

Committee Resumed

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question before the Chair is that the amendment of the member for Swan be agreed to.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. I. W. Manning.

House adjourned at 6.7 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 24th October, 1967

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ACTS (14): ASSENT

Messages from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Acts:—

1. Shipping and Pilotage Act.
2. Prevention of Pollution of Waters by Oil Act Amendment Act.
3. Bulk Handling Act.
4. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Act.
5. Taxi-cars (Co-ordination and Control) Act Amendment Act.
6. Education Act Amendment Act.
7. Dentists Act Amendment Act.
8. Clean Air Act Amendment Act.
9. Iron Ore (Nimngarra) Agreement Act.
10. Marketable Securities Transfer Act Amendment Act.

11. Iron Ore (Hanwright) Agreement Act.
12. Dog Act Amendment Act.
13. Legal Practitioners Act Amendment Act.
14. Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act Amendment Act.

QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE**TRANSPORT***Overwidth Trucks*

1. The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Mines:
 - (1) Will the Minister ascertain if the Commonwealth railways expect cartage contractors conveying overwidth loads from Parkeston to Port Hedland and other places in the north, to travel at night, this not being in conformity with the Traffic Act?
 - (2) As the trucks travelling at night are causing great danger to the travelling public, will the Minister arrange for strict supervision of these vehicles?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The Commonwealth railways would have no control of overwidth loads transported by road.
- (2) It is not the policy to permit overwidth loads to be transported on roads during the hours of darkness and action has already been taken to check this practice.

HOSPITALS*Charges: Increases in Last Five Years*

2. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Health:

With reference to the Royal Perth Hospital, and hospitals which are subsidised or under boards, or in direct or indirect control of the Medical and Public Health Departments, will the Minister indicate—

- (a) increases in medical and hospital charges and fees for each of the previous five years for—
 - (i) motor vehicle accident cases;
 - (ii) workers' compensation accident cases;
 - (iii) ordinary patients; and
- (b) what percentage increase is this on 1960 figures?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

(a) and (b) (i) Motor vehicle accident cases—

	Country and Metropolitan Non-teaching Hospitals	Major Metropolitan Teaching Hospitals
1960 Daily ascertained cost with a maximum per day of	\$10	\$10
From 1/4/61 to 31/7/63	\$10 per day	\$11 per day
From 1/8/63 to 30/11/65	\$12 per day	\$13 per day
From 1/12/65 to 31/12/66	\$13 per day	\$15 per day
From 1/1/1967 to date	\$14 per day	\$17.50 per day
Percentage increase 1967 over 1960 charge	40 per cent.	75 per cent.

(ii) Workers' compensation cases—

(I) Country and metropolitan non-teaching hospitals—

Since the 1st June, 1960, workers' compensation charges have been raised at the gross ward rate applicable to the ward occupied. These are outlined under (iii) below.

(II) Major metropolitan teaching hospitals—

From 1/6/60 to 31/10/63	\$6.80 per day
From 1/11/63 to 30/6/65	\$8.40 per day
From 1/7/65 to 31/10/66	\$9.00 per day
From 1/11/66 to date	\$13.50 per day
Percentage increase 1967 over 1960 charges	approximately 84 per cent.

(iii) Other patients—

(I) Country and metropolitan non-teaching hospitals—

Charges are based on the size of ward occupied as follows:—

	Single Bed per day	2-4 Bed per day	Other per day
From 1/6/60 to 31/10/63	\$8.00	\$6.80	\$5.00
From 1/11/63 to 30/6/65	\$10.80	\$8.40	\$6.00
From 1/7/65 to 31/10/66	\$11.50	\$9.00	\$7.00
From 1/11/66 to date	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$10.00
Percentage increase 1967 over 1960—	Single bed	125 per cent.	
	2-4 Bed	98 per cent.	
	Other	78 per cent.	

(II) Major metropolitan teaching hospitals—

	*Private	Intermediate	Other
From 1/6/60 to 31/10/63	\$8.00	\$6.80	\$5.00
From 1/11/63 to 30/6/65	\$10.80	\$8.40	\$6.00
From 1/7/65 to 31/10/66	\$11.50	\$9.00	\$7.00
From 1/11/66 to date	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$10.00

* Private patients general wards, Royal Perth Hospital, \$15.00 per day.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Opening: Blessing and Dedication

3. The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Will he ascertain if the Minister for Education is aware—

(a) that at the opening, last August, of a new State high school at Home Hill on the bank of the Burdekin River in Queensland, Ministers of the various religious denominations were present, by invitation of the headmaster and the parents' and citizens' association, to bless and dedicate this building; and

(b) that this was a unique occasion in the history of secular education in Australia?

