Legislative Council

Wednesday, 10th November, 1954.

CONTENTS.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1, Guardianship of Infants Act Amendment.

2, Administration Act Amendment.

BILL—DOG ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [4.36] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is the result of a request from the Farmers' Union for producer representation on the Milk Board. Originally, the board consisted of two representatives of consumers, two representatives of producers, and an independent chairman. However, in 1948, the Act was amended and the present board, consisting of an independent chairman and two members, none of whom is connected with the industry, was constituted.

The Farmers' Union requested a majority producer representation; and partly to meet its wishes as well as to conform with the Government's policy, it was decided to provide for one producer representative who would be selected by the Minister from a panel of names submitted by the Farmers' Union. In providing for this member, the Bill states specifically that he must be a person actively engaged in the business of a dairyman and be licensed under the Act.

The Bill adds a further member to the board, thus making a total of five; and proposes that this person, who shall be a woman, shall be a representative of consumers. I think members are familiar with the passage of the Bill in another place, and no lengthy explanation of it is required. I trust that it will have a good reception in this House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [4.38] in moving the second reading said: As members may be aware, the Forests Act has remained virtually unchanged since it was passed in 1918. The experience of the past 35 years, particularly since World War II, has now indicated the need for some amendments to make it more workable.

Times have changed, and so have the demands on the forest resources of the State. Some parts of the Act are too rigid to meet present-day needs; while changes in money values, as well as changes in the intrinsic value of our timbers, have brought about anomalies, which are difficult to correct while the Act remains as it is. The Bill is an endeavour to bring the Act more into conformity with the realities of the present day.

Of the 16 amendments in the Bill, seven relate to monetary penalties for forest offences, and two are to delete sections which are no longer operative. The first amendment proposes to include "seeds" in the definition of "forest product". This definition already includes many things such as bark, gum, flowers, roots etc., and seeds are an important item with which the department is now doing a considerable and an ever-increasing business.

The second amendment aims at the deletion of Section 6 of the principal Act. This section authorises the extension of concessions and leases where operations had been interrupted during the 1914-18 war. This action has long since been taken, and the section is now redundant.

While, under Section 14 of the principal Act, no person may be appointed an officer of the professional division of the department unless he possesses the degree or diploma of a forest school recognised by the Governor, no similar requirement applies to the office of conservator. Today, forestry is recognised as a profession requiring a wide technical knowledge, and it is most necessary that the conservator should be a man of high training.

Every forestry service in Australia is administered by technically qualified foresters, and such qualified men have held the position of conservator in this State for at least the past 38 years. It seems

unlikely that any Government today would seriously consider appointing a person who was not so qualified in forestry matters. The amendment seeks to ensure, however, that the conservator shall always be a qualified man. The Bill provides for the repeal of Subsection (3) of Section 8 which merely validated the appointment of the conservator who was in office at the commencement, in 1918, of the principal Act.

Another amendment empowers the conservator, as a body corporate, to acquire, hold and dispose of real and personal property of the department, and to confirm past action along these lines. Over many years freehold titles have been issued in the name of the conservator, but the Crown Law Department has advised that it is desirable to provide statutory authority for this. The department must have offices and houses in towns throughout the State, in order to function properly. In other instances the department purchases land from or exchanges land with settlers who are anxious to effect an exchange in order to straighten up their holdings or to receive land more suited to their needs. This procedure has operated for many years, and therefore statutory validation is most desirable.

The next amendment deals with permits, the most important of which are those for sawmilling. At present the Act states briefly that "the term of a permit shall not exceed 10 years but may be renewed." For many years, the Forests Department practice has been to issue a permit for one year's duration, and to renew it annually, if sufficient timber has been available on the area and the conditions of the permit have been faithfully observed. The obvious intention was that a sawmilling permit should have a 10-year life, which should be sufficient security to warrant the capital outlay; but that after that time, revision of conditions, etc., should be made. But that is not explicitly stated.

Moreover, the Act does not at present state who shall renew the permit, or under what terms, conditions and royalties it shall be renewed. While the department attempts on a permit to provide, if possible, for permanent cutting, it must also be in a position to protect the State's timber assets by bringing royalties and conditions of tenure and operation into relation with changed conditions. Over the years, many royalty anomalies have arisen, due to the rigidity of this part of the Act. Permits adjacent to each other, but let at different periods, have royalties which are not properly related.

What was a sufficient royalty in 1934 is only a fraction of the true value today, and a sawmiller on a newer permit may be paying very much higher royalties than his neighbour. This is obviously undesirable and unjust. Mr. Rodger, who conducted the Royal Commission in 1951, pointed out the need for reappraisal of royalties on a more scientific basis, such as already operates in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania. However, the Act does not possess adequate provision for this, without seeking the drastic step of cancellation of a permit and resubmission to auction or tender, thus introducing a serious element of insecurity to an industry in which large capital expenditures have been made.

Many causes operate to upset basic royalty values, such as monetary inflation and rises in rail freights, of which there have been three in recent years. It is the purpose of the Forests Department to endeavour to keep a fair and reasonable relationship between all the royalties paid, taking into account a number of factors, which, however, are disturbed from time to time by economic changes. The availability of timber, the value of timber products, and the demand for them, can influence greatly the royalty rates at any given moment; and, in so doing, have serious repercussions on royalties of permits issued at different periods of time.

While negotiations have been conducted from time to time by the Conservator of Forests with principals of sawmilling companies with a view to redressing anomalies, and some changes have been agreed to, this is a hit-or-miss type of procedure. It depends too much on every organisation being equally amenable to reason, and tends to impose disadvantages on the more reasonable organisations. What is needed is impartial royalty determination based on scientific principles. Such a basis has been operating in Victoria for some years past with full co-operation between the Forests Department and sawmillers.

In the light of more accurate knowledge now being secured as to available timber on the permit areas, it may be desirable or necessary to amend the areas of permits or the permissible annual cut, to safeguard continuity. The intention is for the Conservator of Forests to have the right to make such adjustments in respect of terms, conditions and royalties applying to any sawmilling permits, as are dictated by the times. While on the face of it these powers may appear to be wide, it is a fact that the conservator already has authority to refuse to renew a permit at the end of 12 months, and then submit it for auction or tender under new terms, conditions and royalties, thus achieving the same end, but by measures less palatable to all concerned.

The powers now sought provide for a more orderly and less drastic approach to the problems with which he has to deal. There is such a long-standing spirit of goodwill and co-operation between the department and the sawmillers that there should be no genuine fear as to misuse of

the powers. The conservator has explained to the associated sawmillers organisation in detail what lies behind the present Act, and they have informed him in writing that they raise no objections to the proposed amendments, which indicates the continuance of good relations.

Perhaps, with the best intentions in the world, the conservator could do something which the sawmillers seriously objected to or considered unjust. In that case, they would have access to the Minister for Forests under whose direction the Forests Department is administered. The Minister, on hearing such representations, could make his own decision, or refer it to some independent body, as is done in New South Wales, as set out in the Royal Commissioner's report. It must be remembered that the Forests Department and the sawmillers have mutual interests in the healthy and harmonious functioning of each other. Without a reasonably prosperous timber industry, the department cannot secure the revenues for its forestry work. Without adequate revenue to finance the work of the Forests Department, the future supply position of the timber industry would be jeopardised. Consequently there is no need for fears of what may result from the powers sought.

When the Act was passed in 1918, it allowed the conservator to issue permits without necessity for auction and tender for forest produce of a total value not exceeding £10. In view of the intrinsically higher value of timber today and the reduction in money values, the Bill seeks to increase this amount to £50. This provision applies to small operations and special cases.

Section 35 of the principal Act provides for the disposal of forest produce under licence. The usual form of disposing of areas for sawmilling and other purposes is by permit, which is issued after the area has been sold by auction; or alternatively, by the acceptance of a tender. However, another section of the Act allows areas to be made available by way of licence. This provision has been employed very rarely in Western Australia, although I am informed that similar power is used considerably in some of the other States. The section provides that licences may be used for the removal of timber from a forest area in common with other licensees.

It could happen that there is only room for one licensee or that perhaps only one is affected. It could apply to anything at all; to the removal of timber or some other produce which I mentioned in my opening remarks. In order that there shall be no ambiguity in the matter, it is proposed to add the words "if any." The section would then read, "A licence may be issued in common with other licensees, if any."

Subsection (2) of Section 35 specifies that licences may be issued subject to payment of prescribed fees and prescribed royalties. That means that a whole series of royalty rates for many forms of forest produce would have to be determined by the Conservator of Forests and then laid on the Table of the House and passed as regulations. It is difficult if not impossible to cover all circumstances in this way. Questions arise of quality, accessibility, locality, demand, ruling market price and so on which change continually. At present the section is so cumbersome as to be generally unworkable and it has been little used by the Department, and then only reluctantly.

There is another small amendment. Under the Act the payments to be made to the Treasury Department include all royalties, fees, proceeds of sale of forest produce, rents and so on. When that was inserted in the Act, it obviously meant rents received from grazing leases over forest country. But today, because of the more intensive application of forestry work, the Forests Department has erected many houses—I should say several hundreds of them—for its employees. The Auditor General has queried the point as to whether these house rents should not be paid into the Treasury, and then, of course—as the Act states at the present moment—only three-fifths of the amount returned to the Forests Department. The rentals charged are only nominal, and are for the purpose of maintenance and ultimate replacement of those premises, and therefore are not revenue in the strict sense of the word. Accordingly it is proposed to amend the Act, whereby all the revenue shall be paid into Treasury, including rents, but excluding rentals from houses.

Other amendments deal with monetary penalties provided for offences against the Act. In the past 36 years, monetary values have changed greatly, and it is proposed that these penalties should be doubled. The Act provides that the minimum penalty shall be one-twentieth of the maximum. Where the maximum fine is £50, then a fine of £2 10s. is no deterrent, and some of the offences against the Act can have serious consequences. At times, it is difficult to detect all offences because of the magnitude of the forest area, and it is felt that when any offender is apprehended, some reasonably deterrent penalty is warranted.

In the Forests Act of New South Wales, there is no requirement for licence fees and royalties to be determined by regulation, this duty being delegated to the Forests Department, except that minimum fees are laid down by regulation. This was done so long ago that their minima have now no meaning. It would appear that

under the circumstances it would be preferable for the Conservator and the professional officers of the department to determine the fees, and the Bill provides for this.

Under the principal Act, three-fifths of the net revenue of the department has to be paid into a special Reforestation Fund, for the purposes of developing and protecting forests. Experience has shown this amount to be insufficient for the purpose, and supplementary financial grants have been made annually by successive governments, so that the actual spending has been nearer to nine-tenths of the net revenue.

The proposed amendment seeks to make nine-tenths of the net revenue available and thus give more security and certainty to the department in its planning. It is necessary for continuity to be assured from year to year. The result will be security, and will not necessarily increase the actual amount provided for the department's operations. A sudden lowering of grants could be disastrous. In the Eastern States, the forestry services receive back virtually all their revenue, plus considerable loan funds, and their spending on forestry is relatively much greater than ours.

No alteration is proposed in respect of terms of imprisonment originally provided for. The final amendment is the repeal of the machinery for making regulations, which conflicts with the procedure now laid down in the Interpretation Act. This action has been taken in connection with other Acts.

A perusal of the Bill will reveal that no drastic alterations are requested. Nor is any attempt made to alter the basis of the Forests Department administration. The amendments are sought in the light of experience and what the Forests Department feels is necessary to facilitate its work and its negotiations with those who operate in the forest.

Members will be interested in the following letter which was sent on the 3rd November to the Minister for Forests by the Associated Sawmillers and Timber Merchants of W.A. The letter reads:—

> At a meeting of the Council of this Association held this afternoon, members expressed satisfaction with your explanation of the main intention of the amendments to the Forests Act, 1918, namely the future security of the State forests and the industry generally on a long term planning basis.
>
> The matter of security of tenure of sawmilling permits is one which has always exercised the minds of sawmillers, particularly on sawmilling permits where large sums of money have been expended on saw mills, roads, housing and amenities. Your assurance that it is your intention to see that the security of tenure of such sawmilling permits will be fully safeguarded where possible is a source of gratification to members.
>
> We fully realise your difficulties on the matter of an equitable assessment of royalty rates and the industry is pleased to hear that it is your intention to confer with a committee of this association when any new basis of royalty is proposed.
>
> We are also pleased to note that the amendments provide for an increased share of the revenue derived from the forests to be retained by your department for the protection and development of State forests.
>
> After hearing the Hon. Minister's speech on the second reading of the Bill and your assurances and after a full discussion at our meeting, members of this association raise no objections to the proposed amendments.

I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. Hearn, debate adjourned.

BILL—ARGENTINE ANT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th October.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.56]: I have not much to say about the Bill; nor is there any need to make a long statement on the life history of the ant, or how to control it. In the main, this is purely a machinery measure for the control of the ant in infested areas. There are only one or two points one could mention about the Bill. The first is that it appeals to my sense of humour that it takes a Bill of 17 pages, in which colossal powers are conferred, to control such a small insect as the ant. The Bill is almost as big as the one that covers a much greater sphere. I refer to the measure which alters the whole Act dealing with the native problem.

The other point I want to mention is the appointment of the Director of Agriculture as chairman of the committee. I wonder whether we cannot appeal to some of our citizens to take some authority in these matters and relieve the heads of our departments from constantly taking the chair at committees of this sort. For instance, we find that in some of our hospitals excellent work is done by public-spirited citizens acting as chairmen because they have a great personal interest in our hospitals. At the Royal Perth Hospital the departmental head is the chairman of the board.

However, I do not think it is wise, on every occasion, to ask the director of a department to be the chairman of a committee which affects his particular department. I think we are losing the idea that the average citizen should take some responsibility in these matters, especially when one realises that out of the £105,000 to be spent on this problem, £66,000 will be found by local governing bodies. That suggests to me that it might be left to a person who would regard this matter as vital to himself and to the rest of the community, to act as chairman.

We could well relieve the director of the necessity of acting as chairman of this committee. I do not know how many committees the heads of departments chair; but a question along these lines concerning the Director of Public Works was asked in this House, and the answer was that he was chairman of, from memory, 17 of them. Much the same sort of thing seems to occur in the rest of our departments. I cannot see that there is any reason why the head of a department should be chairman of this committee. If it is argued that it is for the purpose of guarding the public money, I would point out that the chairman of the board, whoever he might be, would be responsible to the Minister. At the present time there is too much avoidance of public responsibility by citizens; and some of it is possibly due to the fact that Government departments, and the Government, generally, have a tendency to draw to themselves more and more power, and to assume office on more and more committees of this type. I seriously suggest that this committee should be allowed to select its own chairman.

Hon. L. Craig: It could appoint somebody else.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The Bill states that it will be the Director of Agriculture.

Hon. L. Craig: The Minister may appoint somebody else.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I feel it could be left to this committee to appoint its own chairman, who would assume this as one of his real obligations. If that were done, we might find a true interest taken in this matter.

