

# Legislative Council

Thursday, 1st August, 1957.

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

## QUESTIONS.

### RAILWAYS.

#### *Letter re Estimated Loss.*

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

He will remember that on the occasion of the debate on one of the railway motions I made an inquiry as to the estimated loss of the railways and my persistence brought from him the statement that he would write to me. I have not received the letter. Will he please write to me?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

### WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

#### *Report of Honorary Royal Commission.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

If the report of the Honorary Royal Commission on War Service Land Settlement has been sent to the printer, when is it likely to be made available?

The MINISTER replied:

The latest information in regard to the report is that it is being printed and will be tabled immediately it becomes available.

### WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

#### *Annual Kill and Weight per Carcass.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE asked the Minister for the North-West:

(1) What has been the annual kill at the Wyndham Meat Works for the past three operating seasons?

(2) What has been the average weight per carcass?

(3) If any record is kept of different aged cattle what are the respective average weights of baby beef, four years old, and over four years old cattle slaughtered?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2)—

	1954.	Average Weight
	Total Annual Kill.	lbs.
Oxen	24,816	523
Heifers	166	449
Cows	1,774	444
	<hr/>	
	26,756	
	<hr/>	
Overall average:	518lbs.	
	1955.	
Oxen	27,145	553
Heifers	92	427
Cows	1,905	437
	<hr/>	
	29,142	

Overall average: 545lbs.

	1956.	
Oxen	28,225	568
Heifers	134	447
Cows	2,281	445
	<hr/>	
	30,640	

Overall average: 558lbs.

(3) Because mobs of cattle are of mixed ages, it is not possible to keep records. The ages are thought to range from four years upwards.

### ROADS.

#### *Expenditure on Coolgardie-Esperance-rd.*

Hon. J. J. GARRIGAN asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What amount was spent during the financial year 1956-57 on the Coolgardie-Esperance-rd.?

(2) What amount is it intended to spend on this road during the current financial year?

(3) What is the average number of men employed weekly on this work?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

- (1) £206,130.  
 (2) £132,150.  
 (3) 59.

**WATER SUPPLIES.***Extension of Great Southern Towns Scheme.*

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Has the Government proposals for the extension of water pipelines to places east of the main pipeline on the Great Southern towns water supply scheme?

(2) If the answer is "Yes"—

(a) What are the proposals?

(b) Will he table or make available the plan showing the proposal or proposals?

(3) If the answer is "No," will the Government give immediate consideration to such extensions?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Not at present.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) There would be no advantage in giving immediate consideration to extensions until the comprehensive scheme is substantially nearer completion.

**NATIVE WELFARE.***Certificates of Exemption.*

Hon. A. R. JONES asked the Chief Secretary:

How many certificates of exemption were issued to natives by the Minister administering the Act or Acts in the years—

(a) 1945;

(b) 1950;

(c) 1955;

(d) 1956?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(a) 66.

(b) 33.

(c) 85.

(d) 225.

**BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.**

1, Nurses Registration Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Minister for Railways.

2, Newspaper Libel and Registration Act Amendment.

Introduced by Hon. Sir Charles Latham.

3, Justices Act Amendment.

4, Bees Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

**BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE ACT AMENDMENT.***Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [4.40]: On reading the Bill, I have found, as the Minister explained, that it is a simple one

and, on the face of it, desirable. However, as the measure was introduced in this House and there had been no previous debate on it, I thought it desirable to get in touch with the people it directly affected in order to ascertain whether they had any suggestions in regard to it. It so happened I contacted the very man who was responsible for the accident—mentioned by the Minister in his opening remarks—when the "Zephyr" touched the bridge at Fremantle. He agreed entirely with the Bill and said that in his opinion it was desirable. He also explained the circumstances of the mishap which, I think, put it in rather a different light.

He explained that the accident happened on New Year's eve, when, apparently, a swell caught him unawares and there was just a slight contact with the bridge. In his opinion, it was not a major occurrence; otherwise his own vessel might have shown signs of damage. He said that he did not stop at the time as he knew he would be passing through again the following day when he would have an opportunity to examine what damage, if any, had occurred. He said he was quite satisfied from his examination that little or no damage was sustained.