(2) Will he ask the Minister for Education and his officers if they will examine an account of the

opening ceremony and of the form of prayer used, which I will make available to them, with a view to making the Christian blessing and dedication an important part of any opening of a State educational institution?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) (a) I have ascertained that the Minister for Education was not aware.

(b) Blessings and dedications of State school buildings by ministers of religion are not unique in Western Australia.

(2) If it is the wish of a community that a blessing and dedication ceremony should take place, the department would grant approval provided the various ministers of religion reach agreement on the form of prayer to be used.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES*North-West and Kimberley:
Takeover*

4. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

If any decision has been made regarding the taking over by the State Electricity Commission of power supplies in the north-west and Kimberley districts to reduce consumer charges, which towns are affected, and when might the changes be made?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The only takeover planned in these districts is that at Port Hedland in November. The purpose is to co-ordinate supplies in that area and charges will depend on costs.

LAND RELEASES*Salmon Gums and Grass
Patch Areas*

5. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

In the area of land extending approximately 30 miles west of—

- (a) Dowak, Salmon Gums, Red Lake, and Grass Patch, to be investigated by the Lands Department in 1967-68; and
- (b) Treslove and Grass Patch, which has been surveyed for release in 1967—
 - (i) how many acres are there in each of these areas;
 - (ii) how many farming blocks is it anticipated each will contain; and
 - (iii) can an approximate date be set for the release of this land for farming purposes in the area referred to in (a) and (b) above?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) Area to be investigated, 1967-68—

- (i) approximately 247,000 acres are to be investigated;
- (ii) an assessment of the number of farm units which will emerge from the subdivision will not be known until the field investigation and classification are completed;
- (iii) it is expected field work will commence during 1968 and release will depend on completion of soil classifications, road location, and surveys.

- (b) Area for release, 1967—

- (i) 75,000 acres approximately;
- (ii) estimated 22 locations;
- (iii) every endeavour is being made to release this land as soon as possible.

NICKEL MINING*Pension Scheme for Employees*

6. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

In order to assist materially in decentralisation, to maintain a permanent workforce and stable townships on the mining fields, and to enable employees to look forward to a reward on retirement, will the Government—

- (a) encourage nickel mining companies to institute a pension scheme for their employees; and
- (b) contribute financially in a similar manner as they do to the Coal Mine Workers' Pensions Fund?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) This is a matter for the industry and each individual company.
- (b) The suggestion is impracticable.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2)*Second Reading*

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [4.42 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

When introducing the Supply Bill on the 2nd August, last, I mentioned that the full details of proposed transactions on both the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the General Loan Fund would be available to members when the Estimates were presented to Parliament. This has since transpired, the Loan Estimates having been presented in another place on the 21st September, and the Revenue Estimates, together with the detailed financial statement for 1967-68, being presented to members on the 5th October, 1967.

Supply to provide continuity in the services of the State until the Estimates have been passed was granted to the extent of \$68,000,000 in August last, and this figure was made up as follows:—

	\$
Consolidated Revenue Fund	48,000,000
General Loan Fund	15,000,000
Advance to Treasurer	5,000,000

Before I place before members the details of the additional supply now being sought, it occurs to me that I should mention briefly some details of revenues and expenditures, which have been collected and incurred during the past three months.

Revenue collected in the three months to the 30th September of this year totalled \$56,420,000. This fell short of expenditure in the same period by \$634,000.

Expenditure incurred on services financed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund amounted to \$57,054,000 during the period. Of this total, an amount of \$13,356,000

represents payments authorised by appropriations under special Acts, and the balance of \$43,698,000 was expended under the authority granted by the Supply Act passed earlier in this session.

I would mention that the result for the first quarter of this financial year does not indicate any variation from the estimated deficit of \$724,000, which is provided in the Budget. It is quite normal for the deficit to accumulate in the early months of the year and to reduce later as certain items of revenue are brought to account.

As regards the General Loan Fund, I advise members that expenditure from this fund for the three months ended the 30th September totalled \$6,382,000, but this rate of spending will increase as the capital works programme gathers momentum.