The other point I wish to mention is the amount that is to be charged for rating. I feel that 2½d. on the capital value could become quite a sum to the business interests of the community. Even on my own property I would say that the amount charged would be £15, whereas one could actually obtain the same amount of work for £5.

The Minister for the North-West: Where?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The amount could be considerable in some larger areas. I have no quarrel with the amount, because I think it is essential that we should get rid of the Argentine ant as soon as possible. It has been pointed out in the Bill that no pathological disease has been carried by these ants—or at least none that is known—and they are considered more a nuisance than carriers of disease and injurious to health. To those members who have not had experience of them, I would say that they are a complete nightmare to the housewife, especially when they take charge of the place as they do.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [5.3]: I desire to raise only one point in connection with this Bill and it deals with the principle of parliamentary Government. The Bill provides that the measure shall continue in operation until the 30th June, 1959; or, where the scheme period is extended under Subsection (2) of Section 2 of the Act, until the expiration of the extension. In another part of the Bill, provision is made that the scheme shall be for a period ending on the 30th June, 1959, but that it may be extended by the Minister for a further six months. I submit it is a wrong principle to leave any Act of Parliament operating entirely at the discretion of a committee or Minister. I feel that Parliament should determine that; and when the Bill is in Committee, I propose to move to delete the words that leave this to the discretion of the Minister. In brief, I propose that the measure and the scheme should end on the 30th June, 1959.

Hon. L. Craig: Suppose the scheme is not quite complete?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I do not say that it should not go on for five, six, or seven years; but I do think the matter should be referred back to Parliament, and the question dealt with then. This point also affects rating. I submit that our laws should be definite, and that the ratepayers and local authorities should know where they stand. If this is left afloat, there may be serious confusion arising from a lack of knowledge of prospects as it concerns the rating problems of local authorities in their last year.

One small point has been mentioned to me by a local authority. As members are aware, it is customary, when local authorities strike their rate, for many of them to allow discount for prompt payment of those rates. In this case, however, it would appear that if the road board or the local authority allows a discount, it is still liable under the Act to make the fixed payment on the valuation to the Government. To that extent the local authority could be out of pocket to the amount of the discount. How that could be overcome, I do not know. Subject to those two qualifications I support the Bill.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [5.6]: While I commend the purpose of this Bill, which is to try to eradicate the Argentine

ant, there are one or two points I would like to mention. I believe it is very necessary to eliminate this pest, but I find that the Bill asks the country road boards and councils to contribute to a fund for the purpose of eradication.

While I suppose it can be said that the ant infestation today is not so much the concern of the country districts—because the ant is not in many of those areas—there is a possibility that if it is not tackled at the moment, it will become a problem all over the State. For a number of years we have had a rate struck annually through local governing bodies for the eradication of vermin in country areas, but metropolitan road boards and councils have never been asked to make any contribution. While it may be pleaded that we do not have vermin in the city areas—I refer to foxes, rabbits, etc.—it must be agreed that whatever it costs the country would result in saving, because there would be greater production. Accordingly, if it is fair for the country boards and councils to help in the eradication of Argentine ants, I think it is equally fair that the metropolitan local authorities and councils should help to bear part of the burden which applies to the country districts in the eradication of vermin.

It seems to me that the rate asked for is extreme, and, before we go into Committee, I will take the opportunity of looking into the matter with the idea of moving some amendments. As I read the measure, a person owning property in the country could be up for a lot of money, although there was no ant infestation there whatever. I support the second reading; but would point out that, while the country people are anxious to eradicate this pest, they should not have too high a rate imposed on them, because they already have a vermin rate to pay, and this takes a fair amount of money. The amount is increasing annually. So let us not over-burden the country people to the extent this Bill proposes. I support the second reading, but I will look into the matter with a view to submitting necessary amendments.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [5.8]: I rise to support the Bill, though I do not think I need to say a great deal about it. I am sure that members will regret it has become necessary, for the purpose of controlling a pest, to impose further taxation on people who are already heavily taxed. The pest is becoming very acute in certain parts of the State and some method of control must be adopted. This has been decided as a result of conferences between representatives of the Government and the local authorities. The control suggested has, of course, been incorporated in the Bill.

There is one point with which I am not exactly in agreement, and another on which I would like some further explanation, if possible. The Bill provides for a committee and says that the Governor shall appoint its members from the City of Perth, the Local Government Association of Western Australia, the Country Municipal Association of Western Australia, and the Road Board Association of Western Australia. That means we will have representatives of local government throughout the State; and it is possible, of course, that the Government will be represented on the committee in view of the fact that it will contribute to the finance necessary for the purposes of eradication. Although the Government is making available a fairly large sum of money for this purpose, I, like other speakers, cannot see any reason why the chairman of the committee should be the Director of Agriculture.

All of us believe that it is absolutely necessary for the Government to supply finance for this purpose, because it is a matter which is of great importance to the State, and the pest must be controlled before it grows to greater proportions; but the ratepayers throughout the various local authorities will also be contributing large sums of money; and I do not know why permanent Government officials—who already have a great deal to do in the administration of their own departments—should be appointed as chairmen of various committees that are set up. There are quite a number of other people who are competent enough to hold that office; and by virtue of the fact that they would be rendering a service to a local government, would be prepared to accept nomination on this board. They would be quite capable of carrying out the offices of chairman.

The Minister for the North-West: Do you know if they are prepared to do so?

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I do not know whether they are; but if the Bill is passed in its present form, they will have no opopportunity of being consulted, and we will not know whether they are prepared to accept the position or not.

There is another point on which I should like some information. I understand that in the first place it was stated that the rating on the annual value would be 2d. in the £, whereas the proposal in the Bill is that it shall be 2½d. Has anything happened since the discussions took place some time ago to indicate why it should be necessary to increase the amount? I take the view, which has already been expressed by other speakers, that this represents a further tax on people who are already bearing heavy imposts; and while everyone agrees that steps should be taken to raise sufficient finance to eradicate the pest, the Minister should tell us why the amount of the rate has been increased. I support the second reading.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.16]: The Bill represents a good move to take definite action to control or eradicate the Argentine ant. The city areas are fairly

heavily infested and the pest is making its way into the country, so that definite action is necessary to combat it.

I agree with Dr. Hislop in the objection he raised to the appointment of the Director of Agriculture as chairman of the committee. Members of the public service are being appointed to the chairmanship of so many boards that I fear that they will not be able to attend to their normal duties. This matter has been mentioned in the House on previous occasions. Members have objected to Government officials taking these positions, and it is time the Government woke up to the fact that such a man is incapable of doing more than a certain amount of work in a day and is not likely to be able adequately to attend to the affairs of a committee such as this.

The Minister for the North-West: The committee would not meet every day.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Admittedly so, but these positions require time for work which the officers were not previously expected to undertake. The Director of Agriculture was appointed for a specific purpose, and not to serve on all the boards and committees to which he has been appointed. His duty to the State is to attend to agriculture and refrain from accepting positions on bodies that are not associated with his department.

The Minister for the North-West: You believe in one man one job?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: No, but by appointing him to such bodies, we are reducing the value of his services to the State.

The Bill proposes that the committee shall include representatives of the City of Perth, the Local Government Association, the Country Municipal Council's Association, and the Road Board Association, but no mention is made of appointing a technical man possessing the knowledge requisite for undertaking the destruction of Argentine ants. I consider that a technical man having a knowledge of pest control and destruction should be appointed to the committee. He might be an officer of the C.S.I.R.O., or he might be a representative of one of the firms operating in the city and spraying for the control of vermin of various types. Such a man would be very useful on the committee to provide the requisite information and advise on the carrying out of the scheme in the cheapest possible way. The Government should consider the advisability of appointing such a man.

The Bill provides for the members of the committee to hold office for the scheme period, which would be for five years. I consider that that period is rather too long, and that it would be preferable to appoint the members of the committee for three years with the possibility of their terms being extended.

A member may be removed from the committee by the Governor if he becomes unsuitable to continue because of mental or physical infirmity or illness, neglect of duty as a member, or misbehaviour whether in his capacity as a member or otherwise. In very few instances are members of committees elected for a longer term than three years, and if the scheme is to extend over five years, the Government could well consider reducing the period of membership to three years, and we would then be in a position to see what was happening under the scheme.

Regarding the powers of rating, I am afraid that the proposals will not work out quite equitably. In one instance, the rate is to be ½d. on the unimproved value and in another instance 2½d. on the annual value, and I cannot see how the proceeds from the two rates could be identical. If there were a district where the rating was on the unimproved value, I believe that a rate of ½d. in the £ would produce much less revenue than would 2½d. on the annual value in a similar district, even though the rating was based on 1952 values. I daresay that those responsible for the framing of the Bill have considered this point pretty closely, but it is rather amazing to find that 1952 values are to be the basis, considering the alterations that have since occurred.

The Minister for the North-West: That will make it cheaper for the local authorities.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I fear that there will be discrepancies, in that one district, where the unimproved value system is adopted, will pay so much, whereas another district, where the annual value system is in force, will pay more, and thus almost identical districts will be paying widely different sums into the fund. The Minister, in his reply, should endeavour to justify the proposal to adopt the two different ratings under this measure. The rate will apply in districts that are infested or not infested, and so the House should have an explanation from the Minister on this point.

Some of the local authorities in my province are not too happy about having to pay the higher rating for this purpose. I am opposed to the imposition of ratings one on top of another, which have the effect of increasing costs, particularly to the country people. That has been the experience over the last few years. I am prepared to support the second reading, but may have some comments to offer when the Bill is in Committee.

HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [5.25]: I should like the Minister to explain one small point. In paragraph (d), Clause 13, provision is made that where any movable thing is so placed in or upon the premises that it harbours or is likely to harbour ants or to hinder the treatment

of the premises, the committee may have it moved or required to be moved. In a number of places, the ants have succeeded in making their way under solid concrete foundations. That occurred at my own home where it was necessary to pull up 11ft. of 4ft. 6in. path and completely relay it. I hope that the Minister in his reply, will deal with this matter.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [5.26]: I would not have replied today as I desired to obtain more specific answers to the questions that have been raised, but it is rather urgent that the Bill should be passed. Spraying has actually been commenced in some districts, and it is desirable that we should get the measure on the statute book so that the committee may be formed and the necessary organisation set up. However, I believe that I can answer most of the questions that have been raised.

Several members have objected to the appointment of the Director of Agriculture as chairman of the committee. This appointment has been proposed at the request of the local authorities, and not at the wish of the officer himself or of the Government. The object in proposing him as chairman is to ensure central control by an officer who would be in touch with the Government departments concerned and who has control over them.

Reference was made by Mr. Baxter to the advisability of appointing a technical officer as a member of the committee. The services of such an officer could be co-opted.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: The Bill does not say so.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No; when such things are embodied in a Bill, they impose restrictions and leave no room for elasticity in control.

Hon. L. Craig: He could delegate his power.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes. The Director of Agriculture was nominated because he was considered in all the circumstances to be the most suitable man for the position. Mr. Jones raised the question of rating in country districts. I explained when moving the second reading that, if property were rated under the Vermin Act, it would be exempt under this Bill. Consequently there is no fear of double rating occurring. The rate may be levied in a specified infested area. The fact is that a number of districts would not come under this provision at all. As members are aware, huge areas of the State are paying vermin tax, and there is no danger of their having to pay this Argentine ant tax, should an infestation take place there.

Hon. A. R. Jones: But every local governing authority will contribute to the fund.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: They have agreed to contribute a sum not exceeding £66,000 each year, and some of them have already forwarded their contributions.

Hon. A. R. Jones: But they will obtain that money by rating.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes; but where the vermin tax is imposed, the money will not be obtained by any extra rating.

Hon. A. R. Jones: That will be its effect.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The Bill distinctly lays down that the 1952 values will be used, and that is because they are lower than those of 1954. I do not know whether some members believe in retrospective legislation, but I think it all depends upon who is to benefit. The 1952 values will be used; and a property that is rateable under the Vermin Act of 1919 will be exempt from any further contribution under this Bill. How uniform rates on improved or unimproved values would be struck, I could not at the moment say, because both those rates apply in various districts where the built-up area has the improved value basis, and the outlying areas the unimproved value. Obviously some anomalies will arise, and how they can be overcome I cannot explain at present. So far as I can see, the reason why the tax is assessed at 2½d. is that that figure has been arrived at in the light of the experience gained in the campaigns held last year and the year before at South Perth and Bunbury.

Hon. L. Craig: Is it 2½d. on the annual value?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes. No doubt the figure has been fairly closely worked out, and I imagine it would be a very cheap insurance for areas where an infestation took place. I moved into a house that was infested, and it cost me £7 per year to have the premises sprayed by a firm specialising in that work. They did a good job, and we now have the ants under control. Whenever we see a track of them, we lay baits, and in that way keep the house free of them. I do not think the rating would reach anything like £7 per year for a property; and anyone whose home is infested will be getting a very cheap service under this Bill, and will find that it is money well spent. Mr. Watson proposed to limit the legislation to five years, and Mr. Baxter said that he thought five years might be too long.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I suggested that we might make it three years.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: At this stage no one can suggest how long it will take to get rid of the

ants; but in the light of the experience up to date, both the Health Department and the Department of Agriculture believe that five years might be sufficient. However, they are not certain of that, and think there might still be some mopping up to do at the end of that period. That is the reason for the six months' extension. If the campaign ended on a certain day, surely members would not want those engaged in it to down tools and leave a small section of some area infested! No one can tell what area is likely to become infested. When I moved into the house I mentioned, I took some sweets home from this House one evening, and in the morning found my pocket full of ants. Had I visited some other area before discovering them, no doubt I would have thrown the sweet away there.

