

sideration decided that this proposal was not to be included in the Bill.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

BILL—HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 2:—Delete paragraph (a) and substitute the following:—

(a) by repealing Subsection (1) and substituting the following:—

(1.) Whenever the vendor (except by the request or at the instance of the purchaser) shall take possession of any chattel the subject of a hire purchase agreement the vendor shall within twenty-one days thereafter prepare and serve on the purchaser an account under this section as between the vendor and the purchaser.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Previously we thought to establish the right of the purchaser to an account, but it was held that 21 days would be too long. However, the amendment proposes that the vendor shall give to the purchaser within 21 days an account as between the vendor and the purchaser.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

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

House adjourned at 11.16 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 10th December, 1937.

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

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE, PENSIONS.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many pensions of £600 and over are being paid by the Government to retired public servants? 2, What is the highest rate of pension being paid and the number of persons in receipt of such?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Fifteen. 2, £950 per annum; one person.

BILL—SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. J. Cornell and read a first time.

BILL—BUSH FIRES.

Third Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.36]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [4.37]: In giving further consideration to the Bill during the last 24 hours, a phase of the problem has occurred to me that calls for some explanation. I have in mind the position at timber mills where fires have to be kept going continuously to burn up the waste. Nothing is contained in the Bill dealing with that point in any way. I would like to ask what the position will be regarding timber mills and whether those mills, having to keep fires burning continu-

ously, will be rendered liable to the penalties set out in the Bill. I am sorry the point did not occur to me before, but as it is rather important, it should be cleared up before the Bill finally leaves this House.

On motion by the Chief Secretary debate adjourned.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.41]: Before proceeding to deal with the Bill, I wish to draw attention to the volume of work ahead of both branches of the Legislature. Although nine days only remain for the transaction of business prior to Christmas, there are 41 items on the Legislative Assembly Notice Paper and at this stage of our proceedings we have eight on the Council Notice Paper, making in all 49 matters that require to receive consideration. I suggest to the Leader of the House that it is manifestly impossible to complete the work ahead of Parliament before the holidays intervene, unless the Government intends to jettison at least two-thirds of the business that remains. I object to rushing Bills through. Some important measures have to be dealt with here and other important Bills have yet to reach us from the Assembly. If we attempt to rush them through by dealing with legislation at all hours of the night, we are inclined to permit troublesome provisions to remain in Bills that will not be to the credit of Parliament. I trust some decision will be arrived at whereby, if necessary, we will work in the usual way, giving ample time to digest thoroughly the various legislative proposals placed before us, and then meet again after the Christmas holidays to complete our work.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Have you ever known our Notice Paper to be in a better position at this stage of a session than it is to-day?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: But there are 41 items on the Notice Paper in the Assembly.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Many of those items will be dropped.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is easy to say that, but if we are to be expected to deal with those matters, and in order to do so sit very late, only to find that we cannot complete the business, which will necessitate our returning to our labours after the Christmas holidays, of what value will that be? As to the Bill before members, it will be recognised that it is a measure that always causes a lot of discussion and will continue to do so for some time to come. We are in a unique position at present in this respect that the Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act governs the position and provides the machinery by which the tax Bill operates. The assessment Act provides for an exemption at £3 15s. per week. We find that the tax Bill provides for an exemption of £200 instead of £195 and of £3 17s. instead of £3 15s. I will deal with that matter later on because it will be necessary to know exactly where we stand in view of that lack of uniformity. It is very unfortunate that the Premier has taken upon himself to throw down a direct challenge to this House through the Bill now before members. As reported in the "West Australian" these were the Premier's words:—

The Government has decided that the exemption this year shall be up to £3 17s., and I definitely say that this tax will be passed in the form desired by the Government—that is, providing exemptions for people who are on the basic wage in the metropolitan and agricultural areas—or it will not be passed at all.

Members of this House are here to use their endeavours to assist the Government in financing the country on the basis of the financing being reasonable and sound. But we are here also to safeguard the taxpayers who provide the money. In such a position are we to be told by the Leader of another place that we are to do this and do that? This House should take no notice of that, but should do what is right, and if the Premier does not agree with the House in that, then he takes the responsibility on himself, and he is going to do so. I stand here fearless of any threats: indeed, threats only go to strengthen my determination. The Premier also went on to say, "It is the policy of the Government." But this House is not concerned with the policy of the Government; what we are concerned with is, first the governing of the country, and secondly, the rights of the taxpayers. I notice the usual phrase was not employed by the Premier: he did not say that he had a

mandate from the people. That has been dropped. There has not been a mandate from the people. Either the Premier has no knowledge of what a mandate from the people means or he has mistaken ideas about it. To secure a mandate from the people the Government must go to the country and fight an election on a particular question. However, the Government has put up a strong plea, ably supported by the comments of the Auditor General and of the "West Australian"—

