

have taken over the light at Bunbury, which was previously maintained by the Commonwealth. It was to meet the convenience of the departments that these necessary services were changed over, so to speak. But this has not lessened the responsibility of the department. I have replied half-a-dozen times to this effect to persons in Broome and members of this House. Only within the last month I have had a comprehensive report in regard to these matters as a result of statements made by certain people at a deputation two or three months ago. I have mentioned this because I do not like members to be under a misapprehension or to be making statements which are not in accordance with facts. The Government through all their departments operating in the North have endeavoured to give whatever assistance they could. The revenue from the Far North is not very great and there are many ways in which we have to meet expenditure. I may say the revenue does not in any way meet the expenditure. Still, we have done what we could, and while we hope there will not be any necessity for further relief, if that necessity should arise the Government will deal sympathetically with any question of the kind in the Far North.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

House adjourned at 9.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 5th November, 1935.

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

QUESTION—FARMERS' RELIEF.

Commonwealth Grant.

Mr. WARNER asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What amount of money has been received from the Commonwealth as a grant for the relief of necessitous farmers? 2, What amount of such grant has been appropriated to date? 3, What number of farmers have received benefit from the fund? 4, How many of those farmers were Agricultural Bank clients?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, £137,000. 2, £111,755 2s. 6d. 3, 2,986. 4, 2,270. In reference to the last figure, I may say that quite a number of those Agricultural Bank clients are also clients of private banks.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Industries Assistance Act Continuance Bill.

PAPERS—CROWN LANDS OCCUPATION.

Prosecutions at Reedy's.

The Minister for Lands, in response to a question by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) on the 31st October, tabled the Lands Department file containing references to the prosecutions at Reedy's in March last.

**BILL—WORKERS' HOMES
AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

Third Reading.

On motion by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LOAN, £2,627,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 31st October.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.35]: This Bill, gives authority to the Government to raise the amount of money required to give effect to the Loan Estimates. The other evening the Leader of the National Party (Hon. N. Keenan) said the Government ought to frame a policy for the expenditure of public funds. The remark was rather resented. It is difficult, of course, for us to understand what the actual position is likely to be unless we do get a policy for the expenditure of public funds. It is true that a portion of this money is being used for water supply and sewerage works, and the balance principally for harbours and jetties in the North-West. I think the House should know of the purposes for which we should use revenue funds. A little while ago the Acting Minister for Works, speaking at the annual social of the Master Builders' Association, said that between May, 1933, and August of this year the Government had spent £182,000 on general repairs and maintenance of public buildings. Nearly the whole of that money came from loan funds and the work, of course, is not revenue-producing at all. That would not be so bad if we did, as is done with the railways, where the cost is rebated against the revenue of the railways during the year. That policy might be excused, because there is then a chance of recouping Consolidated Revenue some of the money. But it is very unwise, and we have protested a number of times from this side against using loan funds where revenue should be used. I am surprised that the Auditor General has not drawn attention to that. He has drawn attention to loan funds being used where revenue funds should be made available, but not in the matter of work of this kind; there he has said nothing at all. The policy is strictly unsound. It may be difficult to frame a policy, because the Treasurer has

to go to the Loan Council long before he frames his Estimates, in order to find out how much he can get; and what he gets is brought along chiefly for the purpose of providing employment. That is its main purpose, and secondly it is wanted to make good the deficits. Thus we have £300,000 set aside on the Loan Estimates to make good the deficit for the year. That policy is very unsound.

The Acting Minister for Works: It is difficult to provide works of a useful nature to give employment.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: I admit that. That is the only excuse. The Government borrow money when they have a policy of development and for the advancement of the State. They are entitled to borrow money for that purpose, but to-day we are not borrowing money for that purpose at all, but to keep our people employed. That is exactly the position.

The Minister for Justice: All the works are needed.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: Most of them. I admit. I am not sure whether the reconstruction of that jetty up North, should be a charge against Loan Funds, but any new jetties should be charged against Loan Funds. Works the member for Nedlands spoke of the other night, such as the maintenance of Fremantle harbour, is not a legitimate charge against Loan Funds.

The Minister for Justice: Yes it is, because we are replacing a wooden structure with a concrete structure worth twice as much.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: Then the difference between the values of the two works is a legitimate charge against Loan Funds.

HON. N. Keenan: But the cost should come out of the revenue collected.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: Previously when borrowing money for the opening up of lands or the development of mining, there has been a policy over a number of years. On such a policy the Government are entitled to ask for Loan Funds.

The Minister for Justice: The half a million pounds for the railways is all for constructive work.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: No, I think most of the money spent on railways to-day ought to come from revenue.

The Minister for Justice: No, no.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: There is just this, and I think the Minister will agree, that during the last Government's term of office

we did the construction of railways through the Railway Department. That prevented the duplication of work that had taken place over a number of years. Moreover, the Railway Department will construct their railways on grades over which they will be able to run economically.

The Minister for Justice: Oh, no.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Are they still to go on building lines of grades of 1 in 60 or 1 in 80, and then have to rebuild the lines to grade 1 in 100? I cannot believe it. I believe the Commissioner of Railways will see to it that in new works the grades will be satisfactory from the beginning. But most of the money being spent is being spent on regrading railways that have been running for many years.

The Minister for Justice: Not regrading—relaying.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Well, it may be so, but it seems to me to be duplicating work, for already one sum of money has been spent there, and relaying is not chargeable against loan funds.

The Minister for Justice: The difference between the added value we debit to capital, and from the ordinary money we pay it back.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, I know. There is no policy to-day. It may be a sound policy at the moment to spend loan money on sewerage and water supplies, particularly for the city, but the main justification is that it is providing employment.

The Acting Minister for Works: No, it is a sound work.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then why was it not done years ago? The population has not increased so rapidly in recent times as to justify the work at the moment. Of course, it is a suitable time to borrow money with which to provide employment. I know the difficulty of the Government, and I do not intend to harass them.

The Acting Minister for Works: I wish that other works were as sound. Take the drainage works. They were purely to provide employment, and the people concerned will not pay rates on the drainage.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Rates are charged against them, and whether or not they are going to pay is a matter for the Government. I notice from the Press there is a probability of this loan being floated at a higher rate of interest. I trust we shall not set out at present to increase the rate

of interest, as there is no justification for doing such a thing. If Governments are going on the market to borrow money, and to do so are increasing the rate of interest, it will mean there will shortly be very little money available for private industries. I hope whatever happens the Government will stand fast, and will keep the rate of interest as low as possible. Some time ago the banks and Governments had to enter into competition with private people to obtain money for the opening up of new industries.

The Minister for Water Supplies: All State Governments are standing for that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I was afraid from what I read that there was a probability of the next loan being offered to the public at a higher rate of interest.

The Minister for Justice: It would be a certainty if we retained the original amount of money we hoped to borrow.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then I hope we go on the market on two separate occasions to raise the money, rather than that we should increase the rate of interest. Private industries are receiving assistance to-day by means of borrowed money, and will desire to go on borrowing money. If Governments raise the rate of interest, or go on the market at a higher rate, they will take a good deal of the available money out of the market. In some cases Governments have paid as high as 6 per cent. for loan moneys. I hope the Premier will set himself against any increase in the rate of interest in respect to the flotation of the next loan. The Loan Estimates, for which this Bill provides, have been before us. They authorise the Government to borrow £2,600,000. I see no alternative but to agree to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. Marshall: There is an alternative. What do you, as Leader of the Opposition, suggest?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member seems to know what the alternative is. He who knows everything says there is an alternative, whereas I say there is not one. If the hon. member has an alternative, I shall be glad to hear it.

Mr. Marshall: What about social credit? That is an alternative.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Let the hon. member propound it.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton—in reply) [4.48]: I agree with practically everything

the Leader of the Opposition has said, but would like to remove one or two misapprehensions he has with regard to the expenditure of loan moneys on capital works. In the railways we have many miles of 45-lb. rails, and decided on a relaying programme. The money for this work was originally advanced from loan. The only portion that is ultimately debited to loan is the difference between the original cost of 45-lb. rails and the cost of 60-lb. rails. That is all that is debited to loan.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is justifiable.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: With regard to harbour works, we have replaced a number of wooden piles with concrete piles of twice the value, and the added value is debited to the concern out of loan.

Mr. Sleeman: Are you going to replace the bridge in the same way?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not know that the bridge has ever paid interest on the original capital, or that money could be obtained from it to repay the cost of a new structure.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It was cheaply built in the first place, but I was talking about regrading.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Working Railways are now building new lines. About 30 years ago, when many of the lines were built, they were built to carry traffic from the coast inland.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Only the goldfields railway.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: All the railways. The Great Southern, the Bunbury line, the Eastern Goldfields and the Murchison line—all were built with the idea of taking something from the centre outwards. As a result of the development of agriculture, the very opposite took place. The railways were not concerned about the grade into Perth. If it was easy to build a one in fifty grade, the line was built on that grade. Now that we have hundreds of thousands of tons coming to the coast, we find it is not economical to have a heavy grade, especially when it is possible to get a better grade for comparatively little additional cost. In the early days regrading was not warranted because of the additional expense compared with the small additional traffic, but to-day, owing to the greatly increased traffic coming to and going from the coast, it is becoming neces-

sary to spend money on regrading. The regrading between Kellerberrin, Hine's Hill and Meenaar cost £80,000. The interest on that at 4 per cent. comes to a little over £2,000 a year, but the actual saving owing to the regrading is £4,767. Because of the expenditure of this money, we are not only able to pay interest at 4 per cent., but earn for Working Railways an additional amount of over £4,000. That work was fully justified. At another place in the hills a sum of £1,415 was spent on putting in an extra siding. The interest on that amount is £58 a year, but the annual saving, for the number of trains which do not pass that point, is £2,400 a year. We therefore get back twice the amount of capital we spent in one year. A considerable amount of money was spent at Collie. This will return interest on the cost to the extent of about 10 per cent.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Only the same traffic is there that was there when the line was constructed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There was not nearly so much then. It was customary, when there was only a limited amount of business to be done, to build a new railway with 45-lb. rails. As business increases, it is found that a 50 per cent. increase in capital expenditure is warranted, and the work is proceeded with because the time is ripe to do so. It is the same thing in all classes of business. A mine may be started with a capital of £20,000 or £30,000. As development warrants and new machinery is required to deal with a greater tonnage of ore each month, additional capital is found to be necessary, and is raised accordingly. Take the Lake Grace-Newdegate railway. That was built originally with 45-lb. rails. At that time we were running three trains a fortnight, and it would not have been sound business to increase the capital expenditure there. When the volume of business and turnover increased it became economically sound to increase the capital expenditure. Is it a sound policy to open up country economically with light construction costs, and when the business warrants, and only then, to increase the capital expenditure so that interest is paid on the additional outlay. That policy has existed in the Railway Department for 10 or 12 years. The whole of the metropolitan tramway system was relaid some 11 or 12

years ago. We spent in the course of five or six years two or three hundred thousand pounds on this work. Each year £20,000 was taken out of revenue to pay the cost of the rails that were put in. In the case of the railways themselves we take £80,000 each year out of revenue to replace moneys expended from loan. The same principle is followed in connection with other works. The rehabilitation for which money will be advanced under this Bill will cost £500,000. Last year we provided £100,000 and this year another £100,000. We will spend the money in three years and at the end of six years it will have been repaid from revenue. It cannot be expected that a vast sum of money should be spent in one year: it would not be economical to do so, but the money is always repaid.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair: the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6, Schedules 1 and 2—agreed to.

Third Schedule:

Mr. SAMPSON: Could I be advised as to what money has been provided for the protection of railway crossings?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If there is any safeguarding of crossings to be done, the money will come out of revenue. The hon. member had better discuss that matter on the Railway Estimates.

Schedule put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—METROPOLITAN WHOLE MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [5.1]: This is a Bill to continue the operation of the Metropolitan Whole Milk Act, 1932, for another year. I believe the amendments proposed will have the effect of making the administration of the princi-

pal Act more effective and more satisfactory than is the case at present. It might be as well, when discussing the Bill, to take a retrospective view of the position which existed when the 1932 measure was discussed here. At that time, it will be remembered, a state of chaos existed among the milk producers of the metropolitan area. And not only that, but the distribution of the commodity in the metropolitan area was in the most disorganised condition any industry could possibly be in. The Act was placed on the statute book at the request, mainly, of producers throughout the State: but it was felt also that the interests of the consumers needed consideration. The legislation was largely of an experimental nature in Western Australia, and it is natural that as the result of practical experience we should find certain amendments to be necessary in such legislation. So far as I have been able to gather the viewpoint of the milk producers generally, they appreciate the interest which the Minister for Agriculture has taken in their problem. They realise that the amendments which he proposes in the Bill will, possibly with certain other slight amendments, prove acceptable. The parent Act was designed in the interests of the producers of the commodity and of the consumers of the commodity. That was only natural, because, after all, the interests of those two sections should be paramount. The interests of both sections were conserved, as far as humanly possible, in the parent Act; and I believe they are conserved also in the measure under consideration. I believe that the administration of this legislation by the board appointed under its provisions has given general satisfaction to both those main sections of the community—the producers and the consumers. There has, inevitably, been some criticism and some fault-finding with the activities of the board and the operation of the Act; but I think we can take it for granted that generally the criticism and the complaints have emanated from paid officials representing other sections, and not vital sections at all, of the community. The board undertook a difficult task, and in my opinion have performed it well. They have had to break new ground in connection with the building up of their body, and have encountered many difficulties. Therefore it was only to be expected that established producers and established

distributors should have had their business operations and activities disturbed to a certain extent. Thus there was bound to be some opposition raised and some criticism offered. In a general way, I believe, the board are entitled to the commendations of the producers and also of the consumers for the way in which they have discharged their duties. I agree with the Minister for Agriculture that if we are to have an efficient and satisfactory milk supply in the metropolitan area, there must of necessity be rigid supervision over its production, its treatment, and its distribution. I know of no other means by which that rigid supervision and control can be exercised except under an independent board such as we now have administering the Act. It is a fact that in connection with the milk supply scrupulous cleanliness is essential. Bad milk is the most dangerous carrier of disease known, whereas good wholesome milk is one of the best articles for human beings, and particularly for the young, whom it gives that start in life which is needed in order that they may grow up into healthy human beings. The Minister has told us that the consumption of milk in the metropolitan area for the year just closed was 4,367,000 gallons. I notice that in 1933, when the board assumed control of this legislation, the consumption was only 3,832,000 gallons. Thus there has been an increase of 14 per cent. in consumption. In 1933 the daily consumption in the metropolitan area was 10,500 gallons; in 1935 it is 12,000 gallons. That increase of 14 per cent. has, I consider, been brought about by the activities of the board. Bearing in mind that the increase in the population of the metropolitan area in that period, according to the Government Statistician, is only 5 per cent., we can regard as fairly satisfactory the fact that the actual consumption of a staple article of diet has increased by no less than 14 per cent. I believe the increase has been due largely to our having had a better standard of milk delivered in the metropolitan area than we had prior to the initiation of this legislation. No doubt there have been improved methods of handling and improved methods of distribution. There can be no question whatever that the consumers of the metropolitan area, by reason of the great confidence placed in the board administering the Act, have increased their consumption so largely. So far as their incomes would allow