Hon. L. Craig: But there would not have been a queen among them.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: With goods and persons moving about it is conceivable that an infestation could break out almost anywhere. The idea of the six months' latitude is to enable any mopping up or further small outbreaks to be dealt with. It is felt that that period of latitude should be given if the committee recommends it to the Minister, but not otherwise. Without that provision it would be necessary to bring a continuance Bill before Parliament during the fifth year.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What if some mopping up remained to be done at the end of the six months' extension period?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: By then the scheme will have been well tried out, and the necessary legislation could be brought forward. It is generally thought that five years would be a fair term. I trust members realise that legislation of this nature is necessary, and that every effort should be made to control the Argentine ant before it causes serious damage to buildings, property and orchards, as it has in other parts of the world.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. E. M. Davies in the Chair; the Minister for the North-West in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I have on the notice paper a series of amendments seeking to ensure that the scheme definitely ends on the 30th June, 1959. The scheme envisaged is to be operated by the Health Department in conjunction with the local authorities; and I am informed that at the discussion between the local authorities and the Minister, there was a definite understanding that the scheme should continue for five years and no longer. If an extension after that time is required, I think the question should come before Parliament for consideration. As it stands, the measure would introduce into our legislation a wrong principle. I move an amendment—

> That the words, "and includes, where an extension is made under Subsection (2) of this section, the extension;" in lines 12 to 14, page 3, be struck out.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The amendment has merit, because if the scheme ends on the 30th June, an extension of six months would take it to the 31st December; and as Parliament would not be sitting then, no further extension could be made immediately; while, if the scheme ended on the 30th June, Parliament would normally sit in July, and a Bill could be brought down to extend the scheme for the required time.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: That view has some merit, but also contains some restriction. If the scheme ceased on the 30th June, it would not be possible to get legislation through Parliament before the end of August, and so the scheme would probably collapse. If the Minister extended the scheme for six months, that could be done only on the recommendation of the committee, and on that committee there are four members against the chairman, who is the Government nominee. Should it be necessary to extend the scheme for six months in order to clear an infested area, work could be proceeded with in that period while Parliament was sitting; and when that concluded, it might be considered desirable to extend the time still further. I am inclined to think that the six-monthly period would be more beneficial than to have the scheme ceasing abruptly in June.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I was under the impression that until the commencement of the hot weather no one could determine whether any locality was infested with Argentine ants. If the Act ceased to operate at the end of June, who could tell whether there was another locality that required attention until the following summer commenced? Therefore, the period should finish on a definite date. By that time it would be known whether there were other localities that needed attention; and if there were, a new Bill could be introduced. The Minister claims that the whole scheme would collapse if we did not include this six months' extension, but against that he has told us that there are some local authorities that have already sent their money forward. I think we are raising barriers that will not confront us at the end of the period.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The point is that an area infested with ants will be known before the end of March, and by that time we will know whether the scheme will have to be extended until the following year. A report of operations during the previous summer would be available to Parliament at the expiration of the period, and the matter could be considered then. I think it would be quite safe to have the expiry date fixed at the end of June.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Minister has stated that probably there would be a period of two or three months after the Act had expired to survey the results obtained; and, as a result, the scheme could go by the board. I might remind him that spraying has been going on in the Carlisle district for four or five weeks, and yet there is no Act in existence.

The Minister for the North-West: But there are no funds available to carry on the scheme.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is so; but spraying is being done now. After five years' experience of spraying operations, members might welcome the opportunity to discuss the results of the scheme and the rating, because any weaknesses would be apparent by then.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move an amendment—

That Subclause (2), in lines 26 to 29, page 3, be struck out.

Amendment put and passed, the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Source of contributions by local authorities:

Hon. A. R. JONES: I would like the Minister to clear up two points. I take it that a rateable property situated within the local authority's district, as mentioned in Subclause (3), refers only to the residential or township area.

The Minister for the North-West: Yes; that would be correct.

Hon. A. R. JONES: In paragraph (a) of the same subclause it is provided that the committee shall assess the sum each local authority shall pay at a rate not exceeding ½d. in the £ on the capital unimproved value of the property, or 5½d. in the £ on the annual value of the property. That is in respect of an infested district. If the district within the local authority's boundaries is not infested, the rate shall be ¼d. in the £ on the unimproved value of the property and ¾d. in the £ on the annual value. I would point out that ½d. in the £ on the valuation of some properties could amount to a considerable sum. A person owning a valuable property in the country could pay a greater amount than a person owning a property in the city.

In Subclause (6) it is stated that if the town clerk, or the secretary of a road board, does not comply with the requirements laid down, he commits an offence; and the penalty for such a breach is £50, with an additional daily penalty of £1 for each day the offence continues. I do not see why such a high penalty should be imposed. The responsibility placed on such men is rather heavy, and to impose such a penalty on a town clerk or the secretary of a road board is rather severe. Why has the Government seen fit to provide such a high penalty?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: All I can say is that these rates have been struck after due consideration, and were no doubt assessed in the light of experience, and what is regarded as fair and equitable. I do not know how the rate was determined. If the hon. member desires full information regarding this rate, it will be necessary for me to report progress.

Hon. A. R. Jones: I do not want to delay the progress of the Bill. I suggest that the Minister could supply the information at the third reading stage.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Very well.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The points raised by Mr. Jones are rather interesting because, under this rate, farms that have been reassessed by the Taxation Department could be put to great hardship. I have a 400-acre farm in the South-West. It may be that Argentine ants are within several miles of my property, and my rating would be £32 6s.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You are rated under the Vermin Act.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is under the State Vermin Act.

The Minister for the North-West: Nearly every country property pays that to the Taxation Department.

Hon. L. CRAIG: No, I do not think that is so.

The Minister for the North-West: The rates are based on 1952 valuations.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I may be wrong. I only hope the Minister is right.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I move an amendment—

That the words "in his opinion" in line 12, page 11, be struck out.

I do not think these words are necessary. The Minister should declare outright an area that is infested with ants. It should not be a matter of the Minister holding an opinion. He might be of opinion that a district is infested, but it might not be. The words should be struck out of the Bill, and the clause would then provide that

the Minister would have to declare those districts that were infested with Argentine ants.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I oppose the amendment. If these words were omitted serious trouble would arise. The Minister would have to wait until an area was wholly covered with Argentine ants before he could declare it to be an infested area, It is safer to retain the words "in his opinion," because this gives him some discretion, and steps can thus be taken to rid an area of Argentine ants when they first appear, rather than leave it until a later stage when the whole area is infested.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I agree with Dr. Hislop, and oppose the amendment. Some latitude should be given to the Minister. If the Minister can only declare areas in which there are ants, anything might happen. The Minister would act only under the guidance of the committee.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 to 20—agreed to.

Clause 21—Duration of this Act:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I move an amendment—

> That the words "or, where the scheme-period is extended under Subsection (2) of Section 2 of this Act, until the expiration of the extension" in lines 22 to 25, page 19, be struck out and the words "and no longer" inserted in lieu.

This amendment is consequential to the amendment made to Clause 2.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: This amendment is consequential; but I remember that on previous occasions when similar words were inserted as consequential, it was found necessary to introduce further legislation at a later date. I hope that in this case that will not be necessary.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Vermin Act Amendment.

2, Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment. Received from the Assembly.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £15,000,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [6.10]: I wish to speak on two items concerning the province I represent. Both will be of State-wide interest. The first relates to the widening of Canning Highway from Rome-rd., Melville, to Canning Bridge. It is proposed to build a six-lane highway on this stretch. On the Perth side of the bridge there is at present a four-lane highway from Canning Bridge to the Causeway. At this early stage the Melville Road Board, is very perturbed with the congestion of traffic, before the Highway has been widened to take six lanes of traffic. Work has already commenced on one section. It is proposed to build another bridge connecting the southern tip of Mt. Henry with the Esplanade at about Hesford-venue to connect up with Bull Creek-rd. A water survey is now being conducted. The idea is to join Bull Creek-rd. on to the proposed bridge and carry traffic across Canning River to Mt. Henry.

The board considers that the proposed road to take the main traffic from Kwinana into Canning Highway will not effectively cope with the flow of traffic expected to use Canning Bridge in the near future. The suggestion of the board, which I commend to the authorities for investigation, is not to widen Canning Bridge so that it will carry four lanes of traffic, like Fremantle traffic bridge, but to build another bridge alongside. The idea is to use one for up traffic, and the other for down traffic. The second reason for suggesting the construction of a new bridge is that Canning Bridge is already some years old, and any addition would be unable to cope with the expected increase of traffic. It would be merely like adding an extra room to a house. The board asks the Government to build a new bridge alongside the existing one.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: There is another matter that concerns a number of people in my province, and probably in other provinces too. I refer to the surveying of sites for railways through primary producing areas. It will be remembered that when the Bill to provide for the Kwinana railway was before this House a couple of years ago, it was suggested that a select committee should inquire into the matter. That was not agreed to, and it was left to the department to plan the railway to the best of its ability.

Many contour surveys have been made in the district in connection with the proposed railway from Welshpool down through the Jandakot area and on to Kwinana. Some of them have been of no avail; but others look like being of a permanent character. One of the proposed lines seems likely to go through an area of potato-growing land in the Spearwood-Coogee district; and the market gardening people as a whole are perturbed about it, inasmuch as the line will proceed not only through a lot of public property but through their properties as well. It has been suggested

that before the final siting of railways is decided upon by the department, consideration should be given to contour surveys on the eastern side of the Rockingham-rd.

Speaking of potato growing, it may be of interest to Country Party members to know that 500 tons of new potatoes were loaded on to the "Duntroon" and arrived in Sydney last Monday. They will be unloaded by the Sydney lumpers tomorrow instead of being returned to this State. The potato growers had been perturbed at the possibility of the potatoes coming back to this State, because it was felt that they would not be of any commercial value upon arrival. The news that they will be unloaded in Sydney is very gratifying to the growers, who have had a bad season on account of the long dry spell. I support the second reading.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [7.35]: Some interesting questions were asked by members, to which I propose to attempt to make some effective replies. Mr. Barker commented on the North-West. He suggested improvements that could be made at Shark Bay, and referred to the need for a bitumen road from Geraldton to Wyndham.

Everybody would desire the construction of a road of that type, but I am afraid that the project is beyond the capacity of the State Treasury on account of the enormous amount of money which would be required to undertake the work. The sum would probably be far greater than the Commonwealth Treasury would be prepared to subscribe, although it is building a special road from Wyndham to Gordon Downs, a distance of 250 miles. There has been a progressive programme of sealing of roads in the North-West, and much more money has been spent there in the last four or five years than was the case previously.

Regarding a water supply for Shark Bay, that is something which is not impossible. It is attracting the attention of the engineers of the Public Works Department, who are investigating the possibility of piping water six or seven miles from a station bore to the township. The water would not be fit for drinking purposes, but would be suitable for ablutions. It is quite possible that a water supply of that kind will be provided for Shark Bay within the next year or two.

Queries were raised by Mr. Henning concerning prosecutions in connection with substandard milk. I have some notes on that subject which I propose to read. They are as follows:—

> It has been stressed many times during recent months that breed is one of the major causes of milk being of low composition. Any extra difficulties into which some producers are falling, are undoubtedly due to the trend in recent years to change over their herds to the Friesian Breed, or at least to use Friesian bulls for breeding their replacement heifers. This breed is notable for producing large quantities of milk. It is probably the best known breed for this purpose. It is also an unfortunate fact, however, that of all breeds it gives milk of the poorest composition. It appears to be time that this fact was stated clearly.
>
> Feeding also has an influence. If cows are seriously underfed either in quantity or quality, the composition of the milk will fall.
>
> It has been suggested by Mr. Henning that it is a subject for intense scientific research over a long period, but the things which have the major influence such as those mentioned above, are things within the farmers' control.
>
> Dairymen for many generations have acknowledged this by including in their herds a substantial proportion of cows of the Channel Islands' breed, with a view to maintaining the quality of milk at a satisfactory level.
>
> The investigations which have been referred to are being completely distorted in their intention. The intention was to determine whether there was a seasonal variation in the quality of milk, and this was established. It was unfortunate that the herd selected proved to be a diseased one, and therefore the detailed results have to be seriously discounted.
>
> It is also notable that the herd from which the samples referred to by Mr. Needham in his paper were obtained, has since been proved to be particularly heavily infected with mastitis.
>
> Considerable emphasis has also been placed upon the advice regarding the flushing of the milking machine with water. There is a difference between flushing the machine so as to moisten the surfaces prior to milking, and flushing the machine after milking to rinse the last remnants of milk into the cans, and there is ample evidence that on a number of occasions excessive quantities of water have been used for this purpose, with the result that the milk is seriously watered.
>
> It is advisable for farmers not to rinse these flushings into the cans, but into separate containers for feeding to their stock. There would then be no possibility of this "accidental" adulteration occurring.
>
> It should be emphasised that the Milk Board, in launching prosecutions for sub-standard milk, has not prosecuted where there is low solids-not-fat without supporting evidence of adulteration with water.

Those remarks were supplied by Mr. Cullity, Superintendent of Dairying.

Hon. C. H. Henning: They are working on the assumption that their tests are always correct. You read the evidence of the inspector!

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I could not say whether the information is correct or not, but that is what was supplied to me. Sir Charles Latham mentioned the sudden cessation of the subsidy to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. in the Kimberleys. That scheme was purely experimental, and was intended to establish whether or not it was economically possible to transport beef by air from inland killing centres to the seaboard. The scheme was first proposed in 1946. There was not a thorough investigation, but some research was undertaken in conjunction with the then Director of Works.

Eventually, after estimated costs had been compiled, it was decided to send a deputation to the Premier in 1948 to put before him the views of interested persons, and to request a free-of-interest loan of £10,000, and an assurance that the products from the Glenroy abattoir, which was to be the killing centre for the scheme, would be handled through the Government-owned Wyndham Meat Works.

After further research and some requests to the Commonwealth to render financial aid—the Commonwealth did not come in originally—the State decided to grant a £10,000 free-of-interest loan for five years, and to make the facilities at Wyndham available at cost to the air-beef scheme. As soon as the Government of the day made that decision, Air Beef Pty. Ltd. was formed, and 14,753 shares were issued. Of that number, 12,998 were taken up by air companies—A.N.A., M.M.A., and Air Lines of W.A. Ltd. The balance was issued to individuals, some of whom were pastoralists—those at Glenroy and Mt. House stations, and one or two of their neighbours. Almost the whole of the shares, however, were and still are held by airline companies.

It was decided to build the abattoir; and that was done, and operations commenced. The scheme attracted world-wide attention because it was something new, and was being operated in an area where there were considerable difficulties—but not insuperable ones—in getting the cattle out. The difficulties existed by virtue of the rugged and stony nature of the country. But the country was not so bad as to prevent completely the droving of cattle, because cattle had been driven from this area for many years prior to the establishment of Air Beef Pty. Ltd.

The company was brought into being to investigate whether it was sound and economical to help cattle breeders in these areas; and it was a good thing to establish it to see how it would turn out. It has proved to be very uneconomical for the cattle producer himself. He has lost considerably. If the income of a station is restricted, so are the improvements on that station. A property can be improved only to the extent that its income will allow. No one will over-capitalise unless he is getting a return.

I propose to demonstrate that the operations at Glenroy have been most uneconomical and not at all advantageous to the producer. Many claims have been made in the Press, by pamphlets, and in another place, that this is the ideal scheme; that it is a good one. That, however, is certainly not shown by the figures or returns that have come forward in connection with this scheme. To illustrate what I say, I make the following comparisons:—

	Average chilled weight per head of cattle.	
	Wyndham.	Glenroy.
	lb.	lb.
1949	540	589
1950	537	548
1951	550	532
1952	514	530
1953	527	521

I have not got the figures for this year, but they have been mentioned in another place. As all the books of the Wyndham Meat Works are still on board the "Koolinda," we have not been able to obtain access to them to check the weights for 1954.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Is that for all grades?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: That is the average over all beasts Members will notice that in these five killing seasons, the weight at Wyndham has varied from 540lb. to 527lb. whilst at Glenroy it consistently became lighter; it went from 589lb. progressively down to 521lb. It was initially claimed that the bullocks killed at Glenroy would return at least 100lb. to 120lb. by reason of the fact that they would not have to be driven 250 miles to Wyndham.

