

Hon. G. Fraser: If they can do it in the country districts, why not in the metropolitan area?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The multitude of affidavits are made in populous centres like Perth, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, Northam, York, etc., where there are practising solicitors. In all those places are to be found men enrolled by the courts as commissioners for taking affidavits. When affidavits taken by them come before the courts, they can be verified as to the signatures of the commissioners. If the door were opened to all justices of the peace to take affidavits—that is a very bad provision in the Federal Act—there would be no definite record of signatures. Where has anyone fac-similes of the signatures of all the justices of the peace in the State? Accordingly, how is the signature of a justice of the peace to be verified before the courts? Sometimes affidavits are of the greatest importance. We shall be wrongly advised if we open the door too wide. We may open it to the perpetration of some fraud. The courts should exercise a wise determination in regard to these matters. I am seeking to preserve as far as possible by the Bill a safeguard, not for the purpose of helping the profession but of helping the public. That is the difference. The Bill has not been introduced from any such unworthy motive as has been suggested.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That was only banter.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I will take it as banter. The Bill has been introduced with a worthy object—to help the public in remote places, to assist them in their difficulties, and to save what I can only regard as needless expense. I hope the House will agree to the second reading. In order to meet Mr. Lovekin's wishes I will postpone the Committee stage until Tuesday next.

Hon. A. Lovekin: No. Go on now. I have an amendment ready.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Meantime I wish to consider the matter Mr. Lovekin has brought up. He has only mentioned it to me this evening. In the circumstances I would rather defer the consideration of the Bill in Committee.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I propose to insert the Federal section.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I shall take time to consider that matter; I have not had

the opportunity of doing so yet. In the meantime I hope the second reading will be carried.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 22nd October, 1930.*

	PAGE
Questions: Traffic Act, licenses ... ..	1217
Mining, workmen's inspector ... ..	1218
Governor of the State ... ..	1218
Uniforms, manufacturing contract ... ..	1218
State Brickworks ... ..	1218
"Betting tickets," revenue ... ..	1218
Kangaroo skins, royalty ... ..	1218
Motion: Government business, precedence ... ..	1218
Bills: Land Tax and Income Tax, 3a. ... ..	1219
Parliamentary Allowances Amendment, 3a. ... ..	1219
Egg Marketing, 2R., defeated ... ..	1219
Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment, returned ... ..	1233
Annual Estimates: Votes and Items discussed ... ..	1233
Department of Mines ... ..	1233
Council of Industrial Development ... ..	1257
State Labour Bureau ... ..	1257
Police ... ..	1257

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

### QUESTION—TRAFFIC ACT, LICENSES.

Mr. H. W. MANN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the number of the following vehicles licensed at the 30th June, 1930: (a) Commercial motor vehicles, including motor vehicles licensed for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward; (b) other motor vehicles; (c) horse-drawn vehicles; (d) all other vehicles? 2, (a) What was the revenue received from each of the foregoing classes of vehicles during the last financial year, and (b) how was that revenue disbursed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The information desired has been laid on the Table of the House.

### QUESTION—MINING, WORKMEN'S INSPECTOR.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is it a fact that the workmen's inspector situated at Meekatharra and elected to inspect the mines at Wiluna and Meekatharra was appointed only for 12 months in lieu of the usual term of two years? 2, If so, will he give the reason or reasons for the alteration in the duration of the appointment?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes 2, Consideration is to be given to the whole question of workmen's inspectors of mines during this period.

### QUESTION—GOVERNOR OF THE STATE.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the report in the daily newspapers of a telegram from London which states: "Tasmania's decision to ask the Dominion Office to defer the appointment of a successor to Sir James O'Grady and to carry on with a Lieutenant Governor has not caused surprise here"? 2, If so, is it his intention to follow this practical method of economy?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, All possible economies are being considered.

### QUESTION—UNIFORMS, MANUFACTURING CONTRACT.

Mr. RAPHAEL asked the Premier: 1, Which firm has the contract for the manufacture of Government uniforms? 2, Is it a fact that the firm has recently been fined for late delivery of the uniforms? 3, Is the Minister aware that this firm has been working part time during recent months? 4, If so, will he have inquiries made to ascertain why the firm was working part time, and why it was late with the delivery of Government contracts? 5, What action is it proposed to take if this is found to be true? 6, Is the managing director of the firm also chairman of the Chamber of Commerce?

The PREMIER replied: 1, M. Rosen and National Clothing Manufacturing Co. 2, No, but both firms have paid damages under the terms of their contracts. 3, No. 4, Answered by 3. 5, None. 6, Yes—of one of them.

### QUESTION—STATE BRICKWORKS.

Mr. ANGELO (for Mr. McLarty) asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the date of the temporary closing of the State Brickworks at Byford? 2, What was the number of bricks stacked when the works were closed? 3, What is the number of bricks at present stacked at Byford? 4, Does the sale of bricks from the date of the temporary closing of the works give any indication as to when the works are likely to be reopened?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 19th September, 1930. 2, Bricks stacked in the yard, 1,025,316; bricks in the kiln, 543,386. 3, In the stack, 919,236; saleable bricks in the kiln, 421,700. 4, No.

### QUESTION—"BETTING TICKETS," REVENUE.

Mr. H. W. MANN asked the Premier: What amount was received by the Treasury for the year ended 30th June last for the sale of betting tickets, at one-halfpenny and twopence?

The PREMIER replied: At  $\frac{1}{2}$ d., £1,657 5s. 10d.; at 2d., £4,029 3s. 4d.

### QUESTION—KANGAROO SKINS, ROYALTY.

Mr. MARSHALL (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary: Has anything been done to give effect to the motion that was carried in this Chamber two weeks ago with regard to the abolition of the royalty on kangaroo skins?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Nothing has been done by the Fisheries Department.

Mr. Marshall: I was speaking of kangaroos.

### MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.38]: I move—

That on and after Wednesday, the 29th October, Government business take precedence of all motions and orders of the day on Wednesdays as well as all other days.

This is the usual motion moved at this time of year. I may add that private members' business will receive consideration, as has always been the case.

**HON. P. COLLIER** (Boulder) [4.39]: The motion is not quite the usual one. In the past we have had every Wednesday at the beginning of the session set aside for private members' business, and this has lasted for a couple of months. It has then been reduced to every alternate Wednesday.

The Premier: Not for a long time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has been the practice. This motion cuts out private members' business altogether.

The Premier: We always have made room for private members' business.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I shall be quite satisfied if the Premier will give an undertaking that, not only private members' business now on the notice paper, but anything which may come forward between now and the end of the session, the House will have an opportunity to discuss.

The Premier: I readily give that assurance.

Question put and passed.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Land Tax and Income Tax.

2, Parliamentary Allowances Amendment.  
Transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—EGG MARKETING.

*Second Reading.—Defeated.*

Debate resumed from the 15th October.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [4.43]: I feel impelled to make a few remarks in opposition to the Bill, seeing that in the past I have opposed a measure which was more or less a twin to this one, namely that which dealt with the dried fruits industry. The latter measure was originally introduced by the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) who was then Minister for Agriculture. When doing so, he offered his humble apologies.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Humble!

Mr. Sampson: The Act has thoroughly justified itself.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The humility was made apparent to me. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), however, very strongly objected to the member for Mt. Magnet apologising for introducing the Bill, because, he said, "This is a fine specimen of socialistic legislation." He went on to say, "As the then Minister for Agriculture was a member of a socialistic Government, it was wrong for him to apologise for introducing a piece of socialistic legislation." I do not think any other member of the House agreed with the member for Guildford-Midland that the dried fruits measure was of a socialistic character. Those who thought about it and cared to put a label upon it would have said it was a particularly interesting piece of syndicalistic legislation, certainly not socialistic.

Mr. Sampson: And strongly flavoured with commonsense.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That may or may not be so. I doubt very much whether many members agreed with the member for Guildford-Midland when he said that the previous Government was a socialistic Government, in spite of the red objective of the A.L.P. Now we come to this new favourite of the hon. member. I cannot help remembering the times in this House when he fulminated, or railed against combinations for the fixing of prices. He told the House that their continuance was inimical to the good of the public, and should be dealt with whenever possible. In fact, he supported the former Government in introducing a piece of legislation which was designed to break up price-fixing combinations. Now we have the hon. member bringing before the House a measure that is specially designed to compel a certain section of the community to join in a price-fixing combination to put up prices as against the consumer.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I say, yes. I call upon every member of the House who is opposed to price-fixing combinations and who desires to keep the cost of living down, to join with me in defeating the Bill, particularly at this critical time in the his-

tory of the State, when we desire strongly to see the cost of living as low as possible. When the Bill was first mooted, as the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) told the House, overtures were made to the Government and to individual members of the Ministry to introduce the measure. The first complaint was that the local egg-producer was finding it almost impossible to carry on against South Australian competition. It was said that the South Australians were putting eggs on our market and cutting the local producers out. One naturally asked why South Australians could produce eggs cheaper than West Australians did, and the answer made to me was that in South Australia eggs were produced as a side line on the farm, whereas in Western Australia they were produced on poultry farms. The obvious answer to that reply, if it could be deemed worthy of an answer, was that if it were cheaper to produce eggs on a farm as a side line, it was absurd to produce them on a poultry farm. Surely no one would imagine it was cheaper to produce an article in small quantities, than to produce the same article in large quantities under a system of scientific organisation. During the course of the debate on the Bill, it has gradually leaked out that this measure is merely a link in the chain that is to embrace the whole of Australia. We have gleaned the information that the ambition of the father of the Bill is to get similar measures passed in the other States of Australia, and thus they will be able entirely to control the Australian egg market.

Mr. Sampson: For the export of eggs.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, to control the Australian market. The great objection I have to price-fixing combinations is that the price fixed has to be high enough to enable the least efficient in an industry to earn a living. It prevents the natural operation of events that tend to eliminate the dud. That is the scheme that the member for Guildford-Midland has fathered in this House. It will enable the least efficient of producers of eggs in Western Australia, when the chain is complete, to make a living, however small, lazy and inefficient he may be. It would be bad enough if the hon. member sought to embrace merely eggs for consumption in Western Australia, but we have been told by the member for Guild-

ford-Midland that there are the rosiest prospects for an extended export trade, that we have more than reached production sufficient to supply local needs, and that we already have a large quantity of eggs available for export, a quantity that is likely to be larger each year. This scheme has been based on a proposal that losses made on the export trade are to be added to the price charged to local consumers. That means that the bigger the export trade, the greater will be the aggregate losses and, consequently, the bigger the price that will have to be paid by the local consumer. The end to that will be only when the limit is reached, which will be attained when eggs are so high in price that the richest people alone will be able to afford to eat them. I have received a letter dealing with this subject that I propose to read to hon. members.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Is that from Mr. Shaw?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes, and I will ask the House to bear with me while I read portion of the letter. I cannot vouch for the figures quoted by the writer, but I know Mr. Shaw to be a man whose word is reliable and whose knowledge of business is good. Most decidedly the arguments he uses are such as should command respect. He says—

Apart from the world-wide situation to-day, the trouble with the industry is the lack of application of science to breeding, culling and feeding, and until the poultry farmer applies scientific knowledge to his production, all the compulsory pools in the world will not improve the outlook. The first question one asks to-day is, "What does it cost to produce one dozen eggs?" And the answer will vary from 6d. to over 1s. The wide range gives one food for thought. If one can produce at 6d. per dozen during this season (glut), why does it cost another 1s. per dozen? I shall give you the answer by comparing my neighbour and myself. He believes that an Act will overcome all difficulties. I believe the Act will only start trouble and penalise the consumer and men like myself who can produce eggs at 6d. per dozen for feed. My cost is based on what it costs in feed to produce the dozen eggs. Other factors such as outlay, marketing, etc., I deal with later. My neighbour has 650 head; I had 450 head a fortnight ago. My neighbour gets 330 eggs a day; I get 310. He feeds a ration of six kerosene tins of pollard and bran, bought at £7 12s. 6d. per ton; I feed three kerosene tins of wheat-meal, bought at £7 10s. per ton. He does not cull out unprofitable breeders or layers; I do. He will buy breeding cockerels from novice growers at 7s. 6d. each; I pay £4 for one bird from an expert and single test the

progeny. He will export only about 40 per cent. of eggs to England (an advance of 9d. per dozen is given); I send 90 per cent. away. He puts his 60 per cent. on the market at 8d. per dozen; I put 10 per cent. on the market at 8d. Finally, he expects the basic wage for looking after 650 head, and I do not, because unless one has 1,500 head, one is either loading on the job or mismanagement does not allow him to handle more. The above is an example of the industry to-day. Very few have farms of over 1,000 head, yet all expect £5 per week irrespective of how many fowls are kept. Very few cull out "wasters," yet all want a Bill so that the public will have to pay to keep those wasters profitable. My neighbour wants an Act so that the price obtained will allow him to keep 200 duds at the expense of the consumer. At 9d. per dozen there is nothing in poultry farming but there are still tucker and feed bills—more than any other primary industry to-day. At 9d. (the price ruling when the agitation was raised) one's capital is not being drawn on to pay for feed etc., if one has fowls worthy of a poultry farm. Ask Mr. Johnson—

I presume he means the member for Guildford-Midland.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I should say so. As a matter of fact, he helped me with this Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He is entirely opposed to it now. If Mr. Shaw helped the hon. member with his Bill, I take it that he regarded Mr. Shaw as a man possessing knowledge of the subject and knowing what he was talking about, and that the information he gave was well worth listening to.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I will explain all about it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: At any rate, Mr. Shaw continues—

Ask Mr. Johnson what is the price suggested that should be obtained by producers in the market and he will most likely say 1s. or more, and all because those agitating for this Act are men who in the past have realised that anything with a feather was profitable owing to the high prices obtained for eggs. Ask for the average holding by poultry farmers who are agitating, and if the figure reaches up to 500 fowls, I will be astounded, and 500 fowls can be cared for in about three hours per day. Yet they want £5 per week for that labour. The main argument of Mr. Johnson and his friends is to compel export. The only difference between an egg for export and one for local consumption is the use of a stamp: "Australia." Yet so many poultry farmers are too lazy to stamp for export that eggs glut the market. Well, let them suffer. Why compel them to work, and make the consumer pay for it? For the industry this period is the best that could have happened. It will make the producer realise

the necessity for applying science and brains to his livelihood. Pass the Bill, and up goes the price so that the 200 fowls mentioned before will be made profitable.

That refers to the 200 duds, I presume. Then he proceeds—

Kill the Bill and those 200 fowls will have to be killed also, with the result that there will be fewer eggs during the glut period, because any old feather will lay during August and September and they are duds in October and onwards.

Mr. Panton: Well that would mean cheap poultry.

Hon. P. Collier: Whether this man knows anything about eggs or not, I do not know, but he can write a good letter.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is so. He proceeds—

By getting rid of the duds, one evens out egg production over the year, for the dud is a "sprinter" who gets rid of all her possible eggs (very few really) during August and September and after that she is a passenger, whereas the "stayer" lays well on into the winter. So, eliminate the dud, and you lessen production during August and September, but you do not interfere with production during other periods. Hence the "sprinter" causes a surplus early and unfortunately there are so many sprinters to-day that after January we are short of eggs (new laid). If we had more "stayers" we would not have such a terrible glut in August and September, and such a shortage from January onwards.

I think hon. members will appreciate that letter, as I do.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I think the writer would have made a better journalist than a poultry farmer.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Perhaps so, but that does not matter. What does matter is that if a man utters arguments that are sound, they should be treated accordingly.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: He certainly knows both sides of the business.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He has presented one side in such a reasonable way as to be worthy of the serious consideration of hon. members. It should make them hesitate for a long time before consenting to pass a piece of legislation such as that now under discussion. The member for Guildford-Midland says that the Bill represents a specimen of socialistic legislation; I say it represents rank syndicalism. If we agreed to such a measure, it will mean an end to individualism. The measure represents a

most amazingly drastic proposal affecting contracts and the rights of property.