them, they have been purchasing this food more freely than heretofore. The Minister tells us that the additional consumption represents something like £30,000 per annum to the producers. That is a magnificent sum to be distributed among the few hundred milk producers supplying the metropolitan area. That amount of £30,000 has enabled them to improve their premises and increase the productive capacity of the units in their herds. All these things have tended to make for better quality in milk. In introducing the Bill the Minister gave instances of the activities of the board in connection with tracking up inferior milk and in the encouragement of better quality types. No doubt that has been reflected in the better milk supplied to the people of the metropolitan area. And we should not lose sight of the fact that this has been done at no increased cost to the consumers. I understand from figures which have been made available that in actual fact the price to the consumer in Perth is to-day really slightly lower than it was when the board took control. But even if the price of milk were to remain the same as it was three years ago, the fact that we are having the distribution supervised by an independent board at no great expense to the consumers—the total cost of the board's operations so far has been something less than one-third of a penny per gallon—is cause for general satisfaction. I have been glad to notice an increase recently in the number of milk bars established in the city. I believe the establishment of those milk bars, and the increase in their numbers which we can look for with the approach of the hot weather, will tend materially to make for a further increase in the consumption of milk in and around Perth. That also should prove beneficial to our milk producers. I believe that with the efficient control of the board a great service can be rendered to the people of the metropolitan area by supplying them with milk distributed under hygienic conditions in those various bars which we see established in great numbers almost every week throughout the streets of the city. I notice in the Bill an amendment dealing with the procedure for election of producers' representatives on the board. Undoubtedly there was a weakness in the old Act from that aspect. I believe the amendment proposed in the Bill will make for a more satisfactory election of producers' representatives than obtains at present. I am

also glad to notice the power the board are to be given in connection with the appointment of inspectors, and am pleased that they are to co-operate with the Minister for Health in this regard. This was one of the knotty problems which faced Parliament when discussing the parent Act. I am certain that the best way to get over the difficulty will be the cordial co-operation of those controlling the distribution of milk with those conserving the health of the community. I believe also that the clauses dealing with licenses will make for improvement. However, certain necessary extensions of the powers of the board are not provided by the Bill. The board should be entitled to spend some of the funds they raise on publicity, which I believe would have the effect of increasing consumption and thus benefiting producers as well as consumers. I regret that the Minister has seen fit to extend the life of the Act for only one year. In my opinion this legislation has largely passed the experimental stage now. I think we can definitely say that it has come to stay. Thus there appears to be no adequate reason why the operation of the measure should be extended only for one year. I would ask the Minister to give consideration to an amendment making the continuation for at least another three years. When the Act was placed on the statute-book in 1932 it was to continue until 1935. I see no adequate reason why there should be any terminating date whatever in the measure. That section might well be removed altogether. However, I know that such an amendment is not in accordance with the Minister's wish. I suggest to him, nevertheless, that in any event he might agree to delete the clause making this legislation terminate in 1936, and substitute termination in 1938, say. I also want to see in the measure power to the board to insist on distributors putting up a bond to ensure payment to the producers for milk purchased from them. I do not know whether the Minister is aware of the fact, but if he were to discuss the matter with the board, or even with the Director of Agriculture, he would certainly glean the information that there were hundreds of pounds—and I think I would be safe in saying, thousands of pounds—of which unscrupulous purchasers of milk have absolutely robbed the producers. They have robbed those producers of the fruits of their labour by not paying them for the commodity purchased from them.

While I do not think that operates to any considerable degree to-day—at any rate nothing like the extent to which it did three years ago—nevertheless there is justification for the board having the power to insist that any purchase of milk shall be made on a reasonable basis that meets with the approval of the board. I commend that suggestion to the Minister for his consideration. I believe also that the ultimate success of this legislation will be gained only when we find all the milk consumed in the metropolitan area going through a small number of channels, such as one or two depots that should be controlled by the board. Whether we can deal with that aspect in the present legislation, I am not quite sure. I am certain that we all wish to improve the conditions of the industry and only by effective organisation can the best results be effected. I am glad provision is being made for a daily penalty for a breach of the Act. It has been brought under my notice that a retailer can break the Act with impunity and pay the fine imposed upon him, because he finds it more profitable to continue to break the Act and pay any fine that may be imposed upon him. That is an undesirable state of affairs. The only means of overcoming it, of which I am aware, is to provide a daily penalty for a breach of the Act. That will make infringements of the provisions of the Act such that the retailer will not be able to make a profit on the transaction. It is particularly gratifying to me to find that the Government, through the Minister for Agriculture, are extending this legislation with slight amendments only. I have a vivid recollection of the opposition to the measure by members now sitting on the Treasury Bench who were formerly in Opposition. Nothing they could say was bad enough for the legislation at that time. The present Premier and his colleagues, the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Health, described the Bill that I introduced as representing the most scandalous type of legislation that this Parliament had ever considered. They expressed the wish that it would never see the light of day. I remember clearly the critical remarks of the present Premier, and I have no doubt that other members of the House recollect them well. Now I am glad that the Premier and his Ministers, through the Minister for Agriculture, have come round to our way of thinking and have decided that the method outlined in the legislation is not only

best in the interests of the consumers, but of those associated with the milk industry generally.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [5.18]: I congratulate the Minister on his presentation of the Bill, but I regret I cannot go further and congratulate him on the Bill itself. To quote the words of the Minister, "The Bill gives us an opportunity to remedy many anomalies and to present a much more workable measure to those in control of it." I admit that the opportunity is given Parliament to remedy many of the existing anomalies in the Act, but I am very much afraid that the Minister has not availed himself of that opportunity. After a careful perusal of the Bill, I have come to the conclusion that there are still many anomalies in it.

Mr. Cross: They have put some more anomalies into it.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I realise the Minister has taken considerable pains in dealing with the legislation. He has consulted the opinion of nearly everyone engaged in the industry. I know he has received many deputations. I introduced one to him myself, and the members of that delegation instanced many anomalies under the old Act. The Minister listened patiently to the representations made to him, but concessions to the deputation I refer to are conspicuous by their absence from the Bill. In the course of his speech the Minister said, "The Bill is short and simple." If "short and simple," it is certainly severe in parts.

Mr. Cross: And there are some traps in it.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The Bill is disappointing to many engaged in the milk industry. I shall support the second reading of the measure, but I hope during the Committee stage I may be successful in securing agreement to some vital amendments. Any criticism I make of the Bill is not directed against the board. I realise the board have done excellent work and, though severely handicapped, have secured results that have been beneficial to the industry. I was hopeful that after three years' operation of the Metropolitan Whole Milk Act, we would have had a better amending Bill presented to Parliament. In my opinion, the Bill pays more attention to the board than to the interests of those who have to

work under the board and abide by their decisions. What I mean by that is that the Minister, with every honest intention, has paid more regard to the representations of members of the board than he has to some of the representations on behalf of a most important section of the industry. I would instance the position of retail dairymen. No provision is made in the Bill for their representation on the board. During the period I have been honoured with a seat in this Chamber, on each occasion this legislation has been before us I, with many other members, have stressed the necessity and equity of the retail dairymen being granted representation on the board. On each occasion, however, when that phase was discussed, the only argument adduced by the then Minister—probably the same argument would be advanced by the present Minister who is administering the Act—and by those opposed to that administration, is that it would make for a most unwieldy board. I cannot see how the conversion of a board from one of five members to one of six members would make it unwieldy.

Mr. North: I hope you will have more luck with your proposal than I had.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I hope the hon. member will recognise the justice of the claim and will lend his assistance when the Bill is dealt with in Committee to secure that representation. I need not repeat the statement that is made frequently that this is taxation without representation. The retail dairymen comprise a most important part of the combination associated with the milk trade. The desire of the Minister, and of Parliament, is, naturally, to supply the consuming public with pure milk. Yet we have this important body of men handling the milk from the factory to the homes who have no voice at all on the board, yet contribute the major portion of the board's revenue. If members look through the last report of the board and note the contents of the balance sheet, they will find that the administration contributions total £2,740, three-quarters of which was received from the milk vendors.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: And where do they get the money from?

Mr. NEEDHAM: Naturally, from the consumers. It will also be noticed that license fees total £488, only £131 10s. being paid by dairymen. In spite of that fact,

the important section of the industry that has contributed the greatest amount to the board's finances are deprived of any representation whatever. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) asked where the retail dairymen got their money from and I answered that they got it from the consumers. I would point out to him, however, that the consumers are provided for on the board, which includes two representatives of the consumers and two representing the dairymen. The board provides no representation for the retail dairymen or the milk vendor. I consider it is not equitable that the last mentioned section should be deprived of representation. I do not stress my argument in that regard from the fact that they contribute three-quarters of the board's revenue, but from the standpoint that they can either make or mar the object that the board have in view, which is to give the consumer milk of the purest quality at a reasonable price. It is my intention to move an amendment in Committee that will provide for the representation of the retail dairymen on the Metropolitan Whole Milk Board. Another part of the Bill has reference to inspection. I have always opposed that double-banking system. We have health inspectors appointed by the Health Department and also inspectors appointed by the Metropolitan Whole Milk Board. In the course of the Minister's speech he said, "It is not proposed to override the provisions of the Health Act. The Board are given power to appoint their own inspectors subject always to the approval of the Minister for Health, and such inspectors are to be vested with the powers of health inspectors."

Mr. Cross: We can oppose that proposal.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I intend to oppose that phase of the Bill, because I do not regard it as necessary at all.

Mr. Cross: It will double the expense.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Yes. Not only will it double the expense but it will be a source of irritation and of worry to those engaged in the industry. Milk is a staple article of food and the Minister, in his excellent speech in moving the second reading of the Bill, stressed the importance of pure milk to the health of the community. Every member will agree with me in that matter. Surely the inspectors of the Health Department are competent to determine whether

the milk being supplied to the people in the area over which the board have jurisdiction is pure! Why should there be a double system of inspection? What greater qualifications have the inspectors appointed by the board than those appointed by the Health Department? I venture to say that the inspectors of the Health Department are just as competent to determine the quality of milk as they are to determine the quality of other food for human consumption.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: What about ensuring a healthy condition of cows?

Mr. NEEDHAM: Surely we have a sufficient army of stock inspectors to determine whether the beasts are healthy or not! That is the duty of the Stock Department. I am concerned about milk as an article of food. If the health inspectors are competent to determine whether fish, butter, bread, meat, or any other food is fit for human consumption, surely they are competent to determine whether milk is fit for human consumption. The Minister stressed the point that milk is much more susceptible than any other class of food to the spreading of disease. Again I admit that that is so, but I still contend that our health inspectors are quite capable of dealing with the matter. My parting remark on that phase is that if our health inspectors are not competent or trustworthy enough to determine the quality of milk, they should not be allowed to act in the capacity of inspecting other food of the people. This double inspection is an unnecessary impost on those engaged in the industry, and I hope it will not be permitted to continue. Another feature of the Bill to which reference might be made is that of the transfer of licenses. Under the measure, premises are to be licensed, and considerable difficulty may be experienced by persons holding certain premises to secure a transfer. It is only reasonable that provision should be made for a licensee to sell his business or to purchase any other business. Certainly no hindrance should be placed in the way of a legitimate trader in the industry who desires to sell his business. There should be no barrier placed in his way if he desires to exchange his business, or transfer it, and he should be able to appeal to the court in the event of a transfer or assignment being rejected by the board. If a dairyman were renting his premises, as a large number of them do, and it was known by the landlord

that there would be any difficulty in transferring the license from those premises, it would give power to the landlord either to force the dairyman to purchase the premises, if the landlord wished to sell, or, at the end of any lease, to demand exorbitant rents for those premises. I suggest to the Minister that when any man in the milk industry desires to sell his business, or to transfer to other premises when he finds premises that are suitable and that conform with the requirements of the board and of the Health Act, no barrier should be placed in his way. The Bill, however, will create a hindrance, and no appeal is to be permitted. If the board insist upon not granting a transfer for other premises, at least he should have the right of appeal to a magistrate in the same way that the man who is refused a license has the right of appeal. If a man is refused a license, he has the right of appeal to a magistrate, but no provision is made for an appeal when an application to transfer from certain premises to other premises is refused. Another objectionable feature of the measure is that dealing with the revocation of licenses. It seems to be rather drastic to empower the board to cancel a man's license on a single conviction. If I have interpreted the Bill correctly—perhaps I have not, but I believe I have—one single conviction would lead to the cancellation of a man's license. I ask the Minister to give attention to that point and ascertain whether I have wrongly interpreted the Bill. In any court of law consideration is given to first offenders. Not so under this measure. Many things may happen over which the milk vendor would have no control, but at the same time he would be liable to prosecution, and under the Bill he could have his business wiped out merely at the will of the board. The penalties provided should be a sufficient deterrent, and therefore the power to the board to revoke licenses should not be permitted. Something might occur over which the vendor has no personal control, desirous though he may be to conform with the requirements of the board. Something happens, and he is convicted, and away goes not only his license but also his livelihood.

Mr. Cross: And there is no appeal there.

Mr. NEEDHAM: That is so. That is a feature of the Bill which I am endeavouring to stress. I referred a moment ago to the justice of allowing a man to whom a transfer of license was refused the right of

appeal, just as that right is granted to a man who is refused a license. In the matter of the revocation of licenses, the provision should be amended by allowing a vendor, on a first conviction, to appeal to the Minister before the board actually cancel his license and thus cripple him in his means of earning a livelihood. Portion of the measure deals with fixing a maximum price for milk, but no mention is made of a minimum price, and therein I see a danger. The main theme of the Minister's speech was the need for quality; to secure quality was the ambition of the Government and the board, but unless provision is made for the fixing of a minimum price, the quality of milk will not be maintained. Members are aware that a certain amount of competition exists, and sometimes the quality of the milk is not of the best. I suggest that, in order to reach the goal that the Minister and the board have in view, namely to sell only the purest milk, attention should be given to the question of fixing a minimum as well as a maximum price. Naturally one has to look at the question of expenditure. The Act empowers the board to collect contributions towards the expenditure of the board, and Regulation No. 76 of Part XIII. provides, *inter alia*—

In or prior to every year of assessment the Board shall prepare an estimate of expenditure to be incurred by it during the year of assessment in the administration of the Act and in carrying out its duties and functions, and an estimate of the income available to meet such expenditure which it anticipates that it will derive from sources other than contributions for licenses under this part of the regulations, and shall deduct the amount thereof from the estimated expenditure. The balance remaining shall be the expenditure towards which the board may collect contributions from licensees under Section 26A of the Metropolitan Whole Milk Act, 1932-33.