Hon. A. R. Jones: Is it not a fact that many beasts that would never have got to Wyndham were killed at Glenroy?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I do not know whether that is a fact, but it has been claimed. All classes of beef have been killed at the Wyndham Meat Works ever since they commenced. The general average of the beasts killed at Wyndham would not vary in the slightest from the average killed at Glenroy. All the poor quality bulls, cows and so on are taken into Wyndham just the same as they are taken to Glenroy.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Are they not killing beasts of a much younger age at Glenroy now?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The weights indicate that, but I would not know. It is claimed that double

the number is killed at Glenroy and that the abattoir has doubled its output. If that is a fact, why the need for a subsidy? The station gains the air fare for the beasts from Glenroy to Wyndham if it is getting twice as much beef.

Hon. L. Craig: It is just getting to that stage. I understand that Glenroy has improved tremendously.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I am always dubious about statements to the effect that a station has doubled the number of cattle it runs; because there would not be one station in the Kimberleys that could say, "We have so many bullocks." Cattle stations are not like sheep stations. A complete muster is not possible. In fact, half the employees on a cattle station cannot count, because they are natives. If a station started off in 1949 with 20,000 bullocks, I doubt whether it could say it had 20,000 now. I suggest it is an impossibility for a cattle station to make a complete muster and have a complete tally of the stock running on the property, which would consist of 1,000,000 or more than 1,000,000 acres.

Hon. L. Craig: One million acres is not very much for a cattle station.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: It is a lot of country where it is rugged and unfenced. I am not saying for one moment that the company has not turned these cattle off, but I doubt whether there is the same number of cattle on the station now as there was prior to Air Beef coming into operation.

Hon. L. Craig: I understand that much better quality cattle is left on the stations; that a lot of the rubbish has been cleaned up.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I understand that is correct. Having given the weights, I would like to deal with the quality, which has also shown a steady decline at Glenroy. The figures are as follows:—

1st and 2nd quality.	Quality percentage on Weight.	
	Wyndham.	Glenroy.
1949	65.05	80.7
1950	65.24	70.0
1951	53.43	53.9
1952	56.47	64.1
1953	51.84	56.7

There has been a steady decline in the quality which has come out.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: That applies also to Wyndham.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Wyndham varied from 65.05 per cent. to 51.84 per cent., and Glenroy from 80.7 per cent. to 56.7 per cent. The figures in connection with the third quality show that Glenroy has climbed from 18.7 per cent. in 1949 to 29.3 per cent., 44.8 per cent., 34.5 per cent. and 39 per cent., whereas Wyndham has varied from 32.5 per cent. progressively to 46.9 per cent. The reason for the decline in the last two years might be one over which no one had any control. They were drought years and so were bad from the point of view of quality and weight. This year has been a very good year, and the weights should be good. The rains, which were late, were abnormal, with the result that the cattle had lush pastures to graze on practically through the killing season. The advantages are not all they are claimed to be. In my opinion the main thing is the return to the grower.

In 1949 Wyndham returned to the grower £10 4s. 7d., and Air Beef £6 18s. 1d.; in 1950 Wyndham returned £12 10s. 11d., and Air Beef £7 4s. 4d.; in 1951 Wyndham returned £15 8s. 1d., and Air Beef £7 4s. 3d.; in 1952 Wyndham returned £19 12s. 6d., and Air Beef £10 18s.; and in 1953 the returns were £20 13s. 1d. and £10 15s. respectively.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: What about air freights?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Air freight amounted to over £7 per head. The air freight on hides and the offal flown out amounted to £7 per beast for the 1953 season —I know that because I have seen the balance sheet for that year—and it would be much the same for each year, because I think they charge 3d. or 3d. and some odd point of 1d. per lb. for air freight.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: The droving costs have not been calculated.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: They average about 12s. 6d. per head to Wyndham. Some cattle come 350 miles and some only 30 or 40 miles, but the average would be about 12s. 6d. From Glenroy it would be about £1 to £1 10s., according to one grower who takes in only a few hundred; but, of course, the cost of droving depends on the size of the herd. There is a big variation, but the average is estimated to be about 12s. 6d. Droving is very cheap.

The total subsidies paid up to 1953, excluding this year's payment, amounted to £43,429 from the State, and £26,891 from the Commonwealth, or a total of £75,756 from all sources. In addition, there is the 1954 subsidy to come—which would bring it, in round figures, to about £90,000, or possibly more. It will be seen that the return to growers is in no way comparable with that from Wyndham or from Broome. Broome's returns are comparable with those from Wyndham, and in some instances they may be a little more. It is interesting to see the effect of the difference in the returns to the grower and I

shall mention the difference in the average payment for each year from Air Beef and Wyndham. The figures are as follows:—

Year	Difference per head. £ s. d.	Cattle treated.	Total loss. £
1949	3 6 6	1,805	6,001
1950	5 6 7	3,676	19,590
1951	8 3 10	4,079	33,413
1952	8 14 6	5,185	45,239
1953	9 18 1	3,523	34,892

That shows a total loss to the producers for the five years from 1949 to 1953 of £139,135. Certainly the cost of droving would come into it; but as I mentioned, that is not high. Against that must be considered the loss on fertiliser and tallow; and on 4,000 head of cattle killed it could be said that tallow and fertiliser amounting to £5,500 have been lost to those cattle producers each year. At Wyndham it is all treated and sent away, and the producers share in that profit.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is in blood and bone.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes, and on tallow.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That would be about £2.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No; it is a little under that. It is estimated that 90 tons of fertiliser and 50 tons of tallow have been lost to the producers.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Could it not be treated at Glenroy and flown to Wyndham?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: It is not treated at Glenroy. However, they established a pig-breeding industry there. The pigs were flown up, and they were to be fed with the offal. But they have taken out only between 50 and 100 each year, and I do not think they would be valued at £5,500. Then there is the loss on fertilisers and certain other economic aspects attached to the question. It has been said time and time again that the cattle can be driven in but that the loss of weight is too excessive, and they make up for it by killing at Glenroy. Surely, if there is a gain in weight, that should pay the cost of air-freighting the beef! There are benefits gained, or claimed to be gained, such as the double turn-off of herds and the extra weight on each beast. Should not that offset the cost of flying the beef?

Hon. A. R. Jones: There has been the double turn-off.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: If they gain in this direction there should be no necessity for a subsidy—that is, if we have been given facts. But they are not facts. I have told members of the weight and the quality; and it might be surprising for them to know that one bullock from Mt. House station was killed at Wyndham last year, and I will explain how he got there. He was taken in with a mob of cattle from a neighbouring station—he was one stranger. That happens both at Glenroy and at Wyndham; and for any strangers, the works credit the amount to the station concerned. This bullock went in with the mob from Karungie which station is situated near Mt. House. The bullock weighed 834lb.; he was all total export quality, and the payment to Mt. House station was £40 3s. 4d. That bullock walked into Wyndham.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What age would he have been?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I have no idea. Prior to Air Beef operating, in 1946, 1947 and 1948 Glenroy sent into Wyndham mobs of 400 cattle; and it also sent mobs of 400 to the Perth market. They were driven to Wyndham, a distance of 250 miles—they always say it is 300 miles but it is only 250—and to Derby, which is about 190 to 200 miles away. Of course, the best of the cattle would be sent to the fat-stock market here, and the others would be taken to Wyndham. The station has always obtained a good return; in fact it obtained more for its cattle at Wyndham in 1947 than it obtained in the first couple of years of Air Beef's operations when the cattle were killed on the spot. It is not impossible to drove the cattle into the meatworks. The growers claim that it will be a blow to the beef industry if the Government does not continue to subsidise the scheme after the expiration of the agreement this year. They have known for some time that there was little possibility of the agreement being renewed.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Did they repay the original loan of £10,000?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The free-of-interest loan? No; that was increased later, when the works were extended, and it now stands at £18,000.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Do they propose to repay it eventually?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I do not know anything about it; that is their own private business. In the first year of operations, everybody thought it would be a good thing for the grower, but after the first year the next-door neighbour, who is 30 miles from the abattoirs—his property is only 12 miles away, but the homestead is 30 miles distant—wrote to the magazine "Country Life" in Queensland, and forwarded with his letter an article headed, "A Frank Statement on Air-freighting of Beef." He was speaking of a partnership in which he was interested, and he said—

> As an experiment, we wholeheartedly supported the idea in its early stages and gave a great deal of assistance in

the erection of the Glenroy abattoir. As revised, figures or costs were brought forward by those in charge of the project, before killing operations commenced, our doubts grew stronger and in view of the possible low return we were forced to reduce our booking of cattle from 1,500 to 900.

He took the rest to Wyndham. The article continues—

All kinds of trouble occurred once operations commenced. As a result the kill was reduced from an estimated 3,700 to 1,800.

Hon. L. Craig: That is the first year.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes. I would like to state that elsewhere it has been claimed that the kill was built up from 1,800 in the first year to 4,000-odd this year. The reason for the 1,800 was that it was a new work and the plant did not operate as was expected. The company experienced lots of trouble with refrigeration and had phenomenal rains. That affected the show in its first year of operation. It was rather unfortunate. But still use has been made of that 1,800 kill in an attempt to demonstrate that the works are a paying proposition amongst surrounding pastoralists. I will continue to read this pastoralist's views—

As a result, the kill was reduced from an estimated 3,700 to 1,800 of which this pastoralist's share was 150. These 150 bullocks averaged 604 lb. with a grading of 70 per cent. first and second quality. The Wyndham Meat Works figures for the three preceding years were

		lb.	per cent.
1948	....	620	75
1947	....	595	68
1946	....	590	67

The pastoralist points out that these figures show that killing on the station, which is only 12 miles from Glenroy, has no marked advantage over killing at the Wyndham Meat Works after a droving trip of 200 miles over a very bad route. This man says it is 200 miles. We are repeatedly told it is 300 miles; but I had a look at the stock route and measured it, and found it is nearer 250.

The main factor to be considered, of course, is the return to the grower. The letter is dated the 20th November, 1949; and the pastoralist said that so far he had received only £4 10s. 11d. per head. Air Beef's reply to a query regarding further payments was, "We are unable to give any information regarding future payments, if any." Returns from Wyndham last year—that is, 1948—were £10 10s. per head, and will be equally high this year. Other suppliers here are far from satisfied that air freighting is a practical proposition.

Hon. L. C. Diver: What would his droving costs be?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: It depends on the size of the herd, but the average is estimated at 12s. 6d. per head. His article continues—

All cattle were supplied this year under no contract or agreement of any kind; had they received only £1 per head, growers would have had no redress, but for the future they will require a contract and a price comparable with Wyndham—comparable meaning within 25s. to 35s. of Wyndham price.

We do not wish to see the scheme fail, and we sincerely hope the problem of high costs can be overcome.

But we do feel that our experience should be brought before the cattlemen and others who may have had their hopes raised by favourable reports of this scheme. We wish to state that, in our opinion, the scheme has not been a success and does not show any great possibility of proving economically sound.

Those were the thoughts of a neighbour of Glenroy after the initial year. Of course owing to circumstances—such as breakdowns and so on—they may have been thoughts that were conceived in a hurry. But that same pastoralist has not altered his opinion. He still divides his herds between the two places.

To give an example of what cattle are supposed to lose while being driven, I would like to quote a few figures. It depends entirely on how they are driven. There have been many cases, which have been proved, where cattle have even gained weight walking over a long journey; they have walked from poor country into good. It is a matter of how they are handled. I would like to quote some weights and prices at Wyndham. This is for the station where the cattle walked 300 miles from the Hall's Creek area, which country is just as rugged and rough for cattle to travel as any other.

The droving distance was 280 miles in 1952, which was a very bad drought year. The drought was relieved to some extent in the East Kimberleys, but continued in the West Kimberleys. There was a herd of 353 bullocks driven over this 280 miles, and their average weight was 604lb.; that is, frozen weight. They went 82 per cent. freezers, first and second quality. The return per head was £24 17s. 8d. In 1954, which was a poor season in East Kimberley, 434 bullocks were taken in; they averaged 604lb. and went 72 per cent. freezers, first and second export quality, for a return of £27 14s. per head. If members work it out, they will find the price for export beef would be from 12d. for the lowest up to 22d. for the highest. If we take first-class quality, and work out 600 bullocks at, say, 1s. 6d., it would be £45.

Where is the rest of the money going to from Glenroy? What is happening to it? It is, of course, going in costs. That is where most of it goes. It is clearly demonstrated that the scheme is not economically sound. In the bad drought year of 1952, the station I have just quoted walked its bullocks 280 miles. They were walked through one particular station on the way to Wyndham, where the pastoralist thought it was a bit late in the season, and the stock route would not be in good conditon after several herds had crossed it, he took his bullocks to Glenroy. He told me personally that he had lost between £7,000 and £8,000. He was not prepared to take the risk of going in over that 200-odd miles and taking the cattle into Wyndham. As it happened, he could have done it by the stock route, because the others landed at 604lb.

The suggestion that Air Beef is popular with pastoralists in the Kimberleys is not correct. When this scheme was established, the intention was to provide other centres at Hall's Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, and anywhere they might be able to get sufficient for killing. But after the experience at Glenroy, pastoralists were not anxious to support the scheme, and would not guarantee any number of cattle. The extension into the Kimberleys, therefore, did not take place. Some pastoralists did suggest that it would save them a lot of bother; but asked what would be the future, and what would happen if they established any more centres. They wanted to know how Wyndham could carry on. It could not operate economically on a kill of fewer than 25,000 or 26,000; the overheads come too high with small killings.

Every establishment inland, except one at Fitzroy Crossing, must attract the cattle from Wyndham. So it is natural that eventually Wyndham would be only a storage depot, and not a treatment works. It would be far too costly; and the pastoralists want to know what advantage it would be to them, and what they would do if they were told, "Here is £10 for your bullocks." That though was rife up there. The producer himself would watch out for his income; and he is doing so.

I have looked at this air beef scheme, particularly in the last six months. Of course, I am now in a position to look at it very thoroughly. In my first speech I expressed the opinion that its economics were not sound. I must admit I heard talk in the Kimberleys in 1950 similar to the views of the pastoralist printed in "Country Life."

Hon. A. R. Jones: You advocated it when you first came here.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I condemned it as being uneconomical; for no other reason. Over the years it has been proved that the scheme is not economical. Except perhaps for those growers who have it on their properties, the others do not want it when the price is so low. It is difficult to understand Mt. House wanting to continue it. I have explained the stock route into Wyndham. There is a neighbour 12 miles away taking his bullocks to Wyndham; and I have told the House that from the Glenroy area they have shipped many lots of cattle from Derby.

Last week I read a speech referring to the stations from which the stock were taken. One of the stations is closer to Derby than to Glenroy and the route to Glenroy lies through miles of rough country over the Leopold Ranges. Those are the cattle from Napier Downs, and it was plain that the justification for the Glenroy undertaking was the rough road lying between the stations and Wyndham or Derby. This year they were able to drive stock of poor quality to Glenroy, so I was informed by one of the directors, but that is said to be the very stuff that cannot be taken to a port, though it can be taken the other way. All these points received the Government's consideration when it decided not to renew the subsidy. To claim that, by the non-renewal of the State portion of the subsidy, the Glenroy facilities would have to close down or would be rendered bankrupt is not correct. It would not have that effect at all. The Government has no objection whatever to the Commonwealth's continuing with the experiment by supplying the funds if it so desires.

