

endeavour to get their clients when they are at home?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This will not affect salesmen employed by motor car agents.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If the clause is agreed to as it is, it might mean that people will be fined for doing something that was quite innocently done. An accident might arise to cause delay in the delivery of goods, an accident that could not be avoided.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That argument is really too weak to be taken seriously. In cases of that kind I do not think anyone would consider a man was doing wrong if he completed the delivery of his goods. A plea of inability to do otherwise would be a reasonable defence. We are providing sufficient opportunity to complete the day's work by allowing two hours grace after closing time outside a two-mile radius and half-an-hour within the two-mile radius. The clause is necessary to meet unfair competition.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	17
				—
Majority against	..			11
				—

AYES.		
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. E. M. Heenan	
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. H. Klitson	
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. T. Moore	(Teller.)
NOES.		
Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. J. Nicholson	
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. S. W. Parker	
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. V. Plesse	
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. Seddon	
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. H. Tuckey	
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom	
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. G. B. Wood	
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. C. F. Baxter	(Teller.)
Hon. G. W. Miles		

AYP.	PAIR.	NO.
Hon. A. M. Clydesdale		Hon. A. Thomson

Clause thus negatived.

Clause 47—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to amendment No. 4 and had disagreed to amendments Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5 made by the Council.

House adjourned at 10.22 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 30th November, 1937.

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

QUESTION—BULK HANDLING.

As to Fremantle Terminal.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: 1, Has he received any comments, recommendations, or communications from the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners dealing, in any way, with the proposed terminal grain elevators at Fremantle? 2, If so, will he lay them on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes, if the honourable member moves a motion in the ordinary way.

QUESTION—POLICE.

Traffic Branch Revenue, etc.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Police: 1, What becomes of the surplus revenue earned by the Traffic Branch of the Police Department over total working expenses? 2, Will he consider making available a sufficient amount of the surplus revenue earned by the Traffic Branch to provide an adequate number of police traffic patrols so as to ensure a greater degree of safety for people using our roads? 3, What was the total amount paid as fines, penalties, etc., for breaches of the Traffic Act in the metropolitan area for the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1937?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, It is paid to Consolidated Revenue from which is met the cost of the traffic control in the metropolitan area and the cost of the collection of licenses through-

out the State by general police not under the Traffic department. 2, The matter will receive consideration. 3, £10,380.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of five amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2—Delete.

The PREMIER: I ask members not to agree to the amendment. The clause is necessary for the exemption of the basic wage and income as provided in Clause 3. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I regret that the Premier has not agreed to accept the amendment. When the Bill was last before us I told the Premier he was getting away from a principle that had been adopted practically throughout the period of this legislation. Every year we have had this argument and have had to compromise. All that is left of the Bill is a continuance provision. The Premier should get back to the principle accepted by both Chambers. Undoubtedly that principle has been accepted by members here, though perhaps under duress. What I am more concerned about is that if the Bill goes to a conference the responsibility for reaching a decision will rest upon three members of this Chamber. Then I have strong opinions against sitting all night in order to reach an agreement, because that imposes a strain on members and we get nowhere.

The PREMIER: I regret that the hon. member carried his opposition so far as to give a lead to members in another place.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do not flatter me to that extent.

The PREMIER: Otherwise another place would possibly not have disagreed with the policy embodied in the Bill. The proposed alteration is not a radical one. If this legislation is continued for many years, there can be no disagreement provided we have a set principle such as that contained in the Bill. The assessment measure would be a complete enactment and would not need any amendment of this principle. The reasons we can offer

to the Council are logical, and sometimes another place does adopt a reasonable and logical attitude.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Always.

The PREMIER: Not always. If another place is logical on this occasion and accepts the principle, there will be no need for long sittings or all-night sittings. I am hopeful that the Council will agree with us when we point out that this is part of the policy on which we went to the electors and that we have a mandate from the people.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You did not go to the electors on this measure.

The PREMIER: I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition even now is not prepared to accept a principle that is considered by the Government to be in the best interests of the whole of the people. It will not affect anyone detrimentally, but will give effect to a principle which, in another way, has received approval. When the Council understands that we are genuinely and eagerly desirous of securing recognition of this principle, I think it will agree.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I assure members that I had nothing to do with the action taken by another place.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not think my remarks were taken into consideration.

The Premier: You are too modest.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then I could wish that they were always taken into consideration by another place. The Premier claimed to have a mandate from the electors. I know of no party that went to the people advocating taxation. Less was said on that than on any other subject. On the other hand, if the Premier's party did go to the country on it, they returned with a reduced majority.

The Premier: We have a majority.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I consider that the Council's amendment would relieve a certain number of taxpayers, whereas to exempt the basic income will bring additional revenue to the Government.

The Premier: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am satisfied that it will. If we provided that the amount should be 2s. above the basic wage, less revenue would be received. The Premier, however, is not satisfied with the amount of money being obtained from this source. The proceeds from financial emergency tax are increasing. In one year the receipts totalled

£600,000, but this year I believe they will exceed £1,000,000. That is a tremendous amount of money to take from producers and others who are trying to re-establish themselves. I am sorry that the Premier mentioned the question of policy. When his party went to the country—and this applied to other parties—they were almost dumb on the question of taxation.

The Premier: This is a remission.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, it represents an increase. The Premier would have done well to adhere to the policy accepted in the past.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am pleased that the Premier resists the Council's amendment, if for no other reason than that another place has no power to amend money Bills.

Hon. C. G. Latham: This is not a money Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: Another place invariably refuses to have this point settled by a higher tribunal, and thereby admits that it frequently does something which under the Constitution it is not entitled to do. There are two forms of taxation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There are about a hundred forms that I know of!

Mr. MARSHALL: One form represents payment in cash, and the other form represents payment in bread and meat. The imposition of taxation is wide and varied, but who will maintain that a person on the basic wage, the minimum on which a family can exist, should not be exempted from this tax?

Hon. C. G. Latham: The exemption is put at 2s. above the basic wage.

Mr. MARSHALL: No one can say from one quarter to another what the basic wage will be. The basic wage can only be assessed after the unfortunate recipient of it has proved that the cost of living has risen. In the case of the man on the basic wage this tax would mean the sacrifice of his family's bread and meat.

The PREMIER: The Leader of the Opposition says the Bill is designed to increase taxation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It will bring in a greater amount.

The PREMIER: No. The prosperity brought about by the present Government has enabled the workers to earn larger incomes. The clause is designed to place exemption on a principle, and not to leave it subject to a series of varying amounts denoting the cost of living. The principle

to which we have given effect during the last four years has been to exempt persons on the basic wage from this tax. Because of the possibility of the cost of living figure increasing, we have fixed the amount of exemption at a couple of shillings above the basic wage. The Bill is not designed to increase taxation, and will not increase it. If the Council's amendment is agreed to, then in the event of the Arbitration Court deciding next March that the cost of living has risen, the class of people whom Parliament desires to exempt will have to pay this tax. Thus the will of Parliament would be nullified. I may point out that we are now obtaining from the agricultural districts more taxation than Parliament intended. The clause will prevent that. Notwithstanding the undue modesty of the Leader of the Opposition, I am certain that another place takes a great deal of notice of his arguments. In fact, "Hansard" shows that members elsewhere repeat his arguments. I hope these hon. members will read my remarks in reply to the Leader of the Opposition and thus obtain a fair perspective.

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

No. 2. Clause 3:—Delete.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The arguments previously used apply in this case.

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

No. 3. Clause 4:—Delete.

The PREMIER: The principle here is different. Clause 4 deals with employers who sometimes connive with employees not to pay the tax, and sometimes deduct the tax from the employee but instead of paying it, per medium of stamps, into the Treasury, retain it.

Mr. Tonkin: That is unlawful.

The PREMIER: Yes; but it is not found out.

Hon. C. G. Latham: This clause will not find it out. It only provides a penalty.

The PREMIER: It makes the employer equally liable with the employee, which is not the position now. The tax being levied on everyone with income above a certain amount, we should see that people upon whom a statutory duty is cast to collect the

tax are made personally liable in the event of their failing to do so. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

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

No. 4. Clause 5:—Add at the end of the clause a proviso, as follows:—"Provided that this section shall not have any retrospective effect beyond the thirty-first day of December, 1936."

The PREMIER: I agree with another place in this instance, and therefore move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 5. Title:—Delete the words "two, four, nine, and."

The PREMIER: I do not propose to agree to this amendment until the Council has reconsidered its position. I move—

The 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 Premier, the Minister for Lands, and the Leader of the Opposition drew up reasons for disagreeing to four amendments.

Reasons adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—TERMINAL GRAIN ELEVATORS.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [5.4] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this legislation is to create an authority to provide grain elevators at the ports of Fremantle, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany. The board is to be appointed by the Government and will have a tenure of office for three years. The board will be empowered to raise moneys for the construction of the works and to levy a toll for services rendered in order to provide interest on the money raised and a sinking fund for its repayment. This work, in the very nature of things, should be of a reproductive character and from that standpoint, if from no other, should be welcomed by hon. members. Complaints have been made about works under-

taken by Governments which have not been of a reproductive character, and as a result of which the burden of interest is becoming so great as to give rise to fears that the community may not be able to meet it in years to come. From its ordinary loan allocation from the Loan Council every year the State is unable to find money for this work. In order to create these works from the amount of loan money allocated to the State, the Government would have to abandon other works and other avenues of employment. When the Loan Council met in Melbourne last April, authority was secured for the borrowing of £350,000 for these works and, although that was opposed by the Commonwealth Government, the majority of the Loan Council voted for it. Complaints are frequently made in this House that the Loan Council is responsible for much of the unemployment existing in Australia, in that it will not provide money for expenditure on works for the purpose of development. The other States, particularly New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, are able to supplement their loan expenditure by loans raised by semi-governmental institutions, of which there is a large number. The borrowing by semi-governmental bodies of New South Wales was greater last year than the borrowings of the Government itself from the Loan Council. The fact that those Governments have been able to raise additional funds outside of the Loan Council has made it possible for them to inaugurate and carry on works which have not been possible in Western Australia. The semi-governmental institutions in those States have separate borrowing powers and therefore the Governments of those States are helped with regard to finding employment by the activities and expenditure of these bodies. This is the first time that Western Australia has secured the consent of the Loan Council to the raising of money for semi-governmental purposes. Our complaint has always been that the other States could raise money for these activities, but Western Australia could not, and that the other States have had a considerable advantage in consequence. Now that authority has been given to Western Australia to raise money required, it would be a very unwise thing for a Parliament which complains of the niggardly treatment of the Loan Council to refuse the opportunity provided in this measure. The State will have £350,000 additional money for em-

ployment if this measure secures the consent of Parliament. When the Bulk Handling Act was passed in 1935, that legislation gave the franchise to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. to instal country bins, subject to the authority of the Minister having the administration of the Act. Country bins have now been installed by the company in the Geraldton, Fremantle, and Bunbury zones, and serious consideration must now be given to the establishment of an orthodox system of bulk handling at the ports. The authority conferred upon Bulk Handling Ltd. enables that company to receive wheat at country bins and the company is responsible for the delivery of such wheat through the various agencies through which wheat must pass in its progress from the grower to the port and into the ship. For example, the Commissioner of Railways does not carry bulk wheat for individual farmers who have stored wheat with the company but carries the wheat as agent for and on behalf of the company. So, in respect to every link in the chain in the contract undertaken by the company, the wheat is handled by some intermediate instrument or agency. The Bill does not interfere in any way with that arrangement. The monopoly enjoyed by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. is in no way contravened by this measure. The Bill constitutes a board of three members who are appointed by the Governor for the administration of the Act and the tenure of office of such members is to be for three years. There are the usual disqualifications in certain events such as bankruptcy, incompetency or incapacity. It is also provided as a necessary part of such legislation that no member of the board is to be interested in the marketing or disposal of grain, with the exception that there is no disqualification if a member of the board is a grower of grain and delivers such grain to the board in the ordinary course of his activities as a farmer. In order that the relationship between the board and other interests dealing with wheat may be as harmonious as possible, the Bill provides for the appointment of an advisory committee consisting of five persons, one of whom will represent the merchants, one the millers, one the company and two the growers of grain. The advisory committee will have no authority in the administration of the Act but is to be constituted so that it can at all times get in touch with the

board and may be able to exercise quite an important influence by avoiding unnecessary friction. The Canadian Grain Act has a somewhat similar provision embodied in it. The Bill provides the machinery to carry out the works necessary for the conduct of the board's business. Its relationship with the Harbour Trust, Railway Department and other public bodies is specifically provided for, and any matter in dispute between any of these bodies and of the board is a subject for determination by the Governor. One of the most difficult matters to deal with is the inter-relationship of the board and Bulk Handling Ltd., and that part of the Bill which deals with the conduct of the board's business has been framed so as to enable the activities of the company to proceed as smoothly as possible without any undue hindrance by the board. Very little difference will exist if the provisions of this Bill become law from what is the existing practice at the Fremantle Harbour Trust. The board is to be a warehousing agency only. It will receive the wheat at the various ports, check it, store it, be responsible for its safe-keeping and good condition, and deliver the wheat to the Bulk Handling Co. on presentation of the necessary authority. It will have nothing whatever to do with the labour employed in shipping or in stevedoring. It will have no control over other than its own employees who are engaged in the warehousing scheme. In connection with the transit of grain, the Bill lays it down that when a terminal elevator has been constructed at any port, all wheat delivered in bulk shall go through the terminal. There is, however, a safeguarding provision as regards the Bulk Handling Co. which should have the effect of assuring the Company that it will be entitled to recover the toll and all charges prescribed by the Bulk Handling Act, 1935, before any wheat entrusted by the Company to the Board is delivered out. While the operations of the Board will necessarily for some years be concerned with wheat consigned for storage, other classes of grains may be handled. For instance, I am informed that this year the State will have its first exportable surplus of barley. The Board has power to store such grain. The Bulk Handling Act, 1935, provides that bagged wheat may be carried over the railways without the agency of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., and a further exception is made in that Act in favour of a grower in

respect of 10 per cent. of the marketable crop. A grower is quite free in respect to that percentage to transport that wheat over the railways outside the agency of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. from any country siding, notwithstanding that a bulk bin has been installed by the Company at that particular siding. This wheat, if it is to be exported, must be sent direct for storage or shipment from the terminals, and whereas in the case of wheat received through the agency of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. an acknowledgment will be issued, in the case of wheat received from any other source a warrant will be issued by the Board. So it will be seen that the Board will not be entirely dealing with Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. as there are the rights of other people to be considered in this Bill. The Bill enunciates the important principle that the Board is not to show any discrimination or favouritism to any person in the course of its business. That is a cardinal feature of the Bill. There are many interests involved in the handling of wheat, and it is important that an independent authority shall exist at the ports if the rights of all parties are to be respected. This has long been the principle embodied in bulk handling legislation throughout the world. It is a general principle that the Board is not to receive any grain which is unsound or inferior to the lowest grade then in force for any particular variety of grain. So far as the wheat is concerned, the standards laid down from time to time under the Bulk Handling Act, or the regulations thereunder, will be followed in this Act so that there shall be no clashing; indeed the relevant provision expressly states that regulations in this Act shall be consistent with regulations made under the Bulk Handling Act, 1935. So in respect to that, there can be no clashing between Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. and the Board to be constituted under this measure. In order to ensure that inferior wheat be not sent to the port, or to avoid confusion which might arise by having to hold up trucks at the terminal, power of inspection is given to the Board and its officers in respect of all wheat in country bins or in course of transit. At least one complaint has been received this year as to the prevalence of weevils in wheat. If the power in this Act is conferred on the Board and its officers, a situation will be avoided

which is not in the best interests of any wheatgrower and certainly not in the best interests of the State. In regard to wheat received from the Company, there will be no need, of course, to impose any dockage when that wheat comes down to the Board to be binned in the terminal elevators. All that the Elevators Board is bound to do is to see that that wheat is within the standard, but in respect to wheat and in regard to all other grain, such as wheat received from private persons or grain of a variety other than wheat, the Board's duty of receiving the grain at the elevator is to make an assessment of its quality, to refuse it if it be unsound and, if it can be received, to assess any dockage necessary, having regard to the standard fixed. I am referring there particularly to the grain that comes from private persons either as the result of the farmer being able to handle 10 per cent. of his bulk wheat, or in the form of bagged wheat sent down. That will be checked and classified by the board. If the wheat is docked or rejected, the right of appeal is provided in the Bill to the Department of Agriculture, and that right of appeal will be similar to that contained in the Bulk Handling Act, 1935, under which the Company is operating to-day. Provision is made in the Bill for the delivery of grain, and the relevant provisions follow the provisions of the Bulk Handling Act, 1935. As regards bulk wheat received from the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company, the Company is entitled to receive wheat at the elevators from the Board of an equivalent quality and quantity, subject, however, to the variations allowed by the Bulk Handling Act, 1935. Similar provision is made with regard to the holders of storage certificates for grain delivered direct to the Board by persons other than Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. Where the Board is delivering out wheat which has been received direct, and not from the Company, the Board is obliged to make an adjustment in respect of any inferiority below the standard shown in the assessment of the storage certificate. With regard to wheat for shipment, the Shippers' Delivery Board will continue to function under the Bulk Handling Act, 1935, as I understand that general satisfaction has been expressed with the working of this Board. There is, however, in the Bill a provision that obliges the charterer of a ship to notify the Grain