Mr. H. W. Mann: And enterprise too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. Before a hen lays an egg, that egg will belong to the board. A man will have to get the permission of the board before he is permitted to eat an egg that his hen has laid! The many absurdities of the measure have been successfully indicated by the Minister for Railways. I will admit to the member for Guildford-Midland that provisions of the kind he desires are more or less necessary concomitants of what he wishes. If he is to compel all to put their eggs in the pool, he has to go to this amazingly extreme extent and must say to a man: "You shall not use these eggs that are our property even while they are still within your fowls." It is because of this necessarily amazing aspect of the scheme generally, that it ought to be regarded with the greatest possible suspicion; and if only a case like this can be put up, the passage of such a measure should not be considered for a minute. I hope the Bill will be defeated in common with all other measures that are specially designed to make things dearer.

MR. PANTON (Leederville) [5.1]: I represent a constituency of a little over 9,000 electors who are all consumers, and so far as I can interpret the meaning of the Bill there are not likely to be any producers of eggs amongst them. Consequently I should like to have the Bill a little further examined before I could be prepared to vote for the second reading. I am inclined to agree with the Attorney General, for from my reading of the Bill—and I have perused it several times—I can see in it little else but a desire to control the eggs of Western Australia, at any rate for a start, in a given area; obviously the metropolitan area for a beginning. I am not concerned whether this represents socialism or syndicalism or any other ism; what I am concerned about is whether this House is going to hand over the control of a commodity which is in every day use by the people of this State without any parliamentary supervision whatever. The Attorney General, I remember, severely criticised the principle when the Dried Fruits Bill was before the House—it seems he is still opposed to it—but that Bill had the redeeming feature that it was subject

to ministerial control. I am not prepared to hand over the control of anything to a board that I know nothing about. It is difficult to discover from the Bill just who this board are going to be. The Bill certainly tells us how the board is to be constituted, but it is difficult to find out who is going to constitute the board. I listened to the member for Guildford-Midland when he was moving the second reading, and because I have not a sufficiently retentive memory to remember all that he said, I have since gone carefully through his speech in "Hansard." Whilst the hon. member may have delivered a very able address—he usually does—as a matter of fact he said little or nothing about the details of the Bill. The more one reads the Bill, the more extraordinary does it seem. It makes one wonder just how this board is going to come into operation if the Bill becomes an Act. It is provided in the Bill that a petition by 50 producers is sufficient warrant for a vote to be taken in a given area. So far as I know, there is no real registration of those people who will be egg producers within the meaning of the Bill. The Bill provides that every person having 20 egg-producing birds will be a producer within the meaning of the Bill. I am not a poultry farmer; the most I know about poultry is when I get a cheap bird to eat, or when I sample the eggs that are placed on the table for me; but I hope I have sufficient common sense to reason to myself that the person who has 20 egg-producing fowls ought not necessarily to be termed a producer. If such a person is to be a producer within the meaning of the Bill, then I should like the member for Guildford-Midland to tell me how it is proposed to get a registration of all the people who will be eligible to vote when 50 egg producers sign a petition for a vote to be taken in a given area. It is provided in the Bill that a three-fifths majority of the votes taken will be sufficient to constitute the pool in a given area. It may be quite an easy matter to secure three-fifths of the votes taken, and it may also easily be that the three-fifths are only a minority of those eligible to vote. We all know that in Parliamentary elections, even in a Commonwealth election based on compulsory voting, if we get a poll of from 80 to 85 per cent. of the voters, we think we are doing very well. Yet we are asked in the Bill to

allow 50 persons, say from Kalamurda to South Fremantle, to sign a petition and so get a vote taken. Nobody will know who amongst the 50 has 20 fowls, or who has 25, or who has 50. Yet if the Bill becomes an Act, all 50 of the signatories to the petition will be producers within the meaning of that Act. And if we have a vote taken, I suppose 90 per cent. of those having 20 fowls or more apiece will not realise that as egg producers within the meaning of the Act they are entitled to a vote. Yet three-fifths of those who do vote, men who are particularly interested in egg production, will be able to set up a compulsory pool to the detriment of all the people in the metropolitan area. That in itself is sufficient to make one chary of voting for the Bill, and so handing over to some board yet to be selected extraordinary powers without parliamentary or ministerial control. There is in the Bill another factor, the absurdity of which appeals to me: I refer to the fact that it is possible under the Bill to have half a dozen or more boards operating for the control of eggs in any given area. Let us assume that 50 producers sign a petition for a vote to be taken for a compulsory pool in one section of the metropolitan area, and that at the same time another 50 producers sign a similar petition respecting a similar area. It will be interesting to know who is then to decide whether the areas the subject of the two petitions are rightly or wrongly described. The Minister is to have no control, and until a board is elected I cannot see which of the two petitions is to be favoured.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Or how the areas are to be defined.

Mr. PANTON: That is so. The two sets of petitioners may have different ideas as to the boundaries, and there is nothing to show which section will be accepted or who is going to define the proper area.

Mr. Sampson: The principle is operating successfully in New South Wales.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Governor in Council will decide. That is provided for in the Bill.

Mr. PANTON: I shall be pleased to be shown where it is in the Bill. The Governor in Council will have a pretty hard job to decide such areas.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There are poultry experts who will be ready to assist.

Mr. PANTON: I will for the moment accept the hon. member's assurance that this is provided for. Even so, is there anything to prevent half a dozen boards being appointed to function in other parts of the State?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is so.

Mr. PANTON: Then it is possible for half a dozen boards to be constituted and function, and it is quite possible for those boards to be working prejudicially to one another and prejudicially to the 9,000 consumers in the Leederville electorate.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are reading into the Bill something that is not there.

Mr. PANTON: Just now I understood the hon. member to agree that half a dozen different boards could be appointed. He will have some difficulty in convincing me that it is not possible to have half a dozen boards functioning simultaneously.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You would make the position worse than it is to-day.

Mr. PANTON: The position is bad enough, but it is going to improve, unless the hon. member and his friends can successfully constitute a board in the metropolitan area and quickly extend the principle throughout the State. If it is intended to constitute a board nearest home, where the bulk of the poultry farms are, namely in the metropolitan area, and then as quickly as possible extend it to the country, practically every farmer with 20 egg-producing birds will be classed as a producer, and his eggs will be controlled by the board. I have seen in the Bill nothing that can be accepted as a guarantee that the board is not going to be a board to control the price of eggs in Western Australia. If the member for Guildford-Midland and his friends are anxious to get a board to control and supervise the export of eggs, I am with them; but I have yet to learn that that is the real object of the Bill. Last year there were imported into Western Australia 106,606 dozen more eggs than were exported. From these figures it will be seen that, so far, there is no necessity for us to export eggs at all. I am informed by those who are dealing in poultry that the principal export period is from mid-June to mid-November, the period coinciding with the shortage in the Old Country. If

they are the only months for export, I do not see any necessity for controlling this business in Western Australia. Whilst we are importing a large number of eggs, strange to say we advocate the building up of local industry. In Western Australia there are made many hundredweights of cakes and biscuits. But I have it from a man who has his finger on those items that the whole of the cakes and biscuits manufactured in this State are made from egg pulp imported from the Eastern States. That was told to me at the R.S.L. Conference only the week before last—and my informant was itemising the stuff coming through every day. Therefore I am beginning to wonder where our advocacy of local production is getting to. When we have to import the ingredients that should be produced at our own back doors for the manufacture of cakes and biscuits, we might as well hand that manufacture over to the Eastern States. At all events I am still open to conviction. If the member for Guildford-Midland can convince me that this Bill is not for the creation of a board to control the price of eggs in the local market, but only for a board to supervise the export of eggs, I will support the second reading, although I shall have quite a lot to say about amendments in Committee. However, until the hon. member so convinces me, I will be prepared to vote against the second reading.

**HON. W. D. JOHNSON** (Guildford-Midland—in reply) [5.15]: I appreciate that, in presenting a Bill of this kind, it is open to receive very serious discussion and investigation by members. When I responded to the request of the poultry farmers to introduce the Bill, I knew perfectly well that I would experience some difficulty in piloting it through the House. It was difficult to draft the measure because of the limitations imposed on a private member by the Standing Orders. It is also difficult for a private member to frame a Bill exactly as he would like it, because of his individual opinions. If the Government frame a Bill, they have the knowledge that their party are behind them to assist in getting the second reading passed, and that when the Committee stage is reached, the details can be discussed. A private member has not that advantage. He has to frame the Bill and then appeal to Parliament to pass the sec-

ond reading, so that the mature consideration of members might be brought to bear to improve it in Committee. I am prepared to admit that this is essentially a Committee Bill, and for that reason I did not enter into details. To do so would have been to occupy the time of the House unnecessarily. We must bear in mind that the community are divided into three sections, on the one hand the producer and on the other hand the worker, and between the two comes that strong combination of vested interests generally recognised as the financial and commercial interests. If we deal with matters affecting the producer we have that force against us, and for that reason I knew there would be opposition to the Bill. That section of the community is well and ably represented in this Chamber and elsewhere. It is just the same when one introduces a measure to benefit the workers. The same influence operates. So long as a member is acting for the producer and the worker, he is up against strong organised opposition, which was fostered and encouraged by Parliaments in the olden days until that opposition became nicely dug in. Those concerned do not need to come to Parliament for anything for themselves; they have what they want. But let anyone attempt to do anything to relieve the burden upon production caused by the middleman, and he is immediately attacked and his road is anything but rosy. I had the same experience when I was piloting Labour legislation through the House. The unfortunate part is that often the worker is crushed because there is a combination of the commercial interests and the producers against the worker. Very often, too, the producers are crushed by a combination of vested interests and workers. If we could only create a proper understanding between the producer and the worker so that both could protect themselves against the middle combination, the world would be much brighter and the cost of living much lower. It is the toll levied upon the producer that is the burden we are carrying, just as the worker has to carry the burden of increased profits by those who handle the product during its passage from the producer to the consumer. I appreciate the difficulty of my task. We have the Attorney General representing the strong combination of vested interests. In a sense he is essentially representing the commercial and financial interests. That is the nature of his



constituency, and naturally he is opposed to legislation of this kind. But I cannot understand the attitude of the member for Leederville (Mr. Pantou), who ought to adopt a different point of view. When the representative of such a constituency as Leederville combines with the representative of a constituency like West Perth, I have to admit that I am up against a great difficulty.

The Attorney General: Do not you think we are taking an impartial view?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The point was worth mentioning in passing; let it go at that. To the member for Leederville I would say this is not new legislation. In the first place it was introduced by a Labour Government in Queensland, where this kind of marketing organisation has been fostered to a great extent. It can be said that Queensland has commodities on an organised scale of considerable magnitude. Because of the wonderful success of organisation in Queensland, established by a Labour Government, it has been encouraged by succeeding Governments, and the Government in power there to-day are just as anxious to maintain that kind of organisation, because in practice it has proved of advantage to the producer and to the consumer. Orderly marketing is not price-fixing. We do not seek to fix prices, but we want to secure orderly marketing, so that the producer will not be sweated by low prices and the consumer will be guaranteed a decent commodity at a reasonable price and on something like a uniform price basis. Take eggs: one can go to the market to-day and buy eggs at 8d. a dozen, but there are times when the price soars to 3s. 6d. a dozen. I admit that the laying period is a factor influencing the disparity of prices, but there is no question that in other parts of the Commonwealth where the industry has been organised, there is not that big margin of difference. Orderly marketing is responsible. The reason that prices here soar very high at one period of the year and people cannot afford to buy eggs is because we have no method of ascertaining the exact consumption or the storage that takes place. Some people are storing eggs, but there is no record of what they hold.

Mr. Angelo: Have not they an association?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

The Minister for Lands: What about the co-operative societies?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No organisation I know of has any means of ascertaining exactly what eggs are held, so that the needs of the consumers might be supplied in an ordinary way and at a reasonable price. It is true that orderly marketing will increase the price of eggs during the glut period, because it is designed to prevent gluts. At the same time it brings down the price at other periods of the year. Under orderly marketing, the people would not buy eggs at 6d., 7d. and 8d. a dozen as they are doing now. The Women's Executive of the Primary Producers' Association complained to the voluntary Egg Marketing Board about the price being realised for eggs. They said they could not get even 4d. a dozen in the country, and they appealed to the board for protection.

The Minister for Lands: This will not improve that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It will. The fact that similar results have been achieved in Queensland and New South Wales and to an extent in South Australia—that qualification I shall explain later on—is sufficient evidence that they could be achieved here. The price of eggs does not fall so low in Queensland and New South Wales as in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria.

The Attorney General: There is no doubt about that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Attorney General ought to be fair. While the price of eggs in New South Wales is relatively higher to-day than the price in Western Australia, it is lower when the price here reaches the peak.

The Attorney General: I would believe that if I saw it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If the Minister reads the reports of the egg marketing boards of Queensland and New South Wales, he will find that my statement is correct. That eggs should reach a very high price is not in the interests of the producer, and it is also against the interests of the consumer. The producer does not want eggs to soar to a very high price, because when that happens it reduces the consumption, and it then becomes necessary to take steps to encourage increased consumption. If we regulate the supply and price of eggs, it is necessary to regulate the consumption all the year round, and that is better for the producer and the consumer. I did not wish to

mention other commodities, but I ask members to consider wool. The present position is due absolutely to the fact that we encouraged the price of wool to soar too high. There being no organisation to regulate the supply, substitutes were introduced, and now we are up against grave difficulties to compete with the substitutes.

The Attorney General: What is the cause of the very low price of rubber?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know nothing about rubber or about motor cars. I have never been interested in them. But I can speak with knowledge of the matters to which I am referring, because I have been associated with marketing problems for a considerable time. Just as the public refrain from using wool when the price of wool is high, so they refrain from using eggs when the price of eggs is high.

The Attorney General: The price of eggs becomes high when there are few of them.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I admit that the period of laying and the output have some bearing on the price, but if we could estimate the needs of the State, eggs could be cold-stored in anticipation of the lean period. The glut period would be used in order to cold store for the lean period, and we would have orderly organised marketing as in Queensland and New South Wales.

Mr. Angelo: Why do not the breeders do that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The unfortunate breeders have been trying for years to do it. They have had all kinds of organisations. Take the letter from Mr. Shaw: He was associated with the poultry farmers' organisation, was a member of the executive, and a keen supporter of legislation of this kind. For a long time he was closely identified with the industry.

The Attorney General: Which Shaw, senior or junior?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Major Shaw, the writer of the letter. It is true he was a poultry farmer. However, I must say I do not like his letter. I could give the House other facts regarding Mr. Shaw as a poultry farmer. He is not on the poultry farm to-day, and it is useless for him to throw stones at other people. He was not a very great success as a poultry farmer, and his father is carrying on the farm to-day under very great difficulty indeed. I do not care to make such statements, but that letter is not fair.

The Attorney General: Is it correct?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Every hon. member has received a copy of that pamphlet, with a great display about what can be done with poultry. That is Major Shaw's pamphlet and he was running this concern. He has left the poultry farm where he had to struggle against the same great odds as prevail to-day. To-day Major Shaw has become a boomer of the possibilities of poultry farming. His letter is a continuation of what is stated in the pamphlet. The Attorney General has done him a service in getting that mere propaganda into "Hansard."

The Attorney General: I never mentioned his name; you mentioned his name.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I had to give his name.

The Attorney General: Why could not you take the articles for what they were worth?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I wanted to have the opportunity to make an explanation, because that letter has been sent to practically every member of the House. I have the letter and have read it.

