

Mr. PERKINS: They apparently speak one way and vote another, which is an even more extraordinary position.

Mr. Lawrence: We do not get the whip around us, like you chaps.

Hon. D. Brand: You do not get the whip around you!

Mr. PERKINS: We should realise that members in another place have at least agreed to certain amendments which, in the opinion of all members, will give some added protection to tenants beyond what applied originally. And yet we have members on the Government side of the House saying they are prepared to lose the Bill altogether and put the position back to where it was, unless the Minister intends to call another special session of Parliament in order to deal with the position. I will be interested to hear what members on the Government side really want. It is very difficult for members on this side of the House to know what is the policy of members of the Labour Party on this question.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING (in reply): I have listened with interest to what has been said, particularly by members on this side of the House and, by and large, I agree with the viewpoints they have expressed. From a political point of view, it would probably serve the purpose of the Government far better if at this stage the Bill went overboard because then there would be in the minds of the people no doubt as to who was responsible for what appears to be inevitable, but by our going into conference those who are not politically as well informed as they might be may perhaps be inclined to attribute some of the responsibility to those participating in the conference proceedings as representatives of this House.

As I have emphasised throughout the debate, the importance of the matters at issue transcends political considerations. The welfare of goodness knows what numbers of men, women and children, is at stake and, while I am pessimistic of any good coming from this conference, I believe that while there is still a chance of our getting anything, however small, from the ship-wreck, in the interests of those whom we are endeavouring to protect we have no alternative but to go forward to this final stage of procedure allowed by our Standing Orders.

Hon. D. Brand: Assuming that everything you have said is correct!

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: Yes; that is quite so, but I maintain that the Government, with its departmental advisers, is in a far better position to assess the situation than are persons viewing it on their own account, and particularly those who, as has already been pointed out, are far removed from close association and contact with the great majority of those

who are, or will be, confronted with a crisis that all informed people are of the opinion will develop.

I repeat that however much we disagree on principle with this procedure of six representatives of Parliament secluding themselves and taking part in a discussion to which no one is allowed to listen and of which no record is taken, and where one individual is able completely to negate the will of the other five managers, there is no other course open to us. We are in a cleft stick and there is no alternative but for the Government to do all it can in the hope that something, however small, may be gained to alleviate or postpone for a period the condition which we are certain is bound to develop, until by the erection of accommodation the unhappy lot of those affected can be eased. For that reason and without a great deal of enthusiasm I ask the House to agree to the motion.

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

Sitting suspended from 10.55 to 11.10 p.m.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and had appointed Hon. H. K. Watson, Hon. L. C. Diver and the Chief Secretary as managers for the Council, the conference to take place in the Chief Secretary's room at 10 a.m. on Thursday, the 15th April.

Sitting suspended from 11.11 p.m. to 4.35 p.m. (Thursday).

THURSDAY, 15th APRIL, 1954.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Education, as to metal work training for Armadale High School boys	226
Railways, as to signalling outfit, Narrogin Traffic, as to accidents and effect of fatigue and deficient eyesight	226
Housing, as to flats at Floreat Park	226
Abattoirs, as to new system of handling meat, etc.	226
Address-in-reply, fourth day, conclusion	227
Speaker on Address— Mr. Manning	227
Bill : Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act Amendment, conference managers' report, Bill dropped	227
Adjournment, special	228

The SPEAKER resumed the Chair at 4.35 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

As to Metal Work Training for Armadale High School Boys.

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware that the undertaking given by him in reply to a question on the 11th December, to have boys from the Armadale High School given metal training in Perth, has not been fulfilled?

(2) Will he state the reason?

(3) When is it expected that the undertaking will be honoured?

(4) Where will the metal training take place?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The establishment of the class was delayed pending the return from long service leave of the only metal work teacher available.

(3) At the beginning of the second term at the latest.

(4) At Perth Modern School.

RAILWAYS.