Neither the Act nor the regulation gives the board any power to accumulate funds; yet on perusing the balance sheet for the year ended 30th June, 1935, I find that the accumulation account now stands at £3,262 11s. 9d., of which sum the amount of £1,819 7s. 7d. represents the excess of income over expenditure for the year. I suggest that there is no need for such an accumulation of funds, and that an opportunity is presented to reduce the fees chargeable. The cost of milk sampling and analysis is shown as £448 5s. 9d. While this work has been done and is still being done by the health inspectors attached to the various local authorities, this expenditure is unwarranted. Thus there

are two instances of overlapping. In the first place there is the double system of inspection, under which the board appoint their own inspectors, though there are competent inspectors under the Health Act, and then there is the work of sampling being done by the inspectors attached to local authorities. Why the need for this charge against the fund? There is another section of the community very much interested in the milk distribution—the shopkeepers in the metropolitan area. There are a great number of those people who have permission from the Milk Board to sell milk. Those people are licensed, but to a certain extent I think they are being imposed upon by the double charge which is levied. It is suggested that all shops complying with the health regulations should be given a license to sell whole milk without having to pay two fees, which has inflicted a hardship on citizens of the State who have the inalienable right to engage in business. The license fee of 5s. should be paid to one authority. It is obviously inequitable that two charges should be exacted for the same service. If those people are entitled to sell milk, it is assumed that their premises are suitable for the sale of milk, that the conditions are hygienic and every regulation is being complied with. Therefore I fail to see why they should have to pay a double fee of 5s. to two different authorities. The Whole Milk Board and the Health Department have both agreed that the premises are suitable. Therefore why not have one fee and be done with it? There is another matter to which I should like to refer. There are on the board two representatives of the consumers, and two of the dairymen, with an independent chairman. I think this is a board that could well afford to have a woman as one of the consumers' representatives. Milk is a staple article of diet and who knows more of such a subject than a woman? Women are to-day members of many boards, not only in Australia but in other parts of the world, and this is the type of board on which a woman could render useful service in assisting to control the supply of a staple article of food and ensure that only the best quality is supplied under the very best conditions. When the Bill is in Committee an amendment will be moved in this direction and I trust it will receive support. I regret that the Minister, when introducing the Bill, did not indicate that it was to be a permanent measure. With

all its faults, I should have preferred to see the Bill to control the milk industry made permanent, instead of its having to be re-enacted next year. In this respect I agree heartily with the member for Irwin-Moore who realised that the legislation when first brought in was purely experimental so far as the State was concerned. The hon. member worked very hard in trying to bring about this control. It has been beneficial to the consumers, and it certainly has been the salvation of the dairying industry. Now, after three years, we should be able to say that we will continue to control the industry. Unfortunately, we find the Bill before us is again a temporary measure, but I am hoping that it will be possible to make it permanent. I support the second reading and hope that in Committee some of the anomalies to which I have referred will be removed.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.50]: I support the remarks of the member for Perth (Mr. Noodham) with regard to the re-enactment of the Bill. I intend to speak chiefly for the retailers, who have pointed out that the existing contracts have a tendency to lower the quality of the milk. That contention has been before the Minister. A retailer's views concerning the administration of the Whole Milk Board might be quoted. He states—

The existence of contracts has a tendency to lower the quality of the product supplied to the consumer, since the producer knows full well that the Health and Pure Foods Acts permit him to furnish milk of a 3.2 standard only. Previous to the enforcement of contracts by the Whole Milk Board, the purchaser was in a position, where he could refuse to accept a low-standard milk, and was thereby at liberty to seek a higher grade milk in another market at the moment when the producer attempted to substitute a product of inferior quality. This meant that in order to keep the trade, the producers were compelled to cull their herds periodically to ensure the maintenance of high-grade milk.

That is the argument of the retailers. Of course I do not suggest for a moment that the Bill we are now discussing will be perfect; I suppose that year after year we shall go on trying to improve the situation for all concerned. The board having insisted on the contract system, it is contended by the retailers that that is having the effect of lowering the standard of the milk supplied. That is not admitted, but I have been advised to look into the statements made by the Chief Inspector of Health for

the Perth City Council, and also the officer holding a similar position in the municipality of Subiaco. Both those officers have made public statements definitely that the milk supplied to the public since the board came into existence is of a lower grade. Whether that is right or wrong I am not able to say, but I pass on those contentions to the Minister. I fully appreciate the objective of the measure, but very naturally the retailers are drawing attention to the weaknesses. I do not propose to deal with the cost of administration, but on the question of fees it has been suggested to me that the board might function by assessing the net profits of the industry and not the gross. That contention would not be made so strongly if the retailers had a voice on the board, and in this direction I hope the member for Perth will succeed in his amendment to give them representation on the board. The question of assessing the costs of the board from net profits and not the gross takings would then receive consideration. I can myself give an instance of the effects of the board upon a particular retailer. That gentleman has pointed out that the costs of the board have added £737 to his liabilities over a period of 12 months. That is a pretty stiff smack.

The Minister for Agriculture: That does not prove his case.

Mr. NORTH: I may be wrong, but it seems to me that there is a certain amount of pleasure amongst the representatives of the producers that the other fellow has been tickled up. I am sure that is not what anyone desires. We want every section of the industry to carry on, and if it is true that the retailers, before the existence of the board, were making a do of it, and the producers were down and out, that is no reason for any attempt to penalise the retailers. I am sure that the Minister's desire is that every party shall have a fair return. I am quoting only the information I have received from the retailers, and of course if it can be broken down, then it will be all right. I have a summary of what the retailing section of the industry desire and I put it forward. In the first place it is desired that the board shall not have political influence in its appointment. Secondly, the appointment of the chairman should follow the procedure adopted by local governing bodies. Thirdly, all sections of the industry should be represented. Next the board should be placed under the Commissioner of Public

Health, and that there should be no duplication of duties. That contention is very pointed because anyone who studies the existing Health Act will see the great powers possessed by the Commissioner of Health. The Whole Milk Act duplicates certain functions regarding the checking of milk, and from the advice I have had I should imagine that it was desired that the powers of the Commissioner of Health should remain. Therefore I support the contention of the member for Perth, who pointed out that we have the local bodies acting through the Commissioner of Health, and that his agents are doing the work which is also being done by officers of the board. It is urged that the board's officers who are doing the work are not qualified inspectors. I am not certain whether that is correct or not. It is also contended that the officers of the board should conduct their own prosecutions. The object of that, of course, is to avoid expense. Two glaring instances have been quoted where heavy fees were charged, and so on. Apart from these expressions of opinion of the retailers, I have a letter from Mr. Chantler of Mabel-street, North Perth, who may be known to the Minister. Since I understand that many members have had copies of this letter I will not elaborate on it, but I do wish to point out that, according to the writer of this letter, the operations of the board have resulted in a definite gain to the producers of about £30,000 a year in cash. And this gentleman suggests that the £30,000 has come out of the pockets of the retailers.

Mr. Cross: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. NORTH: It is not only in Western Australia that this wrangle is going on. I have information from Great Britain about the milk board there. There the same complaint is being put up, namely that the public, other than the richer section, have not sufficient money in their pockets to buy enough milk, that a lot of people want milk and cannot get it, and that tinned milk is being sold in large quantities. There, it seems, the retailers are being stung. So there is certainly a fly in the ointment somewhere. The Bill will do a lot of good in bringing the facts before the public as to what is wrong at the root of the problem. In an article which I read it was stated that under the new health investi-

gations in England it would be necessary to spend £200,000,000 per annum more in foodstuffs than is now being spent to enable the people to buy sufficient requisites such as milk. It is clear that there is a shortage somewhere. I agree that the Minister here has done wonderfully good work in helping to put the industry on its feet. Of course there must be something in the contention that the retailers are not getting a fair deal. I am sure the House is determined that in the long run correct action shall be taken to find out where really the trouble is. Perhaps it is something deep in our economic system which, as members know, is to be investigated by the Federal Royal Commission on Banking.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Are not they getting 1s. 3d. per gallon?

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Your friends are getting well over their value now.

Mr. NORTH: I am afraid it is not so. When Mr. Harry Mann was a member of the Assembly we had an investigation into the cost of living. The question of fruit cropped up, and it was found that there were in the city of Perth 70 or 80 retailers of fruit within a few paces of each other. It was obvious that the retailers added tremendous costs, seemingly far too high. If people were prepared to do the whole of their purchasing at some central market and relinquish the convenience of having milk delivered at their doors, those costs could be materially reduced. But presumably it must be cheaper to the community to have this duplicating of service instead of people going out to bring in what they want, because then the customer can use his time to better advantage. I know it rankles in one's mind that the retailers always get the best of the deal. But distribution is a tremendously big thing as compared with production, and although personally I am convinced that there is a deeper root trouble in this matter, and although consumers are getting their milk at a reasonable price—I do not say the quality of the milk is perfect, but the contention is now being made that it is at least quite satisfactory—I say the shoe is pinching somewhere. In my district not sufficient milk is being consumed. Many homes go without it, and a lot more consume tinned milk. I am sure it should be possible for this House to get together all sections of the community and see that provisions are made, legislative or otherwise,

for action to be taken to the end that the full supply of milk demanded by the public is produced, distributed and sold, and no one the loser. I do not think the Bill—although I will support it—is going to solve the root trouble which is at the bottom of this and many other industrial difficulties.

Mr. McDONALD (West Perth) [6.6]: I will support the Bill even though some of its provisions do not commend themselves to other members. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) has given the House the benefit of his views on the Bill, and I think a lot of consideration should be given to his remarks. Fundamentally the Bill is one to stabilise the producing industry. We have to remember that in discussing it the first requirement is to ensure that the producer gets such an amount from his products that he can reasonably continue to carry on his business. Retailing and storage are enterprises which are built on the stability of the producers' business. The measure brought down in 1932 by the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson) was an experiment in the form of State socialism, and is a measure which I think everybody has watched with a great deal of interest and with the hope that it would meet with success. It has met with a good deal of success, and the board should be commended for the success which has attended their efforts in putting forward an experimental procedure and one which adversely affects a number of people. I do not propose to suggest that there should be an election of the board, something like a local authority's election, for it is clear that the chairman requires to have a certain tenure of office so that there may be continuity and consistency in the administration; but I should like to see care used by the Minister and by the board to ensure that the administrative costs do not rise too high. Already we understand that the board are taking in a revenue of £7,200, and in all matters of this kind where there is an administrative board the danger is that by means of the board the increase in cost will be constantly built up with, of course an increasing burden on the industry. I am sure the board will bear that in mind, and it is a matter to which the Minister in particular and the House must give attention, if the administration of the board is to be kept within reasonable limits. I sup-

port the representation of the retailer propounded by the member for Perth. After all, as the member for Claremont pointed out, if the producers are getting £30,000 more and the consumers have paid the same for their products, presumably it has come out of the pockets of the retailers. In a matter of this kind it seems not only desirable, but positively an act of justice that the retailers should have a voice in the controlling board, and I venture to hope that the amendment alluded to by the member for Perth will be carried. After the retailers' representative will have had a period of a year or two on the board, and so will have seen the working of the board from the board's point of view instead of as now from outside, it may be possible to bring down a measure which may prove to be more workable than the present one.

Mr. McLarty: Already they have a retailer on the board.

Mr. McDONALD: I understand there is no representative of the retailers on the board. I have already said that the primary object of the legislation is to ensure fair treatment to producers and I say that this is the fundamental basis of the whole measure. But we must not lose sight of fair treatment for other members of the industry. It is no more than fair to allow the retailer one representative on the board, and I cannot see that it will make any difference to the cost or to the conduct of operations. When the Bill comes up for revision it may be possible to revise it so as to make it rather more workable. There is a certain rigidity about the scheme at present in point of the quota. A man has a certain quota, and although he may be producing a far better product than other people are producing in the industry, he is restricted by the size of his quota. Within the limit of the object which the quota system is meant to attain, I hope that possibly something can be done in the way of elasticity which will ensure that a man producing the highest quality product may be able to get some advantage from that.

The Minister for Agriculture: Some of them would not agree.

Mr. McDONALD: Every consumer knows that the milk of one producer is not of the same quality as that of another. There are very strong feelings amongst the consumers as to the difference in quality between various supplies. I intend to move that one of the consumers' representatives shall be a

woman. I do not intend to discuss the point at length now; the time for advancing any reasons in support of placing a woman in an organisation of this kind has long since passed; in fact, we are far behind other countries, especially of Europe, in using the influence of women in the social structure. The office of representative of the consumers is essentially one of those positions which a woman can fulfil in a way perhaps that would be beyond a man. I hope the House will accept that amendment when I move it at a later stage.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [7.30]: I support the Bill. I was pleased to hear the Minister speaking in such appreciative terms of the work of the board. He quoted figures to show that the producers had benefited as a result of its activities, and indicated that all sections engaged in the industry had also benefited, the producers, the consumers and the distributors. The Minister also said he had given close attention to the views and requests of all interested in the industry, and that the Bill was the result of a considerable amount of careful thought. There is no doubt the Minister has given considerable thought to the whole position, and that he brought down the Bill only after giving it a great deal of consideration. I should have liked the Minister to give the board greater powers than the Bill proposes to do. With these control measures the boards concerned must have sufficient power in order to meet the position. If they have insufficient power it is likely to lead to chaos in the industry concerned. I realise the Minister must be cautious, and that he could not take any very drastic steps. If we are to control the milk industry as it should be controlled, the board must be given ample power. The board have had a difficult task to carry out. I congratulate them on the successful manner in which they have discharged their duties and accomplished their tasks. I agree with the member for Irwin-Moore that one of the difficulties the board have had to contend with is that they exist only from year to year. This short life prevents the board from formulating a policy and putting it into operation. If the life of the board were extended it would go a long way to prevent the propaganda that

is now going on against them. It would also prevent a great deal of unrest from which the industry suffers to-day. I was particularly pleased to hear several members express the hope that the life of this Board would be extended. We have passed the stage when we can call this experimental legislation. It has been in operation for the past two years.

Mr. Cross: It is not satisfactory yet.