The Bill now before members seeks further supply of \$54,000,000 which is required to carry on the services of the State until the Estimates have been passed. Of the amount now being sought, the sum of \$44,000,000 is to be issued and applied out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and the balance of \$10,000,000 from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund.

This Bill has been passed in another place and again I would say it has, as its sole purpose, the authorisation of the use of appropriate funds necessary to carry on the services of this State pending the passing of the Estimates and subsequent appropriations.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition).

MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

THE HON. E. M. HEENAN (Lower North) [4.45 p.m.]: This Bill proposes a further amendment to the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act which first became law in 1943. I think this will be the sixteenth amendment to the original Act.

It will be recalled that last year Parliament amended the Act in a way that created considerable controversy at the time. The main point of controversy related to the establishment of what was termed the Third Party Claims Tribunal, which was delegated with exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine all actions and proceedings brought against an owner or driver of a motor vehicle claiming damages in respect of death or bodily injury to any person caused by or arising out of the use of a motor vehicle.

It will be remembered, too, that there was considerable debate in this House and in another place; then the measure was referred to a conference of managers and

eventually passed. Since that time a prominent lawyer (Mr. Athol Gibson) with a great deal of experience with motor vehicle claims has been appointed chairman of the tribunal.

I have known Mr. Gibson as a practising solicitor ever since he was admitted, and I hold him in the highest regard. My remarks concerning his appointment are not meant to be of a personal nature. I mention in passing, however, that Mr. Gibson, in his practice, was mainly concerned with handling claims for the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust. I am sure that fact, as far as Mr. Gibson is concerned, will not derogate in any way from his fairness or integrity in his role as chairman.

I have the utmost confidence in the appointment that was made, but when I read of it I did feel a tinge of regret that the appointee was someone who had been so closely allied with the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust. However, I can appreciate that such appointments are difficult and I agree it would be very hard indeed to find someone to fill the position more ably or conscientiously than Mr. Gibson. The other two nominee members, I understand, have been appointed also.

The Minister has mentioned that rules have been drawn up and it would appear, therefore, that the tribunal should soon be in a position to commence exercising its exclusive jurisdiction. I express the view that when Parliament passed the measure last year many people probably thought the tribunal would have come into being before now.

Until now the position has been that the Supreme Court deals with all claims, and it will continue to deal with them until the tribunal is under way. The three members have been appointed for some months, and I should imagine a good deal of expense has been incurred in the establishment of the tribunal but, as I have pointed out, it is not yet functioning.

As regards the present Bill, it is designed to tidy up the Act as amended by the measure which was passed last year. The main purpose is to enable the tribunal to function efficiently within its exclusive jurisdiction and, therefore, I have no complaint with the general purpose of the measure. Although I was one who strongly opposed the appointment of the tribunal, I realise it is the duty of all concerned to assist it to function in an efficient and capable way. I believe this Bill will have the overall effect of doing just that.

There are just one or two aspects of the Bill that cause me—and, I might mention, others too—some concern. Before I refer to clause 3 of the measure, allow me to point out again that claims have always been dealt with by a single judge or, in some cases, by a magistrate. They have been handled the same as most other claims which come before the courts. Now

we are getting away from that system and have established a tribunal consisting of a chairman and two others, who will hear these claims.

I think clause 3 of the Bill bears looking at. The clause provides that either the three members can sit together, or the chairman and one other will form the tribunal. In my view, it would be most beneficial if the three members could deal with all claims. Of course, that will not be the case, for obvious reasons. The three members will not always be able to sit together when one is away on holidays, or one is sick. I can imagine a number of circumstances which could prevent the three members from sitting together.

When the chairman and one member are sitting as the tribunal, the chairman—who is the lawyer—has to decide questions of law and his decisions on this aspect are final. But where the chairman and one member are sitting, and they disagree on a question of fact, then the tribunal has to adjourn until it can be constituted by all three members. This situation could arise if the chairman thought that an injured party should get \$10,000 and the other member thought he should get only \$8,000.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: I presume there would be a rehearing.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I think there must be a rehearing. What good will it be for the third member to come in after all the evidence has been taken? I do not know. At least, it will be awkward; and there will be added costs and delay. We have passed the law and, of course, I must not be unduly critical of it. We had three members of a commission running our railways, but we had to scrap that system.