Hon. G. W. Miles: And of the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER:—that it must have this tax, that there is every justification for the tax. I am sorry, but I cannot see eye to eye with the representatives of those three important sections of the community, namely, the Premier, the Auditor General and the "West Australian." Four years have elapsed since the present Government was returned to power, and during that period the expenditure from both revenue and loan account has been £12,400,000, as compared with £11,400,000 expended during the three years' regime of the previous Government. Last year's receipts in revenue and loan account totalled £12,379,000, or £2,963,000 in excess of the total collections by the present Government during the year 1931-32. Last year's revenue alone exceeded by £750,000 the 1931-32 receipts from both revenue and loan account. Taxation collected last year was more than double what was collected in 1932, the figures being, last year £2,404,000, and 1931-32 £1,007,000. In addition the Government has had the assistance of moneys from the Lotteries Commission expended in the way of charities, and of the hospital tax which has brought in a fair amount of money, and from Federal grants, which are becoming very convenient. If the financial emergency tax were bringing in £2,000,000, the Government would still say it wanted it all.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If borrowing ceased, it would be an improvement.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Last year there was expended from revenue on exchange and unemployment relief a total of £512,000, whereas in 1931-32 under both heads the expenditure was £1,264,000, or a little over half a million as against a million and a quarter pounds.

The Chief Secretary: That is a very unfair statement of the position.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is taken from the financial statements of your Government. In 1932 approximately 16,000 men were dependent on Government sustenance and relief. Of that number nearly 10,000 have been absorbed in industry, in the goldmining industry and in the building industry. During the last three years there has been almost a boom in the building trade. That leaves only 6,000 men dependent on the Government. Despite that, and perhaps because of the enormous increase in expenditure in other ways, the Government has not been able to provide full-time work for the men remaining. How can the Government justify these taxes? Whilst it seeks to find justification for the taxation, it is ever ready to exempt its own particular section which it represents. Year after year this increase of exemptions has been in evidence. The financial emergency tax was brought down so that everyone, on however low a wage, should contribute something. The Government cannot get away from that, and I say the principle should be lived up to. The Government can point to their opposition in another place when this tax was first brought in, but that was only political propaganda.

The Chief Secretary: And what is this?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: This is a protest against the continuation of the present system. Now let us look at the other side: Where has the expenditure been? Why is all this high taxation necessary? Is the Government in its desire to safeguard the finances of the State endeavouring to keep expenditure well within bounds? It is not, as I will prove. Some time back I referred to the Government motor traffic. Unfortunately, the Chief Secretary replied to a point that was never in my mind, I mean the ministerial cars. What I meant was the transport services of the State, the whole of the transport used in the State, cars, tractors, trucks and runabouts. Those were the very words I used. The Minister misunderstood me, but that is what I did refer to. So greatly have the motor services been increased that one can hardly find a horse being used on road work. Yet look at the value to the farming industry of the use of horses.

The Honorary Minister: Where are your horses?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I still have a fair number of horses working on my farm. We

require to visualise the cost of all these motor services. During recent years there has been an enormous number of motor cars provided by the Government for officers in the Public Service who have no official use for them. One can see cars standing outside the offices day after day. Are there not any Government motor cars in the Government garage available for this purpose? But no, many of these cars are used for private service only. And we are asked to keep on increasing taxation! All the old cars have been replaced by new cars, and their number has increased tremendously. Let anyone go to the Government garage at any week-end, and he will find in that garage, apart from ministerial cars, only two others. But where are all the Government cars? They will be found out on the roads, running about everywhere, not on Government business, but being used for pleasure. This is one of the extravaganees that require to be stopped, one of those that are building up taxation. Again, there is provision of money where there is no necessity for it. Just consider the provision of £250,000 for a new State steamer. I will give place to no man in my desire that the people of the North should have a good service.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Private enterprise could provide that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I will say without fear of contradiction that the best service the North-West ever had was during the short period when I was in charge of that service. That was brought about by working in with the private services in order to get steamers on alternate tides. But within six weeks of our Government going out of office, the permits to private shipping companies were withdrawn.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Only to-day I was told that I could not travel by the "Charon" on Boxing Day.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If vessels work on alternate tides, they can give a really good service to the North. But now the Government is purchasing another new steamer, instead of working in with those private companies and allowing their permits to continue. But that does not seem good to the unions, and so it has to be abolished.

Hon. G. Fraser: They prefer "Aussies" to niggers.

The Honorary Minister: It does not suit the North-West people.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It would suit me to travel on the "Charon" on Boxing Day.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not think the Honorary Minister knows what he is talking about. The North-West people were never better served than when they had the dual service I have spoken of. I also wish to refer to the trolley bus service being provided. Such a service cannot possibly be equal to that which is maintained at present. It would be impossible for the Government to make it equal to that service.

