

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 8th December, 1954.

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

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

(a) As to Women Teachers' Long Service Increments.

Mr. HUTCHINSON asked the Minister for Education:

Further to the answer given to me on the 27th July, 1954, regarding women teachers' long service increments, in which I was told that administrative action was commenced on the 20th July to ensure that women teachers suffered no reduction of salaries, will he state whether—

(a) any teacher since that date has suffered a reduction under the regulation gazetted on the 11th June;

(b) all women teachers, whose salaries had been reduced by virtue of the withdrawal of their increments, have since been refunded those reductions?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) The regulation gazetted on the 11th June has been superseded by one gazetted on the 10th September, which provides that the full difference in salary will be paid.

(b) Yes.

(b) As to Teachers' Boarding Allowances.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has any action been taken to increase the boarding allowances to teachers under Regulation 47b, as desired by this House in the resolution passed early this session?

(2) If action has been taken, what changes have been made?

(3) If no action has yet been taken, is it proposed to take any in the near future and, if so, can he forecast what the changes will be?

(4) If it is proposed to do nothing, will he explain why the resolution is to be ignored?

The MINISTER replied:

This matter is receiving consideration.

(c) As to Erection of School, Roleystone.

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Education:

In view of his acquiescence in a question on the 24th November, relative to a new school site at Roleystone, that a decision has been pending for over two years, will he state—

- (1) The date on which the Public Works Department will make a decision?
- (2) If a decision is reached this financial year, when will a commencement be made with the erection of the school?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A site has been selected and it is now in process of acquisition.

(2) Work will be commenced as soon as possible after the site aspect is finalised.

(d) As to Additional Classrooms, Carnarvon High School.

Mr. NORTON (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Were any tenders received for the building of additional classrooms at the Carnarvon Junior High School?

(2) If so, has a contract been let?

(3) When is it anticipated that work will commence?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The contract is in course of preparation.

(3) It is expected that work will commence early in the New Year.

GUILDFORD ROAD.*As to Rehabilitation.*

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Works:

When will the rehabilitation of the sections of Guildford-rd. from Ninth Avenue to Grosvenor-rd. and Garrett-rd. to Slade-st. be—

(a) commenced;

(b) completed?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) It is expected to commence the drainage associated with this work in January, to be followed by the road construction in February, 1955.

(b) It is planned that this work will be carried out and completed during the summer of 1955.

NARROWS BRIDGE.*(a) As to Competitive Designs.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the aesthetic importance of the proposed Narrows bridge to the City of Perth, will he call for competitive designs on a world-wide basis?

The MINISTER replied:

The Main Roads Department proposes to call, on a world-wide basis, for competitive designs, accompanied by tenders.

(b) As to Calling of Tenders.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Although, in answer to previous questions, he has advised that consideration would be given to the matter of calling tenders for the construction of the Narrows bridge, is it the intention of the Government to call tenders?

(2) Have any of the international contracting firms, now about to finish work at Kwinana, made inquiries regarding this project?

(3) Is it reasonable to assume that such firms would be able to cut the cost of building the Narrows bridge if a decision was made before their departure from Western Australia?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) The department is aware of the advantages which might be derived by being able to utilise the well-equipped construction forces already in the State. Unfortunately, however, it would be impossible to obtain the necessary basic site information and prepare detailed plans before international contracting firms have completed their assignments at Kwinana.

GNOWANGERUP HOSPITAL.*As to Addition of Nursery.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Has departmental approval been given for the addition of a nursery at the Gnowangerup hospital?

(2) If so, when is it likely that the work can be put in hand?

(3) Will he do everything possible to ensure an early start with this improvement?

The MINISTER replied:

Tenders will be called early next year for general repairs and renovations. This tender will include provision for nursery accommodation.

MINING.

As to Miners with Silicosis, etc.

Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What are the numbers of miners who have been—

(a) notified as having silicosis early;

(b) notified as having silicosis advanced?

(2) How many have been prohibited from working in mines because they have been discovered to be suffering from—

(a) tuberculosis;

(b) tuberculosis with silicosis, for each of the past five years?

The MINISTER replied:

						New Cases
						1949. 1950. 1951. 1952. 1953. 1954.
						to date.
(1)	(a)	263	283	261	242	299 151
	(b)	51	55	29	35	32 22
(2)	(a)	7	8	4	7	2 6
	(b)	6	3	6	2	2 6

MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT.

As to Introduction of Amendments.

Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Has consideration been given to the proposed amendments to the Mine Workers' Relief Act which were submitted to him by the Australian Workers' Union earlier this year?

(2) Is it his intention to introduce amendments to this Act on the lines suggested during the next session of Parliament?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The suggested amendments in the union's letter of the 11th August last are of far-reaching character and require close consideration. The views of the Mine Workers' Relief Board, which comprises equal representation of both workers and employers, have been requested and are awaited.

(2) It is hoped to introduce an amending Bill next session to provide such alterations as are approved.

DRAINAGE.

(a) As to Costs in Assessing Rates.

Mr. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What costs are taken into consideration when the drainage rate is assessed?

(2) Which of these costs is the cause of the need to increase these rates?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Only normal annual operating costs are taken into consideration when drainage rates are being assessed.

(2) The increase in rates was the result of normal annual operating costs exceeding income by a large amount. No one particular item of cost caused the need to increase rates. The increase will not provide sufficient revenue to cover the deficiency.

(b) As to Survey in Kenwick District.

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Has the survey of drainage in the Kenwick district of the Gosnells Road Board been completed?

(2) If "Yes" is the answer to No. (1), when can the report be made available to the Gosnells Road Board.

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) About four months hence.

(c) As to Cost to South-West Settlers.

Mr. BOVELL (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he aware that drainage in the lower South-West was inaugurated to allow the group settlement scheme to be implemented and that at that time the settlers were assured that there would be no financial charge on them to maintain the scheme?

(2) Will he give an assurance that no further charges will be implemented without consultation with the settlers concerned, as this charge is becoming unbearable and a financial strain on the resources of primary producers?

The MINISTER replied:

The answer to both questions is "No."

(d) As to Amount of Rates Received.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What was the total amount of rates received last financial year from the drainage districts rated under the Drainage of Land Act?

(2) What will be the additional amount obtained as the result of the 25 per cent. increase to be imposed for this financial year?

(3) Is it proposed to rate any additional districts this financial year?

(4) If so, what districts will be affected?

(5) Does the Government not consider that the heavy irrigation and drainage rates now imposed, and which mainly affect those engaged in wholemilk production, impose a heavy burden on those producers?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The rates levied for last financial year totalled £20,063.

(2) It is estimated to obtain an additional £5,000.

(3) No.

(4) Answered by No. (3).

(5) The revenue will still fall far short of the expenditure, and to that extent the Government is sharing the burden. In fixing the rate for the current year, due consideration was given to the ratepayers' ability to meet the charge and also to the undoubted benefits which a drainage scheme confers.

RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Loss of Station Master, Kenwick.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it correct that Kenwick is to cease having a station master as from the end of this year?

(2) If "Yes" is the answer to No. (1), where will Kenwick residents then be able to deposit and receive parcels?

(3) Who will issue tickets at the Kenwick railway station and for what period will they be made available?

(4) Who will do the cleaning of the railway station after the 31st December?

(5) What financial saving, if any, will be effected by the decision to dispense with the services of a full-time station master?

(6) Will there not be a consequential diminution of the railway service offered to the public of Kenwick under any new arrangement?

(7) Are any other stations on the Perth-Armadale route also to lose their permanent station masters? If so, where and on what date will this service be terminated?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The parcels traffic at Kenwick is inconsiderable. For the month of October last, only four parcels were despatched and fourteen parcels received.

(3) Ticket porter at Kenwick from 6.20 a.m. to 9.20 a.m. daily, thereafter on trains.

(4) A porter from Perth station for one hour daily as at present.

(5) Approximately £570 per annum.

(6) Not to any extent.

(7) Victoria Park as from the 1st January, 1955.

(b) *As to Provision of Stopping-place, Stokely.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Who recommended the provision of a stopping-place at Stokely?

(2) Was the road board consulted before a decision was made?

(3) Why was the name "Stokely" chosen for this site?

(4) Approximately how many residents is it expected that this new station will serve?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A committee of railway officials.

(2) No.

(3) The name of "Stokely" was suggested by two residents of the area and forms a link with Sheriff James Roe who pioneered Stoke Farm in the district in the early eighties. The name met with the approval of the State Nomenclature Committee.

(4) An approximate figure is not readily obtainable, due to the rather scattered nature of housing in the locality, but during the first week of operation 227 tickets were sold to Stokely passengers.

SWAN RIVER.

(a) *As to Eliminating Shallows North of Maylands.*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Works:

Will he have examined the possibility of eliminating the shallows in the river north of Maylands to allow of tidal flow to reduce existing pollution, now precluding schoolchildren from taking swimming lessons at Guildford?

The MINISTER replied:

The matter will be examined, but the department is of the opinion that the elimination of shallows would have little effect on tidal flow at Guildford.

(b) *As to Pollution and Remedial Action.*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it considered that the present state of the Swan River is likely to continue?

(2) Has the Health Department any proposals to place before the Public Works Department to lessen pollution, thus enabling schoolchildren to swim in the upper reaches of the river?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) There will be temporary variations in limited areas from time to time, due largely to natural causes. The high standard of the river will be maintained.

(2) The upper reaches are not ideal swimming places because they have little tidal change, and inevitably receive surface drainage from agricultural, industrial and residential areas. Further than recommending that they should not be used for organised school swimming classes, the Health Department has not thought it necessary to restrict the use of swimming pools in the upper reaches. Proposals put to the Public Works Department for that area have mainly been concerned with the progress of deep sewerage.

SWIMMING CLASSES.

As to Number of Children Attending, Como.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Education:

(1) How many children from the following schools are attending swimming classes at Como:—

- (a) Bellevue;
- (b) Midland Junction;
- (c) Guildford;
- (d) Bassendean;
- (e) Eden Hill?

(2) If the answer is "nil," what are the reasons?

(3) Will the difficulties be overcome?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) None.

(2) Cost of transport to Como is considered to be too high. Bassendean school endeavoured to arrange transport but abandoned the idea because of costs.

(3) Unless improvement in conditions of the river in the Midland-Guildford area are reported by the health authorities, or unless parents are prepared to pay the necessary fares to Como, the difficulties will not be overcome.

WATER RATES.

(a) As to Income and Expenditure, Surplus or Deficiency.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What is the anticipated surplus or deficiency of income over expenditure in respect of collection of—

- (a) water rates;
- (b) sewerage rates;
- (c) drainage rates

for the year ending June, 1954-55, as against the year 1953-54?

(2) If a surplus is evident, will he consider reverting to the old rates for the metropolitan area, or complying with the Government's election promise of closing the gap between metropolitan and country rating?

The MINISTER replied:

The figures are as follows:

	1953-54	1954-55
	Surplus	Estimated Surplus
	£	£
(a) Water	22,056	6,000
(b) Sewerage	22,870	31,000
(c) Drainage	20,064	22,000

(2) Prudent administration avoids as far as possible fluctuating rates, and this objective cannot be achieved if alterations are effected solely because of the financial

results of the previous year in the way suggested by the hon. member. Rates are determined in March-April of each year in the light of anticipated financial results for the ensuing year, and the Government will endeavour to keep rates and charges at such minimum level as is not inconsistent with its policy of sound finance.

COAL.

As to Press Statement re. Departmental Information.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Did he see the Press statement in the "Daily News" of Thursday, the 2nd December, 1954, which reported that the chairman of the Coal Industry Tribunal (Mr. W. S. Wallwork) said that on certain aspects relating to coal costs the State Electricity Commission "did not have a clue." And also that he said—

Here we have two undertakings, the S.E.C. and the railways, which are supposed to be safeguarding public money by paying no more for coal than they are bound to. Yet they have not got a clue whether overtime charges have been properly made by the coal companies.

(2) Does he agree with such statements reflecting on the efficiency of the departments concerned?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

DAVISON PAINTS PTY. LTD.

As to Building Site.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has a decision been made regarding a building site for Davison Paints Pty. Ltd.?

(2) If not, as plans were again submitted on the 17th September, 1954, what is preventing a final decision?

(3) Was not a lease agreement signed by the Government and Davison Paints Pty. Ltd. finalised in September, 1954, on the understanding that the land concerned was to be used for the purpose of erecting a paint factory and store?

(4) When can a decision be expected on this matter?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A building site has been made available to Davison Paints Pty Ltd. at North Fremantle.

(2) The North Fremantle Council opposes the erection of a factory on this site, and will not approve plans submitted. The Minister for Local Government is not prepared to override the council.

(3) Yes.

(4) An endeavour is being made to find an alternative site for the company's operations.

HEALTH.

As to Polio Vaccine.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Has he seen a report that the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in the U.S.A. has announced plans to purchase enough poliomyelitis vaccine to provide free immunisation injections to 9,000,000 children and for expectant mothers?

(2) Has any polio vaccine been obtained by the Health Department?

(3) If not, is it intended to obtain a supply, and when is it expected that it will be available?

(4) Have any plans been made for its use in Western Australia, and if so under what conditions?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

(3) Arrangements are in hand by the Commonwealth Health Department for the mass production of poliomyelitis vaccine in Australia. It is anticipated that an appropriate proportion will be made available for use in this State. No indication can be given at present as to when supplies will become available.

(4) Not yet. The method and conditions of use will be subject to recommendations made by an expert Federal committee when the vaccine is available.

POULTRY INDUSTRY.

As to Commonwealth Subsidy.

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is he aware that a further deterioration has taken place in the poultry farming industry, due to a lower advance being made by the Commonwealth Government against shipments forwarded to England?

(2) What constructive suggestions has he to offer to save this large industry from extinction?

(3) Has anything further been received from the Commonwealth Government with regard to a subsidy?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied:

(1) The lower advance being made against shipments to England is known.

(2) and (3) The Minister for Agriculture is at present attending the Agricultural Council meeting being held at Hobart and consideration is being given to the

condition of the poultry industry with particular reference to the possibility of a Commonwealth subsidy.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ACT.

As to Redistribution of Seats.

Mr. BOVELL (without notice) asked the Premier:

When will the Government implement the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947, regarding a redistribution of Legislative Assembly boundaries?

The PREMIER replied:

This question will be considered at an early meeting of Cabinet.

BOTTLED BEER.

As to Supplying to Employees.

Mr. NORTON (without notice) asked the Minister for Justice:

Is it legal for an employer, acting as agent for his employees, to supply them with one or two bottles of beer a day?

The MINISTER replied:

Bottles may be supplied as a gift but not sold or offered for sale.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [4.49]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [4.50]: It is my firm opinion that the Bill does nothing to deal with the major problem, namely, that of co-ordinating transport throughout Australia, with particular reference to the proper role of road transport. I understand that this measure is akin to the legislation that is being passed by the other States, and I would like the Minister to make representations to his colleagues in the East to see whether they will get down to the problem of co-ordinating transport so that the never-ending wrangle particularly over interstate transport, will be brought to a successful conclusion.

I fear that the States are taking an unfair advantage of the difficulty of interpreting Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, and so are causing great unrest and embarrassment to those people who might want to operate a system of road transport. Secondly, I feel it is unfair for the States to pass immediately legislation of this kind just because a subject of the realm has been successful in proving what are his rights under the Constitution.

For my part, I realise that the Bill is not far-reaching in its effects on the overall Australian transport system, because

our use of interstate road transport is not very great; and I cannot see it becoming very great. If the Minister pressed this issue with the other Ministers, they might be able to do something worth while to stop the use, or rather the abuse of Section 92 by overcoming the road transport problem.

The Minister for Transport: I think you said it correctly the first time—the use of Section 92, not the abuse of it.

Mr. COURT: That depends on the point of view. As far as I am concerned, it is abuse because it is part of the law of the realm, and I feel that the several State Governments should be prepared to accept the Constitution as it is and as it has been interpreted. There is no doubt that the legislation introduced by the other States has been brought down with only one purpose, and that is to force the road transport operators into litigation by challenging the validity of the legislation. It is time the States faced up to the major issue which is: How far can road transport operate? Our Minister could assist in connection with this problem by representing the position to his colleagues in other States.

As to Governor's Approval of Standing Orders Amendments.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to advise the House that the amendments made last week to the Standing Orders have been approved by the Governor, and therefore they can now be put into operation. This gives the Minister the right of reply.

Debate Resumed.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT
(Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie—in reply)
[4.54]: On the 24th January next there will be a meeting in Western Australia of the Transport Ministers of the various States and I will undertake to bring this matter before their notice. I know it will be brought under their notice by other means also because Senator McLeay, the Commonwealth Minister for Transport, has had a very exhaustive inquiry made into the question of the comparative costs of the various forms of interstate transport, and I have in my possession the report of his department for the information of the State Transport Ministers.

I do not take the same view of this matter as that held by the member for Nedlands. I do not believe that Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution was, in any shape or form, violated by this State. The ruling of the Privy Council was that, despite the operation of Section 92, it was quite permissible for a State to charge a fee to road transport operating interstate, for the use of its roads, and that is all that has been done in this State, and it has been done on quite a moderate scale.

It may be said, although I am not going to say it, that the surcharge placed on interstate transport in other States was too heavy and unfair. That opinion was expressed by the Privy Council which said that the impost, as a result of the licence fees, was such as to create a prohibition on road transport as between the States, and therefore it gave its decision that it was a contravention of Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. But that was not the case as far as this State is concerned. All we did was to levy on interstate vehicles the same fees as we did on our intrastate vehicles—our local hauliers.