I hope the Minister will have another look at the situation because I can foresee difficulties. I have referred this matter to a very eminent lawyer—or barrister—who practises a lot in this field, and it has him concerned, too. We were told the idea of this tribunal was to save expense and to simplify procedures. I doubt whether that will happen.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Did your solicitor friend express any views on the question of rehearing?

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes. Let me illustrate a case. Suppose I am the chairman and Mr. Watson is the nominee member and we are sitting as the tribunal. I think someone should be awarded \$10,000 and Mr. Watson disagrees with me and thinks the figure should be only \$8,000. In that case we differ on a question of fact and we have to adjourn until the third member of the tribunal can come in and sit with us to decide the question.

Then there is the point dealt with in clause 7. I would like the Minister to have a look at this matter because it is

proposed that the chairman will be able to make rules to define the means by which particular facts may be proved and the mode in which evidence thereof may be given in any proceedings. That proposal is contained in proposed new paragraph (f).

We already have an Evidence Act, which we recently amended, and this Act contains all the ways and means by which evidence can be properly put forward. Yet by the proposal in the Bill we intend to give the chairman, apparently, the jurisdiction to make regulations outside the scope of the Evidence Act.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Perhaps that is where the presentation of evidence could be simplified.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: That is so. Then we give the chairman the power to make practice rules. I also consider that to be dangerous.

Overall the Minister gave us a complete explanation of the Bill and I must agree that most of the provisions are designed with a view to enabling the tribunal to have exclusive jurisdiction. Of course, that is what we appointed it for and we want to see that happen. The Bill also proposes that the chairman can deal with matters in chambers, which is only right and proper. There have been some doubts about claims relating to children and we want to tidy up this aspect to ensure that the tribunal has exclusive jurisdiction relating to them. I agree with those provisions of the Bill.

I intend to support the second reading but I will be interested to hear what the Minister has to say regarding the couple of points of criticism I have made. Perhaps the Minister may be good enough to delay the Committee stage.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

STOCK DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East) [5.5 p.m.]: This Bill is to amend the Stock Diseases Act, 1895-1966, and, although it is a small measure it is, nevertheless, a very important one. Section 6 of the Act is to be amended and this section enables the Governor to make regulations. The purpose of the Act is to provide for the better use of cattle in Western Australia and to enable us to detect and deal with animal diseases.

As the Minister said, the detection and eradication work done over a period of years has made for the better use of our cattle and has permitted us to declare disease free areas in relation to contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia. The

areas mentioned by the Minister as free areas are areas which are absolutely free of this disease, and have been free of it for some considerable time. As the Minister explained, there are also protected areas and infected areas and in other States of Australia these areas are legally defined. The amendment to section 6 will allow the department to deal with other animal diseases and I believe that Western Australia can feel proud of its record in the control and eradication of animal diseases.

From the little research that I have been able to make, it is interesting to note that contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, which condition is commonly known as "pleuro" in Australia, is often referred to in European countries as "lung plague of cattle." This infectious disease of cattle ranks with foot-and-mouth disease, and rinderpest, as one of the most serious animal plagues. It is caused by an aerobic organism—that is, an organism that lives in oxygen and light—and the method of infection is by inhalation, the disease entering the respiratory tract. Cattle have been successfully infected by this method in experiments carried out in Australia by Turner, who suggested the name of *borrelomyces peri-pneumoniae*, for this organism. The period of incubation is about 6½ weeks, which is certainly a long period for this type of organism.

Some investigators claim to have transmitted the disease experimentally to sheep, goats, guinea-pigs, and rabbits. Pleuro was introduced into Victoria in 1858. It was detected but allowed to escape and, within four years, had spread through Victoria and New South Wales to Queensland, the Northern Territory, and Western Australia. All States except Tasmania have suffered from the effect of pleuro but New Zealand—which is not a State of Australia, of course—has been free of this disease.

It has tended to diminish with closer settlement because control and eradication measures can be undertaken. Now Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia are free from the disease and there are only some very small pockets in Queensland, the Northern Territory, and Western Australia. The method of eradication, of course, is fairly drastic. It has been stamped out in other places by total slaughter, but with the cattle stations in Queensland, the Northern Territory, and Western Australia, being in most cases unfenced, this is very difficult because of mustering problems on these huge areas. The rounding up of the cattle is a problem in such places.

But what an economic waste total slaughter is, both to the country and to the producer. However, by slaughter, and where possible, vaccination and quarantine, the disease has been controlled and gradually eradicated; but it is only in the last few years that serious steps have been taken to bring this about, and it is

wonderful the results that have been achieved. Total slaughter, vaccination, quarantine, and restricted movement of cattle have all had their effect.