Mr. McLARTY: I do not suppose it could satisfy everybody, but I do think it would give more satisfaction if the board had a longer lease of life so that a policy could be formulated and worked to. The Minister pointed out that whole milk boards are now established in great cities where they have become permanent institutions. In London recently a vote was taken as to whether the whole milk board should continue or not, and the voting by an overwhelming majority was in favour of its continuance. The milk board there has become a permanent institution. By creating these boards most countries have acknowledged that milk is the principal and most important article of diet. The board already has power in this State to find out what is being done with the whole milk that comes into the metropolitan area. This power is insufficient. They should be able to prevent what is known as surplus milk from coming into the area. This is a constant source of danger and is most difficult to police. It is this milk that makes it so difficult for the board to maintain the fixed price. If extra milk is required the Act provides that it shall be paid for as accommodation milk. It is a little more expensive than the ordinary quota milk. I am afraid very little if any of this milk is being paid for. So long as surplus milk is allowed into the metropolitan area there will be no such thing as accommodation milk. Surplus milk should never be allowed to come in without the authority of the board, and then only if they are satisfied as to the purpose for which it will be used. In some respects the producers are to blame for a considerable amount of the surplus milk that comes into the metropolitan area. A man may have a quota of 20 gallons and may be producing 25 gallons, and the difference comes in as surplus milk to be separated. If the producers studied their own interests they would separate this milk themselves, and thus help to stabilise the price of whole

milk. The board should control all milk that comes into the area. I would go so far as to fix the price for goldfields milk. That would do no harm to the consumers there, but would be to their advantage. They would also be assured of a better milk supply, and I do not think they would have to pay any more for it. It would do away with the situation we find of people buying milk both for the metropolitan area and the goldfields. The same producers supply the same people, and it must be very difficult to ascertain which milk is being used for the metropolitan area and which for the goldfields. If the board could get control of this milk and fix the price of it as they do for metropolitan milk, it would go a long way towards stabilising the industry. I would like the Minister to take that aspect of the question into consideration. I understand the board would have power to fix the price of milk used in the manufacture of ice cream. I agree with that. People who supply milk for this purpose should really take out a separate license. They are not supplying what we term whole milk, such as is used by the ordinary consumer. A separate license should be provided for those who supply it for ice cream. The difficulty is that the amount required varies according to seasonal conditions. There is another serious difficulty. We are importing powdered milk from the Eastern States. I should like to know whether it is possible to amend the Health Act to guard against the importation of that commodity, and to insist upon the use of local whole milk in the manufacture of ice cream. Powdered milk comes from the Eastern States because it is cheaper than fresh milk, although it is acting detrimentally to our industry. I should like the Minister when replying to say whether anything can be done to ensure that a greater amount of whole milk shall be consumed in the metropolitan area. If he can do that he will be doing the industry a considerable turn.

Mr. Hegney: What about powdered milk in those places where fresh milk is not available?

Mr. McLARTY: That would not affect the metropolitan area.

Mr. Cross: Not much of it is used there.

Mr. McLARTY: Probably more would be used if the board decided to fix the price of milk used for the manufacture of ice

cream. Powdered milk is one of the things we have to guard against. This evening several members discussed the question of dual control between the health inspectors and the board inspectors. I should like the Minister to clarify that position. I understand the Bill will do something to minimise the trouble. In the past this dual control has created a considerable amount of irritation. In the Harvey district one producer on one day was visited by the local health inspector, the milk board inspector, and an officer of the Agricultural Department, because he was sending second grade cream to the factory. That is an unnecessary expense. I should like the Minister to say that the Bill will do away with the dual control, and that one inspector shall be sufficient to cover the ground in a given district. It is suggested to me that the Act provides that the board may carry on propaganda to encourage the consumption of milk. I hope that is so. It should be an important part of their duties to encourage the consumption of milk by propaganda and general advertising. The milk boards in London and Sydney carry on an extensive amount of propaganda. Only two or three days ago I saw in one of the Sydney papers large advertisements pointing out the advantages of whole milk. One advertisement represented a prominent athlete as declaring that his success had been brought about by the great quantities of milk he drank. It all has an effect, and certainly our board could go in for more propaganda and advertising in order to bring about a greater consumption of milk. As I have said before, I would like to see a board controlling the whole of the dairying industry. We have at present a Butter Board, and there is talk of a Cheese Board, and of course we have the Milk Board operating. The time is opportune for one board to control the entire industry. That would obviate a great deal of expense, and would be in the interests of the producer. Now I should like to reply to some statements made by hon. members prior to the tea adjournment. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) was telling us about the hardships imposed on those engaged in the distributing side. I have every sympathy for those on the distributing side, and want to do the fair thing by them; but the hon. member is mistaken in saying that they have the hard part of it. I am perfectly certain that if the hon. member got out in some of the

dairying districts, he would speedily change his views. He said something about the distributor or vendor getting 1s. 3d. out of the deal—that the price per gallon was 2s. 4d. and that the retailer received 1s. 3d. It seems wrong that out of a price of 2s. 4d. the producer should receive only 1s. 1d.—less than 50 per cent. I would take a great deal of convincing that it is not wrong that the producer should receive less than 50 per cent. of the total price at which his commodity is sold. There is a spread of 1s. 3d. between the producer and the consumer, and I do not think that can be justified. In reply to a question I asked some time ago, the Minister stated that there were about 500 producers engaged in the industry to-day, and 1,100 men on the distributing side. Those figures indicate clearly that there is something wrong. It is another grave problem for the board to tackle. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham), and I think the members for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) and Claremont (Mr. North) as well, before tea put up a plea for representation of retailers on the board. I interjected that the retailers already have such representation.

Ministerial Members: No.

Mr. McLARTY: I still say so.

Mr. Cross: Where is that representative?

Mr. McLARTY: The first representative on the board, Mr. Graves, was a producer-retailer. He was succeeded by the late Mr. Kinsella, who was also a producer-retailer. The present representative is also interested on the retail side. So that the retailers have not been absolutely without representation.

Mr. Cross: Those men were elected by the producers.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, but they are producer-retailers. The retail side is an important part of their business. I am perfectly certain that those three gentlemen have given every consideration to any requests put before them by the retailers. Again, take the consumers' representatives. First there was Mr. Curtin, and Mr. Gibson. Mr. Curtin had to resign, and was succeeded by Mr. Davis. There is not the least doubt that those gentlemen would be ready at all times to meet retailers and discuss their position with them. So when hon. members claim that the retailers have been entirely neglected, and that their views have not been placed before the board—well, it is not a statement of fact.

Mr. McDonald: But that was not said.

Mr. McLARTY: The retailers have had representation on the board, and I feel certain that their case has been fully put.

Mr. Cross: Why are you afraid of a direct representative of retailers?

Mr. McLARTY: I am not afraid.

Mr. Cross: Then why oppose it?

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is against your policy, anyhow.

Mr. McLARTY: There is no necessity for it.

Mr. Cross: An additional man would not make the board unwieldy.

Mr. McLARTY: All sorts of people would be wanting additions to the board. Mention has been made of the board's cost of administration. The member for Perth commented on the excessive costliness of the board, but the costs in this case compare favourably with the costs of other boards. The member for West Perth and the member for Canning have been advocating that a woman should be placed on the board as consumers' representative.

Mr. Cross: Is there anything wrong with that?

Mr. McLARTY: No. I am not opposed to the appointment of a woman to the board, and I think the Minister for Agriculture has power to appoint a woman if he wishes to do so. Indeed, I believe he could appoint two women if he wanted to. So far as I am concerned, I would not offer the least objection. Now I wish to ask the Minister what he intends to do with the compensation funds which are accumulating. There is an amount of nearly £2,000 in the dairymen's compensation fund now. I would like to know what is going to be done with that money. Those engaged in the industry would like to know also. I would be very grateful for the information. My intention is to support some of the amendments to be moved in the Bill, particularly the one lengthening the life of the board. I shall also support some amendments foreshadowed by the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson). I commend the Minister for the manner in which he introduced the Bill, and for the enthusiasm he has shown towards the industry. I feel that even although the Bill is not all I should desire, it will help the industry generally.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [7.55]: On this Bill I do not propose to dwell at great

length. In speaking I may perhaps give offence to some of my friends on this side of the Chamber. It will be recalled that I accepted the measure with faint praise at the very inception. Reading through the amendments already foreshadowed—containing almost the whole of the legislation on the subject—I am wondering whether there is any justification for the measure. I desire to pay a tribute to the members of the board, who have carried out their duty in accordance with the statute. In fact, they have had a rotten duty to perform. I stated at the time that imaginary lines were being drawn between producers, and that from this fact dissatisfaction would result. I foretold that there would be differentiation in every direction. The truth of that forecast is proved by the amendments of which notice has been given. No matter what may be said by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty), who is president of the butter producers, or by the member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson), from the aspect of orderly marketing the Bill falls a long way below expectations. Would it not be better to come out into the open and say, "We have forgotten our principles, and therefore we fall back on the Labour Party's policy of nationalisation"? Is there any justification for two sets of producers as proposed by the Bill? I say definitely there is not any. If I asked my friends sitting beside me to vote with me for control of the price of fish, which anyone may catch and sell, or the price of rabbits, there would be screams from all quarters. That shows the degree of sincerity animating the subject. Because the member for Murray-Wellington has something which producers are not in love with, other people say, "We will give them complete control through an Act. We will place in the hands of the board the case where Brockman has been supplying milk, and Smith on the other side of the fence has had to provide butter fat at 4½d. per gallon less." Because the South-West Butter Company paid 1s. 1½d. and Nestle's milk factory did not give 4½d. above that price, a strike was to be declared. The Minister is young and unsophisticated, and to my mind his Bill is ill-conceived. I spoke against it in the first instance. To discriminate between sections of primary production is impossible. Producers cannot be placed in different price-categories

in accordance with an imaginary line. And so the whole thing is a failure. The Milk Board has been taken to court, and there have been appeals. According to certain people, the metropolitan area could supply the whole of the city requirements in the way of milk to-day.

Mr. Cross: Of course it could.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then people living in the country areas would have to accept 4½d. per gallon less for their milk. The member for Murray-Wellington says they could go a little farther afield. Because some of the producers are in the country areas and are supplying whole milk, we in our foolishness—not in our wisdom—allowed a Bill of this description to be placed on the statute-book. Now the amendments the Minister has suggested indicate that practically the whole of the sections of the Act are to be altered. Some members say that we must have orderly marketing. I do not stand for that, and I cannot conceive how it could be brought about. In my opinion, the only way in which success can be secured for those in the industry is to permit open trading. Now we have a board in existence controlling the whole milk industry. We have a very fine chairman, and the board have done their job in accordance with the Act. As a result of their experience, they require certain amendments. The very fact that so many amendments can be suggested shows what a failure the whole business has been. We should consider the amendments very carefully. It has been suggested by the member for Perth (Mr. Needham) and the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) that a lady should be appointed to the Metropolitan Whole Milk Board. I am not afraid of the womenfolk, but I claim that the board as it is constituted is quite all right. It has been said that the retailers should have representation. In my opinion, the people who count should be appointed to the board, and they are those who do the work; the board should be representative of the majority of the producers. I have always had the courage of my convictions. If some members advocate orderly marketing, why do not they go the whole hog and make it apply to all sections, not to one section? If we are to have that, it should apply to the whole of the producers, irrespective of whether they are in the South-West, in the eastern districts, or wherever they may be operating. If it were to have general application, there would be some justification for

such a suggestion. On the other hand, why should Parliament legislate so to differentiate between sections of producers? Why should one section receive 4½d. more for their product than those engaged in producing the same commodity but happen to be operating on the other side of an imaginary line. This legislation is altogether wrong. The Minister told us he had met representatives of every section of the trade. That is not so. He did not meet one section, the representatives of which would have said to him, "If you are going to effect the nationalisation of the milk industry, then we ask you to fix a price for us, just as you have fixed it for other favoured people."

Mr. Hegney: This is not nationalisation.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, and I wondered why you supported it. If we are going to do this sort of thing, would it not be better to have boards dealing with everything so that every activity would be under Ministerial control? Why have a board dealing with milk, another board dealing with butter, and still another dealing with cheese. Why not have, as the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) said, one board controlling the whole of the dairying industry. That is what this advocacy boils itself down to. Do my friends on the Opposition side know what they are talking about? They have held up their hands in holy horror when there has been a suggestion for the nationalisation of any industry. Notwithstanding that, that is what they seem to be advocating. I have never advocated anything of the sort, and will never stand for it.

Mr. Marshall: Then sit down.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Let there be the survival of the fittest, and let the industry stand on its own basis. I shall reserve to myself the right to decide which amendments I shall support and which I shall reject. I shall voice my opinion, whether it pleases or offends.

Mr. Hawke: You are much below form to-night.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: At any rate, I shall never agree with the views of the hon. member.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [8.5]: I have observed carefully the somewhat mixed reception accorded the Bill. I do not entirely agree with all its provisions and, before it

passes, I will see to it that the producers find out who are their friends.

Mr. Thorn: You are bluffing.

Mr. CROSS: I am not.

Mr. Thorn: Of course you are.

Mr. CROSS: I will call the hon. member's bluff. The Bill proposes to perpetuate the system of dual inspection. The producers have to pay for that system. I will see where the producers' friends are when it comes to attempting to wipe out that proposal. I will see where the Country Party members stand on that point.

Mr. Thorn: We know where we stand.

Mr. CROSS: The milk producers of the metropolitan area have had a surfeit of dual inspection and do not want it any longer.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Why did you not vote against it?

Mr. CROSS: When the amending Bill was dealt with last time, I had something to say about that particular phase.

Mr. Thorn: You voted for it.

Mr. CROSS: I have known instances in which an inspector has gone from the Health Department to inspect a dairy, which he passed as satisfactory. Inside an hour, an inspector from the Metropolitan Whole Milk Board visited the dairy and found a host of things all wrong.

Mr. Thorn: Which inspector knew his job?

Mr. CROSS: The qualified man was from the Health Department, not from the Milk Board.

Mr. McLarty: The Bill will do away with that phase.

Mr. CROSS: Why should there be provision for two inspectors? It simply means doubling the cost that the industry has to bear.

Mr. McLarty: But the Bill will get rid of that.

Mr. CROSS: How will it do that?

Mr. Marshall: The provision is there.

Mr. CROSS: I have not seen it.

Mr. McLarty: Then you have not read the Bill.

Mr. CROSS: The Bill gives the milk board power to inspect dairies, but that is unsatisfactory because the legislation cannot have the effect of amending the Health Act to do away with the dual inspection. Any provision that will perpetuate the system of dual inspection in the industry must be regarded as highly unsatisfactory.

Mr. McLarty: Clause 6 deals with that matter.

Mr. CROSS: I shall have something to say about Clause 6 when it is before us in Committee.

Mr. McLarty: Why do you not read the clause?

Mr. CROSS: There is another provision in the Bill that will represent a severe slash at the producers. I refer to the attempt that will be made to enable licenses to attach to specified premises only. That will mean that the dairymen will not have the license, which will apply only to the premises. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) pointed out how detrimentally that would affect the producers. Where do Country Party members stand regarding that matter?

Hon. C. G. Latham: They will be more correct in their stand than you will be.