Some people's interpretation of co-ordination of traffic—I do not say this applies to the member for Nedlands—is that it consists of allowing two forms of traffic to compete with each other, by running parallel with each other and one carrying the high-freighted goods and the other the low. I know that even the McLarty-Watts Government—the majority at any rate—did not hold that view because during the six years it was in power in this State, it protected the people's asset—the railways—in exactly the same way—in fact, to a greater degree—as the present Government is doing.

Road transport has received more concessions in the 20 months that I have been Minister for Transport than it got in the six years of the McLarty-Watts Government. All that Government did by way of concession to road transport, was to increase the free permissible radius in the metropolitan area from 15 to 20 miles. We raised it from 20 to 35 miles. Even the present Opposition, when it was in power, realised there was an onus on the Government to see that the asset of the people was protected, at least from unfair competition. Not only did it realise that was necessary, but it decided to rehabilitate the railway system, and up to the time that the present Government took over, it had expended the sum of £22,000,000 in the process. I emphasise that if the Bill is not passed by another place, Western Australia will be the only State that will not be getting, from road vehicles operating interstate, any fees to off-set the wear and tear on the roads. Each of the Eastern States is passing legislation, if not word for word with the measure before us, at least exactly the same in principle. The responsibility, therefore, is upon this Parliament of deciding whether we will permit interstate road vehicles to come here and use our roads without contributing towards their upkeep.

There would be an unpalatable and undesirable means of combating the position that would arise if interstate road hauliers were to take up the attitude that, by the aid of another place, they will defeat this legislation. The answer will be that the

Main Roads Department, and the Minister in charge, will have to consider seriously whether they will continue to maintain a road—particularly the one from Norseman to the border—for the purpose of allowing interstate vehicles to use it without paying anything towards its maintenance, in the same way as do our own local vehicles.

I will represent this matter to the conference of Transport Ministers and I know that there is an item on the agenda under which it can be discussed. I hope that a system of transport co-ordination, as mentioned by the member for Greenough yesterday, will be evolved in this State in the near future. A committee representative of the Railway Department, the Main Roads Department and the Transport Board is going into the question with a view to endeavouring to bring about a reasonable system of transport co-ordination. Members of the Opposition, when on this side of the House, were singularly reluctant to inquire into and inaugurate a scheme of transport co-ordination in this State.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH (RATING APPEALS) ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. O'Brien in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after the member for Murchison had moved to insert, in line 21, page 2, the words "the employer" in lieu of the words struck out.

Mr. NORTON: I cannot see why a canteen licence should be restricted to a person nominated by the employer.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: A canteen must be on the employer's premises.

Mr. NORTON: It may not be.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It must be, otherwise it is not a canteen in the ordinary sense.

Mr. NORTON: A mining lease would not be employer's premises.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Yes it would be.

Mr. NORTON: I disagree. The Brown Drilling Co. is an employer, but it is not the lessee.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It would be the company's premises.

Mr. NORTON: No, the lease is in the name of Wapet. For instance, a whaling station is on a pastoral lease.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: But it occupies the premises.

Mr. NORTON: But the whaling station does not own the land. Why not make this open? The Bill is too restrictive and I am definitely against any restriction. If we are to have canteens, make the position open so that anybody can apply in the same way as for an ordinary publican's licence.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Why did you vote for the Kwinana resolution?

Mr. NORTON: How many years ago was that? This is a canteen.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: So was that.

Mr. NORTON: No; "canteen" is not mentioned in the Act.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It should not have been done.

The Premier: I suggest to the member for Gascoyne that he takes no notice of the member for Mt. Lawley.

Mr. NORTON: This will be a new section of the Act. There is no reason why an individual should not apply for a canteen licence in the same way as he can apply for a publican's licence. I oppose any distinction.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: What a lot of hypocrisy there is here.

Mr. Sewell: You should know.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: A great many members in this Chamber visited the oil-fields at the company's invitation and did not hesitate to praise its system and drink its beer and have a jolly good time.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I think that is a rotten statement for you to make.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I had a good time.

The Premier: I saw photographs of the member for Mt. Lawley.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: If the beer you got is your price, it is not our price. They say that every man has his price.

Mr. Yates: The member for Fremantle enjoyed himself.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Are we going to deprive the workers there of the opportunity to enjoy a cold glass of beer?

Mr. Norton: They are not the only people.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: If facilities are to be provided on premises occupied by a large industrial concern, it is only natural that those facilities must be under the firm's control.

Mr. May: Why?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It is undertaking the work and the canteen must be strictly controlled.

Mr. May: It does not make any difference to the firm.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It makes a great deal of difference. In some settled places it is convenient to have clubs. They have an excellent one at Wundowie. It was built by the industry there.

Mr. May: They get the profits.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have no objection to it. Workers at Wundowie, before the club was established, had to go a long way in order to get a drink of beer and it was only reasonable to establish a club in such a permanent area. There is a workers' club at Collie, I have no doubt, and one of the biggest clubs in the metropolitan area is in my friend's electorate.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is a good one, too.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I agree, but why deprive men, who are working under such arduous conditions, of a drink of beer? Any canteen established would have to be provided by the company, and it would have control. Is it not right, under those circumstances, that the licence should be granted only with the approval of the employer? There is a whaling station at Carnarvon and it is well provided for. If it were affected by this Bill, the hon. member would give it his full support.

Mr. Norton: This does not allow a whaling station to come under the provisions.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: A question was asked in this Chamber as to whether it was lawful for the company to supply the men with two bottles of beer per day. Unless this Bill is agreed to, that amenity will be stopped because, as the Minister for Justice said, it is an illegal act.

The Premier: Are you discussing the amendment or the Bill?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The amendment. I do not think it is feasible to grant a licence to anyone.

The Premier: The court would not be compelled to grant a licence to anyone.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, but the court must follow the Act and it could not take into consideration the wishes of the employers if this provision were not in the Act.

The Premier: It could take notice of anyone, employers included.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, as the Premier knows, the court must act in a rational manner. I propose to support the amendment.

Mr. MOIR: This amendment will make the position more open and I think there would be more justice in that. But I cannot understand the tender regard for Wapet exhibited by the member for Mt. Lawley.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I have no tender regard for it. I do not care two hoots for it.

Mr. MOIR: The hon. member was concerned only with the facilities available to the company.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: No, any company or organisation—even the Government, if you like.

Mr. MOIR: There are other people who work under arduous conditions also and who do not enjoy the same amenities as are provided by the oil company. It is idle to put forward the suggestion that where there is a reasonably settled community, clubs can operate. They can operate only under certain circumstances—where there is some degree of stability.

There are centres in the goldmining industry where it is not possible to establish clubs. One place is Mt. Ida which is 80 miles from Menzies. Such a town may not be very stable and it requires a great deal of money to set up a club. The people resident there may not think such a step is warranted, but why should they be deprived of a canteen? The Licensing Court will make the decision whether a licence shall be granted and I do not think it would do anything foolish.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: What is your alternative?

Mr. MOIR: I think that the clause should not be restricted to the Western Australian Petroleum Co. or to the people referred to in the Bill.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You should move to have the Bill recommitted and then move an amendment accordingly.

Mr. MOIR: Whilst I do not wish to deny these facilities to the people who reside at Learmonth or anywhere else, I strongly object to such facilities being granted to one group of persons. If the court considers that the granting of a canteen licence is warranted in a particular centre, it should be free to grant it. I can see no merit in restricting the clause to certain people.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I cannot understand why an argument is creeping into the debate at this stage. If members who are opposing the amendment will take their minds back to Friday last when progress was reported, they will recall that the Committee struck out the word "company" with a view to the word "employer" being inserted, in order not to make the clause restrictive, because it was considered that an oil search could be conducted by an individual who might desire canteen facilities for his employees.

We now have the argument that the clause is still restrictive. If members opposite want these facilities extended to cover men engaged on road construction and others working in the North many miles from a hotel, they could move an amendment accordingly or take steps to introduce a new Bill next session. It appears that solely because these

facilities are to be granted to the employees of an oil company, members opposite are opposing the provision. The point is: Can it be suitably amended at this juncture? It is too late to try to amend the Licensing Act in an endeavour to cover all employees who may work in the North from time to time.

The Minister for Health: I think they are entitled to it.

Mr. OLDFIELD: An employer may be a single person.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: A person need not be an employer.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If we insert the words proposed by the member for Gascoyne, the clause will read, "... a canteen licence may be granted by the court on the application of a person nominated in writing by a person ..." I suppose if that amendment is carried, he proposes to amend the clause right through. The member for Boulder has spoken as though this provision is providing facilities solely to employees of a petroleum company.

Mr. Moir: My objection is that it is restrictive.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Certainly the Bill restricts the granting of these facilities to the employees of a person prospecting or exploring for oil.

The Minister for Health: But not for gold.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We are discussing whether it is suitable to insert the word "employer." I can see no objection to that. It is too late to try to amend the Act to cover all employees in the North.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you know of any licence that is granted which is not granted to an individual person?

Mr. OLDFIELD: A person is granted a licence under the Act. I was led to believe that this provision was inspired by the Government, and I can appreciate its viewpoint.

Mr. Lawrence: It was introduced by the Government.

Mr. OLDFIELD: It was introduced by a supporter of the Government. I can appreciate what members have in mind when they desire to extend these facilities to all workers in the North. We know that at Learmonth, for some time, there will be a body of men engaged on oil search, but they can pack up at any time and move to another site. They could not set up a club such as exists at Wundowie because the employees are migratory. If a canteen were established, it would be the responsibility of the company. The Bill merely seeks to make legal what is being provided now, namely, decent amenities for these men who are working in outlandish places. The Bill does not debar any person engaged in the prospecting for oil from applying for a canteen licence.

Mr. Moir: Why should it be confined to such people?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Are we to throw away the whole Bill because it is confined to men who are engaged on oil search in the North? Can the hon. member tell me where there is a sufficiently large body of men that would necessitate the establishment of a canteen? A canteen licence is not warranted for six or eight men.

Mr. Yates: It would be for some.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We require to have a large body of men to make the granting of the licence worth while. The Licensing Court will not grant a hotel licence in a place where no one lives and, in any case, no one would wish to apply for a licence in such an area. We should insert the word "employer" and deal with any objections that may be raised later.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: If the term "employer" is inserted, then the proposed new section would read "a canteen licence may be granted by the court on the application of a person nominated by an employer." I consider that the words "nominated by an employer" should be deleted because a licence is granted not to a company or employer, but to an individual. Members opposite have already agreed that the granting of a licence shall be extended to other groups of workers. I read yesterday in the newspapers that 85 men are employed in Rocky Gully. Surely they are just as entitled to receive a canteen licence as the mine workers! My suggestion will enable that to be done.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

That paragraphs (a) and (b) of proposed new Section 44B, page 2, be struck out.

As it has been agreed to extend this facility to all groups of workers, these two paragraphs are unnecessary.

Mr. McCULLOCH: There is an amendment appearing on the notice paper to paragraph (a). I do not know whether the member for Fremantle is entitled to move his amendment first.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The amendment on the notice paper relates to words appearing in the latter part of paragraph (a), and I would not be able to move my amendment if the one the member for Hannans refers to were dealt with first.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If the amendment of the member for Fremantle is defeated, the member for Murchison will be precluded from moving his amendment which appears on the notice paper, and which I think should be dealt with first.

The CHAIRMAN: The question before the Chair is: That paragraphs (a) and (b) be deleted.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The member for Fremantle should give us some idea of what he intends to do in relation to paragraph (c). It is obvious that it is his intention to permit applications to be made in respect of workers engaged in any industry. In other words, he seeks to delete the restrictions which confine the granting of a licence to employees of the oil companies. If the amendment is agreed to, paragraph (c) will require some attention. How does he intend to clarify that?

Regarding the point raised by the member for Maylands, if there is a difference of opinion, as appears to be the case, perhaps the member for Fremantle should start off by moving to delete the first two words of paragraph (a) in line 22. If that is successful, the member for Murchison could move to insert other words; if not, it will be an indication that the Committee will agree to the deletion of these two paragraphs. Before I can give an intelligent vote, I must know the intention of the member for Fremantle regarding paragraph (c).

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: If paragraphs (a) and (b) are deleted, I intend to move an amendment to strike out all words after the word "desirable" in line 35, page 2, so that the proposed new section will read—

A canteen licence may be granted by the court on the application of a person nominated in writing by an employer, if in the opinion of the court, the granting of the licence to the applicant is necessary or desirable.

That will be a fair enough proposition because Parliament does not grant such licences. We can rely on the Licensing Court to do the right thing and grant licences where they are necessary or desirable.

Mr. NORTON: Paragraphs (a) and (b) limit the granting of licences to workers engaged in oil exploration. If my amendment on the notice paper is accepted, the facility will be extended to other types of mining activities. Not only companies like Wapet, but every other company engaged in industry in isolated areas in Western Australia should be granted the facility. These two paragraphs are too discriminatory and should be deleted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

That the words "for the accommodation of persons who are engaged in the work of exploring, prospecting or mining for petroleum," in lines 35 to 38, page 2, be struck out.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The whole context of paragraph (c) is for the granting of licences to accommodate persons who are

engaged in the work of exploring for oil. Can there be any sense in the amendment? I suggest to the member for Fremantle that the words "for the accommodation of persons" should be retained.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Then we must have a definition of "person."

Mr. LAWRENCE: I make that suggestion to the hon. member.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I was prepared to support the amendment, but it could be improved in the manner suggested by the member for South Fremantle. If the member for Fremantle would withdraw his amendment, I would move to strike out of paragraph (c) the words "work of exploring, prospecting or mining for petroleum" with a view to inserting the words "working in the district".

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I am easily satisfied, and ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That the words "the work of exploring, prospecting or mining for petroleum" in lines 36 to 38, page 2, be struck out with a view to inserting the words "working in the locality".

Hon. A. F. WATTS: A member not far from me has remarked that, if the amendment be passed, we shall have a lot of piccaninny pubs. The intention of the measure as introduced was to enable companies to cater for their employees. I have no objection to that, but I do object to the phrase "for the accommodation of persons who are engaged in working in the locality", because that would detract from the original intention.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Would you accept the words "working for the employer"?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I would prefer the words "persons engaged in the service of the employer", and should like to move to that effect.

The CHAIRMAN: We have not yet deleted the words.

Mr. BOVELL: So many amendments and counter-amendments are being moved that I am a little confused as to the effect of the actual proposal. It seems to me that the amendment would deprive hotels of their normal business. If we are going to allow canteens for all and sundry, we shall be depriving hotels of the remunerative side of their business, leaving them to maintain the unprofitable side, namely, the providing of accommodation. I am inclined to support the Leader of the Country Party. We want to maintain the hotels at as high a standard as possible.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There is only one amendment before the Chair, and that is to strike out all the words after "in"

in line 36. As regards protecting the interests of hotelkeepers, the member for Vasse will find an amendment on the notice paper in the name of the member for Gascoyne.

Mr. NORTON: The amendment of which I have given notice stipulates that the court shall have regard to the necessity for any such licence in view of existing hotel licences in the district. I am not opposed to the suggestion of the Leader of the Country Party, but point out that the object of my amendment is to protect hotelkeepers in remote areas.

Mr. CORNELL: This Bill appears to have three mothers and no father. I move—

That progress be reported till Tuesday next.

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

Ayes	.....	10
Noes	.....	27
Majority against	.....	17

Ayes.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. Manning
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hill	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Moir
Mr. Andrew	Mr. Norton
Mr. Graham	Mr. Nuisen
Mr. Hawke	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Heal	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Owen
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Styants
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Wild
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. Yates
Mr. McCulloch	Mr. May
Sir Ross McLarty	

(Teller.)

Motion (progress) thus negatived.

Amendment (to delete words) put and passed.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That the following words be inserted in lieu of the words struck out:—"the service of the employer".

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I have not studied the amendment closely, but might not it prove to be so restrictive as to become farcical? Would the amendment more or less debar the court from taking into account that there were 15, 20 or more main road employees working in the locality? The court would take into account the number of people in the locality, whether in the service of the one employer or of several employers. That would form part of the case to establish the necessity for a canteen.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: On the point raised by the Minister for Housing, I think that question is dealt with on page 3 in Sub-clause (2). All the present amendment does is to give the court a certain discretion. The court must come to the conclusion that the employer requires a canteen for his employees and later in the measure we can deal with who is to be served in that canteen. The court has to decide that the employer has a sufficient number of employees to warrant the granting of a licence.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I am not yet satisfied. The first point is to establish the necessity for a canteen and then there is the question of who can avail himself of the facilities provided.

Hon. A. F. Watts: I repeat that that is dealt with on page 3.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: An oil company with a certain number of employees might apply to the court which, in turn, might decide that the company had not sufficient employees to justify the granting of a canteen licence, whereas if it took into account the fact that there were also in that area a large number of employees of another company, or some other group of workmen, it might well decide that the granting of the licence in that locality was more than warranted. For those reasons, I would prefer the proposed amendment of the member for Mt. Lawley to that of the member for Stirling.

Mr. BOVELL: The interest shown by the Minister for Housing leads me to believe that the cunningly concealed father of this illegitimate measure is the Government itself.

Mr. O'Brien: That is entirely wrong. My name appears on the Bill.

Mr. BOVELL: I am merely stating my conclusion gained from the trend of the debate. I do not want to see canteen licences springing up everywhere like mushrooms. If that it to be the effect of the measure, I will continue to oppose it.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: There is provision for that in the Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. NORTON: I move an amendment—
That at the end of paragraph (c), page 2, the following words be added:

providing that the court shall have regard to the necessity of any such licence in view of existing hotel licences within the district.