Elevators Board when wheat is required for shipping. There is in the Bill provision for prescribing the charges to be made by the Board for its services. As far as possible, the principle established is that the charges shall be uniform throughout the State. It has been held in this House that at Fremantle the Fremantle Harbour Trust would undertake this responsibility. But there are two objections, and they would apply equally to the Bunbury Harbour Trust. One is that neither of these institutions could raise the money, which would have to be provided by the Government from Loan allocation by the Loan Council.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is a very weak argument.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is my argument, and it is a standard argument, although it may not agree with the views of the Leader of the Opposition. This money is being raised under special provision.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You could raise it just as easily as you raised the money for the East Perth power house.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That money came out of Loan. If the Government were to follow the same system in this instance, we would have to provide £350,000 more. The money spent on the power house reduced the money available from our Loan funds.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No, it did not. The Treasurer told us all about it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In this case we have our own Loan allocation, and are enabled by authority to raise £350,000 more; so I tell members that if they vote against this, they will be voting that £350,000 more shall be spent this year.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No, you are wrong there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have our ordinary Loan allocation, and we have the right by a majority vote of the Loan Council to raise an additional £350,000 for this work. Had we not that right we would not have received one penny more for our ordinary Loan allocation. Those are the facts.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Your facts.

The Premier: No, they are the facts about this matter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Let me point out that in the year 1936-37 New South Wales received from the Loan Council as ordinary Loan £6,053,000, while for semi-Governmental institutions of New South

Wales there was raised that year by the same authority an amount of £5,549,000. So there was expended in New South Wales on the general programme of works, £11,602,000. In 1937-38, this present year, the Government of New South Wales secured from the Loan Council for their ordinary programme of works £5,225,000, and in this same year the semi-Governmental institutions of New South Wales have borrowed £6,785,000, or £1,500,000 more than the Government of New South Wales will expend this year. So New South Wales could not have carried out its programme of works but for the separate borrowing powers of its semi-Governmental institutions. In the Bill the Board is given power to borrow by debentures to the extent of £350,000. The Government of this State has an opportunity to create a similar institution, with separate borrowing powers and separate responsibilities. Therefore, the money will be available for this expenditure. Without this authority that money would not be available. Victoria has also quite a number of semi-Government institutions. The Melbourne Harbour Trust has power to borrow up to £4,000,000 and additional power to borrow money on overdraft. Then there are the Geelong Harbour Trust, the State Savings Bank of Victoria, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board, and the Grain Elevators Board. Victoria, in order to create a system of bulk handling, secured permission to raise money for that purpose. That is outside the ordinary loan allocation expenditure of the Victorian Government. The State Electricity Commission of Victoria has borrowed and spent millions of pounds. These are all authorities additional to the Government, authorities that are able to borrow within their own powers. By this means these two States have been able to acquire a larger amount of money available for loans than has been the case with Western Australia. Our complaint always has been that these States have had two barrels to their gun whereas we have had only a single barrel to ours.

Mr. Marshall: Why cannot you impress the Loan Council with these facts?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Loan Council has already been impressed.

Hon. P. Collier: The Loan Council has nothing to do with it. The fact is our own Parliament has not set up the necessary statutes.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When I attended the Loan Council in April we succeeded in getting our ordinary loan allocation. The proposition was put to the Loan Council that this State should be given authority to raise £350,000 for the purpose of providing terminals at the port. That went to a vote. I do not know that I am entitled to say where the opposition came from. The vote was carried, and the matter was then sent back for a second time. That was very unfair. It was then carried by a majority. It was said to be wrong to allow this principle to be extended. Certain authorities had their rights and it was said to be wrong to extend them. The objection taken was a very unfair one. Anyway, members of the Loan Council said that in this case they would not turn down the proposal. The vote was put twice and finally carried. The Loan Council received a lecture, and the vote was put again and carried.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Your own Treasurer raised money for a State steamer, and you raised money for power house additions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I may say that the acting Premier of Victoria supported us. It is desirable that the charges for wheat handling should be uniform. I assume that the handling of wheat at Fremantle, because of its convenience, will be more economical than would be the case with Bunbury or Geraldton. It would be unfair to have an authority at Fremantle handling wheat at low charges, and authorities at other ports imposing higher charges. The charges ought to be uniform. If wheat can be handled economically in one place, that place should not have the advantage because of its natural advantages.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There should be uniform railway freights too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: One port will carry the other. It is essential there should be one authority to control all ports. That authority will institute a uniform system and uniform charges right through, so that no one body of farmers in one part of the country should be penalised at the expense of farmers in another part. Unless that one authority acts for the whole, the rates cannot be uniform. In one zone which has very great port disadvantages the cost of administration may be heavy compared with another port where the natural advantages are greater and the cost of administration much less. The Fremantle

Harbour Trust could not raise the money in question. It has not separate borrowing powers. There would be no means of providing a uniform charge unless one authority controlled all the terminals at all the ports.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That story did not apply to the handling of wheat in bags.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is a very different matter. We provided no terminals at ports, and there was none of this proposed expenditure. Bagged wheat did not require one penny for this purpose. Provision is made for prescribing the charges. The board is given power to raise £350,000 by debentures. The usual provisions are contained in the Bill for recording the raising of the loan, keeping a register of debentures issued, and other provisions in such cases. The maximum term of any debentures that are issued is 53 years. A sinking fund is provided for that will be liberal in the circumstances. In order to keep a check on the financial operations of the board a special account will be kept at the Treasury. This ought to satisfy the scruples of some persons. To keep a check on the board, that will be appointed for three years, but may be re-appointed for a further term, the Bill provides that separate accounts shall be kept at the Treasury where all funds and revenues of the board shall be paid in, and from which all payments for the carrying on of the activities of the board shall be made. It will be necessary for the board to obtain financial accommodation from time to time for its temporary needs in carrying on the business. For this purpose it is provided that the Treasurer may advance £75,000 on overdraft. The Bill also provides that the board should be obliged every year to put up a budget of estimated receipts and expenditure. This will give Parliament a proper conception of what the board is doing, and enable Parliament to keep an eye on its financial activities and control the institution. The Bill provides that the board in all its administration will be under the supervision of Parliament. It will also be obliged to have its accounts audited under the Audit Act of 1904. These include the general provisions of the Bill. It provides for a satisfactory system for the provision of terminals at all ports. It sets up an authority to make satisfactory repayments out of moneys advanced by way of loan. It provides also for the setting up of the only authority that

can make uniform charges. This authority will be associated with no other interest except the authority of Parliament. It will not be associated with any other interest. It will, therefore, be able to deal impartially with all interests in Western Australia, the farmers, Bulk Handling Ltd., and the other interests that are involved in the sale and distribution of our wheat. For these reasons the Bill should be acceptable to the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

MOTION—PERTH MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

To inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 10th November on the following motion by Mr. Raphael:—

That a select committee be appointed to investigate the administration of the health and building by-laws of the City of Perth with a view to recommending to this House any necessary legislative action to remedy the position and to prevent any recurrence of its arising; and also to investigate any other matters arising out of the administration of the Municipal Corporations Act by the Perth City Council which may have been carried on illegally or contrary to the public interests.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [5.43]: I regret that this matter has not been dealt with earlier.

Mr. Marshall: You did a good deal towards keeping it to this late stage.

Mr. CROSS: It is very timely that we should have an inquiry into the building laws of the city as well as those of other local governing bodies. In the last two years the practice has grown up (and this is not confined to the metropolitan area) of constructing what are known as residential flats. In many cases this is done in the attempt to dodge the building regulations. There are numerous instances where individuals have made application to erect another building on a block of land. The other night I quoted two cases in Bunbury, but there are others all over the State. By the addition of perhaps one other room to a building already erected on a block of land, people are able to divide the building into two residences, and collect two sets of rents. In regard to residential flats, attempts have been made to erect buildings under that heading on blocks of land less than a quarter

of an acre in extent. I made inquiries with regard to some such instances. In one case, I ascertained that the local governing authorities concerned had refused permission for the erection of an additional house on the block, but when it came to a question of erecting residential flats on that land, the local authorities had no power to prevent that course being adopted. Consequently I think the time is ripe for an inquiry, and if it be found necessary for local governing authorities to be given additional powers to deal with matters such as I have referred to, the necessary statutory authority should be provided to prevent such abuses. Inquiries should be made into the application of building by-laws and regulations, and attention should be paid to the action of the City Council in declaring nearly all its territory to be brick areas. During the last few years, particularly in the metropolis, wooden houses have fallen into disfavour. The reason for that, in my opinion, is that probably the building by-laws were not strictly enforced, with the result that abuses crept in and the shanties erected by speculative builders have caused people to take exception to that type of construction. In some of the other States, more particularly in Queensland, a large percentage of the houses are constructed of wood. In Western Australia we have some of the best building timber in the world, and there is no reason why, if the building by-laws were complied with, many wooden houses should not be erected in the metropolitan area. Their erection would not be detrimental to the city at all. I trust an inquiry will be conducted into that aspect of the problem. In certain parts of the city where the houses are practically all of wood, people are prevented from erecting homes of a similar type because the locality has been declared a brick area. I regret that members did not agree to refer this matter to a Royal Commission. We are approaching the end of the year, and I understand that at the conclusion of the Parliamentary session a select committee automatically ceases to function. In the interests of the issues at stake, and so that a full investigation may be carried out, I think it would be better, should members agree to an inquiry being held, if the select committee were given all the powers of an honorary Royal Commission. As I have already mentioned, I think an inquiry into this particular question is long overdue, and I shall support the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [3.50]: With regard to the attitude of the Government in relation to this matter, I take the view that it is not the business of Ministers to make such an inquiry, but rather to determine whether the charges made by the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) justify an inquiry, and also to consider what powers are possessed by the City Council. The powers of the Government have also been referred to. There appears to be an impression that the Government has similar powers regarding municipalities as it has with regard to road boards. That is not so. The member for Victoria Park during the course of his speech said—

It is just possible it is the policy of the Minister's senior officers that municipalities, especially a powerful municipality like the Perth City Council, should not be interfered with.

It is as well to tell members just what power the Government has with regard to municipalities, whether it be the City of Perth or any other municipality. Dealing with appeals, the only appeal to the Minister is provided by Section 296 of the Municipal Corporations Act, as amended by the Municipal Corporations Act Amendment Act of 1915, which reads—

No block of ground shall be laid out for building, and no person shall commence or proceed with any building thereon, unless and until a plan showing clearly the house or building or the houses or buildings, proposed to be built thereon, and the area to be occupied by each house or building, and the position of every privy and drain, and a copy of the specification have been laid before and approved by the council.

There shall be no appeal under the provisions of Section 333 from the refusal of the Council to approve a plan and specification under this section, but any person aggrieved by the refusal of the council to approve any such plan or specification may appeal from such refusal to the Minister, who may uphold, reverse, or vary the decision of the council, and the order of the Minister shall be binding and final.

That section also provides for an appeal by a building owner or other person to the Supreme Court or a local court against the refusal by the council to sanction or otherwise any notice or order of the council in connection with a building under Part XV. of the Act. Although there is that right of appeal against a decision of the council, the departmental records show that only two such appeals have been made to the Minister

in connection with refusals by the Perth City Council to approve of plans of houses or buildings during the past 15 years. There was provision under Section 497 of the Act for an appeal to the Minister regarding the subdivision of rateable land, but that was repealed by the Town Planning Act of 1928, a similar provision being inserted in the latter measure. With regard to special inquiries, there is no provision in the Act for the Minister to institute inquiries into any action or other thing carried out by a municipal council, except in the event of disputes between two or more local authorities, and that is dealt with in Section 528. As to special audits, provision is made under Division IV. of Part XXV. of the Act for a special audit of the accounts of a municipality by special auditors appointed by the Governor. This is done either at the request of not less than 50 ratepayers, or of any creditor or creditors, or without such request. With regard to the resignation of all or a majority of the councillors of a municipality, there is no provision under the Act for the appointment by the Governor of a commissioner in the event of all or the majority of councillors resigning, as is the position under the Road Districts Act. If such a situation arose in a municipal council, it would be necessary for an extraordinary election to be held not less than 20 and not more than 25 clear days after the occurrence of the vacancies. The Perth City Council has, from time to time, framed comprehensive building by-laws in accordance with the provisions of Section 335 of the Municipal Corporations Act, but, owing to the advance in modern building requirements, it was realised that further powers were necessary. The council, therefore, made representations to the department for amendments to the Act so that it could enlarge on its present by-laws. That request was made when the Bill that was being prepared at the time was under consideration. The position with regard to road boards is entirely different, and under Section 30 of the Road Districts Act of 1919-34 authority is provided for the appointment of commissioners in certain circumstances. The departmental experience is that over a period of 15 years, there have been 11 occasions when commissioners have had to be appointed, but only in one instance was that course necessary on account of the supersession of the road board. The other 10 appointments were occasioned by the