Mr. CROSS: Will they be in opposition to those who are the real producers?

Hon. C. G. Latham: If you are one of them, we will be.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: So we are.

Mr. CROSS: If the premises only are to be licensed, it will mean that milk producers in the metropolitan area who rent premises will not be able to secure transfers of the license. In that event, how will the landlords treat them? The landlords will commence fleecing them right away. I will divide the Committee on that question, and we will find out where the Country Party members stand.

Mr. Thorn: Don't keep on threatening us.

Mr. CROSS: Previous speakers have made a statement, which I have heard elsewhere, that the producers, as a result of the activities of the board, received an additional £30,000 out of the whole milk business, and yet at the same time the operations of the board have not cost the consumers one penny.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Neither they have.

Mr. CROSS: If that is true, who pays for the administrative costs of the board, and who provided the £30,000?

Mr. Thorn: That shows you do not know.

Mr. CROSS: If that money came from the retailers, are members to persist in their attitude that the one section of the trade that found such a considerable sum of money are not to be permitted to have one representative on the board? If they do, then I can only say that the amendment suggested by the member for Perth, to give that section representation on the board is

a democratic move. It is axiomatic of British justice that there should not be taxation without representation, and I am hopeful that members will adopt a reasonable view and give that section of the industry at least one representative on the board. How can we expect contentment to exist among all sections of the industry, if one section is not given a voice on the board?

Mr. Thorn: That £30,000 came from the commodity that the producer produced, namely, his milk.

Mr. CROSS: The truth of the matter is that the £30,000 that the producers got did not come from the consumers because of increased charges.

Mr. Thorn: You said that.

Mr. CROSS: If it did not come from the consumers, it must have come from the retail section of the trade.

Mr. Thorn: It came from the milk.

Mr. CROSS: Some of the retailers have gone out of business in the same way as have some of the producers since the Metropolitan Milk Board commenced operations.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They would all have gone out but for the board.

Mr. CROSS: Let me remind members of the reason why Britain lost the 19 American States.

Members: Oh, Oh!

Mr. CROSS: It was no joke. Though it was regarded in England as a joke at one stage, it was not so regarded in the end. Those States said that if they were to be required to pay one penny in the pound tax on tea, they must be given a voice. They were not given a voice. Do members recollect what happened? Do they remember what the discontent led to? Do they remember the story of the Boston tea party? I do not anticipate similar trouble here, but to get contentment in the industry and to give fair play, the retailers should have representation on the board.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think we could do without distributors.

Mr. CROSS: One additional representative on the board could not make that body unwieldy.

Mr. Thorn: They have one already and you know it.

Mr. CROSS: They have not a direct representative. The hon. member might know that, notwithstanding the changes that have taken place in the milk production busi-

ness, of which mention has been made, there has been another change, and that has not been dealt with by the Bill. I do not know what the board have been doing; I am unaware of their activities, but I do know that certain wholesalers in the greater metropolitan area were a few months ago doing certain things that were far from being just and fair. As a matter of fact, I could obtain proof that one milk producer who had a contract with a certain firm in Perth was told first of all that he could deliver his milk twice a day. Later he was told to deliver the milk once a day, but to put it into separate cans and mark the night milk and the morning milk. He did so, and when a few days later he got his account, he found that he was paid whole milk prices for one lot of milk and butter fat prices for the other lot, but the whole of it was mixed together and sold to the public as whole milk. That is one way in which the dairy farmer has been fleeced in the metropolitan area. Other practices have been indulged in.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Did you bring that under the notice of the board?

Mr. CROSS: I brought it before the House at the time, and I have an idea that the board knew something about it, too. Another practice was being indulged in, but it was very difficult to get proof. Producers could not obtain contracts unless they agreed to deliver the milk and, when they received their cheque, to hand back two or three pounds in cash under the lap.

Mr. Thorn: Can you prove that?

Mr. CROSS: I cannot.

Mr. Thorn: Then you should not make that sort of statement.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You disprove it.

Mr. CROSS: I believe the statement of my informant. Such a practice was unjust. I am anxious to ensure that that sort of thing shall not be done. Judging by the opposition shown by some members on the cross benches, it would seem that the country people were jealous of the metropolitan producers. For years past the metropolitan producers have supplied the greater metropolitan area, and there is a little difference between the metropolitan producers and those in some of the country districts. This is the difference: the men who have been in business in the greater metropolitan area have never received one penny of assistance from the Government, whereas the people

who are now seeking to get their milk into the metropolitan area are people who have been spoon-fed by the Government for a long time.

Mr. McLarty: Do not talk such rubbish.

Mr. CROSS: It is not rubbish.

Mr. Lambert: It is true.

Mr. CROSS: Of course it is true. When settlers were started in the Harvey district, they were put there to produce butter fat and cheese, and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. McLarty: They had been in the industry for years.

Mr. CROSS: They were not put there to supply the metropolitan area with milk.

Mr. McLarty: They were there to supply whom they liked.

Mr. CROSS: I know there are members who say it is only a matter of time when the producers in the metropolitan area will have to drop out of the business. They will not if I can help it. They have established themselves without any assistance from the Government, and I will do my best to keep them in the industry.

Mr. McLarty: Plenty of men outside the metropolitan area have done the same thing.

Mr. CROSS: I should like to see provision made that any whole milk entering the greater metropolitan area shall be paid for at a fixed price. There should not be two prices in Perth. It should not be possible to bring milk into the metropolitan area and sell it for less than the fixed price. I believe that it is possible to get milk in the metropolitan area to-day at less than the fixed price. I make that statement because I know it can be bought retail at less than the fixed price, even in Victoria Park. I admit that it is difficult to police the Act, but I know that milk is being brought in from outside the greater metropolitan area and I am afraid from some of those Government-assisted settlers, and that they are attempting to cut the price. I hope that in Committee we shall be able to make some improvements to the Bill. I would have liked to comment on the activities of the board, but as certain prosecutions are pending, notwithstanding the privilege of Parliament, any discussion might be construed as being comment on those cases. No harm would be done, I consider, if the strength of the board were increased by two members. I suggest that the retailers be given a direct representative, and the consumers, instead of having two representatives, should have three, one of whom should be a woman.

I think that a board so constituted would satisfy all sections of the community. A while ago I pointed out that a great change was taking place in the industry. As a result of some of the practices to which I referred a few minutes ago, quite a number of producers are seeking to become their own retailers. I do not know the exact number. One man told me a few days ago that he considered there were 150 producer-retailers at present. If there is so large a section of producer-retailers, their interests are different from those of the producers or the retailers. If that section increases, I think it will be due to the fact that wholesalers have not been playing the game. I hope that in Committee we shall be able to get some support from the Opposition to give the retail section representation on the board. I shall support the second reading. I believe in the milk board, but I consider that at the present stage the duration of the measure should not extend over more than one year. Undoubtedly we are still in the experimental stages. The member for Murray-Wellington spoke of similar legislation in England. I have had considerable correspondence on the subject, and I assure the hon. member that while the idea of a milk board is definitely approved there, just as it is here, a certain amount of dissatisfaction exists and the legislation there is still regarded as being in the experimental stage. I am anxious to obtain the best results, first of all for the producers and then for the consumers, and I believe in giving a fair crack of the whip to the retailers to ensure that they secure a reasonable living. By exercising reasonableness and insisting upon fair play for all, justice could be done to the various interests, but I am convinced that it would be a considerable improvement for all sections if the board were made more representative.

MR. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [8.28]: Unfortunately, I missed the earlier stage of the debate, but I listened in vain for the member for Nelson or the member for Canning to point out to any great extent the iniquities that would be perpetrated by this measure. We all know that previous to the advent of that much-maligned body, the milk board, conditions in the industry had become chaotic, and because of that, those people who had the best interests of the producers and consumers at heart got together and formulated this legislation. Ex-

perience of the operation of the measure, I take it, has satisfied the Minister that there are certain imperfections which need to be rectified. It is remarkable that on every possible occasion, the people who were so clamant to secure something in the way of rationing or an orderly method of distributing the product have availed themselves of the opportunity to contest the authority of the board. They have not been actuated by what has been suggested, though perhaps they have been actuated by what took place at the time. The member for Perth raised the question of female representation for the consumers. I too have been approached on this subject, and representations have been made by several women's organisations. At the present time the consumers are admirably served, but it seems that in the minds of some, efficacy can only be secured by having a woman on the board to represent the consumers. Whether that is so or not is for the House to decide. The women's organisations consider that they should have a say, and the plea they put forward is that women are more naturally associated with the milk question by their being housewives, and by reason of the fact that this is one of the matters that come entirely within their purview. There is another very large body concerned, though up to date no one has raised any plea on their behalf. Strong representations, however, have been made to me on behalf of milk vendors. We have heard a lot about retailers, but those retailers are entirely different from the milk vendors that I have in mind, those people who occupy shops in the various suburbs and who sell milk in those shops. They are compelled to contribute to the extent of £1 per annum, which includes compensation, and they aver that they really derive no benefit whatever from this payment they are compelled to make. Yet they are obliged to make the payment to the compensation fund. They contend that if there is to be any alteration at all they too should receive consideration equal to that given to other sections. The other point to which I wish to refer is that made by the member for Canning in regard to the licensing of premises. A license is given to particular premises, and I quite realise that the contention would be advanced that, for instance, a pig yard would not receive a license to vend milk. At the same time the licensing of premises can operate to the detriment of the people in the industry. The owner of

the premises, unless there is a lease in existence between him and the tenant, can establish his right to the use of those particular premises.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You would not hand it to the individual.

Mr. MOLONEY: So long as the premises were suitable, and provided the conditions were hygienic there should be no restrictions to the vending of milk such as exist now, two shops in this street or two shops in the other.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not think there is any restriction in the city.

Mr. MOLONEY: There is. The hon. member will find that the method is that certain specified places are given a license and no matter how fine a place another individual may have it does not necessarily follow that he will get a license for that place. The board may say that the area in question is sufficiently well catered for. I have perused the Bill, and as has been pointed out, it is largely a machinery measure which can be considered in greater detail in Committee. Many of the amendments that have been suggested have considerable merit. Regarding the particular instances to which I have referred, notably the question of the shopkeepers and the matter of the premises and representation by a woman for the consumers, I understand that amendments are to be moved in Committee. I understand that the member for Perth intends to move in the direction of the appointment of a woman on the board, whilst with regard to the shopkeepers, doubtless there are other members equally desirous as myself of seeing that their interests are protected. I support the second reading of the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne—in reply)
[8.37]: Several members who have spoken on the second reading have mentioned that this is a Committee Bill, and in taking that view also, I do not intend at this juncture to unduly delay the passage of the Bill, particularly as explanations now on some of the points raised will only mean reiteration later on. There are, however, one or two points to which I should like specifically to refer, particularly those raised by the member for Canning. I find that there have been many promises, indeed almost some threats, but fortunately for me, not many

requests. In briefly explaining one or two points raised by that hon. member and others I should first like to deal with retailer representation. It has been stated at least by one member that the retailers have representation, and I was surprised at the quarter from which support has arisen for the retailer. In the first place one of the producers' representatives from No. 1 area was Mr. Grose, who was a producer-retailer and dairyman-vendor. He was a producer and a retailer of the commodity, and on inquiry I found from his figures, taking a typical month, June, 1934, he sold wholesale 1,828 gallons of his own milk and retailed 2,100 gallons, much of which was purchased from other dairymen. His major interest from all aspects was retailing. The present producer-representative for the No. 1 area, Mr. Kinsella, is also a retailer. He is a producer-representative in the term of the appointment permitted under the existing law. I find that Mr. Kinsella in July of this year sold of his own production 500 gallons of milk, and retailed 3,009 gallons. There is another point, and a very vital one. In the No. 1 area there are 200 licensed dairymen, and 138 of these are also retailers; almost a two to one majority, and there is no chance of the producer-representative of the No. 1 area being elected from the ranks of the dairymen only, as both classes could claim to have representation. There is no denying that, and I find on examining the position in Australia and in other countries of the world where similar legislation operates—not only in England but in countries on the Continent, places such as Czechoslovakia—there has always been a claim for the retailer, but not in any instance has the retailer been given representation; and it will be found on analysis that the interests of the retailer are not identical with those who, I claim, should have the major benefit from legislation of this nature. Most of the members who have been circularised will find that many claims have been advanced by the retailing section since the Bill was introduced, and that some of those claims will not in any way stand investigation. The member for Canning, with other members, questioned whether the £30,000 which it is claimed the producers have received since the institution of the board came from the retailers. In the end there is one person who pays, and it is the consumer. For the

services rendered the retailer receives adequate compensation. When the position is analysed we find that at the inception of the board an average price of 10d. per gallon was being received by the producer; but to-day that price is 1s. 1d. In "Hansard" of 1932, page 2617, the Hon. W. J. Mann quoted the fact that the producer received 8½d., and in one case 7½d. The Hon. H. V. Piesse claimed that the producer was averaging only 7½. It is a remarkable thing with legislation of this character that amongst those on whom the greatest benefits are conferred, in this instance the dairymen in the metropolitan area, we find the greatest discord. There is reason for it because they have definitely received benefits under this legislation, but unfortunately the rigorous inspection necessary to provide a healthful commodity for the consumers of the city they claim not to be in their best interests. The Bill, as I said, was designed for the metropolitan producer and the consumer, and in perpetuating this legislation in the Bill now before the House the claim can justly be substantiated that the position has not altered in that respect. To one point raised by the member for Perth I should like briefly to reply; that was his claim that licenses can be revoked, and are revoked, on the first offence. What is the fact, in actual practice? After the premises and the commodity have been thoroughly given the once-over, if it is found that the commodity does not come up to the standard prescribed, the person concerned is given due warning. It cannot for one moment be contended that the board has taken drastic action without giving due warning. In every instance any person prosecuted has not only been visited and written to, and even had a registered letter sent him prior to the prosecution, but he has given every benefit of helpful advice to permit him to produce and supply the best commodity possible. Many members present to-night have paid a tribute to the work of the board, mentioning the difficulties under which the board have laboured. I think all reasonable men in the Chamber will agree that under the Bill which first became the Act the board had a very serious and difficult job to perform. As most of the points raised during the debate will be raised again in Committee, I will not delay the House any further at this stage.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mount Magnet—[8.47] in moving the second reading said: The Bill provides for the continuance of this emergency legislation for another year. That is the whole purpose of the measure. The original Act provides that a mortgagee shall not be permitted to enforce his remedy under a mortgage against the demand of the mortgagor without the leave of a Supreme Court judge. It also extends to the vendor of land under a contract of sale in the same way; that is to say, a vendor of land under a contract of sale cannot enforce his remedies under the contract without the leave of a Supreme Court judge. The Act contains also a prohibition against a judgment creditor seizing the property of the judgment debtor under a warrant of execution. The Act has been in operation for several years.