As to Signalling Outfit, Narrogin.

Hon. V. DONEY asked the Minister for Railways:

As to the electrification of the signalling outfit in the Narrogin railway yards—

(1) What is the anticipated cost of this project?

(2) (a) What is the approximate value of such unused material as is still lying in the yards; and

(b) is such material suffering substantial deterioration on account of the weather?

(3) What is the cost of the labour and material still outstanding?

The MINISTER replied:

The information asked for is not readily available and will take some time to prepare. This information will, however, be ascertained and made available to the hon. member as early as possible.

TRAFFIC.

As to Accidents and Effect of Fatigue and Deficient Eyesight.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Police:

In relation to traffic accidents occurring in this State—

(1) Has any study been made of the effect of fatigue upon the safety factor of driving?

(2) Are any figures available to indicate whether deficient eyesight is a contributory factor in accidents?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No, except that this matter has received consideration by the Traffic Advisory Committee, and it was decided, after discussion, that as there is provision in the State Transport Co-ordination Act (Section 48) in regard to this, in which drivers of vehicles licensed by the Transport Board are only allowed to do 5½ hours continuous driving, or not more than 11 hours in every 24 no further action would be taken by the committee.

(2) No.

HOUSING.

As to Flats at Floreat Park.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) In view of the Town Planning Commissioner's condemnatory report on the proposal to erect 12 flats on lot 213, Cambridge Street, Floreat Park, and the uncertainty which appears to exist regarding the legality of the permit issued by the Perth City Council, could he intervene at this stage to prevent any further work proceeding on the site?

(2) If the answer is in the negative, will he advise the reason?

(3) As he has power to veto a decision by a local authority that has refused to issue a permit and has no such power where a permit has been issued, will he take steps to amend the appropriate Act or Acts to give him such power, and thereby ensure that any future grotesque propositions like the Floreat Park flats could be prevented when such is necessary in the public interest?

The MINISTER for RAILWAYS replied:

(1) No.

(2) The Minister has no statutory power to intervene.

(3) Consideration will be given to this proposal.

ABATTOIRS.

As to New System of Handling Meat, etc.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Has the method of handling meat at the Government abattoirs been changed over to the new system. If not, when is it anticipated the change will be completed?

(2) When will the employees' canteen be opened for business?

(3) Why has the canteen been closed for approximately three years?

(4) Will the Abattoirs Board or a committee of employees conduct the canteen activities?

(5) Have the employees been consulted on the nature of canteen services required?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. It is anticipated that the change will be completed in May.

(2) It is anticipated that the canteen will be open for business at the same time as the change over to operational control takes place.

(3) The canteen has not been completed to the stage that would permit its use and demand for its use has not yet arisen.

(4) The Abattoirs Board has invited the Meat Industry Employees Union to appoint a committee of employees to conduct the canteen activities. The board is awaiting a decision from the union as to its wishes in this matter.

(5) Not as a whole. It was ascertained from inquiries conducted over a wide field of individual employees that only light snack lunches would be required and accordingly only facilities for such have been provided.

BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Conference Managers' Report—Bill Dropped.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I have to report that the managers appointed by the Council met the managers appointed by the Assembly and failed to arrive at an agreement. I move—

That the report be adopted.

In so doing, I express the disappointment of the Government at the result of the conference and can assure members of this Chamber that the outcome was not due to any lack of endeavour on the part of the Legislative Assembly managers. It is my fervent hope, and the hope of the Government, that the situation after the 30th April will not be as serious as the Government fears it will be. The position now is that the Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act, as amended last December, will be the law until the 31st December of this year.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It seems to me that we were correct last evening when we prophesied that it would be a waste of time to hold a conference on this Bill, and I trust that in future we shall not again waste the time of the House by going into conference with another place. When an important Bill is passing through this House, the Minister should make a statement that, if it is not agreed to by another place, this House will not be a party to a conference. Year after year I have been objecting to this method of settling differences between the two Houses, but no notice has been taken of my protests. The experience on this occasion should be quite enough to lead members to resolve that no more of these futile conferences shall be held, and I trust that some action will be taken to that end.

Mr. WILD: I should like to say for the information of the member for Fremantle that on this occasion, as at previous conferences, the managers for the two Houses had their different views. I have no intention of disclosing what took place within the four walls of the conference room, but I think the Minister stated the position quite clearly. The angle that the Minister tried to create did not eventuate on this occasion, and while the managers were unable to agree, the position was not as some members last evening envisaged it would be.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It was exactly as I said.

Question put and passed.

Bill dropped.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MANNING (Harvey) [4.45]: I wish to take this opportunity to bring before the notice of the House some of the problems affecting my electorate. The first of these is the need for raising the wall of the Wellington dam and increasing the storage capacity. Each season that passes emphasises the urgency for carrying out this work, as quite a lot hinges on it.

Sales of milk during the recent summer reached an all-time record. Approximately 33,000 gallons are now required daily and this quantity is steadily increasing. It is expected that a further 2,000 gallons will be needed daily during the next year. By raising the wall of the Wellington dam, there is an opportunity to step up greatly the production of dairy produce. In view of our long dry summer when production declines and consumption increases, the benefit of irrigation in assisting to augment the milk supply during the hot months cannot be too strongly stressed.

The whole matter revolves around the possibility of providing money for carrying out the major project. I understand from the Minister that the raising of the weir and the extension of the irrigation works would involve an outlay of £1,000,000, but I point out that the whole of the work would not be carried out in any one financial year. Therefore I consider that the Government would be well advised to make a start with the project as soon as possible and provide the finance as required year by year.

As the type of agriculture tends to change from dry land farming to irrigated areas, out-of-season crops such as potatoes may be grown under irrigation when such production would not be attempted on dry land. As a general guide when dealing with dairy produce, it is thought that the increased milk production would be 250 gallons per acre on an irrigation area compared with the yield prior

to irrigating. It is expected that with the proposed raising of the Wellington weir, dairy production will be greatly increased. An area of 30,000 acres is now served by this dam and all of it is irrigable. The area actually watered is 8,000 acres. By increasing the storage, the water so conserved would be sufficient for as much land again as there is in the Boyanup-Capel districts.

The other matter to which I wish to refer is the shortage of accommodation at the Harvey hospital. Yesterday I asked the Minister for Health a series of questions and the answers I received were most disappointing, to say the least. The nurses quarters are overcrowded and entirely inadequate. The building was inspected by the member for Subiaco when she was Minister for Health and has been inspected by the present Minister, and the facts and figures are known to him. Plans for a new building were drawn up and agreed to three years ago, but no move whatever has been made to improve the conditions.

Now the Minister says that the nurses should be encouraged to live away from the hospital premises, but nurses are not so easy to get or so well paid that they can be encouraged to board at the local hotel. The point I wish to make is that there seems to be a serious lack of funds being made available to the Health Department and that additional money is needed in many directions.

The Minister for Health: I could do with £5,000,000 to meet needs.

Mr. MANNING: The hospital itself is in urgent need of extensions, such as a maternity wing or a children's wing, but preferably a maternity wing, because that would permit of the existing building being used for general wards. The Minister, in answer to my questions, stated that although the Harvey hospital was overcrowded, conditions there were not as bad as they were at several other places. However, it is very serious indeed for the nurses and patients, and the necessary facilities should be provided as soon as possible. The impression I gained from the Minister's replies to my questions was that the department is starved for money. I hope that when loan moneys are being allotted for major works in future, the Treasurer will give greater consideration to the requirements of the Health Department.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE DEPUTY PREMIER (Hon. J. T. Tonkin—Melville): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to a date to be fixed by Mr. Speaker.
Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.50 p.m.