resignation of all or a majority of the members on account of the domestic differences of the boards concerned. In the light of these facts, the suggestion that the Government has power to step in with regard to the non-observance of the health or building by-laws is erroneous. It is true that the Government has great power with regard to road boards, and that power has been exercised from time to time. In these circumstances, the suggestion that there has been remissness on the part of the Government is not borne out when the actual facts are considered. Turning now to some of the charges that were made by the member for Victoria Park, one related to the evasion of the building and health by-laws. It may be argued by the members of the Perth City Council that they have not the necessary powers to enable them to deal with situations that arise from time to time. Whatever may be their powers with regard to older buildings, the City councillors undeniably have powers regarding new buildings. That has been made plain from time to time when they have withheld building permits. It must be remembered that no building can be erected unless City councillors agree. Charges have been made with regard to new buildings that have been erected, for the erection of which permits were granted. If that is true, then the Perth City Council must accept responsibility for the position. Most decidedly a very grave charge appeared to have been made when the member for Victoria Park alleged that "one man or group of men could get plans passed whether they were contrary to the by-laws or not, and could get them passed with great promptness, while other good citizens who were prepared to comply with the by-laws in the letter and in the spirit met with refusal after refusal." If that is so and there is the preferential treatment that was indicated by the hon. member, then certainly that phase should be inquired into. The Perth City Council is a responsible governmental body. If it can be shown that the council at any time extended preferential treatment whereby certain builders or architects were able to get their plans approved, while others had their plans rejected, that will constitute a very grave charge of preferential and differential treatment. If the charges can be sustained, they will disclose a position that will justify the inquiry. I do not suggest that the House,

or any member, has the right to say that a select committee appointed by the House will not conduct an impartial investigation. I have never yet heard that suggested, otherwise where would be our Standing Orders? Members of a select committee are chosen from both sides of the House, evidence is heard and in open court, too, and the whole of the proceedings are open to the Press and so are reported.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Nothing of the kind; you know that a select committee is not open to the Press.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At any rate, I am not going to suggest that a committee appointed by this House would not be impartial, and I will not even suggest that the committee will not be composed of members who have not had a variety of experience in local government, and indeed other forms of government. Consequently, they should be quite capable of conducting the investigation. With regard to senior officers not having the power to interfere, there is no suggestion that they have meted out differential treatment. All are certainly out to do their duty and the committee should be satisfied that there is no need for inquiry in that regard. One specific case, however, was mentioned by the member for Victoria Park in respect to the refusal of building permits. On that subject there have been two appeals in recent times, one conducted by a previous Minister for Works and the other in my presence only a little while ago. In the latter case I declared the City Council to be right in the action that was taken, and upheld the decision given by that body. The City Council refused a permit to build a shop on a block of land already containing two other shops. As Minister for Town Planning, I was not going to reverse the Council's decision. I would hardly designate what was proposed as something that might lead to slum conditions, but I would say that the conditions that might have followed would have been undesirable, in that there would have been overcrowding in a business area adjacent to a very fine residential area. Although we have business areas associated with residential areas, it does not follow that any kind of a shop will do, a lock-up shop for instance. I consider that the business section should be in conformity with the residential section, and therefore I upheld the City Council's action. I understand, however, that the position is that although

the City Council has refused certain permits on the ground that what was proposed would have been undesirable, others have been granted where the conditions have been equally bad. If that be the case, and if it should mean that some builders, and particularly some architects, got permission to build premises, while permission was refused to others, then that in itself should warrant an inquiry. I have no knowledge of the charges that have been made, and up to date I have heard merely *ex parte* statements.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You heard the charges that were made.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and if those charges are correct, they disclose a bad state of affairs as far as the administration of the building and health by-laws are concerned. Consequently, in justice to the City Council, the inquiry should be held. I do not propose to comment further on what has been said except to add that since charges have been made the Government will not offer any opposition to the appointment of a select committee.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [6.7]: I intend to oppose the appointment of a select committee. When the amendment to the motion was before us, as to whether the inquiry should be conducted by a Royal Commission or a select committee, I pointed out that we were setting up a precedent by permitting a member who happened to be also a member of a semi-governmental institution, and who in this case had made the charges against that institution, to be the judge in conducting the inquiry. That is what I object to. I would have no objection to the select committee being appointed provided that the member for Victoria Park were not either the chairman or a member of the committee. I know that under the Standing Orders it is not possible to avoid that, but there should be a way out. I listened closely to the charges made by the hon. member and I am convinced that he would be placed at a disadvantage were he permitted to have a seat on the select committee. His position should be not on the committee itself but to appear before the committee to substantiate the charges that he made on the floor of the House. Likewise he should be present to call witnesses and to examine and cross-examine them. But that he should be a member of the committee and accuser and judge at the same time

would be getting away from the privileges and rights of Parliament.

The Minister for Works: There will be four other members on the committee.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister knows as well as I do that there is no minority report of a select committee, and I am surprised at the Minister's lack of knowledge of the Standing Orders. Even a few minutes ago he said that the proceedings of the select committee would be open to the Press. He ought to know that there cannot be one word published in a newspaper of a select committee's proceedings, until that select committee has reported to the House.

Mr. Tonkin: You can get over that by a resolution of the House.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Even then I think it would be necessary to suspend that particular Standing Order first. But apart from all that, is there really a necessity for such an investigation? Have we not known of mistakes having been rectified without Parliament being asked to intervene? I never remember Parliament having been asked to appoint a select committee to inquire into a matter that could be dealt with by the Minister, or by somebody appointed by the Minister. The Minister for Works set out the departmental point of view, but I have drawn attention to the fact that charges made against the City Council were also made against the administration of the Health Act, and the Minister for Health intervened. He has the power to intervene where there has been any violation of the Health Act. He has enormous powers if he desires to exercise them. I have known the Minister for Health a long time, and I know also that if the member for Victoria Park had gone to that Minister and informed him that certain things were being done, the Minister would not have hesitated to inquire into the truth or otherwise of the charges. Parliament has given him very wide powers, and he has always exercised them with care. I have read the reports of the proceedings of the City Council and in no instance have I seen any reference made to the charges, or anything resembling them, made in this House by the member for Victoria Park. If anyone makes a serious allegation, he should be prepared to substantiate it. We know that there is such a thing as the law of slander or libel.

Mr. Raphael: I have been threatened about 40 times.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know to what extent that law operates, but so long as a man does not make a charge deliberately to injure another person, I do not think it is slander or libel, that is, if it be true. Were I to repeat in this House statements that are frequently made to me outside about members of the Government, I would always be in trouble. I have, however, enough common sense to know that you can take what is told to you by the man in the street with a big grain of salt. Whenever I do hear anything that I think carries any semblance of truth, or that I consider demands some investigation, I go to the Minister in charge of the particular department and receive from him the consideration that my request deserves. The member for Victoria Park would have been wise to act similarly. He is a young man with many years ahead of him, and probably if he exercised a little more common sense he would go a long way. Even at this late moment, the Minister could tell the House that he himself would see that an inquiry was conducted, because he has the power to do that. The Minister for Health could also carry out an investigation in respect to charges made affecting the administration of the Health Act. The speech made by the member for Victoria Park contained very little more than information that was carried to me six months ago. The hon. member referred to premises opposite the residence of an ex-Lord Mayor. That was told to me. He also referred to lack of ventilation in residences within a stone's throw of Parliament House. That likewise was related to me. So the whole of this information—

Hon. P. Collier: Has been hawked around.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, it was hawked to him and then to me, but I refused to accept second hand information. The member for Victoria Park, however, was apparently glad to accept it and make use of it. He should have verified it before he released it on the floor of the House, and, as I said before, if there has been a violation of the Health Act, he could have gone to the Minister for Health and that Minister would have given his attention to it immediately. Instructions would have been given to an inspector of health to visit the premises. I should like to ask the hon. member through you, Mr. Speaker, whether he did endeavour to have the premises inspected.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I was referring to the inspection of buildings and the charges made against the City Council by the member for Victoria Park. One statement was that there were 40 residents in some flats, and that only one convenience was provided for them. Where flats are constructed it is expected that up-to-date conveniences will be provided, and I contend that the hon. member, as a member of the City Council, had all the power necessary under the Health Act to ensure that its provisions were enforced. I propose to quote some of the sections that gave him all the power required without his coming to Parliament and asking us to supervise work that members of the City Council are elected to carry out. The hon. member referred to the obsolete buildings in the city. There never has been a city without obsolete buildings. A building erected to-day will become obsolete in 20 years' time in comparison with the architecture of that day, and it is very difficult to keep buildings up-to-date. In spite of the fact that we might disagree with the erection of flats, they do provide a cheap kind of residence for people who are unable to pay higher rents for other places.

Mr. Cross: Do you think that flats are cheap?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am referring to obsolete buildings. There are some buildings even in the Canning electorate that have been standing for years, and do not command the rent that a new building would. We may disagree with their continuance, but if we are everlastingly to be pulling down those buildings and erecting others, unless effect is given to the desire of the Government to introduce legislation and provide homes for people, it will be impossible for many on the basic wage to find homes. All the charges that the hon. member levelled regarding sanitary conveniences are charges against himself. The City Council has all the power necessary, and the hon. member, as one of the councillors, has all the power required under the law to take action if necessary. Some of the more serious charges he made included one against a member of the City Council, who, the hon. member said, used his position as a member of that body to get certain plans passed. If my memory serves me aright, the hon. member said plans were submitted to the council and rejected on the ground that they were not quite suitable, and then a certain member of the City Council, whose

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

name was not mentioned, was appointed as consulting architect, at a salary of £750, and that the plans were then approved. It was a most extraordinary statement to make, inferring that one member of the City Council could influence all the other members of the council, simply because he had been paid a retaining fee. That recalls to mind a statement made by the Minister for Works, by way of interjection, that he could not imagine the member for Victoria Park having his own way with four other members of this House. Yet the hon. member wishes us to believe that one member of the City Council, numbering 24 members in all, had a greater influence than the other 23, amongst them the member for Victoria Park, who does not fail to exert his influence in this House, whatever it may be worth, at all times. To say that a councillor would accept a fee to permit of an unsuitable building plan being passed constituted a very serious charge. The hon. member might disagree with the architect, but that does not give him the right to come here and complain. The hon. member referred to Airways House. There is no need for us to worry about that. The matter was decided by the courts of law. A certain gentleman made a complaint, which was investigated by the lower court, and an appeal was lodged to a higher court, which upheld the appeal. Consequently that matter was decided. It is not for this House to make by-laws for the City Council. It is the Council's function, and we have no right to supervise its work in that respect. If there is justification—and inquiry might reveal it—to give the Minister for Works overriding powers that he does not possess to-day, I would not object to it, but it would be far better to have an inquiry by a departmental officer to ascertain whether there is any justification for the charges. Another charge made by the hon. member was that building permits were granted to some people, and withheld from others. That might be the position. If it does happen, I do not know that we can stop it. The Minister for Works said application had been made for permission to erect a building, but that the land was unsuitable. The member for Victoria Park, in one breath, lodges a complaint because the City Council will not grant building permits for the reason that the area of land is insufficient, and in the next breath he

lays charges because some obsolete building has not sufficient backyard. The hon. member cannot have it both ways. I contend that all the charges made by the hon. member are such as could be rectified by the City Council. It is not my duty to point out to the hon. member the powers that exist. He must know the laws that are being administered. References may be found in the Municipal Corporations Act and also in the Health Act. The Municipal Corporations Act provides one overriding power in the penultimate section, namely Section 529, which requires councils to furnish returns to Parliament when directed. The section reads—

If the council refuse or neglect, for the space of 30 days after being duly required so to do by the Minister or any person lawfully authorised by him on that behalf, to comply with and obey any decision of the Minister under this Act, or to furnish accounts or to give and furnish any returns or other information requested by such Minister in relation to their proceedings under and by virtue of this Act or in compliance with any resolution of either House of the Parliament asking for the same, it shall be lawful for such Minister, on complaint to him of such default, to cause, by order under his hand, all or any of the moneys payable or to become payable to such municipality out of the Consolidated Revenue or on account of the fees, fines, or penalties which may be payable to such council, not to be paid until such decision has been complied with and obeyed, or such accounts, returns or other information aforesaid has been duly furnished to the satisfaction of the Minister.

While the Act does not specifically say so, Section 529 really authorises the Minister to do anything he desires. If Parliament authorises anything to be done, the council must obey. The member for Victoria Park must have known that that section appears in the Act, and his course was to complain to the Minister. I do not think there is any Minister who, if a member of Parliament explained the position to him, would not attempt to rectify the trouble. One of the hon. member's complaints was about the erection of a building that projected on the footpath. The hon. member must have known that Section 309 of the Municipal Corporations Act provides that no building shall project on any footway. Subclause 1 reads—

No building erected after the commencement of the Building Act, 1884, shall encroach or project on or over any street or way, nor shall any building whatever which may so encroach or project be rebuilt, either wholly or in

part, except according to a plan to be approved by the surveyor whereby such building shall be placed clear of and without the distance defined for the breadth of such street or way.

The section then proceeds to set out the powers that the hon. member could have exercised.

Mr. Raphael: Do you want me to be a policeman there, every day of the week, and every week of the year?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not act in the role of a schoolmaster in this House, but the hon. member should know his powers. He knows why he is elected to represent a certain section of the city in the municipal council, and he ought to carry out what the Act clearly sets forth. Why did the hon. member enter the City Council? I do not think he went there for the glorification offered by the position; he went there to do justice to the people he represents, and the most important duty of all is to see that the laws of the country are observed. Further, I wish to refer the hon. member to the Health Act, under which nearly all his complaints could be rectified. Before tea, when the Minister for Health was not in his seat, I said I felt sure that he would certainly have seen that the Health Act was enforced had his attention been drawn to any breach. I cannot imagine the Minister doing otherwise. Sections 13 and 14 of the Health Act provide—

The Commissioner may, from time to time, hold or order to be held such inquiries or investigations as he may deem necessary in relation to any matter concerning public health in any place, or in relation to the administration of this Act, and may appoint such public health official or any other person to conduct such inquiries or investigations as he may deem fit.

When an inquiry is directed by the Commissioner to be made, the person authorised to make the same shall have free access to all books, plans, maps, documents and other things belonging to any local authority or any contractor, and shall have in relation to witnesses and their examination, and the production of documents, similar powers to those conferred upon justices by the Justices Act, 1902, and may enter and inspect any building, premises or place, the entry or inspection whereof it appears to him requisite for the purpose of such inquiry.

That does not apply to public buildings; it applies generally to the administration of the Act. Section 34 reads—

(1) Where in the opinion of the Commissioner any local authority has made default in enforcing or carrying out or complying with

any provisions of or in the exercise of any power conferred by this Act, or any by-law or regulation thereunder, or of any order of the Commissioner, which it is the duty of such local authority to enforce, carry out, comply with or exercise, the Commissioner may make an order limiting a time for the performance of the duty of the local authority.

(2) If such duty is not performed within the time limited in such order, the performance of such duty may be enforced by writ of mandamus, or the Commissioner may appoint some person to perform such duty, and shall order that the expenses of performing the same, together with a reasonable remuneration to the person appointed for superintending such performance, and amounting to a sum specified in the order, together with the costs of the proceedings, be paid out of the funds by the local authority in default; and any order made for the payment of such expenses and costs may be removed into the Supreme Court and be enforced in the same manner as if the same were an order of such court.

The remaining sub-sections set out the powers. The hon. member evidently thought there was no power relating to buildings. Section 122 of the Act, which does not apply to public buildings, states—

(1) No building shall, after the commencement of this Act, be erected within any municipal district unless and until plans and specifications thereof have, before the commencement of such building, been submitted by the owner or occupier to, and have been approved, in relation to ventilation, lighting and sanitary construction, and also as to the area of the open space appurtenant to such building, by the local authority.