Mr. Stubbs: And a jolly good Act it is, too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The principal Act does not relieve a mortgagor from the obligation to pay his interest and, if he does not pay, the mortgagee can still sue him to recover the outstanding interest, but he cannot enforce his rights against the land. The mortgagee cannot sue to recover the principal moneys, except by leave of a Supreme Court judge. If the Act is not continued as is proposed by the Bill, it will mean that immediately the present Act expires all past instalments of principal moneys will become due and payable, that is to say, the money instalments not paid during the past three years. It is possible that instalments of principal money have accrued up to some hundreds of pounds, and immediately the existing Act dies, unless some special provision is made, all that money will become payable, and the unfortunate mortgagor or purchaser will be faced with the necessity to find a large sum of money at short notice. From the 13th August, 1934, to the 8th August, 1935, the following applications were dealt with under the Act:—

Applications granted	78
Applications refused	2
Temporary orders (e.g., to enter into possession and receive rent and profits)	4
Applications adjourned S.D. ..	45
Applications pending	23

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It is deemed necessary that the Act should continue in operation for another year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1935-36.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 22nd October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement, and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of Agriculture (Hon. F. J. S. Wise, Minister).

Vote—Agriculture, £80,165:

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gasecoyne) [8.51]: It gives me pleasure to present these Estimates, and although it is my intention to address the House at some length, I hope members opposite and those privileged to sit on this side will pardon me. The State's future and, in fact, its whole welfare is so largely dependent upon agriculture that the department carries great responsibilities; not only a responsibility to the settlers concerned, the responsibility of tendering them the best possible advice, but under the Acts controlling disease and agricultural matters generally coming directly under them, the department has a great responsibility indeed. At the outset I should like to say it is pleasing to note the increase likely to obtain in the price of wheat. The present figure is almost a remunerative one, and when those engaged in the wheatgrowing industry receive sufficient to compensate them for their annual exertions and in some way to recompense them for past gray days, no one will begrudge it to them. I hope that wheat will still go higher in price and act as a stimulus to those engaged in the industry who for some years have been producing wheat at below cost. Our prospects a week or two ago were very bad, and it was remarkable the change that was brought about by the very welcome rains, which were comparatively wide-spread. Although a very serious position still obtains in a large proportion of the wheatgrowing areas, the Government are fully appreciative of that position. I think it was very noticeable on the part of the newspapers of this State that

they, in their moderation in presenting the adverse side of the position, did not adopt any view of panic, nor did they do anything to create a panic. That was very helpful in the situation, and I hope that spirit will continue. I want to advise the House that over an area of almost 800,000 acres there will be very little crop, and that in four road board districts with a total of 386,000 acres the crops are seriously affected, and therefore there is a total of over a million acres badly affected with drought conditions. Over 40 per cent. of the total plantings of last season have been seriously affected, and I find that although the total area planted was over 2,700,000 acres, barely 60 per cent. of this will return a payable crop. Instead of this, the Government Statistician to-day furnishes the figure that a total harvest approaching 20,000,000 bushels will be reaped. A week or two ago it appeared doubtful if anything exceeding 15,000,000 bushels could be reaped. When it is indicated that the first estimate, based on the area sown, exceeded 26,000,000 bushels, it will be readily understood how serious the position was a short time ago. It must be pleasing to the member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) that in his district of approximately 640,000 acres an estimate of 6,000,000 bushels is given. As to the oat crop, I find the statistician's figure is for a yield approaching 5,000,000 bushels of grain from 453,000 acres, and the wheat and oaten hay crop is expected to exceed 463,000 tons. It is pleasing to note the buoyant condition of the wool market. But in that case also it will take more than the enhanced price obtained to-day to compensate growers for the serious losses incurred in past seasons. The drought now prevailing in the Murchison district is probably the worst in the history of that part of the State. Not for a very long time have they had a good season extending from Murchison House right through to and past Mee-katharra, and a succession of good years there would be very welcome to those concerned, and to the State as a whole. To deal particularly with the expenditure of the department: like other departments whose Ministers submitted an estimate of the requirements of the respective departments, the Agricultural Department did not receive all we could have wished. But it is with gratitude to the Premier that I acknowledge an increase

of £12,696 for this year. The increases in expenditure in recent years have been steady and have enabled wider scope and additional valuable work for the department throughout the State. The figures of comparative increases in expenditure are as follows:—

	£
1932-33	53,192
1933-34	59,408
1934-35	67,469
1935-36	80,165

There is an increase of £12,696 or a total increase of over £22,000 during the past three years. That has given a wonderful opportunity to extend many branches of the department in very valuable work. Fifteen additional officers have been appointed during the past two years. It is our intention this year that more officers shall be put into the field. If these Estimates are examined it will be found that the vote for the rabbit branch of the department has been increased, thus permitting further work in the destruction of the pest on abandoned properties. The increase on that item is £1,913. There is also an increase in the herd-testing vote, which will permit additional herds to be tested. This is a very valuable branch of the department's operations, and the work has led to a marked increase in the quantity production of our dairy herds. There is a request for the inclusion of additional breeds. This matter is being investigated. It is possible we shall be able to extend the operations of the department to other breeds. The vote for the toxic paralysis investigation has been considerably increased. In conjunction with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research the department has endeavoured to do much in this connection. The contacts made possible by the good feeling existing between the Director of Agriculture and those in authority in the Eastern States have assisted greatly in this respect. On the occasion of my visit to Canberra early this year, I found that owing largely to the activity of the director, and his personal relationship with the officers of the Commonwealth Bank Board and the officers of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, it was possible to secure an additional £2,500 from the board. The payment of that money will be spread over two years. Comprehensive investigations are being made, and members will be

pleased to know that one of our contracts is that a full-time officer shall be appointed. This work is very largely of a consultant nature and is in conjunction with and under the supervision of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. Certain adjustments in staff will be necessary and these are being arranged. I should like to give members a few facts on agricultural matters, and to show how an increase in the price of wheat would materially affect the prosperity of the State. In the 1901 season the area under wheat was slightly in excess of 74,000 acres, and the yield was 774,000 bushels. Thirty years later the area had increased to nearly 4,000,000 acres and the yield exceeded 53,000,000 bushels. With profitable prices for a few seasons we should, if our farmers possessed the equipment—probably their greatest need is a reconditioning of their farms in this connection—we could quickly reach the 50,000,000 mark again. In connection with the departmental experimental farms, the area under wheat last season was 1,716 acres, with an average yield of over 13 bushels. From these farms 18,000 bushels of pedigreed seed was sent away. Over 16,500 bushels of pedigreed wheat and over 900 bushels of oats were made available to farmers on the exchange basis, the department accepting $1\frac{1}{2}$ bags of f.a.q. wheat for one bag of pedigreed seed wheat, and one bag of f.a.q. wheat for one bag of pedigreed seed oats. Great good has resulted from this arrangement, which was made by a previous Minister. In connection with the 50-acre crop competitions, 110 entries were received. This competition was conducted by the Royal Agricultural Society, and judged by departmental officers. The highest yield obtained was 40 bushels to the acre, grown by Mr. Cockram of Ballinup. In the M. T. Padbury competition, we have one that has been going on for five years. The winner is the competitor who obtains the highest average yield per inch of rainfall during the growing season. This was won by F. M. and J. L. Atkins of Lake Brown with a yield of 4 bushels 29 lbs. per inch of rainfall. Five other competitors beat the previous record of 3 bushels 23 lbs. per inch of rainfall during the growing period. There was a general improvement in the acreage yield amongst all the competitors. It is pleasing to note the interest being shown by farmers in the wheat belt

in connection with pastures. Many more farmers are showing a tendency to take an interest in mixed farming, and in diversified farming there is no doubt they are tending towards safe farming. I have some interesting figures to give in connection with last year's operations in the fruit-growing industry. It is important to note a regular increase in the area devoted to apple production. In the season 1923-24 there was a little in excess of 9,500 acres in apples. In the season 1933-34 there was an excess of 12,000 acres in apples. The figures for this year are not available. Over 25,000 young apple trees were imported during the year, sufficient to plant another 250 acres. Last season showed a remarkable increase in production. The yield exceeded 14 million bushels. The previous heaviest crop was in 1928-29, when the yield was 1,123,000 bushels. A record was also established in the quantity of apples exported. Up to the end of June approximately 850,000 cases of apples were shipped, against the highest previous total of 735,000 in 1931. It is pleasing to note that the quality and the pack were favourably commented on in the overseas markets. In almost all instances higher prices were obtained than were obtained from apples from the Eastern States. The fruit-growing industry although a young one has played an important part in placing the name of Western Australia before people overseas. Only 30 years have elapsed since the first shipment of 32 cases left the State. In 1914, 10 years after the first shipment, 126,000 cases went overseas. In 1934, the Continental markets and the United Kingdom took over 850,000 cases of apples alone. The member for Toodyay will be pleased to know that grapes occupy second place in the export figures. The quantity of grapes exported last year exceeded 50,000 cases, and we sent away 30,000 cases of pears. This is surely an industry worth more than passing mention. The activities of the department in connection with the fruitfly have been very well ventilated in this House on the occasion of the introducing of legislation dealing with this question. Following a very bad season experienced last year, there has been a great diminution in the attacks from fruitfly. It is hoped that the position will now improve. There has, unfortunately, been another outbreak of Codlin moth, following on a free period of over five years. This is confined to a fairly small

area, and there is every hope that the pest will be exterminated within a couple of seasons at the most.

Mr. Thorn: Is that in the main apple area?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Not exactly, and it is confined to a non-commercial orchard. Members have heard a lot about the locust invasion this year. The department it will be remembered acted very quickly following on the serious complaints of an invasion in the north-eastern part of the wheat belt. Unfortunately another outbreak has occurred in the Bruce Rock district. The department is alive to the situation, has acted quickly, and is sending an officer into the district to-morrow. The Government view with great concern the serious possibilities likely to arise from an invasion of locusts. We have given consideration to legislation to assist the situation. As such legislation would cast important duties upon road boards, and I think in certain cases upon vermin boards, and as we have not had all the support we might have had from the local authorities, the matter is still under consideration. The member for Toodyay succeeded in staging a very fine exhibit of local wines in the near metropolitan areas last week. He will be pleased to note the improved position of the industry. During the past year 186,000 gallons of wine were distilled, this being an increase of nearly 40,000 gallons, despite the fact that imports from overseas and interstate show an increase of 33,500 gallons. The total importations last year exceeded 198,000 gallons, and our home production was a little in excess of 186,000 gallons. This increase was made possible by the breakdown in the price of South Australian grapes, which were realising only £1 per ton. Our product has not only compared favourably with the products of all Australia, but in actual competition it has carried off most of the championship awards in direct conflict with products from the grapes of other States. I would like to deal briefly with the good work conducted by the veterinary branch. Ever-increasing calls are being made on the officers of that branch. As the State becomes more developed and as additional districts are brought into production, there is an ever-increasing call for their services. And not only that, but new problems arise, and we find that there is a definite and persistent call upon the officers of the veterinary

branch for their services in many directions. We need, and urgently need, more men in the branch to cope with the ever-growing calls on their services.

Mr. Lambert: The farmers of the past did not require all these officers.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There are many matters arising out of the settlement of new districts, and many questions which did not exist at the time of the settlement of the people to whom the hon. member refers. As the result of the success achieved by the complement fixation test for pleuro-pneumonia, it is highly pleasing to note, it has been made possible to ship over 3,000 head of cattle from four stations situated in a district of the Kimberleys which was previously quarantined. The application of this test is increasing. It also has made an enlarged demand on the services of the veterinary branch. As regards wasting disease at Denmark, the Denmark No. 1 Lick, made from a formula supplied by the department, has achieved excellent results. It has not only made the rearing of young stock possible, but has increased the production of the milch cows.

Mr. Lambert: You gave a firm the department's prescription to commercialise.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Nothing of the sort. If the hon. member were to review the operations of the department under that head, he would find that the deficiency which caused wasting disease was lack of cobalt, very minute quantities of which are necessary to cure the disease.

Mr. Lambert: That is questionable.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is pleasing to know that very minute doses of cobalt not only cure the disease, but are capable of keeping the cattle in a healthy condition.

Mr. Lambert: I went into that matter 15 years ago.

Mr. Doney: Can the Minister tell us how the veterinary officer happened across that discovery? It would be interesting to hear.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is an interesting point, and I am not sorry the hon. member raised it, because it indicates the lines of research that officers find it necessary to follow. It is not only the work of one officer, but the loyal co-operation of many officers working in conjunction with each other that makes such discoveries possible.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And several years' work.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Not only several years of work are involved, but many elements in the testing-out of different mixtures of chemicals and in applying them to the cattle affected. Almost by accident it was found that cobalt was the element with the property necessary to cure the disease.

Mr. Lambert: I think it was an accident, too.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Apparently the hon. member was not able to find the accident. Great progress has been made in investigation into poison plants. With one officer operating in the field and another in the laboratory, over 51 different tests have been made with plants reputed to be poisonous. Great benefit has resulted not only in locating the mortality in stock but in assisting the diagnosis of diseases where poison is suspected. The work in connection with pedigree herds and the concentration of pasture with the establishment of modernly-equipped factories and improved methods of storage has raised the butter industry of Western Australia from a Cinderella-like position to one of honour. As a matter of fact, during the 12 months ended the 30th June last we exported butter to the value of nearly £74,000. In the year 1925-26 we imported butter to a value exceeding £642,000, or at a daily cost exceeding £1,785 to the consumers of this State.

Mr. Lambert: What did we import last year?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Very little. I shall give the hon. member those figures shortly. While it must be conceded that the cost of establishing the dairy-ing industry has been enormous, the industry has almost got to the position of proving, on analysis, to be an investment. For ten years the dairying industry has made a contribution to local circulation of more than half a million pounds annually.

Mr. Lambert: What about the cost of interest on expenditure incurred in trying to establish the industry?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Dairy farmers have received low prices for butter fat, the average being 11d. per lb. But now we are generally in a better position owing to the stability of a fixed price of 11½s. per cwt. wholesale. Although I would not contradict the hon. member interjecting, as to the cost of establishing the industry having been enormous, yet although

we are still paying huge sums in interest I may say, without being either unduly pessimistic or unduly optimistic, that the industry will soon become a contributor rather than one to which we contribute.

Mr. Lambert: We are paying interest on five or six million pounds.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I admit that.

Mr. Lambert: And that would provide all the butter—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie will have an opportunity later. I ask the hon. member to keep order.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is interesting to note that two new butter factories were opened during the year; so that in this State we now have 17 butter factories and three cheese factories operating. Regarding cheese, the position is one which places that commodity on the wrong side of the ledger in point of local consumption. Our production last year was 624,000 lbs. weight, but we imported 4,500,000 lbs. weight. So there is room for great improvement in that direction.