Hon. G. W. Miles: At a price!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is a wonderful service along that route already. Why does the Government want to spend £80,000 on the installation of a trolley bus service there, and make this another charge upon the taxpayers? It is not possible to run such a service under Government control as it is in the case of a private commercial enterprise. We have evidence of that every day. The tramway service is certainly not a credit to us. If a private company were in charge of the tramway service, it would be run very much better. The Government is now investing money in bulk handling, in providing facilities that would have been provided by other people. Both the money and the service would have been provided by another enterprise. The amount of £50,000 has been found for Bunbury, and still more money will be required. I could quote many such reasons as those I have just given, but owing to the rush entailed upon the closing hours of the session, one has not time in which to delve thoroughly into the position.

Hon. G. Fraser: Is this the Address-in-reply?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If the parrot from the West Province would keep quiet, he might learn something. A lot of research work is required in connection with these matters. Even that work does not give one the information. One can see the amounts set out, but, because of the lack of detail, it is impossible to find out what they represent. Mr. Fraser does not know anything about these matters. If he were to listen, he might be guided and learn something.

Hon. G. W. Miles: He makes a good Chairman of Committees.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: A splendid chairman, and he deserves every credit for that. The taxing Bill sets out an exemption of

£200. Then we have the Tax Assessment Act on the statute-book setting out an exemption of £195. Are we going to deal with the tax when it does not synchronise with the Bill upon which the tax is based? It is irregular to ask the House to do so. When the Chief Secretary is replying, I should like him to explain the difference between the taxing Bill and the assessment Bill. One gives an exemption of £3 15s., and the other an exemption of £3 17s. How can that position be maintained? If the matter is not satisfactorily cleared up, I will do my utmost to have this Bill returned to another place with a message that it does not conform to the Tax Assessment Bill. It will then be for another place to put the position right, and not for us here to do so. In Committee I intend to move to reduce the tax upon people with dependants. Members should note how this expenditure is going on. The Government can build up pensions of £1,000 a year to retiring officers, and so on. It is time this House did something to protect the taxpayers from such expenditure, and endeavour to bring about a sounder method of finance. With these reservations, and having announced my intention to move amendments in Committee, I will reserve my judgment as to the second reading.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, debate adjourned.

BILL—HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

RESOLUTION—STATE FORESTS.

To Revoke Dedication.

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting concurrence in the following resolution:—

“That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 4, 14, 22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 36, 39, and 51, laid on the Table of the Assembly by command of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor on the 9th December, 1937, be carried out.”

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.8]: I move—

That the resolution be agreed to.

This is the usual resolution which comes forward every year dealing with portions of the forest areas that it is desired for various purposes should be revoked; in other words, should be taken away from the areas now known as State forests.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Made available for settlement.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: In most cases, the areas are required for other purposes; generally speaking, I think, for settlement. On each occasion the House is supplied with a description of the areas concerned. I have the particulars dealing with each item mentioned in the Assembly's resolution, and these I will present to the House, as follows:—

Area No. 1.—Adjoining Allanson townsite. About 170 acres being chiefly a sandy flat of no value from a forestry viewpoint. Applied for by a local resident.

Area No. 2.—Two miles South-East of North Dandalup. About 4½ acres applied for by the adjoining settler. Carries practically no marketable timber.

Area No. 3.—Three miles North-East of Mundijong. About 110 acres of poor jarrah country. Applied for by the adjoining settler to consolidate his holdings.

Area No. 4.—Five miles North-East of Buckingham's Siding.—About 155 acres of cut-over gully land. Required by adjoining settler to make a self-supporting farm.

Area No. 5.—Four miles North-East of Bowelling. About 90 acres of flat, carrying no marketable timber. Applied for by the adjoining settler.

Area No. 6.—Four miles North-East of Bowelling. About eight acres, carrying very little timber, and applied for by the adjoining land holder.

Area No. 7.—Five miles South-West of Argyle. About 530 acres of poor sand-plain country, which carries very little timber.

Area No. 8.—Three-quarter mile South-West of Gwindinup. About 60 acres of poor jarrah country. Applied for by a local settler.

Area No. 9.—Eight miles North of Nannup. About 14 acres at the head of a creek, and required by the adjoining land holder to improve his water supply. Only a few jarrah trees on the area.

Area No. 10.—Three miles North-West of Wilga. About 560 acres of poor forest country. Required by the adjoining settler in exchange for areas of greater value for forestry purposes.

Area No. 11.—Six miles South-East of Noggerup. About 23 acres of gully land, carrying very little timber, and applied for by the adjoining settler.

Area No. 12.—Eight miles North-East of Hester. About 170 acres of heavily cut-over forest country, not required for forestry purposes.

poses. Applied for by the adjoining land holder.

Area No. 13.—One-and-a-half miles East of Hester. About 11 acres of poor forest country. Required by the applicant for the adjoining location to improve his water supply.