(2) The Governor may from time to time declare by proclamation that Subsection (1) shall apply in any other district or in any portion of any other district, and may at any time revoke any such proclamation, and while such declaration remains in force Subsection (1) shall apply in such district or portion as if it were a municipal district.

All that the hon. member had to do when he found that the health department of the City Council was not carrying out the law was to refer to the Commissioner, and the Commissioner would have had power to take action if action had been justified. He would certainly have to make an inquiry. I know the Minister well enough to say that he would see inquiry was made. But some of the charges, I feel sure, when investigated will not be substantiated. The mover seems to have a grievance against some officers of the Perth City Council. He is not able to deal with them under the powers he has in the Town Hall, because he has not the backing. I think it utterly wrong for any member of the Chamber to bring forward here

extraneous matter which has nothing at all to do with the House, except that the House is required to see that the Minister carries out the law. I would not hesitate, if I had occasion, to ventilate a valid complaint; but up to date I have found no occasion to do so. If the reasons given by the hon. member are the only reasons for his motion, I say it is an improper motion. I hope the Minister will alter his mind as regards supporting the motion. We have certain rights and privileges, but we do not deal with frivolous complaints. It is not our responsibility to do so. We have a right to rectify wrongs, but as regards the Perth City Council I have not yet heard of anything which cannot be rectified in the proper constitutional manner. Every half-year under the Municipal Corporations Act, there must be a meeting of ratepayers. Has the member for Victoria Park ever attended a meeting of ratepayers and ventilated his grievances there? Has he ever charged the Lord Mayor and the councillors with refusing to carry out the law? Has he ever made a complaint that the Health Act has been flouted? I believe the hon. member has never attended a meeting of ratepayers. I have attended some of those meetings, and have never seen him there.

Mr. Raphael: I have never seen you at a meeting yet.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Sparsely attended meetings of ratepayers are generally an indication of satisfaction. At a recent meeting of ratepayers, no fewer than 600 persons turned up. In that instance there must have been some ground for complaint. If ratepayers are satisfied, they let things go on quietly. The motion represents not only a charge against the Perth City Council, but also a charge against the Government of the State, and I object to it. There is no justification for bringing any such charge against the Government, which sees to it that the laws relating to local authorities are observed. The last point I have to make is that the motion is wrong in principle. It is against British justice to allow an hon. member to come to this House, lay charges, and then sit in judgment. The hon. member, by usage and custom of this Chamber, would be chairman of the select committee. I hope the hon. member will refuse the chairmanship of the committee, if it is appointed. Then, if he desires to call evidence, let him do so. I hope the members of

the select committee will give whoever so desires, the opportunity to bring forward all the evidence necessary. I believe the House will probably agree to appoint a select committee, though in my opinion to do so will be wrong. If a committee is appointed, I sincerely hope that the charges will be thoroughly investigated. I know that the Perth City Council is not perfect. No such body composed of human beings can be perfect. I trust this will be the last time the hon. member will bring forward such charges. He has introduced into this Chamber something that has not been introduced into it ever since I have been a member.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [7.50]: I have found great difficulty in coming to a conclusion as to what are the duties of members in a matter of this kind. The mover of the motion has in one or two cases made charges that reflect seriously upon the Perth City Council and also on people who are employed by that body, as well as to a certain extent upon other members of the City Council. In the ordinary way, I should say, the House ought not to be concerned with such matters. The Perth City Council is a local governing authority, and Parliament by statute has delegated certain governing powers to the council and to other local governing bodies throughout the State; and they are responsible for the conduct of affairs placed under their jurisdiction. Beyond the members who are elected to control these governing bodies are, as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, the ratepayers. The ratepayers are required to be called together twice a year in order to supervise the work of their representatives. So the matter appears to be one which should not come into the domain of Parliament at all. It is a matter of internal government, it is a domestic matter for the particular corporation concerned. The Leader of the Opposition, in his highly informative speech which I am glad to have heard, has pointed out that wide powers are possessed by other authorities which can be moved by those who are interested, and which can exercise drastic remedies for any abuses which may arise. If this were a motion merely for an inquiry into whether certain legislative alterations were necessary, and if it were supported by responsible people who said that the time had come to overhaul the Act, or if there were some

body of local councillors or some strong body of ratepayers or of public opinion which requested Parliament to give some consideration to defects in the local governing law, then it might well be a matter for a select committee. But in this proposed inquiry are also certain charges of a serious nature which reflect upon officers such as the Building Surveyor and possibly the Town Clerk, and others who are discharging duties for the corporation. Those men particularly are placed in a difficult position. If they have been guilty of dereliction of duty, possibly they may lose their positions—positions which they may have occupied for decades. Those are matters that are the job of the corporation itself. If employees are not doing their work properly, it is in the corporation's power to reprimand them or dismiss them. It is a clear stretching of the duty of Parliament to sit even as a select committee and decide whether or not employees of corporations are discharging their duties. It is going a long way beyond our proper function as a body representing the State and concerned in legislation for the State. There is a further aspect, and that is that in so far as some suggestion has been made of a serious nature, these matters amount to this. If they are offences against the law, the people concerned are entitled to be tried by the ordinary tribunals in the same way as any member of the public. They are entitled to neither more nor less. If they are tried by the ordinary tribunals, they are tried according to the procedure and the evidence laid down by Act of Parliament, in just the same way as any person who is charged with an offence is entitled to be tried according to the law of the land. On the other hand, a select committee, when it comes to try the suggested offences, if they are offences, is not in the proper position to conduct such an inquiry. A select committee does not pretend to be fully conversant with the laws of evidence and of procedure, and those other details which enter into the cases of persons who are being tried to determine whether or not they are guilty of an offence. So if there has been any wrong-doing, then some member of the City Council, or the City Council itself, can frame the matter in the ordinary way to be dealt with by the ordinary tribunals. When it comes to a select committee sitting as an adjudicating body on offences, if they amount to that, or on derelictions of duty,

then I agree with what the Leader of the Opposition said, that such a body is not the ideal body. I do not care whether it is the member for Victoria Park or any other member who, in the ordinary course of events, lays the charges before this House and then becomes the chairman of the select committee. As that chairman, if the committee is equally divided, he has the casting vote. If the other members of the committee are equally divided, then the decision of the select committee goes in accordance with the chairman's casting vote. That is placing him or any other member who brings charges before the House, in what I call an invidious position. It is not only invidious so far as he is concerned, but also as regards the people who appear before the select committee and whose reputation or position or employment or future may be in the hands of the select committee.

Mr. Raphael: You do not know very much about the Act regulating select committees.

Mr. McDONALD: I think I know just as much about select committees as the mover of the motion knows.

Mr. Raphael: No, you don't!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: The rules governing select committees say that the chairman shall have only a casting vote.

Mr. Raphael: Then why do you not speak on those lines?

Mr. McDONALD: I said perfectly clearly that if there were two votes on one side and two on the other side the chairman would have a casting vote, and that according to his casting vote the report of the select committee would go; because, as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, there is no minority report. There is one report, which is decided, in the event of equality voting, according to the vote of the chairman, who is also the mover. On that casting vote the report is put before the House, and that is the report of the select committee. Under our procedure there is no way by which simultaneously, or as part of the select committee's report, there can be a dissenting report. The only way, as the member for Victoria Park knows, is for members of the select committee who do not agree with the report to get up in the House and make speeches. I have felt very troubled because I have heard these charges. The charges have been made public. Therefore I doubt whether it is not the duty of

Parliament to afford the people concerned an opportunity of replying before a tribunal. Nevertheless, I say that on the whole I prefer to see this motion rejected and the members of the City Council, if they feel there has been any dereliction of duty, left to solve their own affairs and come to their own conclusion on a domestic internal matter. In other words, let them assume their own responsibility and not try to pass it on to this House.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [7.59]: I regret that I find myself in a position where I am unable to support the motion.

Mr. Raphael: On a point of order. I think the hon. member has already spoken on the motion on a previous occasion when it was before the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Swan spoke on the amendment. I have before me a list of all members who have spoken on the motion.

Mr. SAMPSON: One reason why I am opposed to the motion is that it seems to make a definite charge against the members of the Perth City Council, the Lord Mayor, and the officers. I have a great respect for our Perth City Council and, as a result of my own investigations, I know that at least one of the statements made by the member for Victoria Park is an exaggeration. I refer to the case of the house next door to that of the ex-Lord Mayor.

Mr. Raphael: The hon. member told us about that the other night.

Mr. SAMPSON: I did, and I would like to say another word or two in reference to it. One of the places referred to is an apartment house carried on by a widow. I went through it and was impressed by its cleanliness. Unfortunately the widow was ill at the time, and I did not see her. But someone showed me through. There are people on whom an unkind reference in a newspaper has a bad effect. I do not know whether the reference to this house had that effect on the lady concerned, but it may have been so. At all events she was sick in bed when I called.

Mr. Raphael: She must have known you were coming.

Mr. SAMPSON: She may have feared some more exaggerated statements. An unfair attitude has been taken up by the member for Victoria Park in regard to this matter. If the hon. member cannot convince his fellow members of the Perth City Coun-

cil the failure is his, and if he fails to influence them it becomes his duty, since the City Council is not a party organisation, to support the majority. He should have done so. I have no desire to discourage the hon. member when I think he is right, but in this case—

Mr. Raphael: It is so rarely that you think he is right.

Mr. SAMPSON: —I think he is definitely wrong, and he would be showing good taste and judgment if, with permission of the House, he withdrew the motion.

Mr. Raphael: I will do so now that you have suggested it; as soon as you sit down.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the hon. member would really promise to withdraw it I would sit down at once. I do not find myself in a position to support the view of one disgruntled member of the Perth City Council, and Parliament would be wrong in doing so. There may be other members of this House who are not quite satisfied with the Perth City Council, but I have never heard anyone except the hon. member for Victoria Park say so. There may be members of the City Council not quite satisfied with this House, but they have the good taste, if such is the case, to keep it to themselves. The hon. member has shown a wrong conception of his duties in bringing troubles from another organisation of which he is a member to this House. I therefore propose to vote against the motion if it is put to the vote, but I suggest to the hon. member that, in his own interests, he withdraw it with the consent of the House.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [8.4]: Some members opposite are taking up a most extraordinary attitude. A few nights ago we had arguments from them as to why this matter should be the subject of an inquiry by a Royal Commission. We were told that such grave charges were made that the matter should be cleared up, that it could not satisfactorily be cleared up by a select committee and that a Royal Commission should be appointed. The House decided against the appointment of a Royal Commission. Now hon. members who previously advocated the appointment of a Royal Commission are trying to tell members of this House that no inquiry is necessary at all. They prefer not to have an inquiry rather than to have an inquiry by a select committee. I find that argument diffi-

cult to follow. The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) made serious charges against the administration of the Perth City Council. The Leader of the Opposition said that certain information used by the member for Victoria Park was submitted to him by some person some months ago. That only proves that the member for Victoria Park is more alive to the public welfare than is the Leader of the Opposition, because the Leader of the Opposition, having had these facts brought to his notice, did nothing further in the matter at all.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I was not Minister for Health.

Mr. TONKIN: You made no protest.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I told him to make use of the information available to him.

Mr. TONKIN: The member for Victoria Park apparently listened to what was told him and went further by verifying quite a number of the statements made. He told this House so, and the information he gave the House is sufficient to warrant his moving for the appointment of a select committee. Seeing that Parliament has decided against the appointment of a Royal Commission the matter should not be left in the air; it should be cleared up, and the appointment of a select committee will go a long way towards having it cleared up. I am therefore going to support the motion.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park—in reply) [8.7]: There is not a great deal to reply to in the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) and the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson). The Leader of the Opposition stated that the public was not admitted—

Hon. C. G. Latham: I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The hon. member said members of the public were not admitted to an inquiry by a select committee. Standing Order 349 relating to select committees says—

When a committee is examining witnesses strangers may be admitted, but shall be excluded at the request of any member, or at the discretion of the chairman of the committee, and shall always be excluded when the committee is deliberating.

So our Standing Orders say that the public may be admitted. The Leader of the Opposition said that the information I supplied had been hawked to him and he had ad-

vised the person who hawked it, that is, the Town Planning Commissioner—though he did not take the trouble to mention his name—to make use of it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Read Standing Order 352.

Mr. RAPHAEL: This information was not given to me months ago but years ago.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Then why did you not use it before?

Mr. RAPHAEL: It was given to me years ago and I have been from time to time obtaining information and building up my case.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are a slow mover.

Mr. RAPHAEL: That case has been more than built up by the action of the Perth City Council the other day when it refused to purchase that truck.

Hon. C. G. Latham: This is new matter, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The councillor concerned had the casting vote as to whether the truck of which he was the agent in this State should be purchased. But that order was cancelled and a different type of truck was bought. However, I do not want to deal further with that. I want, if I am in order, to read a couple of letters I have received.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not allowed to introduce new matter.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do not think it is new matter. The letters came from individuals and organisations which have supported me in the attempt I have made to set right wrongs existing in this State. The Leader of the Opposition advised the Town Planning Commissioner what to do. The only thing the Commissioner could do was to become a public informer. In respect to every wrong the City Council had perpetrated he would have to take it to the courts and fight the case with his own money. The Leader of the Opposition suggests that I should take to the court every wrong decision made by the council, the case of any councillor having abused his prerogative as a councillor, the case of any building erected contrary to the by-laws, or the wrongful abuse of council material and other such wrongs, thus becoming a public informer and standing up to lawyers' costs myself.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Are you not a public informer now?

Mr. RAPHAEL: My financial position is not as strong as that of the Leader of the Opposition. I am not the possessor of numerous farms and the salary of the Leader of the Opposition, and my limited means do not allow me to do that. His may. I would far sooner have seen him do the job. He has made the statement that my allegations are against the Government. If they were against the Government—but they are not—they would be just as much against him because he is an ex-Minister for Health, and the same things that are taking place now took place when he was Minister for Health.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They were not brought under my notice.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Judging from the speech the Leader of the Opposition made and the knowledge he must have had of the Act, one concludes that he was aware of what was going on but he did not give the House the knowledge he possessed. If an inquiry should take place perhaps the administration of the Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister for Health will come under examination as well. Perhaps that is the position of the hon. gentleman. Perhaps the investigations will go deeply enough to lead to recommendations being made as a result of his not having done the job for which he was receiving a public salary of £30 a week.

Hon. C. G. Latham: So that is what you are doing; trying to harass me out of public life!

Mr. RAPHAEL: I cannot do that. The hon. gentleman gets too many votes from the ladies at the doors.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member need not discuss the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Leader of the Opposition has had this information, but he has had no sense of public duty at all. He must have known about these complaints when he was Minister, and if he had carried out his job as he should have done some action would have been taken years ago. The member for Swan, when he made his investigations, wanted me to take him to certain places he was not game to go to himself. I refused. I said, "If you want to see them, go down yourself." By his remarks I judge that the hon. member had not the pluck to go to those houses to get the information he should have got. As a member of Parliament and a man intending

to oppose this select committee he should have gone, not to one of the houses, but around the back streets where he would have had an opportunity to clean up the conditions existing there.