We are already demanding that hotels supply better meals and accommodation for residents and persons travelling through the North, and I do not want to see these canteen licences encroaching on the business of hotels and, by reducing their revenue, reducing the service given to the public.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the word "hotel".

My reason for this is that I think the member for Gascoyne has failed to take into account the fact that a hotel licence refers only to places such as the King Edward Hotel and the Grand Hotel, whereas the premises he has in mind would be licensed under the publican's general licence or the wayside licence.

Mr. McCULLOCH: I think the member for Maylands is trying to defeat the Bill. The provision at the top of page 3 deals with the types of licences with which we are concerned.

Mr. Norton: I want the court to take into consideration the licences already granted in the district.

Mr. LAWRENCE: With all due respect to the member for Maylands, I would point out—

Mr. Oldfield: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, we are dealing with the amendment on the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order as I do not yet know what the member for South Fremantle was endeavouring to say.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I concur in your ruling, Mr. Chairman. I believe the position is explained in Subclause (2).

Mr. CORNELL: While I agree that cognisance should be taken of the need to protect other licensees in the districts concerned, much hot air has been spoken this evening on the desirability of giving publicans and other licensees some protection as it has been said that they have obligations under the Licensing Act and that the indiscriminate granting of canteen licences would cause them to suffer loss of revenue with a consequent diminution of the service they render the public. I think we should strike out all words after the word "shall" —

The CHAIRMAN: At the moment we are dealing with the amendment on the amendment.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Amendment, on amendment, put and passed.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment,—

That the words "the work of exploring, prospecting or mining for petroleum which work is being carried on by or on behalf of the company referred to in Subsection (1) of Section forty-four B of this Act" in lines 12 to 17, page 3, be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That the words "in the service of the employer" be inserted in lieu of the words struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That the words "for the purpose of transacting business with the company" in lines 20 to 22, page 3, be struck out.

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

Clause 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Section 59 amended:

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (b), page 3, be struck out.

Section 59 of the Act deals with the removal of licences from one place to another.

The CHAIRMAN: Earlier we struck out all reference to the licensing districts.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Obviously this clause was inserted in the first instance to allow for the removal of a canteen licence from one licensing district to another. If this provision is taken from the Bill it will prevent that. All that is needed is to amend proposed new Subsection (8) (a) to read as follows:—"A canteen licence may be removed from one licensing district to another."

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: What is required is to strike out all the words after the word "one" in line 35, page 3, down to the end of the paragraph, with a view to inserting the words, "from one premises to another." At present the Act says that a licence cannot be removed from one district to another, but this provision was intended to enable a canteen licence to be so removed. Whereas the Act provides that no removal of a licence shall be lawful, the Bill provides that, subject to the provisions contained in the Bill, no licence shall be removed. As a matter of fact, I do not think it is necessary for any amendment to be moved, and I would ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I am not clear about that. What was the amendment the hon. member wanted withdrawn?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member's amendment was to delete paragraph (b) of Clause 5. Now he has had permission to withdraw his amendment and is going to redraft paragraph (b).

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No. I am going to leave it as it is. It is provided under the Act that a licence cannot be removed from one district to another. But if this

provision is accepted, a canteen licence may be removed from one district to another. So there cannot be any objection to the provision as it stands.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The member for Mt. Lawley is jumping around like a jack-in-the-box. I think his legal knowledge is getting him into bother. First he wanted to delete the clause, and then he wanted to delete certain sections of it, and now he wants to leave it as it is. Proposed new Subsection (8) (a) provides that a canteen licence may be removed from one of the licensing districts referred to in Section 44A to another district therein referred to. But the districts specified in Section 44A have been removed from the Act.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: No, they have not.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Certain licensing districts referred to in the Bill have been struck out.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Not from the Act.

Mr. OLDFIELD: No, from the Bill. Now Section 44A refers to the whole State.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: So does the Licensing Act.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It refers to the districts which the Governor by proclamation declares.

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is so. This wording was inserted to comply with Section 44A in which the licensing districts were named. But those districts were removed from the provision. Why should we let a Bill go through that it will need a lawyer to interpret?

Mr. Lawrence: The districts will be declared by proclamation.

Mr. OLDFIELD: If this wording is allowed to remain, we will have a subsection referring to Section 44A. Why not simply have paragraph (b) read, "Adding a subsection as follows:—(8) (a) A canteen licence may be removed from one district to another"? That is what was intended.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Section 121 amended:

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not know whether there has been an outcry for liquor to be served at dinner between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. My education has not been very good as regards dining between those hours. Do members think this provision is necessary?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The object is to enable liquor to be served with meals. At present a large number of cafes are permitting liquor to be served with meals at all hours of the night. But at hotels, where it is presumed that liquor can be obtained with meals, such liquor cannot be consumed after 9 p.m. unless there is a special licence. That is granted only where there are a large number of persons being entertained. That is the ruling of

the court. This provision is to enable tourists and others who wish to dine after ordinary hours at a hotel to be able to obtain wine or beer with their meals.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Would there be many providing meals between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m.?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think there will be if this goes through. At present there is only one. But we are trying to cater for tourists. There are places to which people go to have meals and take their liquor with them, consuming it at 1 a.m., 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. If we permit that, is it not reasonable to allow a decent hotel to provide liquor with meals after 9 p.m.?

The Premier: If this became law, any hotel could do that.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, if the court gave permission. But that could only be done if a genuine meal was provided because the charge has to be the same as would be imposed on ordinary occasions. Thus, if dinner at the Esplanade Hotel costs 17s., that would have to be the charge.

The Premier: There is no price control on sandwiches.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is so; but the court will not permit an evening meal to consist of sandwiches, as the Premier knows. If a person is accustomed to dine on a sandwich and a glass of beer, I do not mind; but that is not what the Bill provides for. We are trying to cater for tourists. Overseas visitors from Europe and elsewhere are accustomed to have liquor with meals at any reasonable hour, and any club can provide that service. Liquor can be served in a club till 11 p.m.

It seems unreasonable that people who are travelling, and others who occasionally like to have an evening meal at a later hour by way of enjoyment, should have their liquor dragged away from them at 9 o'clock. I could name at least a dozen cafes that serve meals till 1 a.m. and 2 a.m., and advertise, "Bring your own liquor." I think it is best to encourage people to go to places where there is some control and supervision rather than have them go to non-licensed premises and do what they like.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I strongly support the member for Mt. Lawley for once in my life and strongly disagree with the member for Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I have not spoken on this yet.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The hon. member disagreed with it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I did not. I asked for information.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I know the reason the hon. member asked for information. The member for Mt. Lawley made a mistake,

and he misled the House, by saying that a person could drink all night. That is not so.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, until 11 o'clock.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The clause specifically mentions the hours between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. When the member for Mt. Lawley was a Minister, he amended the Act to allow clubs to trade during all sorts of hours and to serve liquor up till 11 o'clock every night of the week, except Sundays. I think the provision here is fair and reasonable. If people are entitled to have a drink and a meal at a club, why not at other licensed premises? The provision here stipulates that a drink can be served with a meal only between certain hours. It is only reasonable that we should support this proposition.

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

Ayes	20
Noes	16
Majority for	4

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Bovell	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Court	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Heal	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Owen
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Wild
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Sewell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hill	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Manning	Mr. Watts
Mr. Nalder	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 8, 9 and 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Second Schedule amended:

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That the word "following" in line 29, page 5, be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That after the word "form" in line 29, page 5, the words "as shall be prescribed" be added.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

That the remaining words in the clause be struck out.

My amendment will mean that the form, as shown in the Bill, will be struck out because the idea now is that the form will be prescribed.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: We seem to have got into a muddle. How can we amend the Second Schedule to the principal Act by adding to it a form to be prescribed?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know, but we can try.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I suggest this has very little meaning, and it had better be attended to.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is—

That the amendment be agreed to. Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: What is your decision, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: I gave my decision to the noes.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I wish to move an amendment on page 6.

Mr. PERKINS: On a point of order, was not the amendment moved by the member for Mt. Lawley defeated, and has not the Committee decided that these words shall stand?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. PERKINS: I understand he is moving to cut out certain words.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know just what he is doing at the moment.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 12, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

BILL—PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2, page 2—Add after the word "pounds" in line 17 the words "per annum."

The PREMIER: This amendment is to remedy a drafting error, and, in the clause with which this amendment deals, provision is made for the contribution by the Government to be increased by 50 per cent. Where the amount is set out, the words "per annum" should have been included after the total. The draftsman discovered the omission after it had been introduced in this Chamber and the Chief Secretary has rectified the omission. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I do not oppose the amendment, but if I might be permitted at this stage I wish to say a few words which I did not have the opportunity of saying the other night. I desire to refer to the amount paid per annum by certain members in this Chamber and the possibility of their receiving no benefits in the event of their being defeated at the polls.

May I ask the Government to consider some action to remedy what appear to be anomalies in the Act and to take some action next year? I do not know whether a select committee or the Rights and Privileges Committee could inquire into the matter to overcome the anomalies, but I think something should be done. There are members in this Chamber who are compelled to pay £78 per annum and if they are employed by the Crown, following a defeat at the polls, they will receive no benefit whatever. Such a state of affairs is not justifiable under any circumstances.

Mr. Oldfield: They do not even get their money back.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Some say that the Government should not pay a full salary and a pension at the same time. If a person is employed, following his defeat at the polls, the Government pays him for the work done, while the parliamentary superannuation scheme is much the same as a contract drawn up between the member and the fund. I cannot see where the two clash. If a member, following upon his resignation or defeat at the polls, is employed by the Crown, surely he should be entitled to the repayment of the moneys he has paid into the fund, otherwise the fund is receiving money under false pretences! I strongly urge that this matter, together with certain other anomalies, be corrected in the near future and I trust that the Government will give some attention to it.

Mr. Oldfield: Before the next general election.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Yes.

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

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

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

With amendments.

2, City of Perth (Rating Appeals) Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

BILL—PARKS AND RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. Lapham in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2, page 2—Delete the words "for such purposes or any of them" in lines 23 and 24.

Mr. LAPHAM: This is a simple amendment which is of a machinery nature. It was overlooked in this Chamber and I think we should agree to it. The original proposal was all-embracing but, on an amendment moved by the member for Leederville, it was subdivided and the aquatic centre and orchestral shell were made one part and the structures, fittings and so on another part. The words are redundant and I move —

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2. Clause 2, page 2—Add after the word "obtained" in line 35 the following:—

"but such consent shall not be given if native flora is to be despoiled."

Mr. LAPHAM: This adds to the amendment of the member for Leederville a further part which was originally defeated in this Chamber. The amendment seeks to restrict the activities of the Governor-in-Council by adding the words "but such consent shall not be given if native flora is to be despoiled."

Mr. Bovell: It is the same thing.

Mr. LAPHAM: It is actually the same provision as was defeated here, and at the time there was a lot of confusion in the voting. I think the amendment should be agreed to and I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. HEAL: As this Chamber rejected the amendment as originally moved by the member for Vasse, we should not agree to this amendment of the Legislative Council. If it is agreed to, the hands of the King's Park Board will be tied for all time and if the board wants to do anything it will be prevented because native flora might be despoiled. I sincerely hope members will not agree to the amendment.

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

Ayes	.....	20
Noes	.....	15
Majority for	.....	5

Ayes.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. Norton
Mr. Bovell	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Doney	Mr. Owen
Mr. Hill	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Watts
Mr. Manning	Mr. Wild
Mr. McCulloch	Mr. Sewell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Court	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Graham	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Mr. Heal	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Moir
Mr. Jamieson	

(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1954-55.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Moir in the Chair.

Vote—Tourist Bureau, £30,992 (partly considered):

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [8.34]: The Tourist Bureau is generally considered to be one of the minor Government departments, and that has been the position for many years. I know that the Minister in charge of it is keen to encourage the tourist trade. There is an increase of £3,216 in the vote over that of last year, and I think it is justified. In some countries, the tourist trade is practically the most lucrative they have, being worth many millions of pounds per year to them. All those countries do what they can to encourage that trade.

Mr. McCulloch: Did you go to Monte Carlo?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Yes, but I did not enter into the gambling there. Apart from the Casino, they do what they can to encourage people to visit places of interest. There is no doubt that we have much to offer visitors to this State, and those who have come here have spoken highly of what they have seen. I think more could be done to advertise the State in ocean-going liners, where people have plenty of time to read and where they become interested in other countries, which advertise by this medium. I suggest to the Minister that he investigate that line of advertising with a view to publishing as much information about the State as possible.

I have heard it stated that the director of the Tourist Bureau should be a member of the Licensing Court, and I think the suggestion has something to commend it. In my travels abroad, I found that the

primary requirement of tourists is first-class accommodation for which they do not seem to mind how much they pay. A tourist entering a State such as ours would not be at all pleased if he arrived at a country centre and discovered that he had to share a room. I notice that in European countries the tourist demands not only his own bedroom but one with a bathroom adjoining.

Mr. Nalder: He could not have a bath in most country centres because of the water restrictions.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: As the member for Katanning points out, it might be difficult for a tourist to have a bath, for that reason. I suggest to the Minister that, in an endeavour to encourage the tourist trade, there is need to take into consideration improved hotel accommodation.

Mr. Hutchinson: Is it a fact that the electric lighting at Cave House is turned off at 10.30 p.m.?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I do not know. The hon. member should direct that question to the Minister.

Mr. Hutchinson: I believe that is so, and candles have to be used after 10.30.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: During the evening, reference has been made to the hours during which meals can be obtained in Western Australia. I think one has more difficulty in obtaining a meal at night in Perth than in any other city I have visited. If one arrives in Perth after 7.30 p.m., there are few places at which one can get a meal. On the Continent and in other parts of the world, a good meal can be obtained at almost any hour.

Tourists travel about most of the time they are visiting a country, and are not always able to get back at the times meals are served in this State. The suggestion that was agreed to tonight that liquor should be provided with meals on licensed premises after certain hours is a provision that is desirable and would assist to encourage tourists to come to this State. I think the member for Murchison made that clear when introducing his Bill. The main point I rose to make is to express satisfaction that an increase has been made in the vote and to voice the hope that there will be close co-operation between the Licensing Court and the Tourist Bureau with the object of insisting upon improved hotel accommodation.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.44]: Like the Leader of the Opposition, I want to say a few words on this vote. I think a great deal of encouragement could be given to the Tourist Bureau. It has done an excellent job in endeavouring to meet the requirements of people who are visiting Western Australia and to show them as much of the State as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much conversation going on in the Chamber.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: There is much work the Tourist Bureau can do to induce people to come here and, when they do, they should be afforded every opportunity to find their way around the State. One lamentable lack here is that there are not sufficient signposts to direct tourists to wherever they may wish to go. A visitor from the Eastern States would not find three signposts on the roads when travelling from Norseman to Perth. When he arrives in Perth he would find difficulty in getting to other parts of the State. He would have difficulty in finding the main and subsidiary roads. At the Town Hall in Midland Junction two main highways converge, one from Geraldton, being the Great Northern Highway, and the other from Kalgoorlie, being the Great Eastern Highway, but there is no signpost to indicate these roads at the intersection. A visitor would have to get out of his car to inquire regarding the direction he wished to go.

Recently I travelled over Europe and Britain. I went through Belgium, Holland, the Rhine Valley, Austria, across the Alps to Zurich in Switzerland, then to Italy, visiting Florence and Rome. I travelled the 900 miles round the Riviera to Barcelona, thence to Madrid, San Sebastian and on to Paris. I was in a strange land and spoke only the Australian tongue, but I had no difficulty in finding my way by means of the signposts. Not only were the main roads defined but also the subsidiary roads, and there were indicating signs where to take a turn.

If a foreigner were to tour Western Australia he would find great difficulty in travelling around. He certainly would not be able to get about as I did in Europe. The time has arrived when there should be more co-operation between the Tourist Bureau, the Main Roads Department and the Royal Automobile Club to make it easy for tourists, who have money to spend, to find their way around. In England, Scotland and Ireland I had no difficulty in finding the roads, and again the subsidiary roads were well signposted.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The distances were also shown.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: On the Continent the distances were shown in kilometres, and in Great Britain the distances were shown in miles. The S.O. Petroleum Oil Co. supplies maps of Europe, and sectional maps for England, Scotland and Ireland. All towns are marked, as well as main and subsidiary roads. Furthermore, the main roads are numbered and the distances are shown. When I was in Paris I learned that there were approximately 500,000 Frenchmen touring other countries. Parisians may not

be very wealthy, but, by touring other countries and spending money there, they help the industries of other lands.

I hope the Minister in charge of the Tourist Bureau will take some steps in the direction I have indicated. It is long overdue for the main arterial roads to be signposted, and from time to time endeavours should be made to signpost the others. Today the motorcar is used extensively in this country for travelling, not only by wealthy men but also by the workers, therefore there should be greater co-operation between the Tourist Bureau and the Department of Main Roads to overcome the difficulties of this sadly neglected problem. There is great difficulty in finding accommodation in this State. It is another story to overcome it. If it were suggested that we build more State hotels, there would be more opposition to the Government going into the hotel business. Here is an opportunity for private enterprise to provide good accommodation throughout the State.

There is need for considerable extension of hotel accommodation to cope with the tourist trade and to provide suitably for the holidaymakers at places like Albany, Bunbury and other resorts. At those centres it would be difficult to secure accommodation in the next three or four months. While I was travelling through Europe I had no difficulty in finding accommodation. I got it as I went along. When I reached cities like Munich and Dusseldorf, I went to the information bureau or the railway station and was given the information as to where good accommodation could be obtained. I had no trouble in finding it.