Hon. A. R. Jones: I believe it cost the Commonwealth £10,000 a year.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: That would depend on the size of the kill. It has been as high as £26,517 between the Commonwealth and the State, but even that is not enough to ensure that the cattle growers receive the same return as from Wyndham or Broome. If ships were available to carry the cattle south to Perth, the growers could get twice as much as from these works. In the circumstances, the Commonwealth and the State would have almost to treble the subsidy, which amounts to £4 15s. per head for a kill of 5,300. Thus the amount would be very large indeed. For the five years the amount lost to growers is estimated at £135,000.

The cost at Wyndham has been criticised, but I assure the House that those are the actual costs for services rendered, and I understand that they compare very favourably with those of any meatworks in Australia operating on the same basis. I should like to give the actual figures, which I thought I had with me, but I am afraid I have not got them here.

There is no reason why the Commonwealth should not continue to keep this experiment going, although it was not anxious to come in originally. It did not

assist with its subsidy until 1951, although it was requested to do so by the previous Government as far back as 1948. In 1950, however, the Meat Board did provide a subsidy.

Originally the scheme did not require a subsidy. All it requested was financial assistance to erect abattoirs, but after the first season, when it showed a heavy loss, the promoters became very much disturbed and requested a subsidy. As it was an experiment, the State agreed to provide one. Had the present Government been in office at that time, I daresay it would have done the same thing. As an experiement to prove whether the scheme was economical or not, it has been money well spent; but as I have already stated, we can realise that the economics are no good to the producers. I hope that these remarks will satisfy the request of Sir Charles Latham, and I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. R. J. Boylen, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOAN, £14,808,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [8.37]: We all listened with great interest to the story told by the Chief Secretary when moving the second reading of the Bill. He supplied a lot of information which I should like to study in detail in order to obtain an appreciation of the tremendous number of items covered by the projected expenditure.

The Bill with its three schedules does give us a fairly adequate idea of the purposes to which the loan will be applied. Naturally when we listen to the introduction of a Bill of this sort, we do so with considerable interest, because we are hopeful that there may be an indication of some expenditure destined for our own localities. As we read through the schedules, we find here and there items of expenditure that will occur in our own districts. I notice, for instance, item No. 13 in the First Schedule, "Geraldton Harbour Works, £3,000." That harbour could do with a good deal more expenditure than that in order to carry out all the work that is necessary.

We appreciate the fact that the total loan is not as great as we could wish it were, but the money has to be spread as far as possible amongst the projects in hand and perhaps on new projects all over the State. Country areas and towns water supply and loans to local authorities and water boards amount to £1,200,000; public buildings, including furniture and equipment, £1,500,000; charcoal iron and steel industry, £50,000; Fremantle Harbour Trust, £400,000 and so on.

Judging by some questions that have been asked in the House from time to time, there does not seem to be a clear idea of the mechanics of raising loan moneys and the machinery, as it were, by which that money is raised and divided amongst the various States. Until the year 1927, each State raised its own loan money. The details were set out in the financial statement issued each year. Some few years ago when the economy of the country was very buoyant and money was plentiful, loans were floated which enabled the various States to embark upon comprehensive schemes of development. Then there was a slump in wool prices which was reflected in the economic system, with the result that the Government then in office—a Government of the party to which I belong—found that it had contracted for works covering a programme of three or four years. Serious difficulty arose because the supply of money was greatly curtailed in the second and third years of the programme.

The total debt of the State last year was £152,000,000; and, by the end of the current year, it had increased to £165,000,000, which represents a considerable sum per head of the people. The figures given in the "Pocket Year Book" I have represent between £260 and £270 per head of the population. A very interesting feature of the loan raisings over the year is given in the stabilised classification of loan assets shown on page 31 of the "Premier's Handbook." The loan liability on fully productive items—the items that pay their way and provide a certain surplus that can be devoted to interest and sinking fund charges—represents £4,357,000 out of a total of £153,000,000. I am using the figures to the end of 1953, which are the latest I have.

The partially reproductive works represent £43,000,000 and include electricity supplies, harbours, etc. Then we come to the totally unproductive items which amounted at that time to £98,000,000—at present the total is nearly £100,000,000—and they include such items as railways, agriculture generally, public buildings, charcoal iron and steel, water supply sewerage, drainage, etc. To quote individual items, water supply, sewerage and drainage total £27,000,000, railways £40,000,000 and public buildings, £11,700,000.

We realise that when we equip schools, hospitals, public buildings, and so on, there must be expenditure of an unproductive nature which is tied up with the development of the State. The fact that our railways are classed as unproductive, does not mean that there is no income from them, but that it is not sufficient to cover the expenditure to an extent that would enable any contribution to be made to the payment of interest or sinking fund. The payments on sinking fund amount this year to £6.8 million.

After the Loan Council was formed in 1927, it was decided at the Premiers' Conference that instead of the States competing with each other in the available

money market, and sometimes boosting the rate of interest by promising higher rates than their competitors, the position should be stabilised by the Commonwealth taking over the existing liabilities and becoming the channel through which future loan negotiations would be carried out with the lending authorities outside the States, mostly in England. At the same time, the States were allowed to float their own loans with permission of the Loan Council.

New South Wales and Queensland did float loans in America; and from time to time, when the economy of the State would bear it, approval was given by the central body to the raising of money within the boundaries of the State itself. That was availed of by the New South Wales and Victorian Governments particularly, and to a lesser extent by Queensland, which raised considerable sums to assist in the work of development over and above the quota of the loan moneys made available by the Loan Council. Until fairly recently Western Australia entered that field only to a very small extent, but it did float loans a couple of years ago on behalf of the State Electricity Commission. They were fully subscribed within the State, and that relieved the position with regard to the availibility of money within the State.

I am interested to know that expenditure on the Fremantle Harbour Trust has been considerable during the past 12 months, because that was one of my departments, and I know that the money was spent there to good advantage. The port is now on the way to being fairly well equipped, but considerable extra expenditure will be necessary when a decision is made in regard to the provision of extra port facilities. It is interesting to note that the Fremantle Harbour Trust is one of the few State institutions which pays its way. Although it is classed here as being partially productive it has, over the years, contributed a considerable sum to Consolidated Revenue; so much so that if its contribution in that direction had been devoted from year to year to reducing its own capital expenditure, it would not now be faced with a burden of interest. But as those receipts were taken direct into Consolidated Revenue and not credited against the Trust's loan liabilities, they still remain, and portion of its revenue year after year is devoted to meeting the interest payments on the remaining liability.

It was disturbing, also, at times to see the slow turn-round of vessels at Fremantle; and the strikes which occurred, resulting in tremendous losses, not only to the owners of ships serving the port, but also to the owners of the goods concerned; because obviously the freights had to be adjusted, in order to absorb those delay charges. Some of the big boats, when waiting in the Rottnest queue, incur charges of £800 or £1,000 per day; and even our own comparatively small ships incur daily charges of £400 or £500 when waiting for their turn to be served.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They would not incur those charges while out in the bay.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Yes, they do; because it costs that much to maintain the vessel. That is why they are so concerned about the speeding up of the turn-round at the ports.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The turn-round at Western Australian ports is ahead of that in the Eastern States.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That is not so. The turn-round at Adelaide is relatively good; and in both Adelaide and Fremantle it is due, to a great extent, to the programme of mechanisation which was embarked upon and which did considerably speed up loading and unloading.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The gangs in Fremantle are only 16, as against 24 in the Eastern States.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Unfortunately, part of the trouble in all of the ports has been the communist influence at work within the unions.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That has nothing to do with the number of men in the gang.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Yes, it has, because the Waterside Workers' Federation deals with the quota of men picked up to man the ships; and while I do not say that the officials of that union are communists, it is a well-known fact that the allied unions in Fremantle are both headed by communists, and that there is a considerable red element in the union itself.

Hon. E. M. Davies: That is not true.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I was Minister in charge of that department for some time—

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Could you name ten communists on the Fremantle waterfront?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I would not attempt to, because there are so many who are not openly identified with communism, but who hand out "how-to-vote" cards in favour of communist candidates, and who I therefore think can be said to be communists. There is no secret about Mr. Troy or Mr. Hurd, who are the secretaries of two unions at Fremantle, and who are known to be communists.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They have never denied it.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That is so. Dealing with the Education Vote, I see from the list that there is a considerable sum of money expended on public works and buildings, including schools, police quart-

ers and so on. There is an instance here of the communist element in connection with the Parents and Citizens' Association at the Bassendean school, which I know very well.

The circumstances are these: The Parents and Citizens' Association received an offer from a company calling itself "New Theatre Presentations," to put on a play called "Reedy River," which was supposed to benefit the local association, which was to get half the proceeds. They understood they were to get half of the net profits. The people rallied around and booked the hall, and sold tickets; and because it was a P. & C. function, there was a good roll-up, and the ladies took along plates of cakes in order to regale the entertainers when the function was finished. They looked forward to the entertainment and, incidentally, to a substantial profit for their association, but they then found that they had to meet the whole of the expenses out of their own share of the proceeds.

Actually quite a number of them came to me incensed, because they said that while the show was perhaps not openly communistic, it at least sounded a very subversive note, and dealt with something which occurred 65 years ago before industrial machinery had been introduced into the settlement of disputes. The hero of the movement was of course, the strike leader. If that concerned only Bassendean, I would not think it worth mentioning in this House, but the same show was staged at the Midland Junction Town Hall in aid of the Midland Junction High School body; and was also presented in the Fremantle Town Hall in aid of the Fremantle slow-learners' group. It was taken to Collie as well, although I have no idea what it was doing there. The whole story is told in the communist "Tribune," which gives a glowing account of the play itself, and features an illustration of the actors and names them, giving also the names of the places where they are going. That, of course, is their own business.

But I do say that when we are considering the vote or loan money being spent on buildings under the control of the Education Department, and with which these associations are linked, we must be disturbed that this sort of thing is happening and is obviously intended to influence the minds of the younger generation. It is the duty of the Education Department in these circumstances to inquire into the position and see what can be done about it. I am not blaming anyone in the department, because I do not think it knew anything about the matter; but here we have a move that I think should be nipped in the bud, and I am taking this opportunity of ventilating the matter so that other members may be put on their guard should something like this be mooted again. They will now be fully aware of the nature of this particular company.

Quite a number of those taking part in it are well known as being connected with the communist organisation. They hand out "how-to-vote" cards, make their houses available for communist meetings, and appear from time to time on the Esplanade preaching the communist cause. The fact that this company is featured prominently in the "Tribune" is evidence of the nature and identity of the organisation.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Do you imply that that organisation has anything to do with the Fremantle waterfront?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I have not the faintest idea. I switched from the waterfront to the Education Vote, and my remarks are connected with that. I submit that this is the proper place to bring forward such a matter.

It is disturbing to see the growth of unproductive expenditure. Here I am not talking so much about the railways, which are performing a useful function, although something will have to be done sooner or later in order to reduce the huge losses that are such a drain on our revenue. I am referring more to a number of State ventures entered upon in the past, such as Lake Chandler and Wundowie, which have been a drain on our funds and which do not seem to be able to pay their way, even with all the help they have received. Apart from that, the remainder of the unproductive expenditure, on water supplies, buildings and similar works, is necessary for the development of the State.

I have dealt with most of the matters that I intended to discuss. I would naturally like to see more loan money available; but if the capacity and financial resources of Australia are not sufficient to give us the volume of money we would like, and if there are limitations to the amount that can be raised within the State, we must obviously budget for what we can get rather than what we would like to have; and in a State such as this, where such a tremendous amount of development is necessary and is in process of being carried out, we can only hope that the financial resources will grow with the expansion and development of our State. I support the Bill.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

BILL—LIMITATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [9.0]. The Bill proposes to amend the Limitation Act of 1935. It is somewhat technical. The Act itself deals with time limits and other like provisions which apply generally when persons desire to enforce various claims by litigation. For instance, if a person has a claim for defamation or on some other ground, he cannot

wait for ever to take legal proceedings. The Act provides that notices have to be served within certain periods; and, also, the complainant has only a certain time in which to commence legal preceedings, otherwise his legal claim is barred.

At present there are about 50 statutes in operation which in themselves contain limiting periods in which persons can take legal proceedings against others who exercise powers conferred upon them by virtue of their office. For instance, under the Justices Act, it is possible to bring an action against a justice for anything done by him in the exercise of his duties. If he has exceeded his authority, or has been guilty of malice or dishonesty, it may be possible for a citizen to take legal proceedings against him. However, the Justices Act provides that the proceedings have to be commenced within six months after the alleged offence occurred. Also, in the Licensing Act there is a similar provision.

Public officers in the exercise of their jurisdiction can be proceeded against by any person who considers he has a legal claim; but notice in writing has to be given by the person making the claim within so many months, and legal proceedings have to be commenced within a stated period. Reference to the schedule in the Bill will show that a list of about 50 Acts is set out. All those Acts contain provisions under which any person who desires to take proceedings against an officer has to give written notice within a certain period, and must commence his action within a stipulated period.

This Bill proposes to consolidate the provisions in all those Acts by amending the Limitation Act. It is a wise step and conforms with the policy of the Government, as shown in similar measures placed before us, by simplifying and codifying the various Acts in existence. Another wise provision in the Bill is that, in special circumstances, if a person considers he has a claim and is entitled to take some action, within a certain period, he can apply to a judge in the Supreme Court for an extension up to six years if he establishes that the delay in taking action has been due to hardship, ignorance, or some other reason. That is a generous provision which may be necessary in some special cases. To sum up, the Bill will consolidate various limitations that exist in about 50 different statutes. It will simplify and codify them, and embody such provisions in the one Act. I think it is a good measure, and I hope the House will pass the second reading.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [9.10]: The main purpose of the Bill is excellent, inasmuch as it proposes to bring under one piece of legislation the whole of the provisions relating to actions that can be taken against public authorities, which are now covered by several Acts. It is proposed to bring the provisions of all those Acts under the Limitation Act, which at present confines itself to actions by citizens against citizens. The Limitation Act or the Statute of Limitations provides, for example, that an ordinary debt cannot be claimed after a period of six years.

The Bill confines itself to consolidating the right of actions by citizens against public authorities or officers exercising their duties under Acts of Parliament. It will still not touch the rights of actions against the Crown as distinct from actions against Crown agencies which are covered by the provisions in this measure. That is a pity, because earlier this session we had before us a measure to amend the Crown Suits Act. It appears to me that the Limitation Act is the one statute to which anyone ought to be able to turn in regard to taking action against anybody. Therefore, it is unfortunate that the Crown Suits Act has been dealt with separately from the provisions of this legislation.

After reading the list of the statutes set out in the schedule to the Bill, which covers Crown agencies and bodies corporate acting on behalf of the Crown, it will be realised that there are few cases which one can visualise, which will not come under the provisions of this measure as distinct from the Crown Suits Act. On the other hand, there are some, and to give a concrete illustration I would mention this one: Assuming a person has an action for negligence against an officer of the State Housing Commission and an officer of the Public Works Department. Under the law at the moment the position is, and even when the Bill is passed the position will be, that his right of action against the officer of the State Housing Commission will be governed by the limitations set forth in this legislation; but his right of action against the officer of the Public Works Department, so far as limitations are concerned, will be set forth under the Crown Suits Act. It seems to me that in such a case the processes and procedure of the law could become rather complicated.