Mr. Sampson: Perhaps you are wrong.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Well, I hope the hon. member has not been to those places on his own. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that some of the houses to which I have referred are places which have become antiquated and out of date after the lapse of 20 years. My investigations did not lead me to houses 20 years old. They led me into the backs of coffee palaces in Stirling-street and James-street and Brisbane-street and other streets where rooms 8ft. by 6ft. have been let for the purpose of living accommodation. Those places at one time were stables and washhouses and other such buildings, and had been converted into living accommodation. Since I suggested the inquiry I have inspected those places again. The buildings are still there, but I found that in many instances the inmates had gone. If this suggestion has done no more than bring about that improvement, it will not have been in vain. But I do not wish to see that clean-up take place for two or three months only. I want to see that if the Government has not already given the City Council the necessary legislation to carry out its job, or if it has not been provided with sufficient new regulations this session, it will have far more power than it previously had. But I am of opinion that the select committee will probe more deeply than would the Minister or his officers, and that as a result the necessary legislation will be given to the City Council. I do not think the Leader of the Opposition was true in his declaration of dishonesty of purpose actuating my motion. The member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) also seemed to hold a similar opinion. Actually, I do not care very much whether it be a Royal Commission or a select committee that is granted. I approached the Premier on the matter. But it is not that every member of Parliament who was ever granted a select committee merely got up in the House and said, "I think so and so is the case and I want a select committee appointed." Actually, he has been asked to formulate and prove his charges. I spent months preparing my case, and I came to the House and put forward that

case. If I had not proved my case I would not have had any chance of getting the select committee. I did the thing in a constitutional manner. Actually I wasted weeks of time in proving my case, and the only reward I get from the member for West Perth and the Leader of the Opposition is a reference to "filthy allegations." That was the sum total of their remarks. Also it was said that no matter what took place, the select committee's report was going to be "crook." Those allegations were there, as "Hansard" can prove. It is a reflection on the mentality of those who will constitute the select committee. I do not think for a moment that I could persuade any member of this House to do what would be wrong. I am not like the Leader of the Opposition and the member for West Perth; I have not their thought for the lowness of mentality of members of this House; I could not believe that they would do a "crook" thing at my request. Rather do I think that they have minds of their own, and that the members of the select committee will bring before the House a true report. In conclusion, I hope the House will agree to the appointment of a select committee. Nothing can go wrong with it. The allegations I have made can be investigated and a true report brought before the House. Also an opportunity to clear their character can be given to those against whom I have made charges.

Question put and passed.

Point of Order.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I ask you, Sir, whether under Standing Order 334 the member for Victoria Park can take a seat on the select committee. Standing Order 334 reads as follows:—

No member shall sit as a select committee who shall be personally interested in the inquiry before such committee.

I suggest to you, Sir, that the hon. member is interested in the inquiry, inasmuch as he is a member of the City Council. Moreover, in the second place, he has made himself the complainant in this House. So I contend that under Standing Order 334 the hon. member cannot occupy a seat on the select committee. I ask your ruling, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: I do not agree with the views of the Leader of the Opposition. We have not had a select committee appointed

in this House the mover for which was not interested in the question to be referred to the select committee. If it were otherwise, the member who moved for the select committee would not have moved for it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But the member for Victoria Park is also a member of the City Council.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has asked for a ruling, and I am giving it. Also in the eleventh edition of "May" it is set out that "interested" means "having a pecuniary interest." That is the usual practice of the House of Commons. My ruling is that the member for Victoria Park is qualified to sit on the select committee.

Select Committee Appointed.

Ballot taken and a committee appointed consisting of Miss Holman and Messrs. Hughes, McDonald, Sleeman and the mover.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Before moving to obtain power for the select committee to call for persons and papers, etc., I should like to know, Mr. Speaker, whether the select committee requires to get authority to leave the precincts of the House in order to obtain the necessary evidence.

Mr. SPEAKER: So long as the select committee is not taking evidence away from the precincts of the House!

Mr. RAPHAEL: It may be necessary to do that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Standing Order 343 gives the select committee power to do that, but the hon. member must move to that effect.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I move—

That the select committee has power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to adjourn from place to place, and to report on the 14th December.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the words "to adjourn from place to place" be struck out.

This is a matter that affects only that territory within the city boundaries, and can have no effect outside them. The Government should not allow this. The hon. member could take his committee to Kalgoorlie, or any other place. There is no necessity for that. Neither do I expect the select committee to take its staff all around the city. It has always been the custom for evidence to be brought here.

Mr. LAMBERT: Whilst I am prepared to assist the member for Victoria Park, I think this is rather a dangerous procedure. This question involves only the metropolitan area. There is also the matter of expenditure in connection with the inquiry. In the case of a select committee that was sitting the other day, a certain person was called to give evidence, but under Standing Orders it was not permissible for me as chairman to pass the expenditure. We made certain inquiries, and then summoned witnesses to give evidence. This committee could do the same. If the select committee had the right to take evidence here, there and everywhere, this might run into a lot of money, and the committee might not achieve its desires.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	24
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	8

AYES.	
Mr. Boyle	Mr. McLarty
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Hill	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Thors
Mr. Latham	Mr. Warner
Mr. Mann	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Cross	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Doust	Mr. Sheard
Mr. Fox	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hawke	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Styan
Miss Holman	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Troy
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wise
Mr. Munie	Mr. Withers
Mr. North	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

As to postponement.

Order of the Day read for the second reading of the Loan Bill.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [8.45]: I move—

That consideration of Orders of the Day 5 to 37 inclusive be postponed.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I second the motion.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	23
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	7

AYES.	
Mr. Boyle	Mr. McLarty
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. North
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Hill	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Thors
Mr. Latham	Mr. Warner
Mr. Mann	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Cross	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Doust	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Fox	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styan
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Munie	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Nulsen	

(Teller.)

AYES.		NOES.	
Mr. Stubbs	Mr. Needham		
Mr. Welsh	Mr. Johnson		

Question thus negatived.

BILL—LOAN £1,227,000.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purpose of the Bill.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [9.48] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is to give authority for the raising of money to carry on our works programme for the current year, and to make further advances to the Revenue Fund to meet the accumulated deficit. At the 30th June this year, the accumulated deficit was £5,599,351, and the estimated deficit of £128,855 for the current financial year will make a probable accumulated deficit of £5,728,206 at the 30th June, 1938. Previous Loan Acts have authorised advances to the Revenue Fund up to £5,473,000, leaving £255,206 still to be authorised. The £250,000 asked for this year will be just about sufficient to make up the difference. It appears that there is certain misunderstanding among some members in regard to the accumulated deficit, and I think it might be desirable if I were to endeavour to clear up the position. The

whole of the amount representing the deficit at the 30th June last, namely, £5,599,351, has been financed by the Commonwealth Bank on the security of short term Treasury bills. Unfortunately, in the earlier depression years, when the deficits were large, Parliament's authority for the total amounts advanced was not obtained, with the result that the amount of loan moneys advanced to revenue was much greater than the amount authorised. In times of depression when Treasurers had to face deficits, they were unable to determine the extent to which those deficits would amount. The position was met by advances from loan to revenue. It can easily be seen how, in those circumstances, we drifted behind with our loan authorisations, by that method of advancing from loan to revenue. We have gradually overtaken the position until at the end of June last this difference was £126,351, and it is now proposed to seek authority to advance this sum, plus the estimated deficit for this year which is expected to be £128,855. With the exception of this year's estimated deficit, the moneys have already been advanced and used for the purposes of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and the authorising of the advance now does not make any more money available for revenue purposes or increase the accumulated deficit. In the meantime, the question of funding the short term debt into long term debt still remains to be settled. When introducing the Budget, I outlined the difficulties of financing the requisite sinking fund of £4 per cent. per annum if the debt were funded, and all that can be said now is that this problem is one which is receiving the earnest consideration of the Loan Council. While the Government pays two per cent. on the Treasury bills that have been advanced by the Commonwealth Bank for financing the deficit, if deficits continue to be the rule instead of the exception, the time will soon come when the opportunity to finance deficits with Treasury bills will not occur. At that stage unless the Loan Council otherwise determines we shall have to face the position as outlined in the Financial Agreement and contribute four per cent. as a sinking fund on account of future deficits. The amount required for works, as set out in the First Schedule, is £977,000, and for deficit purposes, £250,000, making a total of £1,227,000. The authority granted by last year's Loan Act was £3,212,000,

being £2,412,000 for works and £800,000 for deficit. The unexpended balances of previous authorisations for loan works total £2,908,923, and the £977,000 asked for in the Bill will increase this to £3,885,923. The proposed expenditure on works for the current year, as detailed in the Loan Estimates recently before the House, is £2,241,427, including £57,528 charged to Loan Suspense Account last year, and this will leave an unexpended balance of authority of £1,644,496, which should enable us to carry on until the 31st December, 1938. The position of each authority is indicated in pages 6 to 33 of the Loan Estimates. Each of the items in the Bill has been responded to in the Loan Estimates, and no new principle is introduced. Portion of loan requirements for the year will be raised locally by the investment in Government securities of funds held by governmental and semi-governmental institutions, and by loans from the Commonwealth Savings Bank, as provided by the Savings Bank Transfer Act. The remainder will, as usual, be raised by the Commonwealth on terms and conditions to be fixed by the Loan Council. Two loans were again raised by the Commonwealth during the financial year ended the 30th June last. Both were for £7,500,000, the first being placed on the market in November, 1936, and the second in April, 1937. The November loan was issued at £97 10s., the rate of interest being $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and the term 15 years. Our share was £1,274,270, the net proceeds being £1,232,902, the balance being taken up by discounts, £31,857, and expenses, £9,511. The April Loan was floated at £99 5s., with interest at $3\frac{7}{8}$ per cent. and a term of 11 years. Our share on that occasion was £1,406,000, of which discount accounted for £10,545, and expenses, £11,621, leaving net proceeds of £1,383,834. In addition, we raised £250,060 locally, and stock to the value of £53,200 was issued in London to finance progress payments due on the construction of the new ship for the State Steamship Service. The gradual rising of interest rates on Commonwealth loans, which had been taking place since 1934, was arrested in the early part of this year, and the loan floated last April was on slightly better terms to the Government than the preceding one. The bond market has further strengthened during the past

few weeks, and the new loan to be raised will be on still more favourable terms. The gross Public Debt on the 30th June, 1937, was £92,332,855. This includes short-term debt in London, and Australia amounting to—

		£
London	.. ..	2,998,014
Australia	.. ..	5,425,000
		<hr/> £8,323,014

The position of our total flotations and redemptions as at the 30th June, 1937, was as follows:—

	Overseas.	Australia.	Total.
	£	£	£
Flotations	80,889,055	48,870,470	109,560,425
Redemptions	14,372,876	2,854,694	17,227,570
Balance in Circulation	<hr/> £46,817,079	<hr/> £46,015,776	<hr/> £92,332,855

Sinking Fund amounted to £645,905, leaving a net debt of £91,686,950—an increase of £1,912,079 on the previous year. The Second and Third Schedules authorise the reappropriation of certain moneys which are not required for the purposes for which they were originally authorised. Members will no doubt have observed that a loan has to-day been placed upon the market for the purpose of meeting the programmes for this year, as agreed to by the Loan Council. The loan will be underwritten by the Commonwealth Bank. It will be for £8,000,000 at an issue price of £99 15s. with interest at $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. The maturity date will be the 15th November, 1951 and the average yield over fourteen years will be £3 15s. 6d. The loan reflects the recent improvement in the market for Government stocks, and the yield of £3 15s. 6d. is the lowest since the loan of November, 1935, which was approximately the same. The following are the yields of loans since floated:—

	£	s.	d.
June, 1936	3	17	6
November, 1936	3	19	4
April, 1937	3	19	1

It is very pleasing to note that not only has the trend of increase in the rates been arrested, but that an improvement of 3s. 7d. per cent. has been made possible since the issue of the last loan. I trust that this is an indication that interest rates will return to the low level of November, 1934, when the effective rate was £3 0s. 5d., and that the big conversion to be undertaken next year will be effected on much better terms than at present. As the loan has been underwritten

by the Commonwealth Bank, there is no doubt that the Governments will receive the money, but in the interests of Australian finance it is highly desirable that it should be fully subscribed by the public. I take this opportunity of commending the loan to investors as an attractive and desirable avenue for placing their money. With regard to the large conversion that will take place next year, I hope that with the floating of this loan we shall return to an era of cheaper money. Twelve months ago it looked, when the loan was floated at just under four per cent., that we would have to pay four per cent. interest. The prospect regarding this loan, which has been underwritten by the Commonwealth Bank, is that the average rate will be £3 15s. 6d. At about this time next year we shall be carrying out our biggest conversion loan. Well over £60,000,000 will be converted, and if the interest rate is maintained at the present trend it will mean a very big saving to the people. It is very satisfactory to find that now, within 12 months of effecting that conversion, the interest rate is being maintained definitely towards a downward trend. So that if we effect the conversion next year at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. it can be calculated what that will mean to the people of Australia.

Mr. Rodoreda: What will be our share of that?

The PREMIER: The hon. member will find all the information in Public Accounts.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think the period of those loans has been extended.

The PREMIER: Yes; some will now mature in 1954 and 1955. They were divided on a satisfactory basis and each State has some portion of its debt maturing and every three years there will be conversions of about £15,000,000 or £20,000,000. When loans mature and conversions become necessary, the rate of interest will probably be down to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. If we can get down to what the rate was three years ago, £3 0s. 6d., per cent., it will have a big effect on our debt of over £500,000,000. While for two or three years interest rates gradually went up, the last loan showed a reduction of about only 3d. The present loan, however, is a definite improvement, the reduction being 3s. 7d. per cent. lower than that of the previous loan. Those people who have money to invest will be well advised to invest it at this rate. They will get an investment that will be attractive, and if the

present downward trend continues, it will be even more attractive. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham; debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [9.5] in moving the second reading said: To conform to the Income Tax Assessment Bill now under consideration it has been necessary to make some alterations to the Land and Income Tax Bill. This Bill imposes a land and income tax for one year, as has been the practice in the past. It also imposes a rate for companies, previously levied under the Dividend Duties Act, and for racing stakes formerly included in the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act. There is a new provision for tax on interest paid to absentees which is necessary because the previous legislation did not make provision for taxing interest of that nature. Previously in dealing with the liability of individuals for income tax, the Land and Income Tax Act always stated that an adjustment should be made in respect to dividend duty paid on that part of the income which represented dividends from a company. This is not so stated in the present taxing measure, because the Income Tax Assessment Bill makes all necessary provision for adjusting income in such a case, provision having been made for a rebate to the extent of the dividend duty paid. As intimated in the Budget the rates prescribed under this Bill will be the same as those levied last year and for several years past. Last year the receipts were—land tax £117,249 and income tax £283,539. It is not expected that there will be any great alteration this year, and the Budget Estimate is land tax £110,000 and income tax £285,000. As I mentioned during the time the Assessment Bill was going through, because of the various alterations in the assessment of companies, banks, etc., we may get an increase of about £10,000 this year in income tax collections. Since 1920 dividend duty has been levied at the rate of 1s. 3d. plus 15 per cent., but the extra 15 per cent. has not been imposed on mutual life assurance companies. In the present Bill the 15 per cent. has been incorporated in the amount of tax, making

it 1s. 5½d., and the rate of 1s. 3d. has been prescribed for insurance companies as before. With the slight exemptions mentioned, the rates under this Bill are the same as have been operating for many years past, and as there is practically no alteration, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1937-38.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 23rd November, Mr. Withers in the Chair.