Mr. Panton: I did not get one.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: One of those letters was handed to me to read, and it was identical, so far as I remember, with the letter read by the Attorney General. The position is that Major Shaw has changed his views. When he was actually poultry farming, without the backing of a land settlement company, he favoured a Bill of this nature. At least, he expressed that view at meetings, and he took part in an agitation to have such a Bill as this introduced. But the scene has changed. He is now trying to make out that, after all, the trouble does not lie in difficulties of the industry. It would not suit the land settlement company and his particular ambition if the industry were a failure. He makes out that it is the men engaged in the industry who are the failure. "All you want," says Major Shaw, "is a bit of land. Go out where I have got a bit of land, and do as I do." I hope that ultimately the poultry farmers of Western Australia will be able to accomplish what Major Shaw says is possible. The sad part of it is that I do not know of one man who is doing that to-day. Major Shaw says he is doing it. I have never seen it done, and I do not know anyone who has been able to endorse Major Shaw's statements. However, that only goes

to show that sometimes the point of view is influenced by a change in the circumstances of the individual. To get on to another aspect of the matter, the legislation with regard to dried fruits. This Bill is based on the same principle as that legislation. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn), who spoke on the Bill recently, was for many years closely associated and actively co-operating with the vignerons of the Swan district. He was there before the days of the board of control. He took part in the attempts to form voluntary organisations for the marketing of fresh and dried fruits. That went on for a while, and then it failed. Ultimately the growers had to come to Parliament for a measure similar to this in order to obtain control. The member for Toodyay has stated to the House the difficulties experienced to-day in a falling market. He has experienced both sides of the industry, and he appeals to hon. members to support this Bill because the poultry farmers want board control for ordinary marketing, which has been an advantage to the community.

The Attorney General: To the community?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, to the community. It is helping the producer and—

The Attorney General: Helping the consumer?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is helping the consumer in this way, that the produce is prepared better, is controlled and watched right through the process of treatment, and is put on the market in a better way. Further, the pricing is not relatively high at one period and relatively low at another. Just as the dried fruits growers went through troubles in connection with voluntary organisation, so the poultry farmers have experienced difficulties in that regard. Major Shaw at one time was in with the Poultry Farmers' Organisation trying to do something to help the industry. There were voluntary organisations of all kinds, but they never proved successful. The voluntary organisation of to-day, of which I am a member, is purely honorary; no one is getting expenses or anything else out of it. We are struggling, but we are not successful because of the difficulties confronting voluntary organisations in the marketing of commodities. I want to impress upon the House that there has been a strong attempt

to do the work voluntarily, without the assistance of an Act of Parliament. For successive years, however, there have been so many difficulties and so many failures that this proposal has been placed before Parliament. As to the contention that egg pulp is being obtained from South Australia, I acknowledge that a certain quantity of egg pulp comes in to-day. That is in continuation of contracts made last year. But I wish to explain to the member for Leederville (Mr. Panton) that when I started with Mr. Bath on this matter I got similar information to that obtained by the hon. member, as to egg pulp coming from South Australia. We got together a representative conference of egg pulp purchasers—Mills & Ware, Hunt, the Cabin Tearooms, Boans and others—and submitted to them that we thought they should use the local product. Their explanation was as follows:—"We did go to South Australia and did bring in a hundred tons of egg pulp, but the reason for it was that there was no organisation here upon which we could rely for regular supplies. In South Australia the trade is organised on a better basis, and what we want you to do is to organise the industry in Western Australia. We would prefer to use the local product; we would give preference to the local product; but we want a guarantee that the quantity and the quality will be up to the standard required. Particularly do we want some reliable organisation to say that at the period we want the egg pulp, it will be available."

Hon. P. Collier: Surely a voluntary organisation could give that guarantee.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. The trouble is that the voluntary organisation receive support from only a limited number of poultry farmers. Take the Poultry Farmers' Organisation, which is the largest of the two existing organisations, the other being the Poultry and Egg Producers' Society.

Mr. Wells: I thought you said there was no organisation.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: These are poultry farmers. There is no organisation for marketing.

Mr. Angelo: One of those organisations is supposed to have 400 members.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Poultry Farmers' Organisation has a membership of 358. The Poultry and Egg Producers'

Society has 30 or 40 members. Both organisations are favourable to the Bill. Both organisations combined in a request to me to introduce the Bill. Both organisations support the measure. But when it comes to marketing, the Poultry Farmers' Organisation, although unanimously in favour of the Bill, and the Poultry and Egg Producers' Society, strongly if not unanimously in favour of it, are so circumstanced that we must have a board for marketing purposes. The organisations encouraged us to form the voluntary marketing board existing to-day, but only a very few members of the organisations really support the board.

The Attorney General: Why?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not know. There are other organisations dealing with the marketing of eggs, and particularly for export. The producers confine their patronage to the various organisations, with the result that when it comes to marketing, there is no real organisation. There is an organisation to protect the industry and to discuss matters of production, feeding and all those details; but when it comes to marketing, the producers are hopelessly divided. We want to get them organised under a measure of this kind. I would not mind if no attempt had been made, but attempts have been made over successive years. The poultry farming industry, just like the dried fruits industry, finds it necessary to come to Parliament for the purpose of securing a measure of this description.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Dried fruits are on an entirely different basis.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I admit the two industries are not exactly on all fours, but the principle is identical in both cases. I want to make it clear that the introduction of this Bill was encouraged by both organisations, purely to overcome that which the organisations cannot overcome, difficulty of marketing and supplying. To come back to the South Australian aspect. We had no marketing organisation that could guarantee supplies of pulp. We went into that matter, and to-day our marketing organisation has combined in an understanding with other marketing organisations, such as Nelson & Co. and other firms. There is an understanding thanks to which we can give to the users of egg pulp an assurance that Western Australian pulp will be available in the quantities and quality required, and at the periods when the pulp is wanted. I admit that there is not a great deal of pulp being sold in

Western Australia to-day, the reason being that eggs are so cheap. At present it pays manufacturers to go on the market and buy eggs and pulp themselves. Therefore we do not anticipate any large contracts for egg pulp being secured at present. The pulp difficulty, however, may be regarded as having been overcome. Another question is that of South Australian eggs coming here in the shell. There has always been a certain amount of dumping. The trouble is that we have no organisation and cannot do anything against dumping. Individual representations cannot influence public opinion as to the unfairness of buying South Australian eggs. If we had an organisation which could concentrate upon the matter—

The Attorney General: Why is it unfair to buy South Australian eggs if they are as good and as cheap as local eggs?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: These are surplus eggs from South Australia, and they cannot be guaranteed to be as good as local eggs, since they would not be equally fresh. Again, they are eggs removed from the South Australian market and dumped here in Western Australia so as to raise South Australian values. South Australia has not an Act such as Queensland and New South Wales have. In South Australia there is to-day a kind of organisation somewhat better than that existing here, but not sufficiently effective. For years a certain number of eggs have been sent from South Australia to Western Australia. If there were a sufficiently strong organisation here, there would be a means by which the combined producers, under a board responsible for marketing, would be able to afford protection. Such an organisation could appeal to the public in a way that would produce good results. In moving the second reading of the Bill I said that the Premier had been appealed to for assistance in regard to butter production, and that our butter producers were protected because the marketing of their product was organised. There is a combination to protect the Western Australian producer of butter against the importation of Eastern States butter. Our ambition is the same with regard to eggs. We shall be able with a board of this description to look after the marketing, and we shall be able to limit, if not exclude, the importation of eggs from other parts of Australia. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy), in the course of his

remarks, made one or two points which were emphasised by the member for Leederville (Mr. Pantou) in regard to the absence of a clause to provide for Ministerial veto. I am grateful to them for having drawn attention to it. It should have been included in the Bill but it was overlooked in the drafting. One would welcome a clause of that description, so as to give the Minister some power, as is the case in connection with dried fruits, to protect the public, the consumer and the producer against unfairness, should it be demonstrated that the board are functioning against the best interests of the State. This matter can be attended to when we reach the Committee stage. There is another question, and it is as to whether 20 should constitute the number. Anyway, that is purely a figure, but our desire is to get it as low as possible so as to prevent the smaller people coming in and disorganising the market. I suggested the number 20, but if someone else thinks it should be 30, it is a matter that can be determined later. Again, the member for Mt. Magnet raised the question, and the member for Leederville endorsed it, that the number 50 to a petition for a poll to be taken was too small. I shall have no objection to increasing that number. That also can be attended to in Committee. As I said before, the Bill is essentially one for Committee. The Minister for Railways raised one or two questions which I desire to put right. The hon. member seemed to be fearful that, if the board got control of the eggs, they would use the one organisation to the exclusion of the others. It is true that you cannot put in the Bill that the board shall only use one firm for doing the marketing; what you have to do with a Bill of this kind is to give power to the board to employ persons and agents to do the work. If, on the other hand, the board found they were capable of doing it themselves, there was no reason in the world why they should not do it. If they can get better results and give better service by having one organisation, there is no reason why that one organisation should not function. I pointed out that the wheat pool created their own organisation and did their own marketing.

The Minister for Railways: Is that not the same organisation that is dealing in Russian wheat?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It has no connection with it at all. The Co-operative Society of Great Britain are handling, as agents, a certain amount of Russian wheat, but there is no connection between that body and the wheat pool of Western Australia. I can assure the hon. member that that body in England has never handled one bushel of Western Australian wheat. Reverting to the Bill, it is proposed to give the board power to employ agents, but you cannot mention that kind of thing in the Bill. The Minister for Railways stated that the marketing board, of which I am a member, has not got the best prices for the eggs exported that might have been obtained if we had given more favourable consideration to the offer that was made to us and to which he referred in his speech. It is correct that a certain amount of money was placed to the credit of the Egg Marketing Board on which to operate under certain conditions. Verbal representations were made. I was stopped in the street two or three times. I will not mention any names, but I can give them if hon. members desire to have them. I was told that a British firm had provided a letter of credit, and that it had been made payable to the board, so that the board could operate on it in consultation with the firm's representative in Perth. Several representations were made to me in the street and I was communicated with by telephone at home on various occasions, early in the morning and late at night, for the purpose of getting me to say that we would agree to operate. I kept on saying, "Put your offer in writing; write to the board and let us know exactly what your offer is." Ultimately, the letter came along, but it was a good while before we got it. When we received it, it was given special consideration.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Who was the letter from?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Mr. Hazel.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Not from the E.S. & A. Bank?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They wrote to us and stated that a credit had been established at the bank in the name of the board, but that we could not operate on it. It confirmed what Mr. Hazel had represented to us, and it was there if we were prepared to do business on the terms suggested by

Mr. Hazel. With a letter of credit the bank will only operate provided you carry out the details connected with the credit, and it was in connection with the details that we could not do business with Mr. Hazel.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Were not two conditions laid down?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There was one fatal condition. It is true that Mr. Hazel said he would pay us so much on what was known as the "red clause" of the arrangement, by which we could raise money up to 11d. a dozen between the period of cold storage and the shipment. Immediately we produced the actual certificate of shipment we then got a further amount.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Which brought it up to 1s. 2½d.?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Very likely that would be correct. We got up to that, but as I pointed out to the Minister for Railways, he did not get the whole of the facts. What Mr. Hazel could not agree upon was that, in the event of the market going wrong at the other end, and the values getting below the agreed price, and the eggs not realising the cost of shipment plus the advance made, we were to guarantee to refund the amount. We told him we could not possibly agree to guarantee to refund the amount in the event of over-advancing on the payments.

The Minister for Railways: You did that previously.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Did your pool make a refund when you showed a loss last year?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I admit that last year's operations were not successful.

Mr. H. W. Mann: The growers stood the loss.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We would not have any objection to Mr. Hazel taking the same responsibility and saying that, in the event of his giving us an advance, and we passed it on to the various producers, and it was found afterwards that they received more than the eggs realised, he would have the right to get a refund from the producer. But he wanted the board to guarantee that we would attend to the refund in the event of over-payment.

The Minister for Railways: You were only agents.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We could not take the risk; we have no money in our pool; it is purely voluntary and we were functioning in an honorary way. What Mr. Hazel wanted us to do was to take on a business liability and we would have to pay it ourselves.

The Minister for Railways: In the previous year you had a loss.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I had nothing to do with the previous year. The previous year is causing grave anxiety to one organisation at the moment. They are still trying to get a refund of the over-payment. We could not work on a basis of that description. What we had to do was to see to it that if the firm established a letter of credit to meet advances, that they would get the advances from the producer himself and not the organisation. We were not in a position to give a guarantee.

The Minister for Railways: Why not?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We merely prepared the eggs for export; we got nothing out of it. We had no authority for deducting sums of money for the purpose of guaranteeing Mr. Hazel or his principals; neither would we exercise the authority if we had it, because we had no right to function under the limited powers that we had as a voluntary board and give a guarantee with respect to a refund.

The Minister for Railways: Have you a copy of the contract you asked the producers to sign?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes.

The Minister for Railways: Read that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There has been a certain contract signed, but that contract is not for the purpose of exporting eggs. Anyway, I am not here to argue with the hon. member. Mr. Hazel's terms were that we should give a personal guarantee in respect of the refund. We went into the matter fully and decided we could not accept the liability. Just at that period it is asserted that we were encouraging the business to go through one channel. That is not correct. When we started the marketing of eggs, we first did it, it is true, through the Westralian Farmers. They started to market the first lot of eggs and negotiated the first letter of credit. We found then we could do better than we had done in the previous year. It is asserted that we refused Hazel's offer and gave pref-

erence to another. That is not correct. We did go to another firm which made representations. That firm was able to get their principals in London to accept the liability of securing a refund from the producers themselves, so that the board would not be involved in any way. We went to a lot of trouble to see that we were not personally involved, and that the board were not involved in overpayments. It had to be a matter between the London firm, the agents in Western Australia, and the producers.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Have you exported any eggs this year?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: A considerable quantity.

Mr. H. W. Mann: How many?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I could not say. Nelson & Company have exported more than we have.

The Minister for Railways: Under this guarantee?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We have exported eggs under the authority of documents signed by various producers.

The Minister for Railways: They carry all the liability, whereas you carry none.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is no liability. The whole business is the individual producer's business. We are a board dealing purely with letters of credit, and seeing that payments are made from which there are no deductions, other than the cost of handling, over which we have no control. This handling is carried out by special contracts between the producers, endorsed by the board, and the handling organisations. Hazel's offer could not be accepted. It was not as attractive as the other offers. The price was not better than we could get from other firms, but the other firms did not want us to be personally responsible. Seeing that the price we were getting was the same as Hazel's and more attractive because it carried less liability, we accepted, after mature consideration, the other offer. There was no reason why we should give the business to Hazel.

The Minister for Railways: Why do you not say Mills & Co.?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It was Hazel we had to deal with.

The Minister for Railways: Now we have told you who these people are, tell us who were the people through whom you were handling the matter in London.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We were not handling it through London, but from Western Australia. We do not know London in the matter. The Minister seems to know all about it. We started to deal with the Westralian Farmers.

The Minister for Railways: That is the point.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They did the business with Overseas Farmers. That organisation is a branch of the co-operative marketing organisation of Australasia and New Zealand. Their arrangements with us were not as attractive as were the others. At the time Hazel was making representations, others were also doing it. We took into consideration the offer submitted to us by the Westralian Farmers, the offer submitted by Hazel and the offer submitted by Brown and Dureau. We analysed them all. We actually shipped some eggs under the offer of the Westralian Farmers. When we analysed the whole thing we found that Brown and Dureau's offer was the best for the producers.

