ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 30th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.46 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 24th August, 1949.

CONTENTS.

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

QUESTIONS.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

(a) *As to Extension to Mundaring.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Works:

(1) When is it anticipated that the erection of the transmission lines to carry electricity to Mundaring will be commenced?

(2) Is it correct that a sub-station is to be erected at Mundaring?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Immediately the material, which was ordered some time ago, comes to hand.

(2) Yes.

(b) *As to Cost Per Unit.*

Mr. TRIAT asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What was the cost per unit of electricity generated by East Perth Power House, 1947-1948?

(2) What was the cost per unit to the power house for electricity delivered to Perth City Council for 1947-1948?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 1.068 pence per unit.

(2) 1.068 pence per unit.

I had better explain that the take-off point for the City Council supply is so very close to the power station itself that the losses between the power station and the take-off point are negligible.

BRIDGE, ROYAL-STREET, KENWICK.

As to Disrepair and Rebuilding.

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he aware that the Royal-street bridge at Kenwick is in a very bad state of repair and unlikely to last until next winter?

(2) When is it intended to commence the rebuilding of this bridge?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The fact that funds have already been provided for the bridge indicates that replacement is desirable as soon as possible.

(2) It is impossible to state a time when work will be put in hand, but this will be done as soon as circumstances permit.

KING EDWARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

As to Food Supplied to Patients.

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is he aware that considerable dissatisfaction is being expressed by patients in King Edward Memorial Hospital owing to the quality and quantity of food being supplied to patients of that hospital?

(2) Will he institute inquiries that will ascertain whether the complaints being made can be substantiated or otherwise?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) No dissatisfaction has been reported. The quality and quantity of the food being supplied to patients are excellent.

SERVICEMEN'S LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Number Settled.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Lands:

How many ex-Servicemen have been settled on the land—

(a) between the 15th August, 1945, and the 31st March, 1947;

(b) between the 1st April, 1947, and the 20th August, 1949?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) Nil.

(b) 395 ex-Servicemen have been allotted farms. Of this number 368 have taken up occupation.

SYNTHETIC RICE FACTORY, COLLIE.

As to Accommodation for Workmen.

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Housing:

Anticipating that 30 to 40 men will be employed in the near future at the synthetic rice factory at Collie, what arrangements are being made by the State Housing Commission in regard to their accommodation?

The MINISTER replied:

Arrangements have been made by the State Housing Commission to expand the building programme at Collie to provide for the increasing housing requirements of the district. Land has been selected and an additional contracting team recently commenced building operations at this centre.

WIRE NETTING.

As to Imports from Japan.

Mr. NALDER asked the Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping:

(1) Can she advise how many tons of—(a) sheep netting, (b) rabbit netting have been imported into Western Australia from Japan?

(2) Is she aware that a recent Press statement advises that the imported netting was of a very poor quality having a very low percentage of zinc coating?

(3) If the statement is correct, will she take action to see that imported fencing material is comparable in quality to that manufactured in this State?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) No. (b) No.

The Government has not imported any sheep or rabbit netting from Japan. Private merchants may have done so, but I have no means of ascertaining the quantity.

(2) No, but I believe that the statement is correct.

(3) This is a matter for the Commonwealth. I have no power to interfere with private importations.

ARGENTINE ANT.

As to Action to Combat.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Health:

(1) In view of the fact that Argentine ants are again active, will he inform the House what action is being taken by the department to combat the plague?

(2) What is the nature and composition of the liquid or other preparation considered to be the most effective in the anti-ant campaign?

(3) What is the cost and availability to the householder?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Tenders have been called for the supply in large quantities of a suitable deterrent which is intended shall be supplied to the public at a minimum cost.

An experimental campaign is to be commenced at Bunbury early next month, with a view to obtaining data as to the possibility of complete extermination of the ant in prescribed areas.

(2) Two per cent. D.D.T. dispersed in water.

(3) It is not yet known at what price the supply of D.D.T. under the Government scheme will be able to be given to the public, but it is considered that this information will be available in the near future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman and Publication of Extracts in "Hansard."

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: By way of personal explanation, and in fairness to

"Hansard," I want to say that last night the member for Irwin-Moore, in criticising the letter I had read, said he was always compelled to hand over to "Hansard" letters and articles quoted by him. I wish to state that "Hansard" treats everybody the same, and that everything I quoted from was handed to "Hansard."

MOTION—PIGSWILL.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

MR. GRAYDEN (Middle Swan) [4.39]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and make recommendations with regard to the swill fed to pigs in this State.

I do not intend to speak to the motion inasmuch as the whole position, which has prompted me to move in this direction, was brought before the House last week when I moved for the disallowance of a regulation controlling pigswill. Therefore, I simply want to say that I move the motion for the reasons I then outlined.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

MOTION—STATE ASSETS.

As to Utilisation of Credit Balance.

Debate resumed from the 20th July on the following motion by Mr. Marshall:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should submit annually, along with the Budget, a balance sheet showing fully the value of all assets as well as the liabilities of the State, in order that Parliament might better understand the solvency, or otherwise, of the State with the view to using the credit balance (if any) as security for the State Rural and Industries Bank, which should make available financial accommodation to the State Government at cost for all Governmental purposes. This would avoid in future all borrowing through medium of the Loan Council from institutions or individuals as a debt against the State, which policy has always been responsible for the increase of the Interest Bill, which in turn has meant increased taxation to cover such debt.

MR. REYNOLDS (Forrest) [4.40]: This is a powerful motion moved by a member who has given years and years of study to this question. I was pleased that the Premier paid a tribute to the hon. member's knowledge and capacity and his study of this question. I noticed that reference was made to Douglas Credit and, whilst I am not an advocate of that system, nevertheless I realise that Major Douglas rendered a great service to the people of Australia and, in fact, the people of the world because he made many of them think. I have with me a book by no less a person than J. M. Keynes, and on page 371 he pays this tribute to Major Douglas—

Major Douglas is entitled to claim, as against some of his orthodox adversaries, that he has not been wholly oblivious of the outstanding problem of our economic system.

That tribute, coming from a man of Keynes's outstanding ability, is a worthwhile one. The Premier said he disagreed with this motion because he considered it was impracticable. I am not entirely in accord with that view, because the Constitution, Section 51, under Part V, Powers of the Parliament, states—

The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to—

Then we come to Subsection (xiii), which follows on the words "with respect to," and that subsection states—

Banking, other than State banking; also State banking extending beyond the limits of the State concerned, the incorporation of banks, and the issue of paper money.

From that it is fairly obvious to me that the State, if it contested this section, would win its case against the Commonwealth Government, because there is no limiting factor. It simply states that the Commonwealth shall have power to create banks and also banks extending beyond the limits of a State. But, there is nothing definite or specific to say that the issue of paper money shall be limited to the control of the Commonwealth Government. Therefore, I claim that the State can issue its own money.

In giving my reasons for opposing this motion, I intend to sketch the history of banking and pay particular reference to the Commonwealth Bank, because State banking can play a tremendous part in the development of our natural resources. In 1817, a group of merchants came together and decided to form a bank, which was later known as the Bank of New South Wales. Those merchants were given power, under a charter, to issue their own notes, and they did so until 1910. In about 1819, another group of merchants, realising that banking was a profitable undertaking, also decided to form a savings bank, which was known as Campbell's Bank, and this operated for many

years until the State Government bought it out and carried on until 1930, when the Commonwealth Government absorbed it.

Very few people seem to know that in about 1823 the currency in Australia was Spanish dollars and Spanish cents. This state of affairs existed by virtue of a decree by the Government of that day, stating that the currency would be in dollars and cents. That position obtained until about 1826. As members know, in the earlier part of our history, a good deal of our trading was done by barter, and dealings in rum. I believe the landed cost of rum in those days was about 7s. 6d. per gallon and some of the high officials seem to have had a monopoly. History tells us that it was rationed out at a cost of approximately £8 a gallon.

However, in 1851, gold was discovered and the miners realised that it was better to carry notes than gold, and in this way the banks were able to create tremendous reserves of gold. As we know, the States federated in the early part of this century, and in 1910 the Commonwealth Government then in power issued orders that all notes were to be called up. In 1893, after the bank crashes throughout Australia, the Queensland Government decided to issue its own notes. There is no doubt that because of this fact, Queensland was able to use large sums of money to develop its own State, and this was done very rapidly. The Note Issues Act of 1910 gave power to the Commonwealth Government for the issue of notes. Whilst they had power to issue notes, the banks also had power to create credit. This they did merely by making advances of credit available to their clients, and then entering those advances on the opposite side of the ledger as deposits and advising their clients to draw on these credits by cheques provided by the banks.

That statement is quite true, because the Premier in his reply admitted that Mr. Bosisto, who is the manager of the Rural and Industries Bank, said in a communication to him that the banks had the power to create credit but there was, of course, a limit to what the banks could do in that respect. If they can create credits, they can also destroy them by calling up overdrafts. When the banks bought securities either in the shape of Government stocks or shares in private companies, which they did, they also created money or rather credits, but such credits were also destroyed every time any bank sold some of its securities. Therefore it is quite obvious that the power to create credits rests with the banks. What is money? Some people are not quite sure about it. Actually it is simply the promise to pay, on demand, either in the form of goods or services. To my way of thinking, it does not matter whether the promise is stamped on a piece of jarrah, a piece of pinewood, a coin or a note, or is simply in the form of an entry in a ledger. The vital thing is the promise to pay, not the material upon which it is written.

The particular note I hold in my hand is worth £1 simply because of the promise of the bank to pay that amount on demand. The value of the note rests in the faith of the people in the Commonwealth Government. That is what gives this piece of paper its value. In 1914, the Commonwealth Government issued £11,000,000 in notes. Not all that money was liberated. Sufficient of it was made available to meet the nation's demands in the way of small change. The rest was impounded by the bank and upon that basis it created a huge edifice of credit. Currency comes into existence really by virtue of the debts due to the banks in respect of which they have extracted a tremendous amount in interest.

In 1914, the note issue totalled £11,000,000 and that enabled the banks to expand their credit to the extent of £115,000,000. By 1920 the note issue had been increased to £20,000,000 and credit had expanded to £170,000,000. Members can therefore see that whilst the value of the notes issued had increased by £9,000,000 the credit over the same period had been augmented by £62,000,000. That is no wild statement. The fact can be verified by reference to the Commonwealth Year Books dealing with the appropriate periods. I know that many people are at a loss to understand how a Government makes notes available for circulation. In 1910, the Commonwealth Government called in all notes that were in circulation.

At that time there were about 20 banks operating throughout the Commonwealth and they had been issuing their own notes. In fact, many of the big firms like Elder Smith's, Dalgety's, Burns Philp and so on had been issuing their own notes, and under

the provisions of the Federal legislation those notes, together with all gold, were called in. In return, the Government issued £3 in Australian notes for every £1 worth received in gold. That was done because under the Act the Government was compelled to keep a coverage of 25 per cent. for all notes issued. Then again, short term loans that were interest-bearing were made to State Governments and, in addition, the Commonwealth Government distributed funds by way of deposits with the various private trading banks. Those deposits in turn carried a certain rate of interest.

By 1920 the Commonwealth Government had made deposits with the various banks to the extent of £6,500,000. Thus it will be seen that, by controlling the note issue, the Commonwealth Government was rendering good service to the people of Australia. If members refer to the Commonwealth Year Book, No. 14, they will see at page 691 the various investments that the Commonwealth Government had made in that manner, which investments were returning just on £2,000,000 a year. As a matter of fact, the construction of the East-West railway was paid for by means of the profits made by the Commonwealth Bank. A reference to Commonwealth "Hansard" No. 129, page 1930, will enable that statement to be verified.

As I mentioned previously, the Fisher Labour Government in 1911 introduced a Bill for the purpose of establishing the Commonwealth Bank, which was vested with power to carry on business usually transacted by trading banks, including savings banks. The effect was that those institutions were to be placed under the control of the Government. It had reasons for creating the Commonwealth Bank. At that time the Government was borrowing large sums of money in respect of which it felt the interest rates being paid were too high. It was also considered that the interest on overdrafts was pretty heavy. The decision was reached, therefore, to establish the Commonwealth Bank by which means it would be able to curtail the cost of production because if the interest rates on loans and overdrafts were reduced, that would be the effect.