As soon as he could after the holidays, he submitted a report to the department, and as a result, an examination was made and some structural repairs were carried out. My friend's comment on this is that the pile or whaling piece must have been pretty rotten in the first instance to have been so affected. He said it was not noticeable during his examination on New Year's day following the actual occurrence.

The main point, however, is that he is quite satisfied that the amendment is necessary and desirable. On my own summing up of the Bill, and on the advice of an expert, I recommend the measure to the House for acceptance.

**THE MINISTER FOR SUPPLY AND SHIPPING** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [4.44]: The observations of the skipper of the vessel are not quite correct, or his opinion is not quite correct, if he considers that only minor damage was caused. Under water, two piles were snapped off, and others were damaged above, so it was not negligible damage. In fact, the cost of repairs ran into several hundred pounds.

The matter was referred to the Crown Law Department, which considered that as a court of marine inquiry said the occurrence was purely accidental and caused by a current driving the ship against the bridge, no claim for damages could be made. But I am wondering what would happen if the bridge collapsed. If damage occurred which cost the Government a lot of money, I do not know just what the

position would be. Why these vessels should not have some sort of comprehensive policy such as is provided for a motorcar, I do not know.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: The whole bridge is very old and due for replacement.

The MINISTER FOR SUPPLY AND SHIPPING: I know. But even so, it is not to be knocked about. More care should be taken, and any accident reported straightaway. In this instance a diver was called back during the holidays to make an examination. Penalty rates, overtime rates, and goodness knows what were involved in order to examine the structure beneath the water. It was found that two piles were snapped completely off. Even though they were rotten, I point out that many a rotten pile will stand weight upon it, but it will not stand a bump on the side. If there is any strain placed on the side, it will snap clean off.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: They were fender piles, were they not?

The MINISTER FOR SUPPLY AND SHIPPING: No. One supporting pile and one fender pile were snapped off under water; and above water, three other piles and fender supports were damaged to the extent that they were replaced. These replacements cannot be made for nothing. As I have already mentioned, an accident like this could, if not reported immediately, result in a major tragedy—in respect of a railway bridge, anyway.

Hon. H. K. Watson: If it put the bridge out of order it would probably substantially reduce the railways deficit.

The MINISTER FOR SUPPLY AND SHIPPING: I have no doubt about that; it would save another mile of running into Fremantle, I expect. I am pleased that Mr. Simpson and the skipper who was in charge of the vessel at the time of the occurrence, think it is necessary to amend the Act to avoid any possible tragedies in the future.

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—AGENT GENERAL ACT  
AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [4.50] in moving the second reading said: As hon. members are aware, the salary of the Agent General is fixed by the principal Act at £2,150,

and payment is made in sterling. In addition, the Agent General receives an entertainment allowance of £1,250 sterling, and the Government provides him with a car and driver.

It is considered this payment is quite out of keeping with today's standards and is insufficient to attract the type of man the position requires. The term of appointment is only three years, and while in London the Agent General must provide his own accommodation which is very expensive. He is also called upon to meet very considerable commitments for entertainment.

This Bill proposes to increase the salary from £2,150 to £3,000. In addition, it is intended to increase the entertainment allowance from £1,250 to £2,000. Other conditions of appointment will remain unaltered.

Members will agree that it is most important to obtain an outstanding man for this appointment. One of the State's greatest needs today is to attract outside capital to assist in our task of development, and to invest in the expansion of our industries. It is the task of the Agent General to bring to the notice of business people and investors in the United Kingdom the prospects which we offer in this connection.

British migration continues to be of great importance, and it is necessary not only that we encourage the right type of migrants to come to Western Australia, but also that we supply them with a factual and reliable impression of what awaits them when they arrive here.

The marketing of Australian products is primarily the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government, but there is much valuable work which a good Agent General can carry out in this connection. Although the volume of our overseas purchases has diminished in recent years, it is still important to have in London an Agent General capable of looking after governmental requirements. It is hoped that when the salary and allowance have been raised, as proposed, the Government will be successful in obtaining an Agent General capable of satisfactorily fulfilling all these duties.

The remuneration of other Agents General is: New South Wales, £2,581, plus an entertainment allowance of £3,000, which includes a car; Victoria, £2,000 with an entertainment allowance of £2,000, and living accommodation provided; Queensland £2,150 and £1,250; South Australia, £2,876 and £1,000. Tasmania at present pays £2,480, with an entertainment allowance of £2,400, and a special allowance of £30; but legislation to increase the salary to £3,000 will be introduced this session.