Vote—Unemployment Relief and State Labour Bureau, £68,727 (partly considered):

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [9.12]: The Minister made a great deal of the fact that he had got on to a new tennis racquet, but it appears to me that it was a poor racquet compared with some of the rackets Ministers have indulged in in this State. The Minister when introducing the Estimates led us to believe that all was well with the position of the department under his control, and he quoted figures to show how the improved position of the unemployed had come about since 1933. He told us of the man on 14s. a week, that is, of the man who had a wife and no children, and who was classified on sustenance on that figure, and that that man's earnings were £2 10s. at the present time. I do not know the data from which that average was compiled, but I do know that in my electorate there is quite a number of people not getting that average per week. If the Minister were to take the trouble to go amongst the 14s. men he would find that there are among them a number who have had only seven weeks' fulltime work in 12 months. I do not think the House realised the full extent of the unfortunate plight of the person who is compelled to live on 7s. a week for long stretches at a time. There are men and women in the community who are forced to live month after month on 7s. per week.

The Premier: They are the exception that proves the rule.

Mr. HUGHES: They do not prove the rule.

The Premier: They do.

Mr. HUGHES: They prove the callous indifference of the Premier and his colleagues towards those people.

The Premier: One man out of 6,600!

Mr. HUGHES: There are many of these unfortunate men.

The Premier: There are not.

Mr. HUGHES: Not only in my electorate, but they come to me from other electorates, and I pass them on to the members concerned.

The Premier: There are not any number; there is a very small number.

Mr. HUGHES: According to the departmental statistics, the average of those people is £2 10s. 7d. a week. How is it there is anyone on 14s. who goes for a long stretch without full-time employment?

The Premier: How old is the man you are talking about?

Mr. HUGHES: I am not quoting one man.

The Premier: Yes, you referred to one man.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know his age.

The Premier: He is 64 years of age.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not care if he is 100. It is not right that he should be compelled to exist on 1s. per day. The Commonwealth provides an invalid and old-age pension at the rate of £1 a week. Men cannot get sufficient food to meet bodily needs out of a rate of 7s. a week. This country must be very impoverished indeed when all we provide for those people is a miserable pittance of 7s. a week—1s. a day. Apart from the 14s. men, the man on 21s. is supposed to get an average of £2 13s. 11d. a week. That is 54s. a week against the basic wage of 75s. That is about 75 per cent. of full-time employment. Any number of those men on 21s. a week are not getting 75 per cent. full-time employment. If the Premier wants concrete proof—

The Premier: I have it.

Mr. HUGHES: Will he see everyone whom I send with a letter of introduction? I will undertake not to send anyone unless I first make personal inquiries to satisfy myself that the case is genuine.

The Premier: I know there are 10 per cent. The figures are 500 on sustenance out of 6,600 men.

Mr. HUGHES: We are asking a man and woman and young child to exist on 21s. a week, whereas the Commonwealth allows an old-age pensioner 20s. a week. Thus,

under our system, a man has to keep a wife and child on 1s. a week more than the Federal Government allows an old-age pensioner.

The Premier: It is a poor old man that cannot earn two or three bob a year. According to you he cannot earn anything in a year.

Mr. HUGHES: It is most difficult, as the Premier knows, for relief and sustenance workers to earn money during their stand-down period.

The Premier: But you are saying that a man is standing down all the time.

Mr. HUGHES: I say that a number have had long stand-down periods. Here is a group of instances that I took indiscriminately the other day. One man with a wife and five children has had a stand-off of eight weeks. According to the figures given by the Minister for Employment he would be a 49s. man and his average would be £3 12s. 5d. That is only 3s. short of the basic wage. How comes it that a man with a wife and five children has had a stand-down of eight weeks? Another man with a wife and four children has had a stand-down of eight weeks and other men have been stood down for periods of 25 weeks, 17 weeks, eight weeks, 20 weeks, 10 weeks, and eight weeks. How is it that all those men from one electorate—not men gathered from all over the metropolitan area but men picked up one morning at the bureau during a chance call and without warning or arrangement to be there—should have had such long stand-down periods and all of them with more than four children? Yet, according to the department, the average earning is £3 12s. 5d. a week. If those figures are correct there must be some unfair discrimination in the handing out of the work. Go to any one of the groups and we find men who have been standing down for a much longer period than they should have been if the average were being maintained. The Minister made a point that there had been some improvement in the unemployment figures since 1933. When we consider the enormous increase in the proceeds from the wages tax since 1933, there is no justification for anybody being on part-time work in Western Australia. In 1933, when the wages tax was introduced and operated for six months of the year, the then Government collected £202,336 and spent from revenue in the relief of unem-

ployment £346,956. Thus there was spent 75 per cent. more in the relief of unemployment than was obtained from the wages tax. The National-Country Party Government introduced the wages tax and the present Premier, then sitting in opposition, moved that the whole of the proceeds of the tax be earmarked for the relief of unemployment. The tax was originally called an unemployment tax. In the Public Accounts in the first year the tax was collected, it is referred to as the unemployment relief tax. Whatever one may think of the Government then in power, it did apply to the relief of unemployment out of revenue more money than was collected from the tax. In the year 1933-34, the last year of the old Government and the first year of the present Government, a sum of £411,716 was collected from the wages tax, or double the amount previously received. Instead of doubling the amount of unemployment relief from revenue, the Government reduced it from £346,000, giving round thousands, to £232,000. Thus the present Government, in its first year, spent less money for the relief of unemployment than was collected by means of the wages tax. Although the tax yielded an increase of £209,000, there was a drop of £114,000 in the expenditure on the relief of unemployment. Thus there was taken from the unemployed in the first year of the present Government £350,000 that might legitimately have been spent for the relief of unemployment. It is obvious from the statistics that the present Government and its supporters have no sympathy at all with the unfortunate man who is unemployed, because at every opportunity money has been taken from the relief of unemployment and applied to benefit people better situated. The Government applied it to raise Ministerial salaries and to restore the salaries of members of Parliament and highly-paid Government officials. Wherever money could be taken from the unemployed, it has been taken by the present Government. One would have thought that when the Government received an increase of £209,000 from the tax and took £114,000 from unemployment relief, it would have been satisfied. But no. The next year the wages tax receipts showed an increase of £272,000; it reached the total of £684,000 and the amount provided for the relief of unemployment dropped from £232,000 to

£72,000. Although there was a 50 per cent. increase in the tax collected, the amount spent for the relief of unemployment was dropped to 30 per cent. At that stage there was a margin of more than £600,000 of money collected from the wages tax above the amount spent on the relief of unemployment. Yet, in the last year of the preceding Government, £146,000 more was spent for the relief of unemployment than was collected from the wages tax. That proves that the present Government does not want to end unemployment and relief work and is callously indifferent to the welfare of those unfortunate people. Every time we have a parliamentary session something is promised to the unemployed. When we raised the question of unemployment relief on last year's Estimates we were told that on the 5th October some mysterious improvement would be made for the benefit of the unemployed, and that we could expect full-time work in the near future. Of course it was a hoax, a callous hoax, a callous betrayal of those unfortunate workers by those who live in luxury and have had a life of leisure battenning on them and playing up to them. After this mighty promise of an improvement had been mysteriously conveyed to us, we found that about 4s. per week was provided for the unemployed.

Mr. Doust: Did not the Commonwealth Government reduce the amount to this Government by £300,000?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member is quite satisfied to apologise for the Government by saying that the Commonwealth took £300,000 from the grant and so the Government of Western Australia could take £300,000 from the unemployed—the section of the community least able to bear it. That is the poorest of all apologies, and I do not think the Government would like to have it broadcast. If the Commonwealth Government took £300,000 from Western Australia, are we as a Parliament going to take it from the unemployed? We are to take from him who has not! I am sorry to hear any member put that forward as a legitimate apology for keeping these poor people not on the breadline but 50 per cent. below it. Unfortunate people are to exist on 7s. per week when the basic wage is 75s.! They are to exist on not 10 per cent. of the basic wage! For that the specious excuse offered is that the Federal Government took £300,000 from the grant to the State Government. In spite of that, however, the State Government

received much additional revenue for which it had not budgeted. Referring to the statement of receipts in the Public Accounts for the year we find that notwithstanding the reduction of the Federal grant the amount realised was little short of that estimated.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It was more than the estimate, about £150,000 more.

Mr. HUGHES: Our revenue for the year, notwithstanding the reduced Federal grant, reached the colossal figure of £10,500,000, the highest ever known in the history of Western Australia.

Mr. Doust: What was the expenditure?

Mr. HUGHES: Slightly more, of course.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Expenditure always goes up.

Mr. HUGHES: But who got the increased expenditure? The member for Nelson (Mr. Doust) received an increase of 32s. per week in wages, like the rest of us. If he feels proud of the fact that we forced the unemployed to exist on 7s. a week in order that he might be given that increase of 32s., I do not agree with him.

Mr. Doust: The interest bill went up 40 per cent.

Mr. HUGHES: Has not the ratio of interest to total expenditure been higher in previous years than it was in the financial year just closed? We have been borrowing at the rate of £2,000,000 or more per annum; but notwithstanding that fact our interest bill has been reduced, thanks to certain conversions. There is no doubt the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) is right in saying that presently a day will come when we shall not be able to meet our interest bill, when posterity will be faced with the position of not being able to meet interest payments. However, it is no use saying that an increased interest bill is responsible for holding the unfortunate unemployed down to 1s. per day. If some members would stand up to the Government and force it to do something for the unemployed—

Hon. C. G. Latham: Like the member for Victoria Park over his council business.

Mr. HUGHES: —as they stand up when their own pride or personal interest is touched, my admiration for them would be greater. If they drew the gun and pointed it at the head of the Government and said, "You must do something for those unfortunate people," we would admire them much more than we do—greatly as we admire the stand that was taken.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Which stand was that?

Mr. HUGHES: In 1934-35, when the Government received £684,000 from wages tax, it reduced the unemployment grant from revenue to £72,000. In 1935-36 there was a jump of nearly £200,000 in the amount collected from wages tax. The total jumped to £827,000. Notwithstanding that there had been that increase of £200,000, the Government was not content to allow the unfortunate unemployed to have the paltry grant of £72,000 from revenue. The Government reduced the amount to £48,000. The more the Government receives from the wages tax, the less it gives to the unemployed. Last year the amount from wages tax rose to £971,000, only £29,000 short of a million sterling. In addition there was £89,000 from gold tax, which the previous Government had never enjoyed.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about the Lotteries Commission?

Mr. HUGHES: If one had stood up in this House five or six years ago and said that £1,000,000 could be taken out of the pockets of the workers by a wages tax, one would have been howled down as an idiot. I remember when the tax was first proposed as a flat rate of 1d. in the pound of wages for hospitals, men who later became Cabinet Ministers said it was an iniquitous proposal. If my memory serves me, the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) declared it was a proposal that could only come from a Government of round-bellied plutocrats.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You supported the member for Boulder at that time.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes; and I stand now exactly where I stood in 1922. A flat rate tax on wages is the worst form of taxation, and never should be levied. However, out of over £1,000,000 of additional revenue all the Government could give the unemployed by way of relief from revenue was a paltry £51,000. Just a shilling in the pound! I say advisedly—and I have said this outside the Chamber as well as within it—that any relief or sustenance worker who votes for a supporter of the present Government does not deserve any sympathy at all. Any member of the Government could, by his single vote, have secured the earmarking of the wages tax for relief of unemployment. In that he would not have been doing anything inconsistent. All that was necessary was to

further to £232,192. In 1934-35 it was £72,496; in 1935-36, £49,870; in 1936-37, £51,144. The money given in relief of unemployment is not one-eighth to-day of what it was in 1930-31, and it is not one-tenth of what it was in 1931-32. Yet in 1930-31 we had no wages tax and in 1931-32 there was no wages tax. In 1933 we got the wages tax for the first time and then we showed a steady increase of £200,000 per annum until we reached the stupendous figure of £1,000,000 per annum. Surely a Government that has had such an enormous increase in taxation can provide more than a paltry £50,000 for these unfortunate people. Relatively the treatment meted out to the unemployed by the present Government is much more callous and indifferent than that of the previous Government because the previous Government did not have this additional million of money to spend from revenue.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What was our revenue in the last year we were in office in comparison with theirs?

The Minister for Railways: Tell them what you did—the old, old story.

Mr. HUGHES: We have unemployment not because the Government has not the money to abolish unemployment, but because there is indifference to it and towards these unfortunate people. I wonder why we are paying a Minister for Employment at all. What does he do? How does he fill in the day? The Unemployment Department is run by public servants who are laws unto themselves. They say whether a man shall get married or whether he shall not. When a man tells them "I have a wife," they say, "Was she in trouble before you married her?" and if he says "No, she was not," they say, "You will get no work here." I could not believe that when I was told it. I rang the unemployment office and asked them whether it was so and the officer said that was the policy of the department.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Did he blush when he told you?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know whether he blushed.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is the most disgraceful thing I have heard of—and put over by a Labour Government!

Mr. Tonkin: It was put over by the other Government, too.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of course not.

Mr. Tonkin: Of course it was.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HUGHES: If the working man has the misfortune to meet with an accident and gets workers' compensation, the department says, "You will get no relief until you have exhausted the compensation money at relief rates." If an unfortunate worker has a claim for compensation and one is trying to fight it for him, one is pestered with letters from the department asking, "Have you any money yet for this man? Do not forget that we have a claim." The man cannot get his workers' compensation before the department has its tentacles on it.

Mr. Hegney: That is not the unemployment relief department.

Mr. HUGHES: I can show the hon. member letters galore in which the department writes, "We are giving relief to so and so and we want you to deduct out of the compensation money due to us." The department will not give the unfortunate worker time to get the money for his injury before putting in a claim for it. If the public Treasury was in a deplorable state as it was five or six years ago and the revenue had dwindled away to nothing, we could understand all this cheeseparing and grinding down and parsimonious procedure, but when the Treasury has overflowed with revenue as never before, surely it is time we got up on this unfortunate section of the community. There is a statement here of the receipts and expenditure from 1928-29 to 1936-37.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Only six members of the other side are interested in it.

Mr. HUGHES: We find that there has been a steady increase in revenue from 1931 to the present time, and the estimate for 1937-38 is approximately £2,000,000 more than was received in 1930-31. Two million pounds more from revenue alone coming into the public Treasury, yet we still have these unfortunate people on the 7s. a week which they were on in 1930, notwithstanding that the cost of living has gone up according to the basic wage. Promises were made that there were to be great improvements. The 5th October was named as the day on which there was going to be a disclosure of the plans for full-time employment. It did not materialise. They got a paltry 4s. a week. When we get near the unemployment estimates again, and when

there is an opportunity of ventilating a case for these people again a bunch of carrots is held before them. Now there is going to be a readjustment and the men are to get more work.

The Minister for Employment: That annoys you.

Mr. HUGHES: It does not annoy me. The Minister would have my wholehearted support in anything he wanted to do to provide unemployed with full-time work.

The Minister for Employment: That annoys you.

Mr. HUGHES: I was not annoyed. When I saw the Minister, when delivering his address on these Estimates, looking into the infinite and beholding himself and having a beautiful vision, I was amused.

The Minister for Employment: Are we supposed to laugh at that?