When I refer to overdrafts, I mean the borrowings of business people by that means with the object of creating business enterprises. Thus if the interest on such accommodation could be reduced, naturally there would be a reduction in the cost of production, which obviously would be most beneficial to the people of Australia. I can well recall when the Federal Bill was before Parliament. I was a schoolboy at the time but I can remember the discussions that took place in the homes, in the schoolrooms, on playing fields and in almost every place where people, young or old, were met together, I recollect also some of the advertisements and scare headlines that appeared in the Press. They stated that Australia would be ruined, that inflation would result and that it would mean easy and cheap money for all. They also said that investors would shun Australia and that the vile Labour Government would flood the country with "Fisher's Flimsies." In those days I believed those things because I was very hostile. Not that I knew much about currency matters then, but my training had been such that I was taught to believe those things just as many members on the Government side of the House believe that nationalisation of banking is going to cripple the country.

The first Governor of the Commonwealth Bank was Sir Dennison Miller. He was a highly respected banking official and he came from the Bank of New South Wales. As soon as he had been appointed, he proceeded to open up savings banks and used deposits later on to finance the establishment of the Commonwealth Bank. I think the member for Murchison had this in his mind: that if we could get 80,000 to 90,000 Western Australians to deposit money with the Rural and Industries Bank and, if we were thus able to obtain £7,000,000 or £8,000,000, we should then have something tangible out of which to create credit to be used for the development of our resources rather than having to go, as we do at present, cap in hand to the Commonwealth asking for interest-bearing loans.

Mr. Needham: The cost of financing the Commonwealth Bank was practically nil.

Mr. REYNOLDS: I quite realise that, because the money deposited in the savings bank was used, thus eliminating interest-bearing debentures or loans. This meant a real saving to the people of Australia. In 1914, when the first World War started, the various banking institutions got together and

decided to assist the Government in the raising of loans, and for the services rendered the cost was up to 60s. per cent. When the Commonwealth Government took over, it floated loans totalling £350,000,000, of which £250,000,000 was raised locally and £100,000,000 oversea at a cost of 5s. 7d. per cent. This enabled a profit of 2s. per cent, to be made. Members will thus perceive the great rake-off that the other institutions obtained. That is why I advocate we should ascertain whether we cannot do something to give greater stability to our State banking institution so that it can finance the loans necessary; and that is why I believe in a State bank and also in a Commonwealth Bank.

During the war, the Commonwealth Bank materially assisted the farmers of Australia; in fact, by raising loans it literally saved Australia from stark ruin. It advanced over £450,000,000 for pools in connection with wheat, wool, meat, rabbits, butter and sugar etc., and found £2,000,000 to purchase the Commonwealth "Bay" Liners which were used to great advantage in the transport of our troops oversea. So the Commonwealth Bank has been of great service to Australia and I still think there is some good in this motion. In 1920 an amending measure was introduced which gave the Commonwealth Bank power to control the note issue. A new department was formed and a board of four directors was appointed, two of whom—Messrs. Garvan and Collins—represented financial institutions.

In 1921, when Sir Dennison Miller was interviewed by a Mr. Jouncey, he was asked whether the Commonwealth Bank had advanced £350,000,000 by way of credits. He admitted that it had, and that the bank could find at least another £350,000,000 if it so desired. Some members may recall that in 1921 wheat and wool prices dropped very rapidly. I can remember that, because when I arrived in Western Australia in 1921 wool was worth somewhere about 1s. 6d. a lb., but within a week or so it had shrunk to somewhat in the vicinity of 9d. It was obvious to some people that a depression was in the offing. The international banks started a mild deflationary policy, and unfortunately the Australian banks followed suit. But the Commonwealth Bank rushed to the rescue, and between June and December of 1930 created £23,000,000 worth of credit which helped to stem the depression. It was also a warning to the banks of what the Commonwealth could do in the way of assisting the Government should a depression occur.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member going to connect this up with the motion?

Mr. REYNOLDS: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is getting a bit away from it.

Mr. REYNOLDS: I am opposing the motion and I have to give my reasons for so doing. I said previously that the private banks had created three Australian pounds for every one pound in gold which had been deposited with the Treasury. In this way they were able to increase their cash reserves by three.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You would have some authorities with regard to Douglas Credit?

Mr. REYNOLDS: I have and I shall quote them shortly.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I suggest that the member for Claremont quoted a few, which can be found in "Hansard."

Mr. REYNOLDS: I will take my time! The banks do not lend out cash deposits at interest. They simply keep those deposits, in case there should be a run on the banks. Some people imagine that banks simply bulge with notes. That is not so. In 1941 I had occasion to change a cheque for £130. I asked my wife if she would go to the Commercial Bank and change it for me. She saw the cashier and he said, "I am sorry, but I just cannot cash it." She asked him why and he said, "We have not the money." He advised her to see the manager. She did so and he explained that he had only £40 in notes in the bank. He suggested that I should get in touch with the manager of the Bank of New South Wales, which I did. His name was Pettit. He said I should give him two or three days' notice if I wanted to cash a cheque of that size; but in order to overcome the difficulty, he gave me 12 cheques on which were stamped counter cheques.

The Attorney General: Where was that?

Mr. REYNOLDS: At York. That is an absolute fact.

The Minister for Railways: Do you believe that stuff?

Mr. REYNOLDS: That is a fact.

The Minister for Railways: That a bank refused to cash a cheque?

Mr. REYNOLDS: I say definitely that the Bank of New South Wales gave me 12 counter cheques and in that way I was able to pay my accounts. I know that might seem an astonishing statement, but it is true. That actually happened. There is positive proof that banks do not hold large reserves of money. I was saying it was clear that if a bank had £1,000,000 worth of gold it would have received £3,000,000 worth of Australian notes, and on that could build up credit to the extent of about £25,000,000 to £30,000,000. Earlier in my remarks I showed clearly how in 1920, on a note issue of £20,000,000, the banks had created £170,000,000; and if members want verification, they can check my statement with the Year Books. Of each £3, £2 was in the way of a loan and this loan had to be repaid 12 months after the end of the war. Later on this three-to-one policy was reduced to a two-to-one policy and war bonds were accepted by the Commonwealth Bank as security.

When I returned from World War 1, my people told me that their banker had advised them that if they wanted to buy war bonds they could do so and it was not necessary for them to give any security. They took advantage of that and I know the sum involved was in the vicinity of £5,000. They simply wrote out cheques, I think to the value of £1,000 each and deposited the war bonds with the bank. The bank received the interest and in that way actually made a rake-off of 3½ per cent. That happened in hundreds of thousands of instances and the banks, accordingly, made a tremendous profit. While I suppose the banks had the right to draw the additional sum, in many cases they did not draw the full amount, but traded on their right to do so, as if they actually possessed it.

I remember reading from Commonwealth "Hansard" where Mr. Anstey, M.H.R., said the banks had the right to draw an amount of £8,000,000, and insinuated that the Commonwealth Government was being robbed of money in that way. He knew what he was talking about. Early in 1924 the private banks demanded that their right to draw be increased by £3,000,000. In that year amending legislation was passed taking the control of the Comonwealth Bank out of the hands of the Governor and placing it under a board of directors. Dr. Earle Page, the Minister who introduced that Bill, alluded on the floor of the House to conferences that Ministers had had with the general managers of the various banks. Mr. Charlton told the House plainly that it was nothing less than an attempt to kill the Commonwealth Bank.

It is because of what I have seen happen in the case of the Commonwealth Bank that I am perturbed about our State bank. I would not like anything to be done that would damage that institution. In 1924, when the amending Bill was passed, the various private banks notified the Wool Council that unless they were granted an increase in the right to draw, amounting to £5,000,000, they would not finance the purchase of wool. When they were granted that advance they immediately demanded another £10,000,000, but while that transaction was pending the price of wool dropped tremendously. In 1924 the Commonwealth Bank introduced an innovation in the form of a rural credit department and was going to make certain sums of money available to farmers.

When the farmers approached the bank and were prepared to give their security, the various Commonwealth Bank managers told them that they must apply to the private banks. In the majority of cases they did so and lodged their securities with those banks, which then took the securities to the Commonwealth Bank and were in that way able to borrow large sums of money at four per cent. In most cases, as is well known, the farmers were in turn charged seven and a half per cent. Reference to that will be found in Commonwealth "Hansard," Vol. 114, at page 4332.

In about 1927 a gentleman named Sir Ernest Harvey came to Australia. He was controller of the Bank of England and his special duty was to advise the Commonwealth Government on the formation of a central bank. If members are interested in his recommendations, they are to be found in a book in the Parliamentary Library, named "Government Bank. Australia" by J. C. Jauncey. I commend that book to the member for Sussex, who I believe was interested in banking years ago, though it is obvious that since he has been

in this House that interest has waned. In the House of Representatives Mr. Charlton said—

> By the terms of the Bill, the business of the Savings Bank Department (over 50 per cent. of the total revenue of the Commonwealth Bank) was taken away from the bank, and placed under the control of three directors, appointed by the Governor General (which again meant in practice, the Bruce-Page Government) and it was specially provided by altering the definition of "Bank" in the original Act, that the Commonwealth Bank of Australia does not include the Savings Bank. Much of the profit the bank was earning was made in the Savings Bank Department; but the Bill did not merely lessen the bank's profit, it took away the bank's cash reserves, which enabled it to compete with private banks, terminated its trading operations and reduced it to a banker's bank—not a reserve bank, because no bank is compelled to keep its reserve there—so that it became neither a trading bank nor a savings bank, but a thing of shreds and patches, at the mercy of private banking institutions, and which could be destroyed at any time.

I mention that because if the State bank ever came under the control of a Government that was so disposed, it could be destroyed in the same way as were the Savings Bank of New South Wales, the Federal Deposits Bank and the Primary Producers Bank during the depression period. Another important function performed by banks is in relation to bills of exchange. In 1929 the telegraphic transfer rate on bills of exchange was 35s. per cent. At that time Australia had returned to the gold standard. We were off the gold standard from 1914 to 1925, and a Bill was introduced in 1924 bringing us back to the gold standard. The telegraphic transfer rate, as I have said, was 35s. per cent., but that was above the point at which it paid to buy gold for export, instead of bills of exchange, with which to settle oversea debts.

In 1929 Mr. Theodore was Federal Treasurer and he introduced a Bill which, in plain language, practically confiscated our gold and forbid its export. At that stage the Australian banks were holding about £48,000,000 in gold and when exporters began to buy gold and send it oversea the banks became hostile, because they were losing their profits on the bills of exchange. According to a report that I saw of the Melbourne stock exchange for 1929, the banks wanted the gold because they thought they might need to use some of it for foreign investments, the dividends on which were free from Federal income tax and formed from 30 per cent. to 60 per cent. of the total dividends paid by the banks. Towards the end of 1929 the prices of primary products tumbled and the fall was out of all proportion to what we were still paying for the goods that we had to import from oversea.