Area No. 14.—Twenty-four miles South-West of Manjimup. Eighteen acres 3 roods 20 perches of river flat, carrying no marketable timber, comprised in two small surveyed locations. Applied for by the adjoining settler.

Area No. 15.—Quarter mile West of Collins Siding. About 14 acres carrying very little timber, and not required for forestry purposes. Applied for by the adjoining settler, who wishes to extend his orchard.

Area No. 16.—Three miles East of Mooterdine. About 540 acres to be included by the Lands Department with an adjoining location to be made available for selection.

In continuance of the policy of recommending for excision any sufficient areas of agricultural land in respect to which application has been received direct, or through the Lands Department, it is proposed to excise 16 areas involving an area of about 4,277 acres. Under Section 21 of the Forests Act, 1918-1931, a dedication of Crown lands as a State forest may only be revoked in whole or in part in the manner in which we are now dealing with the question.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [5.13]: I listened attentively to the remarks of the Chief Secretary. I am glad to know the Forests Department is treating the applications of settlers already established in the South-West in a sympathetic manner. It has not always done so. There were times when settlers had to battle very hard to get small areas from which to build up their holdings. At one time the Forests Department seemed to think that all land was valuable jarrah country. Those of us who represent portions of the South-West had extreme difficulty, in many cases, in getting the department to take another view. In these particular instances, the revocation of the areas concerned seems to be quite justified, and I have pleasure in supporting the remarks of the Minister.

Question put and passed.

BILL—ELECTRICITY.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.17] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is

to replace the existing Electricity Lighting Act, 1892, and its amending Acts of 1905 and 1931, with legislation more adequate to meet the requirements of present-day conditions. It has become increasingly apparent for some time that the existing legislation does not give sufficient authority to enable the exercise of proper and efficient control over the generation and distribution of electricity throughout the State. At present, no provision is made for co-ordinating the supply of electricity in this State. In the interests of efficiency and economy, it is essential that we should have a provision of this nature on our statute book. This Bill contains certain proposals which will enable uniformity to be ultimately achieved in the various generating stations throughout the State. To-day there is outside the metropolitan area a multiplicity of generating stations distributing on various voltages. The current is in some cases direct, and in others alternating. Where the latter is distributed, there are also various frequencies. This condition is most undesirable. If allowed to continue, it would mean that as our population increased it would be impossible to link up the various country centres in their electricity supply for the purpose of reducing the cost to the consumers, and increasing the efficiency of supplies. The Bill, therefore, proposes to constitute an Electricity Advisory Committee, whose duty it shall be to devise schemes for co-ordinating the supply of electricity throughout the State, "having regard to efficiency and economy, and the future progress of the State." By planning for the future, the committee will be able to prevent wasteful duplication, and the confusion which arises from the multiplicity of systems of supply. The Bill also provides that no further generating stations shall be erected, or any major work commenced on existing plants, without the approval of the Minister, who shall give his decision after consultation with the advisory committee.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Will that affect private concessions that are now operating?

Hon. J. Cornell: Will it affect mining companies?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope members will examine the proposals closely. To some extent, of course, the Bill is technical and I do not profess to be an electrical engineer. I have, however, been supplied

with quite a lot of information that I can at a later stage give to members. For the time being, I am rather anxious to introduce the Bill so that members may have the opportunity to study it over the weekend, and we can make progress with it next week. It is proposed that the advisory committee shall consist of three members to be appointed by the Governor. Provision is made to ensure that only persons thoroughly versed in the theory and practice of engineering shall be members of the committee.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Will the board be entitled to practice?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It all depends whether the members of it will receive any remuneration or whether they will come under the Superannuation Act. Apart from devising a scheme for co-ordinating the supply, the advisory committee will be required to consider and report on any matters referred to it by the Minister; to determine the price to be paid for electricity purchased in bulk by one supply authority from another for subsequent retail sale; to consider and report to the Minister on the advisability of amending any legislation relating to the generation and use of electricity, and finally to perform any other functions of an advisory character as may be prescribed. Under the present Electric Lighting Act there is no authority for district road boards to supply electricity, although provision is made to that effect in Section 162 (8) of the Road Districts Act. This Bill provides that, subject to certain conditions, local authorities may generate and supply electricity, or combine with any other local authority for that purpose. They will also be empowered to grant a sole concession to a concessionaire upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon.