The Spanish Government goes to a great deal of trouble to supply hostels, not expensive hotels but pensions, where tourists can find reasonable provision for their convenience. The tourist bureau in that country endeavours to assist visitors in every way. Western Australia is a young State and it is difficult for it to provide all that is needed for its growth. The money which tourists from the Eastern States and other countries have to spend, should be attracted to this State because it goes to expand many industries supplying foodstuffs and other requirements for the visitors. We should endeavour to improve our overseas credit by attracting tourists from abroad. I hope the Minister will pay some attention to the points I have raised.

MR. ACKLAND (Moore) [8.55]: It was not my intention to speak to this vote, but after listening to the last two speakers, I would point out to the Government that a great harvest can be reaped in this State by attracting tourists here. We are inclined to depreciate the real beauty and points of interests to be found in Western Australia. The last two speakers told us

what they saw overseas but I wish to tell members of some of the things to be seen in our own State.

I cannot agree that the Tourist Bureau is doing a particularly good job. Frequently people who have gone to that bureau to seek information before making their journeys, say they do not receive satisfactory treatment, and invariably they go to one of the private travel agencies to arrange their bookings because of the superior treatment and personal consideration afforded them. I agree that until reasonable hotel accommodation can be provided in this State, we will not encourage tourists to come here in great numbers.

The hotel accommodation in Western Australia does not compare favourably with that found overseas or in the other States. If the Licensing Court is to justify its existence, it should tighten up the conditions with regard to accommodation to be provided for the travelling public in licensed premises. By interjection, the member for Katanning referred to the fact that it was difficult in some areas to provide water for baths. Today there is very little water in country districts.

Last winter was exceptionally dry, and in Wongan Hills, which has many attractions for tourists, a person had to pay 10s. for 100 gallons of water, not 1,000 gallons, during the summer of 1953-54. I believe there will not be such a shortage this year as last year. Until towns can establish attractions like gardens, bowling greens, tennis courts and hotels with good accommodation comparable with those found in other countries, this State will not be able to reap a harvest from the tourist traffic.

I doubt whether a better view could be obtained anywhere than that from King's Park. Mount's Bay-rd. presents a spectacle of which no Western Australian need be ashamed because it compares favourably with anything that other places can show. There are other beauty spots if we would only act in a businesslike way and advertise them, but we must give an assurance to the travelling public that reasonable accommodation will be available. I ask the Premier to look into the condition of the hotels and compare it with that of the hotels in other parts.

The Minister for Railways: How do the tariffs compare?

Mr. ACKLAND: I have not been in Paris since 1917.

The Minister for Railways: I asked you how the tariffs compare!

Mr. ACKLAND: Mention has already been made of the fact that the tariffs would have to be increased in order to cater for tourist trade. I may say that I have a great difficulty in hearing the interjections made by the Minister for Railways.

As a general rule I have not the slightest idea of what he says when he interjects. We are losing a great deal of revenue because we are not making use of the tourist traffic that could be encouraged to come to this State.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [9.21]: The vote for the Tourist Bureau is £30,992 which, in my opinion, is totally inadequate fully to develop in one year the tourist attractions offering in this State. The electorate of Albany is indeed a place of scenic beauty; in fact, the section all along the south coast and the south-west portion of the State might well be described as the State's playground, richly endowed as it has been by Nature with a delightful climate and attractive flora.

As recently as Monday evening last, I by invitation attended a public meeting at Margaret River convened by the Augusta-Margaret River Road Board with a view to forming a committee to develop the tourist traffic. Unfortunately the board is handicapped by lack of finance. It is completely beyond the financial resources of local authorities with their responsibility for providing amenities for residents, to cater also for the tourist trade. The reserve in the vicinity of Cowaramup Bay is controlled either by the State Hotels Department or by the State Gardens Board. At one time a small grant was made available to provide for road access, but the grant is no longer being paid. The local authority cannot afford the finance for developing roads for tourists, so I trust that next year the vote for the Tourist Bureau will be increased and that, by co-operation with the Main Roads Department, the first step in developing the tourist traffic will be taken, which would be by providing suitable roads to give access to these attractive beauty spots.

In the extreme south-west corner of the State where the Blackwood River flows into the sea, the scenic attractions are delightful, but financial assistance is needed to develop these resorts fully and advertise them for the benefit of people outside the State.

Another factor that we should bear in mind is that the south and south-western parts of the State are, from a historic point of view, most important. We know that in 1827, Major Lockyer arrived at King George Sound, now known as Albany. In 1927 Albany celebrated its centenary. I was a resident of the town at the time and participated in the celebrations. In 1830 the Bussell family arrived at Flinders Bay and settled in Augusta. Later on they moved up the Blackwood River and the Vasse River to what was then known as the Vasse. Therefore I say we should not lose sight of the fact that, apart from these areas being richly endowed by Nature, they are the early historic centres, and people are invariably interested in the history of any country.

I suggest, firstly, that the Minister should confer with the Minister controlling the Main Roads Department with a view to providing funds to assist in the making of roads to beauty spots in the south and south-west parts of the State; and, secondly, that all possible encouragement be given to local authorities to develop the tourist trade. I feel that the Government could do much to encourage new residents by bringing under notice the natural attractions prevailing here. We know that the Minister is a keen sportsman and that fishing is one of his pastimes. He, I am sure, will readily appreciate the advantages to be derived from opening up to tourists the places I have mentioned.

Local authorities are also faced with the problem that inadequate hotel accommodation is available and that on them devolves the responsibility of providing camping grounds. Amenities such as sanitary services and water supplies have to be provided by the local authorities, and generally they are called upon to bear the expense. I believe that some assistance should be given by the Government to local authorities in order to assist in the development of our tourist resorts.

MR. McCULLOCH (Hannans) [9.10]: I would not have spoken on this vote but for the fact that emphasis has been placed on the need for attracting people from other parts of the world to see the beauties of this State. My reason for rising is that there are quite a large number of people in the State who have not seen a tenth part of it. I refer chiefly to the people of the Goldfields.

I have been approached on several occasions with a request to ascertain whether it would be possible to have a tourist coach leave Kalgoorlie at certain periods during the summer months for a tour of the South-West and back in the space of about nine days. However, I have been advised that it is not possible to run a tourist coach from Kalgoorlie, the reason given being that the Metro Bus Co. practically controls the tourist business and has its own accommodation in the South-West where patrons can be accommodated.

If such facilities can be provided for the people of the metropolitan area, I cannot see why they cannot be provided for residents of the Goldfields. When people in the outback areas get their holidays in the summer months, they experience difficulty in obtaining accommodation in Perth, and, on the information I have received, quite a large number would be prepared to patronise a nine-day bus tour through the South-West. The cost for the trip from the metropolitan area is very reasonable, and I have been advised that it would not be any more expensive to run a trip from the Goldfields and return.

I am aware that there are some very attractive beauty spots in this State. In the "Pocket Year Book," a passage dealing with tourist traffic states—

The south-western corner of the State is regarded as the show place of the West with its magnificent forests of karri and jarrah, limestone caves and varied coastline.

Quite a number of people in the back country, if afforded the opportunity, would not, I feel sure, decide to stay in Perth or suburbs for their fortnight or three weeks holiday, but would prefer to take a trip through the South-West as conducted by the Metro Co. from Perth under the auspices of the Tourist Bureau. On the Goldfields we have a Transport Board, and I feel sure that if some encouragement were given, accommodation could be provided for people to stay overnight at certain places. The metropolitan people stay a night at Southern Cross, a night at Kalgoorlie and go round the mines and then they could make a trip to the South-West and return to Perth. But accommodation must be provided, and if it were available, the tour would be a great attraction for the people of the Goldfields.

I do not condemn the idea of bringing overseas visitors to this State, but although the emphasis has been on the bringing of finance into the country, I think we should try to give our own people an opportunity of seeing the beauties of the South-West of this State. We should not concentrate all our efforts on attracting visitors from other countries. I repeat that we should do all we can to make provision for the people of Western Australia and especially those from outback areas to enjoy the beauties of the South-West.

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [9.16]: I wish to deal with the tourist industry. Undoubtedly there are many tourist attractions in this State and they could be developed considerably if we did everything possible to sell the idea to tourists in this State, the other States of the Commonwealth and overseas. The beauty spots of the South-West are one asset that can be sold to the visitor, and yet still remain to be sold to future tourists. In the capital cities of the other States one does see some photographs of this State and its tourist attractions.

Two years ago we had here a visitor from the Eastern States, a Mr. Frank Hurley, a noted photographer and writer. I have seen on the market, both here and in the other capitals, a book on Western Australia written by him and priced at about two guineas. I believe the Government of this State subsidised Mr. Hurley's work on that book and I hope our Tourist Bureau uses it to the greatest extent possible. The most urgent need is the provision of better facilities for tourists in Western Australia.

Although I have not had an opportunity to travel overseas, I have moved about to some extent in the other States of the Commonwealth and I know that tourist facilities in Western Australia are deplorable. Our hotel accommodation is extremely poor. Outside the metropolitan area—where there are a few reasonably good hotels—most of our licensed premises are of a very low standard.

A few months ago I had a quick trip through the South-West and although I booked several days ahead the conditions at the hotels in which I stayed were not such as would induce a visitor to return to them. Although it was winter time and there was plenty of water available, in no instance did I find soap provided in the bathrooms. I think the Licensing Court should pay strict attention to such details, as it is most uncomfortable to have to go to the corner shop and buy soap before having a bath in a hotel.

The standard of meals at some of these hotels also left much to be desired. The staff did not seem to concern themselves about the comfort of guests. In spite of the fact that it was a very cold night, I had to spend most of my time at one hotel stoking the fire with green mill ends because there seemed to be no employee whose duty it was to do that and most of the guests apparently preferred to go to bed rather than stay in a cold room. I might add that even the bedrooms were without heating facilities.

All such shortcomings must be remedied before visitors will recommend our tourist resorts. At the time of my visit the roads were in good condition, due mainly to the efforts of the Main Roads Department, which has done an excellent job although there is still room for improvement in that regard. Sign posts have been mentioned this evening, and I agree that there is little to guide any traveller in the south-west portion of this State—that is, after one leaves a 30-mile radius from Perth.

Most of the signs within that distance are provided by the R.A.C. and although that organisation does give some information on its signs, they are erected in a rather unattractive way and one has to stop and look closely at them before being able to read the directions. Some years ago I advocated the adoption throughout Australia of the international standard code for our sign posts. We hope to get more and more overseas tourists and, even though they could not speak English, the adoption of the international code would at least allow them to understand our road signs.

Admittedly, we have the Australian standard code, but it is not uniform with that used in other parts of the world. The adoption of the international code is desirable not only from the tourist point of view, but also in the interests of road safety. For instance, the international code

prescribes a rail crossing sign showing a railway engine and even the youngest child would understand what that represented and would expect the sign to indicate danger from railway engines. To a person who cannot read English our railway crossing signs mean nothing.

One of the local authorities in my electorate has attempted to do something in the matter of sign posts and has spent a considerable sum in that direction. It tried to enlist the aid of some outside bodies in regard to both advice and financial assistance. The R.A.C. considered it was already doing all it could. I am not sure what the reaction of the Tourist Bureau was, but the local authority concerned did get some financial assistance from one of the oil companies, and the money is being used in erecting a number of signs which I think could well be copied in other parts of the State.

The sign posts can be read at a glance and the one sign post gives all the necessary information as to where the roads concerned lead to. Unfortunately those signs cost £5 or £6 each, even when made locally and so we could not expect local authorities to provide many of them. The local authority I mentioned is attempting to erect 50 of these signs and the oil company concerned is paying £2 towards the cost of each of them. That lead could well be followed by other local governing bodies.

Much could be done by the local authorities in conjunction with the Tourist Bureau to develop our tourist attractions, as the member for Vasse indicated, in regard to the historic significance of certain land marks and other features in this State. One deplores vandalism. The local authority at York recently erected a plaque to indicate the spot where Her Majesty had afternoon tea during her visit to this State and her trip through that district, but a vandal took the plaque away.

It is to be deplored that we have among us people of such low mentality and of such a destructive nature. There is much room for improvement in our hotel accommodation and in the meals provided by both hotels and eating-houses. I have in mind certain places in the hills which are noted as attractions for half-day tourists, in the Canning Dam area and at Araluen, which has been made so attractive by the Y.A.L. The Tourist Bureau, in conjunction with the State Gardens Board, could develop further the approaches to, and the surroundings of, the Canning Dam, as is being done at Mundaring Weir and could well encourage private enterprise to cater for meals for tourists.

The State Gardens Board and, I think, the Water Supply Department are making the surroundings of Mundaring Weir attractive and that will pay dividends.

The hotel there has always done its best to cater for the tourist traffic and is to be commended on its efforts. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the Tourist Bureau should co-operate with the Licensing Court to ensure that attractive meals are provided and that liquor is supplied with them. In other parts of the world where the licensing laws are far more liberal than those of Australia, provision is made in that way to attract tourists.

I hope the Tourist Bureau will leave no stone unturned in its effort to attract tourists to our beauty spots, particularly those from the Eastern States, and overseas, because it will bring more capital into our State, and we could do with that. It is one of the activities that will grow, and the more money we spend in that direction, the more we will collect as a result.

Progress reported till a later stage of the sitting.

(Continued on page 3721.)

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 24 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Labour in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2, page 2—Delete all words in the clause after the word "of" in line 6 and substitute the following:—

weekly payments and of the additional payments in respect of dependants referred to in paragraph (c) of Clause 1 of the First Schedule to the principal Act and the total liability of the employer in respect thereof is amended whether by or pursuant to this Act or by any subsequent Act the provisions of subsections (2), (3) and (4) of this section shall apply.

(2) Notwithstanding any rule of law or construction to the contrary, or an agreement which provides otherwise the worker shall be entitled after the coming into operation of the amendment to receive weekly payments (including payments in respect of dependants) at the amended rate or amount and the employer's total liability in respect thereof and under Subsection (3) of Section 7 of this Act shall be the amended total liability less the total of such payments made to the worker prior to the date the amendment becomes operative irrespective of whether the injury giving rise to the liability of the employer was caused to the worker before or after coming into operation of the amendment unless this section provides otherwise.

(3) Subsection (2) of this section does not apply to payments due in respect of any week commencing before the coming into operation of the amendment nor where, prior to the coming into operation of the amendment—

- (i) the employer's liability for future weekly payments has been determined by the board as an ascertained sum payable by way of redemption; or
- (ii) the employer's liability has been agreed as a sum payable by way of redemption by an agreement binding on the parties to it and registered under this Act as an agreement before or within fourteen days after the coming into operation of the amendment.

(4) A policy of insurance mentioned in Subsection (1) of Section 13 of this Act is deemed to include a provision that where during the currency of the policy the rate or amount of weekly payments and additional payments in respect of dependants and the total liability of the employer in respect thereof is amended pursuant to this or by any amending Act the employer shall be insured in respect of liability for the amended rate or amount. This subsection shall have effect notwithstanding any rule of law or construction or a provision in the policy or any other agreement to the contrary.

(5) Where after the coming into operation of this Act the Court of Arbitration declares a basic wage differing in amount by more than five per centum from the amount of the basic wage as last declared by it prior to the coming into operation of this Act or from the amount of the last basic wage declared by it which led to an alteration in the amount of payments, allowances and benefits under this Act in accordance with the provisions of this subsection hereinafter contained the amount of all payments, allowances and benefits being specific sums payable to a worker under this Act and all specific sums representing the maximum entitlement of the worker or the maximum liability of an employer thereunder shall be increased or decreased in proportion to any such alteration in the basic wage provided that nothing in this subsection shall render an employer liable to pay any increased payment, allowance or benefit in respect of an accident occurring prior to the date on which the increase became operative except pursuant to Subsection (2) hereof.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Having studied the clause I feel it would be a retrograde step to accept it. If I asked half a dozen members to give their interpretation of it, we would get half a dozen different interpretations. Under Section 7 (3) a worker, having lost a limb, would be entitled to, say, £1,400; having received £800 in weekly payments, he would still be entitled to £600. But under this interpretation, there is a difference between the total amended liability and the employers' amended liability.

The Bill seeks to grant the injured worker, prior to the passing of this Act, amended rates of pay and compensation. I would refer members to Subclause (2) which the Council desires to insert. Section 7, Subsection (3) provides—

Notwithstanding the provisions of the First Schedule to this Act, the compensation payable for the injuries mentioned in the first column of the table set out in the Second Schedule to this Act shall, subject to the provisions of this Act relating to that Second Schedule, be the amounts indicated in the second column thereof.

What follows is very important.

Nothing in the said table shall limit the amount of compensation payable for such injury during any period of total incapacity resulting from that injury and any sum so paid shall not be deducted from the compensation payable in accordance with the said table except in the case where and then only to the extent that the total of one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds would be exceeded otherwise.

I will give two examples to show the interpretation that can be placed on the words "amended total liability," and the "employers' total liability." Assuming the Council's amendment were agreed to, the amended total liability would be £2,400, less weekly payments prior to the amendment becoming operative, of £1,200, which leaves a balance of £1,200. That is the employers' total liability.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Even if the £1,200 has not been paid?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: That is my interpretation. Of course, one equals the other, and the employer would not have to pay any more than £1,200, which he has already paid in weekly payments. The amendment would override Section 7 (3). If the worker received £1,200 in weekly payments, he would still be entitled to the balance of the total of £2,400. That is the interpretation placed on it, and I suggest it cannot be agreed to. A right-handed worker who lost his right arm would, under

the present Act, be entitled to weekly payments of, say, £700, and a lump sum of £1,400. He would be entitled to an amount of £2,100 and the amount he draws in weekly payments would not be deducted from the total payable. He would be entitled to £1,400 as a lump sum.