At that time we had reserves of only about £28,000,000 in England, and as soon as the Scullin Government came into power the English banking system promptly closed the London banks to further Australian loans, and the Australian banking system blindly followed that lead. The banks then began to contract advances and call in overdrafts. Proof of that can be found in Commonwealth "Hansard," Vol. 122, page 313. There have been some interesting talks on this question in the House—talks by authorities and men who have devoted years of their lives to the study of these problems. I refer to men who are respected for their courage, because when people advocate something new they are sometimes considered to be fools or cranks. That is what happened to Roland Hill when he suggested the introduction of postage stamps. The Minister, when decrying that suggestion, said its originator was a crank and that if postage stamps were used the post office would be too small and a larger one would have to be built. The same can be said of the man who first thought of railways. As a lad I read that when they first thought of running engines on rails it was suggested that a man should walk in front of the engine waving a red flag. A Bill was actually passed, laying down that the sides of a railway should be boarded up so that the noise would not affect the people, who would otherwise suffer from headaches or nerve troubles. Those are matters of fact and so it will be seen that when anyone advocates the introduction of a new idea he is decried as being a fool. It takes a lot of courage to face a barrage of that nature, but fortunately there have been men with the courage to stand up in this House and state what they believed to be true. One such member, as appears in "Hansard" for 1936, Vol. 1, page 1122, said—

> The British "Economist" in its issue of the 15th August last, made some striking comments. All fair-minded members, I believe, will agree that any work I have done in this House or in the country is now completed. As

a layman, I essayed a very unpleasant task, about which I knew nothing. I took it up first of all at the request of the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell, and secondly at the request of two of my electors, the President and Secretary of the Douglas Credit Movement.

According to the "Economist," when we get into public debt we ought to create more money in order to get out of debt, and that seems fairly logical. The report continues—

Here we have a crank speaking—the British "Economist." Perhaps if we allow the authorities here nine months or so in which to think it over, Australia then will be talking in the same way. The statement I have read relates, of course, to the national sphere. When we get into public debt, according to the "Economist," we ought to create more money in order to get out of debt. Is that not something new? Does not that justify me in closing down and leaving the member for Murchison to carry on?

It is obvious that the member who put that forward was explaining something that has now become history. Members can look it up in "Hansard" for themselves if they wish to discover who that member, a well known authority, was. It will be recalled that in about 1930 Australia was in the throes of a depression and the Commonwealth Government was embarrassed. It asked the British Prime Minister whether he could arrange loans or finance with which to meet interest on its loans. The Governor of the Bank of England decided to send to Australia Sir Otto Niemeyer. That is not an extremely English-sounding name. However, he arrived in Australia in July, 1930. I quote this to illustrate the power of the banking institutions and how necessary it is for us to assume control of our own banking system. The Premiers' Conference suggested five main provisions. They were as follows:—

(1) Budgets to be balanced at any cost regardless of human suffering.

(2) Overseas borrowing to cease.

(3) No public works to commence unless they could pay interest on sinking fund.

(4) All interest payments to be hypothecated in favour of bondholders.

(5) Monthly accounts to be published in Australia and overseas showing summaries of revenue and expenditure.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Did you say 1920?

Mr. REYNOLDS: No, 1930. That was what the Premiers' Conference imposed upon the States of Australia. If we had had a powerful State banking institution it would have been unnecessary for so many thousands of Western Australians to have suffered the calamitous loss which they did during the depression years. That is another reason why I am inclined to think that there must be something good in a State having control of its own bank. The story of the New South Wales Savings Bank will serve to illustrate the reasons why I could not vote for this motion.

In 1930 the Savings Bank of New South Wales was the largest of its type in Australia and the second largest in the British Empire. Its assets exceeded £104,000,000, it had over 200 branches in New South Wales and its annual net profit was in excess of £400,000. The main object of the Savings Bank, which is more or less on all fours with that of our own Rural and Industries Bank, was to finance farmers and make sums of money available to assist secondary industries. It was also providing money to finance homes for workers. Those were extremely laudable objectives. At this period it was solvent but its liquid assets were only £17,000,000 and its liabilities were round about £71,000,000. Unfortunately, a run was made on the bank which was the result of a political move and also was probably caused by Mr. Lang's introducing a three-point plan in his policy speech. He was returned to office but some of the big financial concerns felt that his policy would ruin the State of New South Wales and they decided to get rid of him and the Savings Bank.

In his policy speech Mr. Lang said that Great Britain should agree to fund Australia's oversea debt in the same way as America funded Great Britain's and that no interest should be paid by Australia. That does not seem a very terrifying thing because if members peruse this book, "Mission to Moscow" by Joseph E. Davies, it will be seen that England had to fund about £800,000,000 to Russia and also America had an outstanding debt of somewhere round about £1,200,000,000. That information is on the page dealing with debt settlement. When Joseph E. Davies was sent to discuss the funding of this debt the Russians turned a deaf ear and said they were not prepared to discuss it. It is marvellous how these large sums of money can vanish and no-one seems to be worse off.

Then Mr. Lang requested that the rate of interest be reduced to 3 per cent. and that all interest on private finance be correspondingly reduced. That seemed to be a fair proposal because wheat was round about 5s. or 6s. a bushel and it then dropped to one-third of that price and the reasonable thing was to reduce interest and other charges, but nothing was done. At this time the Press branded Lang as a thief and a rogue and said that his place was in gaol. If in, say, 15 or 20 years something of this nature were to happen to our State bank we would lose it and we would suffer the same experience as New South Wales and therefore we have to be extremely cautious as to these matters.

As I have said, early in 1931 Australia was faced with a breakdown in her monetary system. No-one can deny that, because banks were calling in overdrafts and were doing all they possibly could to prevent expansion either in the way of primary or secondary production. In fact, it was a deflationary policy. No-one denies that the depression was world-wide and the remarkable thing seems to be that almost overnight credit just dried up. But in times of war Governments can find thousands of millions of pounds. If I remember aright Great Britain was able to expand her credit by £12,000,000,000 and Australia was able to expand hers by about £700,000,000.

Mr. SPEAKER: With which part of the motion is the hon. member dealing now?

Mr. REYNOLDS: I am dealing with the financial aspect. I am pointing out that in times of depression these people contracted credit and also it is quite possible that should our State bank ever be controlled by an unsympathetic Government we could lose it. During this period our primary products were in abundance but there was a shortage of money. This motion has for its object the advancing of credit by our State bank should another depression occur and I think there is something in it. Round about the depression period the wells of credit dried up but what was the cause? There was no devastation by war; there was no pestilence; there was no Spanish influenza which broke out immediately after World War I and which took toll of 25,000,000 people.

I know that war was responsible for killing about 11,000,000 people but what caused this depression and the credit to dry up? There must be some explanation and I am trying to ascertain whether some other person can give it. The member for Sussex may be able to tell us why these things happen. But the remarkable thing is that the whole world was commercially and industrially paralysed, almost strangled, in a night or so. There was a lack of currency to keep trade moving. The motion is a powerful one, and if it were practicable to issue credits against the assets of the State and against any savings bank deposits, then the Rural and Industries Bank might be able to make the necessary advances. Personally, I cannot see that it is possible.

If we could get control of our gold and against it create a note issue, the motion would be possible and sensible. We would then be able to develop this great land ourselves, instead of going to the Commonwealth Government, almost cap in hand, and asking for money. We would be able to get it here and use it to develop our industries and conserve our rainfall for irrigation, as well as use it for other purposes, such as developing our coalfields, etc. In fact, money could be found for our primary, secondary and tertiary industries. What a prosperous land this would be if we had control of our gold and our own note issue! As I said earlier, I feel I cannot support the motion. Perhaps the member for Murchison, who is unfortunately absent owing to indisposition, may later on tell us how he considers it will be possible to create credit against the assets of the State.

MR. BOVELL (Sussex) [5.48]: I shall not delay the House long in dealing with the motion. I cannot support it, but shall not spend as much time as did the member for Forrest in explaining my reasons. I do not doubt the sincerity of the member for Murchison. In the few years I have been a member of this Chamber he has delivered many dissertations on the need for monetary reform, but it seems to me that he is now endeavouring to tie up the financial resources of the State with trading concerns. All advances made by banks are repayable on demand. If a balance sheet of the State's assets and liabilities were presented to the Rural and Industries Bank in connection

with advances to meet the financial needs of the State, the loan would, if made, be on demand, as the bank would have other financial responsibilities to its clients. If the motion were agreed to, the State would become a borrowing client of the bank and therefore, in my opinion, its solvency or otherwise would be completely wrapped up in the success or non-success of the Rural and Industries Bank.

We know that when a trading concern approaches a bank for an advance, it produces a balance sheet showing what its assets are, what its business is capable of earning, and what it could earn in addition if the accommodation were granted. What would be the State's position if it sought to borrow money on banking terms and conditions? Take one State asset, our railways! I understand this asset is valued at £27,000,000; but how would the State Treasurer be met by the Rural and Industries Bank if he offered that asset as a security when, although it may have cost the State £27,000,000, it is losing between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 a year?

In my opinion, the motion is unnecessary and impracticable. If it were carried, it would involve the State's assets in a trading concern. Our Treasurer would have to go, cap in hand, to the manager of a bank to seek financial aid and, as I said, bank advances are always repayable on demand. Therefore, the banking institution could seriously embarrass the State Treasurer. I cannot support the motion, but I commend the member for Murchison for his sincere efforts at all times to improve our monetary system. At present it certainly is not perfect, but my opinion is that the motion would not improve it. It would not have the effect desired by the member for Murchison.

On the motion by Hon. J. B. Sleeman, debate adjourned.

BILL—CANNING DISTRICT SANITARY SITE ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

MOTION—STATE ARBITRATION COURT.

As to Dual Position of President—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 20th July on the following motion by Hon. A. H. Panton:—

That this House deplores the recent action of the Government in appointing Mr. L. W. Jackson to the dual position of President of the Arbitration Court and Judge of the Supreme Court. This action seriously reduces the opportunities for efficiency in the working of the Arbitration Court and is a retrograde step.

MR. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [5.52]: I desire first to say that, although I do not see eye to eye with the mover of the motion, the member for Leederville is to be commended on bringing this matter to the notice of the House in an endeavour to obtain from the Minister an assurance that the dual appointment of Mr. Justice Jackson will not militate against the harmonious and expeditious working of the Arbitration Court. The motion could have been fully justified some years ago, as then there was a tendency to make the work of the Arbitration Court subsidiary to that of the Supreme Court. In those days—the early twenties—industrial organisations were suffering growing pains; but they have since gained in strength both industrially and numerically, and any attempt by the Government to sabotage the work of the Arbitration Court would be met by them with hostility.

I believe that a number of employers' organisations would look askance at any action of the Government having for its object the periodical transfer of the President of the Arbitration Court to the Supreme Court. The Industrial Arbitration Act provides for the appointment of the President of the Arbitration Court. It also makes provision for the appointment of an acting president should the president be unavoidably absent, the object being of course to expedite the business of the court. In Section 108, provision is made for the appointment of a conciliation commissioner and in Section 109 there is provision for the setting up of industrial boards. But we know that the decisions of both the conciliation commissioner and industrial boards are subject to appeal to the full Arbitration Court. Such appeals, however, are not very often made, and I think the machinery has helped in a large measure to expedite the work of the Arbitration Court. Insofar as the appointment of the President is concerned, it has to be pointed out that Section 45 of the Act reads as follows:—

The Court shall consist of three members appointed by the Governor. One member shall be appointed on the recommendation of the industrial unions of employers and one on the recommendation of the industrial unions of workers, as provided by section forty-seven, and the third member shall be a person qualified to be appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court, appointed as hereinafter provided by the Governor to act in that behalf. Such third member shall be the President of the Court. The other members shall be called ordinary members.

Section 46 provides for the appointment of a deputy president; and Section 50 stipulates that the tenure of office of the President shall be the same as in the case of a judge of the Supreme Court, and that he shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of a judge, including pension, with the proviso that a president shall not continue in office after reaching the age of 70 years. Section 51 reads—

The President shall receive a salary equal to that of a Judge of the Supreme Court, and each ordinary member of the Court shall receive such salary (not being less than £600 per annum) as shall be fixed from time to time by the Governor, and all such salaries shall be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

I have no quarrel with any prospective appointee to the presidency of the Arbitration Court stipulating, as a condition of his appointment, that he shall also be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court. I believe that the work of the President of the Arbitration Court is of equal importance with that of a Supreme Court judge. I am not suggesting that because the President of the Arbitration Court is appointed a judge of the Supreme Court he should at periods leave the work of the Arbitration Court to attend to Supreme Court work, but I contend that the President should have the status of a Supreme Court judge. As a matter of fact, the Act implies that the president shall to all intents and purposes have such status.