Mr. HUGHES: Of course there is no excuse for a Minister for Employment at the present time.

Hon. C. G. Latham: None whatever.

Mr. HUGHES: What does he do for the unemployed?

Hon. C. G. Latham: What does he do them for?

Mr. HUGHES: He comes along once a year in a callous way and puts forward some statement that leads them to expect something, knowing that he has no intention of giving it to them.

The Minister for Employment: I will be fairly callous a little later in the evening.

Mr. HUGHES: I am not at all perturbed as to what the Minister might be callous about. That does not worry me in the slightest. There is no question about his callousness.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Even if he has to wait until 11 o'clock to exhibit it.

Mr. HUGHES: No other man could keep the sinecure he does and draw his salary and be indifferent to the sufferings and misfortunes of these unfortunate people without an attempt at human kindness. He is all callousness and vanity. I have no doubt about that. Even the unemployed men on relief work who are compelled to contribute out of their meagre earnings to the A.W.U. to save the Minister paying his own election expenses, have to work at lower wages than they are entitled to. I saw a letter from this organisation in which reference was made to the fact that these men are obliged to work on the roads in the metropolitan area

at a lower rate of pay under an A.W.U. agreement than they could get under the municipal employees agreement and the road workers' agreement for the sole purpose of making them eligible to join the A.W.U. and have stolen from them—"stolen" is the only word—25s. a year. The organiser of the A.W.U. had the audacity to say "It is unfortunate that members of the Road Workers' Union have a higher wage than we."

Hon. C. G. Latham: Unfortunate?

Mr. HUGHES: Unfortunate. It was put in black and white that it was unfortunate that the Road Workers' Union had got a higher rate of pay.

Mr. Hegney: What is the difference in pay?

Mr. HUGHES: I will give you the lot later on. I will tell you the signatory of the letter. It is Mr. Dalton of the A.W.U. He says that it is unfortunate. So that as long as they can get 25s. a year out of these unfortunate workers they would sooner see them working at a lower rate of pay. I always thought a basic principle of unionism was to raise the rate of pay.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But they do not represent labour nowadays.

Mr. HUGHES: I always thought that the unions told the workers to get as much pay as they could and the higher the better. But no. Those men pay 25s. into the union and are forced to work at a lower rate of pay than the Arbitration award provides and then the union has the audacity to write and say it is unfortunate that others are receiving a higher wage. Why is it unfortunate? Only because this gentleman who is going to give us a demonstration of his callousness, this gentleman that is on a tennis racquet not half as good as this A.W.U. racket—there is no doubt the Ministers of the Crown are using their ministerial position to levy unlawfully money from citizens because those citizens are not in a position to resist. It is the lowest means of getting money that one could imagine; because these people are facing starvation. No racketeer in America has ever got down so low. I would have more respect for the Minister for Employment if he prided himself less on his callousness and got into a racket such as those favoured by Capone and his associates where they have to take the risk of a gun.

The Minister for Employment: Or like the "Groper."

Mr. HUGHES: There is no money from the "Groper" used to pay anyone's election expenses, nor any money taken unlawfully or illegally. The directors of the "Groper" did not wait until there was £3,000 in the pockets of the company and then transfer it to themselves by unlawful means.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Who did that?

Mr. HUGHES: They got in early, but that was nothing as compared with getting the money from those people and telling them, "You have to work at a lower rate of pay to enable us to get it." If something were done to improve the position of those people, something done by this organisation to stand up and fight for those people, there would be no objection to paying them 25s. or even 50s. per year.

Mr. Hegney interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: I will tell the hon. member something about the camping allowance at the Canning Dam. The men were entitled to 5s. 3d. per week camping allowance, but the Government built some little two-roomed huts that probably did not cost a tanner each and compelled the men to live in the huts, taking away from them their 5s. 3d. camping allowance.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Shame!

Mr. HUGHES: Why did not the A.W.U. stand up against that? If we could have the data compiled of the costs of those Canning huts and the money the Government received by saying the 5s. 3d. per week allowance, we would find that no rent racketeer in Kalgoorlie could come near it. The Government charged 10s. 6d. for a jarrah camp just big enough to take two beds. There were holes in the floor and no lining, but nevertheless the Government charged 10s. 6d. per week for those huts. The men were just told, "You are in hut No. 1" or whatever the number might be.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Where was the Minister for Justice?

Mr. HUGHES: The Government charged 10s. 6d. per week for the huts, taking the 5s. 3d. allowance away from the men. Why did not the A.W.U. stand up against that? Because those men are in the unfortunate position of being a fair target. I hope we shall some day have a Government that will have enough backbone to say, "We will compel you by legislation to refund the money that you have taken without lawful authority."

Mr. Patrick: And make it retrospective.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, and make it retrospective. I do not mind how much the worker on full-time employment voluntarily contributes towards anybody's election expenses; he can contribute the whole of his salary if he likes, but when it comes to forcing money from workers, when it comes to such miserable tactics in order to get one's election expenses paid, it is the limit. No man raised in the Labour Party, no man who had come from the working people and who had lived his life among the working people, would ever dream of doing such things. Only those who come in for the purpose of getting an easy living on the backs of those unfortunate people, and who have never known what it was to work hard, would do such a thing. They have only one thought, which is to get as much as they can.

Mr. Hegney interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: I should say the Government did raise the emergency tax. Yes, certainly it did.

Mr. Hegney: The unfortunate sustenance worker had to pay it before.

Mr. HUGHES: The Government raised it from £800,000 to £1,000,000. I should certainly say the Government raised the tax. And the 44-hour week is no good to the man who is getting only 20 hours' work and is trying to live on 40s. a week and keep a wife. There is nothing very meritorious about that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It was a snare and a delusion.

Mr. HUGHES: If the Government believes in the reduction of hours principle, it has a golden opportunity to put the relief workers on full time, yet we find there is not a suggestion of it from the Government side of the House; not one suggestion that the 40-hour week should be established by putting all the relief workers on full time.

Mr. Hegney interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Middle Swan must refrain from interjecting.

Mr. HUGHES: There is an opportunity for our friends opposite to show their bonafides in reducing hours. The time is long overdue for the reduction of hours. It would give the worker a share in the mechanisation of industry. There is opportunity to start it with the relief worker. And the money is there with which to do it; the Government has the money, so why is it not done? Now we are told that by some miracle, although the loan money raised this

year is about the same as that raised last year, and although the revenue estimated for this year is to be about the same as that received last year—we are now told that these unfortunate relief workers have had long periods of stand-down, and so their conditions are going to be improved. I hope this is going to be a legitimate improvement and not the hoax that was practised on them last year; I hope they will not be told in a couple of months' time, when Parliament is in recess, "You are getting a longer period of work, but also you must have a longer period of stand-down." I hope that this time it will be a real improvement in their conditions. It is a standing disgrace when we are getting this million pounds a year that we should sit by blindly indifferent to the privations of those unfortunate people on 7s. a week. And they are not limited to the constituency of East Perth. I know that every member in the metropolitan area has these unfortunate people coming to him day in and day out pleading for some improvement in their conditions. Also I suppose there are country members who have the same experience. There is no excuse for it. If the only progress that can be made by the Department of Employment is that once a year the Minister makes a speech, then the sooner we abolish that portfolio or hand it over to someone else the better. There has not been one suggestion of constructive policy from the ministerial head of the department during last year. If that is all he can do we might just as well leave the department to the public servants to run, as was done in the past. Then having got rid of the Minister we could distribute an additional £2,000. It is sad to see that notwithstanding the Treasury is overflowing with loan funds and with revenue, we cannot assist those unfortunate people in their plight.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam—in reply) [10.12]: First of all I desire to say a few words regarding the contribution made to this debate by the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver). In her speech she endeavoured to be reasonably fair, and reasonably well did she succeed in that regard. She made an appeal that the Government should give consideration to the improving of the condition of the 14s. men, the 21s. men and the 28s. men. At the same time she was gen-

erous enough and gracious enough, in contradistinction to the miserable attitude just now exhibited by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes), to congratulate the Government upon the improvement the Government proposed to make in regard to the 35s. men, the 42s. men, and the 49s. men. Had the member for Subiaco listened to the statement of the Government policy as carefully as she should have done, or had she read the speech carefully, she would have learnt that a statement was made to the effect that the Government intended to improve the condition of the 14s. men, the 21s. men, and the 28s. men. The measure of improvement to be made concerning these groups of men has since been set out in the Press. No doubt the hon. member is now fully aware of the policy of the Government. I congratulate her upon the reasonableness of her speech on this year's Estimates. Her speech this year stands out in rather marvellous relief against the one she made on these Estimates last year. On that occasion there was a rapid reversion to type.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I have heard that before.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: She described the Government as a gang of political poltroons, as a group of spiritless cowards, as a bunch of arrant hypocrites, and as a collection of spineless prawns and consummate humbugs. I draw attention to those remarks because I am determined that future Parliaments shall know to what depths of degradation some members of this Parliament sink to achieve what they think may be political advantage.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Don't be such a parrot!

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I am inclined to agree that if the member for Subiaco continued to make statements of that kind in the speeches she delivered under cover of parliamentary privilege, eventually free speech in Parliament would be destroyed. I agree with Mr. Menzies who, in effect, said that members who made questionable remarks in Parliament should be forced to repeat them outside, so that they could be dealt with as ordinary citizens.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: So you have read my speech?

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I am sure that when members of this Chamber heard that statement falling from the lips of the hon. member last year, they must

have been horrified to hear unbridled and questionable remarks of that character, especially as they were made under cover of parliamentary privilege.

Mr. Cross: Is that what they do in Turkey?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The hon. member also had a great deal to say regarding the alleged failure of the Government to prevent a great deal of the poverty which she states exists in her own district. In her speech this year she painted a very gloomy picture to the effect that in her district there were men, women and children short of milk, food and clothing.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Quite true.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: She went on to place upon the shoulders of the Government complete and absolute responsibility for the alleviation of this suffering, and these shortages of necessary materials. I understand from some of the speeches of the member for Subiaco that she is a keen student of biblical history. Any person who is a keen student of biblical history, and, what is more, a keen follower of the teachings of that history, will know that it is not the sole and complete responsibility of Governments to do everything for all people. There is in the recordings of that history a statement concerning a rich young man who waited upon the Lord of all the worlds and inquired of Him what he, the young man, must do to inherit eternal life. He was informed that he must keep the Commandments, that in effect he must neither kill nor steal. He replied that he had done all those things, and had done them diligently. He then inquired whether the result of having done all those things diligently would enable him to inherit eternal life. He was informed that one thing more than necessary, namely, that he must sell all his possessions and distribute them amongst the poor and needy of the community. And the young man went away very sad, as I am sure the member for Subiaco would have been in similar circumstances, because his possessions were very great. I now come with a considerable amount of relish to deal with the untrue and vitriolic speech given to members of this Chamber by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). As Senator Cunningham would say, the member for East Perth "opened pretty." He led off by making sneering reference to the fact that I had

mentioned that a new industry had been established in Western Australia for the manufacture of tennis racquets. The member for East Perth said that Ministers of this Government were experts in connection with "rackets" of every description, particularly with those "rackets" that are operated for the purpose of deceiving and robbing the people. Members may have forgotten, and members of the public may have forgotten, that an impartial and expert public inquiry was held in Western Australia not many months ago when a certain person was proven to be a liar, a cheat and a thief.

Mr. Hughes: Who was that, the owner of the Captain Stirling Hotel?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: This individual from East Perth also told members of the Chamber, and indirectly members of the public, that the Minister for Employment and other members of the Government viewed the position of the unemployed and their dependants with callous indifference. The Leader of the Opposition playfully gave support to that statement, although in his mind and heart he knows that the Minister for Employment, and every other Minister of the Government regard the position of the unemployed with complete sympathy, and are doing everything possible on all occasions to bring about an improvement in their condition. Every other member opposite knows that that is true. Many of them who have spoken in this debate have admitted that the Government has done reasonably well in its handling of this difficult problem. And yet the member for East Perth, not because he believes it, but because his interest in the unemployed is only political and mercenary, gets up and declares that members of the Government have shown callous indifference towards the unemployed and their dependants.

Mr. Hughes: We will show you where the mercenary interests are in connection with the Captain Stirling Hotel.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I am glad to have the member for East Perth squealing so early.

Mr. Hughes: You will be squealing yet.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: That is typical of his type.

Mr. Hughes: You will hear who the cheat is.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: In the course of his speech the member for

East Perth lied, and lied deliberately on many points. He hoped I would be baited and would fall, and make interjections to enable him to continue his speech so that he might obtain more publicity in the Press.

Mr. Hughes: No man in the House is a greater liar than you are.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: But the member for East Perth, although he thinks he is shrewd and clever and cunning, is as obvious as the noonday sun in a cloudless sky. Basking in the sunshine of his new friends, and old enemies, the member for East Perth spills poison wherever he moves. The member for East Perth is now indulging in a more or less continuous squeal, and I am comforted to know that the speech I am making is sufficiently effective to draw this continuous squealing from him.

Mr. Hughes: I will help you by telling you a few things.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The member for East Perth was not satisfied with merely casting aspersions on the intentions and characters of the Ministers of the Crown, but even went so far as to cast a most unwarranted aspersion on the Auditor General of Western Australia, an independent officer appointed by Parliament, an officer who knows neither politics nor politicians.

Mr. Hughes: Who appointed him?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The member for East Perth is absolutely incapable of uttering one clean statement or one generous sentiment in connection with anyone except those whom he can use for his own cunning purposes.

Mr. Hughes: You stand for corruption, or you would never have stood what—

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: When the member for East Perth finishes squealing, I will have another word or two to say. He sheds crocodile tears in this Chamber about the salaries of members of Parliament and Ministers of the Crown. He gives the impression that his heart bleeds for the unemployed and their dependants. Yet the member for East Perth occupies five jobs in Western Australia, some at least of which might be made available, with great benefit, to some of the unemployed. The member for East Perth has an income, I should say, greater than that of any other member of this Chamber.

Mr. Hughes: I wish that were true!

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: He is a member of Parliament, and although he squeals about the increase in the salaries of members of Parliament—it was not an increase at all but a restoration of a cut made in salaries during the depression—I have yet to learn that he has refused to pocket the increase or restoration of salary that Parliament agreed to.

Mr. Hughes: He did not get it by bribing!

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: In addition, the member for East Perth is a lawyer. If the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) would take the Chamber into his confidence, he could tell us what an excellent annual income that profession brings to those who are fortunate enough to be in it. Further, the member for East Perth, who now finds it impossible to cease squealing for even a second, is secretary of a union. In addition, he is a qualified and registered public accountant, although I understand he does not receive much business in that line. So this individual, who assumes a sympathetic attitude for his own individual aggrandisement and benefit, holds down at least five separate positions and receives a substantial income in connection with each of them. Yet he has the audacity to stand up here and spill his sympathy, not real but assumed sympathy, for the unemployed and their dependants. Let me say one other thing in that regard. I know one man who was perhaps the strongest supporter of the member for East Perth in the two elections he contested some time ago. That man worked day and night unceasingly, never spared himself in any respect, and perhaps was the greatest single factor in bringing about the election of the member for East Perth to this Parliament. What happened to that man? As soon as the member for East Perth was safe and secure in this comfortable and well-paid position, what happened to that man? He was thrown aside like a squeezed lemon, pitched into the gutter, and eventually found himself sheltering in a crane house on top of the Colonial Mutual building.