Under this amendment the amended total liability would be £2,400, less weekly payments of, say, £700. The employers' total liability is £1,700 and as the worker has already received £700 by way of weekly payments, he would be entitled to a lump sum of £1,000 under the present Act, or £1,700 under the amendment. I cannot agree to this without having further legal advice and without an explanation from the sponsor of it.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 3, page 3—Delete paragraph (a) and substitute the following:—

(a) inserting a new definition after the word "intended" in line 3 of the section as follows:—

"basic wage" means in the case of a male worker the basic wage for the time being payable in respect of the metropolitan area of Perth to an adult male worker as determined or deemed to be determined by the Court of Arbitration under Part VII. of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1952, and in the case of a female worker the basic wage for the time being payable in respect of such area to an adult female worker as determined or deemed to be determined by such court as aforesaid.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The Bill refers to the definition of "dependants" and has regard to the payment of compensation to workers who are injured in this State but whose dependants are overseas. The Council wants to delete that, and I cannot agree. All that is provided is that workers injured in this State whose dependants are overseas shall be entitled to receive the dependants' allowance, the same as everybody else. If death results from injury, the dependants receive compensation, but if the worker is incapacitated from earning wages, they are not entitled to dependants' allowances.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 3, page 3—Delete paragraph (b) and substitute the following:—

(b) deleting the words "any person whose remuneration does not exceed one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds a year or" in

lines 1, 2 and 3; the words "whose earnings do not exceed one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds a year" in lines 79, 80 and 81 and the words "whose rate of remuneration does not exceed one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds a year" in lines 82, 83, 84 and 85 of the interpretation of "worker."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This refers to the limit of earnings. At present the Act provides that a worker is regarded as one whose annual income as an employee does not exceed £1,250. The Bill provides for an increase to £2,000, but the Council's amendment provides for no limit to the definition of worker; he can earn £2,000 or £5,000. The point is that the premium would only be payable in respect of £1,250.

Mr. COURT: I do not quite follow the Minister's argument on the previous amendment. We have not got the Council's amendment before us and it is a little difficult to follow the debate.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It has been put and not agreed to.

Mr. COURT: I would like to make the point that some of these amendments are very involved and it is difficult to enter the debate on them. The mere fact that I have not risen to speak on previous amendments is that I cannot absorb their import at such quick notice.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I secured a copy of the Minutes of the Legislative Council, which contain particulars of the amendments, and I studied them. The Bill, in Clause 3, proposed to amend Section 5, which refers to definitions in the Act. It had relationship to dependants overseas.

Mr. Court: I see the point now.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The Council's amendment provided for the deletion of the provision in the Bill, and something else was inserted in regard to the definition of "basic wage."

Mr. Court: Are you surrendering the basic wage principle?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: No. We are disagreeing. If this measure is taken to a conference, the matter of the basic wage will be a different matter altogether. At this moment, I am disagreeing with the deletion by the Council of the provision in the Bill as it left here.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 4—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

This has relation to the payments of dependants' allowances and compensation to injured workers whose relatives may be overseas.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 5. Clause 5, page 4—Delete paragraph (a) and substitute the following—

(a) Adding after Subsection (1) the following subsection:—

(1a) Without limiting the generality of Subsection (1) of this section but subject to the provisions of this subsection a worker is deemed to have suffered personal injury by accident arising out of or in the course of his employment where he suffers an injury without his own default or wilful act while the worker during the ordinary working hours of the establishment of his employer in which he is employed is travelling between such establishment and any trade, technical or other training school which he is required to attend by the terms of his employment or as an apprentice or between such trade, technical or other school and such establishment or is in attendance at any such school provided that any injury incurred while so travelling is not incurred during or after any substantial interruption of or substantial deviation from his journey made for reasons unconnected with his attendance at the school or place as the case may be.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This deals with what has become known as the "to-and-from" clause. It has relation to the insurance cover for workers travelling to and from their place of employment. The Council deleted the provision in the Bill and inserted an amendment dealing with apprentices travelling from their place of employment to a trade or technical school. I am not opposed to that provision; but the provision in the Bill has been rejected, and I propose not to accept the Council's amendment. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

I understand that the Council's amendment is hardly necessary, because under Section 7 of the Act any person who was carrying out duties normally entrusted to him, or who was acting under his employer's instructions, would be entitled to compensation. One of the conditions of employment of apprentices is that they shall attend a trade school half a day a week or a day a fortnight, and they would

be covered if legitimately travelling to and from that school and their place of employment.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I find it difficult to follow the Minister, but I fully appreciate he is also under great difficulties. It would seem that the Minister disagrees with so many of the Council's amendments that he assumes there will be a conference. If the Minister has made up his mind that the Bill is going to a conference, it is no good me or anyone else getting up and arguing for a lengthy period the merits of the Minister's proposal to reject the amendments.

During his remarks, I understood him to say, in connection with the provision the Council proposed should be inserted relative to the basic wage, that his view of the amendments was such that he could not agree to many of them, and that he did not expect the Council to agree with his point of view, as a result of which there would be a conference and the matter would be adjusted then. If that is his attitude, it is no good our wasting the time of the Committee by arguing with him. The only reason I am speaking now is to make my attitude quite clear.

However, I think that this amendment could be accepted. The Bill contained provision to cover people travelling to and from their place of employment. That has been deleted by the Council, and I think we should accept that amendment. The provision has been found unsatisfactory in other States. A man dies one step outside his house from heart disease, and his widow receives compensation. If he dropped dead inside the gate she would get nothing. That is a case that actually happened.

This provision has led to a lot of litigation. Is there any reason why an employer should insure a worker when that worker is not under his control? None whatever, so far as I can see. It might as well be said that he must be insured during the whole of his existence.

Mr. MOIR: The member for Mt. Lawley is completely illogical in this matter. Here we have a proposal that was carried by this Chamber and disagreed to by the Legislative Council. The amendment made by the Council covers the principle we argued here and agreed to, but the Council wants that principle applied only in part.

The hon. member referred to this provision having caused a lot of trouble in the Eastern States. It has been in the New South Wales Act for upwards of 20 years. If it had caused a lot of trouble, does the hon. member not think it would have been deleted a long time ago. But it is still in the Act. Victoria incorporated the same provision in its Act after the experience of New South Wales. The

hon. member said there is always legal argument about this provision. He knows full well there is legal argument about other provisions in the Act.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: No, I do not.

Mr. MOIR: I would say there was hardly a provision that has not been contested.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Not the legal side.

Mr. MOIR: Before the Workers' Compensation Board.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Not the legal aspect.

Mr. MOIR: The argument as to whether a man comes within the provisions of the Act or not when an accident takes place is heard all the time. As to employers not having control of workers all the time, I would point out that there are many industries where employers have not direct control of their workers all through the working day. For instance, a miner might be working alone for the better part of his shift, being visited only once in 7½ hours, and then only for a few minutes. For the rest of the time he controls himself; but we never hear arguments about that. Many companies cover staff members for 24 hours a day—and for two-thirds of the time they have no control of them.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: What do they insure them against?

Mr. MOIR: Against personal injury by accident.

Mr. Court: That is regarded as one of the emoluments of office.

Mr. MOIR: What about giving some of the emoluments of office to the workers! They are just as worthy of it. Men who toil to produce profits for industry are just as much entitled to such benefits as the men who direct the operations.

Mr. Court: They get their agreed emoluments. It is a method of remunerating certain of these people. Some of the higher executives have that cover because they travel interstate on the firm's business.

Mr. MOIR: One of the industries I am referring to is the mining industry. Workers who come under the provisions of the Act are not covered, whereas a clerk in the office probably is. The employer will do that voluntarily, yet presumably he objects to this clause. The arguments put forward by the member for Mt. Lawley do not make sense to me. A principle is involved, and we cannot agree to half of it and reject the other half.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I agree with the Minister that this does not carry the matter any further than it is in the Act.

Mr. MOIR: The intention is expressed there.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: They are not protected travelling to and from home, but they are when, in the course of their employment, they go to the technical school.

Mr. MOIR: The member for Mt. Lawley can talk about this for the next hour, and he will not convince me if he uses that line of argument.

Mr. MAY: The Legislative Council should be consistent. It has already agreed that apprentices shall be covered.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: No, it has not.

Mr. MAY: I understand that when they go from their place of employment to the technical school, they are covered.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: They are now, and so is any other man under those conditions.

Mr. MAY: No other man goes to the technical school.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: If he goes anywhere in the course of his job.

Mr. MAY: It is only within the last two or three weeks that the Council agreed that a man going to and from a bush fire should be covered by workers' compensation. There is nothing consistent about its attitude in connection with this aspect. I can prove that in two instances the Legislative Council has agreed that a man should be covered when going to and from his employment, yet there is all this argument about a man in industry. One of the first principles to be observed is to ensure that a man travels to and from his work safely because that has everything to do with the employer. If he does not get to his work, the employer suffers.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: If he does not remain well during the night, he would not be there the next day.

Mr. MAY: If he gets injured and is away from work, the employer's operations are upset. A big principle is involved here and there is every justification for a man to be covered when travelling to and from his employment. If it is good enough for a man to be covered when attending a bush fire away from his employment, it is also good enough for an employee to be covered.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 6. Clause 5, page 5—Delete the words "two thousand eight hundred" in lines 31 and 32, and substitute the words "two thousand four hundred."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

This is a basic principle. The Bill provides for a maximum of £2,800, and the amendment stipulates £2,400. One reason why the amount of £2,800 was agreed upon by the Government is that it represented what might be termed the figure which has been adopted by Queensland and Victoria. New South Wales is unlimited with regard to the amount, and Tasmania provides for £2,340, and in certain cases compensation of over £4,000 can be paid. Because of the present-day trend in prices and wages £2,800 is a modest amount for a worker who is totally and permanently incapacitated in the course of his employment.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It must be remembered that a new principle has been introduced into the Bill by the Council, which is that the base amounts shall vary according to the basic wage. I do not know whether the Minister is going to accept that principle, but if he does the amount of £2,400 is not unreasonable. If the basic wage goes up—

Mr. Moir: Sometimes it comes down.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is so. If it goes up, then all these amendments will go up with it. The existing Act provides for £2,100; the Council proposes an increase to £2,400, and the Government wants £2,800. In view of the other favourable provisions that have been inserted by the Council, I do not think this is unreasonable. It is extremely unlikely that the basic wage will fall, because the whole object of the Government today is to keep wages stable. I think we can accept the compromise put forward by the select committee which inquired into the matter.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 7. Clause 6, page 5—Delete the words "two thousand eight hundred" in line 37 and substitute the words "two thousand four hundred."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

This refers to exactly the same thing.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 8. Clause 7, page 6—Delete the words "two thousand eight hundred" in line 9 and substitute the words "two thousand four hundred."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This refers to Clause 7, which relates to the maximum payment. I move —

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 9. Clause 9, page 6—Delete paragraph (a) and substitute the following:—

(a) Deleting subparagraphs (i) and (ii) and the words "whichever is the larger sum" in line 23 of the paragraph and substituting:—

(i) in the case of an adult male worker of the sum of eight pounds sixteen shillings; and

(ii) in the case of an adult female worker of the sum of five pounds sixteen shillings.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The Bill provides for £9 a week or 75 per cent. of the average weekly earnings. The weekly payment is based on 66½ per cent. of the weekly earnings, with a maximum of £8 per week, or £10 a week for a worker with dependants. An important principle is involved in this amendment. The Council proposes to fix the weekly payments at £8 16s., maximum, for males without dependants, and £5 16s. for females. I am astounded that such a provision should find its way into the amendment.

One of the principles in workers' compensation is that a person who is injured in the course of his employment is subject to a maximum payment, but there would be a relation between his wages and that amount of the compensation. In other words, a man on £15 a week would receive higher compensation than a man on a lower wage. The argument has always been put forward that no man on compensation should receive the amount of the wages he was receiving when he was in employment, or an amount greater than his wages. The amendment of the Council makes a vital attack on the female workers of Western Australia. From the time that workers' compensation legislation was placed on the statute book in this State, as far as I know there was no discrimination between the compensation paid to an adult male or female worker without dependants.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: The weekly payments are different.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The weekly payments are based on the same principle and have been for years. Take the case of barmen and barmaids. They receive the same wages, and yet, under the present Act, if a barmaid without dependants is injured she would get £8 a week the same as a barman without dependants. Under this proposal the barman will receive £8 16s. and the barmaid £5 16s.

There are a number of widows who are working for their living and doing their best to educate their dependant children. Under this proposal if they meet with an injury they will receive, if they have no dependants, £5 16s. a week and if they have dependants they will get a maximum of £9 while a male will get a maximum of £12 8s. Is there any reason or justice in that? It is a distinct departure from the principles of compensation in this country and is an unfair discrimination against females.

Mr. McCulloch: What has happened to Clause 8 of the Bill? The Minister has not mentioned that.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: We are dealing with the Legislative Council's amendments; we are not dealing with each clause.

Mr. McCulloch: Have they not amended that clause?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: No. For the information of the hon. member, an amendment was moved to reduce the amount to £2,100 but on a division the Council decided to allow the £2,500 to stand.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: This is a compromise suggestion. At present a worker is entitled to 66½ per cent. of his wages paid in the week immediately preceding the accident. The Bill proposed to increase that to 75 per cent. As I understand it, the argument was that 66½ was not unreasonable and in some cases, if the Legislative Council's proposal is agreed to, he might get more or in some cases less than he does now. After all, I think it must be admitted that in some cases a female has not the same responsibilities as a man who is supporting a family.

The Minister for Labour: What about males and females without dependants?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: In the majority of cases males without dependants are trying to put themselves into a position where they will have dependants, while females are trying to put themselves into a position where they will be dependants. I think the Minister might give way on this.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 10. Clause 9, page 6—Delete the words "ten shillings" in line 34.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The Bill provides for an allowance of £2 10s. and the Council has reduced it to £2. This relates to the allowance for a dependent wife. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: As the Minister seems to be disagreeing with all amendments, it looks as though we will have a

conference. As I understand the Act, at present the figure is £1 16s. The Bill proposes £2 10s. and the Council's amendment reduces it to £2. This means that the Council has increased the present figure and apparently the select committee gave serious consideration to the proposal and heard a good deal of evidence about it.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 11. Clause 9, page 6—Delete paragraph (d) and substitute the following:—

- (d) Substituting for all the words from and including the words "weekly payments" in line 36 to and including the words "two thousand and one hundred pounds" in lines 47 and 48 of the paragraph the words:—"weekly payments including payments in respect of dependants shall not exceed in the case of a male worker twelve pounds eight shillings and in the case of a female worker nine pounds and in the case of a worker whose average weekly earnings at the date of the accident are less than the basic wage that sum being not less than four pounds or where the average weekly earnings of the worker are less than four pounds then the average weekly earnings which bears the same proportion to the weekly payment (including payments for dependants) to which the worker would be entitled if his average weekly earnings were equal to the basic wage as the largest of the following amounts, that is to say—

- (I) the wages of the worker in the week immediately preceding the accident or if the worker has not been so long employed;
- (II) a full working week's wages exclusive of overtime at the rate of pay for the work at which he was employed at the time of the accident; or
- (III) his average weekly earnings during the previous twelve months if he has been so long employed by his employer at the date of the accident; or if not
- (IV) his average weekly earnings for any less period during which he has been in the employment of the same employer

bears to the basic wage. The total liability of the employer in respect of weekly payments including

payments for dependants shall not exceed two thousand four hundred pounds.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The clause as agreed to by the Assembly provided for a maximum payment to a worker without dependants, male or female, of £9 and for a worker with dependants a maximum of £12 16s. The Council's amendment provides for £8 16s. and £12 8s. I previously mentioned the discrimination against females. We could have the position of a widower with three children receiving a maximum of £12 16s. and a widow with three children receiving a maximum of £9. That is what the Council's amendment provides for. I do not think the women of this country would appreciate that and I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: There was a long debate on this point.

The Minister for Labour: Can you interpret the amendment?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am afraid not because I have not had time to go through it properly. It gives alternatives.

The Minister for Labour: What does it mean?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Let us look at Part (IV). I think this is trying to relate the figures to the provision in the legislation which says that the compensation payable shall vary according to the basic wage. That is what this proposes to do. I must admit that it is involved.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 12. Clause 9, page 7—Delete paragraph (e) and substitute the following:—

- (e) deleting proviso (a) to the paragraph.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The Bill provided for a maximum of £12 16s. and because of present-day costs, and the reduced purchasing power of money, and in view of what is likely to happen, I do not think any lesser amount should be agreed to. I put this to members: Only recently the Commonwealth Arbitration Court granted, by formula in regard to tradesmen in the metal trades, an increase in margins of 23s. a week and a proportionate increase to other tradesmen. Other unions have approached the court and it is likely that they will get similar increases. I suggest that the amount of £12 16s. is not exorbitant.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: This amendment relates to the previous provision. The weekly payment is to be varied according

to the basic wage. That being so, this provision was unnecessary. As a result, it was struck out by the Council and the alteration in the Bill was then covered by the amendment we have just dealt with.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 13. Clause 9, page 7—Delete paragraph (f).

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 14. Clause 9, page 7—Delete paragraph (g).

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The Bill provided for 75 per cent. of the average weekly earnings to be paid to the worker, following the principle adopted in the other States. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 15. Clause 9, page 7—Delete paragraph (h).

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This also has reference to the percentage of the average weekly earnings. The Bill sought to increase the amount to be paid to the worker from £3 12s. per week to £5 per week. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 16. Clause 9, page 7—Delete paragraph (i).