Under natural conditions the disease, which affects the respiratory tract, is spread through droplet infection. In the same way, when someone gets a cold the complaint is spread by means of droplet infection through breathing the germs into the air, or sneezing and spraying germs into the air. If some other person is unfortunate enough to breathe that air he, too, gets a cold. In the case of animals the organism of contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia enters through the respiratory tract by direct inhalation. Another interesting feature of this disease is that it is not transmissible to man.

The cattle and stock industries are absolutely vital to Australia, to our food production both for home and interstate consumption, to our export markets, and to our economy generally. Therefore, vigilance is essential. The possible easy movement of cattle, with safeguards, is also important, but there should be provision for the prohibition of movement where this is found necessary.

One must pay a tribute to veterinarians in all States, and to the vigilance of health inspectors in abattoirs and slaughterhouses, animal advisers, graziers, and, most important of all, research workers, for helping to arrest contagious bovine pleuro pneumonia.

It is interesting to read the latest report of the Commissioner of Public Health. In one year 125,836 cattle were slaughtered; but no carcasses or organs were condemned for pleuro-pneumonia. This report covered Robb Jetty, which handles certain cattle from the north-west, the Midland Junction Abattoir, the Kalgoorlie Abattoir, the Perth Meat Markets, the Fremantle Meat Markets, and certain country districts. Those country districts include Bunbury, Busselton, Collie, Capel, Dardanup, Donnybrook, Esperance, Geraldton, Harvey, Katanning, Mandurah, Manjimup, Merredin, Narrogin, Northam, Plantagenet, Upper Blackwood, Wagin and Waroona.

I think this is quite an achievement in view of the fact that we have so many dairy and beef cattle in the south western portion of the State. Of course, there are small pockets of pleuro-pneumonia in the Kimberley but the incidence of this disease has been drastically reduced because of the measures taken, and it will not be long before it will be completely eliminated through the use of vaccination.

Some members may not know this, but the cattle industry in Australia commenced 179 years ago. Governor Phillip, in the year 1788, imported six cows and two bulls, and since that time we have developed in Australia a beef-raising industry capable of taking first place in the beef exporting world.

In the very early days importations consisted almost exclusively of shorthorns and Durhams—although I am not familiar with the latter type. The industry was built up mainly from shorthorns. It has been a remarkable achievement, and is a tribute to this type of cattle in view of the varied conditions which exist in Australia.

Modern meat inspection is based on a knowledge of veterinary anatomy, physiology, pathology, bacteriology, and parasitology. That is why it is essential for any meat inspection service to be under the direct supervision and control of trained veterinarians, with men experienced in the meat industry working with them. The objects of meat inspection, in addition to directly protecting the consumer, include the detection of outbreaks of animal plagues. I say that our veterinarians, meat inspectors, and those connected with the operation of the abattoirs have contributed, in no mean extent, to the detection of diseases in animals. The diseases which they have been able to detect include swine fever, animal plague, anthrax, foot-and-mouth disease, and other diseases of flocks and herds.

As I said earlier, the history of meat and cattle inspection is a fascinating study, and great credit is due to our veterinary surgeons in the field. In passing I would like to say that in my research I came across the way in which butchers were controlled in Naples and Sicily in the year 1221. If a butcher or slaughterman did not conform with the regulations he was drastically dealt with. The punishment for a butcher or slaughterman who failed to observe the meat laws was a fine or corporal punishment for a first offence; cutting off of the offender's hand for a second offence; and hanging for a third offence—although I do not recommend those types of punishment in this State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Similar to the Wild West days!

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I would like to give the House some idea of the directions in which Australia was the first to adopt new practices in the meat industry. Australia did very well in this regard. In 1850 Harrison of Geelong, Victoria, built the world's first ice-making plant. This was a wonderful method of preserving meat, and it was a revolutionary method for those times. It turned out to be a great boost to the meat industry of the day.

Australia was also the first country in the world to establish freezing works. The first such works were established at Darling Harbour, New South Wales, by a person named Mort. This was a forerunner to refrigeration. The Argentine, the economy of which depends very much on the meat industry, was quick to take advantage of the method for freezing meat. In 1877 the first successful shipment of

both chilled and frozen meat was made from Buenos Aires to Rouen and Marseilles.