Mr. Richardson: Were they higher in price than the others?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It was not a question of being higher in price, and they were alike in the matter of advances. On actual realisation we do not know exactly what will be paid. Their offer by way of advances was the same as Hazel's, but less objectionable in that we were not held responsible in the case of overpayments.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you suggest that Brown and Dureau are carrying the risk of overpayments?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They will look to the producers and not to the board. That is definite. The Minister seems to think that Hazel was turned down because of our desire to patronise some special firm. That was not so. We changed our marketing agents because we received a better offer. It is not proposed, so far as I know, that the board should depart from the present practice. They will use agents in the future exactly as they have done in the past. All the agents will be utilised if they can function to the advantage of the producers. With regard to our ambition to get legislation introduced into all the States, I would point out that a Bill has, I believe, been introduced in the Victorian Parliament along the lines of this one. The reason for that is that representations have been made by the poul-

try farmers of that State. They, like the poultry farmers of Western Australia, appreciate the conditions appertaining to organised marketing, as demonstrated by the boards in Queensland and New South Wales. They are agitating in Victoria for a similar board on the lines of those established in the two States I have mentioned. The poultry farmers in South Australia are doing the same thing. The Minister for Agriculture dealt with the representations that were made to the South Australian Minister for Agriculture, but did not read the whole of the facts in connection with them. He read the portions where it was pointed out that an effective organisation was to-day in existence. The Red Comb Poultry Farmers' Organisation in South Australia is one of the best in the Commonwealth on a voluntary basis. It has been pointed out that although this organisation has succeeded to a wonderful extent even on the voluntary basis, the poultry farmers were failing to get proper protection for their industry. The Red Comb Organisation is well known in Australia as one of the most successful of its kind operating in a voluntary way. Notwithstanding this, the poultry farmers of South Australia have urged their Minister to introduce a Bill of this kind. Upon representations being made to him he promised to bring down the measure. Legislation has been launched in Victoria and promised in South Australia on the same lines as the legislation I am asking for in this Chamber. These steps are being taken because of the success of similar organisations in Queensland and New South Wales. We have no other desire beyond this. Because the scheme has been a success in those States, we ask that the same principle should be followed here.

The Premier: Are you sure it has been successful?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It has been endorsed on numerous occasions. The scheme in Queensland has been running for a number of years, and re-elections and re-ballots have taken place, as a result of which the board has continued. The same thing has occurred in New South Wales. The poultry farmers there have endorsed the scheme by a substantial majority. The supporters of the Dried Fruits Board in Western Australia have sought its continuance from year to year. This is evidence that it must be functioning successfully, just

as the other instances I have quoted are evidence that the egg control boards have functioned successfully in the other States. There is no desire on my part purely to get a Bill through the House for any personal advantage to myself. I am not interested except as one who is desirous of helping the producers. I do not want to help the producers by injuring the consumers. As is the case with the member for Leederville, my constituency is mainly, if not wholly, a consuming constituency. I would not be faithful to my trust if I did anything to injure the interests of the consumers in the Guildford-Midland constituency. I know I am not going to injure them. My object is to give them a commodity that will be presented up to a standard value, and at a price that will be regulated all the year round, so that they will be enabled to get eggs at a price and of a quality that will command respect and support. I trust members will realise that most of the work connected with the Bill has to be done in Committee, where I hope to give satisfaction to members generally.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	..	..	19
Majority against					2

AYES.	
Mr. Collier	Mr. Panton
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Wilsou
Mr. Munsie	(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Barnard	Mr. J. I. Mann
Mr. Brown	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Parker
Mr. Davy	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Douey	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Keenan	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wells
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. North
Mr. H. W. Mann	(Teller.)

PAIR:	
AYES.	NOES
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Angelo

Question thus negatived; the Bill defeated.



*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

## **BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACT AMENDMENT.**

Returned from the Council with amendments.

## **ANNUAL ESTIMATES 1930-31.**

*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 16th October; Mr. Richardson in the Chair.

Department of the Minister for Mines (Hon. J. Scaddan, Minister).

*Vote—Mines, £94,254:*

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [7.35]: Hon. members will have noticed that the Estimates do not vary considerably from those relating to last year's estimated expenditure, except that the Estimates for this year show a decrease of £10,862 as compared with the actual expenditure during the last financial year. That reduction is largely accounted for by the amalgamation of positions, the reduction of temporary assistance, the decreased contributions required to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, mainly due to compensation under the Miners' Phthisis Act, a reduction of the contributions under the Miners' Phthisis Act to the extent of £7,213, which I will explain later, and a large reduction in the expenditure on account of travelling expenses for the field staff. With most of those items, I am sure hon. members will be in agreement, and will believe that we are justified, under existing conditions, in introducing economies and making reductions. On the question of the reduced compensation payments under the Miners' Phthisis Act, I investigated the position and found that, while there is provision for the payment of compensation under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, the conditions prevailing under the operations of the Miners' Phthisis Act practically made it a dead letter in its effect on the men in the mining industry, for the reason that the compensation payable under the Miners' Phthisis Act is greater than that payable under the Workers' Compensation Act. Compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act

applies, of course, only to those who have to leave the mining industry because they have been found to be suffering from silicosis. As the compensation is greater under the Miners' Phthisis Act, men so suffering do not leave their occupations readily, but prefer to remain in the industry until they contract tuberculosis, only to be taken away from the mines compulsorily, and placed under the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act, in order to secure the higher compensation. In those circumstances, the matter was taken up with the officer in charge of the State Insurance Department, which handles the question of compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act as it applies to the Third Schedule, and he has agreed to make a contribution from the department's funds of £10,000 towards payments under the Miners' Phthisis Act. I admit that the amount available is less than we are entitled to receive.

Hon. M. F. Troy: That payment is to be made by the State Insurance Department.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Yes, from premiums received from the mining companies. That amount is much less than the cost would represent if the men were actually taken out of the mines when they were examined and found to be suffering from silicosis in its advanced stages; but, as I have pointed out, those men prefer to remain in the mines until they contract tuberculosis, which they are more liable to do when once they suffer from silicosis. Some anxiety has been expressed by hon. members with regard to the results reported after the recent re-examination. My predecessor in office was concerned about the fact that after the recent re-examination there appeared to be a greater number of miners who had contracted tuberculosis than in previous years. When I inquired into the position and ascertained the explanation, I discovered there was no real ground for exceptional alarm. I found that the result was due mainly to the fact that there had been introduced more up-to-date plant and a change in the officer responsible for the examinations.

Mr. Munsie: The up-to-date plant had been installed for the other examination.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Yes, but the officer appointed to conduct the re-

examinations that took place recently is evidently more keen than his predecessor, and does not take any chances. It can be said that if a similar examination were made respecting every individual in the community, it would be found that there were very few who did not show evidence of tuberculosis. That is rather an astounding statement to make, but it is only in recent years that we have actually discovered a method by which tuberculosis in its early stages can be discovered. Even now a great number of men in the outback goldfields districts, who are not in a position to be examined in the laboratory in Kalgoorlie, are examined before they are allowed to enter the mining industry, and that examination is conducted by medical men under the best methods known to them, other than the X-ray process. In such examinations, no evidence of tuberculosis has been found in the men, but when they have undergone the X-ray examination, it has been found that in quite a number of them there is evidence not only of the disease in its early stages, but of the disease in a stage of actual activity.

Hon. P. Collier: And the disease can be carried through a whole generation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so. The result is that when the re-examination has been conducted, what might be termed a "spot" has been found, but that spot is not active. It is assumed that the present officer who makes the examination, being more particular than his predecessor, has insisted that such men should not be allowed to continue work in the mines. I do not know that we need worry about that, because, so far as I can learn, tuberculosis may be found in the majority of the people to a greater or lesser degree. In those people, however, the disease is not dangerous, and may not become active during their lifetime. It is only when such people enter an occupation that may tend to make the disease active that they become affected by it, and in many cases the disease spreads rapidly, until galloping consumption is contracted, and the individual passes away. A great number of people may have tuberculosis, without any indication of it in their general health. It has now been ascertained that in some instances the "spot" has been present in individuals almost from birth, but has never become active. Suddenly

it has burst into activity, with the result that galloping consumption develops and the disease cannot be stopped. In cleaning up our mines, it is assumed that it is undesirable to retain underground men who give evidence of having a "spot" on their lungs. Once such men become dusted, and contract silicosis, the disease is likely to become active quickly, with the inevitable result I have indicated. In such cases it is desirable to take the men affected out of the mine, not only in the interests of others, but of themselves, seeing that they will shorten their own lives if they remain working underground. We have set out to relieve the men confronted with the possibility of contracting tuberculosis so that they may be able to live longer and lead useful lives. We are continuing the practice of taking such men from the mines. As a matter of fact, the re-examination recently made showed there were a greater number of men who had apparently reached an advanced stage of silicosis. I am, at the present time, discussing the whole position with a view, perhaps, to submitting amending proposals to Parliament at a later stage, to govern the conditions under which we take men from the mines. Instead of waiting until men contract tuberculosis before they are forced out of the mines, I am considering whether we cannot force them out at the stage at which, though liable to contract tuberculosis, they are still normal to all outward appearances and are able to live many years of useful existence, provided they do not take up occupations calculated to bring the disease to a state of activity. Such men may not be able to do their work as efficiently as formerly. They may be what is known as "short in the wind" but otherwise fit enough. I discussed the position with Dr. Mitchell and I ascertained that it is held that these men, unless they have reached the advanced stage of silicosis, are, although perhaps uncomfortable because of being "short in the wind," quite capable of carrying out healthy occupations for years to come. If we force those men out of the mines at that stage, it will be not only in the interests of themselves but of those with whom they come in contact in the course of their mining operations. That is desirable from the point of view of all concerned. In South Africa they have practically cleaned up the position. They had a very hard row to hoe and a very expensive one, but the burden did not fall on the general taxpayer to so great an ex-

tent as it does here. I am of opinion that, having made the preliminary survey, we have now reached the stage where we ought to follow the example set by South Africa and give the men an opportunity to come out of the mines while they are still able-bodied and fit to follow some other useful occupation, rather than compel them to stay in the mines until they become wrecks and very often go to early graves. Whether that reform could be put into effect without undue expense to the community, remains to be seen. The view I take is that when the men are attacked by silicosis, they ought to be warned that the compensation they will receive will not be any greater eventually than if they leave the mine before becoming infected by tuberculosis. Our Act is very definite that the men are not to be taken out of the mine unless they are suffering from tuberculosis, and in order to bring them out at an earlier stage we would have to consider the question of the compensation to be paid. The mining industry is of sufficient value to the State to justify the State in doing something for the men who suffer in health in consequence of following the occupation of mining. I think they ought to receive what we would be justified in giving them under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, and that they ought also to get a guarantee that after they have exhausted their rights under that Act they would be eligible for special compensation; for it is of considerable advantage to the State to have a man able-bodied and in fit physical condition rather than to have him a physical wreck. That is a matter which, of course, I cannot pursue in any detail at this juncture, but which I propose to deal with at a later stage. It is a matter which I view in the light of the welfare of our citizens, and therefore I propose to ask my predecessor, the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) and, if he likes, other members representing goldfields constituencies, to confer with me during recess in order to see if we cannot get a non-contentious measure drafted to submit to the House, a measure which will do justice to the men and at the same time be essentially fair to the general community. I am of opinion this can be effected by consultation with those who have had experience of the industry. In my view this is the most serious matter affecting the department at the moment. Of course I could give mem-

bers statistics regarding the output from our mines, but that would be of no value because members have all the figures submitted in various returns from time to time. There is one other question to which I think I am entitled to refer at this stage, namely, the proposal that the Federal Government should grant a bonus on the production of gold. Personally I am not very keen on bounties and bonuses to industries; but if we have a policy, which apparently has been accepted in Australia, of a high tariff wall in order to assist our sheltered industries, there are other industries that have to be compensated for the impost of the high tariff, and that compensation they can only receive by way of a bonus or bounty. So I cannot see why a commodity such as gold, which fortunately we cannot over-produce, and which, equally fortunately, always has a ready market and does not require any protective tariff to allow it to continue in competition with the production of gold in other parts of the world—I cannot see why it should not receive equal consideration with other industries, because it suffers equally with other industries from the operation of the high tariff. If, as has been asserted, it is economically unsound to apply a bonus to the production of gold, it seems to me even more economically unsound to provide a bonus for other industries merely to bolster them up against keen competition in other parts of the world. However, I am not going to urge the granting of a gold bonus on that ground at all, but on the ground that unquestionably it would give a fillip to the production of gold, and so would help our industry. And not only would it help the mining industry, but it would help the Commonwealth in its present depression. In fact I have said, and I repeat it here, that I know of no single act open to the Federal Government which would be so likely to help us in our time of stress as a bonus on gold. It would have to be of such a kind that it would be the means of introducing new capital to open up new mines, new capital for the improvement of existing mining machinery, and new capital for the opening up of mines known to-day as low-grade propositions. So although it may be claimed by economists to be unsound, I take the view that if any bonus is warranted, undoubtedly it is one on gold. Recently we were told by the Prime Minister that the Federal Government would not consider the granting of a

gold bonus on any basis at all. I was very much surprised at that.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You need not be surprised, for Mr. Bruce was even more definite.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not concerned about the attitude of Mr. Bruce as against that of Mr. Scullin. What I am more concerned about is an effective bonus on an industry so vital to Western Australia as is that of gold mining. When I made reference to the question of a gold bonus being considered in some quarters to be economically unsound, I had it in mind that it was Mr. Bruce who had made that statement in declining to grant a bonus. Mr. Scullin, of course, did not take that attitude at all. He simply said the Federal Government would not grant a bonus on gold on any basis at all. Since then evidently the matter has been further pursued, and a couple of days ago Mr. Fenton, the Acting Prime Minister, made an announcement—which apparently was premature—that it was intended to grant a gold bonus. It seems evident that the Federal Cabinet discussed the question and agreed to grant the bonus, subject to the approval of their party and eventually of the Federal Parliament in passing the necessary legislation to permit of the granting of a bonus on the production of gold. I sincerely hope Mr. Fenton's statement is correct, after all. I have no doubt it will get the support of his party, and I doubt still less that the proposal would receive the sanction of the Federal Parliament. So although there may be some doubt about it at the moment, I am hopeful that eventually we shall obtain justice for an industry which had to suffer considerably during the war period and which has been suffering heavily ever since.

Mr. Angelo: And an industry that has done a great deal for the country.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Undoubtedly it has. After all, it is not merely the question whether we are to have the gold bonus, but whether that bonus is going to be effective. The first gold bonus sought was upon the total production of gold, which would be a very heavy burden on the taxpayer. Indeed, it was questionable whether the Federal Government could finance a proposal of that kind. Eventually the request was made that the bonus should take the form of £1 per ounce on the increased production of gold. That,

I understand, is the proposal at present in the minds of the Federal Cabinet.

Hon. P. Collier: That is, the production in excess of that of last year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. That of course is on the basis of the increased production for Australia as a whole, not on the increased production of any one State. Any increase in the gold production over that of 1929 would be paid for on the basis of £1 per ounce. Our gold production last year was 372,000 ounces—leaving out the odd ounces. Whatever we produce this year in excess of that 372,000 ounces would bring us a bonus of £1 per ounce. There has been abroad the impression that the bonus would apply to any new gold produced as the result of the opening of a new mine. It is expected that the Wiluna mine will produce half a million ounces per annum, and the impression seems to be that we would receive, not £4 per ounce, but £5 per ounce on that total production. That is not the proposal at all. On the other hand, if we were to increase our 372,000 ounces by, say, 50,000 ounces this year, then we would receive a bonus of £50,000, and that £50,000 would be distributed over the total of 422,000 ounces, which would work out at a bonus of half-a-crown per ounce. To grant us a gold bonus of half-a-crown per ounce would be no better than giving us nothing at all, for it would not have the effect of inducing fresh capital to come into the State.