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The Act now provides that in the computation of the average weekly earnings, the board and lodging that is supplied to a worker is to be taken into account. This provision was placed in the Act some years ago and the existing amount is 30s. a week. The Bill proposes to increase it to £3 per week, which is quite reasonable. The Council has rejected the proposal. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think the Council was not unreasonable in rejecting this. Under the A.W.U. award a farmer can charge only 25s. a week for board and lodging, so why should a worker receive £3 per week? That is why, on general principles, to iron out all the anomalies, the Council has inserted a fixed amount and has deleted all other references in this amendment.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 17. Clause 9, page 7—Add a paragraph to stand as paragraph (j) as follows:—(j) substituting for the word "forty" in line thirty-two of the proviso (c) to paragraph (c) the word "fifty."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This refers to the amount of funeral expenses allowed to the dependant of a deceased worker or the person responsible for the burial. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 18. Clause 11—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The principle of this amendment has been dealt with previously. Again it refers to the percentage of the average weekly earnings to which a worker should be entitled. By the Bill it was proposed to increase it from 66½ per cent. to 75 per cent., but the Council has deleted the clause. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 19. Clause 13, page 8—Delete all words in the clause after the word "is" in line two and substitute the following:—"repealed and reenacted as follows:—Provided that where the worker was at the date of the accident under twenty-one years of age and his average weekly earnings were less than the basic wage at that date and the review takes place more than twelve months after the accident the weekly payment may be increased to any amount not exceeding the amount to which the worker would have been entitled at the date of review by way of weekly payments including payments for dependants in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (c) of Clause 1 of the schedule if at the date of the accident the worker had been earning the amount he probably would have been earning at the date of the review if he had remained uninjured."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

This, too, relates to the percentage of the average weekly earnings. The Council has struck the clause out.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 20. Clause 14, page 8—Delete the word "eight" in line 7 and substitute the word "four."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I regret I cannot agree with this amendment. The Council has reduced the amount from £2,800 to £2,400. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 21. Clause 15, page 8—Delete all the figures in the second column and substitute the following:—

£
2,400
2,400
2,400
2,400
2,400
2,400
1,920
1,795
1,680
1,555
1,795
1,440
1,795
1,440
1,440
480
960
960
720
625
480
380
380
190
285
260
480
240
140
45
2,400
960

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

This amendment relates to the Second Schedule payments and as the maximum is £2,800 and the other items stem from that amount, I regret I cannot agree to the amendment.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I merely repeat what I said before. The select committee suggested £2,800 should be the maximum amount to commence the schedule and that the other items would follow accordingly. The Council has reduced the maximum amount to £2,400. It was £1,750 before.

The Minister for Labour: You said that the maximum was £2,100.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I was wrong.

The Minister for Labour: It is in some cases.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It was £1,700 and it was proposed to increase that amount to £2,800. Therefore, the Council by decreasing the amount to £2,400, has gone more than half way.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 22. New clause—Insert a clause after Clause 7, to stand as Clause 8, as follows:—

Subsection (3) of Section 13 is amended by inserting after the word "insurer" in line 9 the words "no employer in compiling such statement shall be obliged to take into account that portion of the wages of any worker which exceeds or which he estimates will exceed the sum of twenty-five pounds per week and."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This is a new clause and refers to the premiums payable on aggregate wages. That is the provision in the Act and as there will be no limit on the earnings of the worker, the amendment by the Council provides that premiums shall be payable by an employer only up to a total of £1,250. If a worker is receiving £2,000, premiums will be paid by the employer only in respect of a maximum amount of £1,250.

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

No. 23. New clause—Insert a clause after the new Clause 8, to stand as Clause 9, as follows:—

Subparagraph (iv) of paragraph (b) of Subsection (1) of Section 30 is amended by inserting after the word "wages" in line 3 the words "(up to a maximum of twenty-five pounds per week in respect of each worker)."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This amendment refers to Section 30 of the Act which also deals with the computation of premiums and the basis which the Premiums Rates Committee has to follow.

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

No. 24. New clause—Insert a clause after Clause 9, to stand as Clause 10, as follows:—

Paragraph (c) to the proviso to paragraph (c) of Clause 1 of the First Schedule to the principal Act is amended by—

- (a) deleting the words "artificial limbs" in lines fifteen and sixteen;
- (b) deleting all words in the last eight lines of the paragraph and substituting the following:—"and any surgical appliance or artificial limb can be procured to relieve such disablement he shall be entitled to the cost of such appliance or artificial limb provided that the artificial limb

shall be in accordance with the standards laid down by the Commonwealth artificial limb factory."

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to. There is some misunderstanding with regard to the schedule now with reference to medical and hospital expenses having to be used by an injured worker to purchase an artificial limb. The interpretation which the State Insurance Office and I placed on it was that a man was to be paid up to £50 for an artificial limb exclusive of the amount allowed him for medical expenses. In some quarters it has been interpreted differently. The amendment passed by the Council will mean that any person who is required to obtain an artificial limb and it is proved that it will help him, will be entitled to the cost of that limb, and that such artificial limb shall conform to the standard laid down by the Commonwealth artificial limb factory.

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

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of the Minister for Labour, Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, and Mr. Moir drew up reasons for not agreeing to certain of the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILLS (4)—RETURNED.

- 1, Petroleum Act Amendment.
- 2, Dried Fruits Act Amendment.
- 3, Road Closure.
- 4, Canning Lands Revestment.
Without amendment.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 3—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. WILD: I think we should agree to the amendment. I have already traversed the reasons why we should not agree to the final three clauses of the Bill, and that view has been endorsed by another place.

Mr. MAY: The principal reason advanced by the member for Dale against the repeal of this section of the Act was that the Coal Industry Tribunal was unable to deal effectively with matters which would disturb the economy of the State. It is strange that the very week after that argument was adduced, the chairman of the Coal Industry Tribunal gave his decision in regard to the claim for a 35-hour week. I propose to read an article which appeared in "The West Australian" of the 3rd December. It is as follows:—

An application by the coal mining unions at Collie for a 35-hour week was dismissed today by the Coal Industry Tribunal.

The claim first came before the tribunal some months ago and the hearing was completed only recently. In refusing the claim, the chairman (Mr. W. J. Wallwork) said that it was obvious that a reduction of hours in the coal industry would result in reduced output. Consequently, that would cause an increase in costs.

It was vital that there should be no increase at present in coalmining costs at Collie other than those that would normally follow industrial trends, such as an increase in the basic wage or possible increases in margins.

The member for Dale was emphatic that the chairman of the Coal Industry Tribunal did not take into consideration the State's economy when making his decisions. The member for Dale was quite wrong and, after having read this newspaper article, he obviously has not a leg to stand on. The Coal Industry Tribunal has always given due consideration to the effect on the economy of the State when it has made its decisions.

Mr. Court: I do not think he said it would ignore the effect on the economy.

Mr. MAY: I did not use the word "ignore."

Mr. Court: He said it would be less competent than the Arbitration Court.

Mr. MAY: As I pointed out to the hon. member, I have not used the word "ignore." The member for Dale said the Coal Industry Tribunal was not able to appreciate the consequence of its decisions on the economy of the State. I said that the Coal Industry Tribunal is a set-up with power to appoint boards of reference to deal with all matters affecting the coalmining industry. Any appeal can lie from the decisions of a board of reference to the Coal Industry Tribunal. Consequently, it is ridiculous that another appeal should lie to the Arbitration Court. There is no necessity for it, and the principal argument against it was that the tribunal did not have enough knowledge, in effect, to study its decision in relation to the economy of the State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Collie has given a very good reason why we should not agree to the Council's amendment. The Coal Industry Tribunal is a responsible body, fully acquainted with the position surrounding a somewhat different industry, and its rulings in matters concerning the industry should be paramount, and should not be referred to the Arbitration Court.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 4—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 5—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This is a consequential amendment, and I move—

The amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of the Minister for Mines, Mr. May and Mr. Wild, drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES 1954-55.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting; Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair.

Vote—Tourist Bureau, £30,992 (partly considered):

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. L. F. Kelly—Merredin—Yilgarn—in reply) [11.50]: I desire to express appreciation of the interesting matters brought up in the discussion of this vote. The member for Nedlands spoke at some length about the development of the tourist trade. I think he was slightly critical of the tempo at which the tourist business has been developed in this State, and he seemed to be of the opinion that the provision of finance was a much easier proposition than the previous Treasurer realised it was, or than the present Treasurer is prepared to admit.

Over a period of years, the Tourist Bureau could rightly have been referred to as the Cinderella department in the eyes of most Governments. On many occasions this Chamber has been regaled

with the opinions of members—myself included—as to the great importance attaching to the tourist trade. We have seen how in many parts of the world, and in many parts of Australia the tourist trade has been stepped up and magnified many times as the years have gone by, and as more modern methods have been developed. This State is no exception in the matter of opportunity for the development of the tourist trade. We have for a long time realised that that opportunity has been very great.

A wide diversity of attractions is available throughout the State; and I can assure the hon. member for Nedlands that so far as the approach to the development of the tourist trade in this State is concerned, the only limiting factor is that of finance. He commented on the assistance the Government should give to various centres. In that connection I would point out that three branches of the Tourist Bureau are functioning—one at Geraldton, one at Albany and one at Bunbury. There is a grant in the Estimates of £2,000, and £500 is available to any branch, the only stipulation being that the branch shall raise £1 for every 10s. contributed by the Government. In other words, the branch would raise £1,000 for a contribution by the Government of £500.

One of the places the hon. member mentioned was Albany—and I think that that centre was also mentioned by the member for Vasse—as being one of the places that should receive greater assistance from the Government. It is rather remarkable that Albany should have been selected, because of the three assisted branches, Albany was the only one that did not raise its quota. In other words Albany did not help itself to the degree that Geraldton and Bunbury did during the past 12 months.

Mr. Court: I was not criticising the service given by the Tourist Bureau. I think we are as far ahead as we can go with the facilities we have to offer. What I am concerned about is that when one gets to many of the lovely parts that can be seen, one finds they are serviced by very bad roads, for instance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The success of a tourist branch is largely wrapped up with the enthusiasm of the local people, and particularly the business people, in the centre. The point I was wanting to make was that Albany did not raise the amount of money required to enable it to obtain the maximum Government grant. It was entitled to £500 on the basis of 10s. for every £1 it raised, but it was able to collect only £75 by way of Government assistance. We all realise what a great potential there is in that area in the way of attractions, and I feel that the local people should not only be able to draw on the Government to the full extent, but

should be hammering at the door for more money on a similar basis. I would be very much happier if that were the case.

Reference was made by the member for Guildford-Midland to the possibilities of encouraging tourists to visit the Swan River. He spoke of the attraction which centres of historic importance would have, and of the scenic value of other parts of the river. It has to be realised that people come to this State from other parts of Australia where there are attractions similar to those which are available here, and it is somewhat difficult to provide something to interest them that is a departure from the normal.

However, interstate and overseas travellers are catered for to a considerable extent. We have what are known as spring-time tours that are conducted after lengthy preparation by way of advertising in the other States, and much publicity is given to the attractiveness of such tours. Sometimes we have had as many as four or five of these tours conducted in that period of the year. Members will have noticed that there is to be an increase in the number to be conducted in the coming 12 months.

I propose to give members some idea of the coverage given by one of these tours, because members have remarked that the department could do a lot more than it does. As a matter of fact, the member for Moore was rather critical, and said we do nothing at all. He said we do not make use of our tourist attractions, and enumerated one or two instances where he said the department could show a lot more interest and do a certain amount in the way of encouraging people to come to this State.

The spring tours are similar to those conducted in the summer. During the summer the numbers of tours is a little in excess of that of the spring-time. The programme, the details of which I am about to give, covers a period of 16 days. The first portion is a suburban tour embracing practically the whole of the metropolitan area or, shall I say, the whole of Greater Perth, as we have come to regard Perth and its environs in the near metropolitan area. The Swan River scenic drive, is one that practically encircles the river. Then the metropolitan beaches, including a visit to the Cottesloe Civic Centre, are viewed.

The member for Darling Range mentioned that Canning Dam was not being fully treated. Both Canning Dam and Araluén are given full coverage. This section is greatly appreciated. We glean that knowledge from the letters received from people who subsequently write and comment on the interesting parts of their trip. A whole day is devoted to Yanchep Park and the caves. Jarrahdale and Serpentine

Falls are visited as well as are Mundaring Weir and National Park. Another tour is conducted through Armadale, Pinjarra and Donnybrook and then on to Bridgetown, Manjimup and Pemberton, so that interesting and important parts of the State are covered.

Mr. May: The tourists would not enjoy the ride through Pinjarra.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Take no notice of him!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The tourists inspect the hatcheries and the set-up generally in Pemberton, including the saw-mills, Fonty's Pool, the Cascades and the tobacco plantations. They then go through Shannon's mill, Nornalup, Denmark and on to Albany. They stay in Albany for a day and a half and visit all the main attractions there. The return trip is made through Katanning, Pingelly, Wagin, Narrogin, Beverley and York and so on to Perth.

Some mention was made about more river cruises. So far the upper reaches of the river have not been included in any of the trips because there are disadvantages and obstacles in going very far up the river with the type of craft that would be needed to take a number of tourists. If we had enough 12ft. boats, we could take a number of tourists.

Mr. Court: You would need to know the way.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, or we would be on a mud bank in no time. Nevertheless, quite an extensive launch tour is arranged, and it occupies two-thirds of the day. Finally, the member for Moore made some comment about the beauties of King's Park. King's Park is inspected during the course of one of the tours and not only in the day but at night. The final view of Perth that our visitors get is from King's Park in the evening. We look after our visitors at all times. The coverage from the point of view of the tourist is very complete. Some spots may not be included, but the 16-day tour that I have described gives an indication of what we have to offer. Many of our attractions are replicas of what is evident in some of the other States, but perhaps in a slightly different or more rugged form.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke of more publicity being made available to passengers on liners. I do not know that we have a complete coverage in that respect, but we have some on most of the overseas vessels, and we have a big coverage in the Eastern States in hotels and such like places. Much of the publicity that comes from Western Australia is placed in the lounges in the little containers that hotels have for tourist pamphlets, and it is understandable that most hotels give the best display to their own State.

They would seek to entice whatever capital is to be spent by the tourist to be expended within their own State.

Hotels in Victoria are not keen to advocate that people should come to Western Australia and spend their cash. Very frequently the Western Australian publicity is given a secondary position in the hotels there. On the other hand, some of them give equal display to the literature of all the States.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Accommodation is one of your most difficult problems.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will come to that point. We have an extensive advertising campaign. Many leaflets are published from time to time. During the current year between 45 and 50 have been put out. I have 44 of them here, and they are done up in a most attractive form. Many of them are on display in the other States and on some boats. If the Treasurer could be persuaded to double our publicity vote, we would be happy to give even better service than we have in the past.

The matter of hotel accommodation is a live problem, not only in this State, but throughout the whole of the Commonwealth. Those who went to the Coronation will realise that unless accommodation had been arranged for them, their position would have been very difficult. Another point is that the accommodation that is available here is frequently not of a high standard. The suggestion has been made that we should have our hotels examined by a competent authority and graded (a), (b) or (c) so that tourists would know which offered the best type of accommodation.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: That happens in quite a number of countries.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I believe it does, but it is something that would be hard to implement here, because we probably have only one grade at the present time, and it is rather indifferent. There does not seem to be any great urge by private enterprise to embark on a hotel-building programme to cater for tourists, but I think if someone were interested enough to establish a chain of hotels in places where tourists from the other parts of Australia and overseas could be certain of getting first-class accommodation, he would find that his project would pay dividends. The member for Middle Swan and the member for Darling Range made some comment about sign posts. I agree that this is something to which attention could be given, not only by the Tourist Department but by other departments. The Main Roads Department could do a tremendous lot in this way.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: And the local authorities.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. Something could be done on a standard basis to place this State in a good position from the point of view of directions. Prior to the war many oil companies and local authorities, and to some extent the Main Roads Department, distributed signs fairly liberally throughout the State. That was of great advantage, not only to visitors, but also to Western Australians because many of our own people do not know a great deal about the State. There must be a big stack of signs somewhere because during the war period the military authorities pulled them all down, although in many cases they took the mileage signs away and left the destination mileage sign on the post.

The same position prevailed with regard to many of the town names that were removed from sidings. In the town of "Woop-Woop", for instance, although the name was removed from the railway station, every second building would have the name on it because there would be the "Woop-Woop" bakery, etc. I think the removal of these signs, particularly the road signs, did not serve a very good purpose.

I take exception to the comment passed by the member for Moore, and I am sorry he is not in his seat at the moment. He said that the treatment at the Tourist Bureau was poor. I am certain that is the only time I have ever heard any such comment. The majority of people are always delighted at what is done for them by our tourist officers. Visitors from all parts of the world have expressed their appreciation of the treatment they have received from the staff at the bureau. All the officers, down to the youngest cadet, are well spoken of. If any hon. member decides to go, unknown, to the bureau to test what I am saying, he will find I am speaking the truth because he will see that those officers are courteous and show a desire to help. Members would not be able to fault the treatment meted out to them.

Mr. Nalder: That is far from the treatment I received some years ago.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: How long ago?

Mr. Nalder: About four years or so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That may be, but not now. The member for Hannans talked of a "See W.A. First" attitude. I heartily endorse his remarks regarding the possibility of embarking on a plan that would enable the people of the Goldfields, or any other part of Western Australia, to visit some other portion which they had not seen but had heard so much about. I think the matter could be looked into and possibly something could be done which would satisfy the desires of the hon. member. It would be much appreciated by many people in different parts of the State.