It is by no means beyond the realms of possibility that a citizen could have a joint action against an officer of the State Housing Commission and the Minister for Public Works. For instance, in regard to the land resumptions which recently took place, Mr. Griffith instanced some extraordinary ways in which officers discharged their duties; and I notice that in the "Government Gazette" that dealt with those resumptions, action was taken by both the State Housing Commission and the Public Works Department.

So there is a case where a person's right of action, jointly against an officer of the State Housing Commission and an officer

of the Public Works Department, is governed by two separate Acts. That is not conducive to speedy justice. I submit they should all be covered by the one Act.

When introducing this Bill, the Chief Secretary explained that it was modelled on the English Public Authorities Protection Act, 1893, and the English Limitation Act, 1939. It has been suggested by eminent legal authorities in this State that the Bill could well be modelled on the English Limitation Act of 1954 which repealed the 1893 Act and amended the 1939 Act on which the present Bill has been modelled. If we are to follow a model to bring our own laws up to date, it would be a good idea to follow the latest English legislation and not legislation which has been withdrawn and replaced by a more up-to-date statute.

The present position in England is that the same period of limitation applies to all actions, including those against the Crown. All actions for damages for personal injuries caused by negligence, nuisance or breach of duty must be brought within three years whether the defendant is the Crown, a public authority or a private person. There are no requirements as to notice of claim in actions against the Crown or public authorities. This principle might well be adopted in the Bill before us.

In this Bill, as in the Crown Suits Bill passed earlier in the session, it is provided that the prospective plaintiff must give notice as soon as practicable after the cause of action accrued. He must give notice promptly, and then he must commence the action within one year from the date on which the cause of action arose. In other words, the plaintiff is still pretty well limited. I invite members to compare the provisions of this Bill with the English Act. I imagine that the words "as soon as practicable after the cause of action accrued" could well be the subject of legal disputation.

The plaintiff must give notice properly and must commence his action before the expiration of one year. The provision in the English Act is that an action can be commenced at any time within three years, and no notice is required. In other words, it places the Crown and public authorities on precisely the same basis as private individuals. I would suggest that the Chief Secretary refer this Bill back to the Crown Law Department to see if it cannot be brought more into line with the English Limitation Act of 1954.

While the Bill is certainly an improvement on the existing law, the Act should be amended in such a way as to obviate amendment next year or the year after. As it is now being amended, it will be a good idea to bring it into line with the latest English legislation. Personally I do not agree with the provision in the Bill requiring notice or restricting the commencement of action to a period of one year.

Hon. L. Craig: Is not the power given to the court to extend the period to six years a dangerous one?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I do not think so. This refers only to public authorities, and acts in one direction. The rights of the Crown are unlimited. The provision restricts the right of the individual in any action against Crown agencies. The Bill says that a person includes a body corporate, a Crown agency, or an instrumentality of the Crown created by an Act, or an official or person nominated under the Act. The distinction between the Crown, defined under the Crown Suits Act, and a public authority or agency of the Crown, defined under this Act, is too fine.

This question suggests itself, and the Chief Secretary should inquire into it: What will be the effect of the clause containing the definition of "person" on the State Trading Concerns Act? In that Act, the Minister in charge of a State trading concern is declared to be a body corporate, and there is nothing which differentiates that concern from a private concern when it comes to rights of litigation. If a person has a claim against the State Saw Mills or the State Brick Works, then I submit such State trading concerns should come under the same category as any other concern. They are not in effect agencies of the Crown. Under the State Trading Concerns Act there is no suggestion that the Minister or the manager of a State trading concern enjoys any greater immunity than that enjoyed by other merchants or manufacturers. They are in business like the ordinary person and should take the ordinary risks of business.

The Minister for the North-West: The manager can sue and be sued.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The State trading concerns are bodies corporate, and can sue and be sued, in precisely the same manner as any other trading concern. It is desirable that this position should continue. How will it be affected by Subsection (4) of proposed new Section 47A, which defines a person as a body corporate created by an Act of Parliament? The Minister or the manager of a State trading concern is a body corporate created by an Act of Parliament, and conceivably this section can operate to require that any person with a right of action against a State trading concern should be subject to the limitations of this Bill and to the giving of notice; that is to say, he will have to give notice as soon as possible after the cause arises; and, in addition, he will have to commence the action within 12 months. This position requires clarification. For those reasons I seriously suggest to the Chief Secretary that before proceeding

further with this Bill he should request the officers of the Crown Law Department to review it in the light of the observations I have made.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Davies, debate adjourned.

BILL—DENTISTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [9.27]: This Bill interests me considerably. It is very short, but there are implications which we might well discuss. It is quite right that if a dentist has not practised for some considerable time and then desires to resume practice, he should not be called upon to pay the fees for the term during which he did not practise. I agree with that part of the Bill.

The second part of the Bill shows a rather interesting sidelight on human nature, and presents possibly the cause for so much of the legislation that appears on our statute book. The present licence fee of the dentist is £2 2s., and it has apparently remained at that figure for a very long period.

Hon. H. K. Watson: You must have been reading the Dog Act.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It has existed even as long as the Dog Act. The proposal in the Bill is the same as one which has been incorporated in the Medical Act. Members will recall that some years ago a long debate on the Medical Act took place when it was being overhauled. It was then suggested that the medical profession should pay an annual licence fee to practise, when up to that date every person practising in this State had already paid a lump sum which guaranteed him the right to practise for life.

A discussion took place around the aspect of whether that was honest or fair. As a method of compromise, I suggested to the Minister at the time that it could possibly be agreed to if the excess of revenue over the cost of administration of the Medical Board were returned to the profession and spent upon such things as scientific investigation and so on, and particularly the formation of a library. The Minister accepted that principle, and the result is that we in the medical profession have built up a library of which we are very proud. We ourselves contributed to it, in addition to the contributions received from the Medical Board; and the library has become of tremendous benefit, not only to the profession but to many outside, and has rendered a public service in the way of keeping the profession abreast of all the movements in modern scientific medicine.

The proposal in this Bill is that the board be allowed to spend money for the same purpose: namely, the foundation of a library. The point that interests me is that the dentists have agreed to a limit of their fee of £6 6s., which is exactly twice what members of the medical profession are paying. It seems to me that they are agreeing to do that because it will cost such a lot to commence and maintain a library. It appears curious that they should have to ask the Government to introduce a Bill of this kind in order to charge themselves for their own library. It was wished on us, but these people are wishing it upon themselves. It is evidence of the frailty of human nature, because it would have been much better had dentists been able to say to themselves, "Let us charge ourselves a certain amount to maintain a library."

Hon. L. Craig: Some would fail to pay.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: That is what I am driving at. This has to be brought up as a matter of legality, because some would fail to pay. I think there is a way out of the difficulty for the dental profession; and that is, that they should consider joining their library to the medical library, which is now housed at the Perth Hospital. At one stage it was known as the British Medical Association library; but it has become a much wider library than that, because it is contributed to by members of the profession as well as by the Medical Board, and the members of the profession donate journals.

If the dentists were to join that library, they would find accommodation right from the start. The founding of a small library involves the cost of housing it and paying rent for a room.

Hon. L. Craig: Do you not pay rent at the hospital?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not think so. As a matter of fact, for certain reasons, the Perth Hospital is preparing to subscribe to that library. If the dentists joined with us, the cost would be much less than if they attempted to start their own library. Not only would it be an advantage to the dentists, but it would also be a benefit to every branch of the profession. When I was at Massachusetts General Hospital, I spent a considerable number of hours in the library there, and was interested in the way all the staff used it. Not only did members of the honorary staff and the profession in Boston use it, but also the nursing staff and technicians from the various branches of the institution.

I saw sitting in the same room of the library a couple of trainee nurses, a trained sister, a member of the resident staff, a member of the honorary staff, one of the radiological technicians, and so on. They were all in search of medical knowledge; and that, in my opinion, is as it should be. I do not think we will get anywhere in this State until we begin to co-ordinate

our activities, and live together in common knowledge as one body, seeking the advancement of medical science.

I understand that the nursing staff have made a request to the Perth Hospital Board for an advance to the library. I gather that the board has seen the wisdom of having a really good technical library to which the nursing staff can refer; but I have no doubt that it is not going to start a library in the nurses' home. It will, I trust—and I think my information is pretty sound—make available to the library a grant for the extension of its activities to cover the requirements of the nursing staff. I think it might be expanded to the point at which the psysiotherapists and those associated with the ancillary branches of medicine would have opportunities of enjoying a common library. The library is fairly extensive, but is not as comprehensive as it is intended it shall be when the new building is completed. There are provisions for that purpose, and the board of management would be able to meet the requirements of this State for many years by additional accommodation close by the present site.

What I am emphasising is that no longer should we attempt to have small isolated units, but rather should we co-ordinate our activities in a common search for medical advancement and medical knowledge. I shall certainly support the second reading, but would ask—either through the Government or publicly through this Chamber —that the members of the dental profession, in their desire to found a library, make an approach to the Perth Hospital and the medical profession for co-operation.

Hon. L. Craig: Could you not invite them?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: At present, I do not know who actually controls the library. I know there is a sub-committee of the British Medical Association; though whether it is housed in the hospital purely for the association, I am not aware. But I believe that before very long—if it is not so at present—the hospital itself will take a considerable hand in the furtherance and enlargement of the library. But whoever has the responsible control, I think an attempt should be made to invite dentists to join the library. It would be to their benefit from the point of view of knowledge, and I am certain it would reduce the cost to them and the fee mentioned in the Bill. I shall vote for the second reading in the hope that by some means or other the idea of a common library for all branches of medicine will be achieved, either now or soon.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [9.40]: I thank the hon. member for the information he has given. Naturally, he will not expect me to be able to reply to what he has said. I will allow the second reading stage to be completed, but will not take the Bill into Committee. I will then forward his suggestion to the right quarter and will provide him, at the Committee stage, with any information I obtain.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH SCHEME FOR SUPERANNUATION (AMENDMENTS AUTHORISATION).

Second Reading.

Order of the day read for the resumption from the 28th October of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

The Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—NATIVE WELFARE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [9.45]: The Minister for the North-West made the right approach when introducing the Bill, which is much more palatable to members than was the one which was brought down last year. I think the suggestions made then have been fully considered by the Government; and that the Bill now before us will find general acceptance in this House, although it contains some clauses which I, at least, will object to. The House may be prepared to accept the Bill with the possible deletion of these clauses. The Bill is essentially a Committee one.

The details of the Government's work in connection with native affairs made quite an interesting story; and inasmuch as a constructive and vigorous programme has been embarked upon, we can give the Government credit for having achieved considerable progress. I was all the more pleased to hear the story come from the lips of the Minister because a note of frustration had been sounded in the previous reports of the Commissioner of Native Affairs which, to my mind, seemed to be in the direction of persuading the native that he was being kept down; that no one cared about him; and that no one wanted to introduce legislation to help him. But those are not the facts.

I am pleased that the Minister has acknowledged that a great deal of progress has been made; that opportunities are

being afforded our native population; and that now an appreciable number of natives measure up to the whites in conduct and behaviour. I think these remarks apply particularly to those natives who have had the opportunity to go to Alvan House or McDonald House.

The native question is essentially a country problem. It does not affect the metropolitan area very much, but rather the people who live in small country towns and who come into rather intimate association with these people. They are forced together, and the children going to school make contact with the native children. Generally speaking, the contact among the children at schools is a happy one, but the relationship does not seem to continue when they leave school. Whether we like it or not, there is a sense of a colour bar which makes it very difficult for the two to come together. This problem is in the transition stage, and there is no simple solution to it. Time will be needed to solve it; to raise the standard of the natives; and for the white people to appreciate the advances they have made and to be prepared to receive them into their social circle.

I think that time will come, but I am of the opinion that it would be a mistake to enforce equal rights and privileges by law because at this particular stage, to do so would do the natives more harm than good; and it would certainly arouse a feeling of resentment in the country people, because they would come to the conclusion that any such action would be influenced by the sentiments of people in the metropolitan area who were not fully au fait with the problem.

As Mr. Logan said, the Bill last year was unacceptable; but there is evidence that the Government has followed the suggestions which this House made, and a modified measure has now been introduced. We are pleased to co-operate in modifying legislation which, in many respects, has become out-moded. We feel it should be brought into line with the present practices. We are quite prepared to cut out of the Act all the dead wood or restrictions which were necessary many years ago but which have little or no application today. At the same time we have to remember that these people are not ready for full emancipation. Many of them need the protection which is afforded by the Act, and by the police.

The best means to this end is to educate the natives and instil into their minds the idea that they can lift themselves up; that people are quite willing to help them; that there is a positive attitude towards their emancipation; that if they will only qualify for full citizenship—I think they should be encouraged to do so—it will be theirs as a right; that when they attain that status they can move about and become accustomed to the new standard which they have achieved. It should be something which they should try to earn; something which they should strive for, and which they should be proud to possess once they have achieved it.

It could be that we would have to amend the citizenship rights Act in order to deal with that position, because there are some apparent anomalies in it. Take the position of a lad who was educated at McDonald House in his later adolescent years. If his father is dead, he cannot apply for citizenship rights until he is 21 years of age. I do know, however, that the commissioner can grant him exemption which would mean much the same thing. At the same time, I do not see why the citizenship rights Act should not be brought into line so that it can achieve the things it is required to do.

I do not sympathise with the attitude the Minister spoke of when he mentioned the natives who would not attempt to apply for citizenship rights, even though they felt they were entitled to them; who had a sense of pride; who said, "Why should we get a dog licence?". That is one of the chief communistic slogans which has arisen, because many communists are behind these natives. I know that is so at Mullewa and Bassendean.

The Minister for the North-West: I did not mention dog licences or communists.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That is so; but these things have been mentioned in the Press. Natives have written in saying they would not have a dog licence. Someone has put that idea into their minds; and it is something they should get out of their minds, because they should be encouraged to regard citizenship rights as a prize which they can earn and be proud of. That is a positive attitude that should be adopted. If the natives are not prepared to lift themselves up, then no matter what we do for them, it will be of very little value.

The Minister for the North-West: Many highly educated natives consider it is below their dignity to have to apply for what is temporary citizenship.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I have heard that argument raised; and I have heard it said that we do not bar the Afghan, the Ceylonese, the Japanese or the Chinese from going into hotels, but that we do bar the people who are born in our own country. We are not barring them because they are born in this State, but because we know from experience that they have not arrived at that standard of culture and behaviour which entitles them to the privileges I have mentioned. Many of these other nationals have thousands of years of culture behind them, and in some cases their cultures are older and

superior to our own. That is the standard of measurement that we have to apply, and not that of the accident of being born in a particular place and of having lived, for hundreds or perhaps thousands of years in a primitive state. There is a difference in the cultural standards of our tribal aborigines from those of the people I have just mentioned.