Mr. McLarty: Are not our factories capable of producing all the cheese we need?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No; but I think the hon. member would claim that our lands are capable of that. Owing to the demand for early subterranean clover seed, the particular strain fostered and being bred by the department has been in increasing demand. Over 60 tons of seed have been certified to, and have increased considerably the planting of that desirable product in many districts.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Was the clover seed bred by the farmers?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Not the variety known as Dwellingup. The total number of sheep in the State sounds something like a collation of astronomical figures. I would brave the wrath of the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) to quote figures, mentioning that last season from 11,160,000 sheep the wool produced amounted to 88,457,000 lbs. weight. This was a record production for the State, and prices are giving a fair indication that we may hope for something better for the wool industry in the future. There were very heavy clearances at the last wool sales, and very little was withdrawn. The export of

lambs has been rather an encouraging feature during the last exporting year. The total number shipped exceeded 147,000. This is a far greater number than was exported in any previous season, and very satisfactory prices were obtained. The agents selling the commodity in London made pleasing comments upon the quality of the product. Now to deal for a moment with the export of eggs. The quantity exported last year increased to 64,000 cases, of a value to the State of over £125,000. It will be noted that in the contingency item of the department an additional amount is provided for an assistant to the poultry adviser. There is a great call upon the services of the existing adviser.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: He is a very good man, too.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Perhaps I would be neglecting my duty if I did not briefly mention the rapid progress made on the Gascoyne River. Hon. members will be pleased to know that there are over 200 acres under bananas in that district now, and that additional areas are being planted during this month, while many other crops of a tropical nature are being tried. There is an increasing demand for many tropical fruits which the Gascoyne can undertake to grow. Last year over 9,000 cases of bananas, over 10,200 cases of beans, and a couple of thousand cases of tomatoes, as well as many similar commodities, found their way to the metropolitan market. An important appointment recently made by the department was that of Dr. Samuel as cereal research officer. This officer left the department as a cadet to train overseas, and he has been re-appointed with the assistance of the Millers' Association to a very important post in the department. It is anticipated that his work will give Western Australia a great advantage in connection with wheats in demand in China and in Japan from this State. The Salmon Gums alkali soil survey was completed and an area re-classified during the year of 227,400 acres, and 67,000 soil samples were tested in the field and in the laboratory. The figures in connection with the Vermin Trust Fund are interesting. Bonuses were paid as follows:—Wild dogs £10,801; foxes £24,088; eagles £5,102. In connection with emus there has been considerable discussion as to destruction of the pest. When

the Government originally decided to pay a bonus of 1s. per head, it was anticipated that a matter of a few thousand pounds would greatly minimise the pest. But astonishing figures are coming to hand as to the emu pest in the northern and eastern parts of the wheat belt. Up to date over 25,000 claims for bonuses have been received. That means that 25,000 emus have been killed and paid for at the rate of 1s. per head. It is interesting to note that so far one-half only of the vermin boards entitled to submit claims have adopted that course. Increased business at the metropolitan abattoirs made it necessary to effect many additions, which were completed during the year and the work carried out to the 30th June last represented a cost of £56,000. Now we have at Midland Junction up-to-date facilities that will compare favourably with those provided in any other centre in the Commonwealth. In fact, I can say that there is none better in any part of Australia than the abattoirs at Midland Junction. The stock slaughtered for consumption in the metropolitan area during the year showed increased figures and comprised 30,269 cattle, 406,840 sheep and lambs, and over 40,000 pigs. There was a slight decrease in mutton, which was probably due to the large export of fat lambs overseas. There is a very important side of the department's operations that I intend to deal with before concluding my remarks. I refer to what may be regarded as the research side of the department's operations, and I intend to review that phase of the work of the department. I shall submit what I think will be sufficient answer to the very many uncalled for statements made by the President of the Primary Producers' Association (Mr. Teasdale) and by the member for Beverley (Mr. J. I. Mann). I shall prove that those statements were unfounded, and in many instances untrue. As Mr. Teasdale went out of his way at the opening of the Primary Producers' Association Conference this year to attack the department, its work, and that of many of the departmental officers, I do not intend to allow his statements to go unchallenged. Mr. Teasdale said that the rivalry between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the University of Western Australia, the Agricultural Society and the Agricultural Department was unsettling pro-

gress in research work, and he named the Director of Agriculture as one not having a proper conception of such research work. There is no foundation whatever for such a statement.

Mr. Wansbrough: What was his authority for making it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That charge was completely refuted by Professor Wilsmore, who is a member of the State Committee of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, in the course of a lengthy statement. The professor claimed that at all times the Department of Agriculture had acted in the closest co-operation with the Council, and instanced the fact that many of the departmental officers were then, and still are, attending lectures and conducting lectures at the University. The remarks of Sir David Rivett within the precincts of this House concerning the work of the department and its operations in general should have made us proud of our achievements, and at the same time appreciative of the difficulties under which the officers are labouring. We fully realise and recognise the lack of housing and equipment for the very efficient officers on the staff of the department. While the Government realise the urgency for the provision of better accommodation and additional equipment to enable the officers of the department to function at their best, we also realise that we have not been able to respond to the best efforts of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. At the same time, the record of research achievement that the officers have built up is such that we can be justly proud of it. I do not intend to allow any personal feelings between the President of the Primary Producers' Association and the Director of Agriculture to cloud the issue. The Director of Agriculture is a man of very strong opinions, and any man in possession of strong opinions, who is fond of his work, must make enemies in the exercise of his duties. But that is no reason why that particular officer should be attacked. While the Government have the greatest appreciation of the officers and the difficulties under which they are labouring, we intend, as I shall show before I conclude, to rectify, at the earliest possible moment, the unfortunate conditions in which they are working. I think it is quite unfair that any bitter bias

in personal feelings between any individual and any public officer should cloud the issue. The member for Beverley made certain statements on the Address-in-reply and there is a great similarity between the statements made by him and those made by the President of the Primary Producers' Association. As a matter of fact, some of them could well have been the expression of Mr. Teasdale's very thoughts. The member for Beverley attacked the qualifications and administration of the Director, and while I deplore personal attacks made under privilege at any time, there is no reason whatever why a calm unbiased review of the department's operations should not be given consideration and analysed.

Mr. Lambert: I do not think you have been in love with the Director yourself, have you?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is something that does not enter into the question. I would be very low in my present position if I allowed an attack on my department or upon any of the officers, which was unjustified, to go unanswered. As one who has worked in that department on two occasions, I know full well the position of the officers of that branch of the Government service. I submit to the member for Beverley that results should be the basis upon which to make a comparison. The efforts of the hon. member as a stud breeder would surely not be rightly gauged by anyone indulging in gossip or by anyone who might be, for the time being, disgruntled. I object to the statement made by the member for Beverley when he said that our agricultural scientists were subordinated to a man who had no knowledge whatever of science. I doubt if the hon. member knows just how untrue that statement is. The Director of Agriculture passed, with the highest honours, the only examination possible for him to sit for at the time when he was training as a scientist. He has been consultant to very many bodies engaged in scientific research, and not only has been a lecturer in agronomy and other allied subjects, but we find great praise of him has been expressed by many leading scientists of the world.

Mr. Lambert: Never mind what the member for Beverley stated about him; what have you said about him yourself?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have never said anything about him to which the hon. member or the Director of Agriculture, Mr. Sutton, could take exception.

Mr. Lambert: I have heard you say things about him that were ten times worse.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie must refrain from interjecting. He will have an opportunity to make a speech later.

Mr. Lambert interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie will keep order.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Without a scientific outlook, it would not have been possible for the Director of Agriculture to make any advance in many avenues in this State. As for the relationship between the Royal Agricultural Society and the Department of Agriculture, the allegations in that respect were completely answered by the statement made over the air by the president of the society on the occasion of the opening of the Royal Show recently. His statement then was repeated by him at Katanning. In the course of his remarks, the president of the society said that the closest co-operation existed between his association and the Department of Agriculture. I admit that the Director of Agriculture is very jealous of his department. We who realise that the department has an honoured name in the land should also be jealous of it. The operations and ramifications of the department call for control by an able administrator, and not for subordination to one who might be possessed of a single-track mind. Results speak for themselves in that direction. Unfortunately it is not generally known just how far research matters are undertaken and have been developed in Western Australia. I am reminded of the story told by Dr. Gilruth in connection with research. He mentioned the young university graduates who were endeavouring to take a science degree. After six months of studying they made a wonderful discovery. What did it amount to? They had been peering through a microscope for six months, and they found that whereas it was thought that caterpillars had five hairs on their posteriors, they actually had ten. That is not the sort of research work indulged in by the department. I would instance some of the 76 projects now under consideration by the many branches.

Mr. Lambert: The Government are doing that sort of thing at the Observatory with a peep show.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:

In connection with the veterinary branch, I have already paid a tribute to the officers regarding their work on toxic paralysis. That work has proved, in conjunction with the efforts in collaboration with officers of other branches of the department, most successful, and that co-operation has also been indicated in the steps taken regarding the braxy-like disease. A toxine has been provided that has been successful in preventing the spread of the disease. I have already mentioned the wasting disease. Regarding work on the Gingin rickets, we feel that an announcement of a cure will shortly be made. Very valuable work is proceeding in research into poison plants in poison areas. A great work has been done by the officers of the plant nutrition branch. I may mention that, in connection with soil surveys and animal nutrition, we are working in close co-operation with other branches. Plant pathology for the control of black spot on apples was one of the greatest achievements. But for the checking of that disease, possibly the loss to the State would have accumulated to £60,000. Regarding nitrogen-fixing bacteria and the supply of cultures, work is proceeding. In the dairy branch the officers are actively engaged on many matters of research. It is not necessary for me to enlarge upon the work of the department in general research into cereal matters. In the manufacture of butter and cheese, in the botanical branch and in the entomological branch, a great work is proceeding, hampered only to some extent by a lack of adequate housing accommodation. As to co-operation between the department and the University, at least four officers have devoted a considerable portion of their time, equal to the time of two full-time lecturers at the University. Surely that discloses the closest co-operation between those two bodies. I admit that even now, on matters of administration, I differ at times from the Director. Probably in many departments in this State differences of opinion exist between the administrative head and the Minister. Even between the officers within departments, there are differences of opinion, but surely it would not be said that the efficiency of the depart-

ment would be impaired thereby. Nor would the beneficial work of the department be marred by any difference of opinion that I may have with the Director on a minor matter or even an important matter. I wish to say that as the department doubtless has an honoured name in the rural and urban districts of this State, we should be jealous of it and endeavour to protect it. Effective functioning largely depends upon adequate housing. Let me repeat the words of the Premier in July last—

The work of providing new buildings to house the Titles Office and the Department of Agriculture should, if possible, be begun this financial year. It is imperative that we begin the work soon. We are looking ahead 50 years, and it would be of no use shifting hurriedly without adequate accommodation and consideration for our future.

We can regard that as meaning something tangible. In the near future a start will be made adequately to house the officers and an endeavour made to assist them in the great work they are doing for the State. It should be an edifice worthy of the department, with sufficient accommodation for its officers for a generation, and I hope it will be the means of continuing to strengthen the rural industries of the State. I have pleasure in submitting the Estimates.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [9.50]: I rather question the usefulness of airing in this Chamber differences that may arise between outside public men. I take the view that we cannot settle those differences here, no matter how much we may desire so to do, and that therefore we should ignore them. Differences that arise outside should be settled outside. I rather regret that I have not the remarks of Mr. Teasdale, to which the Minister takes exception, and rightly so, if the interpretation he places on the words is correct, but I have an idea that probably the Minister has misinterpreted the meaning that Mr. Teasdale intended should attach to his words. I think members will agree that Mr. Teasdale is a man who is very careful indeed of his facts, and he certainly does not permit his personal feelings in respect of any public man to deflect him from the truth.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There must be some differences of opinion between men.

Mr. DONEY: This much I do assert, that whatever the president of the Primary Pro-

ducers' Association did say, he certainly at the time considered that he had ample and sound grounds for the statement. I am glad indeed that the Minister made those very complimentary references to the veterinary staff of the department. I cordially support those references. He has a really splendid body of men there, and it is right to say that we never look to them in vain; they never let us down. Personally I have had, and hope I shall continue to have, very fine service from them in respect to questions and problems arising in the country districts. In particular, I should like to say that the services of Mr. Filmer and those associated with him in respect to the wasting disease at Denmark have been of untold value to the farmers in the south-western part of the State. As to wheat, the Minister, in summing up the position, had a dismal tale to tell, and unfortunately, remembering the true position, he could not very well have done otherwise. So I join with the Minister in regretting greatly that today, when the price of wheat is such as nearly to offset the cost of production, we can export only the miserably small quantity that he mentioned. With perhaps no more than 17,000,000 or 18,000,000 bushels to export, it is plain that the wheatgrowers are deeper in the doldrums this year than ever before. It is necessary to help them in every way possible. Let me refer to one direction in which the Minister will be able to help. There is a fairly substantial increase in the Minister's vote. The figure, I think, is £12,970. I am hopeful that the Minister will be willing to utilise the additional amount in helping to build up the distressed farming industry.

Mr. Patrick: A lot of that will be absorbed by salary restorations.