Hon. H. Tuckey: They do that now.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill proposes to enable a local authority to trade with another for a supply of electricity in bulk. Power will be given to the Minister to arbitrate on the conditions of supply in cases where the local authorities cannot agree. The later provision is deemed necessary, in that it will prevent a local authority with a sufficient supply from adopting a "dog in the manger" attitude. For the first time a specific obligation is placed on supply authorities to declare the electri-

cal pressure of the system, and for the frequency of the supply. Further, they will be required to maintain the pressure within the limit of 6 per cent. of the declared voltage, and the frequency within the limit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The power of making regulations has been widened to bring it more in conformity with modern enactments. Hitherto, the regulative power has related solely to local authorities and "undertakers" that is, concessionaires, supplying electricity under the Electric Lighting Act.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Undertakers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is the term used in the existing legislation, and in the Bill we are altering it to "concessionaires." Provision is made for regulations which by their nature, will apply in some cases to supplies given by local authorities, but in other cases will have a general application throughout the State. In recent years a number of fatalities have occurred as a result of faulty installations. Regulations made under the present Act for the licensing and control of persons engaged in the wiring of electrical installations have been instrumental in bringing about a certain amount of improvement in this class of workmanship. However, many loopholes have been found to exist in the present regulations which have rendered them somewhat ineffective. The Bill specifically provides that regulations may be made relating to the examination, qualifications, and licensing of electrical workers and contractors, including cinematograph operators, who operate plants supplied with a pressure of not less than 100 volts.

Hon. J. Cornell: Is it proposed to take away those parts of the Machinery Act that apply?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not think so.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is all right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Regulations may also be made for the inspection of service apparatus and electric fittings by inspectors appointed under the proposed Act, and for the prohibition of the use of faulty installations. These provisions have been included in the Bill at the request of various organisations, which have urged the necessity for regulations to ensure the safety of the public. It is also considered that in the public interest there should be some legislative control over the sale of electrical appliances and apparatus. Most of the other

States of the Commonwealth have already devoted attention to this matter. If we continue to permit the unrestricted use of electrical apparatus in this State, we may expect it to become a dumping ground for articles prohibited or condemned elsewhere in the Commonwealth. To safeguard our position in this respect, the Bill stipulates that regulations may be made prescribing standards for fittings, and so on, used in connection with any electric supply. The use of articles not measuring up to the required standard may then be prohibited. For some time there has been an insistent public demand for legislative action to suppress radio interference. It is now proposed to enable regulations to be made for the purpose of preventing such interference, and authorising the inspection of premises in any part of the State where radio interference is being caused, or suspected of being caused. Provision has been made for the appointment or approval by the Minister of inspectors, who shall have general powers of inspection throughout the State. Inspectors, however, will not be empowered to enter generating stations or to inspect transmission and distributing works, unless holding a special certificate in that behalf under the regulations. So that the Bill shall be self-supporting, it provides that regulations may be made prescribing fees to be charged for the services performed by the committee, or any officer or authority, pursuant to the proposed Act. It is anticipated that these fees will be quite moderate. The Bill is largely of a technical nature, and has been formulated by a committee of experts, comprising Mr. Taylor, manager of the power house, Mr. Edmondson of the Electricity and Gas Supply Department, and Mr. Shaw of the Public Works Department.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are these honorary appointments?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, so far as I am aware. The Bill makes very necessary provision for the future. It is hoped that it will ensure the eventual co-ordination of the whole of the State's supplies of electricity. If this condition can be achieved, then industry will ultimately have the benefit of a cheap and uniform supply of power throughout Western Australia. I have covered the main points of the Bill in my remarks and would stress the fact that the Bill is looked upon as a most important measure. Experience elsewhere has indi-

cated that it is highly desirable that such a measure should be on the statute-book in this State. In view of the fact that additional generating stations are being established from time to time in various parts of the State, I hope members will agree that the Bill is necessary from the point of view of securing uniformity in regard to the supply of electricity throughout the State and of having a supply provided as economically as possible wherever it is required. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Macfarlane, debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [5.34] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill, and another measure which will shortly be dealt with, is to restore the right of public servants to appeal to the Public Service Appeal Board against the classification of their offices by the Public Service Commissioner. Members will recall that legislation was enacted in 1935 for the purpose of enabling public servants in receipt of less than £700 per annum to approach the Arbitration Court. It was the Government's belief and intention at that time that the amending legislation would in no way affect any officer's right of appeal against the decision of the Commissioner in placing him in any particular class, or grade within a class. A recent decision of the Public Service Appeal Board has made it clear that this right no longer exists. The Bill seeks to remedy the position. The Arbitration Court will retain its original jurisdiction to define classes and fix the minimum and maximum rates of salary within each class. The Public Service Commissioner will be responsible for the placing of offices in classes defined by the Court. Thereafter, the Public Service Appeal Board will, subject to certain conditions, have jurisdiction under the Public Service Appeal Board Act, to hear appeals by public servants against the placing of their offices in one class as against another. In order that the work of the Appeal Board may be made practicable, the Bill provides that any award or agreement covering public servants