Mr. Bovell: What are the possibilities of securing funds from the Main Roads Department to develop some of our tracks?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I think it is largely a matter of finance. Approaches have been made to the Main Roads Department from time to time not only regarding roads for tourists but also roads which would be of benefit to industry. But finance is the limiting factor. We are repeatedly trying to get better roads for the inaccessible areas of this State, particularly when the roads are used by fishermen and people in industry to enable them to get to their respective areas of operation.

The member for Darling Range also spoke of Government assistance to local governing bodies. I have dealt with that to some extent and I think those authorities would be part and parcel of a general overall scheme embracing a number of departments which would all be concerned with a policy for a standardisation of our road signs. I do not think that the Tourist Bureau should be strangled for want of finance. Tourists bring to this State large sums of money and if we can increase the number of tourists we will be improving our financial outlook. To give members some idea of the increased activities of the bureau, the collections by way of fares paid for services rendered and so on amounted to £88,928 eight years ago. At present the figure is £248,687. As regards commission on the money received, the sum has increased from £3,799 eight years ago to £12,828 now.

While the volume of business is increasing, the money made available to the Tourist Bureau has not increased in the same proportion. If it had been, the bureau would have been in a healthy financial position today. During the same period the money allocated has increased from £13,000 to £29,000. That is only a little over double the amount. I can assure members that the Tourist Bureau is alive to the possibilities that exist with tourists coming to this State. Its officers are keen to advance in this direction and the one restraining factor is that of finance.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—North-West, £1,275,048:

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [12.20 a.m.]: I think something should be said on this vote because it is an important one and on this occasion is shown separately in the Estimates. It would be interesting to hear from the Minister what is happening in regard to the work of the research stations in the North. I had an opportunity of seeing what is being done on the station at Carnarvon and I have some appreciation of the value of the work being carried out. Most of it is in relation to the banana plantations and it is recognised that the research station has

carried out valuable work for the industry and has been a great help to the growers. Further experiments are taking place from time to time.

A few years ago I also had the opportunity of visiting the Ord River experimental station. A most important experiment is being carried out at that establishment and I would like some information about it. I want to know how the irrigation project is progressing. Has sufficient research work been carried out as yet and has any report been received in regard to it? Perhaps the Minister could tell us whether a report is likely to be issued. There are two other research stations, one at Woodstock and the other at Abydos. These were abandoned sheep stations and are, I think, in the electoral district of Mr. Speaker. When I was last in the North I met a gentleman who was working on these two properties and I understand that the research work being carried out there is mainly concerned with the finding of suitable pastures for the northern areas.

If it is possible to find suitable pastures it will make a great difference to the carrying capacity of the country. Whatever happens, I should think that for a long time to come these areas will have only a light carrying capacity, but if some grasses suitable to the area can be found it should make a great deal of difference. I have seen what happens to Birdwood and buffle grass. I think they are chance grasses which were brought in. They are prolific growers in areas that suit them and it would be interesting to know, from the expert advice obtained as a result of the work at the research stations, how far it is considered that these grasses can be spread and to what areas they might be adapted.

Anyone who takes an interest in North-West development must be concerned about the work of these research stations operating in our northern districts. Last year the expenditure on these stations was £45,740 and the estimate this year is nearly £50,000, an increase of just over £4,000. I think an increase in the funds for research work in these areas is justified. However, I hope that some information will be available, either tonight or by way of publication in the Press, regarding the success of the work being carried out.

I come now to another item under the heading of "Agriculture Protection Board." In 1953-54 the expenditure was £15,363 and the estimate for this year is £13,500, a decrease of £1,863. I am sorry to see this reduction because those who have a practical knowledge of the North know that vermin are a severe drawback in that country. For instance, we have heard about the tremendous number of kangaroos that are to be found in the North and and there are other pests as well. There has been a considerable increase in the number of donkeys in certain parts and

from all I can learn these pests are increasing at a considerable rate. The donkeys were used in the early days as teams for carting wool and other produce. With the introduction of motor transport the donkeys were turned out and allowed to run wild and, as a result, have multiplied rapidly.

The kangaroos in that part of the State are like the rabbits down here; they greatly affect the carrying capacity of the country. We have heard much criticism of pastoralists in the North and how they have overstocked and allowed the water frontages to be eaten out. It is said that such action causes erosion and that this has been responsible for a deterioration in the country generally. We must not forget that these scores of thousands of kangaroos that are to be found in the North also eat the best of the grasses and live on the water frontages where those grasses are to be found. They play an important part in the eating out of pastures on the water frontages and help to cause this erosion about which we hear so much.

It is quite possible that even supposing the country was abandoned by the pastoralists today, the kangaroo menace would increase to such an extent that there would still be the problem of the water frontages being eaten out, thus causing erosion and deterioration of the country generally. In dealing with this vast area we are faced with this tremendous problem. Members with a knowledge of agriculture in those parts know that if we allowed the rabbits to breed without intensive poisoning and other means used to get rid of them, the carrying capacity of this country would be decreased to an enormous extent.

Of course, the rabbits carry diseases that ravage the stock to some extent, and the same applies to kangaroos. So it would be interesting to learn from the Minister what is proposed to be done to try to combat these menaces in the northern areas and what success has been achieved. I understand the C.S.I.R.O. is carrying out certain experiments on the extermination of kangaroos.

The Minister for Mines: There is no report in yet. The team is up there at present.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I know that organisation is making efforts to see what can be done to get rid of the kangaroos which abound in those parts in such large numbers. I notice that another item under this vote is "Additional Watering-points, Kimberley Cattle Stations." The vote last year was £20,000 and the expenditure was £8,472. I wonder why less than half the amount was spent on water boring in the last financial year. This year the estimate has been reduced to £10,000 or half the amount that was allocated last financial year.

It is realised that some of the stations in the North must have additional water points. The lack of them has been responsible for overstocking of water frontages and causing the losses I have mentioned previously. The more watering points we can get down on cattle stations in the North, the better it will be, not only for the cattle industry itself but also for the North generally. For a considerable time to come, cattle-growing in the Kimberleys, at any rate, will be the main industry.

I also notice that there has been an increase in the amount allowed for air transport of perishable goods to northern centres. The vote last year was £15,000 and nearly £20,000 was spent. This year the estimate is £25,000. When I occupied the position of Minister for the North-West, I adopted a sympathetic outlook respecting the payment of subsidies on perishable goods to the North. The amount was stepped up from a few hundred pounds to many thousands of pounds in a short period. I realised then that there would be an increasing demand for air subsidies on goods for the North generally.

That has been brought about by the fact that we have asbestos mining at Witteboom Gorge which has been greatly expanded, and now the oil search is being conducted in those parts and other activities crop up from time to time in various centres in that huge area. I consider that the increase in air subsidies is justified and I also think that if it is possible to provide some subsidy for people who work in the North, it should be done. I know there is a limit to what can be done with finance.

When the committee, which Parliament has agreed shall meet the Prime Minister or some Federal Minister with regard to the northern development and the difficulties confronting the State Government, proceeds to Canberra, that is one of the points that should be raised, so that sympathetic consideration can be given by the Commonwealth to assisting the State to provide for cheaper transport in the northern areas. We know perfectly well that that country cannot be developed without experienced labour for the pastoral, mining and other industries.

I have always held the view that those who live and work in the North are the people who should receive every consideration. I certainly think that if it is possible to do something to lighten the burden of travel which is expensive from the south to those northern areas and which is borne by the people who live and work there for a specified time, some consideration should be given to such a proposal.

Next I come to the last item in this vote which deals with the loss on the State Shipping Service. Last year the estimate was £534,702 and the expenditure amounted to £521,844. The estimate this year is

just on £500,000. Some time ago the Premier said that he considered that rail freights had reached such a peak that further increases were not justified. I would say that the same principle should apply to the North-West shipping freights. Costs in the northern localities continue to increase, and I think it might be said they increase at a greater ratio than many of the costs in southern areas. That is because not only is there the expense of transporting goods over very long distances, but also when they reach their port of destination, very often a long haul is entailed. Motor transport, on account of having to bring fuel and other motor accessories over such long distances, is a costly business.

When I was Treasurer of the State, I stressed to the Grants Commission how difficult was our position in regard to northern transport. I asked the commissioners to adopt a sympathetic outlook respecting this problem. I was instrumental in getting the Grants Commission to visit the North to obtain first-hand knowledge of our transport difficulties. I am glad to say that it paid that visit, and as a result I feel sure it has a much more sympathetic and practical outlook towards our financial losses on State ships than it hitherto possessed.

I feel sure that that sympathetic outlook will continue because those gentlemen know all the difficulties that we are faced with and the severe handicap that would be placed upon development generally if increased costs have to be faced. I referred to the pastoral industry in the North and I, of course, hope that research into all animal breeding and their diseases will continue, together with research into pastures. In the Kimberleys, both East and West, I think the Government should interest itself in an improvement in the quality of the stock. Some stations would not require financial help to achieve this, while others would.

However, as I said some little time ago, when speaking on the agriculture vote, there is need to improve the quality of our stock in the northern districts. I pointed out that the bulk of the beef produced there goes to the export market. In the Argentine and such countries, great attention is paid to the quality of the stock in order to ensure that the best quality beef is placed on the market. We know how keen our own Governments are to put good quality lamb on the overseas market, particularly the London market, and the same applies to New Zealand.

I certainly urge the Government to take an interest in the beef industry in the North. The Government has its own meat works at Wyndham on which a large amount of public money has been spent and it is also interested in the meat works at Broome. If we are to improve the quality of our cattle, we must have good stud stock. They are not easy to get in these

northern parts. In the southern districts, Governments in the past have done a considerable amount to help the dairying industry improve the breeding of stock and commendable success has been achieved. It would be an economic loss to the country, and particularly to the North, if deterioration in the quality of our beef cattle were brought about.

Producers in the North are faced with peculiar cattle diseases of a type we do not have to deal with in the southern areas. The northern producers run a certain amount of risk, and they have to pay heavy transport costs. The Commonwealth Government has assisted the stock raisers in the Northern Territory to a considerable degree. It is imperative that the breeding be improved, and anything that can be done to bring about this desired result should be encouraged. When the proposed committee meets the Commonwealth Government Ministers to advocate increased assistance to develop the North, this point should be stressed.

Dealing with the North-West shipping, I hope that a better outlook will prevail in the future as compared with the past. The unsatisfactory holdup of State ships on the North-West coast cannot be justified. Where ships have to sail to a schedule to take advantage of the tides, it becomes very serious when they are unable to sail or cannot enter ports through industrial stoppages. The reasons for holdups of State ships in the past have not been justified in any way. The difficulties of transport in the North are already very great, without any further obstacles being placed in the way.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. L. J. Kelly—Merredin—Yilgarn—in reply) [12.48]: The Leader of the Opposition expressed concern about the Ord River, Abydos and Woodstock experimental stations. I understand that through experimentation and other means, vigorous steps are being taken to develop an irrigation system that could greatly enhance the possibilities of those three research stations. The Government realises that they can play a very important part in carrying out research and in instilling confidence in the settlers by achieving satisfactory results.

Much research has been undertaken and considerable advance made in regard to pastoral improvements. The progress made in the last two years on experiments with buffle grass, birdwood grass and another type was very marked. I understand that remarkable results have been achieved in the rejuvenation of spinifex. For many years it was considered that spinifex would be impossible to cultivate or reproduce by artificial methods. That difficulty has been largely overcome.

With regard to the Agriculture Protection Board, mention was made that a C.S.I.R.O. party is up in the northern areas carrying out research work. Up to date

no reports have been received from it. The party is authorised to carry out a wide range of investigation, and some Western Australian representatives are included in the personnel. They will watch the interests of the Agricultural Department. It is hopeful that this party will greatly minimise the incidence of vermin. Recently much interest was shown overseas in the use of kangaroo meat for human consumption. One overseas representative made a trip to the North to calibrate the potential of kangaroo meat as a food.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I understand that kangaroo tails are being shipped from some ports but there is difficulty in obtaining export licences because the Commonwealth Government cannot supervise the killing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The experiment will hold some possibility for the future. It is hoped that if kangaroo meat can be used as food, the large numbers which invade the districts and deplete the pastures, will be greatly reduced.

Regarding air transport of perishables, the payment of a subsidy operated during the regime of the previous Government and has been increased considerably over the past few years. Eight years ago only £815 was provided in the Estimates, but it was increased to £12,000 in 1949, to £16,000 in 1950, to £13,000 in 1952 and to nearly £14,000 in 1953. This year it has been increased to £25,000. The Government has not lost sight of the necessity to treat the transport of perishables to the North seriously. I do not think criticism can be levelled at the loss on the State Shipping Service. This loss has been maintained for some considerable time. When compared with other losses, such as the loss on the railways, it is not very great.

I can assure members that the Government realises the importance of the subjects referred to by the Leader of the Opposition, and that everything to the extent that finance is available, is being done. The financial resources are not elastic and expenditure can be undertaken only to the limit of the amount available. That consideration applies to the North-West as to the other parts of the State. Another interesting feature was the assistance granted to 11 missions, amounting to £38,000. This is a very big increase from the previous year.

The assistance for native children has been increased from 22s. 6d. to 30s. 9d. per week. The item of £36,000 for medical and health services show a very big increase. An appreciable amount, something like £50,000, has been set aside for repairs and renovations to buildings. This is an increase of £17,000 compared with 1953. Many of the grants have been increased, and when some are increased so considerably, it is reasonable to expect that

other items will be short. The Government is paying close attention to all these matters, including those affecting the North-West.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Harbour and Light and Jetties, £148,000; Supply and Shipping, £7,535—agreed to.

Vote—Country Areas Water Supply Schemes, £733,000:

Mr. PERKINS: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. PERKINS (Roe) [12.59 a.m.]: This vote is very vital to some people living in the country areas. My reason for referring to the country areas water supply is because of the reply given by the Minister to a question asked recently in this House. At Corrigin in particular it will be necessary to wait before steps are taken to provide a reticulated water supply for the town.

I have spoken on this subject on a number of occasions and pointed out the disparity between the treatment meted out to the metropolitan area and the country districts. I strongly urge the Government to have another look at the allocation of the loan funds. Considerable development has been carried out in the country areas in recent times, but the present position is worse in many parts than it has been for years because, with the growth of population and the need for water supplies, the existing supplies will not go as far as they did previously.

In Corrigin, for instance, underground water supplies are obtainable, though not nearly so easily as in the metropolitan area. Further, those supplies have been reasonably adequate but, with the growth of that town, the time is not far distant when the underground supplies will become too salt, or the flow will not be sufficient to meet the reasonable needs of the people. If the Government is going to say that we cannot expect any improvement for a considerable time, and if that means until the comprehensive scheme is completed, it highlights my contention that very different treatment is being meted out to people in the country districts as compared with those in the metropolitan area.

I know it would be distasteful for any Government to take money from the vote allocated for the metropolitan area, and I should not like to suggest that that should be done. On the other hand, Ministers have taken an oath to deal fairly between all sections of the people, and I suggest that they are not carrying out their oath of office if they allow the present disparity of treatment to continue for any length of time. I believe that this matter will

have to be investigated, even to the extent of looking to the metropolitan area for additional supplies.

It has been suggested that a possible way out of the difficulty would be to give encouragement to home-owners in the metropolis to tap the underground supplies that are available. In most parts of the metropolitan area, underground water may be obtained at a reasonable depth, but if householders are going to be rated on the assumption that they will use the water, there is no encouragement to them to make use of the underground supplies unless they are very heavy users of water. This is an aspect that might well be investigated. It is practicable and it might prove attractive to some householders.

I stress the fact that if we are going to retain the population in the country, it is absolutely vital that water should be made available in reasonable quantities. In many country towns at present, it is not available at all. The Minister, in my judgment, is not showing sufficient concern in the matter of overcoming the difficulty. Unfortunately, the area I represent is affected to a greater degree than are some other districts. If members went there and saw the conditions under which some of the people are living, it would be realised that there is not much incentive for people to reside there as compared with the more favoured portions of the State.

A question that I do not wish to delve into at any length tonight is the need for water supplies in so many of our country areas. With the better balance in our farming methods, as a result of which less dependence is placed on returns from grain-growing and more stock is being carried, it is only natural that the demand for water will be greater than it has been in the past. If stock is to be carried successfully, the water supply must be assured. On all these counts, I strongly urge the Minister, and also the Premier, to look into the question of the allocation of loan funds. I do not think it would be right on this vote to deal with the whole question of the allocation of loan funds, but if the Loan Estimates come on for consideration at a reasonable hour tomorrow, an opportunity will be available to deal with that matter.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [1.9 a.m.]: I do not intend to speak at length at this stage of the sitting, but I should like to urge the need for greater effort in pressing forward the construction of the comprehensive water scheme. The member for Roe has emphasised the necessity for more consideration to be extended to country areas, and I support his remarks. At this stage, when the people in many country towns are rationed and are given an allowance of only a few gallons per head per day—some of them are even rationed to two hours in the morning and

two hours in the evening—members can realise how great is the concern that is being occasioned to those people.

We hear talk about decentralisation and endeavours to encourage people to live in the country, but until we can give the country areas amenities similar to those available in the city, we shall be talking merely through the back of our necks. On that subject, we should maintain silence until we can provide the facilities so badly needed in the country. One notices in travelling around the metropolitan area water streaming from hoses and running down the footpaths. When travelling along King's Park-rd. today, I saw hundreds of gallons of water running into the street drain, and when one thinks of the shortage of water in the country, it makes one's blood boil to find this happening.

The Minister for Water Supplies: You should remember that a lot of the farmers at one stage did not want the comprehensive scheme.

Mr. NALDER: That was a good many years ago.

The Minister for Housing: There were country members among them, too.