But if the President of the Arbitration Court is going to remove himself at periods to the Supreme Court, I have no doubt that the confidence that has been established in Western Australia in the Arbitration Court, particularly amongst industrial organisations of workers and employers, will be considerably reduced. If we are to continue to have that industrial harmony which has been so pronounced in Western Australia—more so than in any other State of the Commonwealth—it will be incumbent upon the Arbitration Court to spend all its time on the work of harmonising relationships between industrial unions of employers and industrial unions of workers in this State.

I do not suggest that the President of the Arbitration Court does intend periodically to be absent from the court in order to carry out the functions of a Supreme Court judge; but if that were to happen I have no hesitation in saying that a wedge would be thus put into the relationships between those engaged in industrial work, and workers' organisations would begin to lose confidence in the operations of the court. If it is necessary at times for the president, through unavoidable circumstances, to be absent from the Arbitration Court, there is nothing to prevent the Government from appointing a deputy.

So far as the general work of the court is concerned, we all know that over the years a number of conditions have been standardised, such as those relating to sick leave, holiday pay, working hours, margins and allowances. Before the motion is disposed of I would like a definite assurance from the Attorney General that though the President of the Arbitration Court has accepted a dual appointment his work will be very definitely that of President of the Arbitration Court.

The Attorney General: He has made that very clear himself.

Mr. HEGNEY: I am very pleased the Minister has given that assurance. In 1912 and in 1921 the Industrial Arbitration Act was considerably amended. The 1925 measure was rather comprehensive. Both pieces of legislation were the work of Labour Ministers and the provisions regarding the appointment of a President of the Court and his status were written into the Act by a Labour Government.

Hon. A. H. Panton: They were written in by the Legislative Council.

Mr. HEGNEY: The Labour Party in this State has been instrumental in fostering the spirit of industrial arbitration for the purpose of settling industrial disputes, and over the years the majority of organisations in Western Australia have approached the State Arbitration Court with confidence. I believe that as a result of experience of industrial relationships between employers

and workers' organisations a number sincerely believe that approaching the court and having wages and conditions of employment settled there is better than the old method of win, tie or wrangle.

The confidence that has been built up over the years will be considerably minimised, if not altogether shaken, if there are any deliberate attempts to attack conditions, wages and margins that have been gained up to date. If the work of the court is to be beneficial to the State as a whole by maintaining reasonable industrial relationships all decisions must be made in an unbiased and impartial manner. If anyone is going to make a deliberate attack on the standards built up over the years, I have no hesitation in saying that the organised strength of the industrial movement of this State will resist it to the utmost. In conclusion I repeat that the member for Leederville is to be commended for initiating the motion.

I cannot actually deplore the dual appointment, because I believe it would be a fair proposition to assume that the present occupant may have indicated to the Government that he was not prepared to accept the position of President of the Arbitration Court unless, at the same time, he was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court. I do not know whether that is correct or not but, having regard to the frailty of human nature, it is possible that a person may not think it extravagant, when it is suggested to him by the Government that he should occupy this position, that he should also be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court. I know that the majority of the industrial organisations are not alarmed, but they will be and they will certainly show their hostility if at any time the President tries to divide his time between the Arbitration Court and the Supreme Court.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland) [6.7]: I support the member for Mt. Hawthorn in his motion.

The Acting Premier: Not yet!

Mr. BRADY: The member for Leederville, I mean. The motion is the only effective way of protesting against toying with a most important section of our judiciary. The hon. member outlined the history of the Arbitration Court in this State from 1902, when the first Bill was introduced. He pointed out that it was brought down because of the industrial disturbances which had been going on for years. It was to bring about industrial peace. He then traced its history to 1911 when certain organisations were precluded from getting the benefits of the Arbitration Court. He showed that in 1912 the Act was amended to allow those unions, the Clerks' Union and the Shop Assistants' Union to get protection. He pointed out that in 1914 war broke out and the Arbitration Court did not function to a very great extent as everybody concentrated on winning the war. He then moved on to the more important time when the war was over, and showed that a great number of unions then desired to go to the court, and that because of big delays in the hearing of their cases there was likely to be a lot of industrial disturbance. As a fact, there actually were some such disturbances and as a result quite a lot of economic trouble ensued for the State.

The hon. member then pointed out that one union waited for 12 to 18 months to get before the court, and after the case was heard and the decision was given a margin of 6s. 3d. was provided, whereas previously is was 3s. 9d. The union concerned was the A.W.U. and it realised that as a consequence of the court being presided over by temporary or part-time presidents, who were Supreme Court judges, the whole position was most iniquitous as the workers were not getting their just dues. So an agitation took place, and in 1925 it was decided to appoint a permanent President of the Court. Mr. Walter Dwyer, now Sir Walter Dwyer, was made the first permanent President. He carried on until President Dunphy was appointed in 1942 or 1943. Mr. Dunphy recently resigned, and the present Government had to make an appointment, and ultimately Mr. L. W. Jackson was chosen for the position.

I have no personal feelings against Mr. Justice Jackson. As far as I can ascertain he is doing quite a good job. I have, as a Justice of the Peace, sat on the bench when Mr. Jackson has been taking cases in the court, and I feel that he is quite a competent man. I have no axe to grind as far as he is concerned, but I have a bone to

pick with the Government for making the dual appointment. I think it is lowering the prestige of the Arbitration Court.

The Attorney General: Quite the reverse.

Mr. BRADY: I say it is, because to expect a man to do the Arbitration Court work and that of the Criminal Court, as a Supreme Court judge, is lowering the dignity of the Arbitration Court. I feel that already there is not sufficient time given to the Arbitration Court. We are approaching the position when the Arbitration Court President will have to take the initiative and suggest to the Government means whereby the economic difficulties facing the country can be anticipated and legislated for before they eventuate. I can think of a dozen different ways in which the Arbitration Court, if it had any slack time—I cannot imagine it having any in this State—could apply itself and anticipate trouble that was brewing. I want to read the statement made by the Premier when Mr. Justice Jackson was appointed. He said—

> The State Government regarded the position of President of the Arbitration Court as one of great authority. It considered that the President should have the full prestige and status attaching to the position of a Judge of the Supreme Court.

If he had stopped there I would agree entirely with him. I feel the Arbitration Court is more important than the Supreme Court, because it deals with the foundation of a man's future, and that of the nation. If we have dissatisfied workers who have not decent conditions, the rest of the civil authority will fall by the wayside. The fixing of a man's wages is more important than dealing with a criminal who has offended against some particular section of society. I feel that nothing can be more important than the tribunal which is to fix the wages of the workers. Unfortunately the Premier did not finish there but went on to say—

> It was hoped that although Mr. Jackson would for some years to come be occupied by his duties as President of the Arbitration Court, he would, when requested by the Chief Justice, be able to sit on appeals to the Court of Criminal Appeal.

That implies, in my opinion, that he will be expected to sit on the Court of Criminal Appeal.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. BRADY: Before tea, Mr. Speaker, I read to the House an extract from the remarks made by the Premier on the appointment of Mr. Justice Jackson to the Arbitration Court, where, in the first part of the paragraph, the Premier stated that the position was one of great authority and importance, and followed that up by saying that the new appointee would occupy a dual position. When the mover of this motion first mentioned it in the House he was assured, from the Government side, that Mr. Justice Jackson would not be called upon to do any of this extra work, and yet quite recently—

The Acting Premier: Except in the Court of Appeal.

Mr. BRADY: In the "Gazette" recently tabled in this House it was stated that the rules dealing with liquidators under the Companies Act were filed, and they were signed by Sir John Dwyer, Mr. Justice, Wolff, Mr. Justice Jackson and Mr. Justice Walker. In the "Daily News" of the 16th August there appeared a paragraph headed "Judge Misses the Bar." It read—

> There were occasions when he felt particularly keenly the absence of legal practitioners from the Arbitration Court, said Mr. Justice Jackson today. He was replying to welcomes when he sat for the first time as a member of the Court of Criminal Appeal. Parliament in its wisdom had decreed that there should be very few occasions when lawyers would appear before him in the Arbitration Court, he said. "I feel sure that in years to come our brother Judge will adorn this bench," said Mr. Justice Wolff.

So we see that within a very short time after the appointment of Mr. Justice Jackson he is on the bench of the Supreme Court and is signing legal documents, which would probably take up a certain amount of his time. Last year we passed through this House an amendment to the Industrial Arbitration Act to provide for the appointment of a conciliation commissioner and assistant industrial registrar, because we were told that the work of the court had grown to such dimensions that it necessitated this assistance. Yet here we have a tendency, at this early stage, to get away from the position of the president having to do only Arbitration Court work. I agree with the remarks of the Attorney General when he introduced the measure to the House and said—

"Industrial arbitration is one of the most important judicial functions provided for in our Constitution and any party having an industrial matter that requires decision is, in my opinion, entitled to have the question decided with all reasonable promptitude."

It is because I agree with that and wish to see it carried into effect that I am making this protest tonight.

The Attorney General: It is entirely unnecessary.

Mr. BRADY: It is not. As I have said, there is a tendency to make little of the Arbitration Court by allowing this dual position of the judge to continue. As far back as 1925 this Parliament had proved to it the necessity of having a full-time judge of the Arbitration Court with no other responsibilities. With many years' experience of matters affecting the welfare of the workers and of the State as a whole, I think there is more than ever reason today why the President of the Arbitration Court should deal only with that specialised work.

The Attorney General: Mr. President Dunphy did not think so.

Mr. BRADY: I am not expressing his views. I say, as one with more than 20 years' experience of the Arbitration Court, and as one who has been held up for anything from six to nine months—

The Attorney General: You have never experienced that. That has not happened for years.

Mr. BRADY: It happened only two years ago. I would remind the Attorney General that Mr. President Dunphy met representatives of the trade unions and said the work had increased to such an extent after the war that he found it impossible to deal with it. He advised them to seek the appointment of conciliation commissioners so as to allow them to get on with the work. My own union did not get into the court until 12 months after it should have been able to get there. These are not figments of the imagination and I could bring 20 union secretaries here to prove what I have said. In "The West Australian" of the 8th September there appeared a paragraph outlining what the Arbitration Court had been doing. It showed that in 1927-28 the court dealt with only 127 cases, while in the ten months from the 1st August, 1947, to the 31st July, 1948, it dealt with 857 cases. That was the same court to which a president was appointed in 1925, and yet last year it dealt with seven times the amount of work. In spite of that members of the Government suggest that one man can fill the dual position of President of the Arbitration Court and judge of the Supreme Court.

As an ex-union secretary I say that that position is too important to be toyed with. It has taken many years to convince some of the unions that arbitration is the best way in which to settle industrial grievances. If they are now to find that the president can be taken from his important work in that court to do other jobs, while they have claims waiting to be dealt with, they will gain a poor impression of the value of that court. As it is now, one or two important unions, such as the Coalminers' Federation, have not a great deal of regard for the court. I feel that the work of the president is more important than that of a judge of the Supreme Court and I believe that that will be proved true in years to come. I support the member for Leederville in his protest and hope the House will agree to the motion, in the belief that the welfare of the workers must be protected.

MR. OLIVER (Boulder) [7.39]: I agree with the member for Guildford-Midland that industrial arbitration has become a highly specialised form of litigation and for that reason is probably one of the most important functions of the judiciary. In recent years we have had a good example of how the Arbitration Court should be conducted. The ex-President of the Arbitration Court, Mr. Dunphy, was always prepared to waive technicalities. He dispensed with what I would term a lot of unnecessary formalities and he went to no end of trouble to encourage the conciliation aspect of arbitration. I am of the opinion that anyone who is placed in control of that court must give serious consideration to those aspects. He is not dealing with men who have been trained in a legal sense. He is dealing with laymen who, while they have a full knowledge of the specific problems which they are handling, are not conversant with all the technicalities of law.