Mr. Angelo: And it would be too uncertain.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is not a question of uncertainty, because it is understood that the bonus if granted is to last for 10 years.

Mr. Angelo: But what they are going to get would be too uncertain.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course. To be satisfactory, the gold bonus would require to be at least 10s. per ounce spread over the whole of the production but making a maximum, so that there would not be undue strain on the resources of Australia in providing the bonus. I think 10s. per ounce could be paid on any increased gold production with a good profit to Australia, particularly in our existing economic conditions. For a bonus of 10s. per ounce would have the effect of introducing new

capital, not merely for the opening up of new mines, but also for the re-opening of mines that have been proved to carry large quantities of low-grade ore. Under the existing high costs, those low-grade mines cannot be profitably worked. I think Wiluna, as a goldfield, would not be able profitably to operate on exactly the same conditions as obtain in Kalgoorlie. I do not think the Kalgoorlie methods would permit the Wiluna mine to show a profit.

Hon. P. Collier: Most certainly they would not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: For the Wiluna conditions, a large amount of capital is required.

Hon. M. F. Troy: And the latest possible equipment.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, that is so. What I think will happen under a gold bonus is, not merely that we shall have new fields opened, but that some of the old fields known to contain large quantities of low-grade ore will be re-opened.

Hon. P. Collier: There are greater possibilities there than in new fields.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, I think so, but the bonus has to be sufficient to attract the capital. And, after all, if it does not have that effect there will be no advantage in getting a bonus, for then it will affect only new mines, and so will cost the taxpayer a good deal without returning any great advantage. Also, an effective bonus will be of great assistance to mines finding it difficult to obtain capital with which to improve their methods, mines such as the Lake View and the Gwalia. But unless they practice those methods, not only will those mines reach the end of their existence much earlier than they otherwise would, but much gold will remain in the ground and never be recovered. The richer chutes will all have been exhausted and the low-grade ore will remain in the ground. That is very undesirable from an economic point of view, but there are no means to obviate it except a gold bonus. Having mentioned the bonus on an increase of 50,000 ounces at 2s. 6d. per ounce, let me say that the mines are receiving 6s. 7d. as a premium on every ounce of gold. Yet with that 6s. 7d. many mines are confronted with difficulties, and it may not be very long before they will have to close down. There-

fore the bonus will have to be sufficient to attract fresh capital. It is capital we want in the mining industry more than anything else, in order that plant and methods may be improved and that large quantities of low-grade ore, which we know to exist, may be developed.

Mr. Sampson: That will be in addition to the exchange benefit?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. I happen to know that since the middle of March, when the exchange benefit was £2 7s. 6d. per cent., to the end of September, when the rate was £5 5s. per cent., the premium received on the gold produced on the Golden Mile amounted to something over £40,000. That was a very nice little windfall, and it is helping the mines considerably. This brings me to a point that has been exercising the minds of members representing constituencies in and around Kalgoorlie, that the Government have transferred the obligation represented by the rebate on water charges to the mines. The Chamber of Mines have been exercising themselves pretty freely in the last few weeks, by sending telegrams to members and using the columns of the Press, to denounce the procedure. The amount previously made available to pay for the rebate on water used by the mines was taken from loan funds under the Mines Development Vote. The Loan Council definitely decided that this was not an expenditure which could be charged against loan. For this year we have made provision under the Sale of Government Property Trust Account for something like £45,000 to meet the expenditure previously defrayed out of the Mines Development Vote. It is too early for me to say that that will be continued. Only the Treasurer could answer the question, and perhaps not even he could do so at this stage. We are hoping that a change of conditions will occur before the 30th June next, and that the mines will not suffer unnecessarily, because this would be a heavy burden for them to carry.

Mr. Cunningham: Is it assured for this financial year?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes; it is on the Estimates, and the amount has been transferred from General Loan Fund to the Sale of Government Property Trust Account. Over and above that, the mines

have a heavy burden to carry this year under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. The premiums were previously paid out of the disabilities grant.

Hon. P. Collier: The amount is about £30,000 a year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Altogether the amount paid by way of water rebate and premiums under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act amounted to over £80,000 per annum. If that burden were to fall suddenly upon the Kalgoorlie mines it would prove a very serious blow. I assure members, and people outside the Chamber interested in the mining industry, that we have a full realisation of the difficulties, and are hoping to find means to prevent all of the burden being cast on the mining industry. We want to prevent the mines from closing down, which I am afraid would happen if the burden were cast upon them. Whether I shall be able to get the necessary money will depend upon the Treasurer. I have endeavoured to show him the seriousness of the position, and if ways and means can be found, I am satisfied he will do his best to provide the money. How he will do it is more than he can say. I have nothing further to add at this stage because, outside the two or three items I have explained, the expenditure is not much different from that of last year.

MR. MUNSIE (Hannans) [8.6]: I compliment the Minister upon the full statement he has given of the Mines Estimates. I was pleased to hear many of the remarks that have fallen from him, but there are one or two matters about which I wish to inquire, and I hope the Minister will be able to give a satisfactory explanation of them when he replies. I wish to deal briefly with the statement of the Minister regarding the gold bonus, and the proposals submitted. I realise the advantage that the industry is receiving at present through the rate of exchange. The first proposal submitted was that £1 per ounce should be paid on gold produced in Australia. It was definitely stated in the written conditions submitted to the Commonwealth Government that they had a right to retain any difference accruing from the exchange rate. Consequently, if the Commonwealth had paid the bonus of £1 an ounce from the Treasury, the net amount the Treasury would have to find at present would be 13s. 5d. As a matter of fact, it

would not be paying quite that amount. I believe the mining industry is getting about 6s. 7d. The Commonwealth Government still commandeered all gold produced, and the Commonwealth Bank is allowed a certain percentage to pay for the cost of insurance and shipping the gold to London. On the gold produced to the end of last month, and shipped from Australia, the bank had shown a profit of approximately £16,000. If the Commonwealth had been getting the total exchange, they would have received more than the 6s. 7d. per ounce. The amount would have been nearer to 7s., so that the Commonwealth would have been paying a bonus of about 13s. That proposal, however, was definitely turned down, but a subsequent proposal was submitted. What the intention of the Commonwealth Government is I cannot yet say, because contradictory statements have been published during the past two days. I am hopeful that the second proposal will be adopted. It provided that the Commonwealth should pay £1 per ounce on all gold produced in Australia over and above the 377,000 ounces produced last year, but that the industry should have the right to the difference arising from the favourable exchange rate. Consequently, that would mean not 2s. 6d. an ounce, but 2s. 6d. on top of the present exchange advantage.

The Minister for Mines: When that proposal was put up there was no premium.

MR. MUNSIE: There was a premium when the first proposal was put up.

The Minister for Mines: No, it commenced only on the 30th March of this year.

MR. MUNSIE: But when we waited as a deputation on the Prime Minister, there was a bonus on gold.

Hon. P. Collier: That was in July.

MR. MUNSIE: Yes. If there is one industry in Australia for which a good case for assistance can be made out, it is the gold mining industry. I do not care what other industry may be assisted, if people were encouraged to engage in the production or manufacture of any other commodity, one thing that would result would be over-production. With gold there is no possible chance of over-production. I wish also to refer to the position under the Miners' Phthisis Act and the Workers' Compensation Act. I assure the Minister that after my three years' experience of administration, if I can do anything to facilitate a satisfactory arrangement being made to withdraw from the mines the men suffering from miners'

phthisis, it will be done. The Minister said that, unfortunately, the men did not leave the mines as readily as they ought to do when they were found to be suffering from dust, that is phthisis. The explanation is simple. It is not altogether a matter of the conditions under the Miners' Phthisis Act being better than those under the Workers' Compensation Act, and that therefore the men remain in the mine until they contract tuberculosis and can come under the Miners' Phthisis Act. Under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act they cannot get any compensation for dust until they are certified to be totally incapacitated. Consequently, they have to work in the mines until they are unable to work any longer, because otherwise they cannot come under the Workers' Compensation Act. It is not a matter of their not leaving; they cannot leave. If they do leave, they get nothing. Therefore a man would be foolish to leave. Hundreds of them left when informed by the Mines Department that they were suffering from dust and that, in the interests of their own health, they ought to quit mining. But they found it difficult to obtain employment elsewhere, and within the two years that they were allowed to return to the mines, many of them did return and, on being examined, were found to be suffering from dust. The reason, however, was that they could not find employment elsewhere. The Minister also referred to the results of the recent examination. I think the Minister has taken a very generous view of the abnormal increase. I do not know what the figures are, but when I left office they were at least 150 per cent. worse as compared with the corresponding portion of the examination in the previous year. That is rather alarming. The Minister pointed out that it was due to the new machine and more effective methods. But the machine was there last year. I drew attention to the point then. There was a Press controversy on the subject. After making many inquiries, I published a statement; and it was then said that the abnormal number of men brought from normal to silicosis early, or from silicosis early to advanced, was due to the use of the new machine. However, nothing was said on that occasion regarding the number of tubercular men. I do not want to keep in the mines any man suffering even from dust, especially if there is the slightest doubt as to whether he is suffer-

ing from tuberculosis. I do not want any man served with a notice that he is suffering from tuberculosis unless it is certain that he is suffering from the disease. Many men take it philosophically and in a good spirit; but a fair percentage immediately upon their notification, in an Australian phrase, "drop their bundles" and are speedily gone. It is a serious thing for any man, medical or otherwise, to notify a miner that he is suffering from tuberculosis unless it is certain. With all due respect to science and the X-ray method, I still hold that a fairly large number of men who were notified as a result of this examination to be sufferers from tuberculosis, would not disclose any trace of tuberculosis if put under any other known test.

The Minister for Mines: I agree with you.

Mr. MUNSIE: I mentioned that aspect to the Minister some time ago. I know of a man who worked in the Kalgoorlie mines for some considerable time prior to the passing of the Miners' Phthisis Act, when there was no payment whatever for men suffering from tuberculosis. That man found his health going. He certainly had dust. He left the mines, and remained away from them for about 3½ years. Then, feeling himself getting worse, he came to Perth. Here he stayed with a friend, who advised him to see a doctor. He in fact saw three of the leading medical men of Perth. All three pronounced him to be an advanced case of tuberculosis. The man became very downhearted. As a last resource his friend advised him to go to the Sanatorium and consult Dr. Mitchell, giving him a note to enter the sanatorium. The man was in the institution for only nine days. On the recommendation of the friend, Dr. Mitchell put the man under special examination and treatment for the testing of his expectoration. As a result, in nine days the man was discharged as having no sign or trace of tuberculosis. The doctor simply said that the man would in a short period spit his lung away with phthisis, but that when he got rid of the lung he would be all right. The man is at work to-day.

Hon. P. Collier: Doctors differ and the patient lives.

Mr. MUNSIE: The man is now working on the land with one lung. He spat

the other lung clean away, not owing to tuberculosis but owing to phthisis. If as the result of the X-ray examination the least spot is found on a man's lung, no risk is taken; the man is turned down for tuberculosis. Many men have been turned down because they have the spot, and not because they have tuberculosis. Anything I can do to help the Minister in overcoming these difficulties I shall gladly do. I have been informed that the Minister has altered the conditions which prevailed some little time ago as to treatment of miners notified to be suffering from tuberculosis early. Formerly, as soon as the Mines Department received word that a man had been found as the result of a laboratory examination to be suffering from tuberculosis, he was notified and prohibited from further work, and naturally was paid the award rate for the work he had been doing at the time of his withdrawal from the mines until Dr. Mitchell or Dr. Stevens could go to the district and examine the man to ascertain whether or not he was fit for light work. If he was certified as totally incapacitated, he came under phthisis compensation. If he was certified to be fit for light work, it became the Government's duty to find him light work or else pay him the ruling rate of wages. Nowadays, when the Mines Department receive the laboratory notification that a man is suffering from tuberculosis, they do not serve the withdrawal notice on him immediately, but withhold it until the doctor's arrival in Kalgoorlie; on the day the doctor reaches Kalgoorlie, the man receives the notice of his withdrawal. The interval may be a fortnight or three weeks. Now, the Act was passed specially for the protection of miners who had not got tuberculosis as against miners who unfortunately had. In face of that legislation, it is wrong to permit any longer time than is unavoidable to elapse before notifying an affected man of his withdrawal. By the present course, the department save the man's wages until Dr. Mitchell can get to Kalgoorlie. About that I am not worried, but I am worried about a man who is left in the mines after he is known to be suffering from tuberculosis. Further, I am told, though I cannot vouch for the truth of it, that in some cases Dr. Mitchell, in the face of a laboratory certificate that the man is suffering from tuberculosis, has ordered him back to

the mines. I hope the Minister will be able either to explain that matter or contradict the statement.

Hon. P. Collier: Such a man is allowed to work on the surface of the mine, where he is not a danger to his fellow workers.

Mr. MUNSIE: My information is that the doctor ordered such men back to work on the mines—whether on the surface or underground I do not know. Care is necessary. I am prepared to admit that if the Act is administered with literal strictness, no man certified to be suffering from tuberculosis can work on a mining lease. I know of a case in which after five years, upon the second examination, a man was found to be suffering from tuberculosis. He was working on the surface, in the open air, and at a fairly healthy occupation. There was no dust at his work, and he was at least 100 yards away from any other man. On the doctor's recommendation he was permitted to continue to work under those conditions. I also know that such cases have occurred previously. I would not raise any objection to work of that kind being done by a certified man. If the man cannot work on the fields, he is brought to Perth. This frequently means that he has to break up a home in Kalgoorlie. Probably nowadays he can get something for his home; but he is also under this disadvantage, that people do not like to buy a house that is known to have been occupied by a tuberculous man. I am prepared to accept the Minister's explanation. I was wondering how the hon. gentleman would manage the reduction of £7,000 odd on the amount to be paid for miners' phthisis cases this year, when the numbers are increasing so fast. To some extent the Minister has explained it by saying that the State Insurance office will rebate the Government to the extent of £10,000. I fear, however, that at the end of the year the Minister will find £10,000 nothing like sufficient for the extra payments under the Act.

The Minister for Mines: We have to meet our obligations, anyhow.

Mr. MUNSIE: Certainly. But I was wondering how the Minister was going to find the money. Although the previous Government were responsible for establishing the State Insurance Office, the institution is still being carried on whether legally or illegally.



The Minister for Mines: We do not want to introduce that subject here. It is not connected with the Mines Department.

Mr. MUNSIE: Undoubtedly the State Insurance Office, year by year, was showing an immense profit on the item of insurance under the Third Schedule. It will continue to show that profit while the Miners' Phthisis Act is in operation, because it does not pay the true or ordinary liability. As I have previously mentioned, and as the Minister stated, men are not leaving the mines because of having phthisis. At the same time, the present position is not fair; and that is why I raise the point. If the Government cannot find the money, it is not fair to ask the mining industry of this State to pay £4 10s. per cent for insurance under the Third Schedule, whilst the liability or risk is not more than £1 10s. per cent.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [8.30]: I was very pleased to hear the remarks of the member for Hannans, particularly in respect to the operations of the Miners' Phthisis Act and the Workers' Compensation Act. I was also glad to hear the Minister's promise with regard to the transference of miners from the mines before they reached the T.B. stage, or the advanced stage of miner's phthisis. I can assure the Minister that we on this side will gladly give him every help in that direction. It is a proper precaution to take men from the mines before their illness becomes too severe. In any arrangement that is made, there will have to be provision to place men in new jobs. It is peculiar that men who have followed the occupation of mining for many years get it into their minds that they are unfit for any other work. No measure will be satisfactory unless it is one that provides some occupation that will enable the miner to leave the industry not only in the interests of his own health, but for his benefit. I approach these Estimates with mixed feelings. I have no wish to be hard on the Minister, but I have some grievances which it will be realised are perfectly legitimate. I shall be prepared to give the Minister every assistance provided he puts up a fight—which in my opinion he will find it necessary to do—in the Cabinet.