Mr. NALDER: So much money is being spent on public utilities in the metropolitan area that I think even the people of the city would agree to cutting down that expenditure for 12 months and devoting the money to pressing on with the comprehensive scheme. That remark seems to have evoked a snigger from the Minister for Housing. I only wish he had to put up with some of the inconveniences being suffered by people in the country.

The Minister for Housing: You ought to talk to Mr. Roche, a member of your party, who knocked the scheme back.

Mr. NALDER: That is past; let us look to the future. To do as I suggest would be only commonsense. Our objective should be to ensure that the State progresses, and we should not concentrate on one portion of it to the detriment of another. There should be a curtailment of some of the expenditure in the metropolitan area, and greater efforts should be made to provide for the country. If this were done, many more people would be provided with the necessities that are their due.

I hope that the Minister will exert effort and still more effort until the comprehensive scheme is carried at least to the main line so that some of the folk in the country districts may have the advantages enjoyed by people living in the city. There are instances, such as at Dumbleyung, where an adequate water supply already exists, but the facilities have not been made available to reticulate the water to the township. In the last year or two, quite a few people have left Dumbleyung

who possibly would have continued to live in the town had the water that is there been made available to them.

That is a reasonable request and where there is not much money involved and it is only a matter of installing a small engine to pump the water to the top of a hill about three quarters of a mile away, I think every effort should be made to do something for that centre. In the last few years the population of Darkan has almost doubled. The town is not far from the line of the comprehensive water scheme and I feel that the claim for the connection of a 4in. pipe to the Darkan township should receive consideration. I believe every effort should be made to give country people the facilities they deserve and which are their right.

MR. CORNELL (Mt. Marshall) [1.17 a.m.]: On Friday last I asked the Minister for Works a question relating to the pumping equipment at Barbalin reservoir, to ascertain whether he was satisfied, from a perusal of the report of the inspector of pumping equipment, that that equipment was in reasonably sound condition and would get through the summer. In reply he said the department was of the opinion that the existing plant would fulfil requirements during the coming summer.

I want it on record that my information is that the equipment is in bad shape and not as good as the Minister's statement would lead us to believe. Perhaps it will get by; but a major breakdown could occur and that would have serious consequences for consumers in that area. I urge the Minister to re-examine the position and satisfy himself that the equipment is as good as his departmental advisers say it is.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Other Hydraulic Undertakings, £474,502; State Abattoirs and Saleyards, £107,472; Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, £810,900—agreed to.

Vote—Railways, £14,500,000:

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [1.20 a.m.]: Inappropriate as the hour may be, I feel that the Estimates of the department responsible for the greatest expenditure in the State should not be passed without some brief remarks by the Minister in charge. The estimated revenue of the Railway Department for 1954-55 is £12,353,000. This figure if achieved, will exceed last year's collections by nearly £1,000,000 an increase of almost 9 per cent.

For the year ending the 30th June, 1955, the department has budgetted as follows:—Revenue, £12,353,000, expenditure,

£14,500,000; deficiency, £2,147,000, interest, £1,250,000 and loss to Treasury, £3,397,000. I would say in passing that these Estimates were made before the decision of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court was announced in connection with margins for skill. As the margins will be increased by approximately £1 per week and a very high percentage of the employees of the Railway Department are skilled tradesmen, the increase on that account in railway finance will be considerable.

Coaching revenue is expected to return an additional £55,000, due to the proposed introduction of the new suburban passenger services in November. Additional goods traffic and a full year at the higher freight rates which became operative on the 1st October, 1953, should account for the balance. Increased haulage is expected in wheat—for it is anticipated that 100,000 tons will be put into the new storage depot at Midland Junction—and also with regard to timber, an additional 30,000 tons due to the State's increased timber production and local coal and coke. The power station at South Fremantle anticipates an increased consumption of coal this year and the department therefore expects to haul an additional 64,000 tons. Unfortunately little improvement can be expected in the haulage of livestock as private hauliers are still making serious inroads into this traffic.

Huge sums of money have been spent by the railways on new livestock wagons and action will have to be taken if these vehicles are not to remain idle. We did have a check made some months ago and I warned the stock people and road hauliers that if they extended their activities over a greater distance than now obtains, I proposed to impose restrictions on anything outside the 40-mile limit. I think this is the duty of the Minister because he has to protect the enormous amount of money that has been expended by the previous Government in the procurement of both sheep and cattle trucks.

I know an attempt has been made, because I have heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, by interjection, say that they were advised to get these trucks by the Railways Commission, to place the responsibility there. I do not think it is quite fair to endeavour to pass the buck in that way because, although it would not be denied that the Railways Commission advised the Government to get these stock trucks because they were badly needed, it is on record in black and white that the Minister for Railways of that day said the need was only temporary.

Despite the assurance of the McLarty-Watts Government and the fact that it had given the authority to the Railways Commission to expend £1,250,000 in the procurement of cattle and sheep trucks, members opposite now urge the present Government at every possible opportunity

not to do what its Minister of the day advocated when he decided on the advice of the Railways Commission to procure these sheep and cattle wagons—that is to say, that they would be used for the purpose for which they were procured, namely, to shift stock on the railways.

I will have another check made and if the warning has not been heeded by the stock-owners and road hauliers, serious consideration will be given to the imposition of the restrictions which operated previously in connection with the road transport of livestock. I am informed by the commission that some 25 per cent. of this £1,250,000 worth of sheep and cattle wagons procured by the previous Government is standing in sidings and I do not think any Government could view that position with complacency.

Mr. Nalder: In the last few months every available truck has been used.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is not my advice and I think the Railways Commission, which has a department for the purpose of keeping check on all the trucks from one end of the system to the other, would have better knowledge of the movement of the trucks than the member for Wagin, who would have a limited knowledge only of the position in his own electorate. It may be that there has been a greater percentage of stock trucks in use over the last two months than would be customary, because of the drought and the necessity for shifting a large number of stock away from the drought-stricken areas.

Hon. D. Brand: In the event of the demand for stock trucks growing, do you think it is a wise policy to continue to buy more railway trucks or allow a percentage to go to road transport?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If, and when, the position arises that we have insufficient cattle or sheep wagons to transport the stock offering, it will be a question of whether to procure more wagons and consideration will be given to the shorter distance hauls being performed by road transport, because I think that up to about 80 miles the road transport of stock is often preferable to rail transport.

I am not satisfied that the best service that can be expected, is being given by the department in stock transport. I believe the trains are too slow and too much time is lost at certain junctions where they come in from the branch lines. I have given the commission to understand that I expect something better to be done in that direction. When I was at Kulin recently it was pointed out to me that it took 26 hours to bring the stock 270 odd miles. A traffic inspector was sent down there with the result that a considerable number of hours have been cut off that time owing to different loading times of stock trains.

When we get sufficient "X" class diesel locos, I believe we shall be able to reduce the time taken to run the stock trains to the market and give a much improved service as compared with that available at present. Because the Government has expended money in providing transport for livestock, I think we would be justified in saying that, by and large, where it can be done conveniently and expeditiously, stock should be shifted by rail.

Hon. D. Brand: Providing the service is comparable.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The estimated expenditure for 1954-55 is £14,500,000. The traffic branch will require £8,418,350, the engineering branches £4,183,700, and the administration, stores and other general charges £1,897,950. Last year £14,356,056 was spent, and the estimate provides for an additional £143,944, or an increase of approximately 1 per cent. Taking each branch individually: Traffic spent £8,392,418 last year, and proposes to spend £8,418,350 this year; an increase of £25,932. Additional expenditure will be required for the printing of new timetables, the renewal and provision of liners for bulk wheat wagons, and for increased costs anticipated initially in replacing steam with diesel services.

Savings are expected in the refreshment services, as the speeding up of the Perth-Kalgoorlie trains, including the "Westland," will obviate the need for a diningcar, except at the Perth end, for the ordinary express, and in road service operations because of the closing of the Mundaring route and the projected cancellation of the Bunbury service.

The mechanical branch spent £1,743,193 last year, and expects to spend £1,668,500 this year, a decrease of £74,693. During 1953-54, however, £161,000 for the rehabilitation of certain wagons and coaches was charged to Consolidated Revenue Fund, whereas during the ensuing year the work will be charged to loan funds. In effect, therefore, this branch will spend approximately £86,000 more in 1954-55 due principally to additional wagon and coach repair work of a general nature, in a programme to improve the standard of rolling-stock.

In the civil engineering branch, the estimate is for £2,515,200 compared with £2,482,646 last year, an increase of £32,554. This branch will continue and intensify its efforts in improving the permanent way, including the restoration of ballast, building-up of banks and scrub cutting. It is hoped to have additional trackmen working this year. At the 30th June, 1954, 1,703 men were engaged on track work and the object is to bring this number up to 2,000 before the end of the ensuing year.

The track is our greatest worry at present. We had a spate of derailments last year and we started badly again this year. After consultation with the commission we decided to reduce the axle load from 13 tons to 10 tons. Fortunately, this has had the effect of reducing the number of derailments. I think we have only had two main line derailments over the last four months. But we cannot continue to haul an 8 ton tare for a 12 ton load. We have sent reports to New Zealand, Queensland, South Australia, South Africa and Rhodesia describing the make and components of our rollingstock, the condition of our tracks, the thickness of our ballast and the condition of our sleepers, in an endeavour to get information from the engineers of the various railway systems where there is a 3ft. 6in. guage as to the reason for the unusual number of accidents.

My personal opinion, as a practical man, is that they are due to an aggregate number of causes, the principal of which is the condition of the track. There is insufficient ballast, and there has been insufficient renewal of sleepers over the last ten years. Let us take the line between Northam and Kalgoorlie as an example. The rails were originally put down between 1901 and 1903. They were put down as 63lb. to the yard rails and most of them have worn down to 54½lb. Everything possible is being done in the relaying of the Eastern Goldfields main and the south-west main lines.

The expenditure in the stores branch is estimated to be £155,550, an increase of £33,549 on last year's actual disbursement. This branch is in the process of establishing depots at Narrogin and Bunbury and will take over the Perth store. Expenditure will also be incurred improving the stores handling methods and equipment.

The administrative branches and general charges are expected to need £1,742,400, an increase of £126,602 on last year. There is little change in the administration costs, but under general charges depreciation will require a further £120,000 because of the additional assets.

Members might be interested to learn of the progress that has been made by the department during the last twelve months, particularly as regards the dieselisation programme. There are now 25 diesel locomotives in the State, comprising 10 mainline, 12 branch line shunters, and three jetty shunters. The branch line shunters and the jetty shunters have proved most successful and the mainline diesels are now carrying out satisfactory running-in trials on goods trains, before being put on to the fast mainline passenger services. Actually these notes were written before the 28th November, when the "X" class diesels started on the fast passenger service between Kalgoorlie and Perth.

The date fixed for the commencement of the fast schedules for the "Westland" and the Kalgoorlie express was the 28th November next. As from that date the "Westland" will depart from Perth at 7.15 p.m. and arrive in Kalgoorlie at 7.50 a.m. the following day. The total time for the trip will be 12½ hours instead of 16½ hours as at present. The Kalgoorlie express will depart at 5 p.m. as usual, but is scheduled to arrive in Kalgoorlie at 6.50 a.m., three hours earlier than at present. As mentioned previously, the new timetable will obviate the need for hauling a diningcar, except at the Perth end for dinner and breakfast on the Kalgoorlie express. This alone will represent a considerable saving.

As soon as sufficient mainline diesels are available, a start will be made on the complete dieselisation of the lines north of Northam to Geraldton and Wiluna. We have had what is known as a "Y" class diesel, the medium weight, which has been doing shunting in the Midland Junction, Perth and Fremantle areas. As a result of a trial made by the Assistant Commissioner, Engineering, last week on the Mullewa and Geraldton line, we have decided to take these diesels from the shunting service and put them in the area where the water supply difficulty is so acute so that they will relieve the water position considerably.

In addition, two "X" class diesels are being prepared in the Midland Junction workshops, and as soon as they are ready for traffic they will be sent to the Mullewa area and one will be on the Wiluna run again. The new suburban timetable was brought into operation on the 28th November. Eighteen of the suburban type railcars are now in service and the remaining two are being prepared in the workshops.

The seven new stopping places in the metropolitan area are complete. They are situated at Ashfield, between Bassendean and Bayswater; Victoria-st., between Mosman Park and Leighton, Grant-st., between Cottesloe and Swanbourne; Loch-st., between Claremont and Karrakatta; Oats-st., between Carlisle and Welshpool; William-st., between Cannington and Kenwick; and the Highway, between Maddington and Gosnells.

An additional station for the convenience of the Royal Show patrons, situated alongside the Chancellor-st. overhead bridge, was brought in to use for the show and was the means of winning back a large number of passengers who had previously travelled to Claremont by road transport.

Mr. Hutchinson: Is it too early yet to assess the value of these extra stopping places?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We have not got the actual returns, but each one of those additional stopping places is

very well patronised, and the response to the faster and more frequent passenger service being run by the diesel coaches has been phenomenal. The passenger service has increased by 40 per cent in the metropolitan area since the 28th November. It increased so much that diesel coaches were unable to cope with the demand, and we had to intersperse steam trains with smaller coach sets to cater for the passenger traffic offering.

Mr. Hutchinson: That was at peak periods.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We had to put in steam trains at peak periods, but during the off-peak periods, the patronage was 40 per cent greater. A single coach was being run as a train at 20 minute intervals between Perth and Fremantle, 30 minute intervals between Perth and Bellevue and 40 minute intervals between Perth and Armadale, and the response has been phenomenal.

Between Fremantle and Midland Junction on weekdays, a 20 minute service is operating, from early morning to evening, with extra trains during the peak periods. On the Perth-Armadale section there is an off-peak service of 40 minutes, with additional peak period trains. In the evenings on all sections, a frequent service is being run with additional trains to cater for people going to and also returning from entertainments. Frequent and regular services are also running at the week-ends. On the freight side, the department has, over the last twelve months, put into service more than 1,700 new wagons and these have greatly enhanced its freight carrying capacity.

I would like to say in conclusion that one of our great difficulties is staff. It will be noted that there has been an increase in the staff, and that has been necessary on the civil engineering side because of the addition to our buildings and our tracks. There has been an increase on the operational side, but that has been brought about by the fact that the quality of goods and the mileages run have increased by about 40 per cent. over the last 12 months. Our greatest trouble now is operational staff. We are finding great difficulty in getting sufficient trainee enginemen. When I started in the service they were known as cleaners. There has been great difficulty to get men to do portering and work up to shunters and then on as guards. We are short of train crews. The number of wagons appears to be sufficient and so does the tractive power at our disposal.

In the country districts we are very short of track gangs. In some places we have a ganger and one man instead of a ganger and six men, and I would say that

that was brought about to a great extent by the deplorable conditions under which those people are housed. It is one of my great worries to secure better housing accommodation for them. We have a man with a wife and five or six children living under the most crude conditions in a 12ft. x 14ft. cabin and two tents. If we are going to retain our staff in the country districts, most of them being new Australians, we will have to improve their housing conditions.

Mr. Nalder: Build a few more houses in the country and you will get people to stay there.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It depends on the houses. The Railway Department intends to build 40 of the standard type, but they will cost about £2,400 each and that is cheaper than we can get them erected by private contract. To obtain a reasonable return we would have to charge £2 10s. to £2 15s. per week, and that is more than a permanent-way man can afford to pay. But to get something better than the cabin and two tent system, we have £140,000 available this year.

Because of shortage of staff in the civil engineering branch and the inability to get plans drawn we have not been able to make much headway, but we intend to make use of private firms for the purpose of prefabricating necessary material to provide something better than cabins and tents, but considerably less expensive than the standard type of house. We do not intend to make it permanent accommodation, but hope that we will be able to relieve the position of those people upon whom we are depending to maintain our tracks in the country. We must improve their living conditions or the staff position will deteriorate further.

Progress reported.

BILL—RESERVES.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LIMITATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it did not insist on its amendment.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendments.

**BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT
AMENDMENT.***Council's Amendments.*

Returned from the Council with a schedule of four amendments.

In Committee.

Mr. Moir in the Chair; the Minister for Housing in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 3—Delete.

No. 2. Clause 7—Delete the word "twelve" in line 38 and substitute the word "eleven."

No. 3. Clause 5—Delete.

No. 4. Clause 6—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The four amendments made by the Council delete provisions that embrace one principle—namely, the proposed appointment of a representative of the permanent firemen to sit with others comprising the Fire Brigades Board. During the second reading debate and the Committee stage, when this matter was considered in this Chamber, there was argument in connection with it which it is not my intention to repeat. It is the wish of the Government that this section of the people who are closely associated with fire brigade work shall have a voice on the board, and for that reason the amendments sought by the Council are unacceptable. As all the amendments pertain to the one matter, unless there be some objection, I move—

That amendments Nos. 1 to 4 be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments not agreed to.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of the Minister for Housing, Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Sewell drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

**BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION
ACT AMENDMENT.***Council's Message.*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it insisted on its amendments Nos. 1, 2, 4 to 16 and 18 to 21.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Labour in charge of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the Assembly continues to disagree to the amendments made by the Council.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I move—

That the Council be requested to grant a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and that the managers for the Assembly be Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, Mr. Moir and the mover.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

Sitting suspended from 2.0 to 2.15 a.m.

**BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION
ACT AMENDMENT.***Council's Further Message.*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and had appointed Hon. H. Hearn, Hon. L. A. Logan and the Chief Secretary as managers for the Council, the Chief Secretary's room as the place of meeting and the time 10.30 a.m. on Thursday, the 9th December, 1954.

House adjourned at 2.16 a.m. (Thursday).