If the President of the Arbitration Court is to concern himself with all the finer points of law and disallow legitimate claims on those grounds, then of course it will not give the industrial unions much cause to have faith in arbitration. This is more important when we consider that the decision of the court is final. There is no appeal from it. A decision of the Supreme Court can be subject to an appeal to the High Court and that in turn is subject to appeal to the Privy Council. Therefore I believe that arbitration is a most important part of our judiciary. It has become a highly specialised form of litigation, and as such I consider that any man who is put in charge of that court should apply himself wholly to that particular work.

This work should be set completely apart from any other aspect of our judiciary because if it is not, it is apt to become confused. If technicalities are to enter into it and affect decisions, then it will jeopardise the legitimate claims of unions. That will only lower the prestige of the Arbitration Court and destroy the confidence of the workers in it. I do not intend to say any more on the motion, but I deplore the fact that the President of the Arbitration Court has been made a judge of the Supreme Court as well. It would have been far better if the position had been left as it has existed over past years. That would have allowed the President of the Arbitration Court to concentrate all his energies on industrial arbitration. I support the motion.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet) [7.45]: I support the remarks of all previous speakers on this side of the House. My experience, in dealing with the President of the Arbitration Court goes back, probably not as far as that of the member for Leederville, but at least to 1912 when the President of the Arbitration Court was a Judge of the Supreme Court and in his spare time he conducted Arbitration Court work. The knowledge possessed by that learned gentleman was very great as far as law is concerned, but in dealing with industrial arbitration work, it was infinitesimal.

In those days the unions were very youthful as far as Arbitration Court work was concerned because very few cases had been conducted. I can remember a particular case in those days which concerned costs. We had to prove our costs in those times and we submitted documents, through witnesses, to show the prices of goods purchased. We proved, by those figures, that the prices were really excessive and the only remarks we had from the bench—that is from the judge—were that he advised us to buy our goods in England and have them brought to Australia via Singapore. That was just pure nonsense. Just fancy a working man, on the basic wage having to purchase goods in England and bring them to Australia via Singapore! Those were the remarks of the learned judge. He did not know anything about Arbitration Court work at all.

In latter days, my next experience was before Mr. Justice Dwyer who was President of the Arbitration Court wholly and solely. His decisions whether good or bad, were based on facts. He made his decisions according to the viewpoints advanced either on behalf of the unions concerned or the employers. Because of his experience he had considerable knowledge of this type of work. I found that in those instances we received justice and got a reasonable award on every occasion. If it was possible to prove to him that we were in the right, he would award the decision in our favour. He would not advise us to get goods from England because he understood the position we were in. I realise that there is no appeal from a decision of the Arbitration Court, but I believe that it is possible to get better decisions from the Arbitration Court than through the Conciliation Court.

Those concerned with unions have found that the men are always anxious to have their claims heard and put before the court as soon as possible. If the men think they are entitled to better conditions they consider that their claims should be heard quickly. In the old days it took many months for an organisation to place its case before the court. It is not possible to obtain from the Conciliation Commissioner a decision which is 100 per cent. correct, because his decision may not be accepted by the president of the court. I realise that the decisions of the conciliation commissioner are subject to appeal, which is not so with the decisions of a president of the court. The decision of the President of the Arbitration Court is most important

from the viewpoint of a working man or a union. It is final and affects the home and kitchen life of thousands of people. When the president decides upon an award then the effects of that award extend right into the kitchen. His decision affects everybody, man, woman and child, whereas in the Criminal Court the decision affects one man and probably his family, whether the decision be good or bad. It might be, in that case, that the man shall be hanged. That affects one man but the decision of the President of the Arbitration Court affects thousands of people.

If the president is to have a dual position, it will cause unnecessary delay to unions having their cases placed before the court. As has been stated, there are many organisations which do not like industrial arbitration because there is too much hold-up and such a situation should be obviated if possible. I hope that if Mr. Justice Jackson remains appointed in a dual capacity, then his appointment to the Supreme Court will be an honorary one. He has sufficient work to do on Arbitration Court work alone. That will keep him 100 per cent. occupied. If it is the desire of this Government to make Mr. Justice Jackson a judge of the Supreme Court, then it should appoint somebody else to the position of full-time President of the Arbitration Court. If this is not done it will cause unnecessary delay and destroy the faith of workers in arbitration. I support the motion.

HON. A. H. PANTON (Leederville—in reply) [7.50]: I do not intend to take up much time in reply, because everyone has supported the motion except the Attorney General and the member for Pilbara, who accepted it with faint praise. The Attorney General, I am sure unthinkingly, kept on referring to what sort of a judge Mr. Justice Jackson was, and to his character and other personal attributes. I want to point out that at no stage in my speech did I refer to Mr. Justice Jackson in any way personally.

The Attorney General: I agree with you.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I said that I did not know Mr. Justice Jackson, and his success in the Arbitration Court can only be proved in course of time.

Mr. Fox: You will meet him later in another court.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: It would not be the first time. I do not agree with the member for Pilbara when he said that the bulk of the trade unions are in favour of the appointment. I have met a few trade union secretaries who have found fault with it, but many men, as the member for Boulder said, agree that a man should be a specialist in that work. The member for Pilbara also stated that in 1912-25 the Arbitration Court Bill was brought down by a Labour Government and provided for the present set-up, but that is not so. The 1912 legislation contained no such provision, because from that year to 1925, when President Dwyer was appointed, we had no appointed president except the man whom the Chief Justice agreed to send along. In 1925, when the Bill was introduced, it contained no such provision when it left this House. That proposal was inserted by another place.

Some of the members in the House at that time will remember that the managers sat in conference for 13½ hours on that Bill in an endeavour to reconcile their differences. It can therefore be realised that there were considerable differences of opinion between both Houses on many matters contained in that Bill. When it returned to this House, the stipulation that the president must have the status of a Supreme Court judge had been inserted and we had to accept that provision to save the Bill, because the previous one was full of technicalities and made it difficult for unions to approach the court. We were anxious to have the Bill agreed to and therefore accepted the provisions inserted by another place. It was not the wish of the then Labour Government, or any other Labour Government.

A suggestion made in relation to Mr. Justice Jackson that in course of time members of the Bar may appear in the Arbitration Court has been a bone of contention for many years, and no doubt a man trained in law would prefer to have lawyers as advocates on the floor of the court. Quite candidly, my experience, which is a pretty long one, is that the man who is associated with the industry itself over a number of years has a great deal more knowledge of his particular industry than any lawyer that is likely to appear in court. Lawyers are not trained for that sort of work, because the Arbitration Court is not a court of law but one which deals with questions of fact. A man

trained in law is surely gifted to sift evidence and give a decision on the facts placed before him. That is all he is asked to do.

I do not propose to labour the question further, but I trust it will work out all right. I have been a lifelong advocate of the Arbitration Court. My first experience of industrial matters was when I was about 12 years of age, living on bread and jam because my father was on strike.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Not on rabbits?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: No, strangely enough I have only taken to rabbits since I entered Parliament and they were too thick to bother about. I have learned that the idea of sitting on the master's doorstep starving to obtain better wages was too silly for words, and when Mr. Seddon introduced the Arbitration Court system in New Zealand, I was a keen advocate to have it introduced here and I am anxious to see it continued. It can only be broken down by the workers themselves losing faith in the system, and that will only happen if they lose faith in the president or if they cannot have their cases heard promptly by the court. I plead with the Attorney General to ensure that the President of the Arbitration Court will not be taken from that court more often than can be avoided.

The Attorney General: He will never be taken from it.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: That is so much nonsense, because the Attorney General, when speaking to this motion, said that the president was his own boss. I know that President Dunphy was particularly anxious to see this present set-up established, and in fact he recommended it. It is only natural and human that a man trained in the law, a man who has now reached the position of judge, will want to continue with the work of a judge in courts other than the Arbitration Court. I suggest that Mr. Justice Jackson would probably desire to perform judicial work other than that as President of the Arbitration Court, and I am not blaming him for that. I am blaming the policy of the Government. I will leave the motion at that. I have voiced my opinion and I do not propose to divide the House. All I wish is that the appointment turns out for the best.

Question put and negatived; the motion defeated.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

As to Constitution of State Transport Board.

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. F. Watts—Katanning) [7.58]: I ask leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The ACTING PREMIER: I have already stated on behalf of the Government, in this House, that following consideration of the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, the Government has no doubt that the temporary appointments for less than three years to the Transport Board were valid. It may be, however, that some section of the public may, through the views of the Opposition expressed by the member for North-East Fremantle last evening, be influenced to believe that the Government has in some way jeopardised the carrying out of the functions of the board. Neither I personally nor the Government accept that view, and we are fortified in that attitude and, may I say very strongly fortified, by the decision of the members of the Opposition when, in the year 1946, they, as the Government of this State, which included the member for North-East Fremantle himself, appointed Thomas Henry Bath and John Bearne Hawkins, then two of the three retiring members of the board, for a further period of six months.

I have here copies of the relevant papers which are to be found on pages 67, 69, 71, 72 and 73 of the Western Australian Transport Board File 1/34. They show that on the 4th February, 1946, Cabinet approved, subject to Thomas Henry Bath and John Bearne Hawkins being appointed for a period of six months only. But I cannot do better than read the subject-matter of some of the papers which follow. On the 7th February, 1946, a communication was sent to J. B. Hawkins and to T. H. Bath in similar terms, signed by the Minister for Railways, stating, inter alia—

> With reference to your service as a member of the Western Australian Transport Board, which service terminates on the 11th instant, it is the desire of the Government that you agree to continue your service on the Board for a further period of six months.

On the 8th February, 1946, Mr. J. B. Hawkins replied to the Hon. the Minister for Transport as follows:—

Dear Mr. Marshall,—In reply to your letter of February 7th, I concur in the terms thereof that appointment as member of the Transport Board for a further term will be for a period of six months from the 12th February, 1946, and I accept the appointment on that understanding.

A similar communication was received on the 8th February from Mr. T. H. Bath, but adding—

I may add that after I cease to be an official member of the Board, should you consider that at any time my advice and assistance will be of any service to you, you need have no diffidence in asking me.

Then follows a minute from the chairman of the Western Australian Transport Board addressed to the Hon. Mr. Marshall and dated the 8th February, 1946, as follows:—

Hereunder, I submit replies from the Hon. T. H. Bath, and Mr. J. B. Hawkins, concurring in the renewal of their membership of the Board for a period of six months as from 12th February, 1946.

This is succeeded by an extract from a Press statement in "The West Australian" of the 2nd August, 1946, which you will observe, Sir, is a bare six months later. It reads—

Mr. H. McL. MacNee has been appointed to the State Transport Board to represent rural and country districts. Lieutenant W. D. Wright has been appointed to the Board to represent city interests. The appointments were confirmed at a meeting of the Executive Council yesterday. They replace Messrs. T. H. Bath and J. B. Hawkins whose term of office recently expired.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What about reading the Executive Council minutes?

The ACTING PREMIER: These papers show, I think, that the present Opposition, then the Government, took action almost precisely similar to that taken by the present Government. It may, therefore, be safely assumed that the members of the then Government, including the member for North-East Fremantle, had no shadow of doubt that the proposal for temporary appointments which they had approved was a valid one.

Point of Order.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask you, Sir, whether the Acting Premier is in order in deliberately misrepresenting to this House a situation which he knows to be entirely different from the one he is presenting to the House.

Mr. Speaker: The Acting Premier is merely making a statement. The member for North-East Fremantle can raise the point of order later.

Debate Resumed.

The ACTING PREMIER: At this stage, I may say that I know of no misrepresentation.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What about the Executive Council minutes making the appointment? Where are they?

The ACTING PREMIER: Perhaps the hon. member will allow me to proceed. If the purpose and intent—and this is the real point I wish to make in dealing with this matter and with the speech of the member for North-East Fremantle last evening—of the State Transport Co-ordination Act, as alleged by the member for North-East Fremantle, is that members should be appointed for the whole period of three years so as to remove any possibility of political pressure, then the scheme adopted by the previous Government in 1946 is open to precisely the same objection raised against the present Government by the hon. member last evening. I think there is no gainsaying that, however one approaches this question. Their appointments lasted only six months; whether by agreement or by direction the result is precisely the same.