shall contain a declaration of the fundamental principle or basis upon which the classes are defined. This will simplify the correct placing of offices in their appropriate defined classes. In this connection, provision is made regarding agreements already existing and deposited with the Registrar. If the parties to the agreement made early this year fail to agree regarding the basis or principle underlying the placing of an office in a defined class, the Public Service Appeal Board will be called upon to decide the matter. When determining appeals, the Board will take certain factors into consideration for the purpose of assessing the nature and responsibilities of the offices concerned. Although the Bill does not limit the matters that may be considered for such purpose, Subclause (e) of Clause 7 specifically sets forth that they shall include degree of skill, effect of the work of the office on revenue and expenditure, the financial or administrative effect of mistakes which may be made by the officer in the performance of the duties of the office, and so on. With the enactment of this legislation, the Appeal Board will not be able to encroach on matters affecting the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Court, but will simply decide appeals lodged against the decisions of the Public Service Commissioner in placing any officer in any particular class or grade. What I have said explains the contents of this small Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member does not say that this is a small Bill, does he?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not a big Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is all verbiage.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, there are a lot of words in it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned.

BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [5.40] in moving the second reading said: This measure is complementary to the Bill just dealt with. In order to prevent conflict between the jurisdiction of the Public Service Appeal Board and the Arbitration Court, it is provided under Sec-

tion 6, subsection 1 (a), of the present Act that in certain specified circumstances the Public Service Appeal Board shall not have jurisdiction to hear appeals by public servants. Thus, when the subject matter of an appeal comes within the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Court, the Board is not competent to hear the appeal. This condition obtains in respect of the reviewing of the Public Service Commissioner's classification which, under section 147 of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1935, comes within the purview of the Arbitration Court. It is now proposed that, in certain cases and subject to certain conditions, the Appeal Board shall have jurisdiction to consider appeals by public servants who are government servants within the meaning of Part IX of the Industrial Arbitration Act. The Bill provides that appeals shall be limited to those against the placing by the Commissioner (or other authority) of the office of the appellant in one class instead of another. Further, such classes must be classes which have been defined by the Arbitration Court or by an agreement of the parties under Part IXA. of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1935, while the award or agreement which defines the classes must also state the fundamental principle or basis upon which the classes are defined. The jurisdiction of the Board in respect of any appeal allowed under the proposed legislation, will be limited solely to hearing and determining whether the office of the appellant has been placed in the proper defined class, and to declaring the class in which the office should be placed. It will be seen, therefore, that the Board will have no jurisdiction to define classes or fix salaries; neither will it have power to adopt and apply its own basis for determining in which class an office should be placed. Special provision has been made to enable the Appeal Board to hear appeals which have already been made by public servants against their reclassification. In this connection, the Bill also provides that where existing agreements do not contain a statement of the essential fundamental principle or basis upon which the classes have been defined, the Board shall make its determination in accordance with the statutory principles laid down in Clause 7 of the Bill amending Part IXA. of the Industrial Arbitration Act. The enactment of both this and the previous Bill is necessary to restore to public servants the right of appeal which, it was thought, they would still

retain after the passing of the amending legislation of 1935.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How are public servants dealt with in the other States?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot say; but there will now be no possibility of mistakes being made in this State under these Bills.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It looks to me as if the civil servants want it both ways. They wanted an Arbitration Act and they got it. Now they want to come under the Public Service Appeal Board Act.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Arbitration Act does not deal with individual cases. What has to be borne in mind is that what was promised in 1935 should be given effect to and that is the purpose of this Bill. The parties affected have conferred with the Crown Law Department regarding the drafting of these two Bills, and, as a result, it is anticipated that they will provide a complete solution to the difficulties that have arisen. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th December.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [5.45]: The Appropriation Bill is usually one of the last measures dealt with by this House, and I hope the Chief Secretary will keep a tight hand on it by placing it near the end of the notice paper. Evidently not many members are anxious to speak on it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is not usual to pass it until the last thing.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I moved the adjournment of the debate the other evening because apparently nobody was prepared to speak. Since I have been a member, the custom has been to pass the Appropriation Bill almost last of all.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We could pass the second reading and hold up the third reading.

Hon. G. W. MILES: That is what I suggest, unless members are prepared to continue the debate.

Hon. G. Fraser: Why not pass the Bill?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Then the Chief Secretary could keep it near the bottom of the notice paper. Under this measure we are

appropriating a large sum of money, inclusive of loan funds to the extent of £2,200,000. While we continue to spend so much loan money we have to be prepared to pay additional taxation. There has been much talk about the financial emergency tax and the need for the extra million of money raised by that tax. This year the amount to be borrowed shows a reduction, but if we had continued to pay out of loan funds for services that are now debited to revenue it would have been necessary to borrow about £3,000,000. I wish to impress upon members that every time we vote for an increase of loan expenditure we have to be prepared to pay additional taxation. I think it was a provision in the Financial Agreement that prevented the Government from continuing the expenditure of loan money on works that should be constructed out of revenue, and therein lies the explanation of our taxation having increased from £3 odd to £5 per head. It is as well for members to understand the position and to appreciate that they cannot have it both ways. If borrowing is to be continued, the only way to finance it is by imposing increased taxation. That is why I am opposed to some of the actions of the Government whereby it is foregoing much-needed revenue. Rather than forego revenue, the Government will need more taxation to enable it to carry on if it is going to continue its borrowing policy as in the past. I cannot see how members can logically complain regarding the amount of taxation being collected by the Government. That is one point I wish to stress, and another point I wish to make clear is that the Government has no right to try to grant taxpayers any further exemption.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is not being done.