The Minister for Mines: I have my gloves off.

HON. M. F. TROY: The Minister will need them off, too. I was very elated when I read yesterday that the Federal Government had promised to grant a bonus on the production of gold, but I was very disappointed when I discovered this morning that it was a canard.

Hon. P. Collier: It was a reporter's mistake.

HON. M. F. TROY: This afternoon my spirits were a little higher; I think there is something in what we were told yesterday, and the possibilities are that the Prime Minister may have given a hint, and the hint was immediately accepted as the decision of the Government. Those who have been associated with the Ministry will realise how those things happen. At any rate, I am hopeful that the Federal Government will see their way clear to grant the bonus on gold. At a time like the present people are looking round for means by which we may tide over the existing depression, and the country is full of amateur economists, who tell us of all the things that might be done. In fact, we are absolutely inundated with little pamphlets telling us how we can get out of our difficulties. But the extraordinary thing is that all these wise men disagree, and so as a last resort, we are compelled to depend upon ourselves. I have come to the conclusion that about the only sound economy at the present time, if the country is to be assisted, is a bonus on the production of gold. In my own simple way I have made up my mind on the following basis: The gold basis against the issue of notes is 25 per cent. What is proposed is that five notes should be issued in payment for the production of gold worth £4, that the Commonwealth Government should find that £5 for the £4 worth of gold. We shall be increasing the gold reserve. It might be called inflation, but it cannot be inflation to provide notes for the employment of people in an avenue that is creating real wealth. It would be inflation if we were paying for goods which are sold to-day at a loss. In the same way it would be inflation if notes were printed for the mere purpose of providing work. For instance, the issue of notes on work at Blackboy would be a decided inflation. The issue of five one-pound notes for one ounce of gold will increase the gold reserve and will create that commodity which can be utilised to pay our debts abroad. That should be the soundest possible econ-

omy. Even though it might not be as sound as others suggested it will help us to tide over the difficulty which faces us. It may be the bridge by which Western Australia can get over its temporary difficulties until such time as the prices of wheat and wool improve to enable us to return to a period of prosperity. It would be a mighty good thing for this country, and something that we should welcome with both hands. I quite understand that a bonus of £1 an ounce of gold would bring into production a large number of mines that are now closed down. I know of one or two which I am sure a bonus on gold would be the means of re-opening, and I can conceive the large number of prospectors who would be employed in the smaller shows in various parts of the State producing gold. Even if they were earning only a few pounds a week, there is always the prospect of making something more. There are hundreds of prospectors who have drifted to the city during the last 20 years because the city offered facilities for the education of their children, facilities entirely denied to them in the back parts of the State. The children of the people in the back country, if they remain out there, must become the hewers of wood and carriers of water. So we find their parents drift to the city where they can have their children educated and later find employment for them. In that way the population of the metropolitan area has grown, and now, because of the lack of employment, these people are going back to the goldfields in large numbers. They are the men who would be employed in the smaller mines producing gold and assisting Western Australia to regain its former prosperity. Again there would be a big market for much of the produce grown in Western Australia. Therefore I hope that the encouragement we have been given in the last day or two will be more definite within the week, and that the Commonwealth Government will announce that it is their intention to pay a gold bonus. Whatever may be said by economists, I am convinced that such a bonus would help the State to bridge its difficulties.

Mr. H. W. Mann: We shall be prepared to take the risk.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not think the risk would be great. We heed the cry about the production of more wheat, more wool,

and more butter, but what is the use of producing all these things if they cannot be sold, and particularly if the commodities cannot be sold at a profit? We are only impoverishing the community. If the whole community is engaged in producing commodities that are sold at a loss, the community becomes more impoverished day by day; so to-day the only thing we can produce which the world wants is gold, of which there is a decided scarcity. Western Australia can produce any amount of gold. I do not know of any industry other than mining in which men will embark their labour for the sake of a small reward. There is always the expectation of much better results.

Hon. P. Collier: They never look for the basic wage.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They are prepared to work for months and months without any return in the hope of one day striking it rich. There are any number of those men still in Western Australia. The Minister referred to the fact that the Wiluna mine will reach the production stage at the beginning of the year. That may mean a very rapid increase in our gold output. The Wiluna development is more important to us than probably anything else, because of the fact that there is erected on that mine the latest possible mining equipment.

Hon. P. Collier: And it will treat ores that we could never treat before.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The equipment is the foremost in the world. There was a time in this country when the Kalgoorlie field was the best equipped in the world, but the Kalgoorlie people lost their opportunity. They became too well off. They were producing great quantities of gold year after year, and while that gold was being produced, while the mines were paying, the directors considered that everything in the garden was lovely.

Hon. P. Collier: They paid dividends and did not give a thought to reserves.

Hon. M. F. TROY: And they did not bring the plants up to date. Then when the evil day fell upon them they found they had made no provision for the future, with the result that they had to appeal to the Government. The Government, of which Mr. Collier was Premier, appointed Mr. Kingsley Thomas a Royal Commission to investigate the position of the industry. Mr.

Thomas was one of the foremost mining men in South Africa. When the Collier Government appealed to the South African Government for the services of a man to inquire into the mining industry of Western Australia, the Union Government of South Africa strongly recommended Mr. Kingsley Thomas. They said that Mr. Thomas was the one man who could be recommended and we were very fortunate in securing his services. Although Mr. Thomas was associated with the Chamber of Mines of South Africa, he had no difficulty in placing his finger on the weak spot of Western Australian mining. He declared that our mines had been allowed to go back, that the industry had been neglected, and that the existing position was due entirely to the maladministration of the Chamber of Mines of Western Australia. Mr. Thomas's report was most scathing, and of course it raised the ire of the mine managers in this State. The Chamber of Mines had year after year been issuing manifestos to the people, laying the blame for the position on the workers in the industry. As a matter of fact, most of what was wrong was due to the man who was on top. Like other such men they had become affluent and consequently lazy and indifferent—some of them, of course, not all. There are some outstanding men in the Chamber of Mines, men of great capacity, but one man had never been down his mine for eight years, so Mr. Thomas discovered.

The Minister for Mines: Did he have T.B.?

Hon. M. F. TROY: No, he did not. He apparently did not take the risks. When I was Minister for Mines it was alleged I was hard on the Chamber of Mines, because I did not allow them to wring sums of money out of me. My view was that the employers in the industry were not doing sufficient for themselves.

Hon. P. Collier: You embarrassed us up there at the time.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Mr. Kingsley Thomas, before going to London, told me that all the money we might give these people was of no value, and that it would be thrown away. He urged that they should be made to stand up to their obligations, to improve their own mining operations and their equipment. He said they did not require half

a dozen managers, half a dozen different staffs and so on, and that they should amalgamate their mines. He pointed out that the Golden Mile carried half a dozen staffs, a dozen sets of directors, and half a dozen managers. He said the whole thing ought to be controlled by a few men having up-to-date knowledge of mining operations, and that this was the only way to restore the mining industry on the Golden Mile. They have had to come to that since. To-day many of the mines on the Golden Mile are amalgamated, and are being brought up to date. Whatever may have been said about the Chamber of Mines in Kalgoorlie in the past, that body is more alert and efficient than it has been in the past 20 years. That is a fine thing for the industry. If I were Minister for Mines, I might be agreeable to helping the Chamber of Mines.

The Minister for Mines: I heard you say that once before from over there, and you were warned by your Premier about it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They had not mended their ways. I had to resist them, and I think I did so in the best interests of the State. I did not resist them because I had anything against the Chamber. I resisted them because I thought it my duty to do so, to see that they did their job properly, and did not rely upon the State for aid to which, in the circumstances, they were not entitled. I am glad to know that the industry at Kalgoorlie has been resuscitated, that to-day it is more prosperous than it has been for many years. There is a better feeling there of security and permanence. That has largely been brought about by amalgamations and by the added interest that has been taken in the industry by those in control of mining affairs. It would be a fine thing for Western Australia if all our mines were equipped in the way the Wiluna mine is.

The Minister for Mines: There is room for a lot of similar plants.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes. Many of the mines would be working to-morrow if they had the necessary equipment. The Youanmi mine was closed down because the equipment was obsolete and valueless. At the time the company would have done something if the Government of the day had assisted the management. They only required to get an overdraft guaranteed for £5,000 in order to maintain a few hundred men and keep going.

The Minister for Mines: Only until the £5,000 had gone.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Mitchell Government at that time denied the mine any assistance. I do not blame the Minister for that. I have seen the file and know that the present Minister for Mines strongly urged Cabinet to make the necessary provision. The assistance was refused, but he came at it again. I say of the Minister that he did his utmost to keep the mine open. The Premier was, however, unsympathetic as he always has been in matters concerning the mining industry.

The Minister for Mines: I think he was right on that occasion. I saw the mine afterwards. If I have ever seen pig-rooting, which is called gold-mining, commend me to the Youanmi.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Minister had no chance to see it later, because the mine was closed down.

The Minister for Mines: I did go over it afterwards.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am satisfied that with proper equipment the mine would be a good gold producer; in fact, I feel sure it will be so again. I now wish to say a word or two on the recent medical examination of the men on the mines. This has perturbed quite a number of men in the industry. A larger number were turned down in comparison with the number examined that was the case at the previous examination. This was the work of one doctor. I have nothing to say against him. I believe he did his work to the best of his ability and quite properly. **It is, however, a mistake to leave the examinations to one medical man.** As pointed out by the member for Hannans, mistakes have been made in determining T.B. cases. There have been numbers of instances where men have been turned down and prohibited from further employment in mines by the laboratory doctor, who was travelling the country and making examinations, whereas several of these men went to Kalgoorlie, and were admitted to employment by the same laboratory but by a different doctor. If the gold bonus is ever obtained, a great many men will be employed in the industry. We do not want to have kept out of the industry men who are still well enough to be employed in it. It is not possible in any community to get men who are entirely without physical blemish. Every man cannot be expected to be like an athlete, in the pink of condi-

tion. It would be wise if the department would revert to the old method of examination by a board, such as was done in the early administration of the Miners' Phtisis Act. The results accruing therefrom were much more satisfactory than under the present system. No doubt the doctor in question acted conscientiously, but he also appears to have acted in error. But at the same time he may not have been in error; the other doctor may have been wrong. Whatever is the case, it will be an embarrassment to the industry if numbers of men are turned down because they are not perfect specimens of humanity. I have one or two complaints to make with regard to the present Administration, in the hope that my remarks may prove a corrective. The person upon whom we must depend for the extension of the industry is principally the prospector. He is the finest type of man engaged in it. He is the man who opened up the country in the early days. He took all the risks and made the industry possible. That sort of man ought to be encouraged, but the present Administration have done nothing but discourage him. When the Minister for Mines was in the former regime, a prospecting vote was arranged to give assistance to the prospector. It was not given to all men, but a number of them were helped, and in that way the industry was assisted. Large numbers of prospectors were enabled to make a living and produced a fair amount of gold which kept the State batteries going. They required assistance only occasionally. To my great regret and disgust, I find that large numbers of these men cannot now get either sustenance or any assistance. Every time I have called at the Mines Department, since the House met, I have been told there is no money. I hope the Minister will improve that position. These men must get assistance and they ought to get it. It is incomprehensible to me that a Ministry can maintain a large body of men at Blackboy, doing nothing of any real value to the country, and can deny ordinary assistance to men in the back country who are helping to carry on the mining industry and without whose help the industry cannot be extended. If they are discouraged, there will be little more mining development in Western Australia. It may be good policy to get a body of men into Blackboy, who might prove a menace

to the peace of the Minister if they were allowed to roam at large; but it is bad policy to deny the man in the back country, who would not come to the city to look for sustenance, any reasonable help when he is able to do so much for the State. During the past few weeks we have been discussing legislation having for its purpose the assistance of wheat growers. There has been no difficulty about that. Parliament has promised all sorts of legislation to help them. It is a lop-sided Parliament if all the public support is to be given to one class of the community, who cannot help themselves, and that the men in the back country who never come to the city and are never heard of except through their representatives in Parliament, are to receive no support of any kind, and in effect are to be penalised. I will not stand for such a thing. Many of those in other industries who are already assisted as the result of our legislation are men who have done well in the last few years, whilst there are others, of course, who have not succeeded. There are men who have been assisted by sympathetic legislation who have been able to take trips to England. I know one man who complained about what the country owed him, and of the disabilities under which he was suffering, but two years ago he was able to take a trip to the Old Country.

The Attorney General: You do not suppose we are proposing to give any financial assistance to them?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do imagine it.

The Attorney General: I do not know where the money is coming from.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not know either. I know that all the resources of the country are placed at their disposal. I do not object to any man being helped if he is in difficulties. He ought to be helped, and I would support the idea of helping him. I do, however, object to the Government placing all the resources of the State at the disposal of one section and denying fair consideration to another section. The party on this side of the House never stood for that. It never stood for the interests of one section against those of another. Go where you will in the country you will see evidence of where the Collier Government gave a fair deal to every section of the community. I ask the Minister for Mines

to stand up for the men in the back country, and give them support and help, and he and I will then have nothing to quarrel about. So long as he denies support to those men, he will find me expressing my protests all over the country. I will go so far as to say that I will organise their grievances, because it is necessary that someone should stand behind them. I am hopeful the Minister will not be unsympathetic, because he has had a long association with the goldfields. He has helped these men in the past; indeed, he initiated the first assistance that was given to prospectors. The Minister has a large inspection staff on the fields. He has inspectors of mines who are not overburdened with work and who could act as useful guides in this matter. I feel sure we can prevent anything being done that is not in the interests of the State. Another objection I have to raise is in respect of the carting subsidy. In the past the Government gave the subsidy to prospectors who were situated 25 miles or more from a State battery, in order to enable them to carry out prospecting work on mines that otherwise could not be operated. It was a wise provision. Quite a number of State batteries have been kept going because of that subsidy. I think the Warriendar State battery was kept going as a gold producer more from the proceeds of that subsidy than from anything else. That battery is distant 25 miles from the Ninghan, Rothsay and Field's Find mining centres. That represents a large area of country that has produced a lot of gold. I am sorry that the subsidy has been cut down, because it is not in the interests of the further development of the mining industry of Western Australia. I have heard it said that it had been discovered that a number of prospectors had merely carted old dumps to the batteries. That may have been done in a few instances. That sort of thing will happen, but it does not condemn the principle, because thousands of tons of ore genuinely mined have been carted to the batteries and will continue to be carted in the days to come. In those circumstances, it is necessary that the prospector shall receive every assistance possible from the Government. Then, again, there is the concession regarding the tonnage for free treatment. That concession has been reduced, but I shall not

quarrel with the Minister on that score. My major objection relates to the assistance to prospectors and the carting subsidy. There have been a few pettifogging economies that I do not think should have been effected. I have spoken to the Minister regarding the closing down of the offices of the mining registrars at Menzies, Yalgoo and Sandstone, and the Minister has promised that the mining population will receive the same attention as in the past, even though the mining registrars have been taken away. I tell the Minister that the people in those centres may be able to get their miners' rights from the honorary registrars, but many people in those outback centres require assistance in filling up papers and securing additional information that can be given only by official registrars. The same thing happens in connection with the Lands Department and, as a matter of fact, in the head office an officer is kept solely occupied in writing out applications and doing other work on behalf of applicants. The schoolmaster has been about the land for a long time, but there are still people incapable of making out applications, and who require the assistance of public servants to comply with the necessary formalities. If that is not provided, many of the people I refer to would not be affluent enough to travel 100 miles from Sandstone to Mt. Magnet, for instance, or to take similarly long journeys from other points in order to transact departmental business. Hon. members will readily understand the difficulties under which the people outback labour in this respect. There are difficulties that I hope the Minister will rectify, because I look upon these pettifogging economies that save a few pounds here and there as not worth while. Unless we receive the gold bonus, which will make the industry more prosperous, surely there are other ways of effecting savings apart from those that inflict hardships upon men who live 600 or 700 miles away in the back country. If the Minister were to carry out an investigation, he might find opportunities of effecting economies in the head office itself. He might find, particularly if the industry does not progress, that there is no necessity for several officers who are drawing large salaries under existing conditions. I suggest to the Minister that he should look around, if he desires to effect savings, but I hope he will not effect his

economies at the expense of the people living in the outer areas.