If the purpose and intent of the Act have been frustrated by a temporary appointment, then that frustration applies equally well to the other. Therefore, I say that in view of all these facts, the criticism of the Opposition, the allegations of deliberate flouting of the law and the imputations made in respect of the matter generally, amount to nothing more nor less than gross political impertinence.

Statement by Member for North-East Fremantle.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [8.5]: I also ask leave of the House to make a statement with regard to the matter the Acting Premier has been dealing with.

Leave granted.

Hon. J. T TONKIN: It is most remarkable that the Acting Premier should take advantage of this opportunity to make a

statement on this subject, when a fuller and wider opportunity is available to him and the members of his Government. I regret the absence of the ex-Minister for Railways, as he was the Minister directly concerned with the subject-matter of the statement of the Acting Premier. However, I happen to have some knowledge of what occurred on the occasion.

The facts are that because the then Government's advice was to the effect that it could not make temporary appointments and because it had plans in view which could not have been carried out had full appointments been made, it consulted with the members of the board, all of whom, I understand, did not desire appointments for the full term of three years. There was no difficulty about those members agreeing that a six months' appointment would be satisfactory to them. But the then Government did not appoint them for six months; it appointed them for three years, as the Acting Premier knows. That is why he has not the Executive Council minutes amongst the papers in his possession. The then Government appointed those members of the board for three years on the understanding that they would tender their resignations.

The Acting Premier: There are no resignations on the file; not a sign of them.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The appointment was made, as I was saying, on the understanding that those gentlemen would tender their resignations at the end of six months. Had they declined to do so, then, because of the terms of their appointment, they could have remained members for three years.

The Acting Premier: There is nothing on the file about resigning.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is a fact, despite what the Acting Premier is saying. Therefore, the difference—and it is a very wide difference—is that this Government has deliberately made temporary appointments which are subject to termination on 14 days' notice; whereas the previous Government made complete appointments for three years, as the Executive Council minutes will show. The appointments lasted only six months, but that was a matter entirely in the hands of the appointees. Had they declined to resign at the end of six months the Government could have done nothing about it.

The Acting Premier: Then why did the Government approve? There is nothing on the file to say that they would resign at the end of six months.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Because there was an understanding reached with the appointees, who had previously served a term.

The Acting Premier: There is no record of that on the file.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Had the arrangement not been suitable to those appointees, I have no doubt the Government would not have made any appointments at the time, but would have hastened on with its plans for a re-organisation of the board. For the Acting Premier to present to the House a portion only of the facts, when the full information was available to him, is in my view a very wrong step for a responsible Minister to take. The Acting Premier produced certain papers to this House, but you, Sir, must be impressed by the fact that he did not have among those papers the Executive Council minutes setting out the actual appointments and the terms upon which they were made. That is my answer to the Acting Premier.

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. F. Watts—Katanning) [8.9]: On a point of personal explanation—that will suffice, I think—I would say to the member for North-East Fremantle that I cannot make use of documents or extract information from documents which, so far as the file I have perused is concerned, do not exist. There are no resignations on the file from either Mr. Hawkins or Mr. Bath.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Is there an Executive Council minute?

The ACTING PREMIER: Yes. The Cabinet minute says, as I read, that they are to be approved provided they are to be appointed for six months only. They are written to and told that fact; and so far as my examination of the file goes, prior to the Cabinet minute there is no memorandum that they had been approached in regard to a six months' appointment. The recommendation of the Minister, so far as the file shows, was for a three years' appointment.

The Cabinet minute—and this is why I take exception to the remarks of the hon. member, who has imputed dishonesty to me in regard to the examination of the file—at the bottom makes the qualification that Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Bath be appointed for six months only, leaving Mr. Millen, the chairman of the board, to be elected for three years. In consequence, while I have no desire to question unnecessarily the hon. gentleman and rarely, if ever, do, may I submit to him and to this House that I am entitled to the same privilege and not to be told that what I have said is a deliberate untruth.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Will you table the files?

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Can anybody enter this debate, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: Any further debate must take place as a result of an Order of the Day. I cannot allow the matter to go any further now.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT. (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 20th July.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth) [8.12]: The object of this Bill is to amend a section of the Licensing Act which deals with the consumption of liquor on licensed premises by persons under the age of 21. The member for East Perth has told the House that the existing provisions are unduly harsh on those who, because of their avocation, either as licensees or employees of licensees, have to supply liquor on licensed premises.

The existing section provides that no licensee or servant or agent of a licensee shall sell, supply or give or permit or suffer to be sold, supplied or given any liquor in any quantity whatsoever either alone or mixed with water or any other liquid to any person apparently under the age of 21 for himself or for any other person. I think every member would agree that all reasonable precautions should be taken to ensure that no person under the age of 21 is supplied with alcoholic liquor. That is my view and the view of the Government. But I do consider that the draftsman responsible for this section of the Act did not give sufficient consideration to the language he used because he made the licensee and the agent or employee of the licensee an insurer that under no circumstances shall a person under 21 years of age consume liquor on licensed premises.

It must be remembered that a youth of 18 is entitled to go on to licensed premises and into a bar. Whether that is right or wrong, I am not prepared to say, but that is what the Act provides. He is not entitled to consume alcoholic liquor, but he is entitled to drink non-alcoholic liquor in the bar of an hotel with those who are consuming alcoholic liquor. But if by chance he picks up a glass that has not been served to him and which he is not intended to have and which does not belong to him in any way, then if the glass contains alcoholic liquor and he takes a mouthful of it, a technical offence has been committed and both the licensee and the barman can be charged.

Hon. E. Nalsen: That is the unfairness of that section.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes, because the section says that no licensee or servant or agent—and an employee is a servant—of the licensee shall permit or suffer any liquor to be given to a person under the age of 21 or apparent age of 21. If a bystander gives a youth under the age of 21 a glass of beer the licensee, who may have issued strict orders on the matter, and the barman, who may have been busy and had no idea of what was happening and no possibility of preventing it, could be brought up in the Police Court and dealt with under the law of the land.

I want every reasonable precaution to be taken to ensure that no liquor is supplied to any person under 21 years of age but I do not feel that we are entitled to be unjust to those whose livelihood compels them to be on licensed premises as servants of the licensee and who, in spite of having exercised every care, may find themselves in the position of being charged with an offence in a court of law. To that extent I agree with the proposed amendment of the Act.

There is another provision to the effect that any person who by falsely representing himself to be over 21 obtains or attempts to obtain liquor at any licensed premises commits an offence. So, any youth who

represents himself as being over the age of 21 years and obtains liquor, does commit an offence. But if he has not so represented himself—and it is very difficult to prove that he has—he has not committed an offence. That is a most unjustifiable position because, after all, who is the cause of offences of this nature? It is the person under the age of 21 who goes into a bar knowing that he is under age, and obtains liquor. If he does not actually represent himself as being over the age of 21 then he personally cannot be charged. The Bill seeks to amend that situation by providing that if he goes on to licensed premises and obtains and consumes alcoholic liquor, he commits an offence whether he has represented himself as being over age, or not. With that provision I agree. I therefore, although not prepared to agree to all the provisions of the Bill, shall support the second reading. In Committee I intend to resist some of the proposed amendments.

MR. McCULLOCH (Hannans) [8.21]: I support the Bill. In my opinion the amendment proposed is a small one—it is merely the substitution of the word "knowingly" for "apparently." I am sure we all agree that appearances are very deceptive, especially amongst females. For some time we have been trying to get the Act amended along the lines suggested by the member for East Perth. On the 11th March, 1948, I wrote to the Attorney General, but up to date I have had no reply. That was 17 months ago. With the permission of the member for Irwin-Moore, I shall read the letter I wrote—there is nothing disparaging in it—as follows:—

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, M.L.A.,
State Attorney General,
Crown Law Department,
Perth.

Dear Sir,

re: Proposed Amendment State Licensing Act.

I have been directed by the above organisation to communicate with you, and to respectfully request that the abovementioned Act be so amended whereby "persons under the age of 21 years accepting intoxicating liquor in or adjacent to licensed premises shall have committed an offence."

The reason for this suggested amendment is, that certain servants of Goldfields licensees have been charged and convicted of an offence for supplying to under-age persons, which, of course, is in order, and complies with Section 147 of the State Licensing Act. However, although Section 149 of the same Act reads as follows:—"Any person who, by falsely representing himself to be over the age of twenty-one years, obtains or attempts to obtain liquor at any licensed premises commits an offence" this latter section does not seem to make it mandatory that the under-age person (unless he falsely represents himself) who is the abettor, shall be punished.

If in your opinion, Sir, Section 149 is sufficient to charge an abettor as having committed an offence without evidence being required that he or she has "falsely represented themselves" then it is desirable that the police take the necessary action in future, because after all, we feel confident that very few servants of a licensee would commit an offence of this type if they had a fair chance of ascertaining a person's age. A further point arises, where a legitimate person purchases liquor at a public bar and conveys same to persons under age in some other part of licensed premises, it seems unjust that the bar tender should be held responsible for any offence committed thereby.

Trusting your Government will give the foregoing proposition their favourable consideration.

As already stated I did not receive a reply to that letter. All I got was an acknowledgment that it had been received, and that consideration would be given to it. Apparently consideration has not yet been given to it. There have been several convictions on the Goldfields. The first case occurred during the war. It concerned a young man in uniform who had been in the Middle East and was then under 21 years. The barmaid on that occasion was fined. The person under age was in the company of others in a crowded bar. Another person ordered the drinks. They were all served in the saloon bar. They were caught by Constables Lees and Rosich and taken to the court and fined. That was in 1944. In 1947 the licensee of the Inland City Hotel was prosecuted and fined because a boy could not say which attendant had served him. In this case his mate put the cash on the bar counter and gave the drink to the person who was some distance away. The bar was crowded at the time. In that case the licensee was caught by Constables Simms and Hazelby.

In January, 1948, at the Duke of Cornwall Hotel a barmaid was fined £5. There were three persons in the lounge bar, but

the barmaid could not have a clear view of the whole of the saloon bar lounge from the small bar from which drinks were served. One person walked up to the bar and ordered two beers and one squash. They were on their second round of drinks when caught by Hazelby and Simms. Another case occurred in January, 1948, at the Oriental Hotel. A barmaid was fined £5. Two persons came into the front bar of the hotel, and one ordered the drinks. As far as the barmaid knows, the person under age walked in and just commenced to drink the beer when Simms and Hazelby walked in and caught him. The licensee of the hotel was told that he was lucky in not being on the premises at the time. He was away conducting a booth at the Kalgoorlie oval where cycling sports were being held.

Also, in January, 1948, the proprietress of the Inland City Hotel said that a particular Saturday night was the worst night she had experienced. The young people had to be chased out of the bar and the hotel, but as they were put out of one door they gained admittance through another. The bar staffs dread rush periods as it is difficult enough to attend to everything else without having to question customers regarding their age. In a crowded bar, especially on a racecourse or a trotting ground, it is not possible for a barmaid or a barman to ascertain whether a person is under the age of 21. I have already mentioned the instance of a soldier in khaki. I do not think that too many members could see a boy of 18 years of age in civilian clothes and then in khaki, and be sure that it was the same person, unless they knew him. The barmaids and barmen have to stand quite a lot of abuse from all kinds of people, and the suggestion of the member for East Perth to increase the fine from £5 to £25 is a good one.

About three weeks ago in Kalgoorlie I was speaking to a barman who told me that a few days previously a youth ordered a pot of beer and was told he could not be served. A customer standing behind the youth said, "Don't stand there like a fool. Get someone who will serve you." Barmen and barmaids have to stand a lot of abuse and I think that they and the licensees should be protected. In the majority of cases where a conviction is obtained against a barmaid or barman those employees have no way of knowing that the youth concerned is under age. During the war when identity cards had to be carried, hotel staffs could ask for them to be produced, if there was any doubt about the age of a customer, but of course that cannot be done now.