The Minister for the North-West: There is a difference with the mixed bloods.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I agree; and that is where the more intelligent application of the citizenship rights and privileges could achieve quite a lot.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Do you know that members of the Coolbaroo League went away to a country town and stayed at a hotel, and nothing was said about it?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Some of these ideas are studiously circulated, and they die pretty hard. The Government deserves every credit for the work it has done, and particularly for its approach to housing. Some of the work had been carried out and some plans made by the previous Government before it went out of office; but from my experience of some of the natives who occupy houses, they need to be carefully selected, and supervised—by the Commissioner, if they are still under his control, or by the police if they are not—to ensure that they keep the houses in a proper condition.

I know of one street in a particular town where the houses have been occupied for years by natives; and although the natives, especially during the war were employed at the full rates of wages, the condition of the houses they occupied was pretty disgusting. No attempt, or very little, was made to furnish them, and the gardens were neglected and the fences just about down. The homes would house not only the family occupying them but possibly a dozen of their friends who would come in from the bush.

So a programme of education must be carried out in order that these people may conform to our social standards. I admit there are exceptions, and they are the ones we want to encourage. The question is mainly one of hygiene. I have seen kiddies go to school and then be sent home by the teacher because the children sitting next to them complained that they were dirty and smelled. After having been sent home they returned in the same condition because, according to the idea of their mother, they were already clean. That was quite good enough for her and it should be good enough for the school.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That was a long while ago.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Not long ago. The result was that when they came back to school, the teacher had to turn round and scrub them herself. The Church of England clergyman took his three children away from the school and sent them to a Catholic convent because he thought that the hygienic conditions of the native children were not good enough to allow them to mix with his own. I am not saying that his conduct was ethical, or that it was right or wrong. But that is one case where the hygienic conditions of the native children did not measure up to standard. We have to deal wth this problem as it exists and not perhaps as we think it ought to be.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Does Sir Charles Latham subscribe to those ideas?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I would not know.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You are standing in his place, so I thought you might have been expressing his opinion.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Apparently I am moving to one side; that might have influenced my thinking. Time and again the natives have proved themselves to be quite all right when under supervision. We had experience of that with the native soldiers who went away to the war. They were under direction and control, and they were expected to do certain things and to measure up to certain standards, the same as everybody else. They were subject to discipline and training; they did it and they did it very well. But I know that quite a few of those who came back with the reputation of having been good soldiers—and they were—within a few weeks were back to the old standards. They had slipped and had reverted to what was natural to them. This attitude of mind and life, to which they are accustomed, and in which they are perfectly happy, is such that we cannot graft our own ideas on to it by simply passing an Act or overcoming it within a short space of time.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: The trouble is that you are way behind and they are way ahead.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I do not think so. Only recently I received an invitation from the health officer of the Bassendean Road Board and we visited the native camps in that district. I realise now, on looking at the Act, that perhaps I was committing an offence. But while there I saw quite a few of these poor unfortunate people and I felt very sorry for them. At the same time, I could not help feeling, as I came away, that perhaps more than half the trouble with their conditions was their own fault. Two native women seemed to have some sense of house tidiness and pride; each had a bit of a garden in front of her house, although it was by no means prepossessing. The houses had been whitewashed and did not look too bad; they were certainly much better than a couple of dozen others that I saw.

I went to one place where there was a well-spoken half-caste woman. She would be in her twenties and the morning we called was very cold. She was standing in front of the door of a one-roomed place and she had a little fire, such as natives have in the bush, upon which she was boiling a billy. She was using a long stick of about 15 ft. as fuel; and as it burnt, she was feeding it into the fire little by little. This was in marked contrast to the previous house where the woman was living on her own. She had chopped her wood into lengths, and it was stacked at the corner of the house.

The first person I mentioned had a husband who was working as a truck driver and, I imagine, would be getting full rates of pay. As far as speech and demeanour were concerned she was quite cultured; she was wearing an old coat of her husband's—there was no harm in that—but one would have thought that she would have patched the sleeves or trimmed up the threads of cotton at the end of the sleeves. One would have thought, too, that she would have taken the trouble to lace up her boots, but she did not. She seemed to be a pitiful object, and one could have felt sorry for her. But I came to the conclusion that a good deal of her trouble was her own fault. If she had smartened herself up and made her house neat and tidy, like some of her companions, she could have done what I would say the great majority of white women would have done under the same circumstances, even though their lot might be an unfortunate one.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: We have white women as bad as that, you know.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I have seen them compelled to live, back in the depression days, in poor-class houses.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You ought to have seen some of those that have been in the Melville camp.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: In the depression days many people did not have much to live on; they could not buy motorcars and their houses were in a bad state of repair. But as far as cleanliness was concerned, there was nothing to complain about. The women would help the family budget by keeping fowls, milking cows, and making butter, and in many other ways. They had a sense of the standards required of them, even though the times were hard. They measured up to those standards, but that was not the case in regard to the native camps I visited. In the report of the Commissioner of Police, portion of which I intend to read because it might have some bearing on certain sections of the Bill which will come under discussion, the Commissioner has this to say—

> Native Administration Act.
>
> Four hundred and fifty-three convictions were recorded against natives for receiving liquor, or drunkenness, including nine for being unlawfully on premises. One hundred and thirty-eight convictions were recorded for supplying liquor to natives. Drunkenness is prevalent amongst natives and they resort to any means to obtain liquor.

Hon. J. J. Garrigan: Where was this? In Perth?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I think so, but I have not examined the report. Those are the commissioner's figures. The report continues—

> Native women are a menace about the streets of Perth at night, particularly in the summer months. They frequently remain about the streets until a late hour, soliciting for prostitution. They are abetted in this by male natives who are always on the look-out for the police, and make the detection of this offence extremely difficult. White men frequently pick up native women in the streets and take them to parks and reserves outside the city. Native women are also frequently seen with white men in taxis. The general conduct of natives leaves much to be desired, but it is very difficult to improve the position owing to the protection afforded them by Section 61 of the Act, which does not appear to be justified when applied to educated natives.

I will have something to say in regard to Section 61 later, and I entirely agree with the view expressed by the Commissioner of Police. We will deal with that section of the Act in the Committee stage when we are discussing the clause which covers it. In the report of the Commissioner of Native Affairs I can see that, despite the criticisms that were voiced in this House last year on the rather cavalier attitude of the commissioner, when discussing Parliament and parliamentarians, he seems to be quite unrepentant; because in one particular section he says in part, "the debates as reported in 'Hansard' manifest the truth, however unpalatable it may be, of the observations made under the heading 'Legislation and its effect' published in last year's Annual Report." That statement I consider is quite uncalled for. It is not the function of any civil servant, no matter how highly placed he may be, to criticise what is or is not done in Parliament. That is the function of his Minister, if and when such a need arises.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You gave him a pretty raw deal last year.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I told the truth.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You did not let him off.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: If the truth is unpalatable to Mr. Middleton, that cannot be helped. I made certain observations on the articles published in the Press

under the heading "Not Slaves Not Citizens." I think what I said then was the truth, and he should study the references to himself in the speech I made. The report of the Commissioner of Native Affairs, in regard to "stations and settlements—transfers" is, to some extent, disturbing, because I know that it is out of line with a well-considered programme that had been put into operation on the advice of a previous commissioner who was regarded as an authority on natives and an able administrator. I refer to the late Mr. A. O. Neville. However, in the latest report these details are given—

> It has long been felt desirable that this Department should be relieved of responsibility for the administration and management of pastoral and agricultural properties, mainly because it has found that such responsibilities have seriously hampered and curtailed the functions and duties of the department's welfare officers stationed on these properties.
>
> During the past five years the following establishments, wherein dual responsibilities and functions were practised, have been disposed of in the manner indicated:
>
> 1. Cundeelee Feeding Depot (Trans Line): Closed as such on 20th December, 1948, and subsequently re-established by the Australian Aborigines Evangelical Mission as Cundeelee Mission.
>
> 2. Munja Native Station (Walcott Inlet, N.D.): Closed as such and buildings, equipment, livestock, etc., handed over to the Presbyterian Board of Missions, Kunmunya. Mission subsequently transferred to new site at Wotjulum, opposite Cockatoo Island, where Munja natives now located. Transfer effected as from 1st April, 1949.
>
> 3. Udialla Native Station (near Derby, N.D.): Closed on 1st June, 1949, and natives, with agricultural plant and other portable material, transferred to La Grange Native Depot.
>
> 4. Moore River Native Settlement and Farm: Handed over to Methodist Overseas Mission on 13th August, 1951, and reorganised with Government financial assistance as Mogumber Methodist Mission.
>
> 5. Marribank (formerly Carrolup) Native Settlement and Farm: Closed on 30th June, 1952, as boys' farm training establishment and transferred to Baptist Union; now reorganised and functioning as Marribank Baptist Mission.
>
> 6. Cosmo Newbery Native Station: Closed as delinquent boys' detention centre and handed over to United Aborigines Mission as from 15th December, 1953.
>
> Moola Bulla Native Station and Settlement: This 1,100,000 acre cattle station has been an administrative bug-bear for some considerable time. At the best of times the management of such a huge property on which has been pastured upwards of 30,000 head of cattle and cattle, horses, goats and other livestock, has imposed on the welfare and clerical staff of the department a crushing and disproportionate burden of work and responsibility. The long drought conditions which prevailed in the North over the past two or three years, posing as they have the additional burden of water location and conservation, moving of starving stock, etc., made the situation quite unbearable and a strong recommendation was made to the Hon. Minister for Native Welfare urging that the department be relieved of the responsibility of the cattle station and that the institutional section of the settlement be transferred to a new site adjacent to the new Hall's Creek township.

Then follows a series of recommendations regarding the treatment to be adopted. I am not criticising what has been done, because I know that by and large, when stations have been handed over to missions, they have done quite a good job, where previously a good job was not done. But I think we deserve some explanation from the Minister as to why, in regard to Moola Bulla, this idea was abandoned, which, when it was adopted, was adopted with a view to the station proving a training ground for natives so that they could receive vocational training and could perhaps be induced to assume responsibility of their own on smaller holdings. I know that was the idea with Moola Bulla, and most of the other properties were in line. Whether that is a confession of failure so far as the ability of the native is concerned I do not know.

On the one hand we hear it said that the native is raising his standard and is able to assume the white's privileges; and here we have the fact that those properties have had to be transferred—probably with good reason; I do not dispute that. There must be some degree of explanation why the natives who were mainly in charge were not capable of achieving success, which I think in many cases, white men had achieved on other properties. Anyhow, for what it is worth, I ask for an explanation as to why these properties were abandoned.

The Minister for the North-West: Your Government transferred all but one.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Some of them.

The Minister for the North-West: Every one. Moola Bulla has not been transferred yet.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I was asking about Moola Boola particularly. Some of the places are not suitable for vocational training. This was a project very dear to the heart of Mr. Neville; he was very interested in natives, and he understood them.

The Minister for the North-West: He did not do very much for them.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: A good deal of success attended the work he did. There may be an explanation as to why it has drifted. I do not know. In his speech last night, Mr. Logan gave certain figures concerning repeals and amendments to the present Act. I think my own figures will agree with his. I make the number of sections to be repealed, 35; the number of amendments, 38; new clauses added, 2; new clauses re-enacted, 3; and those left untouched, 10. That is not a very high proportion out of 78 clauses. So the attempt at revision has undoubtedly been a very comprehensive one. Some of the main changes in the Bill are: The name of the Act has been altered. It defines the commissioner's powers so far as wards are concerned; removes restrictions on movements of natives generally; eases restrictions on leprous natives; provides for resumption of land to train and settle natives; abolishes the permit system and contract conditions and restrictions on natives going near boats or areas adjacent; abolishes restrictions on entering towns; and abolishes the tribal clause. It is also proposed to repeal Section 40 which governs the entry of whites into native camps; and to amend section 50, which deals with the admission of natives to hotels; and Section 61, which exempts natives' statements being accepted in a court, by deleting the last three paragraphs. As I said before I do not think anyone would object to the out-moded restrictions being taken out of the Act. I, for one, would be pleased to see them removed.

I am rather concerned about the proposal in Clause 1 to repeal Section 40 of the Act. I know that Section 15 still continues to operate, and there is some measure of control as far as the entry of a white man into a reserve is concerned. But this question of the white man being given the right to go into native camps is something which I think is wrong. It will probably aggravate the half-caste problem for one thing.

Hon. L. Craig: I do not think it is necessary, either.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I do not think so. I remember a very fine speech made by Mr. Craig some two years ago in which he gave us a picture of the conditions which could eventuate when whites and blacks are brought into close proximity without the restrictions that impose heavy penalties—or did under the Act—upon white men going into these camps. I think it is very desirable that that protection should be continued.

So that at least is one of the sections I will strive to have retained in the Act; and when the time comes, I hope the House will realise the purpose of that section. It is to deal with the dangers that could arise from having that section repealed. I know a number of natives themselves do not wish that protection to be removed. As far as the rights of natives with citizenship to visit their parents is concerned; so far as the legitimate visits of employers looking for employees is concerned; and so far as a visit I made myself is concerned, the commissioner would have no hesitation in issuing a permit. This has been accepted in the past as a matter of course. It is these illegal visits, where we have consorting between the whites and the natives, which are most undesirable, and require to be kept under control. I have read the police report which has some bearing on this matter.

Clause 50 will call for a good deal of debate. In the original Bill, as submitted in another place, Section 50 of the Act would have been repealed; but the Minister introduced an amendment that would allow an exempted native to enter an hotel and be served with food, and board and lodging. There is a considerable responsibility on those in the country, and particularly in the country hotels. In most of the country towns there is only one hotel; and, more often than not, there is a big call on the accommodation facilities it has to offer.

The complaint, if any, is that the hotels are not now measuring up to the standards that travellers feel they have the right to expect. In any case, travellers and the townspeople are anxious to preserve as high a standard of hotel accommodation as they can. Natives, whether exempted or not, would be allowed to go into any part of an hotel; they could go into the dining-room or the bar.

Hon. L. Craig: With the approval of the licensee.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I doubt the efficiency of that. They would have the right to order a soft drink. If they got amongst a certain type of white man, or among some of their own pals with citizenship rights, it is certain that they would get a drink whether they liked it or not.

The Minister for the North-West: But they are exempt.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I know they are; but it is difficult. It is the thin edge of the wedge, and it is difficult to introduce an innovation of that kind without its leading

to trouble. A number of travellers have expressed themselves as not being very keen on the idea of occupying a bed which the night before may have been used by a native. They know, and we know, that the standards of hygiene of the native are not up to those we would expect of the whites. In many of these country hotels, when one gets a room, one is called on to share it. One could quite easily have to share it with a native. That may be all right; but, on the other hand, it may not. The consensus of opinion among those who live in those parts of the country, and among those who travel around, is that this measure is going too fast and too far.

After all, we are making a lot of concessions. It is a distinct advance and a big step forward as far as the conditions of the native are concerned. Why not let it rest at that, rather than impose these clauses which would cause embarrassment to a lot of people who deserve consideration? Let us take it up at some future time, when everybody is used to the idea that the standard of these natives has been raised. At the present time, I think it will cause a great deal of trouble; and I hope the Government will agree to the deletion of that clause.