Mr. Hughes: That is a lie.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Yet the member for East Perth comes here and tries to convince the Committee that the members of the Government are indifferent and callous to men and women who

are in need of assistance. I am glad to embrace the opportunity of exposing the political hypocrisy of this individual, so that members of this Chamber and the general public may know the true situation. As a matter of fact, I am quite sure that although hon. members opposite playfully support the member for East Perth, they do not actually possess a grain of real respect for him. There can be no doubt in the world but that this Government has achieved a great deal of improvement for the relief workers of Western Australia. Did hon. members listen to the weird and mysterious tale the member for East Perth unfolded regarding the amount of money expended from financial emergency tax receipts for the relief of unemployed in this State? Was there one member on either side of the Chamber who was in the least impressed by that weird story which the member for East Perth unfolded? The member for East Perth knows the truth about the position, but he never tells the truth about it. The true position has been explained to him time after time. Despite the fact that he is in possession of all the knowledge and all the real information regarding the position, year after year he gets up in this Chamber and repeats that weird, mysterious tale of his and seeks to prove that because the Government of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member spent more money from the financial emergency tax proceeds on relief of unemployment, the previous Government has done more than the present Government has done for the unemployed. I am not concerned as to which Government does most for the unemployed. My concern—and I think the concern of 99 per cent. of the members of this Chamber—is that the best possible in the circumstances shall be done for the unemployed. The fact that the previous Government expended more money from financial emergency tax proceeds for the relief of unemployment than the present Government has done proves nothing at all. That, of course is the cunning method always used by the member for East Perth. He produces two sets of facts, and then tortures an utterly wrong deduction from them. No doubt he thinks it clever and cunning, and believes that it deceives a great number of people, as indeed it does; but the member for East Perth cannot expect to go on getting away with that sort of thing. Almost every member of the Chamber knows that

the only money used from revenue for the purpose of relieving unemployment is that which is used for the purpose of providing sustenance for the men when they are not working. All of the work—and work of course is easily the more important side of Government activities in connection with the relief of unemployment—is financed from loan funds. The member for East Perth knows, if he would only have the decency to admit, that prior to the present Government coming into office 70 or 80 per cent. of the men had to exist on sustenance only, because the Government of the day was not able to organise the works necessary to provide the men with employment. So it was inevitable in those circumstances that large sums of money had to be found from revenue for the purpose of providing relief for the unemployed. As every member knows, the position to-day is different. A works programme has now been organised and is in operation, with the result that instead of 80 per cent. of the men being forced to accept assistance on the sustenance basis only, about 10 per cent. only have to accept that unfortunate sustenance basis. To-day 90 per cent. of the relief workers are provided with work in accordance with a roster. The expenditure necessary to finance the carrying on of that work comes not from revenue but from loan funds available to the State. I regret it is necessary for me to repeat, even briefly, the explanation of the true position. I have been forced to repeat that explanation because the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) wilfully persists in misrepresenting the situation. The member for East Perth has a great deal of bitter feeling towards the A.W.U., and other industrial organisations of the State. Why? You, Mr. Chairman, probably know as well as I do the real reason for it. The real reason is that the member for East Perth, in years gone by, with the use of all the cunning and trickery of which he is capable, endeavoured to get control of the A.W.U., the timber workers' organisation and other industrial organisations of that description. Because the member for East Perth could not obtain that control, because the rank and file of the members of those unions were wide awake to him and his trickery, deceit and dishonesty on those occasions, he failed to get the control he wanted, and failed to achieve the objective at which he had aimed. Ever since, he has been overflowing with bitterness and malice with regard to those

organisations, and especially to the officials connected with them. So it is clear beyond the slightest shadow of doubt that the member for East Perth has no real genuine concern for the unemployed and their dependants. His concern, as I mentioned earlier, is political and mercenary. He expressed his opinions regarding the Minister for Employment, or rather, as he termed me, the Minister for Unemployment. I understand my predecessor in office was somewhat particular about being always referred to as the Minister for Employment. I am not concerned whether the member for East Perth, or any other member, refers to me as the Minister for Employment or as the Minister for Unemployment. My susceptibilities in that regard are not to be injured by references to the title of the office I hold. Nevertheless there are thousands of relief workers and their dependants throughout the State who could tell the member for East Perth very eloquently what the Minister for Employment does. I sometimes smile when I realise that we, as a party, are advocating and fighting for a shorter working week while we ourselves work 60 or 70 hours weekly. My heart and soul have been in my job every day I have held my present position, and I am quite sure that 99 per cent. of the members of this Committee will agree with that statement. The fact that the member for East Perth does not, affords me comfort and consolation, because if he agreed with that and offered one word of encouragement or comfort to me I would regard his action with complete and absolute suspicion. Did not the member for East Perth to-night, true to his type, tempt and encourage supporters of the Government to rat on the Administration? In almost every speech he delivers in this Chamber he does the same thing. He tempts them, and encourages them to rat on their own party and the Government with which they are associated. He plays up to them, as he does to other members of this Chamber. He tries to put it across them as he put it across the unemployed and other sections of the community. Despite it all, I am convinced, in my own mind, that the power and the strength of the member for East Perth are rapidly approaching the stage when the only one person in this community likely to be influenced by him in any way will be the ex-member for East Perth, Mr. Hughes.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Labour, £866; Factories, £5,117; Arbitration Court, £7,378—agreed to.

Vote—Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, £122,069.

Mr. NORTH: Has the Minister received any communication from the Federal Government with regard to a nutrition allowance of any kind? Throughout the Commonwealth there has been an inquiry regarding that phase.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: No information at all has been received from the Federal Government regarding the result of the nutrition inquiry that was inaugurated by that Government. Doubtless when the inquiry is completed and reports are available, the Federal Government will extend to the State Government the compliment of providing it with a copy of the report.

Mr. CROSS: Will the Minister take some action in the interests of a section of a community receiving outdoor relief? I refer to a number of aged people from Great Britain who have not been in Australia sufficiently long to enable them to obtain either the old-age or invalid pension. Similarly there are elderly people who have gone from Australia to Great Britain. Will the Minister take the matter up with the Federal Government and ascertain if some reciprocal arrangement can be entered into between the British and Australian Governments so that these elderly people may be granted a pension? I have come across a number of such instances. Some of the elderly people, even if they were sent back to Great Britain, would not be in a position to qualify for a pension there. The onus of keeping these people is placed on the State. For the most part, these people have been respectable members of the community and certainly should receive some redress. There are many sad cases, and they seem to be no one's business. All they can get is 9s. a week from the State. Will the Minister take this matter up with the Federal authorities?

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I give an undertaking that I will make representations through the Premier to the Federal Government with the object of ascertaining whether it is possible for the Federal Government to amend the Pensions Act to provide for the people mentioned. The position of people who have come to

Australia from other British countries and have reached the age of 65 in the case of men and 60 in the case of women is difficult if they have not been in this country for at least 20 years. I had an instance this week where a wife and husband would ordinarily be eligible for a pension but as they have lived here only 14 years, they have not any hope of obtaining a pension until they have been here another six years. The husband is sick but not totally incapacitated, so that he cannot obtain even the invalid pension. The State has to carry these people and through the Child Welfare Department we do the best possible for them. This is an obligation that should be shouldered by the Federal authorities.

Mr. SHEARN: Can the Minister inform the Committee whether there is any possibility of the report of Mr. Wolff, the Royal Commissioner on the Youth Problem, being submitted in the near future.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I discussed this matter with Mr. Wolff recently. Hon. members will be aware that Mr. Wolff has been particularly busy in recent months assisting in the preparation of legislation. The result has been that his work in connection with the inquiry has been held up. I have no doubt that as soon as he is free to devote himself to the continuation of the inquiry, he will give his time and ability to that work, with the result that his report should be available reasonably early in the New Year.

Vote put and passed.

Public Utilities:

Votes—Native Stations, £6,833; Gold-fields Water Supply Undertakings, £126,791; Kalgoorlie Abattoirs, £1,107—agreed to.

Vote—Metropolitan Abattoirs and Sale-yards, £32,051:

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I should like to draw the attention of the Government to the necessity for providing increased accommodation at the metropolitan abattoirs at Midland Junction. Quite recently an improvement has been effected in the sheep-yards at Midland Junction and the convenience has been greatly appreciated not only by the fat-stock salesmen but also by the owners of sheep and lambs. There is, however, still need for further improvement. The increase in the number of sheep in the agricultural areas of the State and the con-

sequent increased yardings week by week at Midland Junction indicate that there is need for further accommodation. The markets at Midland Junction during recent weeks have occasionally exceeded 20,000 sheep and lambs, and there is not provision at these saleyards to accommodate that number of stock. On some occasions it has been necessary to fill the pens two, three and four times in order to accommodate the number of stock for sale, and in view of the fact that these facilities are revenue-producing, I urge upon the responsible Minister that he endeavour to obtain further funds from the Treasurer in order that the conveniences may be further extended.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, £99,536:

Mr. NORTH: Complaints have been made to me about the chief sewerage treatment works that are creating bad odours in parts of Claremont. I have been asked to bring the matter before the Committee and I hope the Government will see that the question receives attention.

Mr. CROSS: I wish to draw attention to the fact that a number of people on the Fremantle side of the Canning Bridge complain that they cannot get extensions of water mains to serve their properties. Houses are being built fairly close to the Canning-road and there is a 24-inch main through there, but the complaint of the people is that they cannot get the department to connect up the houses. The people at Mt. Pleasant have also complained a good deal. There is a considerable number of houses there and requests have been repeatedly made to the department since 1925 for another half mile of main. The department now takes the attitude that it will only put down a 4-inch main and it will cost nearly £500. I would like the Minister to give some indication of what is intended. Some people have lived in the district for 40 years and steps should be taken to give them a water supply.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Other Hydraulic Undertakings, £59,757:

Mr. DONEY: Speaking recently on the Public Works Vote I discussed the matter of the survey now being undertaken in regard to the water requirements of certain Great Southern towns.

I asked certain questions which it was not easy for the Minister to answer on that occasion, because the Chairman had ruled that portion of my remarks out of order. I should like to repeat those questions now. They were:—What is the cost of the survey to date? How far is the survey from completion? What has the Minister done so far as to the probable cost? What is the engineering practicability and the general feasibility of the scheme, and what Great Southern towns and agricultural areas is it intended to include in the scheme? Since the Minister has had some notice of those questions, I hope he will be able to give me a reply to them now. People of the Great Southern have a very close interest in this survey and we fervently hope that the scheme proves capable of adoption. The water position in all the Great Southern dams is very serious this year, so I hope the Minister will give close attention to the questions I have submitted. The Minister may recall that when on the Public Works Vote I mentioned a small experimental plot, a quarter acre of bitumenised plot put down on the Narrogin catchment. I said that for its shedding abilities it was very successful, but that in the matter of cost it was not nearly so satisfactory. I suggested to the Minister that he might profitably get his officers to inquire in the Eastern States and other countries and ascertain whether experts in those other places had had experience that we might with benefit examine. If the Minister has made those inquiries I hope he will refer to them tonight.

Mr. MANN: I should like to ask the Minister a question concerning the Wadlerin dam. The Minister probably knows that it will be dry by Christmas, and I should like an assurance from the Minister that something will be done about it.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: Regarding the survey of water supply on the Great Southern, the replies I have already given are all that I am able to give. I have not yet even had an interim report from the Director of Works. I do not know whether the member for Williams-Narrogin is under the impression that we have information but are withholding it; if so, he is quite wrong. The hydraulic engineer would not make a report where any guesswork was involved. First of all, there is the question of site for the proposed dam. Surveys have to be made,

and it may be that in the ultimate report there will be alternative sites proposed. There is all the work of the survey of the proposed pipe line, and before the report is put in one would require to have regard for the economics of the scheme. I have an idea that before a water scheme is put in it would be required that we should go through the usual formula of a vote of land-owners of the districts concerned, because we cannot force the water supply on people and tax them for it. I think I recall protests from some people of the Great Southern.

Mr. Doney: I do not think so.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: Yes, it is so. Some of them are not prepared to pay water rates; they will want to know the rate per acre. The actual fact is that not even an interim report has as yet been presented. In a scheme of that magnitude I would not expect engineers to put in a report which they would have to revise and amplify later on. I do not know that the Great Southern is the worst off, from a water supply point of view. It must be remembered that all districts are making applications, and in many districts where we have plants, they will have to be amplified. Requests are continually coming in for extensions of the goldfields main. The decision to go ahead with the Canning dam, increasing the height of the wall, was agreed to because this is now the most economical way of conserving water. As the wall rises it is almost incredible the quantity of water gained for the expenditure involved. The engineers have decided, and we have agreed, that the best way to get security for the goldfields scheme, on which country districts as well as the goldfields depend, is to conserve the water at Canning and have a reserve there to supplement the Mundaring Weir. According to the engineers, that is the most economical way to conserve a reserve supply. Although we may regard it as merely a metropolitan scheme, it is one that will supplement the big country scheme, namely Mundaring, which supplies the goldfields and country areas. Mundaring at present holds a two years' supply, but having regard to the draw upon it and the continuous requests for further tapping of the goldfields main for country water supplies, provision must be made to supplement it to ensure reserve supplies.

Mr. Sampson: How could you connect it?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: It could be connected economically. We are drawing water for the Guildford-Midland district from Mundaring, and it means coupling Canning with that line. It will be used only in case of emergency, but that coupling offers the necessary security. The decision to go ahead with the construction of the Canning dam was made with that object in view. Regarding the Great Southern, we must remember that the only decision so far has been for the survey. If in time it becomes the policy of the country to put in that supply and money can be found for the work, the survey, plans and all necessary data will be available. A decision must be made respecting the site of the dam and also the route of the pipe line and the requirements to supply the various towns.

Mr. Doney: Are the engineers acting on the assumption that the water will come from the Wellington dam?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: So far I have not received a report. There may be alternative sites for the dam. I am withholding nothing, but members will realise that I can give no further information until the report is made.

Mr. Doney: I thought you were referring to the service dam on the Great Southern.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: The engineers must fix upon a site for the dam. So far that has not been determined. As to roofing the Wadderin dam, I am not sure whether that is on the programme.

Mr. Mann: It has been recommended by the engineers for quite a while.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: It is our policy to roof the dams. One that is being roofed is Gutha. I believe the recommendation has gone forward, but I do not think authority has been given. The proposal, however, is being seriously considered.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If you do not do it while the dam is empty this summer, you will not have a chance.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: We recognise the seriousness of the position. From memory I cannot say whether it has been definitely decided to go ahead with it. As regards the provision of a bitumen surface for the watershed, an experiment was made and found to be very

expensive. I think the engineers decided that to put in a bitumen watershed was not an economic proposition. It would be effective, but so far the reports are not encouraging, on the score of expense.

Mr. Doney: Could you undertake to make inquiries in the Eastern States regarding that aspect?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: Yes.

Vote put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.11 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 1st December, 1937.

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

QUESTION—BOULDER ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Payment of Fee.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that Mr. W. H. Taylor, General Manager of the Tramways, Gas and Electricity Department, was paid a fee of one hundred and twenty guineas by the Boulder Municipal Council for recommending it to do what it should have done 30 years ago, viz., purchase supplies of electricity in bulk from the Kalgoorlie Power