The proposal in the Bill will give this State's Agent General a combined salary and allowance of £5,000 compared with

New South Wales, £5,581; Tasmania—if the amendment is agreed to by Parliament—£5,430; Victoria, £4,000 plus living accommodation; South Australia, £3,876; and Queensland, £3,400. I thought it wise to give members an idea of the salaries being paid by the other States—and also the allowances—so that they would have some method of comparison.

Hon. H. K. Watson: The Commonwealth Government is appointing a mere trade official over there at a salary of over £3,000.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not surprised at that, because the salaries for all Commonwealth appointments, whether they be in Australia or overseas, are always much higher than the salaries paid in most, if not all, of the States. While we are increasing the salary and allowance of the Agent General, I think the person who accepts the position will be very hard put to it to stay within the limits provided.

Hon. H. K. Watson: He would have to draw on his own resources.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Exactly. I doubt whether any person could go to England and do the job that is required of him as Agent General and still stay within the bounds of the salary and allowance provided. I say that because I have had many conversations with Agent Generals who have occupied the position over the years. We cannot make comparisons today with conditions that obtained 20 years ago; but that has been the story all the time. I have been told by all of them that had they not had finance of their own, they would not have been able to do the jobs that they did. So even with the increased salary and allowance, the person who accepts the position will find things difficult; he will certainly have nothing left if he has no finances of his own.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Do you propose an increase in the salary of the secretary?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no suggestion of that.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I think it warrants some consideration.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not think there is any necessity for legislative action to be taken in that regard. Even the allowance of the Agent General is not mentioned in the Bill; but we have given members the figure to show them that the allowance is being increased. Increases in the salary of the secretary and the allowance of the Agent General are more administrative than legislative acts. However, I do not think we have been over-generous in the amounts provided. We have tried to arrive at a figure that we consider will be reasonably close to the mark, and which will allow the person who occupies the position to carry out

the job at least to the satisfaction of the people of the State. I have no hesitation in asking members to agree to the Bill, even though the figures at first glance seem quite large.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Have you got anybody lined up for the job?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [4.58]: I do not in any way oppose the Bill, but I would like the Chief Secretary to inform the House whether taxation affects the salary and allowance of the Agent General in London. I would like to know whether his taxation is assessed on the British standard; if so, it would be severe. I would also like to know whether there is any arrangement between Governments concerning this matter.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Griffith, debate adjourned.

#### BILL—AGRICULTURE PROTECTION BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [4.59] in moving the second reading said: In 1944, a select committee was appointed to consider amendments to the Vermin Act and to see if ways and means could be found to establish a capital fund to provide expenditure for combating all types of plant diseases, vermin, etc. In 1945, this committee was converted to a Royal Commission. As a result of the commission's recommendations, the principal measure was introduced in 1950 and was agreed to by Parliament. The purpose of the measure was to provide for the constitution of a board for the co-ordination of the administration of certain Acts relating to the control, prevention and eradication of noxious weeds and vermin.

The board, which is a body corporate, consists of nine members, inclusive of the chairman, who is the Director of Agriculture or his deputy, the Chief Vermin Control Officer. The chairman has no casting vote. There are four other ex-officio members of the board. Two are members of the Department of Agriculture: the Chief Weed Control Officer and the Government Entomologist. The other two are the Chief Warden of Fauna and a representative of the department. The remaining four members are nominated by the Minister for Agriculture and appointed by the Governor. These four members comprise representatives of the agricultural industry and the pastoral industry and two members representing local authorities. The Minister nominates such members from names submitted by the executives of the organisations con-

cerned. He may also appoint a deputy of each member of the board to represent the same interests as that member.

It is usual for the board to sit once in every two months, and an additional meeting is also convened at a suitable time to enable discussion on annual estimates of expenditure. Public Service members of the board receive no fees, but private members receive remuneration at the rate of £4 4s. for each meeting.

The Bill provides for an additional member to represent producers in the more closely settled areas in the south-west area of the State. This proposal will give representation to the dairy farmers, the fruit growers and farmers in the more intensely cultivated areas. This proposed amendment meets with the approval of the Farmers' Union which has urged for some time that the type of farmer previously mentioned should have representation on the board. Requests for similar action have also been received from other organisations.