Coming back to Australia, in 1879, exactly 91 years after Governor Phillip landed six cows and two bulls, the S.S. *Strathleven* froze on board some 40 tons of Australian beef and mutton, and this consignment was landed successfully in England. Such small beginnings marked the commencement of the enormous international frozen and chilled meat trade. One of the repercussions of this trade was an insistence by the importing countries on high standards of meat inspections in exporting countries. For this reason veterinarians and meat inspectors were employed to ensure that high quality meat was exported; and in the course of their duties they detected various diseases. Eventually those diseases were eradicated.

When the frozen meat export trade commenced in the 1870s—as with the export of canned meat in the 1840s—the responsibility for inspection rested with the Government of the colonies. No record of inspection in Victoria was found before 1900; and in that year Victoria passed a Meat Supervision Act. The Commonwealth Government, in January, 1911, appointed veterinary officers under section 51 of the Constitution to supervise the inspection of meat in Queensland. Within the next few years this supervision was extended to cover the export meat trade in all States. In 1916 the Commonwealth Government went further, and set up its own inspection staff in the various States. By 1950 the service included between 400 and 500 lay inspectors under the supervision of a score or more of veterinarians.

Rudyard Kipling wrote the following lines:—

When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre,
He'd 'eard men sing by land an' sea;
An' what he thought 'e might require,
'E went an' took—the same as me.

He dropped a few alitches; I have done likewise and have taken my material from various authorities on this subject.

It is interesting to know that the Australian meat trade had such a wonderful commencement. Of course, later on it was taken over by the Argentine—particularly in respect of canned meat—and the United States of America. The U.S.A. is the biggest importer of tin which is used by the tinplate industry for the making of cans, yet it produces no tin itself. Australia is the country which sells most of the tin to the U.S.A. Australia has the tin and the meat, and it should be one of the leading producers of canned meat.

I would now like to refer to another aspect of the meat industry, although it might not come strictly within the terms of the Bill. The old method of preserving meat was by salting, and smoking and drying. It was accidentally discovered by a Frenchman, Appert, that meat could be

preserved by hermetically sealing it in containers. This method of preserving meat revolutionised the industry. It certainly made a difference to Australia, because with our numerous cattle herds we had been in a fix for many years, and all that we could do was to melt the meat down to tallow.

I conclude by paying a tribute to the C.S.I.R.O., and by quoting the following from the booklet, *Rural Research in CSIRO*, of June, 1965:—

Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia entered Victoria just over 100 years ago in a small shipment of cattle from England. In those days little was known about the nature of infectious diseases and no adequate defence barriers could have been raised. In the next 12 years "pleuro" spread rapidly northwards into New South Wales and Queensland and soon much of the eastern half of the Commonwealth was infected. But the disease did not invade the extreme north-west until 1928.

Cattlemen came to know this disease as a grim enemy likely to strike unexpectedly from time to time with devastating results. The worst aspect was not always the deaths from infection but the need to slaughter whole herds in order to stop further spread of the disease. This meant a crippling loss to the individual until the whole industry shared it through compensation funds. Industry funds were supplemented by a government grant in this first move towards unity in meeting a common foe.

A great deal more can be said about the wonderful work of the C.S.I.R.O. Through its efforts in the field and its methods of vaccination, and through the co-operation of the graziers and others concerned, the dreaded diseases of cattle have been brought to a halt. I anticipate that as a result of their work it will not be long before Australia is completely free of these diseases. I support the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.27 p.m.]: The Bill contains six amendments to the parent Act, and several of them are related to moves which were made previously to amend the Act. For example, the parent Act provides for the sale of Crown land by public

auction. Up to the present, where town or suburban lots were passed in at sales by public auction then at any time within a period of six months after such sales it was possible to purchase the blocks by private treaty at the upset price placed upon them by the Lands Department.

From the experience of the department it has been found that the period of six months is not sufficient to give people an opportunity to take up the particular land that has been submitted for auction and has been passed in; because if there are inquiries for the land at the end of that period it is necessary to gazette the details of the sale and to go through the necessary procedure for submitting it to public auction again. The particular provision in the Bill seeks to extend this period of six months to 12 months, to avoid the further submission of the land for sale at auction.