Mr. DONEY: Yes. I know the Minister will appreciate the fact that throughout the farming areas there is need for assistance during the change-over from wheat to sheep. The difficulty in that respect is, as always, finance. The suggestion put up in many quarters is that the Department of Agriculture should finance or help to finance the purchase of good rams to approved farmers. There is no need to lay down a fixed sum that the rams should cost. The prices might range from five guineas to twenty-five guineas. The assistance might be by way of loan of the full sum, or an advance on

the fifty-fifty basis, according to what funds the Minister has available. I am sure he will appreciate the fact that as wheat is becoming an increasingly unreliable source of income, an increased reliance on wool is necessary. People may object that this should be a function of the Agricultural Bank. I admit that customarily this would be so. This, however, is a case where the assistance is required by the whole State, whereas the bank must restrict its help solely to its own clients. I would draw attention to the fact that already we have established a precedent in the allowances that are made for the purchase of bulls. I think the bull subsidy goes up to £15. Already the principle to which I desired the Minister to agree has therefore been adopted. There is also the stallion subsidy, although in that case the amounts required are drawn from a special Federal grant. The grants in respect of rams would be short-term loans payable probably at the discretion of the Minister, or over say two clips. If the Minister contends that this is not a matter for his department, or that he has no funds available with which to give the necessary assistance, I hope he will submit to the Government the desirability of making sufficient funds available for the purpose.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [9.58]: It was a pleasure to listen to the Minister while he was introducing his Estimates. The Agricultural Department is the most important of all the departments of the State. The scope of its operations is practically unlimited. It always has been a matter of funds for the department to carry out its duties, and it can only be extended according to the funds that are available. I have said before that we could do with twice or three times as many inspectors as are at present employed. There is any amount of work for them in dealing with insect pests, which are costing the country so many thousands of pounds every year. I refer to the loss of fodder crops, vegetable crops and fruit. It is to be regretted that another outbreak of codlin moth has been recorded. The more publicity we can give to this and the more serious is the view we take of it, the better will it be for the producers. I spent five years in Angaston, South Australia, practically the whole time dealing with the codlin moth. I know the dangers of the pest and how readily it will

spread. We had cleopatra apple trees on the property I was on capable of producing 30 cases of apples per tree. The trees were planted 25 by 30 and they were growing into each other. Mr. Wickens knows that those trees produced from 25 to 30 cases each, and that we lost between seven and ten cases from codlin moth per tree. The moth provides a full-time job both summer and winter. The custom has been to put a bandage around the butt of the tree. As the apples fall they are gathered. If any grubs are left, they make their way up the tree again, and are stopped by the bagging. In that way we have cleaned up thousands of grubs. Another necessary treatment is to remove every particle of loose bark from the tree trunks. Under the loose bark one generally finds some grubs. This entails a tremendous lot of work. The officer in charge of this work in the department knows his job well. I am confident he will attack the pest and will probably keep it down, but I doubt if it will be possible to eradicate it. Once the codlin moth makes its appearance it is difficult to get rid of it. There are generally a few moths who get astray. I was pleased to hear the Minister mention the importance of the export grape industry. The growers are certainly making good progress. The Trade Commission now on their way to India will no doubt benefit the export grape industry. We are the leading State in this business and practically control the position. During one season the grape-growers got together and there was a certain amount of co-operation between them. They arranged good terms with different buyers in the islands. We all make mistakes, but learn by experience. One of the greatest difficulties we had to contend with was that different growers insisted on sending grapes away on consignment. When the requirements of the different ports and islands are known, and people connected with the trade send down an order for 250 cases of grapes, and by the same ship a similar quantity is sent up on consignment, the market is absolutely upset. The man who sends down an order pays for it f.o.b. Fremantle, but when a consignment arrives, the market is upset, and buyers cannot purchase with confidence.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What solution do you recommend?

Mr. THORN: We have solved the problem. We have decided to send no more grapes on consignment. The result is that every case of grapes is sold, and we have not been able to supply the full requirements of the market at the fixed price. We sold the grapes ourselves.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Through what organisation?

Mr. THORN: Through the Export Grape-growers' Association, of which I have the honour to be president. I am also pleased to hear that the apple districts in the hon. member's constituency are going ahead so well. The fruitfly is a serious problem in Western Australia, and we have heard a great deal concerning it. In that one respect there is ample room for additional inspectors. However, it should be pointed out to the Western Australian people that their co-operation is most desirable in combating the pest. I do not think an army of inspectors could efficiently deal with the pest without co-operation from the producers. It is to the producers' own benefit to co-operate. I hope that as we make progress we shall be able to deal more effectively with the pest. The Minister referred to a visit we paid to the Swan district in connection with wine factories. The idea was to point out to our visitors that Western Australia can produce as high a standard of wine as can be produced anywhere else in Australia. That is borne out by the fact that every year, upon our exhibiting in the Eastern States, Western Australian wines carry off most of the important prizes. Last year a Western Australian firm won the Australian championship. This year the same firm gained several first and second prizes in high-class wines. To make the morning interesting, we had instructed our representative in London to buy from the London shelves 12 bottles of wine of different varieties—Australian wines which had been sent to London—and to case them up and send them back here, so that we could test them and judge of their quality, and as to how they compared with the same article sent forward latterly. We also had wine from Portugal and wines from all the leading wine making Australian States. I am quite sure that the morning proved highly interesting. The object was to show that we were striving to the utmost to get those

Western Australian people who drink wine to drink Western Australian wine.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: What was the next morning like?

Mr. THORN: I am sure it is all to the credit of Western Australian wine to say that I never felt better in my life than I felt the next morning. I am sure that the friends who accompanied me will bear me out in that statement. We labour under great disabilities here in producing our local wine. The Minister mentioned that when Eastern States winemakers, especially those in South Australia, can buy grapes for as little as 15s. per ton, turn them into wine and send it over here as young wine, the price makes it extremely difficult for our local wines to compete. It is not fair, because our winemakers of repute are making wine up to a high standard. They pay the Commonwealth price fixed for grapes. I can safely say that that price averages £5 per ton to the grower. Thus it will be seen how seriously Eastern States wines come into competition with Western Australian wines. The South Australian Government had introduced a Bill to fix a price for grapes, which was to be the price fixed by the Commonwealth. Up-to-date, however, it has not been found possible to get New South Wales in particular to agree to introduce similar legislation. It will be understood that one State could not be expected to introduce such legislation on its own, since it would be placed in unfair competition with the other States. The dried fruit industry is not in a very happy condition this year. We have been subject to serious falls in London prices through competition with Greece. It is to be understood that the dried fruit industry in Australia is essentially an exporting industry now. Over 80 per cent. of the fruit is essentially grown for export. When there is a serious fall in the export market, it reflects seriously on the industry here. To make the business pay, we require £40 per ton on the London market. To-day currants are selling as low as £28 per ton. I believe the reason is that Greek currants had been displaced on the London market by Australian sultanas. The Greek growers decided to fight Australian sultanas with Greek currants, and this has had the effect of reducing the price of dried fruits on the London market to a point unprofitable to the grower. I was

pleased to hear the Minister mention the butter position, and, irrespective of interjections by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie as to the cost of group settlement, show how settlers have been responsible for making up the leeway in our butter production. We must all agree that it is highly difficult to assess the real value of that industry. In due course it will undoubtedly be an asset to the State. Western Australian farmers should be gratified to learn that we are producing all our butter requirements within the State. I believe that the bulk of our butter has been brought up to a high standard, and that it is capable of being stored until it is required for the market. Likewise I was pleased to hear the Minister state that last year we exported 64,000 cases of eggs to the value of £125,000. This proves that our poultry industry is becoming highly important, and must develop into a most valuable asset to the State. The introduction of new capital to the extent of £125,000 into the State, coupled with the development of all our primary industries, must have the effect of assisting Western Australia with her financial affairs overseas. I am pleased to note that the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox) has moved to introduce a Bill to give those producers control of their own industry. The view I take is that if we have effective control over these industries, it provides us with opportunities to fix proper standards and packs that help to make the name of our products overseas. Undoubtedly the department are to be congratulated upon the present condition at the abattoirs. I am a regular visitor there and I can pay a tribute to the wonderful improvements that have been effected. During the summer months the animals will now be covered and protected from the blazing sun, and I hope the time is not far distant when the sheep pens will be covered as well.

The Minister for Lands: Those that are about to die.

Mr. THORN: Even if the sheep are about to be killed, that is no reason why we should not make their conditions comfortable before they meet their fate. The yards are congested on sale days, and there is not much air in the pens. The heat must have a detrimental effect on the animals in summer and, of course, in the winter months they are out in the pouring rain. The departmental officers are fully aware of the

position and I am sure that when funds are available the whole of the yards will be covered. The Minister mentioned the operations of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and I can also pay a tribute to the valuable work that body is carrying out. Last season one of the council's officers, Mr. Lyons, paid a visit to the Swan district and effected most valuable work. He spent a few days with the vine-growers, and demonstrated to us how, although we had spent a lifetime in the industry, a newcomer was able to present new ideas, show us how we could improve our vines and their production, and how we could graft new stock on to old. I desire to pay a tribute to the work of our wine expert, Mr. Johns, who has been a great asset to Western Australia since his advent. He is a most valuable officer, and I have known and worked with him for a long time. I appreciate the wonderful service he has rendered the wine industry. That officer is to a great extent responsible for the very high standard Western Australian wines have attained to-day.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [10.20]: As has been indicated by other members, the season this year has been very mixed and it is disappointing now that prices for wheat are improving, that the seasonal conditions should be so bad. Undoubtedly the late rains played a prominent part in the results that will be achieved in different parts of the State, despite which there will be decreased yields. Nevertheless, the late rains provided necessary water supplies to enable stock to be carried, and if those late rains had not fallen, we would have experienced probably the most calamitous year for stock in our history. I desire briefly to reply to the Minister's criticisms of some of my remarks on the Address-in-reply. I have been associated with sheep propositions for many years, and even as a lad of 13 years I was employed by one of the largest stock firms in the State. I have had experience of agriculture in all its varied phases, and I do not think I will be refuted in my statement that Western Australia lacks an adequate veterinary staff. That branch of agricultural science plays a big part in our stock-raising generally. In the course of his remarks, the Minister made reference to my statements regarding the Director of Agriculture. What I stated on that occasion were definitely my own opinions, but the

Minister endeavoured to suggest to members that I was playing second fiddle to Mr. Teasdale, the President of the Primary Producers' Association. That gentleman made his own statement regarding the Director of Agriculture.

Mr. Lambert: And you repeated it.

Mr. MANN: Members who are sitting on the Government side of the House have their own candid opinions regarding the position of affairs. Does the Minister think that the officers are able to do all they desire to secure progress in farming conditions generally? I bring this point home to members: Officers of the department have not the ear of the Minister. If an officer desires to interview him, it can be done only through the Director. In those circumstances, naturally the Director can do as he thinks fit. Members must realise that this State's most competent veterinary officer was Mr. Murray Jones, the former Chief Veterinary Officer. What happened to him? From various remarks I have heard, I think Mr. Murray Jones was either dismissed or was retired from his position because he was too strong a man for the Director of Agriculture. There is no man in the State who is more competent as a veterinary surgeon than Mr. Murray Jones. I sat in court and heard his appeal for compensation. What was the position? The present Director of Agriculture and the Public Service Commissioner crucified Mr. Murray Jones. I have no hesitation in saying that I have no faith in the Director. I do not think he is an administrator but, as I said previously, he is an excellent wheat man. There are very few men in Australia who can touch him on wheat matters, and I give him every credit for what he has done to increase the wheat yield of this State. I know perfectly well the feeling that has existed between the Council of Industrial and Scientific Research and the Department of Agriculture. Regarding the Minister's other statements, I desire to pay a tribute to Mr. Teasdale, who has held a high position in the financial life of the State, and is a man of first-class experience and capacity. Although he is the president of the P.P.A., he is not the class of man to put in the newspapers misstatements that would amount to blackmail. Mr. Teasdale is a man with the courage of his convictions and what he has to say he will say outright.

Mr. Coverley: That does not justify your statement that Mr. Sutton is not a good administrator. Where has he failed?

Mr. MANN: Take the whole of the Government departments to-day and you will find a system whereby the chief of the department is working in conjunction with his officers. But the Director of Agriculture does not seem to work in conjunction with his officers, who, apparently, are all tied down by him. There is no confidence between him and his officers. What is the result? The man has not the capabilities himself, and he has not the confidence of his officers. He has had a particularly wonderful run. The Minister himself, before he became Minister, was in the service of the Agricultural Department. He is the first Minister to hold academic qualification. Of all those who have had the administration of that department, Mr. Sutton seems to me to be the man capable of putting it over his Ministers pretty well. That is my candid opinion and I will not withdraw it. Apart from the present Minister with his special qualifications, I think that another man proved capable of controlling the department was the present Minister for Lands. On the Address-in-reply I stated that if the Minister could formulate his policy, it was the duty of the Government to—

The Minister for Agriculture: Tell me where I have missed.

Mr. MANN: I do not say you have missed at all. I offered you my congratulations in the first place, and they still stand. But I warned you in the first place that you had a big job to tackle.

Mr. Wansbrough: You do not mean to say you are an authority on that?

Mr. MANN: No, I leave all that to the hon. member who has just interjected, but I think I know sufficient about life generally to appreciate a man's ability. I do not condemn Mr. Sutton holus bolus. I say he is a competent wheat man; indeed I doubt whether there is in Australia another man more capable than he in the matter of wheatgrowing. But how many veterinary officers have we in the department? Yet in view of the value of our stock, veterinary work is the biggest thing Western Australia has to attend to. What happened when rinderpest made its appearance and we had no staff of veterinary surgeons? We are not very far from foreign countries and,

despite the quarantine laws, there is a strong possibility of the introduction of disease by aeroplane. Then before we know where we are there will be a spread of rinderpest which will wipe out all our stock.

The Minister for Justice: No fear!

Mr. MANN: Very well, but you must realise that with modern transport, particularly by aeroplane, these diseases can be brought in here without a moment's notice. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie made an objection to what I had to say. But what does he know about veterinary officers? We have but to realise the value of our stock and at once we see the necessity for a staff of competent veterinary officers. The Minister to-night has given me an opportunity, it is true, but I hope he appreciates the fact that I admire him as Minister for Agriculture because of his qualifications. He may still think that Mr. Sutton is a most competent administrator, but I have still my own views and I will support Mr. Teasdale in his remarks. He is a man who is just and fair and is held in the highest respect, and when he thought fit to criticise Mr. Sutton he was justified in doing so. I was sorry to hear the Minister to-night tackling Mr. Teasdale.

The Minister for Agriculture: I did not tackle him.

Mr. MANN: When I spoke on the Address-in-reply it was not with the intention of putting the boot into the man. I merely tried to draw a comparison between him and another. I hope the wool prices will remain firm, because the season has been a particularly bad one and much stock has died. The increased price may compensate for some of the losses. I was pleased to hear the Minister's remarks about the export lamb trade. I hope it will soon reach 100,000 lambs. Our export lamb trade is a credit to Western Australia. We have put up some of the best lambs to be received in England. This country lends itself to the breeding of a fine type of export lamb. I have seen many flocks in my district and I can say we are growing sheep to-day which, from a wool point of view, are equal to any in the Eastern States. Mr. McCallum, our chief wool expert, has played a prominent part in this State. He has urged men to improve their flocks and by personal touch with farmers themselves he has done immensely good work. I hope

my remarks to-night have not been too hard. The Minister has attacked me on my views, but I still stand by my views and my remarks. I see no reason why I should alter them. I hope the Minister will not think it is a very petty point of view. I have had no falling out with Mr. Sutton. I have never disagreed with him, but I am perfectly justified in my criticism of him. I give Mr. Sutton credit on some points, but on others I do not give him any credit at all.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 6th November, 1935.

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

QUESTION—TROLLEY BUS BODIES.

Hon. A. THOMSON (for Hon. L. B. Bolton) asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the cost of the body imported with one of the trolley buses? 2, What was the cost of the locally built bodies? 3, Is it correct that additional orders have been placed in England for trolley buses, including the bodies? 4, In view of the satisfactory bodies built at the Midland Junction Workshops, what is the reason for importing bodies? 5, If it is excessive cost, will the Government