At present, the local authority members and the agricultural industry member all come from other parts of the State. The Road Board Association members are from Mt. Barker and Northampton. The farmer representative comes from the wheat belt—Gabbin—and the pastoralists' representative, of course, comes from the pastoral areas. It is, therefore, most desirable that an additional representative should be included from the south-western districts, embracing, say, the area between Serpentine, Augusta and Northcliffe, and representing those farmers engaged in more intense culture. The Bill also includes a small amendment to Section 5 of the parent Act. This involves a correction to the section by renumbering and transposing a paragraph, but there is no amendment to the verbiage. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—FREMANTLE PRISON SITE ACT AMENDMENT.**

##### *Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. G. Fraser—West) [5.4] in moving the second reading said: On the 16th May, 1851—and I draw the attention of members to the date; they will notice that it is not 1951—an ordinance to vest the site of the convict prison at Fremantle in certain officers in trust for Her Majesty, Her heirs and successors, for ever, was assented to. The ordinance provided for the whole of the area to be vested in the Comptroller General of Convicts and the Colonial Secretary, in trust for Her Majesty.

In 1902, the ordinance was repealed by the principal Act, which in turn provided for the vesting in Her Majesty of an area

which comprises the "Site of Convict Prison at Fremantle," with the exclusion of certain Fremantle lots, the largest of these being the Fremantle Oval. Apart from the lots originally excluded, other areas of land have been, from time to time, transferred or leased. These include a reserve occupied by the "Drill Hall," which was transferred to the Commonwealth on federation and an additional area which has been acquired by the Commonwealth of Australia; the portions comprised in Reserve 7735—South Terrace School—and Reserve 22292—Fremantle Public Hospital; the area previously occupied by the Base Flats; Fremantle Lot 1633, which was held as a special lease by the City of Fremantle and is now the subject of a proposed exchange between the City of Fremantle and the Government; the public streets within the area; and the proposed parking area over which the City of Fremantle is seeking control.

It can be seen, therefore, that the official boundaries of the prison site are out of date and require amending to conform with the true position. Some time ago, it was agreed, subject to the approval of Executive Council, to make available certain areas to several bodies, these being the Returned Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Imperial League of Australia, the Police Boys' Club and the South Fremantle Football Club. I hope that any member who happens to be a barracker for some other team will not oppose this provision because of that. These pieces of land are all part of the old Base Flats area. The survey has been completed, and each of the organisations I have mentioned is most anxious to obtain a title to its piece of land. The purpose of this Bill, therefore, is to amend the Principal Act, so that the land in question becomes Crown land and, as such, may be dealt with under the provisions of the Land Act.

It is so long since this land has been vested, and since any change has taken place, that I am sure members will agree it is necessary to have a measure such as this placed on the statute book. A portion of the old Base Flats was used as a base hospital in the 1914-18 war. When I first went to Fremantle in 1910 it was used as an old men's home; and following the building of the "Sunset" home at Claremont it became—prior to World War I—an immigration hostel for those migrants who came here in their shiploads from 1910 to 1912. As I have said, it became a base hospital in World War I and since then it has been known as the Base Flats. The returned soldiers also had their headquarters there, and an R.S.L. hall was built in that area.

With the improvements to the Fremantle Oval the stage was reached where both the R.S.L. hall and the headquarters of the returned soldiers had to go by the board. It is proposed that a portion of

the area shall be given to the R.S.L., a section to the boys' club, and another to the South Fremantle Football Club, which has its headquarters on the South Fremantle Oval. I would point out that everybody is quite happy about the position, and I hope that members will support the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. N. E. Baxter, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—DAIRY CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ACT REPEAL.**

### *Second Reading.*

#### **THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**

(Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [5.10] in moving the second reading said: For the information of members, the principal Act was passed in 1922; and as its name implies, its object was the improvement of the dairy herds of the State. The importance of improving the productive capacity of these herds had been recognised for some time prior to 1922, it being considered most necessary that only bulls of a high productive strain should be used.

The Act provides that bulls be registered on payment of a small fee. For the purpose of registration, bulls are classified as either pure bred or grade bulls. A pure-bred bull is required to be registered only once during its life, on payment of a fee of 10s. A grade bull is required to be registered annually on payment of a fee of 5s.

