of the local product. Orders for 14,000 tons have been placed in the United Kingdom and some of this has already arrived. The tile position continues to improve and in March last production was 149 per cent. of the pre-war figure. Fibrous plaster output has risen considerably and in March was 179 per cent. of the pre-war output.

The March production of asbestos cement sheets was 283 per cent. of the pre-war figure, but these are still in short supply. The local company is moving from Rivervale to Welshpool shortly and provided fibre is available will be able to further substantially increase its output. Most of the asbestos fibre used locally comes from oversea and is subject to a quota allotted by a distribution committee in the United Kingdom. The output of blue asbestos from the Hamersley Ranges is, unfortunately, not large, and the entire production is sent to Sydney. The Government is doing its utmost to obtain some of this for the local market and also to encourage the production of white asbestos in this State. Flat and corrugated asbestos sheets are being imported from oversea for Government use to enable private persons to have the benefit of the local article.

The most serious position is in regard to steel, and there appears little hope of early improvement. Strikes and other industrial troubles have greatly retarded steel production, and are impeding the house building programme. Members will have noticed from the Press that the large steel works in the Eastern States have had to close down and

it is said that it will be some months after the resumption of coal production before blast furnaces and other associated works will return to full production. So it will be quite a long while before we shall be able to get those essential materials which are so urgently required. Other articles on which it is necessary to retain control are Eastern States importations such as galvanised iron, porcelain enamel baths, piping and plumbing fixtures. It appears that there can be little hope of an early improvement in the supply of these articles and here, too, the position has been aggravated by industrial unrest.

With regard to the control of building operations, a steady improvement is being shown in the number of houses built. In 1946-47, 2,120 homes were completed; this improved to 2,923 in 1947-48, while the figure for the six months ended the 31st March, 1949, was 1,722. Of the last figure, 1,302 homes were built by private contractors or under the day labour system, and the average cost of each unit was £1,290. The remaining 420 homes were erected by builder-owners at an average cost of £720. The owner-builder scheme by which a man may build a small home is conditioned that he provide one-third of the skilled labour required, through his own or his friends' efforts, and it has accelerated the building rate. The latest return received by the Minister for Housing from the Commonwealth Government revealed that up to the 30th June, 1948, this State has built more rental homes per capita than any other State.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Did you refer to rental homes?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I would prefer to see it the other way round.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are at present being erected at the rate of approximately 1,000 per annum. The Western Australian house is reported to be an improvement on homes constructed in the other States, although the designs are basically the same, and the rentals are cheaper in this State than elsewhere, being as much as 12s. 6d. to 15s. cheaper than the New South Wales homes, which are the dearest in Australia. The building costs per square for brick houses as at the 30th June, 1948, were—

	£
New South Wales	169
Victoria	147
Queensland	147
Western Australia	112

The costs per square foot for timber homes were—

	£
New South Wales	153
Victoria	131
Tasmania	127
Queensland	115
Western Australia	106

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Why do you not quote the South Australian cost?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not got that information. South Australia secures much of its timber from Western Australia, and the cost there would be higher because of transport charges. Costs since the 30th June, 1948, have, of course, increased, but the figures I have quoted are the latest available. It will be seen that the operation of the parent Act has assisted materially to keep costs down in this State. It is also reported that in Western Australia we are in a happier position with regard to blackmarketing than are people elsewhere.

On the 31st May, 1949, 21,644 applications for homes were outstanding. Of these, 11,381 were for Commonwealth-state rental houses, 4,218 were for private permits to build, 4,406 were for war service homes, 586 for McNess homes and 1,053 were for assistance from the State Housing Commission to build. The grand total thus increased to the figure I have mentioned from 8,643 as at the 1st January, 1947, from 13,781 on the 1st January, 1948, and from 19,550 on the 1st January of this year. It has been found that many persons are applying for several types of homes and that the number of applicants would equal about 90 per cent. of the applications. Furthermore, it has been ascertained that many people who are reasonably housed are applying for Commonwealth-State rental homes or for permits to build. Since January, 1948, 2,921 persons have applied for small unit homes, namely, flats and duplex homes.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: How many of those are doubling the rate?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot say. It is estimated, also, that of the

2,180 applications for private permits since January, 1948, approximately 1,500 were for small unit families. Referring to the increase in costs, the approximate average cost of the 4-roomed brick house built by the Housing Commission has risen from £1,041 in March, 1947, to £1,285 in March, 1948, and to £1,310 in March, 1949. The figures relating to 5-roomed houses for those periods are, respectively, £1,175, £1,448, and £1,568. The Housing Commission built 474 houses during the 12 months ended March, 1947, 789 in the next 12 months, and 969 during the year ended March, 1949.