It is well known that in several countries of the world liquor is allowed to be supplied to persons of 18 years of age. Even here, if a youth aged 18 joins the Army he is not refused a drink in the canteen, and if a lad is old enough at 18 to fight for his country, surely he is as much entitled to a drink as is a young man of 21 who may not have been in uniform. I would like the Minister to give consideration to a further amendment to reduce the age from 21 to 18 years. I am in favour of the suggested amendments and support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Hill in the Chair; Mr. Graham in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 147:

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move an amendment—

That Subclause (b) be struck out.

The subclause seeks to delete the word "apparently" which I think should remain. I feel that the offence should be constituted by the person concerned knowingly serving a person who is apparently under age. No-one, in the absence of a birth certificate, can know absolutely that a youth is under the age of 21.

Mr. GRAHAM: If the Minister persists with that amendment he will destroy the purpose of the clause. When introducing the measure I gave a number of illustrations of the impossibility of determining a person's age with any degree of certainty, particularly in the case of the weaker sex. Whilst I, as a conscientious barman, may consider that a girl is 25, the Minister, as a magistrate hearing the case, when she is paraded before him, may consider that she is 18 years of age.

The Attorney General: "Apparently".

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes. Therefore, if this amendment is agreed to, it will be a matter of hit or miss. It would make the law too loose and irresponsible, and somebody would be hurt in the process; that somebody would be a barmaid or barman. The purpose of the Bill is to throw the responsibility, to a far greater extent than at present, upon the youthful offender who is the root cause of the whole trouble; secondly, to make the adult who orders the drinks and passes them to a youth, assume responsibility and be liable to appear before the court; and thirdly, to overcome the unfairness existing at present where conscientious, hard-working servants must accept the responsibility. This is something that has remained part of the statutes far too long. When a person is in working clothes and his face is covered with dirt and grime from his employment, his age looks totally different from what it does when he is clean and well dressed and appearing before a magistrate.

There are many thousands of immigrants in this country at present, and it is difficult to assess, within many years, the ages of those people. Let us put the blame and responsibility and rigor of the law upon those responsible for the commission of the offence. I was informed by the union that if any one of its members transgressed the Act—as I hope this Bill will become when Parliament has finished with it—the union would not be opposed to severe increases of the penalties that may be placed in the Act. The union feels that it is grossly unfair that its members should have marks placed against their names for having offended against a statute because of faulty legislation. I do not know how any injustice can be done if the Attorney General allows the Bill to remain as it is, so far as this subclause is concerned. To safeguard the position, provisions have been inserted in the Bill. I hope that members on both sides have given this entirely non-party measure full and proper consideration and that they will agree with the viewpoint I have submitted.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for East Perth is drawing a red herring across the trail. Is not the crux of the matter that anyone who looks, or is apparently, under the age of 21 should not be served? If someone looks under the age of 21 years, then he should not be served. Surely we are not going to say that a barman is entitled to serve anyone who looks "apparently" under the age of 21, without any responsibility. The whole thing depends on that.

Mr. RODOREDA: My idea of the crux of the situation is not that a person looks under 21. The law is designed to stop anyone who is actually under 21; not who looks as if he may be under 21. We all know plenty of people who look as if they are 21 but are actually not so old. We cannot decide this matter on the age that a person looks. We must recognise the facts. We are designing the law to prevent people who are actually under the age of 21 from having a drink; not those who look as if they are under 21. If the case comes to court, the magistrate can decide by requesting production of a birth certificate or some other means of proving the age.

The Attorney General: And that the man knew it.

Mr. RODOREDA: I am not dealing with that point at all. We are discussing the word "apparently." If we confine ourselves to that fact, that is all we have to do.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That would put the prosecution in an impossible position. How could the prosecution possibly prove that a barman knew a person was under 21 years of age? He could not prove it, and that is why the word "apparently" must be included. The barman could only prove that he knew it if the man told him that he was under 21. Surely we all agree that people under that age should not be served?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What would be the position if a person apparently was not under the age of 21 but was in fact over?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He is entitled to have liquor under one section read in conjunction with another. There is no difficulty there. The whole thing rests on the question of proof. One could not prove that a barman knew a person was under 21.

Mr. GRAHAM: I do not know whether the Attorney General, just because he has put something up, is determined to stand by it and will not listen to arguments in rebuttal. I would point out to him that Section 149 which deals with the offender himself makes no mention of "apparently under the age of 21." The Act still pro-

vides, with the amendments, that the person who is the root of the trouble has to be proved to be under 21 before he can be prosecuted. Therefore, someone will be prosecuted on the say so of another individual as to whether he is under 21 or over. Such an attitude is indefensible and I hope the Committee agrees with me.

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

Ayes	16
Noes	27
Majority against	11

AYES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Ackland	Mr. North
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Seward
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thorn
Sir N. Keenan.	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Wild
Mr. Murray	Mr. Brand
	(*Teller.*)

NOES.

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Oliver
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Fox	Mr. Read
Mr. Graham	Mr. Reynolds
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Triat
Mr. May	Mr. Wise
Mr. McCulloch	Mr. Yates
Mr. Naider	Mr. Brady
Mr. Needham	(*Teller.*)

Amendment thus negatived.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (c) the figure and word "(2) and" be struck out.

Assuming that a youth is apparently under the age of 21 and is supplied with liquor, and the licensee is up on a charge of supplying it. If the youth comes from England or elsewhere and no birth certificate can be produced by the police then it is impossible to prove the conviction. The youth would not have to go into the witness box and consequently there would be no means of proving his age. There would be no hardship, because if the youth could not produce his birth certificate he would merely have to go into the box and swear that he was over the age of 21 years. If he is not to be obliged to do that, then the whole provision will be useless.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Attorney General was good enough to discuss this point with me some time ago and I have since given it much consideration. I do not know where else in our statutes the word "apparently" obtrudes itself. We have an age limit for persons driving vehicles and there is an age restriction for nominating for the Legislative Council. In my view, Subsection (1), with which we have already dealt, qualifies this subsection, which merely provides that if a person is charged with the offence of serving a youth apparently under the age of 21 years, it is for the court to determine whether the culprit who has made someone else an offender is under or over the age of 21 years.

The Attorney General: But this has nothing to do with the offence; it simply means that the youth shall be obliged to deny that he is under age.

Mr. GRAHAM: There would be no more difficulty in proving his age than there would be in proving the age of a child leaving school or starting work in a factory.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am sure the member for East Perth had no intention of placing a false view of the matter before the Committee, but he rather deceived me. The word "apparently" is used in the Factories and Shops Act. If a youth is served who is apparently under the age of 21 years, he should be expected to state on oath that he is over that age. Surely that is not unreasonable. Minors should be protected from drinking in hotels. They should be protected in every way possible so long as justice is done. We should not wipe out the effectiveness of this provision by putting the prosecution in the position where it cannot prove anything. If a youth looks under the age of 21 and someone is charged with having served him, it should be obligatory upon the youth to go into the box and say that he is over that age. If I suggested that similar provisions in the Factories and Shops Act relating to the employment of persons apparently of an Asiatic race or of a certain age should be deleted the hon. member would at once object.

Mr. Fox: That is a very poor analogy.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Factories and Shops Act provides that "when a person employed is, in the opinion of the court, apparently of the age alleged by the complainant, it shall lie on the defendant to prove that such person is not of that

age.'' I am sure the hon. member would not suggest that that should be deleted. I contend that both offences are of equal seriousness, and where the people concerned in either case are apparently under age they should have to go into the witness box and prove that they are of the qualified age. I hope the Committee will agree to the amendment.

Mr. GRAHAM: This section has nothing whatever to do with the conviction of youths for attempting to secure liquor. Section 149 deals with the taking of action against minors who attempt to secure liquor. Subsections (1) and (2) of Section 147 are concerned with the manner in which licensees and their servants shall be apprehended and a case taken against them.

The Attorney General: So does the similar section in the Factories and Shops Act.

Mr. GRAHAM: Let us deal with this Act.

The Attorney General: It is exactly the same.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is not. I do not mind the Attorney General tightening up the provision as far as he likes for the purpose of taking action against the youthful offenders; but this section has nothing to do with minors but concerns the establishing of a case against the barman and the licensee. We have that word ''appears'' which simply means that the court shall guess; and on the court's guess as to the individual's age, a case can be established not against the lad but against other individuals. If the Attorney General likes, he can submit an amendment, with my approval, to tighten up Section 149, when we come to that, so that not only will a lad have to be over the age of 21 but if he is apparently under the age of 21 he can be liable for an offence. Let the Minister deal with that in the proper place. But this places the responsibility upon somebody who has not committed an offence; or if he has, is about the third one in line. If the youth had never come into the hotel there would not have been any argument. This section has nothing to do with the obtaining of a conviction against the youth himself.

The Attorney General: You think the similar provision should be deleted from the Factories and Shops Act?

Mr. GRAHAM: We will deal with that Act some other night. At present I am battling my hardest with the Licensing Act. It is a matter of who will decide. Subsection (2) says that the court shall be vested with authority to have a guess.

The Attorney General: Nothing of the sort! It is a question of what the boy says when he gets into the box.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am sure members will agree that if it is a matter of deciding age by appearance, it is a matter of guesswork, because half a dozen people would probably guess half a dozen different ages. I hope the Committee will reject the amendment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Under the Factories and Shops Act when an inspector finds someone employed who is not of the prescribed age it lies with the employer to prove that the employee is of that required age. This provision is exactly the same. When anyone has been served with liquor who is apparently under 21, it lies on the defendants to prove he is over that age. That simply means that the youth in question has to go into the box and say "I am over the age," and that is the end of it. If he is not obliged to do so, the offence cannot be proved. It is difficult to prove an offence under the Factories and Shops Act and that is why the provision is included in that measure. It is a question of requiring the person who actually knows the correct answer to get up and give it. How could it be proved that a boy who had come from London and had obtained employment was under age? It could not be done so there would be no offence. In the same way, if a youth under the age of 21 is served, his age cannot be proved unless he is obliged to go into the witness box. I hope the Committee will agree to the amendment.

Mr. FOX: There is no analogy with the Factories and Shops Act. I never heard such a ridiculous case put up by a man with a legal training. In 99 per cent. of cases boys who go to a factory or a shop have to produce their birth certificates. How is a barman to tell the age of a boy? In a factory the employer would have ample opportunity to find out a lad's age.

The Attorney General: Why use the word "apparently"?

Mr. FOX: That gives the inspector the right to say that the boy is under the prescribed age. The employer would have the birth certificate. Just try to gauge the age of some of the flappers that go into hotels! Some might be 30, but look 16. Some young fellows of 22 or 23 might be taken for 18 or 19. It is an impossible position for the licensed victuallers.

The Attorney General: They do not come into it.

Mr. FOX: I hope the Committee will stick to the member for East Perth because he has put up a reasonable proposition.

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

Ayes	20
Noes	21
Majority against ..	1

AYES.	
Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Bovell	Mr. North
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Seward
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hall	Mr. Watts
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Wild
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Yates
Mr. Murray	Mr. Brand (*Teller.*)

NOES.	
Mr. Brady	Mr. Oliver
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Fox	Mr. Read
Mr. Graham	Mr. Reynolds
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May	Mr. Triat
Mr. McCulloch	Mr. Wise
Mr. Needham	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Nulsen	(*Teller.*)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. GRAHAM: At the moment it is no offence for an adult to give liquor to a person under the age of 21 in an hotel, although it is to do it at some place adjacent to an hotel or in a public highway. To overcome this ridiculous state of affairs, I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of proposed new Subsection (2) the words "other than a licensee or servant or agent of a licensee" be struck out.