The purpose of registering these bulls is to enable the officers of the dairy division of the Department of Agriculture to know what bulls are being used and to more readily get in touch with the owners of bulls of an undesirable standard, so that the many advantages of using better type bulls can be brought before them. In having to complete an application form each year setting out the breeding and productivity performance of the female ancestry of each bull, it was felt that farmers would gradually realise that the quality of many of the animals they were registering was inferior; and, as a result, they would endeavour to procure better sires. The small fee was meant to act as a deterrent to the owners of young male cattle of little value, and it was hoped that such animals would be destroyed or de-sexed.

It will be recalled that in 1922, there were in Western Australia a number of inexperienced dairy farmers who had been placed on farms; and who, unfortunately, found it necessary to stock up initially with whatever types of cattle were available. There was a tendency to buy cheap

and inferior bulls, and so it naturally followed that a degeneration in the class of progeny resulted.

Over the years, conditions have changed somewhat. A very sound policy of improvement by the use of pure-bred bulls ex tested dams, has been initiated by the Department of Agriculture. As the years have progressed, the results have become more and more apparent, and we now find that there exists in the State a comparatively even type of dairy cow.

There is no doubt that the principal Act has made a great contribution towards the improvement of the quality of our dairy cattle, but concern has been expressed at inconsistencies in the Act which tend to make its administration impossible.

The Act provides for the registration of all bulls; and the only place where the word "dairy" appears in the Act, is in the title. Crown Law opinion is that the section requiring the registration of every bull is unambiguous and could not be read to refer to bulls of dairy type only. Regulations provide for the exemption from registration of pure-bred beef bulls kept solely for the breeding of beef cattle. The Crown Solicitor's opinion is that this regulation is inconsistent with Section 5 of the Act, which requires the registration of every bull.

The Crown Solicitor has also expressed the opinion that Section 11, providing that registration of any bull may be refused if, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Dairying, the bull is below a reasonable standard, is inconsistent with the regulation providing that registration shall be refused unless the bull be well grown according to age, sound in constitution, and manifestly showing evidence of the breed characteristics of one or other of a number of stated dairy breeds.

With the trend towards the use of beef bulls, the difficulty in administering the Act became greatly increased. The department was in the position that it was endeavouring to register all dairy bulls. It purported to have the power to exempt from registration pure-bred beef bulls used on a property which was used solely for the production of beef, but did not have any power to deal with beef bulls which were not pure bred, were used on properties where dairying was carried out, or were used in dairy herds.

Apart from these difficulties in administration, a notable change in the pattern of agriculture on dairy farms is occurring. The trend to beef production has become intensified. Since the conclusion of the war, the number of cattle kept for fattening has increased by approximately 100 per cent., while the number of dairy cows increased by 7 per cent. only.

On many farms, the carrying capacity has increased beyond the number of cows that can be handled by the available labour; and instead of the farmers attempting to raise only dairy steers—which, although they grow readily and are quite marketable, are not so attractive to the butcher as beef or beef cross animals—they are being definitely encouraged to breed a number of cross-bred beef animals from their inferior dairy cows and, later, animals of more specifically a beef type. This is being done by the inclusion of beef bulls in the artificial breeding service.

This move will assist the production of beef in the south-western districts, which are already contributing the major portion of the beef supplies to the city of Perth and country towns. The artificial breeding service, which so far has proved most successful, will also mean that an increasing number of farmers will be breeding their dairy cattle to the superior bulls which are kept at the centre. For example, in the first 12 months of the scheme, 1,500 cows were bred in this way. At the moment, there are 190 farmer members of the scheme, and the total number of cows which have been offered for the coming 12 months is 8,000.

The need for legislation such as the Dairy Cattle Improvement Act, therefore, has been lessened. These latter developments have occurred on the initiative of the Department of Agriculture since the Act came under fire at the annual conference of the dairying section of the Farmers' Union; and it is now agreed that, in the light of these developments, the request made by the union for the repeal of the Act should be met. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. F. D. Willmott, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.18 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 1st August, 1957.

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

## QUESTIONS.

### HOSPITALS.

(a) "C" Class, Licensed Premises, etc.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON ask the Minister for Health:

(1) Will he list the "C" class hospitals in the metropolitan area?

(2) Which of these have been so licensed from January, 1955, till the present time?