A further clause in the Bill reinstates certain rights which were contained in the parent Act some time ago. It concerns the compensation for dwelling homes on pastoral leases or selected conditional purchase leases. When the Act was amended in 1963 the provision allowing the valuation of dwelling houses to be classed as a *bona fide* improvement for the purpose of increasing the carrying capacity or improving the pastoral capabilities of the land, was deleted. I understand that the pastoralists' association has interested itself in this particular situation and it is mainly as a result of its efforts that the amendment has been submitted to the House.

A further provision in the Bill deals with the widening of the term "discharged member of the forces." The passing of this Bill will mean that members of the Merchant Service and personnel who have served in zones of war since World War II—and members of the Merchant Service who served during that war—will be eligible for rental concessions on conditional purchase land. This will be of obvious benefit to those affected, and also is a recognition—perhaps overdue—of the meritorious service of the members of the Merchant Service who, over the years, served side by side with the members of the armed forces. I believe that in future we might widen this term even further to include all those who served in the forward areas on road and aerodrome construction, etc., and who lived under hazardous and difficult conditions whilst performing essential and urgent work in the defence of their country.

The next clause—clause 6—deals with ring-barking and the payment for this service in earlier days. At that time I believe the rate of payment was 2s. 6d. an acre. Of course, the bulldozer has now moved in and man could not, under any circumstances, compete with it at such a price; neither, I am afraid, would any landowner consider the very slow method

of human endeavour as against the effectiveness and very great speed of modern machinery available today for clearing. Therefore that remnant of the past disappears with the deletion of the term under this clause.

I cannot obtain a clear interpretation of what is required under the amendments in clause 7. Under section 143, the Minister has power to approve transfers upon the sale of conditional purchase land; and the amendment—very minor in itself—seems to alter the present situation very little. The Minister remarked as follows:—

The first of the amendments to section 143 (2a) (a), arises from the necessity to maintain jurisdiction where a lessee or licensee intends to sell land held under the provision of the Land Act, 1933-65.

He then went on to say—

While adequate provision exists for the Minister to authorise the actual sale, assignment, or disposal of such land, it also becomes necessary to make provision that the Minister must approve where the lessee or licensee desires to offer his lease or license for sale and wishes to invite inquiries from prospective purchasers with the ultimate objective of sale.

I cannot understand the purpose behind those two paragraphs. The fact that the purchaser is mentioned seems to me to imply that some submission is required by the purchaser to the Minister; whereas I understand the section to mean that the seller must satisfy the Minister that he has carried out all the conditions applicable to the land and as written into his lease. The purchaser would be able to purchase from a seller only upon the approval of the Minister who would make a decision after having investigated the situation to ascertain whether or not the seller had fulfilled his obligations under the lease up to the time he desired to sell.

I think the explanation is ambiguous when we consider the principle which has been adopted under this section up to now. If the purpose of the amendment is to stop trafficking in these leases—and it well might be—that would be a reasonable implication. However, I fail to see how the two amendments will alter the situation to any material degree, for they merely delete the word “or” in one portion and add it to another. Therefore I would be interested if the Minister could clarify the point.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: From just a quick look at it I would say that one is agreeing to sell and the other is offering to sell; but I will get an explanation for you.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Yes, but the Minister has the overriding say on whether a person can offer or agree to sell.

I fail to see how the purchaser has any obligation at all except to honour the new agreement. However, the point has been noted by the Minister so I will not discuss it further.

The only other amendment is to section 143 and this changes the word “expended” in two places to the word “effected.” This, we are told, will provide for a percentage of area development instead of a monetary value being applied in regard to the improvements of a conditional purchase lease. There would be merit in this amendment, because from my experience of conditional purchase leases, and the very lenient terms they offer by way of the monetary value of development, I would say that very little need be done under the Act at the moment to bring the development within the provisions of this section. However, if a percentage of development must be carried out, this could have a very different effect upon the amount of money being spent and would be a far better yardstick, having regard for the drop in money values and the fact that land today under conditional purchase lease must be developed, because that is the purpose for which it is leased.

Those are my comments on the Bill, which is not a very big one. However, it has been sufficient to occupy the mind of the Government which now sees fit to make these amendments in order that the provisions of the Act will be applied more efficiently.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. V. J. Ferry.

House adjourned at 5.43 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 24th October, 1967

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (5): ON NOTICE

1. *This question was postponed.*

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

*Foreman of Construction Section:
Appointment*

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Electricity:

Adverting to subquestion (5) of question 1 on the notice paper of the 18th instant—

- (a) Will he please answer the question and give reasons for no appointment having been made from the 18 applications.