Hon. G. W. MILES: It is. The policy of the Government seems to be that the more wages a man gets the less tax he should pay. It is now proposed that if a man receives £3 17s. a week, he should pay nothing by way of financial emergency taxation, whereas previously if he received £3 16s. he had to pay the tax.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member is making only an incidental reference to another Bill.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes, only incidental.

The PRESIDENT: I hope he will not extend the incidental reference, because he is referring to another Bill before the House.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I had no intention to make a speech on the Bill. My object was

to suggest to the Chief Secretary that the Bill be kept lower on the notice paper. However, while I was on my feet, I thought I might express my views regarding borrowing and taxation.

Hon. G. Fraser: Pass the Bill and get rid of it.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I would approve of nothing of the sort. I suggest that the Chief Secretary carries out the traditions of the House and keeps this order lower on the notice paper. He has tried the experiment of putting it higher on the notice paper and the adjournment of the debate has been moved without any further contribution having been made.

The Chief Secretary: I wanted to hear what members had to say.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Apparently very few members have anything to say; otherwise I would not have moved the adjournment when the order was previously called on.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.50]: I am impelled to assist the Government to finish the business of the session, and so I shall speak to-day rather than defer my remarks until next week. In view of what Mr. Baxter said this afternoon, and in view of his action in moving an urgency motion a couple of days ago, we are likely to need some late sittings to deal with the business, and I quite expect a repetition of the end-of-the-session experience we have had ever since I have been a member of this House. The Bill affords us an opportunity to make reference to matters financial. I shall try to bear in mind the advice given me by Mr. Holmes a couple of years ago not to get heated but to deal with questions as calmly as possible. The present Government has been in office for some years, and I wish to speak of its failure to do its duty towards the residents of the State. I refer to the failure to see that the Perth Hospital was put into such a state as to enable it to render the service desired and expected of it. Only a few weeks ago I directed attention to the matter. One of the most humane members in this Chamber, the Honorary Minister, then rather contradicted my statement, and said that conditions were not anything like as bad as some people would have us believe. I deprecate indulging in any remarks of a sensational character. I consider that the medical and

nursing staffs are doing their utmost to render all possible service to the people who are unfortunate enough to have to seek treatment in that institution. I have a letter from an old-age pensioner residing in my district, and though I bear in mind that one swallow does not make a summer, I should like to read a passage from his letter. He had been a patient in the Perth Hospital, and on his return home he wrote to me under date of the 9th November, as follows:—

I can see and feel I am quite over the trouble. I could not have been shown more courtesy and kindness than I was shown in that institution by everyone I came in contact with.

I emphasise my desire not to join in the propaganda at present being indulged in against the hospital. The time when action should have been taken in connection with this important institution was some years ago to prevent the state of affairs that I believe exists to-day. Under the Health Act of 1927 local governing authorities were empowered to increase their rates or raise loans to enable them to construct or extend hospitals within their areas. I think that the Perth City Council might reasonably have been expected to give a lead in this matter. For some years on the goldfields and in the agricultural districts—though it does not apply to old settled towns such as Geraldton—the residents have been called upon to find their quota towards the maintenance of the hospitals, and the Government subsidised them pound for pound. The Perth Hospital, of course, is such only in name, as it caters for the indigent and sick throughout the State. However, the Perth City Council could have set an example or at least could have done what the other local authorities throughout the State have done. Had the example been set the Government, notwithstanding the many demands on their finances, would have taken adequate steps to prevent the position developing as it has done. I am sorry indeed that the Appropriation Bill makes no provision for money to remedy the existing state of affairs. There are many public spirited men and women in this city who, if given a lead, would endeavour to do their duty towards that very fine institution. I do not know whether it is now too late to ask that an attempt be made to arouse public opinion and get the Lotteries Commission to set aside a sum of money from every