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

Clause 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—PIG INDUSTRY COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

MR. NALDER (Wagin) [9.29] in moving the second reading said: I point out that this amending Bill is designed to have the parent Act carried out with more efficiency, and without undue inconvenience to those concerned in the pig industry. The original measure was introduced in 1942 by the present Leader of the Opposition who was then Minister for Agriculture. It was introduced because of the outbreak of swine fever in this State. It is not necessary for me to elaborate on the position that existed at that time, because members are well aware of it, following the discussion that took place in this House last week. There was a definite need for a compensation fund at that time, in order to compensate those who had lost pigs as a result of swine fever. The fund was brought into being by deducting a small amount from the account sales of the vendors of pigs. In the first place, it was 3d. in the £1, but that was later reduced to 2d., and is now 1d. in the £1. For instance, if a vendor sold three pigs, which brought £15, 1d. in the £1 would be deducted from the account sales.

This amending Bill has nothing to do with the parent Act as far as the fund is concerned, or the deducting of the necessary amount from the account sales, but deals with the method of administering the Act. One of the prime requisites of any measure introduced in this House is to secure the maximum efficiency of administration, combined with the minimum effort or inconvenience. Under the existing Act, it is incumbent upon a vendor or his representative to deduct from the account sales the amount decided upon from time to time by the Minister for Agriculture or his officers. That amount is taken off in stamps and is affixed to the invoice of the purchaser. The Act requires that when the account is sent out to the purchaser it has to be sent by registered letter. That means that the receiver of the letter has to go to the post office and sign for it, which is inconvenient and in this case unnecessary. The letter contains only the account for pigs purchased.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Which the purchaser does not want.

Mr. NALDER: He most certainly must be prepared to pay for the pigs he has purchased. The purpose of the Bill is to delete from that provision of the Act the word "registered." As an indication of the feeling of pig-breeders and their representatives on this matter I will read certain correspondence that I have received. A letter from the Farmers' Union of W.A., dated the 28th July, reads as follows:—

Pig Industry Compensation Act.

It is understood that you intend moving in the House to have the word "registered" deleted from the above Act in regard to the statement referred to in Section 14, which will enable the said statement, if transmitted by post, to be sent by ordinary mail. We desire to express our support of this move as we consider that the transmission of the statement by registered post is unnecessary and inconvenient.

Another letter, from Westralian Farmers Co-operative Ltd., dated the 25th July, reads—

We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 7th July, and confirm our telephonic conversation in which we stated our agreement to your suggested amendment to the Pig Compensation Act. We agree that it is unnecessary for the invoices to which stamps are attached to be sent by registered letter, causing as it does unnecessary inconvenience both to the broker and the buyer.

A letter from Dalgety & Co., dated the 12th July, reads—

We thank you for your letter of the 7th instant advising your intention to move for the deletion of the word "registered" from the Pig Compensation Act. We are in full accord with this as we have found in the past that apart from inconvenience and expense to ourselves, a good deal of ill-feeling has been caused among clients, who regard the receipt of a registered account as a demand for payment and a reflection on their financial stability.

A letter from Goldsbrough Mort & Co. Ltd., dated the 13th July, states—

In reply to your letter of the 7th July we are pleased to note that you propose to move that the word "registered" be deleted from the Pig Compensation Act. We will be very pleased to hear that you have been successful in your endeavour.

Elder Smith & Co. Ltd., in a letter dated the 11th July, state—

Pig Industry Compensation Act,
No. 38 of 1942.

We have to acknowledge your letter of the 7th July, in which you inform us that during the present session of Parliament you propose to move for the deletion of the word "registered" from Part 14C. of the above Act. The writer would like to discuss this with you at first hand and if you will be good enough to telephone he would be happy to make an appointment to interview you at your convenience at Parliament House.

I have been in touch with two of the bacon curers in this State, Mr. Watson, of Watson's Supplies Stores, Spearwood, and Mr. Johnson, of Messrs. W. O. Johnson & Sons. They are in complete agreement with this amendment. A similar case was before the House last session when the cattle industry compensation legislation was being considered, and the House agreed to the deletion of the word "registered." I believe the word is unnecessary in this Act and is causing considerable inconvenience. I feel sure the House will agree to its deletion. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

MOTION—HOUSING.

As to Suspension of Permits for Business Premises.

Debate resumed from the 27th July on the following motion by Mr. Brady:—

That owing to the continuous increase in applications for tenancy homes and building permits, as disclosed by the Minister for Housing in "Hansard" on Thursday, the 23rd June, and the failure of the State Housing Commission to substantially reduce the existing applications, this House considers immediate steps should be taken to stop further building permits being issued to business enterprises until the present housing crisis has been overtaken.

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING (Hon. R. R. McDonald—West Perth) [9.38]: The intention of the member for Guildford-Midland in moving this motion was to seek from the House an expression of opinion that, in view of the difficulties regarding material supplies for building, there should be at present at all events a limitation of permits for industrial and commercial building. With that general objective I am in sympathy. In the past the policy of the Housing Commission has been to endeavour to maintain some balance between the different classes of building, residental, industrial and commercial, and governmental building of schools, hospitals and other constructions falling within the general description of public works.

I think it will be agreed that that policy was the right one. It meant that we were taking care of the industrial expansion of the State in particular, the opportunity of acquiring new industries, and the provision of employment opportunities for the people of the State and particularly the young people of the State who would be coming on in the future. In fact the complaint has been voiced to the Government, and the Housing Commission, that the policy of the Commission has been too restrictive on industrial buildings in particular. It has been alleged that by a restrictive policy on industrial building the truest interests of the State, on a long-term basis, were not being as fully conserved as would be the case if there were greater opportunity for industries to establish themselves here, and for those already in the State to expand to a larger production and larger employment.

But the Commission has felt that housing is essentially the No. 1 priority and there should be very definite limitations on the volume of building material, and building labour, which should be diverted from housing into construction for industrial and commercial purposes. Much construction that we see around us—although there may be some questions raised with regard to specific cases and their justification—will be found on examination to be needed for the manufacture, assembly or warehousing of essential appliances, machinery and other goods required for the economy of the State, and in some cases for the reception and distribution of imported goods. For example there are tractors, earth-moving machinery and agricultural machinery which are essential for the State's purposes.

Reverting to the more particular question raised by the motion! Almost immediately after the coal strike commenced and having in view the interruption to building and building materials which would ensue from the industrial stoppage, if it should continue for any length of time, the Commission determined a certain policy. All permits for industrial and commercial purposes which had been approved, but not issued, would be suspended for three months and the position would be reviewed at the end of that time. All other applications for permits for industrial or commercial purposes would be suspended for six months—which means until the beginning of next year. At the end of the periods mentioned the Commission intends to review the position of those permits that have been approved, although not issued, and those not approved but for which applications have been received for the building of industrial or commercial projects.

The idea is to review the position to determine whether any longer period of suspension is necessary in the interests of the housing programme of the State. The suspension of the issue of permits in the way I have mentioned is subject to certain reservations. The member for Guildford-Midland will agree with me that a complete stoppage of permits for industrial or commercial purposes would not be practicable. In the first place the Commission will proceed to grant permits for industrial establishments where such establishments will be worthwhile contributors of building materials. Any new factory that will create or produce bricks, cement, asbestos sheeting, tiles or any other building materials of which we are in need, is worthy of consideration. It would be obviously wise and proper to grant a building permit for the erection of such a structure

Then again it happens from time to time that some industrial or commercial building is needed in the interests of the safety of the workmen employed. It may be that conditions have arisen and the structure is unsafe to those who work in it. In such a case the Commission would, of course, feel it necessary to safeguard the lives of the workers by granting any necessary permit to do as much work as was requisite to avert that danger. So it might apply in any special case where a permit might be justifiable but in general the principle is, as I think the hon. member intended, that there should be a curtailment of the issue of permits for industrial and commercial buildings until such time as the dislocation of supplies, which we have recently experienced, is sufficiently restored to enable some more lenient view to be taken of opportunities for industrial and commercial buildings.

The hon. member made reference to the hutments at Bushmead and he inquired as to whether they might have been, or could be, used for housing purposes. The Housing

Commission did in fact manage to acquire two hutments from the Bushmead encampment. The Commission would have taken more if that had been possible. Those huts were transferred to Wembley, have been converted to flats, and are now occupied. The Commonwealth Postal Department, which controlled the huts, informed the Commission that the buildings are essential for the requirements of that department.

The Commission did suggest that until the remaining hutments at Bushmead were used by the Postal Department they might be leased to the Housing Commission for the Commission's purposes. The Postal Department has informed the Commission that its need of these remaining hutments is immediate and they are unable to part with possession of them for housing purposes. So the Commission apparently has done what it could but the Federal Department—I am not saying in any way improperly—has felt that the remaining huts had to be reserved for its own urgent requirements to enable it to carry out its service to the community.

I propose to deal with the housing position generally when speaking on the Estimates, and I hope to be able to say something about the instances which have been concerning the member for Guildford-Midland and other members and the Commission itself; that is, in particular, where evictions have become an urgent and immediate matter, the Commission will try to afford shelters to families who otherwise would be in extremely difficult circumstances. During the debate on the Estimates I shall look forward to dealing with the aspects of that matter which were raised in general terms and also certain specific cases mentioned by the member for Guildford-Midland.

The motion is for the House to express an opinion that the Housing Commission should limit the issue of permits to business enterprises and industrial establishments for the time being, and I am in agreement with it. I therefore do not propose to refer to the wording of the motion in detail except as to noting the intention to which I refer and the purposes which the hon. member had in his mind. The motion says that in the opinion of the House the issue of permits to business enterprises should cease. For the reasons I have mentioned that would be impracticable and undesirable, because there are certain cases where I think it is clear the Commission virtually would be compelled to recognise the need to issue a permit for industrial and commercial building, or where for example the issue of such a permit may mean the production of building materials by the occupant of the premises or for some similar reason.

I therefore propose to ask the hon. member to accept an amendment to delete the word "stop" which appears in the tenth line of Order of the Day No. 5 with the intention of inserting the word "curtail" in lieu. The motion would then read "This House considers immediate steps should be taken to curtail further building permits being issued to business enterprises until the present housing crisis has been overtaken." I hope the hon. member will accept that amendment because I assure him that action has been taken by the Commission to this effect since the motion was moved on the 27th of last month, and he can be certain that the Housing Commission will watch with the utmost care the issue of permits for business premises in order to maintain the maximum production of materials for the housing programme. I therefore move—

That the motion be amended by striking out the word "stop" in line 10 and inserting the word "curtail" in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland—in reply) [9.55]: At the outset I wish to remove any false impression that I may have conveyed to members when I moved this motion and when I stated that all the materials put into the construction of the building by Westralian Farmers at Bayswater were new. Since making further inquiries I have ascertained that approximately 80 per cent. of the materials used were secondhand and only 20 per cent. were new. In principle buildings of that nature could be curtailed, but to avoid my remarks relating to the building by Westralian Farmers being misrepresented I desire to make that correction. In another place on the same evening when this matter was discussed a member mentioned that to his knowledge there were millions of pounds available for building in the metropolitan area. In fact,

he stated that he had £100,000 himself that could be immèdiately used to erect buildings if the Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment (Continuance) Bill were thrown out.

I hope the Minister will keep this in mind when the motion is implemented, and will ensure that with all this money immediately lying idle for building operations in the metropolitan area there will be no possibility of permits being issued for their construction. I want to say in all sincerity that numerous cases have come to my knowledge where people have reduced their desired number of squares from 12 down to 6 and 7 in the hope of securing an early permit and, despite the fact that last year they were assured they would receive their permits in November and December, they still have not received them. In view of that the Minister can realise the urgency of the matter and I hope the motion, as amended, will be passed. I have no objection to the amendment because I realise that certain buildings must be erected to ensure a continuance of building materials both for housing and primary production.

Question put and passed; the motion, as amended, agreed to.

House adjourned at 9.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 25th August, 1949.

CONTENTS.

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

QUESTIONS.

KIMBERLEY REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

As to Meetings and Resolutions.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY asked the Acting Premier:

(1) How many meetings have been held by the Kimberley Regional Committee since its appointment?

(2) How many resolutions were forwarded for consideration?

(3) How many resolutions have been given effect to?

(4) Will he lay on the Table of the House a copy of all resolutions forwarded for the Government's consideration?