The next clause I want to speak about is Clause 58, which refers to Section 61 of the Act. Section 61 (1) of the Act is the provision that deals with the question of natives not being allowed to give evidence. It states—

> No admission of guilt or confession before trial shall be sought or obtained from any native charged or suspect of any offence punishable by death or imprisonment in the first instance. If any such admission or confession is obtained it shall not be admitted, admissible or received in evidence.

Very often natives who have attended school are quite intelligent and well up to the standard of education of many whites. They are often quite prepared to plead guilty, but the magistrate or judge is not allowed to accept that plea. If the plea or confession is made, they must disregard it, and rely on other evidence which may not be forthcoming. That is causing a lot of difficulty for the magistrates and the police.

The Minister for the North-West: Only where the penalty is death or imprisonment.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That could be so; but when we have the claim that many of these natives are well up to the white standard, they should be prepared to accept the obligations and privileges of their new status. This is one which I think the natives themselves would be prepared to accept. So I hope this particular provision will be struck out. We must appreciate that the judge still has the right to disregard the confession if he wishes. On page 394 of vol. 9 of Halsbury's "Laws of England" we find the following:—

> All statements relevant to the issue which are made by a party can be proved in evidence against the party who made them unless they are privileged from disclosure, subject to this exception, that admissions or confessions of guilt made by a defendant before his trial can only be proved against him if they were made freely and voluntarily i.e., without being induced by hopes held out or fear or threats caused or used by a person in authority.
>
> In giving evidence of such admissions or confessions, it lies upon the prosecution to prove affirmatively to the satisfaction of the judge who tries the case that such admissions were not induced by any promise of favour or advantage or by the use of fear or threats or pressure by a person in authority .....
>
> It is for the Judge in each case to decide whether on the facts the confession is or is not admissible.

This means that, even if a confession is made, the judge has discretion to say whether he will accept or disregard it. If he thinks it has been obtained by duress or threats, or by hopes being held out to the defendant, or that the mental state of the defendant is such that it would be fairer not to accept the plea, he has the right to use his discretion in the matter. From what I know of judges and magistrates, I believe that would be done.

The Minister for the North-West: On major charges, a jury brings in the verdict.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I think that theory is observed even on a minor charge.

The Minister for the North-West: But these would be major charges.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: However, that is the opinion expressed by a competent legal authority, and I am inclined to agree with it.

The Minister for the North-West: But what about an aboriginal in the Kimberleys?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: That would be a different proposition; we are dealing mostly with people of mixed blood in the south-west part of the State.

The Minister for the North-West: That provision was inserted to apply to natives in the primitive state.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: We can discuss that later, but I lean towards the view of the Commissioner of Police that the job of his men would be facilitated if the section were deleted. I believe that a greater degree of co-operation between the Department of Native Affairs and the Police Department would follow; but from the

talks that I have had with some of the junior officers, that assistance is not forthcoming from the department, though they have a right to expect it.

In conclusion, I would say that in this matter of social assimilation, it is not just a question of colour. It is a question of standards, hygiene, self-help and social outlook. It is primarily a country problem—overwhelmingly so—and city people have little understanding of it and are not entitled to compel country residents to accept unacceptable legislation. Native assimilation is a long-term problem requiring patience, understanding and tolerance. It is a case where an ounce of help is worth a pound of theory or pity. Citizenship rights should be a prize to be won and natives should be encouraged to earn it.

The Bill, even allowing for the exclusion of Sections 40, 50 and 61, will have gone a long way towards easing conditions and removing restrictions. We should be patient and try to achieve progress by stages. The old army rule of consolidating ground won before making further advances still holds good, and we should apply it here. We should avoid the mistake of trying to bite off more than we can chew. That is a sound approach in tackling this problem. Those are my views; and with the reservations I have mentioned, I support the second reading.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [10.35]: In rising to support the second reading, I am very pleased that I am able to do so, particularly in view of the measure that was presented to us at this time last year. I agree with an observation made by Mr. Simpson that one must conclude that the Government or the framers of the Bill took a considerable amount of notice of the debate in Parliament last year. We then pointed out that the legislation proposed on that occasion seemed to be a case of the blind leading the blind. The Minister who presented the Bill had had very little, if any, experience of natives; and those people from whom he took advice and counsel were influenced to an extent by a number of old ladies, who possibly had very good intentions but knew nothing about the natives.

I believe that in the main this Bill will be accepted by the House, though there are a few clauses to which I shall refer that I think ought to be amended. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that a larger amount of money is being made available to the institutions that have accepted the responsibility of caring for a number of the younger native people. A few years ago they received only a mere pittance and could not be expected to do very much with it; but now that something like 30s. a week is being provided, we can look for improved results as outlined by the Minister when moving the second reading.

We were told by the Minister that the educational standard of these people has improved in the last couple of years, and there is no doubt that, from now onwards, the education and training that these people will receive must fit them for a better way of life, so that they will be capable of accepting their responsibilities as citizens of the State. I believe that most of us have considered that the best way of dealing with the problem that confronts us is to provide more money for the institutions, and this contention is bearing fruit. Even though the Government may feel at the moment that it is being hard pressed to supply money for the furtherance of the movement, I hope that it will strain a point and do its utmost to find further funds in order that this good work may be carried on. It has been clearly indicated to date that, in the first place, education is essential to lift these natives to the required standard.

As the Bill was presented last year, it seemed to me to be like asking a child to sit down and do an examination paper without having first received an educational grounding. On this occasion, I feel more assured than ever, and I am pleased that some members who apparently did not realise the fact last year are now beginning to appreciate that education represents the first important step to be taken.

I have often thought that probably the child endowment money which is paid to the parents of children in the native community is not being wisely spent. If we look around in country towns, we may find illustrations, when pension or endowment day arrives, of the fact that, after these people have collected their money, they go to the nearest lolly or ginger-pop shop and spend most of it.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Over half of it is spent in that way.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Possibly that is so; the best customers for those shops are the native people. While that is all very good for business, the fact remains that the money is not being wisely spent; and while the Commonwealth Government makes money available to these people, we should endeavour to ensure that it is put to the best possible use. It might be better, rather than dishing the money out as at present, to make the equivalent available in goods.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Probably they would barter the goods for money.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Of course there might be some difficulty in that direction. Undoubtedly the spending of money on sweets and ginger-pop and similar things does not do them any good and does not help them at all. It should be a first consideration to consider their health; and

secondly, to see that the money they receive is wisely spent. While I do not suggest that something along these lines should be worked out hurriedly, I think that consideration should be given to ensuring that better use is made of the money given to these folk.

On perusing the Bill, I have picked out some clauses on which I should like further information from the Minister, because I fear that the proposals, rather than helping the natives, will probably have the opposite effect. Clause 17 proposes to amend Section 15, which provides—

> It shall not be lawful for any person other than a native to enter or remain, or be within the boundaries of a reserve for any purpose whatsoever, unless he is a superintendent or a person acting under his direction or an inspector or a protector or a person authorised in that behalf under the regulations.

That is fairly wide. The amendment changes the wording "is an offence against the Act" for the wording "shall not be lawful"—

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Does it not lay them open to a fine, where previously it did not?

Hon. A. R. JONES: Yes. Section 40, which is to be repealed, deals with something of the same nature and says, "It shall not be lawful for any person"—other than the superintendent, protector and so on—to "enter or remain or be within or upon any place where natives are camped or where any natives may be congregated or in the course of travelling in pursuance of any native custom." I think something should be left in the Act to provide for the person who wishes to employ a native to go into a native camp to engage and pick him up. It is an everyday experience in the country, where natives are camped on reserves or in camps, for farmers wanting shearers, shedhands or clearers to call at native camps, pick up the men they want, and take them to their employment. Under this clause, it would be impossible for that to be done without an offence being committed. I feel that if we left in Section 40 the words "without lawful excuse," that would overcome my objection, which I think is logical, for the reasons I have given.

Clause 19 seeks to repeal Section 17 of the Act; but I do not think the time is opportune to repeal that section, because I take it that the commissioner would authorise a doctor or dental surgeon to ascertain whether a native was ill or suffering from some disease; and without this section, I do not know where authority could be found for that to be done.

The Minister for the North-West: The position is covered by the Health Act.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Clause 26 seeks to repeal Section 24, and the provisions of that section may be covered somewhere else; but I would like the Minister to make sure of that, because I feel the protection afforded is still necessary owing to the fact that many natives are still not sufficiently literate to be able to enter into an agreement, and could easily be taken down.

The Minister for the North-West: I will make inquiries to see whether that is covered elsewhere.

Hon. A. R. JONES: If it is not, I think the provision should remain, as otherwise natives could easily be taken down. Clause 42 seeks the repeal of Section 41, which states—

> If at any time he thinks it necessary so to do, a protector may cause any natives who are camped or are about to camp within or near the limits of any town or municipal district to remove their camp . . . .

If we delete that provision, there will be strife in country towns. With a lot of experience of natives in the Moora district, I know that once or twice we had to shift their camps. Although we had provided ablution facilities, huts and lavatories, and had laid on water, we found they were not proper people to be in close proximity to the township because they would not use the conveniences provided. We had to shift them some two miles from the township where they would not be so readily contacted by undesirable whites, and would not create a nuisance by not observing the health laws or regulations. Unless there is something to replace it, that provision should not be deleted.

The Minister for the North-West: Did you remove them under the by-laws of the local authority or under the Health Act?

Hon. A. R. JONES: No; we sought the assistance of the protector.

The Minister for the North-West: The position is covered in other Acts and I will give the explanation.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I still think it would be better for the position to be covered in this legislation, and I am not satisfied that it should be done elsewhere.

The Minister for the North-West: This is considered to be dead wood.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Clause 50 seeks to amend Section 50, which deals with natives entering hotels. The Minister put up a good argument as to why natives should be allowed to enter hotels and cited a contractor travelling to a place further north

and taking native labour with him. While I believe we must do something to assist the right type of native, I do not think we can, at the moment, go as far as this amendment would permit, as there is such a wide discrepancy between the average native and the average white that the native falls far below what we would expect him to measure up to before he could take his place at a table in a hotel or perhaps share a room with a white person.

I shared a room with a full-blooded native from one of the country districts many years ago. He had his citizenship rights, and one could not wish for a more desirable companion than he was. While in many instances one might find natives who measured up to that standard and behaved better than some white people would, I do not think we should give this privilege to all and sundry of the natives. If the department is concerned, as it should be, that a native travelling should be able to get a meal and a bed at a hotel, it should approach the Government, which in turn should approach the licensing authorities, in order to have accommodation made available perhaps a bedroom and a dining-room—in a hotel—where natives could be fed and lodged for the night.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Perhaps once a year.

Hon. A. R. JONES: In the past, it might have amounted to that, because the native has not been eligible to enter a hotel unless he had citizenship rights. Perhaps the difficulty could be overcome in that way. Perhaps the white person travelling with the natives, or a native with citizenship rights, should be enabled to take a native into a hotel for a meal or a bed and be made responsible for him while he was there. I would like members to give that suggestion consideration because, while I am not prepared to leave it open for any native to enter a hotel, I think the difficulty might be overcome along the lines I have suggested.

Until, as Mr. Simpson says, the time arrives when both natives and whites learn to accept each other in a better light than is the case at present, some such provision will be necessary. Many of us in this Chamber, and particularly country members, have had experience of natives in country areas, who, once they get into a hotel and have one or two drinks, are very nasty people to deal with. Drink often has the same effect on white people, about one out of ten of whom, having taken drink in excess, becomes objectionable, and in some cases dangerous, through wanting to fight and using his fists; but not to any extent beyond that. On the other hand, natives become nasty under the influence of drink; and approximately eight out of ten of them are not responsible people after having a few drinks.

Surely we are not going to allow a native in such a condition to come in contact with white people in a hotel! We know that once a native is given the liberty to sit in a hotel lounge whilst waiting for a meal, he will take advantage of every right he has. Once a native of a wrong type entered a hotel he would seek drink from any source; and unfortunately there are far too many people who would supply it to him. I suppose that, under common law, a licensee would have the right to eject a native from his premises; but he cannot be everywhere at once, and he may not be present to deal with any problem that may arise. Whilst we must give consideration to a native who is travelling, we do not want to throw a hotel open at will to any type of native.

So with the reservation I have made, and which I have asked the Minister to explain, I think that most of the provisions contained in the Bill are good. Many of the limbs that were in the measure previously introduced have been cut out, and the trunk that remains is sound. It is legislation that can be amended as time goes by if we find that natives are shouldering responsibility and improving their educational standard. Although we may have some disappointment when the housing programme is extended to provide for natives, I feel sure that, as time goes by, and as their educational standards improve, they will feel a growing pride in themselves and will consider that citizenship rights are something worth striving for.

In every walk of life a certificate is granted to those people who seek to attain a certain degree of proficiency. I know I was proud to take home one of two small certificates that I received and show them to my parents. The same would apply to other children who receive certificates for something they have been striving to attain. Sometimes they even frame them so that they can be seen by all.

I believe we should instil into natives a sense of responsibility so that they may understand what citizenship means. We should not make them feel that a certificate is a dog licence, which is how some members have referred to it. I think it was Mr. Barker who made such a reference in regard to a certificate granted for citizenship rights. Whoever thought of that type of jargon has not made things any easier for the native.

The Minister for the North-West: It was used in a Press article last year.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I think the Press, too, should encourage natives to feel that citizenship rights are something worth striving for.

On motion by Hon. C. W. D. Barker, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

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

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 10th November, 1954.

CONTENTS.

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

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Statement by Premier.

The PREMIER: I should like to indicate that the Government will be asking the House to sit after tea tomorrow evening.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

(a) As to School Bus Service, Margaret River District.

Mr. BOVELL asked the Minister for Education:

What new school bus routes will operate, and when will tenders be called for transport of schoolchildren from surrounding districts to Margaret River when consolidation at that centre becomes effective in February, 1955?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Education) replied:

Tenders, which close on the 26th November have been advertised in the Press for the following new bus services:—

Margaret River-Bramley-Osmington—Circular route of 33½ miles for 50 children.

Margaret River-Rosa Brook—Circular route of 33 miles for 40 children.

Margaret River-Augusta—(Post primary bus). Terminal route of 28 miles for 45 children.

Forest Grove-Warner Glen—Circular route of 31 miles for 35 children.

Karridale-Nillup—Terminal route of 29 miles for 35 children.

(b) As to Postponement of School Ground Improvements.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Education:

In view of the disappointment expressed in Swanbourne that the improvement of the school grounds there has been postponed, will he inform the House which (if any) other schools in the State are in the same predicament?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Education) replied:

Yes, there are 50 other schools listed for ground improvements when finance becomes available.

(c) As to Tenders for School, Carey Park.

Mr. GUTHRIE asked the Minister for Education:

Will he inform the House whether tenders have yet been called for the new school at Carey Park? If so, when is a start likely to be made on the building?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Education) replied: