

determine that the park is to remain as it is at present until there is greater evidence that the indigenous flora of the park will be preserved.

The **SPEAKER**: The hon. member's time has expired.

Hon. D. BRAND: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

*Point of Order.*

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member desires to say any more, I would like to move that his time be extended.

The Speaker: It is the right of any hon. member to move such a motion, but it must be done immediately. I did not receive such a motion.

Mr. Jamieson: I do not wish to say any more.

*Debate Resumed.*

Motion put and passed.

Debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Council and, on motion by Hon. D. Brand, read a first time.

*House adjourned at 11.32 p.m.*

## **Legislative Council**

Wednesday, 18th September, 1957.

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

## **QUESTIONS.**

### **RAILWAYS.**

#### *Employees of Dining-car and Refreshment-room Services.*

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Minister for Railways:

In connection with the dining-car and refreshment-room services of the Railway Department, will the following information be supplied to the House:—

(1) What number of persons are employed at Welshpool?

(2) What are—

(a) their names;

(b) their positions;

(c) their individual salaries?

The **MINISTER** replied:

(1) Salaried staff 9; wages staff 6.

(2) (a) This information is not normally supplied but can be made available to the hon. member at my office.

(b) and (c)—

#### **Salaried Staff.**

Position.	Present Salary.
	£
Superintendent	2,000
Clerk in Charge	1,500
Providore	1,350
Inspector	1,215
Accounts Clerk	1,095
Staff Clerk	1,025
General Assistant	1,025
General Clerk	975
Typiste	334

#### **Wages Staff.**

Pastrycook	868
Van Driver	803
Labourer	729
Head Attendant	552
Junior Attendants (2) each	506

### **NORTHERN HIGHWAY.**

#### *Centre-lining at Bindoon Hill.*

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Will the Government give consideration to the necessity for widening portion of the Northern Highway, and in particular, the north and south approaches to Bindoon Hill, with a view to centre-lining those portions and so minimising the road hazard?

(2) If it is not practicable to widen the full length of these approaches immediately, could selected danger points receive attention?

(3) How soon could such work be put in hand?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes; and the Government has been heavily engaged on the work of widening this road. The programme over the years has been prepared having regard in some measure to the greater traffic intensity near the metropolis and with a view, also, to obtaining maximum improvement with the money available. The road north and south of Bindoon is of low speed value, and this is obvious to road users.

The cost of widening and improving the alignment on this section would be many more times per mile than other parts of the highway. However, the time is approaching when such sections as Bindoon Hill are becoming due for treatment. A survey has already been made of this particular section and the department is now planning for the work.

(2) The sections with the poorest alignment will receive prior treatment.

(3) Probably a substantial part of the road in the Bindoon area will be scheduled in the 1958-59 programme of works.

#### BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL.

##### *Attendances and Accommodation.*

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) How many pupils is it anticipated will be ready to start at Belmont High School next year?

(2) Is the present accommodation, or the anticipated accommodation, sufficient to absorb the anticipated number of pupils?

(3) If not, what steps are being taken to accommodate these pupils into high school?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 320.

(2) The proposed additions will meet requirements.

(3) The matter is receiving consideration.

#### MILK.

##### *Board Inspectors and Solids-not-Fat Content.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. N. E. Baxter) asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What qualifications do inspectors of the Milk Board possess?

(2) How do their qualifications compare with the qualifications of health inspectors employed by the Health Department?

(3) What are the recognised normal solids-not-fat content of—

- (a) cows' milk;
- (b) goats' milk
- (c) human milk
- (d) mares' milk?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The qualifications held by individual inspectors of the Milk Board vary. They include—

The Diploma in Dairying, Muresk Agricultural College.

The Diploma in Agriculture, Muresk Agricultural College.

The Certificate of having taken the Diploma of Dairy Manufacture's Course, Massey Agricultural College, New Zealand.

Milk and Cream Tester's Certificate.

Cheese Maker's Certificate.

Butter Maker's Certificate.

Cream Grader's Certificate.

The Royal Sanitary Institute—Sanitary Inspector's Certificate.

The Royal Sanitary Institute—Certificate of Inspector of Meat and Other Foods.

Certificate of Competency as Engine Driver.

Boiler Attendant's Certificate of Competency.

Fellow of Australian Institute Dairy Factory Managers and Secretaries Inc.

(2) The work of Milk Board inspectors and of health inspectors is not comparable in many respects. The Royal Sanitary Institute Certificate held by some inspectors of the Milk Board is similar to a certificate held by health inspectors. Some Milk Board inspectors have other qualifications.

(3) (a) Cows. Minimum standard in Western Australia is 8.5%.

(b), (c), (d) There are no recognised standards but the average solids-not-fat content is as follows:—

(b) goats	....	8.3%
(c) human	....	8.3%
(d) mares	....	8.4%

#### MOTION—SCHOOL CHILDREN AND CROSS-WALK HAZARDS.

*To Inquire by Select Committee.*

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [4.40]: I move—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into, and make recommendations for, proposals to invoke the aid of suitable age pensioners in connection with the manning of cross-walks used by school children in journeying to and from school, with particular emphasis upon the urgent necessity for a plan which will provide more defined and specific protection for school children against ever-increasing traffic hazards, which protection at present is totally inadequate.

As members know and appreciate, the incidence of accidents that occur to children travelling to and from school is greater today than previously, and it seems to be increasing as time goes on. I venture to suggest that every parents and citizens' association in the State—and for that matter, every individual parent—is considerably concerned over the safety of the children who are obliged to cross main highways and thoroughfares, particularly in the metropolitan area and in Fremantle, in order to get to school and return home.

Personally, over a period of years, I have, in connection with this problem, made representations to the Minister for Police; but unfortunately the Minister, or the Traffic Department, has not seen fit, in many cases, to give attention to these cross-walks until some tragedy has taken place or a child has been injured. I can personally think of a number of such instances, some of which have happened within my own electorate.

I realise that the answer that members who pursue inquiries of this nature usually receive is to the effect that because of the shortage of staff in the Police Department it is not possible to make available police constables to man cross-walks that are used by children. I suggest, however, that a cross-walk is not of much value unless it is manned by someone in authority.

This excuse is given by the department and by the Minister when inquiries of this nature are pursued and requests are made that the department should give a particular cross-walk some attention in order to relieve the traffic hazards which endanger the children whilst travelling to and from school. I know that Governments in the past, and the present Minister, have realised the importance of traffic lights, and that an endeavour has been made to install them at many intersections in the metropolitan area. But traffic lights are both short in supply and expensive to buy; and it is not possible to provide all these crossings, intersections and cross-walks with the necessary traffic lights in order to minimise the danger which adult and juvenile pedestrians come up against while using the crossings.

At the same time, the manually-operated light is not always infallible. One is installed in Canning Highway, in portion of my province; and on one occasion two small boys, out of the devilment of their nature, decided to press the switch; and having done that, they made a quick exit and left the red light against the traffic. That is the sort of thing that can happen, although I appreciate that it does not occur very often.

When I was overseas I saw age pensioners—both male and female—being used to great advantage to protect school children when going to and from school.

The pensioners appeared to me to be suitable types—I mean they were in full control of their faculties; their eyesight in particular—and they were dressed in white coats and caps, and had mounted on a pole or broom-stick a sign upon which was printed the words: "Stop. Children crossing."

The attendant would stand on one kerb and collect behind him—or her—a number of school children; and when there were sufficient to make the crossing, the attendant would go out into the middle of the road and show his sign; the traffic would obediently come to a stop at the cross-walk; and the children would be safely shepherd across the road, the attendant returning to the kerb. The result was that the number of accidents was minimised to the greatest possible extent because of the protection that was afforded to the children by the implementation of this plan. This was done in the morning and also in the afternoon, and at times—in certain places where it was required—in the lunch period as well.

I do not propose that this would be a matter of permanency. As I said a few moments ago, we realise that because of the possible shortage of material and the acute shortage of money, it is not possible to supply straight away all the traffic lights that are required. The plan I have in mind would be a temporary measure until such time as the traffic lights were placed where required.

The operation of this idea could, I think, be undertaken by the local authorities in the particular districts concerned; and wherever there is a cross-walk we know that it is painted on the road only after an investigation has been made—now by the Main Roads Department—over a period of 12 hours on any one day. The amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic that uses the road and the cross-walk is considered; and when it is found that sufficient traffic uses the crossing, then the cross-walk is usually put in by the department, with the authority of the Minister. By doing that the department would automatically say where a particular crosswalk would be; and it is at that point that the assistance of suitable age pensioners could be used for the plan I have. The reimbursement to the local authority can be done by the Government.

The cost of such a plan is at present beyond my estimation, because I do not know exactly how many cross-walks there are in the metropolitan area; and I do not know how many of them would require the attention to which I have referred. But if the House sees fit to allow the appointment of a select committee, these matters can be investigated: evidence can be called from wherever necessary; and certain information can be furnished in order to elucidate

the cost basis of this plan and to see whether or not it could have any practical application in Western Australia.

Furthermore, in the event of a select committee being appointed, its findings would be returned to the Legislative Council; and members would then be in a position to see whether the plan had any merit or not. If it had any merit, members would be in a position to give us their views, and recommendations could be made to the Government in order that the scheme could be put into operation.

The employment of suitable age pensioners, in addition to being a protection for our young children, would also be the means of supplementing the income of some of these people. Of course that must be done within the permissible earning of a pensioner over and above the pension payable to him under the Commonwealth scheme. I do not think it is necessary for me at this stage to tell members what the permissible earning rate of a pensioner is; but it is of such a nature that payment for services which I have outlined would be most satisfactory, and would supplement his income to such an extent that it would be of benefit to him.

This work would not require any marked degree of qualification. I think that pensioners who would be employed on this work would have to be given some sort of short course so that they would be able to understand and be proficient in the work that they intended to undertake. I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything further concerning the matter except to repeat that this work is done very satisfactorily by pensioners in certain parts of England; and I see every reason why the matter should be investigated.

I hope that the move for the appointment of a select committee will receive support from members of this Chamber, and that the investigation which the committee makes will prove to be of such a nature that a plan of the type I have envisaged can be put into effect. I believe it will be highly beneficial to the school children of this State by giving them the protection which they so badly need; and it will also be doing something to assist certain of our age pensioners.

**HON. G. BENNETTS** (South-East) [4.55]: While I shall speak on the motion at this stage, I shall defer my decision on it until I have heard some debate on the question. As regards controlling traffic over cross-walks, I think a scheme similar to that which now exists in Brisbane should be adopted. When I was over there I was taken to several places where schools have been built on busy highways, and at those places I saw children themselves controlling the traffic. At each cross-walk three children from either the 5th or 6th standard

would use a red or a green flag, as the case might be, and control the traffic in order to allow the children to cross the road.

The children would be taken to the cross-walk by the teacher and left there under the control of these other three children. It was remarkable the way that these youngsters controlled the traffic. The police told me that there were seldom any breaches of the traffic regulations, and the children were given instructions by the Traffic Branch as to the control of traffic.

The use of age pensioners for this work might be one way of using cheap labour. While it may be assisting some of them who are perhaps at present on a very limited income, and who find it difficult to exist when they have to pay rent and so on, I think they would be employed at a rate far below that which is now paid to others who do a similar type of job. I refer to members of the Police Department. I have travelled through Midland Junction at certain hours of the day, and I have seen police constables on duty at the cross-walks directing the traffic. I do not like the principle involved in these age pensioners doing the work at a lower wage.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** They have to work only about two hours a day.

**Hon. G. BENNETTS:** I suppose it would be a couple of hours in the morning.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** It would be one hour in the morning and one in the afternoon.

**Hon. G. BENNETTS:** There would be lunch-time, too.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** In some cases.

**Hon. G. BENNETTS:** They would have to be there at play-time and lunch-time, because shops are generally situated on the opposite side of the road to the school, and children have to go across the road to get to them. I would like to see a plan similar to that in operation in Queensland adopted in this State. It is an education for children to be taught the rules of safety and the general traffic regulations. If two or three of them are on duty each day, they soon become traffic conscious.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Was the Queensland Traffic Act amended to give them any status?

**Hon. G. BENNETTS:** Yes; I believe they do have certain powers.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Sixth standard children with traffic status?

**Hon. G. BENNETTS:** I would not say that. I did not inquire that deeply into the matter; but I was told that these children report any person who breaches the traffic regulations—which is very seldom. If that happened, they would take the number of the vehicle and report the matter to the police. The police would deal with the

offender very severely. I give this information to the House in the hope that I might contribute something of value to the debate on this motion.

On motion by Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, debate adjourned.

## **MOTION—CHARCOAL IRON WORKS IN SOUTH-WEST.**

*Export of Tallering Peak Iron Ore.*

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**  
(Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [5.11: I move—

That this House supports the proposal to establish a large-scale Charcoal Iron Works in the South-West and also the associated proposal to export overseas 1,000,000 tons of iron ore from Tallering Peak for the purpose of financing the project.

During the last few sittings of this House much information has been given in connection with the iron ore deposits in this State. I am sure that members are fully aware of the object of this motion and of the circumstances surrounding the charcoal iron industry and the iron ore deposits here. However, it will be necessary for me to go over some of the ground which has been already covered in order that this motion might be viewed in its proper perspective.

The proposal to export iron ore originated from the very large overseas demand for Wundowie charcoal iron. The board of management of the Wundowie charcoal iron industry was approached by representatives of various countries overseas with offers to purchase charcoal iron in very great quantities, much greater than the maximum output of the Wundowie works. It was considered that the transaction would give a very large profit to the State, and lead to the expansion of a very important industry.

Unfortunately, the works at Wundowie are unable to produce anywhere near the required quantities of charcoal iron that are being sought by the overseas buyers; so it was proposed to extend the industry, and to utilise the waste timber in the forests of the State with a view to producing more charcoal iron, creating more employment, and establishing another very valuable industry.

Approaches were made to the Government for finance to expand the charcoal iron industry at Wundowie, but the funds were not available; so the board of management attempted to sell the overburden at Koolyanobbing, which amounted to 50,000 tons of ore. This was on top of some very high-grade iron and manganese ore; and the board of management was very anxious to extract that ore.

An approach was then made by a Japanese firm to purchase the 50,000 tons of iron ore. In September of last year the board of management applied to the

Commonwealth Government for an export licence. Some months passed before the Commonwealth Government arrived at a decision on the matter. This ultimately proved to be in the negative. The Commonwealth refused the application for a permit.

In the meantime the board of management also approached Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. and acquainted that company of the position in which the Wundowie works were placed. The board indicated to B.H.P. the price that had been offered by the overseas buyers, and at the same time invited that company to make an offer for the iron ore. B.H.P. advised the board of management that it was not able to quote a price which would be acceptable to the board of management; in other words, B.H.P. considered that the price it was prepared to pay for the iron ore would not cover the cost of extracting and shipping the ore. It advised the board of management to remove the overburden of ore and set it aside until such time as the board decided to use it, or until it was possible to ship the ore.

I repeat that while the request was before the Federal Government, an endeavour was made by the board of management to negotiate the sale of this ore in Australia to B.H.P. The content of that ore is 60 per cent. iron. However, as I indicated, B.H.P. was not interested and declined even to make an offer. That action would indicate that B.H.P. was not at all concerned about this quantity of 50,000 tons of ore, and that it was pretty well assured that the ore would not be exported from Australia. The company knew that the ore would be made available if it decided to use it. However, the Commonwealth Government, after some months, notified the board of management and the Premier of this State that the permit could not be granted.

Subsequent to that request and its refusal, several offers to purchase this iron ore had been made by various interests to the board of management of the Wundowie works, and also to the State Government. The Government obtained expert advice as to the cost of mining and transporting the ore in order to arrive at an f.o.b. price Fremantle. The offer from the overseas buyers exceeded the cost of extraction and transport by just over £1 per ton.

So in its considerations, the board of management felt that here was a great opportunity to expand the charcoal iron industry, and to secure sufficient capital to carry out the proposed extensions with a view to increasing the output of charcoal iron in this State. It grasped the opportunity of exploiting the overseas markets for high-grade charcoal iron.

After discussions with the Minister concerned and with the Premier, the board decided to make a further approach to the Commonwealth Government for a

permit to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore, the profits from the sale thereof to be used on expansion and development of the charcoal iron industry in the south-west portion of this State—either in, around or near Bunbury. The application was accompanied by a statement prepared by the board of management which showed the cost, the revenue expected, and an estimated profit of something like £1,000,000 spread over 2½ years. That would be sufficient to enable the establishment of new coke kilns and a blast furnace in the South-West to produce more charcoal iron.

The Commonwealth Government gave consideration to this proposal, but again refused an export permit. The reply from Sir Arthur Fadden has been read in this House. It set out the grounds upon which the Commonwealth Government based its reasons for refusing a permit to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore. The refusal was based mainly on two factors.

The first was the existence of a general embargo against the export of iron ore from Australia which the Commonwealth Government did not propose to alter in any respect—and on that ground it refused to grant a permit to export—and the second was that the Commonwealth Government had analysed the costs submitted by the board of management. It ridiculed the figures which had been submitted, and it contended that the figures were not all that the board of management and the Premier had hoped. It contended that instead of a profit being derived from the project, the venture would, in fact, be unprofitable.

With all due respect to the Prime Minister and to Sir Arthur Fadden—who was acting Prime Minister at the time, and who prepared the letter in reply—I must say that no positive reliance can be placed on an analysis of a proposition which is placed before the Commonwealth authorities. That has been proved over and over again. They have been proved to be wrong in their analysis and estimate of what a certain industry might do, and in regard to its prospects of survival. I want to quote one instance of which I have some first-hand knowledge and experience. I refer to the application by the Australian Blue Asbestos Co. to the Tariff Board for protection against overseas imports.

On that occasion, the Tariff Board took very lengthy evidence from all parties concerned; and in its final report to the Federal Government, in which it recommended that no protection be given, it ridiculed the claim of the company that it could obtain overseas markets for the sale of 4,000 tons of blue asbestos. The board said that the company's assessment of an outlet for 4,000 short tons of Australian crocidolite asbestos per annum at an average price of £110 (Australian) suffered from a degree of optimism which

was neither supported by its history or earlier marketing experience nor justified by likely trends of its future production position. I mention that to show that little credence can be placed on the analysis of a proposition which is submitted to what are supposedly Commonwealth experts.

The members of the Tariff Board said that the company was basing its claim on optimistic premises. What has happened since then? The company has not been able to produce near the quantity of blue asbestos to satisfy the markets which it has secured overseas. Several times 4,000 tons per annum could have been disposed of overseas if the plant had been large enough to handle it adequately. So, with all due respect to Sir Arthur Fadden's letter, I would say that very little credence can be placed upon the final submission that the proposal to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore might not prove to be profitable and could perhaps eventually result in a loss.

Hon. H. K. Watson: The Tariff Board, in its turn, is complaining that the Federal Government does not accept its recommendations.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Unfortunately, the Federal Government did accept its recommendation.

Hon. H. K. Watson: In that case, yes. The Tariff Board is not the Federal Government.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know that. I quoted that to show that the analysis of the experts concerning the possibilities of an industry is not always correct. We know that Sir Arthur Fadden would not work out the possibilities of the industry. That matter would be submitted to the economics department.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Apparently not to the Tariff Board. It does not think much of the Federal Government at the moment.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: This would not be a matter for the Tariff Board. These people do not want protection. All they want is the right to a little of that freedom of which we hear so much these days.

Hon. H. K. Watson: And to which they are entitled.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am speaking of the board of management of Wundowie. All the members of the board ask is the right to be able to finance expansion with their own resources, and at no cost to the taxpayers. The figures they presented have been analysed, checked and rechecked; and I think that members of this Chamber will agree that those who constitute the board of management of Wundowie are men with very wide experience. They are very capable men, for the

purpose of having their names on record in Hansard, I propose to mention who they are.

The chairman is Mr. N. Fernie. One of the members is Dr. A. J. Reid, who was Under Treasurer of this State until his retirement only two or three years ago. Another member is Mr. B. K. Butterworth, managing director of Saunders & Stewart. The workers' representative is Mr. W. Heeps and the other member is Mr. A. C. Harris, Conservator of Forests, who has had long experience in connection with the establishment of Wundowie.

I suggest that men of that calibre know what they are talking about when they analyse the cost of a project and when they say that the sale of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore will return a net profit to the industry of £1,000,000. They could sell 5,000,000 tons. In fact, they were approached for that quantity at the rate of 1,000,000 tons per year. However, they do not propose to sell 5,000,000 tons, but only 1,000,000 tons, which would be sufficient to finance the project.

The quantity of 1,000,000 tons is only .7 per cent. of the known high-grade ore in Australia, as was pointed out by Mr. Wise in his excellent speech of yesterday, in which he covered the whole industry. I am speaking now of the total quantity of iron ore which is known to exist above the ground. Based on today's annual consumption of iron ore throughout Australia and on B.H.P. figures there is something like 3,000,000 tons of iron ore per annum being used in Australia. If 1,000,000 tons of that 3,000,000 tons were exported, it would mean that the life of the industry would be reduced by four months. The life of the Australian steel industry would be reduced by that period and by no greater period.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: At the end of the century.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS:** When we look at the consumption, compared with the quantity available, it could be, as Mr. Wise just said, that the deposits would not be exhausted until 100 years' time. On the other hand, the period could be much longer. There are 250,000,000 tons of ore in Western Australia alone of a quality rendering it suitable for use in the steel industry. That is the quantity of measured ore above ground. It includes the quantity known to exist as a result of drillings that have taken place at the Koolyanobbing deposit; the ore goes very deep.

It is known also that at Cockatoo Island and Koolan Island, in Yampi Sound, there is a quantity of 108,000,000 tons which has been measured above low-water mark, which is visible. The ore is also known to exist below low-water mark; but how far below nobody knows, because it has never been drilled.

At the rate that B.H.P. is taking iron ore from Yampi Sound it will last for many years. The company's figures show that from Yampi Sound in 1955 it took something over 600,000 tons. The following year it took less; and last year, it got down to somewhere in the vicinity of under 400,000 tons. So it took an average of 500,000 tons, and there is 108,000,000 tons measured above low-water mark. So at that rate there would be a supply of iron ore available at Yampi Sound for 200 years.

We know, of course, that the company will take more; but if it took its 3,000,000 tons annual requirement there would be a supply lasting for 33 years—that is, supply of ore above the low-water mark. Then the quantities of iron ore in the Kimberley, North-West and many other areas in Western Australia have certainly not all been located. I would not say that nobody has ever walked over them; but I do say that they have not been definitely located on a plan. As I said by interjection yesterday, iron ore exists in such huge quantities and appears in so many places throughout Western Australia, that little notice is taken of it by prospectors who are looking for rarer minerals; and they do not report finds of iron ore to the Mines Department.

The quantities of iron ore in Western Australia, plus what is in the rest of Australia, are immense; and 1,000,000 tons on Australia's present-day consumption would shorten the life of the steel industry by only four months. But it would establish a charcoal iron industry in the South-West which would have an indefinite life because of the known and unknown quantities of iron ore that would be available if required.

It is surprising and amazing to read of so much criticism against the proposal to establish an industry of that type in Western Australia. We have read in the papers that the Leader of the Opposition in this State criticised a proposal to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore; and he did so mainly on the ground that the profit to be derived from the sale was to be used for the establishment of a charcoal iron industry—an export industry which would employ 500 men directly and, indirectly, another 500, his contention being that the money would be better utilised in the establishment of schools and comprehensive water schemes.

It is all very well on the one hand to ask what the Government is doing about attracting industries to the State; and then, on the other hand, when it attempts to establish or expand its own industry, to condemn it. Had one wished to do so at the time, one could possibly have adopted the same attitude as the Leader of the Opposition now adopts, by criticising his Government, when he was Minister for

Works and took an active part in establishing the Kwinana Refinery at a cost to the taxpayer of something like £4,000,000. The charcoal iron industry now proposed would not cost the taxpayer a penny.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Because it would be established out of a profit from the sale of the iron ore. However, we know that the hon. member has always been biased against the development of a charcoal iron industry in this State.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: You should read the debate on the Kwinana project.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have read the debate on the Kwinana project, and I supported it. My point is that while it is apparently all right to spend £4,000,000 of the taxpayers' money to attract to Western Australia an industry which, incidentally, does not supply us with petrol one farthing cheaper than we got it before—

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: But it pays rates and taxes and pilotage.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The pilotage is still at the taxpayers' expense. I do not say that that industry should not have been established here—far from it. But I would point out how unfair is the criticism of the present proposal, and how it falls into line with the refusal by Canberra and with the attitude of some Federal members and also Government members who represent Western Australia. Have members read of those Federal members complaining about the Commonwealth Government refusing to grant this export licence for 1,000,000 tons or four months' supply of iron ore on the present-day Australian consumption? If B.H.P. doubled its consumption of iron ore in a few years' time the quantity now sought to be exported would represent only two months' supply for the Commonwealth. Here we see the development of Western Australia being strangled by central control.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Don't you believe in unification?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I believe in unification being applied in a fair manner. I believe in federalism, but not in the Federal Government refusing permission to export a few months' supply of iron ore which could be sold at a profitable price, thus allowing us to establish here an industry that would mean employment for people now out of work.

The PRESIDENT: One hour having elapsed, the Minister's time has expired.

*Resolved: That motions be continued.*

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I thank the House for granting me further time. I do not desire to enlarge further on

my criticism of those who have apparently set out to obstruct worth-while progress and development in this State. I can only repeat that a licence to export this iron ore would result in a valuable export sale which would bring the State between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000, of which £5,000,000 would be expended within the State in mining, transporting and shipping the iron ore; while the other £1,000,000 would be spent in establishing a permanent industry in this State—one which would produce charcoal iron of a grade which is without comparison elsewhere in the world, and which is in demand by 15 or 20 countries, all anxious to buy charcoal iron produced by the Wundowie process.

There is no need for me to enlarge further on the economics of using the waste timbers of our forests to produce charcoal for use in the charcoal iron industry. We know that forest waste at present constitutes a considerable fire hazard and is a menace to many people living in forest areas. Many millions of tons of such waste are burnt annually by fires lit to clear the land—fires which get away or start by spontaneous combustion; fires started wilfully by people who do not realise the danger of leaving camp fires unattended; or fires due to other forms of negligence.

If the proposal before us is given fair consideration and is analysed from all angles, no one can logically say it is not reasonable and deserving of a sympathetic response from the Federal Government, which should do all it can to facilitate the establishment of this industry. If members give the matter careful thought they will realise the immense impact that the sale of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore would have on the economy of this State at present; and I am sure they will agree that the motion should be carried and forwarded to the Federal Government so that it, in turn, might appreciate our position and give us the sympathetic co-operation we require in order to grasp this market which is waiting for our iron ore.

I would remind members that there is no objection by the Commonwealth to the export of charcoal iron, the finished product; and if the Commonwealth will agree to the export of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore from Talling Range, in about 2½ years' time we will be able to increase our export of charcoal iron and take advantage of the market offering.

America and Europe are inquiring every day for our charcoal iron, and would buy it in quantities if it were available; yet we are being denied those markets merely, in effect, because the export of the tonnage sought would shorten the life of the Australian steel industry—on present consumption figures—by four months at the outside. I hope the House will agree to the motion.

**HON. C. H. SIMPSON** (Midland) [5.40]: In moving this motion the Minister is really asking us to register our approval of two projects. The first is the mining of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore from Tallering Peak; and the second, which is coupled with the first and which is apparently made a condition relating to it, is the establishment of a charcoal iron industry in this State.

I cannot see why the two should have been coupled. If the Minister had submitted a proposition asking the co-operation of this House in regard to permission to accept a very attractive offer by the Japanese to purchase 1,000,000 tons of iron ore, I think he would have commanded a certain amount of sympathy; and I, for one, would have been quite prepared to give my support to the project.

However, the Minister is asking us, in addition to approving of the sale of the iron ore, to sanction the establishment of a charcoal iron industry here; and that is something that would require the closest examination, in spite of the report furnished by the gentlemen mentioned by the Minister. It would require very close examination before we could possibly agree to it.

I am, of course, interested in the iron ore deposit at Tallering Range; and I have known of it for many years. When coming to Perth years ago I discussed with the Mines Department the question of this deposit. The department knew quite a lot about it and told me that the estimated tonnage was 1,000,000 tons; and that it was high grade and equal in every respect to the ore at Yampi Sound, Koolyanobbing and Iron Knob. But it was pointed out that, by and large, iron ore was at that time a plentiful commodity in its occurrence throughout the world; that it was very cheap to buy; and that it would offer little attraction to any prospective buyer at that stage unless it was closer to the seaboard.

The department at that time informed me that it might be quite a long while before this admittedly rich deposit of iron ore, limited in extent, would be seriously considered, for the reasons given me. Later on, as Minister for Mines, I examined the files again in regard to this deposit; but no other work had been done on it and I learned little in addition to what I had been told originally.

The revised estimate as a result of a survey made since placed the amount at 3,517,000 tons. Why the odd 17,000 tons should have been mentioned has always been a bit of a mystery to me, because they admit that this amount, surveyed down to the base of the deposit, could very easily be more. In fact they were not prepared to say that that estimate—although it was surveyed and worked out as being reasonably accurate—was a true and correct estimate of the body of ore that was there.

I can also remember that when I was Minister for Mines approaches were made to me for a permit to export manganese and chromate. As the export of these minerals was covered by a blanket embargo by the Commonwealth Government which considered them to be of strategic value—and iron ore was placed in the same category—we could only inform the inquirer that we could not possibly give the permission he desired. But later on, as representations were repeated, we took the matter up with the Commonwealth Government; and the Bureau of Mineral Resources, while adhering to its contention that they could not be exported, did approve the provision of some money for drilling to be carried out in order to ascertain the extent of the actual deposits. The result was that after a re-examination permits were issued for the export of both manganese and chromate; as a matter of fact, manganese is being exported from the port of Geraldton today.

My experience—as Minister for Mines—with the Commonwealth authorities also showed that while Ministers in all good faith may say that such and such a thing cannot be done, their advice rests, almost entirely, as they must, on the reports of their technical experts. Without being too critical I can say that the Bureau of Mineral Resources is a very conservative institution; and that on at least two occasions I have found that when a matter was resubmitted to that body it revised its first estimate; and, no doubt, on the particulars supplied, the Minister in charge of the department would have to vary the original answer he gave to any query.

Accordingly it seems to me—and I think I am right—that to a large extent we are at the mercy of what some civil servant in Canberra might think. To my mind that is an example of remote control. The principle seems to be that unless a proposition is submitted a second or a third time it is not considered any further; it is just allowed to rest. So it is, with that conviction in mind, that I think there is something to be said for the acceptance of an offer which is so very attractive compared with the prices offered previously; it is something that might well be considered as of value to the State.

It has already been pointed out that if our minerals are reserved for processing in Australia, and most of them go to the Eastern States, we may, or may not, receive an adequate consideration in value for them. But most of the processing, and the industry created—which would of course mean the employment of men—would not directly benefit Western Australia, though it might be of value to Australia as a whole.

Arguing on those lines there may be something to be said in favour of a more adequate consideration on the part of the Federal Government of this particular request. But when it comes to the second

part of the proposition, I am afraid I cannot view it with the same favourable reaction.

The history of Wundowie has not—at least not on paper—proved it to be a very attractive proposition. I understand that iron interests generally are not favourably impressed with the possibilities of a charcoal iron industry. That is why I think that another motion appearing on the notice paper should receive the support of this House, and that the matter should be fully considered before a motion such as this is dealt with.

A fortnight or so ago, being interested in this particular project, I journeyed out to Talling Peak; but unfortunately time did not permit the examination I would have liked to make. There are two hills, each of which would, I suppose, be 1,000 ft. high. From Mullewa they are situated about 33 or 34 miles.

In order to approach them it is necessary for one to journey as far as the 37-mile peg on the North-rd., and then branch in on a station track as far as one's car will go; because only a jeep or a land rover could negotiate the country beyond that point. After this it is necessary to travel on foot for about 1½ miles to the first peak, and perhaps three miles to the second. The journey is over some very rough country, though it is not particularly difficult to traverse if one has the time and is prepared for the trip, and has suitable boots, knapsack and something to drink.

It would probably entail a day's visit to make an adequate survey of that area. But that was beyond the time that I had at my disposal at that moment, and this rendered my trip abortive so far as a close examination was concerned.

I was informed that the iron ore deposit was on the peak furthest from the point which I was able to reach; and that while there was some indication of iron on the first peak, it was probably of not very high quality, and certainly not to be compared with that on the Talling Peak itself.

The name "Talling" is rather a misnomer, because the hills are actually situated in the area leased by Wandana station. I do not know whether my assumption is right or wrong, but it is probable that when the peak was named the country was held by Talling station. That, however, is only an assumption; and I do not know whether it is true. In any case there is little doubt that the deposit is there, and so far as the economics of the proposition is concerned, it would definitely be much cheaper to extract iron ore from Talling and transport it to Geraldton than to take ore from Koolyanobbing, and bring it to Fremantle. If the proposition for the extraction of that ore were the only feature to be considered there would be much to commend it.

So far as the particular district of Mullewa is concerned, it would mean the employment of a number of men, and necessary improvements having to be made to the roads to enable them to carry the traffic; because 1,000,000 tons of ore to be transported in two or two and a half years is certainly a fairly sizeable strain for any roads to carry. Some work would definitely have to be done to the Geraldton harbour to enable that tonnage to be handled.

I submit that both those considerations would be of value, not only to that area, but to the Government and to the State; because the port of Geraldton—which is already second in this State as far as size is concerned—is very much in need of dredging work to be done on the channels. That work is urgent because at the moment, the port is being by-passed by vessels; and at certain times of the year it is classified as an unsafe port.

That work alone would necessitate the spending of some hundreds of thousands of pounds; and if that benefit alone were derived from working this particular deposit it would be something well worth while. I also think there would still be some spare cash to meet urgent needs in carrying on the business of State. Indeed the matter could be accepted as a worthwhile proposition.

The word I have from the Mines Department confirms the information I have already given to the House, so there is no necessity for me to read the letter I have before me. It merely goes to show that the estimate of the ore body is the same as given previously—namely, 3,517,000 tons—and the analysis of the ore, while varying from one check to another, did indicate that there was a very high-grade body of ore that could be mined.

If the deposits were developed it would be necessary to grade a reasonably short road from the main North-rd. A short cut from the nearest point would lessen the distance from Talling Peak to Mullewa considerably, as compared with the journey we were compelled to make.

My conclusions are as follows:—I would willingly support a proposition to approach the Federal Government with a request to sell this iron ore, and leave the money available to the State Government; but I would certainly not be prepared to couple that with an approval to establish a charcoal iron industry.

The Minister for Railways: Expand.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Nor do I think that would be necessary. If the State Government were given permission by the Commonwealth Government to export this ore, then nominally the question of what was done with that money would be a State Government responsibility; and I do not see that that Government would be bound to accept the verdict of this House

one way or the other in regard to what should be done with that money, if and when it were received.

In any case I would say that any project to establish a charcoal iron industry should be carefully examined in view of our experience of the past, before we are called upon to give our approval in this House. For that reason I oppose the motion as it stands.

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

#### **PERSONAL EXPLANATION.**

*Withdrawal and Apology to  
Hon. F. J. S. Wise.*

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: During the debate yesterday on the motion for the appointment of a select committee to consider the sale of iron ore to Japan, I uttered words to which Hon. F. J. S. Wise raised objection. I have now satisfied myself that I was in the wrong, and I withdraw those words. Further, I would ask Mr. Wise to accept my apology for an unintentional imputation that he deliberately omitted certain words to mislead the House. I do not believe he did so.

#### **BILL—NEWSPAPER LABEL AND REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

Read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

#### **BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [6.0]: I am not going to oppose this Bill. My only feeling in regard to this class of legislation is that we seem to put in a terrific amount of time looking after people who want to drink beer.

The Bill gave me something like a surprise; because, when the Act was amended four years ago, hotels were given the right to remain open for one hour on Sunday between midday and 1 p.m. and were subsequently allowed to sell two bottles of beer which could be taken away. That, of course, applies only to the Goldfields. It is most extraordinary that we have to legislate for that class of thing for the benefit of those who must have two bottles of beer to take home.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Don't you think the licensing laws are out of date?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes; but we must not—

Hon. G. Bennetts: They can go and get it at a hotel.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The hon. member had better be careful, because I intend to support the second reading. I cannot see any objection to giving clubs the same right as that enjoyed by hotels, and I am not going to oppose the second reading.

HON. J. J. GARRIGAN (South-East) [6.2]: I support the Bill. In 1953 the late Mr. Boylen brought down a Bill whereby the public of the Goldfields could obtain two bottles of beer on Sunday morning from hotels. Unfortunately, the clubs on the Goldfields were overlooked at that time; and all this Bill does is to give them the same right as hotels.

I want to draw the attention of members to the hours of the Sunday session on the Goldfields. The licensing Court asked the U.L.V.A. what hours it suggested for Sunday afternoon. At that time the hotels agreed they should be from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. That was quite all right and it was granted by the court. The clubs were asked what hours they would like and from 3.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. was suggested.

Eventually the hotels called this unfair trading; and once again the U.L.V.A. applied to the court for the same hours as the clubs, and that request was granted. Now to put hotels and clubs on an equal footing, I suggest that the clubs be given the right to sell two bottles of beer on Sunday mornings to their members, and hope that the House will agree to this Bill. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. G. E. Jeffery, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 12th September.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [6.4]: This Bill apparently gives the right to a person or persons to qualify to practise law within the State under unusual circumstances. I want to point out to members that the phraseology of law today is totally different from that of the early days, when it was clearly stated what the statute meant; and we have a lot of verbiage in recent legislation which makes it difficult for ordinary people to understand it.

I am fearful that if we give a man the right to practise law and he has not had the experience and training, it might be very expensive for people and also dangerous for them to accept advice from such a man. I like to help young people, as this Bill proposes to do. My mind goes back to the late Thomas Walker, when he was Minister for Justice just after I came into Parliament. He became Attorney General because he qualified to practise law. He was a man who had an unusual ability—natural ability. I suppose there were few people who could state a case more clearly and more convincingly than he could.

When I was a member of the Government, I was very fearful when the Premier was away because the late Mr. Walker would get up and speak to legislation which

had been introduced and the younger members of the Country Party could not understand quickly enough what he was saying and sat with their mouths open; and immediately he sat down, we had to get the adjournment. I am satisfied that otherwise we would have lost a lot of the legislation we introduced. He was very convincing; and Mr. Heenan knows that there are men who can convince the juries and judges in some cases to believe that black is white and white is black.

I am very reluctant to oppose this legislation because I like to see people have an opportunity to qualify. However, there are better opportunities for young men now than existed in the early days. They can go to universities and reduce the period from five years to two years by practical work in a lawyer's office, and by qualifying for a degree. In the days to which I refer, there was no Faculty of Law at the university.

The second portion of the Bill I regard as being very objectionable. I do not see why members of Parliament should be selected for special privileges. I daresay members have a knowledge of the law because of their association with Parliament, but we very often disagree as to the interpretation of a Bill. Even older members of this Chamber disagree with one another, and that has been the custom for a long time.

Although members of Parliament handle legislation quite frequently, sometimes in this House up to 50 per cent. of members, including myself, will vote either "Yes" or "No", without knowing thoroughly what a provision means. We look to the only man in the House with the qualifications—Mr. Heenan—because he is trained. He has not only practised law for some time, but has passed exams; and we believe he can give us advice. The same thing applies to Dr. Hislop in regard to medical matters, as he has had training and experience.

I am reluctant to say I do not agree with this Bill, because I like to help young men; but we should not pick out certain members of the community to give them an easier qualification than the man who has to start from scratch working in an office or a drapery shop. I think we should suspend the Bill until a later stage.

**HON. L. A. LOGAN** (Midland) [6.11]: I find it difficult to arrive at what might be a right or wrong conclusion with regard to this Bill. In the first place it deals with articled clerks having the right to earn money outside. They have to spend 30 hours at least working with the lawyer to whom they are articled; and if they try to earn more outside they must, to a certain extent, reduce their hours of study.

Once that is done, their chances are lowered—according to the position they take—of getting through their examinations. On the other hand, I should say

that the articled clerk today is not receiving sufficient to enable him to live a reasonable life, unless he can increase his salary by some other means. Therefore, this question is difficult to answer.

**Hon. J. G. Hislop:** The medical student does not get paid now.

**Hon. L. A. LOGAN:** It would be wrong to allow articled clerks to become lawyers simply because of the amount of money their parents possess. I do not think that because he has parents with money a man will therefore become a good lawyer; but opportunity should, to a limited extent, be given to those boys who have not been brought up, each with a silver spoon in his mouth. They should be given a chance to become lawyers.

**Hon. E. M. Heenan:** The board grants permission in reasonable cases.

**Hon. L. A. LOGAN:** The board does grant permission; but it has been said in this House that the board has been refusing opportunities to these articled clerks. Perhaps the board refuses on occasions when there is justification and on occasions when there is not. It is not easy to assess the true position. I know that the Act says the board can give permission for these fellows to work outside; but when Mr. Teahan introduced this Bill, he gave as one of his reasons for doing so that the board was refusing. We cannot have it both ways. One is right and the other is wrong.

The other part of the Bill deals with allowing a member of Parliament to take into consideration the period of time in which he attends sittings of Parliament in regard to serving articles. Again that is not an easy one; but I do not see any reason why a man serving his country and the community should be debarred from eventually taking his examinations. Possibly I will be able to make up my mind better on that point when I hear Mr. Teahan in reply. Until then, I reserve my judgment on the Bill.

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

**HON. R. C. MATTISKE** (Metropolitan) [7.30]: I was interested in the lengthy dissertation given by Mr. Heenan, particularly in view of his profession of solicitor. I think he is well qualified to advise the House and I appreciate the information he gave. I was particularly impressed with the kernel of his speech. He has heard no complaints about the operations of Section 13; and he said that the main object of the Bill is contained in the provision relating to members of Parliament. I will go further than that and say that the main object of the measure is contained in the provision relating to a sitting member of Parliament.

The purpose for which the Bill was presented to Parliament is, I feel, no secret; and I consider it is entirely wrong in principle that we should have anything to do

with it. If we were making provision for some contingency that might arise in the future, or for some emergency, I would say there might be some justification. But when it concerns a person who at the moment is a member of Parliament and it may give him some advantage—it may not but I feel it will—we would be wrong in supporting it.

As Mr. Heenan said, Section 13 has been functioning quite well up to the present. Therefore, why amend it? Why not let it stand as it is, and as it has done for many years? I feel strongly that we should not pass the second reading of the measure. I therefore intend to oppose it.

**HON. J. D. TEAHAN** (North-East—in reply) [7.34] Firstly, I want to say that there is no desire, by the Bill, to break down standards. It has been said that that is what is wanted. But it will be noted that those who graduate, no matter which way they do it, must finally satisfy the Barristers' Board in every detail. So no short cut is intended by the measure.

**Hon. H. K. Watson:** At the moment they must satisfy the board that they have done five or two years' articles, full-time, as the case may be.

**Hon. J. D. TEAHAN:** At present before an articulated clerk engages in outside employment, all he has to do is to get the approval in writing of the Barristers' Board. The Bill simply seeks to provide that he shall get the approval in writing of the solicitor to whom he is articulated. What is wrong with that?

**Hon. E. M. Heenan:** That is my amendment.

**Hon. J. D. TEAHAN:** It has been said all the time that lawyers and solicitors are men of very high standing, and we do not disagree with that. If we have to obtain the approval of the solicitor, what is wrong with that? It is almost equal to getting the approval of the Barristers' Board because I would say the board would be guided by the recommendation of the solicitor to whom the person was articulated.

One member said that the legal profession does not attract many people to it; that the rewards are not as great as they are in other professions. Let us assume that to be correct. It is an argument in favour of making the position no more difficult for those who desire to become lawyers. If anything it should be made easier—and by that I do not mean to break down the standards. I am not suggesting that the examinations should be less difficult or that the time spent as an articulated clerk should be less.

Another member said that the university course is the better one, and that the students are trained well. With that I do not disagree; but the provision we are

trying to make is to cover the person whose parents are not well enough off to assist him through to the final stages.

Let us try to visualise the cost of putting a young chap through the law. A boy would matriculate at the age of about 17 years, and he would then have another five years to go. During that time he would have to be fed and clothed, and have books provided, as well as pocket money and entertainment. I am not going to hazard a guess as to what the total cost would be, but it would be plenty; and it would certainly be more than a man on the basic wage could dare think about; and more than a person on double the basic wage could think about.

**Hon. H. K. Watson:** He gets an opportunity for part-time work.

**Hon. J. D. TEAHAN:** The course is still difficult and costly. There may be a young chap who has matriculated and who has his mind set on the legal profession, but his father receives just a little more than the basic wage.

**Hon. E. M. Heenan:** What does he do if he wants to study chemistry or medicine?

**Hon. J. D. TEAHAN:** A good deal of what I say applies to the other professions too. I would like to see the Federal Government offer more scholarships to permit the people I have spoken about to reach their required goal.

It has been said that the right of the articulated clerk to work should be withheld from him because he may go into avenues that are not the best for him; or that he may do too much. But we do not say that of the university student. When the university recess comes around the university student is at liberty to go and work on the bulk wheat bins for bulk handling, or underground in the mines.

Only the other day I spoke to a medical man on the Goldfields and he proudly told me that each vacation his lad goes out to a pastoral property and does the most menial duties—as a shed hand, I think. He thought that was quite good, and so did I, because it would give the boy an insight into life that would be valuable to him and it would also teach him to fend for himself and not always to rely on his father and mother.

Another argument used was, instead of requesting the right of the articulated clerk to work at night time, or at a time other than when he is engaged with the particular lawyer, why not aim to get a better pay for him when he is articulated?

**Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. J. D. TEAHAN:** It has been said that would be Labour's attitude. It is suggested that lawyers are not too keen on having articulated clerks, and if we forced them to pay too high a wage—say the basic wage of £12 to £14 a week or more

—they would not be bothered with them. This would only defeat the object I am setting out to achieve.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Would this standard apply to all the legal people?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I do not quite understand the interjection, but I would say that a lawyer, rather than pay big money to the articulated clerk, would employ a law clerk. Law clerks who are well trained and do a good job in many offices, are not easy to get.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: They are in a different category. They carry on an occupation on its own. The articulated clerk is learning and being trained.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I hope the Bill will pass the second reading. Certain amendments appear on the notice paper, and one seeks to qualify Section 13 slightly. I have no quarrel with that.

The other part of the Bill seeks to assist members of Parliament who desire one day to join the legal profession. I cannot see much wrong with that proposition. It has been said that the Bill is designed to suit one man. I am not in favour of legislation to suit one man or even tiny sections. But as it happens there is a young man to whom this could apply.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What about the tiny section that wanted two bottles?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: That is another story. It might suit a particular person to take advantage of this measure. I think members have in mind someone that it may suit; but who knows that there may not be others in political life— young men of courage and the ability to study—who might desire to join the legal profession if it were possible for them to do so?

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Why limit it to the legal profession?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: A start has to be made somewhere. The amendment will tone this down. What is asked is not a great deal, but that a portion of the time spent in Parliament shall be considered as part of the articulated time. As has been said by several speakers, any clerk might study in the atmosphere of parliamentary work.

We have heard members say that a horse and cart could be driven through some statutes. The provision here will be an incentive for those taking advantage of the measure to make a better job than perhaps we have done, of the statutes that pass through Parliament. I cannot see much wrong with that provision; more especially in the amendment that is foreshadowed.

To prove to members that I am not seeking something outrageous through this measure, I shall read a subsection appearing in the New Zealand Law Practitioners'

Act of 1955. This Act was passed only two years ago so members can see that it is fairly up to date; it was certainly not passed in the year 1895. Subsection (2) of Section 8 states—

Provided that it shall not be competent for the Senate—

That is the University Senate—

to require that any course of study or practical training shall be taken at a university college in New Zealand by any candidate who for the time being is resident more than 10 miles from that college or who in being engaged qualifying for a profession, learning in a trade, or earning a livelihood, is thereby prevented from attending lectures.

That is to give exemption to those who live some distance from the university.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Exemption from what?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: From the necessity to attend all lectures at the university. We often read in the daily Press that a new Australian has passed the examinations necessary for one of the professions while working as a pastrycook at night, or carrying out some other menial task. Such a person is acclaimed throughout Australia. He has his photograph in the papers and people say, "Good luck to him." I think those who are prepared to work as articulated clerks during the daytime, and do work at night as well in order to earn the wherewithal to carry on, should be encouraged. Only the chap with grit and courage and tenacity will do that.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: As I pointed out to you, and as you know, there are six or eight people in Kalgoorlie who have already done that.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I know of some people who have done it; and they are particularly good solicitors. They are doing a good job; and I could name three of them.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Are any being refused?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I am not certain of that.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Other people do not have a special Act passed for them.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: No; but a person who desires to study for a profession such as this, and who is prepared to do it the hard way, should be encouraged. So I hope that members will agree to the second reading.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	....	14
Noes	....	....	....	....	11
Majority for					3

**Ayes.**

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

(Teller.)

**Noes.**

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

**BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE.***Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 10th September.

**HON. A. R. JONES** (Midland) [7.52]: This Bill which is now before us is for an Act to repeal and re-enact with amendments the Public Service Act, 1904-1956. I believe that some legislation is necessary to correct the Act as it stands today; and I listened attentively to the remarks of the Minister when he introduced the Bill, and also to the speech made by Mr. Simpson.

While the Bill has some 89 clauses and three schedules much of which is taken from the old Act, it does provide for something which is entirely new; I refer to a board of three full-time commissioners in place of the single commissioner. That is one feature to which I have an objection for reasons which I shall submit.

My main reason for objecting to it is that it would be a board consisting of three full-time commissioners who would be in control of only 4,336 public servants. Those are the figures given to us recently. A board of three to control that number of people seems wrong and unnecessary.

Quite apart from that aspect, we have seen in recent times the results of a three-man commission in the Railway Department. That three-man commission has not worked very satisfactorily. But I firmly believe that there is a greater possibility of three commissioners handling the Railway Department, which can be broken up into three parts and each commissioner given a separate job, than there is of three commissioners handling the Public Service of this State; because I cannot see how it would be possible to split the work of that body into three distinct parts and allow each commissioner to have jurisdiction over one particular section.

I believe the appointment of three full-time commissioners to a public service board would make it far too unwieldy. There would be overlapping of work and disagreement between them; and, of course, far too much expense involved. The Bill envisages the setting up of three separate sections, and one can imagine

each commissioner having a secretary and office staff; and that, apart from being unwieldy, would be very expensive, particularly as only 4,336 public servants are involved. On making inquiries, I have been told that the present commissioner has a fairly full-time job. That is understandable; but I cannot imagine that there would be sufficient work to keep three men fully employed.

It was suggested by Mr. Simpson that we should adopt the South Australian idea. Their scheme has been in operation for the last seven years; and they have a full-time commissioner and two other part-time commissioners appointed from the Public Service. In addition, there is a separate chairman, who takes the place of the commissioner when dealing with disputes and appeals.

That seems to me to be a very good setup. I have had the opportunity of studying the South Australian Act, and I listened to and studied the remarks made by Mr. Simpson in regard to it. I think we should take notice of the seven years' experience they have had of this scheme in South Australia, and we should go into the question fully before we decide whether this Bill shall become law.

If we adopted that scheme, the two other commissioners could be employed in the Public Service and only be called upon to act on the board when required. Of course, they would receive additional payment for carrying out those duties, as is provided for in the South Australian Act; and in order to save the chief commissioner from embarrassment in dealing with appeals against decisions he had made in regard to appointments or promotions, a separate chairman—possibly a magistrate or a judge—would take his place on those occasions, with the assistance of the other two commissioners. I can see nothing wrong with that idea, and I think we should give it close attention.

With Mr. Simpson, I think that if the Bill were amended in that way, it would be acceptable to all members here. If the Minister feels that he cannot agree to the suggestion, I think I will have to vote against the second reading; because a board of three full-time commissioners, who will be appointed for a seven-year period, is more than I am prepared to accept, especially after the experience we have had with three commissioners in the Railway Department.

The Bill provides for two commissioners to be appointed; and one selected by the Public Service Association itself to be approved by the Governor. A suggestion was made by Mr. Simpson that rather than one commissioner being nominated, a panel of three names should be submitted from which one could be selected. In my opinion that would be a commendable amendment to the provision in the Bill; because, as was pointed out by Mr.

Simpson, one person could be nominated by his fellow members in the association on account of his popularity, rather than for his ability; but if three names were submitted, the Governor would be given the opportunity to make a selection from the three and to appoint the best person available from the Public Service. This is another matter to which the Minister might give consideration.

One other provision in the Bill which I dislike is the proposal that only union members are to be protected by the appeal board in case of disputes. Those members would be the only ones permitted to appeal on any matter in dispute. I for one am definitely against a policy which deprives non-unionists of such protection. To my way of thinking it is another thin edge of the wedge to force all persons employed in the Public Service to join that union. If a person does not want to join a union, none of us should have the right to compel him to join. Why should we exert any force on a person to do so? I feel I must definitely oppose that provision if the second reading of the Bill is agreed to, in which case I shall seek to amend it.

There is only one other matter I wish to discuss, and that is the term of office of the three commissioners. It strikes me that a period of seven years is much too long. We can face the prospect of not being able to terminate the term of any of the three commissioners, if we tie ourselves to a period of seven years.

Shortly after they had been appointed they might be considered incompetent. If that occurred there would be no opportunity to terminate their appointment. There would be very little chance to shift them from their position, because although the Act makes provision for the Governor to suspend a commissioner, the matter would have to be brought before both House of Parliament and passed. Therefore we should at least make the period shorter than seven years. I would suggest a term of four years, the same as applies in South Australia.

Whilst I agree that no person should be expected to hold such a high office as commissioner of a board for a short term, because he might be jeopardising his chances in other fields, it is reasonable to presume that four years is a worthwhile period in which to hold such a position. This will give some opportunity in the not distant future for the Governor to suspend the services of a commissioner, if it is felt that his services should be dispensed with.

To my mind, an appointment for seven years is too long, particularly if that term is to apply to the three commissioners. It would not be so bad if two commissioners were appointed part-time, or for a period of four years, and the chairman for a period of seven years, because the

latter would no doubt be a very trusted and proved member of the Public Service, and would have held a senior position before his appointment to the board.

I trust that the Minister, in reply, will give the House some indication of his feelings with regard to the suggestions made by Mr. Simpson. I feel that unless the constitution of the board is amended, I shall vote against the Bill as a whole, rather than give it a chance to become law. I reserve my decision on this measure until I have heard the Minister's reply. I do hope that many more members will contribute to the debate on this Bill, because it requires much discussion and considered thought from all of us to reach a decision on a matter as important as this.

On motion by Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, debate adjourned.

### **BILL—BANK HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading—Defeated.*

Debate resumed from the 11th September.

**HON. L. C. DIVER** (Central) [8.7]: This is quite a short Bill to amend the Bank Holidays Act, 1884-1953. It is not so much the contents of the Bill to which I wish to refer, as the principle that we would establish—when I use the term “we” I refer to Parliament as a whole—in regard to the conflicting interests of the various sections of the community. Only yesterday this House dealt with another measure which set out to limit the hours in which pastrycooks could work under the Bread Act. Later on we shall be deliberating on the hours during which petrol stations may remain open for business.

In the Bill before us it is proposed that bank officers be given a 5-day week. It would be interesting if we knew exactly how many of the people who work in banks signed a petition drawn up by Sydney Anderson some months ago asking that he be allowed to sell petrol at his station for seven days a week and 24 hours a day. Surely it is time that we attempted to arrive at a little uniformity in regard to hours of business, so that the various sections of the community will be dealt with fairly and reasonably, and each in its sphere will be able to realise its responsibility to the rest of the community.

I would point out that the letters and literature received from bank officers in regard to this measure have been couched in very moderate terms. That is to their credit, and it is appropriate to the calling in which they are engaged. In determining what are reasonable hours for people in different categories of life to work, we have to consider the public demand for the service concerned; but within reason.

I say "within reason," because my experience in life has led me to believe that if we left the determination of these matters to our personal interests, we would all want the best cuts of meat off the one bullock, so to speak, and no one would want the inferior cuts. To that extent the law of the jungle takes possession of us. As citizens of a society endeavouring to create some form of order, we have to live down such natural instincts in the interest of the rest of the community.

In determining whether there is a demand by a section of the community for banks to keep open and give service on Saturday mornings, I now propose to read from a portion of the select committee's report referred to in an issue of "The West Australian Banker." When I do that I shall use the material as supplied by the select committee, but I shall also deal with the total determination from the facts that have been supplied by that select committee. On page 4, paragraph 18, appears the following:—

The statistics provided by the associated banks were of great interest and assistance. They referred solely to transactions over the counter and not to any of the more important sectors of banking.

In main city branches Saturday is less than half the next smallest day (Tuesday) and between one-fifth and one-quarter of the largest (Friday). This applied to all aspects including foreign drafts and savings bank. In suburban areas Saturday covered about the same volume of counter work as Tuesday, cashed cheques being about 10 per cent. higher in number, deposits being about 25 per cent. lower, foreign and savings transactions being similar. Country statistics show Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday as very similar days in volume of transactions with Monday and Thursday almost twice as big, and Friday as about three times as big. Despite the beliefs of retail witnesses, savings bank transactions are not noticeably high on Saturdays. Foreign drafts are the one group where there is a noticeable variation in different districts, the numbers are small and therefore minor variations show out of true proportion; figures extending over a longer period could provide a very different picture of the relationship of this item which is, in itself, of minor importance and therefore not pursued further.

Now I propose to stress that part of this paragraph which reads—

In main city branches Saturday is less than half the next smallest day (Tuesday).

For on Tuesday the banks are open for business for 300 minutes; whereas on Saturday they are open for 90 minutes. Consequently, while—as is pointed out in the report—Saturday is less than half of Tuesday's business, with the time factor wholly stressed it is 90 minutes on Saturday versus 150 minutes on Tuesday; that is, if we bring it to the proportion of a half-day on Tuesday as against a half-day on Saturday.

That proves conclusively that there is not only a demand for banking business on Saturday morning, but a substantial demand. The comments in paragraph 19 of the report are rather damning. They are as follows:—

The hours of trade of savings bank agencies show availability of that service on week days for far longer than banks are themselves open, and on Saturday at least until noon. Quite a proportion are available as late as 8 p.m. six days a week.

So the select committee has pointed out that there is a demand for banking facilities.

But I am sorry to say that it would appear that the members of this profession who once used to give considerable service now wish to shed their best service and say that an agency can carry on the business, and that they are not required. It is a sorry state of affairs when we find a profession of the nature of this one adopting that attitude.

It has been said—and the statement is contained in certain literature I received—that the bank officers were very loyal in their fight against nationalisation of the banks. I thought it was rather ironical to address a circular like that to me. For who was being protected in the fight against nationalisation but these very officers, with the exception of those who work in the Commonwealth Bank?

If the present trend continues, there will be no need—as other speakers have pointed out—for the Associated Banks to exist. If the public are going to be regimented to a five-day banking week, all the services could be given by the Commonwealth Bank; and I feel that the last thing these people want is to undermine their own future and jeopardise the chance of promotion that comes to those who apply themselves assiduously to their task in the service of the various associated banks.

In the circumstances, I feel that these folk should do all in their power to see that we do not have the spectacle of people coming to the conclusion that the trading banks have lost their competitive spirit through the attitude of their employees, and that therefore they have no useful purpose to serve. I would also have thought that certain members in this Chamber would adopt a different attitude to the Bill. I refer to those who are supposed to represent the workers and the

great Labour movement. Who would constitute the majority of persons desiring business on Saturday morning except the wage-earners?

The Minister for Railways: How many have bank accounts?

Hon. G. Bennetts: They don't get much to bank.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I am amazed how ill-informed are those in this House who are supposed to represent the working man. If they were only to see the number of banking accounts—

The Minister for Railways: How many operate cheque accounts?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Thousands.

The Minister for Railways: Wages men?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Salaried men—thousands of them.

Hon. J. D. Teahan: The cheques come back.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: This is only the beginning of a reform.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I am reminded that this is only the beginning of a reform.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I have seen it working in another State.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Is it not time that we realised there are scores of thousands of people who work on Saturday and Sunday. The interjections show that some people at least do not realise that there is such a thing as saturation point in the economy of the country.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: We're not talking about the economy.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: That may be the hon. member's opinion.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is true; it is not just my opinion.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I submit that there is a considerable demand for banking facilities on Saturday morning; and if the bank employees desire to have a five-day week, they should take the matter up with their employers and work on a roster system. Other industries can do that; I do not see why the banking profession should not be able to arrange matters in the same manner.

One has only to be associated with men who work in other walks of life in executive positions, and with the mantle of office upon their shoulders, to observe the number of hours that many of them have to work at night and the Saturdays they have to put in simply for advancement. Yet we have been approached on this occasion to legislate for Saturdays off for bank employees. I feel that Parliament should not legislate in such a manner. The problem is one that can be settled to a great degree by arbitration between employers and employees. Therefore I oppose the second reading.

HON. R. C. MATTISKE (Metropolitan) [8.29]: I oppose the second reading, not because of any desire to see bank officers work on Saturday morning, but because I oppose very strongly certain principles underlying the presentation of this measure.

At the outset I would like to say how much I deplore the fact that this matter is being made a political football. This is the third year in succession in which this very same measure has been presented to Parliament. Surely if a measure is presented once, and Parliament rejects it and then affirms its rejection on a second occasion, that should be sufficient to make anyone realise that Parliament does not want the measure; and particularly when no amendment and no further information has been submitted.

The Minister for Railways: Only one House of Parliament has rejected it.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I think it is a gross insult to have a measure presented in that manner year after year; and I am therefore certain that the only reason for it is to use the Bill as a political football in order to make political capital out of it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is just high-power politics.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Each year we see different tactics employed in the presentation of this Bill. This year the emphasis seems to be more on the correspondence and personal contact angle, as the volume of correspondence—particularly the petitions—has increased considerably. Those who have submitted their views in writing must remember that we have also had considerable correspondence from people strongly opposed to the measure.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: How many?

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I would also, in claiming that this question is a political football, direct attention to the timing of the debates on it. Each time the measure has come up for debate it has been so timed, whether in this Chamber or another place, that the gallery which is there at an appointed hour has not been disappointed. Last night we were fortunate in hearing a long and enlightening address by Mr. Wise, on a matter of paramount importance to the State.

Hon. E. M. Davies: The Press did not give him much space.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Unfortunately that is so, and there was no one present, other than members of this Chamber, to hear what he said. There will also be few who will read the report of that speech in Hansard. I feel that more of the people of this State should be encouraged to take an interest in the affairs of Parliament, not more or less as a compulsory parade for a specific purpose, but in order that

they might be better informed on matters of State. Even at this late hour I hope some of Mr. Wise's utterances will receive wide publicity as they certainly warranted it.

I do not blame Mr. Johnson for having introduced this Bill year after year. He has his political beliefs and I have mine; and I will say in his favour that he is consistent in the views he expresses. When there was so much turmoil over Mr. Chifley's nationalisation of banking legislation in 1949, Mr. Johnson openly declared himself in favour of it and since then he has continued to be a strong advocate of the socialisation of banking. I do not blame him as he has that right, and I feel that the freedom of the individual is of the greatest importance.

Mr. Johnson believes socialisation is right; and in his fight for it he is placing his principles above the individual, as I believe is amply demonstrated by his reference publicly to the people whose cause he now pretends to espouse as spineless worms. To use such a phrase in relation to anyone is bad enough; but to apply it to persons whose cause one is pretending to espouse indicates clearly, I think, that one has not their personal interests at heart but is merely using them for an ulterior motive. In this case I think the ulterior motive is a long-term policy that Mr. Johnson hopes ultimately to achieve by means other than those which failed when Mr. Chifley's banking nationalisation measure was thrown overboard.

I think this is a matter in which the Government can take little pride; and its action in regard to it shows the present Government up in a sorry light. Socialisation of banking is one of the major planks in the Labour Party platform.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There is nothing to be ashamed of in that.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Why did not the Government sponsor this measure instead of leaving it to be brought down year after year by a private member? Was it because the Government is prepared to let him carry the odium of repeated failure while it sits on the fence and endeavours to make political capital by attacking those with sufficient courage to oppose the measure in the interests of the very people that the Government would make out we are decrying?

The Minister for Railways: Who is playing football now?

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Why did not the Premier do what was suggested by the Liberal Party, and raise this matter on an Australia-wide basis, particularly when there was a majority of Labour Premiers in Australia? Why did not the Queensland Government, in the 25 long years during which it dispensed with its Legislative Council and jerrymandered the boundaries

to such an extent that it was practically impossible for the Opposition ever to overthrow it, introduce legislation of this nature? Why did not the New South Wales Government, with a Labour majority in both Houses, take action such as this?

The answer is simple. Despite the fact that the socialisation of banking is a high-ranking plank in the Labour platform, it is becoming more evident daily that many people in the Labour movement now realise that the socialisation of banking would be bad for Australia, as would socialisation in any form, and they are now trying to back down and have socialisation deleted from their platform.

The Minister for Railways: The Bill has nothing to do with all that.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: It is obvious that those in the Labour movement who have sufficient courage to express themselves or resist the pressure to implement socialism are being attacked, and we can see what is happening to them. People like Mr. Gair and others who have received the axe are getting a good deal of encouragement and are being accorded a fair amount of respect not only by their supporters but also by their opponents. One must respect anyone with sufficient courage to take up the fight in that way knowing that he will go under in the process.

The Press recently stated that the fate of this Bill rests on one member in this Chamber and it named him. That was grossly unfair to that member and to this House, because the fate of the measure does not depend on one member. In the two short sessions I have been here it has been evident to me that Labour votes en bloc on practically every matter; whereas the two Opposition parties are entirely free to please themselves how they vote, and they do so—

Hon. E. M. Davies: Not very often.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: At present if two members of the Opposition parties in this House vote with the Government on this measure it will pass the second reading. One of our members has said he will support it with qualifications, but has not said what they are. No doubt we will find out when the Bill is in the Committee stage, if it gets that far. It now requires one other Opposition member to join with the Labour Party in order to have the Bill pass the second reading.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Are you going to join them?

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: It requires one more individual from the Opposition, and not one particular member who may be named by the Press.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I want it on record that I have no intention of joining the Labour Party.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I feel that a gross injustice was done to that member, particularly as he has not indicated how he will vote on the measure.

Hon. J. J. Garrigan: He is capable of speaking for himself.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I do not oppose the measure simply in order to see bank officers working for an hour or two on Saturdays. I feel sorry for them. When I was employed on the State Civil Service I had to work on Saturday mornings and was very pleased when we were given one Saturday morning in two off, and more pleased still when we got every Saturday off.

Since I have been working for myself I have often worked on Saturday mornings, at nights, and Sundays also; but that is beside the point. In any community there must be a balance; and we cannot all be doctors, bank officers, lawyers, or something of that sort. There are advantages and disadvantages in being this, that or the other; and we all have the right, within certain limits, to select the calling that we will follow. I say "within certain limits" because there are some people who have not sufficient intelligence to follow any calling at all.

In electing to be bank officers those who do so do it with their eyes open. They realise there are certain disabilities under which they must labour; they also realise there are certain advantages to be derived from their employment. They know they will be entitled to three weeks annual leave; they know that when they desire to build a home they will get certain financial accommodation, and other concessions; they also know that in many cases they have their own canteens, etc., that provide for them very good food at very reasonable cost. They also realise that they all have an opportunity to rise to the top.

Those are very important aspects of their employment, apart from the question of security and the general nature of their work. They are all conditions that render that employment attractive. On the other hand, they must realise that being a service industry they owe a lot to the public. Mrs. Hutchison said by interjection, when Mr. Diver was speaking, that banking was not an essential service.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I didn't say any such thing.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: That was how I heard it, and how I wrote it down at the time.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: So did somebody last night, only he was gentleman enough to admit his mistake.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: That is what I heard. I would say very strongly that banking is an essential service—a most

essential service—and service is the very keynote of private enterprise. Banking is the keynote of our whole economy; and it is to banking that we look for many leads—leads that we have got in the past, and which I hope we will continue to get in the future, if banking can still remain free and unfettered from Government regulation and control to give that service. In speaking of those conditions of employment, there were a couple of points I omitted to mention.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Sick leave.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Apart from that and a host of other things, it is realised that many bank officers must be encouraged to take an active interest in sport. Anyone in a sedentary occupation must have that sport; he must be physically fit to keep himself mentally fit. For that reason the finishing hours at the bank on Saturday were advanced from 12 o'clock to 11 o'clock. That was a good concession given to bank employees; I was very pleased that it could be done.

Also, in determining wages and salaries payable to bank officers, the Arbitration Court was fully aware that there was a 5½-day week to be considered, and it made due allowance for that when fixing the salaries of these people. I have made considerable observations during the past few weeks; and I have confirmed what certain bankers have told me: that in various banks there is a considerable amount of idleness on Saturday mornings, whereas in others the employees are working flat out, to use the language of the classics, from the time they open till the time they close their doors.

But it is not the prerogative of this Parliament to tell the Associated Banks how they should conduct their business. It behoves the banks themselves to put their own house in order. If there are certain banks where the staff could be reduced and service still be given to the public, it behoves the banks to take action in that regard.

Similarly, if there are certain departments—and I realise the difficulty in regard to the tie-up between one department and another—which are not fully occupied on Saturday morning and which could be closed, then is it not the duty of those controlling the banks to determine which department shall be opened and which shall be closed? It is not for us to say. Therefore, let the banks view this problem very seriously, because I do feel there is much to be done and it is up to them to do it.

When speaking to this measure the other night Dr. Hislop said there is nothing achieved without effort. I think he made a very wise remark; because if our forefathers had come out here and rested on their shovels, and smoked certain brands of cigarettes, we would not be

where we are in Western Australia today. It is only hard work that has turned Western Australia from what it was 100 years ago into the country we are blessed to inhabit today.

It behoves each one of us here to continue to do his part so that we in turn will pass on to our successors better and better conditions. There is a limit at which we can achieve anything without labour. Mrs. Hutchison would have us work 1½ days a week and live in a Utopia. That is not possible. We must work for the things we want.

There is another important aspect which we must consider. Through the advancement of medical science we have a prolongation of life and have arrived at the stage when it is becoming a very serious economic problem, as the populations of the world are aging. This means that we are reaching the stage when the proportion of breadwinners to the proportion of non-breadwinners is such that a far greater effort must be made not only now but also in the future in order that we may be fully provided for.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It simply means—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: In that problem I can see a ray of light. We have had improvements in working conditions; we have new methods of production; and as has been said very freely in the last few years, we are getting automation in many industries. That is going to be a very great blessing to humanity. The more we can encourage production through automatic means the more the community as a whole will benefit. I hope we may reach the stage where we can have a two-day or three-day working week, and that machines will do much of our work for us.

Until then, however, we have to work hard to maintain our present standards. Much has been said of socialisation in industry, including banking. Let us see what happens in the parent socialist State. At the present time bank officers in Russia are working 48 hours a week; in addition they work 12 hours a week on what are called defence projects—chemical projects principally, for which they are not paid. In other words, they are working 60 hours a week, and I venture to say they do not enjoy the same general living standards as we do here.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Look at all the roubles they would have to count.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Let us not be too short in memory. Let us think of the terrific struggle we had in 1949 when bank officers and two Opposition political parties of the present time—the Liberal and the Country parties—were fighting side by side in a very severe battle, a battle for the very existence of the bank officers employed. Do not let us forget that or the

fact that the move towards socialisation and the fight to avert it are not yet over. It is continuing, and we must keep up that struggle all the time. I feel that so far as this Parliament is concerned our job is made hard. We would find it so much simpler to agree to everything that comes before us; but we have principles for which we must stand, and I am certainly going to adhere to those principles.

I am fully conscious of the fact that in opposing this measure we may apply what could be construed as hardship on the bank officers. But I am sure they will realise that this pill, bitter though it may be for them, will help them to keep strong and healthy. If that is the case, then we are doing our job as we should. I do not see that there is any need for laughter, particularly when we are trying to fight a battle for the preservation of the rights of free enterprise, with particular emphasis on the bank officers themselves.

I only wish I had before me cuttings from the newspapers of 1949 to show how the bank officers worked hours and hours at nights and weekends for all manner of things in order to assist in that battle; and through our unity we were successful. I hope we can continue to be successful.

At the outset I said that I will oppose this measure on principle. I will definitely oppose the second reading of the Bill; but it seems to me that I should strongly urge the Government to listen to the overtures of the Liberal Party, and take this matter up on an Australia-wide basis to see whether something cannot be done to overcome the general position. The trend in the world at present is not for a reduction or a restriction of working hours, but for an extension of working hours.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They are starting it over east already.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: It may interest some of those who laughed so much a minute ago to know that at Wynyard station recently a bank realised that it had to give service to the public and opened its doors at 8 a.m. That bank is doing a roaring trade, and the other banks are following suit. We must be realistic and look at the whole problem; we must realise that the standard of working hours must be extended. But by the same token I am not saying for one moment that the working hours of each individual per week must be increased.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You do not think that action altruistic.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: If we are to succeed in the struggle that is taking place throughout the world for our very existence we have to face up to these and many other economic problems. I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West)** [9.0]: I did not speak on this Bill when it was before the Chamber last year or the year before, but I do not intend to pass a silent vote this time. I would preface my remarks by saying that I regret very much that there has been criticism by a member of this Chamber because we have the galleries filled with these people or any other group of people. While I was lying in hospital I read that Mr. Logan suggested it was not right for a group of people to try to exercise pressure by attending this Chamber.

**Hon. L. A. Logan:** I did not say that.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** Not in those words; but it was implied.

**Hon. L. A. Logan:** You should read what I said.

**Hon. R. C. Mattiske:** A member apologised for this last night.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** I think I will draw the hon. member's false teeth in a minute.

**Hon. Sir Charles Latham:** Is that a threat?

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** I read in that august paper, "The West Australian"—which we have to believe—that Mr. Logan suggested it was only people with some concern in the debate who attended this Chamber. Excluding Mr. Diver and Mr. Watson, there was not a vacant seat in this House when our salary increases were being discussed.

**Hon. R. C. Mattiske:** Mine was.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** The hon. member had not won his seat at that time. I feel keenly tonight to think that a man of the calibre and ability of Mr. Mattiske would bring party politics into this debate.

**Hon. Sir Charles Latham:** Don't make us laugh!

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** I am really ashamed to think that in a situation such as this, with a group of people trying through their registered association—the Bank Officers' Association—to improve their lot, criticism should be levelled at them. They cannot do anything through the court until the court has been given the power by Parliament. Therefore they can only appeal to Parliament in order to get authority for the Arbitration Court to decide whether it will grant a half-holiday on Saturday. At present, the court has no power to grant this, even if it so desired.

**Mr. Mattiske** made a point in regard to hours. I do not think there should be doubt in anybody's mind in this Chamber—on the floor or in the gallery—that these bank officers, who are being so maligned tonight, are working a 40-hour week.

Under the conditions of their employment, when the general working standard in Australia was 44 hours, the bank officers worked 40 hours; but when the general working standard was brought down to 40 hours, it would have been natural to assume that the hours of bank officers would be reduced also. However, that was not the case. The fact is that these ladies and gentlemen are still working 40 hours, and if this Bill becomes law, they will still work 40 hours.

**Hon. N. E. Baxter:** For how long?

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** Until such time as the court decides otherwise.

**Hon. R. C. Mattiske:** How many hours do they work now?

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** They work 40 hours.

**Hon. R. C. Mattiske:** They work 37 hours.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** It is 40 hours.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** I know they are working 40 hours. I have seen it in black and white; and they have written to you, Mr. President, also, telling you that they work 40 hours.

**Hon. Sir Charles Latham:** I was associated with a bank for three years in this State and know something about it, too.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** I am associated with this Bill at the moment.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** I wish to make a few comments which I feel should be brought before the House in order to show my reason for supporting this Bill. I tell Mr. Mattiske and all others who think like him that I am not speaking politically. That statement is a definite challenge, as this is not a political matter. It is a case where the Arbitration Court has not the authority to do a certain thing.

**Hon. F. D. Willmott:** It said it had.

**Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY:** That is why they have come to Parliament and the hon. member knows it. I do not think he should be so naive as that. I will now refer to the position in my electorate at Fremantle in regard to banking which is being conducted on Saturday morning. At the moment the banks are open for 1½ hours. I understand that the Commonwealth Bank opens at 9.15 a.m. and gives an extra quarter of an hour of service to the public. That is a big office—not a small one where two or three are employed.

In that first quarter-hour there would be nine or 10 customers. I am speaking from a savings bank point of view. During the next hour there is a normal flow of business; and it is during the half-hour period between 10.30 to 11 a.m. when

there is a rush. This applies not only to the Commonwealth Bank, but to all other banks in Fremantle. In the suburban areas, such as Applecross, where there are small banks and agencies, there is not the same number of people seeking banking facilities.

As I mentioned previously, it is during the half-hour between 10.30 and 11 a.m. that the Commonwealth Bank is crowded. And if one looks in at the other banks down the street, the position is proportionately the same. But I would think—I could be wrong—that the Commonwealth Bank would have the greatest number of savings accounts.

However, it has to be borne in mind that the services rendered by the Commonwealth Bank have now been channelled into a number of banks. The service is now much wider and there are five other banks besides the Commonwealth Savings Bank doing this type of business. It might surprise members to know that in the metropolitan area alone the Commonwealth Bank has approximately 300 agencies; and with the addition of the other banks which have adopted savings bank business, the scope has been widened considerably for the ordinary citizen.

My next remarks are in connection with the criticism we hear as to what business houses will do if the banks are closed on Saturday morning. I have taken a note of the larger retail businesses in the city of Fremantle which are very busy on Saturdays. The banks close at 3.30 in the afternoon; but big business does not close until 5.30 in the evening. What do they do with their takings in that period? The money is not put in sugar bags or under the counter; it is taken down to the bank, which provides a night-safe system. In the same way, the bookmakers have something arranged with the bank authorities on Friday night. What do hotels do? Why do members in the Chamber try to draw a thin line down the retail shops and not bring in theatres and hotels? Hotels do not close until 9 p.m.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: Why not bring all trade into no Saturday morning work?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Do members in opposition try to suggest that because these people have to receive money until 9 p.m. and the banks close at 3.30 in the afternoon there are vast sums of money being stolen? Of course there are not; because the theatres, bookmakers and hotels make special arrangements with the banks as to what they are going to do with the money. It is the same every day of the week; not only on Saturday. What do they do with money after midday on Saturday to Monday morning? They use the facilities provided by the banks.

Night-safes are becoming an established fact with banks. In the later years of the war when I was employed at the Vacuum

Oil Company, we had pool petrol. It was the order of the day; and everybody knows that pool petrol was sold for cash, whether to Boans, Foys or the smallest garage in the city. When we drivers came in later in the evening from the outer areas—where we were the banks so far as the small garages were concerned—what did we do with the money? We did not take it home or hide it in a kerosene case or drum in the petrol store. We put it in the proper facilities provided by the company—the night-safes in the bank. All business people do that, and members know it.

The other story is in regard to drafts on Saturday morning, and in regard to the type of business other than just receiving change and banking money. I made some inquiries about drafts and shipping. Fremantle is a town where most shipping offices, except those of shipping companies concerned with airways, are situated. They do not open on Saturday mornings and they do not have the business that is suggested in regard to drafts and shipping. On the other hand it has come to my notice that because the banks are open on Saturday mornings, some shipping companies will go to a bank on Saturday morning with documents bearing Monday's or Thursday's date; documents that could have been taken to the bank on Friday. I think there is mythical opposition to the claims of these people who are looking for the amenity of the Saturday morning off.

I also have had a reasonable experience in the country—I have not always been a city slicker or city guy. Like Sir Charles Latham, I have used the axe to clear the ground and I have ploughed the ground, seeded and harvested it, and conducted business in the normal way of farmers. I did that up to the years 1922 and 1923.

Hours do not really mean anything to country bank managers in the smaller farming areas—I do not refer to places like Northam or Bunbury—where there is one bank officer, or perhaps two. In those places it is usual for the bank manager to look after the affairs of the majority of people in the district. You yourself, Mr. President, as a farmer know that farmers do not run into the town every time something has to be done at the bank.

They go into the town at a time to suit themselves. If at harvesting time they break a part of a machine, they will go into the town to get a replacement, and while there they will get their grocery order for the week and will also go to the bank if necessary. So far as the local bank manager in the country is concerned, I would say he is the highest positioned man in the town, no matter how wealthy some of the farmers may be. In some of the places he would

be looked on almost as the mayor. There is a great affinity between the bank manager and the country people.

The story that we hear so often that the bank administration boards do not want the Saturday morning granted, is not exactly true, although I would not go as far as to say that they would say to the Bank Officers' Association, "Ask for the half day off on Saturday and we will give it to you."

Let us be factual. At present in Western Australia those involved in the administration of the banks are attempting to roster the staffs on Saturday morning knowing full well that the service they are getting from the staffs throughout the year entitles the staffs to at least some of the Saturday mornings off, if not all. Under the existing system, they are finding it difficult to work out a roster; but if the court were given the power that is suggested in the Bill, the court could say, "We will not give you every Saturday morning off, but 10 Saturdays a year," or something like that. I am given to understand, and the information I have is—I think it is above reproach—that the administration staff is already employing a roster system.

I want now to come back to the country bank manager, and the manager in the small branches with a staff of three or four. Even if the administration does roster some Saturday mornings off for the staff in the city, those in the smaller branches in the country will not be able to enjoy it. In the smaller branches, with a staff of four or five, in the metropolitan area, the manager has a set of keys that he is responsible for, and the accountant has another set that he is responsible for, so that neither one can go off. We can really say they are key men.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Key personnel.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Yes. I admit a lot of what I am saying tonight is what I have learned from bank officers.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They were not very good instructors.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: They were not all from the counter staff, or just a little above it. Some were bank managers who are now enjoying an odd Saturday morning off.

I want to make the point clear that whereas one of the banks in this State would like to give its officers at least eight Saturdays off in the year, the best it has been able to do so far, because it has not the authority of the court to close on Saturday mornings, is to give the staff two Saturdays off. This is all it has been able to manage in the nine months of the year that have already passed.

These officers, who have always had the privilege of fewer hours than other workers in similar positions, are working a 40-hour week. I reiterate with all the emphasis I can that they were working 40 hours when the standard was 44 in Australia, and now that the standard is 40 they are still working 40 hours; and even if this half holiday were granted to them—and it would take some considerable time to come into effect if it were granted—they would continue to work 40 hours. They have not the slightest intention, nor have they shown any intention, to reduce their hours below 40.

I noticed that several of the interjections made when Mr. Mattiske was speaking referred to New Zealand; but they were not answered by him.

Hon. R. C. Mattiske: I did not refer to New Zealand.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The hon. member was very cunning and keen not to answer that one. The position in New Zealand is that for a number of years the banks have closed on Saturdays although the retail shops are open on that day. I am sure that no investigation by any member here can show that the bank administration would want to open again on Saturday in that country.

The position in Tasmania is slightly different. The shops and retail businesses there are also closed on Saturday. What happens in Tasmania after the banks close at 3.30 p.m. on Friday? What happens to the large amounts of money taken by retail houses, hotels, theatres and others that take large sums? What happens to that money until Monday morning? It is obvious what happens to it; it is obvious it goes into night safes. I also know that at least one of the big banking systems makes provision in all its plans for new buildings for the installation of night safes because all banks realise their benefit as do many of the retail traders.

I would like to answer a suggestion put forward by another member—I was not present when he made it but I read it—that the Commonwealth Bank would not be bound by the decision of a State Parliament if the decision was made to grant the half day off. This can be answered by what is actually happening in Tasmania. In that State the Commonwealth Bank closes on Saturday morning. It has not made any attempt, nor is it likely to, to open on Saturday morning; nor has it in any other State attempted to open other than during the hours prescribed by the legislation of the particular State.

So I feel that a number of red herrings have been drawn across this measure because there has not been a case sufficiently strong against it to say that this Parliament should not grant to the Arbitration Court the right to give these people

the Saturday morning off, if the court so desires. Mr. Mattiske did say that he had received a great number of letters from interested persons in opposition to it—I am not in a position to doubt what he says and I do not doubt it—but it seems strange; because I and my colleagues on this side of the House have been voting solidly for the Bill for three or four years, and I would think we would be the people those in opposition to the Bill would want to convert, and that they would write to us. But I have received a letter from the Meat and Allied Trades Federation, dated the 27th August—

Hon. E. M. Davies: They close in Melbourne on Saturday morning.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: —and one from the Federated Pharmaceutical Guild of Western Australia. They are the only two people from whom I have received letters; and if others have written on the subject, I have not received letters from them.

I feel that opposition has been raised to an attempt to give to bank officers an amenity they richly deserve, because of the job they did for those in opposition to the nationalisation of banking in 1949. I believed in that proposition then, and I still do; and I think that what the bank officers did at that time warrants a return to them of thanks by the granting of this half day.

#### *Point of Order.*

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Mr. President, I ask you to take a point of order. I draw your attention to the Bill before the House, which I believe does not come within the scope of the parent Act in that it fixes the hours of labour, which the Arbitration Act was designed to control.

The President: Will you please explain the point?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: If we turn to the parent Act, which is dated 1888, we find that the intention of the Legislature at the time was that certain days in the year should be set aside as holidays; and these included Good Friday and such days as we have always observed as holidays, and on which banks should be compelled to close. That has continued and been added to by different days which are set out in the legislation.

We in Western Australia, both in the Legislative Assembly and in this House, have passed legislation which fixes the hours of labour, as this will fix the hours of labour by reducing the period which the banks shall be open on Saturday mornings. Therefore it should be done under legislation which fixes the hours of labour and I submit you have no alternative but to rule it out of order and say that it should be introduced under an amendment to the Arbitration Act.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Do I understand that Sir Charles Latham is suggesting that this Bill will curtail the hours of employment? If he is suggesting that, then I would remind him that that is not a fact.

The President: I shall leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells.

*Sitting suspended from 9.33 to 9.48 p.m.  
President's Ruling.*

The President: I do not sustain the point of order raised by Hon. Sir Charles Latham for the reason that the Bill seeks to amend the Act by adding another item to the schedule in which there are other specified days.

The title of the Bill is "An Act to amend the Bank Holidays Act, 1884-1953," and the amendment contained in the Bill comes within the scope of that title.

#### *Debate Resumed.*

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [9.53]: This Bill has been fairly completely debated and it is not my intention to speak at great length. I might add that the speeches for and against the measure have been very interesting. The other evening, and again this evening, I was impressed with the arguments propounded by the various speakers. This evening Mr. Mattiske and Mr. Diver acquitted themselves very well; they impressed me with their sincerity, although I am afraid that on a couple of occasions they allowed their feelings to warp their judgment somewhat.

For instance, I cannot agree that if this House carries the measure, it is going to have any great bearing one way or another on the issue of socialism. I do not think for one moment that there is justification for bringing the bogey of socialism into this debate. I have in mind in this regard what Mr. Lavery told us, in his very interesting speech, about the position in New Zealand.

Apparently the provision for closure of banks on Saturday mornings has operated in New Zealand for some years. By no stretch of the imagination can it be urged that New Zealand is a socialist State or has a socialist government; likewise Tasmania can be said to be possibly one of the most conservative States of Australia. It certainly has a Labour Government, but no one would claim that that Government is a left-wing or strongly socialistic type of government.

Then I am impressed by the fact that both New Zealand and Tasmania enjoy the tourist trade to an extent to which it is not enjoyed by any of the other States, with the possible exception of Queensland. I understand that the tourist trade in New Zealand is a big factor in the economy of that country. Tourists visit New Zealand from all parts of the world. The money they spend in that country contributes much to its economic welfare. I daresay that also applies to Tasmania.

It is fair enough to draw the inference that the conservative governments in those two places where the tourist trade is big business surely would not have introduced and countenanced a measure which would drive away trade, which would embarrass tourists, and which would be deleterious to trade in general. Possibly I might not be entitled to draw that inference because I have not been to those places, or seen the conditions operating there, but I think that is a fair inference to draw; and I also think that it is a legitimate argument to influence us in weighing up the merits or demerits of this measure.

Before proceeding further, I indicated that I appreciated the spirited and conscientious way in which Mr. Mattiske and Mr. Diver put forward their views. But I think Mr. Mattiske was possibly a little unfair to the leader of the House in criticising him for arranging these debates at a time when it was convenient for a lot of people who are interested in the outcome to attend the hearings.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Wasn't it done by design?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I was about to say that it was obviously done by design.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: And always has been.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: And instead of being critical of the leader of the House, members should, I think, realise it was a generous and worthy gesture on his part. It is not the first time this has been done. I am sure that anyone who had a measure to bring forward in this House affecting some section of the community would, if he made an approach to the leader of the House—and this applies not only to the present time but to years gone by—find him willing to meet the convenience of members and the convenience of the public so far as possible.

So I think that criticism of Mr. Strickland was unfair. It is a good thing that the public come along to hear these debates; and if we can arrange our programme in such a way that no business suffers by having a certain debate at a certain time, nothing but good can result.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I think that some important business has suffered.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Are you referring to the Licensing Bill?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: No, to the education issue.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Actually the issue here is fairly simple. I do not think the implications are world-shattering, or that they will have tremendous influences as has been suggested. If the measure comes into operation, I feel sure that

within 12 months it will be forgotten, and the business public will have settled down and got quite used to the change.

I fully agree that the banks provide a service to the community, and that they have an obligation to serve the public. Insurance companies and Government officers are in a somewhat similar position. It is generally conceded that Saturday morning is a time during which a lot of people do not work nowadays; and if we can bring the bank officers into line with other large sections of the community whose vocations are very much allied to theirs, and do so without inflicting any great harm on anyone, then I think that should be done. The conclusions I have drawn from a reading of the select committee's report; from arguments I have listened to; and from my own experience, is that we can in fairness grant this concession to the bank officers without doing any real harm to the business community or to anyone else.

Hon. L. C. Diver: You agree that it is a concession?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It is a concession in the way that it is a concession for members of the Taxation Department, for instance, to close down on Saturday morning.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: It is a pity they do not close down forever!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I have in mind that the courts close. The clerks of court carry out fairly responsible obligations to the community; but their offices are closed on Saturdays. I remember that in Kalgoorlie, until recent years, the Mines Department opened on Saturday mornings, and miners were able to purchase miners' rights and get various forms incidental to taking up mining leases in prospecting areas and other mining tenements. When it was decided that the Mines Department should close on Saturday mornings, there was a considerable outcry, and people were genuinely worried and alarmed. It was felt that the Mines Department, being one that dealt directly with the goldmining industry, on which the whole community depended, was one department that should remain open on Saturdays.

But no one ever thinks of it now. People have arranged their programmes in such a way that no harm has been done and no one suffers in any manner whatsoever as a result of the closing of that department. From what I can see in Perth, a lot of professional offices close on Saturday morning. According to the select committee's report, the majority of hotels do not bother about banking facilities on Saturday morning.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Do they close on Saturday morning like they do in New Zealand?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: No. Apparently there is a demand for them to keep open in Western Australia. Most of the insurance companies apparently find business barely warrants bringing their staff in on Saturday mornings.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: They have skeleton staffs.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes; I admit that. Possibly it might have been worth while if the banks had been able to arrange skeleton staffs; but apparently that is impracticable. They only trade for 1½ hours. But all these young people that are employed have their homes and avocations similar to those to which we all look forward at week-ends; and even if one has to travel from a suburb to go to work for only an hour or 1½ hours, the whole morning has gone. And apparently the business community does not need or use the services of these people very much on Saturday mornings.

I listened to the figures relating to hours that were read out by Mr. Diver, and the deduction I drew was that they proved fairly conclusively that little banking was done on Saturday mornings.

Hon. L. C. Diver: As put up by the select committee. That was the committee's conclusion; but it was erroneous.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It is well said that figures can prove anything; but I think if one relies on one's own experience and one's own observations one can come to definite conclusions. For the last couple of Saturday mornings I have taken the opportunity to look into most of the banks along St. George's Terrace; and it was quite obvious to me that very few customers patronise them, and very little business appears to be done.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I have had to wait half an hour to get a cheque cashed.

The PRESIDENT: Order in the gallery!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am sure there are a lot of places where Sir Charles would not be kept waiting one minute to get one of his cheques cashed.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I generally take my turn. I am not rude enough to think that because I have an official position in this House I should have priority. I hope that is not suggested.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Oh no! I thought that the laughter in the Chamber was caused by the thought that the cheque itself might have been—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It takes very little to amuse some people.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am sure that no member who laughed would hesitate for one minute to cash the hon. member's cheque.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Not so long as he signed it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Those are all the remarks I propose to make, except that I cannot see the validity or the weight that those in opposition to this measure attach to the fact that it was introduced by a private member. Surely its merits or demerits are not affected by that factor. It is a simple measure. If adopted it will cause Saturday mornings to be added to the schedule of holidays; and the fact that it was introduced by a private member surely cannot affect its merits one way or the other. The member in question conceived the merit of the proposition a few years ago, and has pursued it. I think that the fact that he has won the approval of the Government followers speaks for itself.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham. There is not much trouble in getting that if the right legislation is introduced.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I must admit that I cannot see any merit in that argument. I think a measure is good or bad whether it is introduced by the Government or by a private member. The issues involved in this Bill are so unambiguous and simple that I do not think that argument counts at all. I supported the Bill on previous occasions and propose to do so again.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [10.14]: I intend to oppose the Bill as I have on each occasion it has been before the House. I think that to use this legislation as a means of determining that Saturday morning shall be a holiday for one section of the community is to stretch things a little. However, Sir, you have given your ruling. I did not have time to disagree with it, because I would have had to find sound reasons for doing so; and time did not permit that. However, I shall take the opportunity to obtain the best legal advice, so that if the Bill is introduced again I will come to the debate fully armed.

I also note, as other members have dared to suggest, that there are some measures which seem to attract the public, although not the general public. Whenever we have legislation dealing with gambling, the licensing laws, or anything of that nature, we get a large audience; and the bank officials and their friends seem to have found this debate entertaining, judging from the laughter we can hear from time to time. I feel that as this House stands in fact above a court of justice, at least the ordinary decorum upon which a judge insists in his court should be observed here.

Of course we are each entitled to disagree with the other if we think it logical to do so; and I believe this is bad legislation; which has been introduced at the behest of the employees to deprive the public of banking facilities on Saturday

mornings and give the said employees an extra half day off per week. I see no reason why such a change should be made at this stage. Obviously the public would be inconvenienced by lack of banking facilities on Saturdays, as otherwise the banks would have closed their doors on Saturday mornings long ago. They would not stay open if there was no necessity for it.

In the years that I have been in this House I have never before known legislation of this type to be introduced. The Parliament of the State has provided the Arbitration Court as a tribunal to which either employer or employees can go if they feel that adjustments to wages or working conditions, hours of work and so on, should be made. But in this instance it seems that Parliament has taken sides, by bringing down this measure.

I do not feel that we have justification for compelling the employers to do something on which they have had no opportunity to express their views, particularly as nearly all the bank managements are located in the Eastern States and they have no representation here except their general managers. Bank officials today are not required to do the work they did when I was a lad and, in fact, until comparatively recently. The days of balancing by adding up figures in a ledger are gone and that work is now done by machines.

The Minister for Railways: That is progress.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The only brain effort required for that sort of thing now is sufficient to tap the right keys. In the old days the position of bank officials was such that many people lifted their hats to them—

Hon. R. F. H. Lavery: Don't they do that today?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am certain that they do not.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I think you are living in a prehistoric age.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I remember the hon. member as a boy. I have known him for a long while. I have developed my brain to an extent where I have been able to hold a seat in this House longer than any other member here at present; and I have submitted myself to my masters on pretty well every appropriate occasion, except in the last couple of years, when they have told me I could continue—

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is a privilege.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The hon. member belongs to a body that is so skillfully organised that he can expect it to make no changes. If I was a young man in the Labour movement I would expect to remain in my place until I was 96 years of age, but I have not that privilege and

do not want it. I want to be independent; but there are many members in this House who are not independent, and they know that as well as I do. They have to follow their leader.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Don't be silly!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Thank goodness I am not a dummy for any organisation! I left an organisation to which I belonged and stayed away for six years because it was usurping the voice of my electors. My electors, incidentally, backed me in that. As I grow older I feel that the only people who count are those that we represent in this House, and we must remember that we represent not only our own followers but also every one of the people living in the provinces that we represent.

The Minister for Railways: That is what we do.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Minister does it to a great extent, so long as it does not violate the privileges that are marked L-A-B-O-U-R. To return to the Bill: In 1888 legislation was passed to provide for certain holy days such as Good Friday, Christmas Day and so on to be holidays, and I think the first Monday in August was declared a bank holiday. That measure has been amended from time to time and now we have the Bill before us. It is not a public holiday Bill but a piece of industrial legislation affecting the employment of bank officers and giving them a special privilege by Act of Parliament which nobody else has ever received in this State.

I do not think that is right; and I would remind the bank officers that if present buoyant conditions do not continue, the time might come when many people will be looking for employment. Banking is a valuable service rendered to the people and bank officers must be trustworthy as they handle the private and confidential business of the public. I would like to see them maintain the high standard of the past and I regret to see a certain amount of deterioration that has apparently taken place.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: In what way?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The hon. member is not so innocent that he cannot understand what I mean. The present measure is one-sided, and if agreed to, would mean that bank officials would be paid for less service than they now render—

Hon. E. M. Davies: That is an old tale.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is true. Do they not earn the money they are paid for Saturday mornings now? Some members think a bank officer's position is a difficult one, but I think the greatest difficulty they have is in dealing

with the public. As I said earlier by interjection, I was closely associated with one bank in this State for about three years—

The Minister for Railways: Has it not gone out of business?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Not the one I was associated with. The officials there, if they finished their work at 4 or 4.30 p.m., were allowed to go home; and they did not have to do hard work such as the handling of bricks by the thousand hour after hour. I can remember the conditions that existed in the period from 1932 onwards; and when circumstances such as those arise, it is hard to reverse a tendency such as is indicated in this measure. Bank officials make no sacrifice by working on Saturday mornings.

Members in this House are often asked to attend at various places at night or at week-ends. That is part of our work, and it requires in many instances a great deal of preparation and effort. We remain here frequently till midnight or later, and that is not just a question of a few hours. I was here this morning at 9 a.m. and may not be able to get away until midnight or later; but I have no objection to that. We work whatever hours the Minister wishes—

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Do not encourage him too much now!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Not tonight. I do not believe in the socialisation of production, distribution and exchange, which is part of the Labour platform. I suppose "exchange" covers the banks, and I will not agree to this measure which, as I have said, is one-sided. I think the bank officials should take more time and give further thought to the question before again having such a measure brought down if this Bill is not passed.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [10.30]: I do not intend to delay the debate very long, but I wish to make one or two comments following my opposition to a similar measure in the past couple of years. There is not much more I can say except that, together with other members, I have received quite a number of letters from the various districts throughout the area I represent, and from banks in the city, asking me to give special consideration to this measure, and requesting my support of the Bill before the House. I have some very good friends among those who have written to me; and I also notice some people in the gallery who have been friends of mine and who, I trust, will continue to be my friends no matter which way this measure is decided.

We each have our job to do; and I take the one that I have to do as a job entrusted to me by a great many people who constitute the electors, and who ask that

I do the best I possibly can in the interests of those people and of the State as a whole. I have always been one to uphold the principle of free trade and free enterprise. I have never had any desire at all to restrict hours of trading, or to restrict services to the public. Accordingly it would go very much against my grain to entertain an idea of voting for this legislation, because it would take away from the public a service which I think it needs; it would restrict hours of trading, and I believe it would tend to disrupt business generally.

Not only would it do that, but I think it would have a far-reaching effect on the economy of Australia as a whole. Ours is a very young country, a little over 100 years old, and we have many millions of acres to develop, and many industries to build, we hope. Therefore we should not, at this stage, be thinking of reducing our hours of work or our output. While we have these many millions of acres to bring into production, and the prospect of developing our secondary industries in the next 20 years or so, we should not for one moment entertain the idea of reducing our hours of work.

I agree with Dr. Hislop, and I think he made a very fine contribution to the debate. Unfortunately, however, it was not given any publicity in the Press, although it is possible that the paper was printed before he made his speech. However, I do think it merited some mention in the Press. As I have said, I agree with Dr. Hislop that if we are to make progress we must keep abreast with the rest of the world in the hours we work; we must look very closely at the position and decide whether we are not on the very brink of at least being in the position of not being able to compete with the rest of the world in the marketing of our produce.

If we were not dependent on one country or another for our livelihood; if we were self-sufficient and traded only with those within our shores, it would not matter two hoots if we worked 20 hours a week or 30 hours a week, or if we earned £10, £20, or £30 a week, provided there was a levelling off process. But when it is necessary for us to compete with other countries in the sale of our produce, we must try our best to keep our prices down.

Members opposite have suggested that the Bill asks us for very little indeed. I agree it asks for very little, but it constitutes 1½ hours' service to the community on Saturday morning. By providing that service I maintain that we are giving a standard of service to the public which they require; something which the banks themselves require, because they do not wish to close on Saturday morning. The point was well taken by Sir Charles Latham when he said that we are asked to legislate to close the doors of business houses that do not wish to close.

It was said by Mr. Heenan that the mining registrar's office at Kalgoorlie was closed on Saturday morning, and he added that it made no difference to the people at all; that there was no inconvenience to anybody. Might I suggest that if anyone wanted to do business in that office, who would normally have done it on Saturday morning, it would have meant spending the week-end in Kalgoorlie. They would have had to go in on Friday morning to conduct their business on the Friday, and would have had to spend 2½ days instead of 1½ days away from their work. Wherever that happens it must increase the costs of production somewhere along the line. The fewer hours that are worked the higher will the costs rise on whatever we are producing.

I venture to say that even though this is a small request, as has been suggested by those in favour of the Bill, it will still have an adverse effect on the economy of the country if the people concerned work 1½ hours less on Saturday morning. Mr. Heenan said it would not affect anybody; but is it not a fact that a person who wishes to do business in the office of the mining registrar would have to go in on Friday and thus neglect his work for that period, which would mean a consequent rise in the cost of producing gold? That applies throughout industry in this country.

For the reason that ours is a young country chasing production and expansion, I feel that we should not entertain any idea of reducing hours until our country has been developed, as we would like it to be developed; until we can say that we are on top of the world and that we have nothing to fear. That is the time for us to relax and reduce our working hours, provided the economy can stand it. Provided those conditions existed I do not think any one of us would deny these people the privilege they seek.

Another point that arises is that when we get to the stage of having so much leisure we ought to use that leisure properly. I would suggest that over the last ten years when the hours of work have been reduced and different organisations and employees have had Saturdays free, they have not been educated to use those leisure hours to advantage, and we find that many of them mis-spent that leisure time. Until we are able to use to the best advantage the leisure time available to us, it is a bad thing for us to have too much leisure.

I oppose the Bill on the grounds I have mentioned tonight and on those which I have mentioned previously. I feel it is a retrograde step from a section of the community which we have always held in very high regard. I agree with Sir Charles Latham that people recently have not held the banking profession in quite such high regard as they did previously.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What a lot of piffle!

Hon. A. R. JONES: I would say the hon. member contributes a lot of piffle herself! I would think that the banking fraternity is not held in such high esteem as it was 10 or 15 years ago; and their persistence in bringing this measure before the House as they have done in the last three years, will mean that they will further lose face with the public of Western Australia and that would be a very bad thing indeed. I oppose the Bill.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [10.41]: I feel I should address myself to the House on this measure, though I do not propose to take up too much time. I would say at the outset that this Parliament is modelled on the Mother of Parliaments in the Old Country. The Constitution provides that we should have a government and an opposition. I for one would say that each and every member elected to this Chamber, or any other, has the right to get up and express his opinion and listen to the opinions expressed by others. Accordingly tonight I am endeavouring to do that.

I am reminded of what I once read in a parliamentary history as being attributed to Disraeli. That eminent statesman is reported to have said that the function of the opposition was to oppose everything and to propose nothing. I am not suggesting that the opinion expressed by that English statesman was a correct one.

While listening to the debates tonight I have listened in some cases to very interesting speeches that have expressed the opinions of the members concerned; and these members were, of course, quite entitled to do that. Unfortunately, however, they want to take the credit from somebody else for having introduced the question into the legislative halls of this State. I venture to say that a member elected to either House has a perfect right to introduce legislation.

Hon. A. R. Jones: So do I.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: He particularly has this right if he believes that this legislation will be beneficial to a section of our community. Unless this were done there would, of course, never be any reforms. During my lifetime—and I am able to look back a few years—there have been reforms introduced, and the very arguments that were used against the introduction of those reforms in those years, were aduced in this Chamber this evening.

We have heard nothing new. As a matter of fact I can recall not many years ago when it was decided to close the town halls and offices of local government. At that time it was said, "If you close those town halls and offices of local government you will never get any rates in." The town halls and offices of local government have

been closed on Saturday morning for some time now, and the local authorities still collect their rates. So I believe that as we moved down through the century there have been certain reforms brought about, and there has always been criticism.

I do not for one moment deny the right of the opposition to express their opinion; they are perfectly entitled to do so. But when I hear statements to the effect that the Minister has arranged for a gallery to be present, I would suggest that that is going too far. We know that in the legislative halls of this State and of the Commonwealth, and in the British Commonwealth there are, at times, questions which go before both Houses of Parliament that do create an interest for many sections of the people; and they are attracted to the gallery to hear the debates on the measures before Parliament.

Therefore, I deplore some of the statements made casting reflections against a large body of men and women who have remained in the gallery and listened to the debate. I feel sure that as citizens of the State they have every right to occupy seats in the gallery and listen to a debate in a legislative hall of the State.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I wish more would come.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I have heard tonight that certain people have travelled outside the bounds of the Commonwealth. I think Dr. Hislop said he had just visited certain Asian countries and the people there were working very hard; and, of course, certain things were going to happen. If my memory serves me correctly, similar statements were made many years ago and were responsible for bringing about the White Australia policy; because it was said that the standard of living of Asian countries was lower than that in our country and we did not want to let them reduce our standard. Quite a lot of those statements have been made this evening; and they have been made over the years when any reform has been suggested to provide better conditions for a section of the community.

One would be led to believe that if banks closed on Saturday morning the whole financial structure of the State would fall to the ground. We have had evidence this evening that this reform is in existence in an important dominion of the British Commonwealth—New Zealand—and also in the State of Tasmania. However, we have not heard that the financial structure of New Zealand has fallen to the ground.

If one goes to the British Isles one will see a great deal more advertisement of New Zealand than of Australia. It is unfortunate that I have to say that; but it is a fact. The financial structure of that country has not collapsed because the banks have closed on a Saturday morning, and neither will it collapse in this State.

We have been through two great wars. Necessity is the mother of invention; and as a result of those wars, when we were denied the right to import and export, other means were found and great inventions were brought about for the benefit of the war, which in some cases proved to be of great value to us. The banking industry, in common with other industries, must have the benefit of these inventions and the mechanisation that has taken place over a period of years.

I do not think the passing of the Bill would be detrimental to the people generally; because they would become accustomed to the closing of banks on Saturday morning, just as they have become accustomed to the closing on Saturday morning of the town hall and various other Government offices, the opening of which was considered to be essential to the State. Therefore, no harm will be done by the closing of the banks for the small period they remain open at the present time.

I have recently been overseas and have visited countries older in their history than Australia. I have seen some where trading hours last all day and through the night. However, look at their standard of living; look at their monetary set-up and see what they have got! Are they better than the British dominions? No!

In some it is possible to purchase goods at 2 o'clock in the morning and there are money-changers as well. Yet a few hundred yards down the street, people can be seen sleeping on the side of the road, without a bed to go to. Yet we are told that if we do not adopt the standard of living of the Asian countries, our financial set-up will fall to the ground.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Who said that?

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: If something new had been brought out in the debate tonight we would have been pleased to hear it. Some members have been interesting, but nothing new has been brought forward. We have only heard the same arguments that have been produced over the years every time an attempt has been made to obtain a reform for some section of the community.

I trust this House will give this measure a second reading tonight, because it is not new legislation; it already exists in another State of the Commonwealth and in the Dominion of New Zealand. If it works there, there is no reason why it should not work here. I support the second reading.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [10.52]: The measure is commonly referred to as the Bank Holiday Bill. A better name for it now might be "Roman Holiday Bill." I hope that as a result of what I shall say tonight my overdraft will not be affected. I have waited until most

members have spoken because I wanted to find out as much as possible about the pros and cons of the measure.

When it was first introduced I supported it. At the time there appeared to be very little interest taken in the measure. No one seemed to care whether it passed. In fact, the only interest taken was by the people most concerned—the bank staffs—and even they just looked upon it as something that might fall from the skies into their lives like manna from Heaven. Who can blame them for that?

This proposition was conceived in the mind of a young and comparatively new member of Parliament who had worked amongst bank officers. I do not for a minute contribute to the attitude expressed here, which might be termed almost resentful, to the letters received and to the attention and interest shown by the people concerned. I think that not only are they acting within their rights in contacting members, but I feel it is obligatory on them to do so as we otherwise might try to debate and legislate on a subject about which we knew very little. When we had a Bill such as this, which was introduced earlier with no interest shown, other than from the section which wanted it, there was no reason to do other than support the measure, which I did. But many grounds have since been introduced in opposition to the Bill.

Although I have been interested in them and know how they have been brought about, I feel that the major issue is how the Bill will affect the people. The measure could ultimately be used as a lever, or taken as the thin edge of the wedge to obtain Saturday closing for all industry. Members will agree that this is a fairly logical conclusion. Some of the arguments advanced in favour of the Bill are that one office has been closed without much detriment to the activities of the State, and some other office has been closed and so has some industry, so why should not banks be closed?

Well, good luck to the interested persons in trying. We know they approached the Arbitration Court but without much success; and three times they have approached Parliament, but without success. We cannot deny them their right to approach whatever source they wish in order to obtain their ends. Today, after three similar Bills, the interest has grown beyond all imagination. In the first instance it was merely a case of—"if we get it, good luck." Today, however, it has become quite an issue, and the interest and publicity have been amazing.

The Minister for Railways: In favour?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Not all in favour. That is the significant part. Very belatedly other people have realised what may result from the measure and they are perturbed.

The Minister for Railways: After three years?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: Dear, oh dear!

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: They have sat back and relied on the Legislative Council as being able to foresee their desires and just throw it out the window. But now a lot of information is forthcoming. One member opposite said he got only two letters in opposition to the Bill. Well, I have as many against it as I have for it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I would not give the information.

The Minister for Railways: You should read it out.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am prepared to do that or to lay the letters on the Table of the House. Some good points on both sides have been made. Contrary to what some members have said, the letters I have are couched in the most courteous terms.

Hon. L. A. Logan: There has been only one discourteous letter.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The inference I drew was that there were quite a few. The only offensive incident I have experienced as a result of the Bill was following a fairly cruel article in one of the papers.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: It was a very unfair statement.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Quite early on the morning of the publication of that paper I had an obscene anonymous phone call, and during breakfast I received another anonymous call. Harking back to the last election, I point out that the wording of the message I received over the 'phone was so similar to something I heard at that time that I feel that if it was not the same person it was someone who was the same type of person.

At about 1 o'clock in the morning a big car with some half-dozen people in it went roaring past my home in Boulder, and there was a concerted roar of voices making some obscene remarks to the effect "How do you like your eggs boiled now?" That was at a time when it appeared almost certain that I had lost the election. Subsequently the count just let me sneak my tail over the line. I would have been delighted to know where the people in that vehicle lived as I might have done a little bit of roaring myself. I in no way contribute to that sort of thing, but no one has contacted me with offensive matter through the mail.

I appreciate correspondence on any measure as I do not profess to be a know-all in all fields. On some subjects I probably know as much as, if not more, than

some other members; but on many subjects I may not be well informed. When the time comes I appreciate it if people pay me the compliment of contacting me personally or writing to me in regard to these questions. So many thoughts have been expressed of concern about the far-reaching effects which the Bill could have that I have not been surprised to be stopped in the streets on the Goldfields last week by people ranging from businessmen to pensioners who wished to talk to me about this Bill.

Normally persons one meets in the street just pass the time of day but I am referring to people actually stopping one in order to discuss the measure. Such people no doubt had in mind the effect it would have on them and that is a selfish approach to the question, but it is an urge we all have when matters concern ourselves.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: It is not selfishness.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is so. It is everyone's right to look after self-interest. In Boulder there are three branch banks and two newly created agencies and there will be a great deal of concern there if the Bill becomes law. Before the measure was brought down this year I canvassed the business houses in the main street of Boulder for support for one of the banks to install a night safe because no such facilities exist there in spite of the large business turnover that exists. I received a favourable response and the bank manager concerned wrote to his principals on the question, but there was not sufficient business there to warrant the installation of a night safe.

The reason for the inquiry I made was that at about that time a visitor from another State was active in the town. Four or five safes were blown and some thousands of pounds changed hands, a few business people being left lamenting and they had to install safes of greater substance than they had previously. Even with Saturday morning banking the amount of money they had to keep on their premises was sufficient inducement for this temporary resident to try his luck. Fortunately, he is now a permanent resident at Fremantle.

The greatest proportion of banking business in Boulder is done on Saturday mornings just after the banks close; and with no banking facilities on Saturdays, there would be a great deal of money floating around the town. For many years the Goldfields enjoyed a high standard of security and few people had keys to their front doors, because they were not needed, but of recent years that has all changed and business people are concerned with the number of burglaries and robberies that have taken place recently.

Boulder is a town that is concerned at the effect the Bill would have if it became law. That is sufficient reason for us to ask whether the benefit to one group is outweighed by the disability to another? It has been said we would become accustomed to the closing of banks on Saturdays just as we have become accustomed to the closing of various Government departments and other organisations on that day. It is true that the human mind and system can become accustomed to almost anything; but the important question is whether this would be a forward move.

It is only partly true that this legislation is in force in Tasmania. Some parts of that State have Saturday closing, but not all of it and it has not been the great success that we are led to believe, according to reports by those who have been there.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I have been there.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member was probably a little prejudiced. This Bill would make W.A. the first and only State completely without banking facilities on Saturday mornings and then of course the other States would use that as a precedent.

Hon. E. M. Davies: What about New Zealand?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: This measure would implement a five day week. That is not the policy of the Labour Party because, if it had been, the Government would have done something about it. If any member has a good idea which the party will not take up he is free to bring it before Parliament and have it debated.

The Minister for Railways: The party has taken this up and is behind the member concerned.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The Government is not doing much about it. If the Labour Party thought the measure was worth while and supported it so completely, why did the Premier refuse to take it to the Premiers' Conference and submit it as a worth-while question?

The Minister for Railways: When did he refuse?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: He refused the request of the Bank Officers' Association in that regard.

The Minister for Railways: Yes, because he is waiting to take it there and say, "We have implemented this in Western Australia."

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is a bit weak. If implemented this measure should be Commonwealth wide and should not be reserved to one State only. I would be willing to go on any deputation to the Premier to request him to put the measure to a Premiers' Conference.

The Minister for Railways: Do you object to the Foundation Day bank holiday?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No.

The Minister for Railways: This is the only State where it applies.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I say good luck to them in isolated cases such as that, but even the bank officers are not happy about trying to get this measure through by this backdoor method.

The Minister for Railways: Before Parliament?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It is using an Act that was not designed for this purpose.

The Minister for Railways: You are squaring off.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am not squaring off anything. The association is not happy about using this backdoor method.

The Minister for Railways: Is that your excuse for not supporting it?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If it were made, as it should be made, a Commonwealth matter, and implemented in every State, I would support it. I have supported this question before but now there are other people interested; before there were not. No one would have been hurt; no one would have been upset. But now, apparently, there are others who will be gravely concerned and they represent a large group of people who are giving a service to the State.

The Minister for Railways: They have not voiced their objections to it.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The voicing that I have had through letters—

The Minister for Railways: They are keeping silent in regard to it.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I shall not weary members by reading all the letters I have but there are a number of lengthy ones and if members want to hear them—

The Minister for Railways: All you have to do is to say whom they represent and then we will know to whom you are referring.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Apart from the banking people, from whom we have all had communications—

The Minister for Railways: Not me.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: —there is the Perth Chamber of Commerce, a further letter from that body, a letter from the Retail Grocers and Storekeepers Association of Western Australia—and there is also a screed from them setting out their reasons—then I have a copy of a letter in answer to a letter which I sent asking for further information; and that is followed by a summary of all the reasons advanced, including figures supplied by the special committee which sat on the matter, a letter from the Kalgoorlie Chamber of Commerce Inc., the Pharmaceutical

Guild of Australia, the Meat and Allied Trades Association of Australia, and quite a few others.

The Minister for Railways: Half-a-dozen.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: They have all set out good and lengthy information, which, if the Minister is really interested, I shall read to the House. But I think it would be better if I tabled those letters so that those interested can read them.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You are not allowed to threaten members.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I think the hon. member knows me better than that. I want now to hark back to something in the nature of a personal approach that I feel towards this measure and this is a question which has occasioned me considerable resentment. In the first instance there was an article in the paper which I resented very much and it contained, more or less, these words: "The certain support of two Liberal members who occupy borderline seats." As one member who represents a borderline seat I presume that I was one of these members concerned and I want to assure members that in cases such as this an approach of that type is an outrageous attempt to try to influence a member's decision. If any person thinks that I would allow my judgment to be coloured at the expense of fairness, simply because I occupy a borderline seat, then I am afraid he has not closely observed my record in the past.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Was that a Press statement?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: It should be repudiated.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It probably was. In any case, my attitude this evening will repudiate it. I cannot, in the circumstances, disregard the overwhelming weight of evidence which is against this proposal and there are so many people who are most upset about the possibility of this measure reaching the statute book. I supported this measure once in the past but I do not think I can on this occasion because it is too far-reaching.

I believe that if this legislation were agreed to it would lead ultimately to a complete closing of all shops and business houses on Saturday and if members consider what that could mean to the shop assistants in this State they might not be so eager to support the proposition. It is a well recognised fact in business circles that if trading hours were restricted from Monday to Friday a far smaller staff would be required by business houses because on Saturday mornings shops take on an average one-third of

the total cash sales for the week's trading. The business houses must have a bigger staff than they require during the rest of the week to cope with that short rush period on Saturday mornings. They cannot employ staff just for a couple of hours on Saturday and so they have to maintain them over the whole period. As a result, for the five week days their staff is larger than is really needed. So we have to give serious consideration to the possibility of Saturday morning trading being stopped.

It could mean that a considerable number of shop assistants would find themselves out of work. I realise that that is not strictly related to the Bill; but it is one of the little facets that could crop up if this measure were passed and it did ultimately bring about a change in the trading hours for the business community.

I would sincerely say to all members of the banking fraternity that now they are organised—and they are properly and well organised—they should use their association, and all the information it has gathered, to approach the Government to tackle this matter on a proper basis. It should be an Australia-wide proposition, and no one could object to it. If it were made Australia-wide the same position would apply in every State, and a man would not have to make arrangements about holding his cash over the week-end simply because this State had no banking facilities on Saturdays.

If we were to close our banks on Saturdays, and it were not the general practice throughout Australia, I think it would create great hardship; and it would mean that many business houses would have to make private arrangements for holding large sums of cash over the week-end. It would probably mean that in some small towns night safe facilities would have to be installed. That would probably be all to the good; but there are certain drawbacks even to that proposal.

Hon. L. A. Logan: They do not use them now.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No; there are certain things that militate against their being used. As the banking people have such a good organisation, and all the facts to back it up, it should put pressure on the Government.

The Minister for Railways: Which Government?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The State Government.

The Minister for Railways: The State Government cannot legislate for the Commonwealth.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: No; but this organisation can do what I said earlier; it can influence the Premier to take the matter to a Premiers' Conference,

and I hope that if this Bill passes the second reading some amendment in that direction will be passed.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Why worry about the other States?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is a point that has often been introduced into debates on other matters. The Minister, when introducing Bills, often tells us of the position that obtains in New South Wales or in Queensland and advances that as an argument why his legislation should be agreed to. I think the same argument could be used in this case.

One member also said that this legislation should not be introduced by a private member. I do not know that I entirely agree with that. But I believe that if it has any virtue the Government could quite easily have made it a Government measure, and given it the added importance that the Government apparently believes it is entitled to.

I would now like to look at the measure from the point of view of the bank clerks. I agree completely with the view that has been expressed that the younger members among the banking clerks particularly, when they see their friends going off on Saturday morning while they have to go back to work for one or two hours feel that it spoils that part of the day for them. I agree there is nothing more maddening, because I have experienced it myself.

Hon. L. A. Logan: They work longer than 1½ hours.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Oh yes, we all know they are tied down after the doors are shut. It is still maddening to know that one's friends are enjoying the freedom of Saturday morning, and I can appreciate their desire to have this measure brought forward. But I also feel that we should consider the other sections of the community and what their plight might be if this becomes law. We must give consideration to that aspect particularly when so many other people are affected. That being the case, I am afraid that on this occasion I cannot support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. G. E. JEFFERY (Suburban—in reply) [11.23]: In replying to the various points that have been raised in this debate, I shall try and cover the major points that have been of some concern to those who have opposed this measure.

Firstly, Mr. Simpson expressed the thought that Parliament would be on doubtful ground if it were to usurp the functions of the Arbitration Court. Tedious as repetition may be, to clear up this point I must again read to the House excerpts from the transcript of the bank officers' case when presented in the Federal and the State Arbitration Courts.

The Commonwealth Conciliation Commissioner, Mr. J. N. Porteus said—

Early in the hearing it became clear that, under the Bills of Exchange Act, banks were required to be open on Saturday mornings to discharge their obligations with regard to bills of exchange. It also became clear that to discharge this obligation at least the great majority of the staffs of the banks would have to be in attendance. Consequently one is faced with the fact that if a five-day week is prescribed, the banks would not have the two alternatives of closing on Saturday mornings or remaining open and paying overtime on Saturday. While the banks are in this position, I do not consider it fair to impose on them a five-day week with costly overtime. It is sufficient to state that if an industry is such that it must by law carry on during  $5\frac{1}{2}$  days of the week it is not appropriate that an industrial authority should limit ordinary working hours to five days per week. It appears to me that if a five-day week is to be prescribed for the banking industry, it should be prescribed by Parliament, as Tasmania has done by closing banks on Saturdays.

In the State Arbitration Court in 1955, during the hearing of a claim for a 5-day week by the Bank Officers' Association Mr. Adams—appearing for the Associated Banks, in opposition to the claim—had this to say—

I submit that this court has no jurisdiction or, if it considers it has, it would be improper for it to accept and exercise jurisdiction on the point. My submission is based on Section 98 of the Bills of Exchange Act (Federal) and Section 1 of the Bank Holidays Act, 1884 (State).

Mr. Adams, for the banks, stated further—

I submit therefore that you have no jurisdiction; if you have jurisdiction you should not exercise it, and it would be improper for this court to make an order which in effect would close banks on Saturday unless and until the Bank Holidays Act is amended.

The President said—

Before you finish, your contention is, of course, that Section 98 of the Bills of Exchange Act impliedly, if not expressly, sets out the days upon which banks should be open.

To which Mr. Adams replied, "That is so." Finally the President, in summing up, said—

Well, we are all of a clear opinion on this point. I do not think there is any doubt that this

court has jurisdiction to fix the hours of employees in banks, even although under the Commonwealth it is, if not legally, practically necessary for banks to keep open on Saturday mornings, and it might be, as Mr. Adams suggests, legally necessary for them to do so. But whereas here it seems certain that any award made by this court of a five-day week would only result in extra overtime being paid, in that the employers would be forced to keep their businesses open despite the court award, we are all agreed that the court, even although technically it may have jurisdiction, would not, except in very exceptional circumstances, make any such order. I think that is as far as I need go.

This clears up this point and I think demonstrates that this long-overdue reform can only be achieved by legislative action—either by amendment to Section 98 of the Federal Bills of Exchange Act, or by amendment to the State Bank Holidays Act of 1884-53, which is the intention of this Bill.

It was also stated that this Bill would not affect the Commonwealth Bank; this despite the assurance given by the Deputy-Governor of this bank, and the precedent that we already have in Tasmania of the Commonwealth Bank conforming to the conditions as applicable to the private banks.

It has been suggested that some form of negotiation between employer and the Bank Officers' Association should take place. On what basis could these parties negotiate? Both are fully conversant with Section 98 of the Commonwealth Bills of Exchange Act and its ramifications. I suggest that it would be sheer hypocrisy to waste one another's time, knowing that each party is rendered equally impotent by this Legislation. Actually many approaches have been made in all States and have invariably foundered on the impossibility of any change without legislative amendment.

Members appear greatly upset that this measure was introduced in another place by an ex-bank officer, and one must admit to having sat in a cold sweat throughout this debate, fearing that some member might disclose the fact that prior to my election to this House I was a plumber.

Others were of the opinion that this matter should be submitted to a Premier's Conference, or introduced by the Government. In reply to the first submission I would point out that Tasmania proceeded with this measure independently, and the issue is of no great national importance.

With reference to the contention that this should be a Government Bill, I cannot understand the expressed concern of members regarding the inspiration of this Bill, except to say that Mr. Logan was well and truly off the track when he said that it was introduced solely because an ex-bank officer happened to be a member of Parliament.

Members can be assured that this question of a five-day-week for bank officers was being discussed long before the member in another place entered Parliament; and surely it is a fair proposition that he should seek to end an industrial injustice after having personal experience of it. It is logical therefore that he should advocate work for this reform when given the opportunity.

Surely the complaint that this is not a Government measure will not play any part in the deliberations on the merits of the Bill. Both in the presentation of this Bill and now in reply, I think it can be fairly said that I have gone to some pains to ensure that this measure would be debated dispassionately and on a non-party basis. Whether I have succeeded or not is another story. The one outstanding fact is that Parliament is given the opportunity by a private member's Bill to consider the pros and cons of legislation without the thought lurking in the minds of members opposed to the Government that there is an attempt to garner any possible prestige accruing from the passage of the Bill.

The suggestion that this is a matter for Federal determination is also invalid when it is realised that any attempt at Federal intervention would be an abrogation of the rights of the State, which are zealously guarded in the Constitution, and amply provided for in the Federal Bills of Exchange Act of 1909, which replaced the State Bills of Exchange Act of 1884. Reference to the Commonwealth Banking Act of 1945-53 clearly maintains the right of the State to determine when and on what days bank holidays shall fall.

Reference was made to the position in other States. Without going into any great detail I will deal with the State of Queensland which was specifically mentioned. It was said that the Queensland Government had sent the President of the State Arbitration Court, Mr. Justice Matthews, to investigate and report on this very matter. While it was admitted that a copy of his report was not readily available, it was understood that the report condemned absolutely any similar set-up in Queensland to that which existed in Tasmania.

For the information of members I will read to the House a letter sent to Mr. Kenneth Laidlaw, State Secretary of the Bank Officers' Association, Queensland, in reply to a letter inquiring as to the attitude of the Liberal and Country Parties of

that State in relation to the question of a five-day week for bank officers. It reads as follows:—

Parliament House,  
Brisbane,  
28th March, 1956.

Leader of the Opposition.

Dear Mr. Laidlaw,

Further to my letter of the 19th inst., I have to advise that the question of the Saturday closing of banks has now been discussed. As a result of this discussion, I now advise that our parties favour the suggestion of closing the banks on Saturdays.

However, there is one point on which we would like your advice: What effect would Saturday closing have on savings bank activities? We think this is important, particularly as there has been an extension of savings bank activities of late.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Frank Nicklin,  
Leader of the Opposition.

If members want more, I have other correspondence which I do not propose to read. I have here a letter from Ken Morris, the Leader of the Liberal Party in Queensland. I have copies of correspondence clearing up the question of the savings bank, and finally the answer from Mr. Nicklin, who thanked Mr. Laidlaw and said that his party was satisfied with the information supplied. This letter was printed in the official journal of the Bank Officers' Association in Queensland, "The Queensland Bank Officer" of the 22nd April, 1956:—

Mr. President,

I think hon. members are fully aware that Mr. Nicklin is now the Premier of Queensland and that bank officers in that State can reasonably expect that the five-day week will be granted to them in the very near future.

I turn now to the claim of the Hon. Mr. Logan when he protested against the selfishness of bank officers and their apparent interest in legislation that only affected their own welfare. I can only say that this is equally applicable to all walks of life and to quote the words of a famous philosopher: "The brutal fact is that everybody on this earth is self-interested, definitely including politicians, and most certainly including people who don't agree with the bank blokes, and who want them to work on Saturday morning."

It was also said by Mr. Logan that savings bank agencies were an embarrassment to some of the storekeepers who held them.

The facts are that these agencies are eagerly sought after by shopkeepers, as they are a guarantee of the integrity of the storekeeper, and do tend to bring added business to the store. Rapid growth of the agency system in banking is found in that the largest savings bank in the Commonwealth now has approximately 800 agencies in this State compared with 570 some 12 months ago.

In regard to the 40-hour week, every speaker in opposition has gone to great lengths to warn of the dangers of shortening the working week, failing to recognise that this Bill does not contemplate this at all, and merely contends that the bank officer will work 40 hours in five days, instead of 40 hours in 5½ days as at present.

The number of hours that banks are open to the public is purely a matter for determination by the banks themselves. Further, it is a standing instruction to the executive committee of the Bank Officers' Association that they will immediately negotiate with the employer to amend the award regarding the hours to be worked every day if this Bill is accepted by Parliament.

One argument used in opposition to this Bill was that if the bank officers were allowed to work the five-day week, other sections of the community would be clamouring for the same conditions. My reply to this is that surely this case must stand purely and simply on the arguments in favour of or against the five-day week for bank officers. Further, the claims of other interests are fully provided for in approach to the appropriate industrial authority, which in most instances would be the State Arbitration Court. Fears expressed regarding an influx of criminal elements from the East appear without substance when one reads the expert evidence tendered to the select committee by Det.-Inspector Pilmer of the C.I.B., who represented the Police Department.

It is admitted that some inconvenience would occur initially, while commerce adjusted itself to the change. One member has suggested that a six months waiting period be allowed between the passing of this Bill and the actual implementation of the proposal it contains, to allow business interests to arrange their affairs to meet the new circumstances. This is only fair, and I give the assurance that the bank officers are in accord, and would honour this proposal.

Reference was made by Mr. Baxter to the inability of the armoured escort service to cope with increased demand, and that its proprietor Mr. Hart, had to supervise personally all operations.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I did not use the word "inability."

Hon. G. E. JEFFERY: I understand that that was correct. Mr. Hart took the trouble to write to me as a result of the

remark of the hon. member made the other evening. The following is a letter received from Mr. Hart to-day:—

18th September, 1957.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery, M.L.C.,  
Legislative Council,  
Parliament House,  
Perth, W.A.

Dear Sir,

It has come to my knowledge that certain remarks were recently passed at a meeting of Parliament to the effect that my Company, Armoured Escort Limited, would perhaps be unable to handle any extra work or responsibility which might come as a result of the banks being closed on Saturday mornings.

I would like to state that this opinion has possibly been derived from a personal conversation with a certain member of Parliament, in which I discussed the long hours which my business entailed. However, this is normal with a new and growing business, and I did not wish to convey the meaning that my Company would be unable to accommodate any further custom on a Saturday morning.

I must further state that since I gave evidence at the Parliamentary Select Committee on this matter, my Company has purchased a Safe Deposit business situated in central St. George's Terrace, which could be opened on a Saturday morning and which contains some 300 private safes for hire, where clients could deposit money for banking. Also, arrangements could be made to make this a receiving depot for bank deposits after banking hours.

My Company is prepared to extend their activities on a Saturday morning or at any other time to receive and handle any new business that may arise and the staff employed are competent to handle such matters without my personal supervision.

Yours faithfully,  
Armoured Escort Ltd.,

W. J. Hart,  
Managing Director.

The topic of a five-day week for bank officers has been before the public for over two months now, and the public are so concerned that the total opposition expressed in the Press comprises two letters from private individuals and several from retail traders' organisations.

But in her usual democratic style, grandma "The West Australian" came tripping on the scene this morning, spectacles awry, out of breath, with an editorial so late as to preclude any chance of reply. With age, it is unfortunate that

she has not achieved that respectability that one associates with all elderly ladies. Loss of memory is also playing its part, and I must read to the House a letter which she received from Mr. Williams, President of the W.A. Bank Officials' Association, and also those lines she conveniently forgot to publish.

The following is a letter in reply to the letter from the Retail Traders' Association:—

30th August, 1957.

The Editor,  
"The West Australian,"  
Perth.

Dear Sir,

#### Five Day Banking Week.

Mr. Paton, of the Retail Traders' Association (29/8/57), in opposing the closure of banks on Saturdays, could have given a wrong impression when he stated, "Any move to reduce the working week would place an added strain on the economy." Bank officials do not seek a reduction of working hours. They ask for the more efficient 40-hour five-day week, already in force for all comparable workers and most others—a more rational spread of hours which they know will not only increase their own welfare but will improve the banks' operative capacity.

Most other sections of industry and commerce do not function on Saturdays and do not use the banks at all on that day. The majority of bank branches handle on Saturdays only a small volume of business, the bulk of which could be done on any other day of the week with equal convenience to the public. Retail traders themselves make very restricted use of Saturday banking facilities.

I now read one of the lines which had been conveniently excluded—

and many of them have expressed to bank officers their private opinions that Saturday banking is not necessary for them.

The letter goes on—

Practical bankers are firmly of the opinion that actual Saturday banking transactions, contrary to Mr. Paton's assertions, have little direct effect on the level of retail trade on that day.

These last two paragraphs were also left out—

From a community viewpoint it is economically unsound for an industry to function beneath its capacity for any period.

More than 3,000 bank officials, their families and friends, await the outcome of the Bill before Parliament with intense interest, and with the

conviction that it would be comparative industrial justice for bank workers to be granted a five-day week.

Yours Faithfully,  
J. J. Williams,  
President,

Bank Officials' Association of W.A.

It has been stated that the banks officially oppose this measure. Perhaps they do—officially. But why have they been publicly silent since the Bill was introduced over two months ago? Bank officers themselves feel assured that their executives privately would welcome this reform which would rationalise their operations and alleviate their staffing problems.

Bank officers claim that the greatly increased welfare of more than 3,000 bank workers plus their families, by far outweighs the problematical and mainly trivial inconvenience of a comparatively limited number. If this measure is accepted as a normal reform, in 12 months' time everyone will wonder what all the fuss was about. Should the Bill not be passed on this occasion we can be certain it will be introduced again.

I think I have covered all the main points; and finally I would say that I cannot believe, knowing the members of this House as I do, that the bank officers, like the Flying Dutchman, will be condemned to sail the industrial seas forever between a court that cannot judge the case and a Parliament that will not approve.

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

Ayes	.....	12
Noes	.....	13

Majority against .... 1

#### Ayes.

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

(Teller.)

#### Noes.

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

(Teller.)

#### Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. W. F. Willesee	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS  
(Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) I move—

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

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.45 p.m.