lottery to form the nucleus of a fund to provide an improved hospital. According to the report of experts a large sum of money will be necessary to put the institution into anything like a satisfactory condition. Still, we can make a start. I regret that no opportunity is given to us to deal specially with the Auditor General's report. When the Address-in-reply is being debated we have not the report before us. However, I shall take this opportunity to deal with his report. I sometimes wonder why older members of this Chamber become so heated when anything in the nature of State trading is proposed. One has only to mention that something is desired by the Government for the people to evoke strong protests on the ground that it is a form of State trading. Though I have wondered at their hostility on that score, a perusal of the Auditor General's report helps me to understand why they become so hot and bothered. The report shows that a number of the State trading concerns have consistently incurred losses ever since their inception. I will refer to just two of the efforts made by our Governments in the direction of State trading. One is the North-West Shipping Service, the other the Wyndham Meat Works. According to the Auditor General's report for the past financial year, the net loss on our State trading concerns for 1936-37 totalled £54,764 16s. 2d. Some of the trading concerns, the State Sawmills, for instance, are showing a profit; but the total I quoted is the net loss. As regards the two trading concerns operating in the North-West, the State Shipping Service made a loss of £36,203 16s., and the Wyndham Meat Works a loss of £36,300; a total of some £72,000. One has to take a long-range view of these undertakings, but ever since their inception they seem to have lost money. In the case of the Shipping Service the losses aggregate £852,775 2s. 7d., and in the case of the Wyndham Meat Works £1,378,157 15s. 7d.

Hon. G. Fraser: And yet it is said that we give nothing to the North-West!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I agree that members for the North-West are entitled to say that people living in this part of the State should do something for those developing the remote North. I have in mind a movement, sponsored some few years ago, to get the Commonwealth to take over our North-West as from the 21st parallel of latitude.

Why the State does not try to come to some arrangement with the Commonwealth about this matter, I do not understand. The North-West is more than we, a mere handful in the South-West corner of the State, can afford. We cannot do what should be done for the people working in the North under great difficulties. Then why should we adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude? Why not relieve ourselves of a financial strain that has proved too heavy for us? In the Appropriation Bill various Ministerial Votes are mentioned. I will refer to one of which I regard the administration as unsatisfactory and which is very hard to get to the bottom of—the amount for Unemployment Relief. The following details are given:—

	£	s.	d.
Bed tickets	252	19	0
Meal tickets	323	16	0
Board and lodging ..	372	7	6
Ration orders	33,348	10	8
	£34,297	13	2

I have repeatedly been asked by unemployed men in my town of Geraldton to obtain ration orders for them. I have gone to Perth and made inquiries, and have been informed—though not on paper—that there is no such thing as a ration order. A former mayor of Geraldton has ventilated the matter in the local Press, but we have been unable to get to the bottom of it. I do not want it to be thought that I am in favour of the issue of ration orders. I do not think many unemployed men desire them. I am glad to know that those men prefer to work for the money required to buy food for themselves and their wives and children.

Hon. G. Fraser: The men concerned are "C" class men who cannot be employed.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I thank the hon. member for that interjection. If other towns are treated as Geraldton is treated in this respect, I can only infer that the whole of the money for ration orders is spent in the metropolitan area. If that is so, it is entirely wrong. I await the Minister's explanation of the matter. The only thing that can be done for men who are down and out or incapacitated in Geraldton is to go to the police station and get them an order for a shilling's worth of rations, after receiving which the recipients must get out of the town. I reiterate, when occa-

sion demands it ration orders are issued in the metropolitan area. Now, one law for the city and another law for the country should not exist.

Hon. A. Thomson: Unfortunately, it does exist.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I ask for an explanation because the matter has given rise to much criticism and controversy in the town of Geraldton. I am sorry to have detained the House and to have added to the labours of the "Hansard" staff. I know the desire is to get the session finished, but I have felt it my duty to say what I have said.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 10th December, 1937.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—EDUCATION.

Perth Boys' School—Payment of Sports Fees.

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is it the practice at Perth Boys' School, James-street, to demand a sports fee

from certain scholars? 2, Was a reference as to character refused one boy on account of non-payment of this fee? 3, Is he aware that a position for one boy in a financial institution has been jeopardised by the non-production of a school character reference, which was alleged to have been refused a boy on the above grounds? 4, Is he aware that even the payment of this small sum of 3s. is beyond the means of many parents? 5, If true, will he take immediate steps to put a stop to this reprehensible practice?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (for the Minister for Education) replied: 1, No. There is no compulsion, and where the payment of such fee would inflict hardship on parents it is not expected. 2, No. 3, No. 4, Yes. See answer to 1 above. 5, The practice suggested does not occur.

Extension of School Age.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Does he propose to extend the school-leaving age, and, if so, to what extent? 2, Has consideration been given to the best means whereby added school days might be used by those concerned? 3, In the event of extension of school-leaving age being impossible, will he endeavour to provide for scholarships whereby bright children of poor parents may be enabled to continue at school? 4, Is it possible, having in view the necessity which would arise for added teaching staff and school accommodation, to advise the approximate date from which the raising of the school age may be inaugurated?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (for the Minister for Education) replied: 1 to 4, The whole question is receiving consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAY INSTITUTE, COLLIE.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it the intention of the Railway Department to proceed with the erection of an institute at the important railway centre of Collie for the use of railway employees in that area? 2, Will he name an approximate date when the building of the institute will be proceeded with?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes, when funds are available. 2, See answer to No. 1.