The Attorney General: What about saving a bit on account of the voluminous annual report of the Mines Department?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I would not mind effecting savings under that heading. If the Minister will support me, I will be prepared to move in that direction this evening. That is all I desire to say on the Mines Estimates. I shall be glad to work most cordially with the Minister, for I have no desire to embarrass him. All I want is a fair deal for the people I have referred to because they are the best type of men we have in the country. They put up with all the disadvantages involved in living in the back country. Unfortunately, in periods of depression, the first thing any Government appear to do is to attack the facilities enjoyed by the people outback. Attacks are made upon their railway and medical services, and in many other directions. That is done because the people are far from the seat of Government; their protests cannot be heard; they cannot give the Government any trouble. If the Minister does a fair thing by these men, I will do the fair thing by him, and will help him in the interests of the mining industry.

*[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]*

**MR. CUNNINGHAM** (Kalgoorlie) [9.7]: I will not occupy much of the time of the Committee in dealing with the Mines Estimates. I am thankful for the assurance of the Minister for Mines that the sum of £45,000 will be continued as a rebate on account of water supplies to the mines at Kalgoorlie. I was under the impression that the amount would be cut out. I remember having read a report in the newspaper a few days ago, which indicated that certain economies were to be effected in connection with the loan expenditure under the Mines Development Act. However, I am glad of the Minister's assurance under that heading. There is one matter I desire to bring under the Minister's notice. In years gone by it has been the practice of those in authority, when dealing with applications for assistance to prospectors, to consider only the applications of those who were known as old prospectors. Quite recently an application was made for prospecting assistance by men who had not previously been con-

needed with the mining industry as prospectors, although they had that connection as mine workers. There were others with an application in as well and, as a result of their long association with prospecting, theirs received first consideration and the application of the younger men was not entertained. To my mind that is altogether wrong. There are men who engaged in prospecting 30 years ago and have grown old in that occupation. I think the time has arrived when the Minister should give consideration to the younger men, irrespective of the fact that they have not had an opportunity to undertake prospecting work before. It will be remembered that in years gone by, at the inception of mining in this State, men came to Western Australia who had had no previous experience in prospecting but their work led in many instances to the discovery of mines. Many of them are now old men and have outlived their usefulness as prospectors. That is the point I want to bring under the notice of the Minister and I want to urge him to give the younger men an opportunity. I urge him to give that opportunity to men who are physically fit to do that work and to put up with the hardships inseparable from such activities.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Would not those older men be good guides to the young fellows?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: There is no royal road leading to a gold mine, nor is any guide necessary to find the gold that is already in the country. The Minister should give the younger men an opportunity to engage in this work. We have heard quite a lot recently with reference to the gold bonus. So far as my experience and knowledge of the industry leads me to understand the position, I am one of those in this House who believes that the gold bonus is as dead as Julius Caesar. I have never believed that we will ever get a gold bonus, and I do not believe we shall get it to-day.

Mr. Marshall: We may get it to-morrow.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: If we were to put a proposition before the Commonwealth Government, through our own State Government, for assistance to enable necessary developmental work to be carried out on a pound for pound basis, for actual approved work accomplished to the satisfaction of our own Minister for Mines, I believe we would be able to attract a good

deal of money for the assistance of the mining industry. In addition to that, I believe it would be possible, provided we presented our case properly, to get money for the purchase of up-to-date and efficient plant to enable ore to be treated on modern lines. If we were to place such propositions before the Federal Government, I think we would meet with success.

Mr. Marshall: That would merely bolster up old companies and not assist new ones.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Not at all: I am inclined to think that the hon. member must have been asleep for some time! It is a matter of assisting companies that are operating to-day, but who have not the money necessary to carry out essential developmental work. In addition to that, we will give the leaseholders an opportunity to take up leases and develop them on the basis of a pound for pound subsidy for actual work approved and accomplished. That should attract money to enable us to do something of real assistance to mining. Although I believe the gold bonus has gone—we will never get it—if we present our case in the proper way, we should be able to get sufficient money to enable operations to be carried on successfully along the lines I have indicated. By that means companies and leaseholders will get at least £2 worth of work done for every £1 provided. In addition to that, we will force the participating companies to prove their bona fides by putting up their proportion of the necessary money. That should induce people to come to this State and should help the Commonwealth Treasurer to agree to our request for assistance. It would convince him that we were out to do something for the further development of gold mining in Western Australia.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.15]: I have no desire to cast a silent vote on these Estimates, and I must say I disagree entirely with the theory of assistance to the industry expounded by the member for Kalgoorlie. It would simply bring money into the State for the erection of new plant and the development of long-established mines, the shareholders in which, had they been well advised by their managers, would have provided themselves with the necessary money years ago. What would be the benefit the hon. member's suggestion for the

opening up of new fields, for the purpose of prospecting and initiating the discovery of other goldfields? The scheme would be of no use there, for the hon. member himself emphasised that under the scheme we should have £2 worth of work done for the expenditure of £1. That connotes the finding of £1 by somebody, and I do not know any prospector who could find a £1 with which to win £1 from the Commonwealth.

Mr. Cunningham: The prospector's labour is his capital.

Mr. MARSHALL: But in the circumstances that would not help him much. I am convinced we are going to get the gold bonus, but exactly how much it will be—

The Minister for Mines: And when—

Mr. MARSHALL: And when, are matters that must be left for the time being. I really do believe that we shall get encouragement for the mining industry and that it will be in the form of a bonus, and that without waiting for the far distant future. Alleged economists say that a gold bonus is an unsound proposition, although many of them justify bounties upon such commodities as port wine, flax and sugar. In 99 out of 100 instances where assistance is being granted at present, no market can be found for those commodities. Mr. Parker Moloney, the Commonwealth Minister for Markets, is now touring England trying to find markets for the commodities on which Federal bonuses are being paid. So without posing as an economist, I confess it appeals to me that the one commodity on which a bonus could justifiably be paid is gold. The industry and its product have been persecuted for years. The price of gold cannot be increased, and in fact we cannot always get the world's parity for it. During the war it was denied us. And in every other way the gold mining industry has been saddled with extra costs, such as tariff duties, in order to provide bounties for the manufacture of commodities for which a market cannot be found. Conversely, the world is hungry for gold. I sincerely hope the Federal Government will shortly show themselves a little more favourable towards the gold mining industry, and that in the near future we shall have an entirely new activity in gold mining. At the very suggestion of a deputation proceeding East

with a view to presenting the case for a gold bonus, our Mines Department becomes more active than it has been for many years. The Minister himself will agree that the department has made many inquiries into the condition of old mining shows in the expectation of a gold bonus being granted. I think the gold production has increased recently, which is very encouraging in a State where the decline in the gold yield has continued for many years. This renewed activity is principally due to the fact that many people are expecting from the Federal Government more favourable consideration for the industry. Personally I believe we shall get the gold bonus. I am like the member for Mount Magnet: while I want to agree with the Minister, I am afraid occasions will arise that will preclude any such agreement. The Minister for Mines and I have been continually wrangling for many years past, expect of course during the term following upon his decision to do the State a good turn by retiring from Parliament. Now that he has come back to us I am forced to comment a little harshly upon a practice, not only of the present Minister, but also of his predecessor, a practice under which anybody who can spin a fairly good tale can expect concessions from the Mines Department, concessions not always granted to others. It is well known that certain persons can hold up fairly large areas of gold mining tenements. The time has arrived to enter a protest against any further granting of concessions over fairly large areas to people who stoutly protest their intention to raise money for the development of those areas. The Big Bell lease, the Minister must admit, was protected for quite a period on the evidence submitted to him that the gentleman concerned would raise a large sum of money and devote it to the development of the lease. That gentleman proceeded to England, returning here last March. I am informed by the Under Secretary of Mines that the gentleman referred to cabled out to the department that a diamond drill was on the way for the purpose of boring on the lease, and that he himself would return with the necessary capital. I think that was the last the Mines Department heard of him, notwithstanding which the land is held up. And there is an area of about seven square miles reserved around the lease to which I am



alluding. The reservation of that land came very unexpectedly. It was due to the fact that the drill on that lease revealed that the lode was pitching farther east than had been expected. The one man employed on the drill was accused of getting inside information. At all events he was wise enough to take out a lease on the east side of the Big Bell proposition. He got the lease, but the then Minister for Mines, Mr. Munsie, agreed to make a reserve around his lease and all along the side of the Big Bell mine, going three-quarters of a mile away. I agree that the department should at all times protect itself and protect those who are prepared to put money into a mining proposition, but I doubt whether they should hold up such very large areas. I suggest to the Minister that he consider the releasing of that reservation either in whole or in part. Then if those concerned in the Big Bell lease should require any further area, there will be sufficient left for the purpose. I could mention several other instances of land being held for mining on the same old story that the money is coming, although it never seems to get here. I agree that the Minister did win his argument regarding Wiluna, but that is the only case where, after a long period, the money did actually arrive. Wiluna is the shining star on the horizon of gold mining in this State. I have travelled most of the goldfields of the world; I have been on the Rand, I have been up in Rhodesia, I have been in Central America, in the best part of Asia—

The Minister for Mines: What on earth did you come here for?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yet I have never seen so well equipped a gold mine as that at Wiluna. It is a lesson to all other companies now operating in Western Australia. Not only is there extreme efficiency in the manner in which the lease at Wiluna is being developed, but the management are more than humane in their treatment of their employees. They are not treating their employees as other companies do, sending them hither and thither among the leases and locating them in veritable rubbish spots, but they have picked out suitable localities for their habitations and in addition have created recreation reserves. It is singular in the history of gold mining in this State. I hope that when the railway opens, the Kal-

goorlie managers one and all will visit Wiluna, if only for their own edification, for they can learn quite a lot in Wiluna. I do not say the Kalgoorlie managers are not up-to-date, but certainly they are slothful and sluggish.

Mr. Munsie: Not all of them.

Mr. MARSHALL: With very few exceptions.

Hon. P. Collier: The man responsible for the opening up of Wiluna is a Kalgoorlie man.

Mr. MARSHALL: That gentleman might be an up-to-date manager, but he has played a very small part in the development of Wiluna. He has paid periodical visits to the place.

Hon. P. Collier: Did not he design the plant?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, the man who designed it is now there, Mr. Harris. Mr. Vail might have played a more or less important part. I join with the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) in regretting the delay in dealing with applications by prospectors for sustenance. I know the difficulties that have arisen and that money is not as easy to secure as in the past, but one has to admit that if any section of the community deserves favourable consideration over what might be given to any other section, it is the prospectors. I do not necessarily include all of them; unfortunately, some of them do not do as well as others. Generally speaking, however, they are prepared to go out and sacrifice all the comforts of civilisation and toil in isolated spots, many of them alone. When men are willing to make such sacrifices, the Minister is not exceeding his duty if he grants them not only consideration but preference. It is pathetic to see such men, after rendering years of service to the State, quite down on their luck and unable to afford the money to fill a prospector's outfit. It is very little good talking about the gold bonus or bolstering up the industry if we do not give first consideration to the men who initiated it. Every ounce of gold taken from a mine leaves it that much the poorer. Our first mission should be to ensure that the prospectors are well cared for and that their applications are promptly and favourably considered. I hope the Minister will do his best to give immediate consideration to the applications that have been lodged. When I spoke to one of his officers, I was given to understand that

an excessive number of applications awaited consideration. The Minister should get busy and deal with those applications expeditiously. The Minister showed discretion in handling the pathetic side of gold mining. If he continues along the lines indicated, he will afford an opportunity to overcome the ghastly aspect of mining. I hope that the increase in the number of men suffering from tuberculosis, due to their employment in the industry, will prove to be only temporary. The Minister's predecessor in office gave us some astonishing figures, and representatives of gold mining constituencies certainly expected the figures to reveal a decrease this year. As the years go by, we hope that the mines will be cleaned up as regards the men suffering from tuberculosis. At the same time, I admit that we shall never get the disease entirely eliminated, but we do not expect the number of affected miners to increase, and that has been the experience in the last few years.

Mr. Munsie: This year shows an increase over last year's, and last year's showed an increase over the year before.

Mr. MARSHALL: If there was an increase in the second year, a decrease in the third year, and an increase in the fourth year, it might be thought that the figures had been faked. I do not suggest that that is the position. If the industry is going to cost so many lives, more drastic steps will have to be taken, because the country should not ask any section of the community to suffer the pain that comes to the home of a miner when the husband and father is slowly dying from disease contracted during his employment. I hope that future examinations will reveal a decline in the number of sufferers. I congratulate the Minister upon his return to office. He seems to have been particularly fortunate. He was a Minister when he left the public life of this State and, by a miracle or an accident, he was returned to public life and secured Ministerial office as well. That might be due to the good judgment or otherwise of the electors of Maylands. Anyhow, I offer him my congratulations, for I would prefer him to any other member of the Cabinet as Minister for Mines. I do not wish to flatter him, because he makes me feel most uncomfortable whenever he is tripping through my electorate. I ask him to assist the prospectors and see that

the holding up of gold mining leases for indefinite periods on little tales spun to him ceases. If one individual will not work them, another will do so. I wish to thank the officers of the department, whom I have always found courteous and obliging. It is a department to which I never hesitate to go when I have cause, as the officials are always kind and considerate. Every officer seems to know his work thoroughly and to do it efficiently.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.39]: There is not much gold mining carried out in the hills districts, but there is a phase of life somewhat associated with gold mining on which I wish to speak. I was in Kalgoorlie a few weeks ago and had an opportunity to inspect a poultry run carried on by a miner suffering from tuberculosis, a man who had been compensated under the Act. I was impressed with the hopeful outlook of the man. A friend informed me that since the man had engaged in poultry farming, his health had improved greatly. It was suggested that instead of the Government making weekly payments to men who had been removed from the mines, an advance should be made sufficient to enable those who so desired to engage in the poultry industry. It would be a practicable, useful and economical proposition. I dare say the Minister has considered this matter. If he has done so, I should like to hear his views, and if not I hope he will give it consideration. I was impressed with the bright outlook of the man and his family, and I hope that consideration along the lines I have suggested will be given to the question of assisting men who have to leave the mining industry.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands—in reply) [9.41]: Out of courtesy to the members who have addressed themselves to these Estimates, I must reply to some of the points raised. I realise that members sitting in Opposition are concerned about the policy of the Government. I wish to assure them that in the main matters of policy affecting the mining industry do not change to any extent with a change of Government. We may hold different opinions on some matters of detail, but on matters of general policy there is not much in the way of a change. In reply to the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie), let me say that while I agree with him to some ex-

tent regarding the recent examinations, I am not so certain that the reasons are as he stated them. I am satisfied in my own mind that if we continue as we have been proceeding in recent years, we shall never clean up the mines. If men are permitted to remain in the mines after they have become silicotic, it will not be long before they become tuberculous cases. I wish members to realise that an affected man may become tuberculous even if he does not remain in a mine. He may contract the disease from another amongst the ordinary population. We know that can happen. That is the reason why it is desirable, when men become prone to attack by tuberculosis and to develop it rapidly, that they should be placed in an industry which will take them away from large centres of population to the farming districts or to engage in industries such as that mentioned by the member for Swan in the hills districts. If they do not completely recover, they have a chance of maintaining their health for many years. On the other hand, if they live in populous centres, they are almost as liable to be attacked by the germ of tuberculosis as if they had continued to work in the mines. If we permit them to remain as long as we have done, we shall be continuing the wrong system. I therefore hope, after consulting with members who are interested in this matter, to effect a remedy.