I feel sure that members will agree the information I have provided this afternoon proves that the parent Act has been of great advantage to the building programme in this State, and it is essential that it be continued. Generally speaking, it has the support of all sections of the building industry. Now, in view of the industrial trouble to which I have already referred during the course of my remarks, the re-enacting of this legislation becomes more important than ever.

I had not intended introducing the Bill this afternoon. The reason I have brought it forward earlier than I proposed is that, naturally, members would like time to consider its provisions. I thought it advisable to deal with the matter this afternoon so that they would know what it is about. I hope members will speak to the Bill and submit any constructive criticism they care to make in order to help the Government to improve the position confronting it in these very difficult times. The Government has in hand a large building programme, and the task of coping with it is more difficult than it has been in the past. For that reason, constructive criticism will be heartily welcomed.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Would it be possible for members to secure copies of the Minister's speech? They cannot be expected to remember all that has been stated today.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As members are aware, owing to the power restrictions, "Hansard" cannot be printed. It might be possible to get a copy of my speech, or that of the Minister in another place when he introduced the Bill there.

His remarks were much the same as mine today. If it is possible to get pulls of my speech for the convenience of members, I shall be only too pleased to procure them. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.28 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 12th July, 1949.

CONTENTS.

Questions: Education, as to expenditure on visual instruction	409
Tobacco, as to Distribution Committee Companies Act, as to limited and proprietary registrations	410
Government employees, as to payment for long service leave	410
Sign posts, as to replacement in country	410
Meat, as to output of Wyndham and Broome works	411
Abydos Research Station, as to experimental work	411
Land resumption demolitions, as to eviction of occupiers	411
Coal strike, (a) as to abandonment of Perth technical classes	411
(b) as to altering school hours	412
(c) as to State Government's intervention	412
Water supplies, as to provision for Bushmead	412
Great Eastern-highway, as to widening, East Gullford-Midland	413
Railways, (a) as to material used on locomotives	413
(b) as to "Australind" and Bunbury bus service	413
Coalmining, (a) as to Stockton No. 2 open cut	413
(b) as to health report on mines	414
Co-operative Bulk Handling, Ltd., as to facilities agreement	414
Leave of absence	414

CONTENTS—continued.

	Page
Bills: Superannuation, Sick, Death, Insurance, Guarantee and Endowment (Local Governing Bodies' Employees) Funds Act Amendment, 1r.	414
Marketing of Potatoes Act Amendment, 3r., passed	414
Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment, 2r., Com. report	414
Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r., Com. report	413
Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment, Message, 2r., Com.	413
Supply (No. 3), £4,700,000, Standing Orders suspension, Message, all stages	420

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

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

As to Expenditure on Visual Instruction.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What was the expenditure on visual education in this State during the year 1945, i.e., two years before the present Government came into power?

(2) What was the expenditure during the financial year 1946-1947?

(3) On what date was Mr. Uren first employed full time on visual education?

(4) On what date was his salary first debited to visual education?

(5) Does the figure of £278, which the Minister informed the member for Albany was the amount spent on visual education in the year before the present Government came into power, represent the actual amount which this branch of education cost the State?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) to (5) The expenditure shown in the records of the Education Department for the financial year 1945-46 was £278. On close inquiry, I find that Mr. Uren was freed for one-half day a week for six months and later full time in exploring the possibilities of visual education. He was freed for this purpose from work as manual training instructor to which item his salary was still charged. For the year ended the 30th June, 1947, the total expenditure was £2,137, the figures for the next following two years being as previously stated, £7,857