Mr. Marshall: Something should be done to stop the numbers from increasing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The number should be reduced. As was the case in South Africa, I hope to clean up the position in time. The member for Hannans referred to the fact that we have not immediately prohibited men from being employed in the industry, on receiving an intimation that they are suffering from T.B. A man may contract T.B. within a month of his examination, and continue working in the mine for 11 months before he is again examined. After all, if he remains for another fortnight, and we can send the doctor who is appointed for the purpose into the district to see him, and decide what course should be adopted, that is not likely to be a serious matter. It would be better, of course, if we could give him notice at once to cease work in the mines, but we want to be reasonable to him as well as to the general taxpayers. No great

hardship will accrue by asking him to wait a fortnight or so for the doctor to see him and decide what should be done. The doctor does not order these men back to the mine if they are reported to be suffering from T.B. He may arrange to continue the employment of these men on the same mines but he first of all satisfies himself that the place in which it is proposed to work them is isolated from the other men on the mine, and that the occupation is a healthy one from their standpoint. Unless he can ensure that this is done, the men are taken out of the mine altogether. Some rather serious anomalies are created as a result of the wording of the Act. I have not been able to discover that there is anything more healthy by way of occupation than prospecting. It should be quite healthy for a man to dig trenches across a lease in the endeavour to discover gold. In some cases, however, we have had to prohibit men from doing that work. One man was working on the Patricia field. He took up a lease and was able to dispose of the option. The purchaser was prepared to employ him to put in a costeen across the lease. No one else was working on the lease or anywhere near it. We discovered, however, that as he was a prohibited man he could not be employed on what was virtually his own lease although he had sold the option. He, therefore, had to remain idle while the other people decided whether they should exercise the option or not. I am sure members opposite will agree that is highly absurd. We should not go to extremes in such cases because it does no good for anyone to do so. Generally speaking prospecting is a healthy occupation for a man who is only very slightly affected with miner's disease.

Mr. Munsie: There are 48 at it now.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, they are working their own shows. When they sell the option they cannot continue to work on the leases. They become employees in the mining industry, and therefore have to be prohibited from working. When my predecessor in office, the member for Hannans, drew my attention to the number of men who had been reported on the recent re-examination, I asked for information on the point. I received a lengthy report, two paragraphs of which I will read.

They are from the Chairman of the Miners' Phthisis Board, who said—

With regard to the 107 cases of silicosis, plus tuberculosis, and tuberculosis only reported, as compared with 48 last year, the Chief Quarantine Officer General also explained that the number of these cases would fluctuate from time to time as advanced silicotic cases are prone to develop tuberculosis if they come into contact with a person suffering from T.B., and he further mentioned that a good deal also depended upon the doctor examining the men. He stated, for instance, that at the first examination a man working in a mine might be found to have a small spot of T.B. on his lungs, but was no longer to any person and in every other respect strong and healthy and fit to continue at work. The doctor, knowing that the man would be re-examined in 12 months would therefore permit him to continue at work. At the second examination it might be found that the spot had increased slightly, but that in every other respect the man was in the same condition as at the first examination, and the doctor might allow him to continue in work for another year. At the third examination, however, it might be found that the spot had further increased in size, and that the disease had become definitely active, and the doctor would then report the man as suffering from tuberculosis, or silicosis plus tuberculosis, as the case might be, whereas another doctor might have reported him at the first sign of activity of the disease in the second examination.

That is what has really happened. Quite a number of people are not conscious of the fact that they have a small spot on the lungs. It may never become active. One doctor immediately discovers it by means of the X-ray. If he finds the slightest movement at the next examination, on the grounds of safety he reports the case as T.B. Another doctor might, on the second examination, say there is not much sign of activity, and that as the man will be seen 12 months later he thinks he can pass him in. We have to deal with the matter in a different way. We must get out of the mines the man who reaches an advanced stage of silicosis. We cannot permit him to continue in his own interests, and I hope to find a method of overcoming the difficulty. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) made reference to prospecting and carting subsidies. I admit that in normal circumstances we could probably afford to be pretty liberal in these matters, but under existing conditions we cannot be as liberal as we would like to be. Carting subsidies are helpful to the prospector, and to an extent to the department that controls State batteries. By

providing carting subsidies we reduce the capital cost through not having to provide State batteries in every small goldfields centre. I am afraid, however, that unfair advantage has been taken of the subsidy in some cases. I believe there are instances where men have carted old dumps, not for the purpose of getting the gold return so much as for the purpose of being paid to do the carting. It was a good proposition for them, and the amount of subsidy allowed made it worth while. The subsidy is intended to be a part payment for the service done. If the whole amount is paid it becomes a grant. If a man thinks his proposition is worth while, he should pay something towards the cost of taking the ore from the point of production to the point of treatment. I have therefore amended the regulation, which I think is still fairly liberal. The regulation now reads—

A subsidy will be paid on ore carted to State batteries for treatment outside a radius of five miles from such batteries. The total amount of subsidy shall not exceed 16s. 8d. per ton and the rate shall not exceed 8d. per ton per mile.

That is a subsidy apart from the cost. I admit it is not the full cost.

Ore carted over five miles to a siding and then railed to a State battery, a subsidy not exceeding 8d. per ton per mile for the distance over 5 miles to a siding, plus the railage to the State battery, up to a maximum of 16s. 8d. per ton.

Ore carted five miles or less than five miles to a siding, and thence railed to a State battery, the total cost of cartage and railage, provided both charges are considered reasonable by the department, less 7s. 6d. per ton.

Payment of subsidies shall be restricted to ore which has been mined and raised by present holders of mining tenements; filling from old stopes shall not qualify for subsidies.

If in the opinion of the Minister for Mines circumstances justify such action, the rate of subsidy may be reduced below 8d. per ton per mile. In exceptional cases the Minister for Mines may increase the rate of subsidy above 8d. per ton per mile.

We have fixed 8d. per ton per mile to be accepted as the rule. That will apply without further reference.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You have made a reduction of one-third.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. I consider that the previous subsidy, whilst justified under the conditions that prevailed until recently, cannot be justified to-day. It was not a subsidy, but a grant sufficient to

cover the cost of cartage. Quite a number of men were operating trucks in order to earn the subsidy, and men were being induced to cart old dumps merely to get the subsidy.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Give an instance of that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Only one day last week a case was brought under my notice, when I was asked to prosecute, but I declined to do so.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You should prosecute.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. The man only did what scores of others have done, namely, took advantage of the liberal provisions which my predecessor had provided at a time when it was probably quite right to give them. To-day it is not possible to afford these facilities. This is a fair and reasonable subsidy to grant.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Why embarrass all prospectors because of the actions of a few?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I asked recently what this subsidy amounted to. I received a complete report from the Inspector of State Batteries, who gave a return showing all the crushings at the batteries, the number of tons subsidised, the amount of the subsidy, the subsidy per ton, and the percentage of subsidised ore. He wound up by saying—

We have not segregated the actual returns from subsidised ore, but taking the gold won for the year ended 30th December, 1929, namely, £86,356, and apportioning it in accordance with the tonnage subsidised, we find that such tonnage produced £48,000, equal to approximately 11,300 fine ozs. The £6,952 subsidy was paid equal to a bonus of 12s. 3d. on each fine oz. recovered.

Hon. M. F. Troy: But it helped the industry.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Federal Government are talking about a bonus of £1 an ounce, but here is a cartage subsidy alone amounting to 12s. 3d. per ton.

Hon. M. F. Troy: A paltry £6,000 a year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know there is another side to the question. Whilst being fair and reasonable to prospectors in remote parts of the State, to men who have to cart and rail great distances, I must consider the conditions now prevailing. I must find sufficient money to do these things. It will be hard enough without doing so on the basis that previously existed. I have already stated that those provisions have been taken

advantage of, not for the purpose of producing gold so much as producing cartage and earning the subsidy.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Not at all. Men will not take on cartage that lasts only for a few days. Look at Warriendar.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Warriendar has had a good cut out of the subsidy. In that centre the amount of subsidy paid was £1,160 on 1,310 tons. I know the hon. member is anxious about the matter, but so are we all. If we could find the money, I should raise no objection to the payment of subsidies. I cannot, however, justify the subsidies on cartage alone, together with all the rest of our losses. The cost of operating our State batteries, including cartage and railage subsidies, amounts, I well believe, to £1 per ounce for every ounce of gold produced. No one has anything to growl about over that.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You must consider all the batteries in the State, and the men you keep out in the bush. They are better there than in the city.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not complaining of the hon. member's attitude. There is, however, a point beyond which we cannot go. The regulation, which has recently been gazetted, goes as far as I can expect the Treasurer to meet the position. I hope, however, things may brighten up a little later on. As I said on the Address-in-reply, I know I shall get what my predecessor got when he announced that a good deal of the expenditure under the Mining Vote would have to cease. He said that a good many of the prospecting and sustenance allowances would be affected.

Hon. M. F. Troy: He got the money all the same.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He was severely criticised for his statement. But he got money from a source from which I cannot get it—the Disabilities Grant. It is all very well for the member for Mt. Magnet to adopt his present attitude; but the member for Hannans, after having made the very definite announcement I have quoted, was only enabled by the assistance of the Treasurer from the Disabilities Grant to continue assistance for a further period. The Disabilities Grant has ceased. I must find the money from another source. I want the member for Mt. Magnet to be fair in regard to realising—

Hon. M. F. Troy: Do you realise that the farmers of this country—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall not argue the subject from the point of view of what some other industry has received. The hon. member can adopt that attitude if he likes. All the story has not been told as to the amount of assistance rendered by previous Governments and the present Government to the mining industry. In the circumstances I ask the hon. member to be reasonable and accept my assurance that as soon as the Treasurer tells me funds will be as easy to obtain as previously, I shall be no less generous in this matter than my predecessors have been. It is all a question of funds. I am grateful to hon. members for their acceptance of the Mines Estimates.

Hon. M. F. Troy: What about assistance to prospectors?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Until the Treasurer can find funds, I do not know how far we can go in that matter.

Hon. M. F. Troy: What is the Treasurer doing about it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have seen the Treasurer often enough. The hon. member can see him. The hon. member has been a Minister of the Crown, and therefore knows that it is the easiest thing in the world to spend money if it can be found. When in Opposition the hon. member said that if he were Minister for Mines he would do such and such things.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I did them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. He said he would put up a battery in every place where gold was found.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I did it, too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member was told by the then Leader of the Opposition, "Do not commit us too far; we may get there." It is all in "Hansard." The first request the hon. member, as Minister for Mines, got for a State battery was from Yalgoo. As a private member he had said that if there was one place in the State which should have a State battery, it was Yalgoo. But when he was Minister for Mines he turned down the application with a thud.

Hon. M. F. Troy: No. In order to prove Yalgoo's claim to a State battery—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member had already proved Yalgoo's claim to a State battery, before he was Minister for Mines. He had said definitely that Yalgoo warranted a State battery. It is all very

well for him to adopt his present attitude when he is not responsible for finding the funds. The position is different to-day. I have to accept what funds are available to me. I acknowledge that the mining industry and the men engaged in it are entitled to the best we can do for them, but I cannot go beyond what funds the Treasurer can find. My immediate predecessor had difficulty in finding funds.

Hon. P. Collier: Just as I had difficulty.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. It was due largely to the generosity of the late Treasurer that the late Minister for Mines was able to do as well as he did. I shall be delighted if on the 30th June next I can tell the House that the Treasurer has found me all the money I am asking the Chamber to agree to now. I will see that my end of the stick is kept up in that respect; if the other departments get their funds, I will get mine. If they do not, I have no definite assurance to give. I cannot do what is impossible. Money is not available now as it was previously, and we have to do our best with the tools available.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We want something, anyhow.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: You will get it.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We have nothing.

Item, State Mining Engineer and Chief Inspector of Mines, £960:

Hon. M. F. TROY: This salary shows an increase of £60. The Mines Department not being very active, what is the reason for the increase? This is the gentleman who controls the expenditure of the Mining Development Vote, subject to the Minister. I admit that the office is highly important and that the officer is entitled to a corresponding remuneration. In reply to the Minister's remarks as to my having promised batteries, I wish to say that in response to a request from my own electorate for a battery at Yalgoo, I said that the Yalgoo people would get a battery if they provided the ore. I agreed to rail free from Yalgoo to the Cue battery 1,000 tons of ore to prove the results. Here the Minister tells us he cannot get a penny from the Treasurer to assist prospecting. The previous Government found money for that purpose. The present Minister says that I gave the prospectors nothing.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I gave the men in the back country the greatest opportunity they have had since Mr. Gregory sent out prospectors. If the Minister has not a penny, why is there an increase in this salary?

Hon. P. Collier: That will be a grade rise, owing to reclassification.

Hon. M. F. TROY: When Minister for Mines I abolished the position of Chief Inspector of Machinery, which in my opinion is an entirely separate office and should not be provided for in this department. I made Mr. Howe, State Battery Superintendent and Chief Inspector of Machinery. At that time Mr. Matthews, I understand, was spending the whole of his time in the office, doing no work outside. I effected a considerable saving there. Now, I understand, the Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery is spending all his time in the office. If the Minister effects savings in the Mines Department by cutting out assistance to prospectors and facilities in the back country, why does he not economise in his own office? I was able to do it. I was able to make effective economies. If the department have no activities and no money, why this expenditure at head office? What are the head office staff doing? I daresay this increase is a grade increase and the officer a very good officer; but still I contend that instead of people in the back country being penalised, we should have some economy in the head office.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member will know that the increase in the salary of the State Mining Engineer is quite out of my control as it is an automatic increase to which he is entitled under the classification. That is the only reason why the increase is shown. I do not say there is no money available for any purpose. The Loan Estimates show that £31,000 is provided for the development of goldfields and mineral resources and there is an additional £45,000 under the Sale of Government Property Trust Account, which provides £76,000 as against £91,000 last year. I do not know whether the hon. member suggests that because we shall not have quite so much money available as formerly, we should undertake drastic retrenchment. If we secure the gold bonus about which

the member for Murchison is so confident, the Mines Department will be asked to undertake most of the work in connection with applications for the bonus. I do not desire to understaff the department. In my opinion, there is no other Government department that is run more economically than the Mines Department, the officers of which have to carry great responsibility. I will not be a party to any foolish reduction in the staff. I know the hon. member did a service to the country when he reduced the staff some years ago, but the explanation of that was to be found in the way branches of the department were scattered all over the place, due to the lack of housing accommodation. It is my intention to spread the money available as in the past, in rendering assistance to the industry in the best possible way.

Item, Inspectors of Mines, £3,288:

Mr. MUNSIE: Will the Minister give us some information as to the intentions of the Government regarding workmen's inspectors? Previously four were employed, but one was found to be suffering from tuberculosis and had to be withdrawn from the industry. I have been informed that it is not the intention of the Government to call for applications with a view to filling the vacancy, and that it is intended to reduce the number of workmen's inspectors employed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not in a position to say what will be done regarding workmen's inspectors. At present there is no intention of filling the vacancy caused by the removal of the officer to whom the hon. member referred. I view the work of these inspectors largely as that of check inspectors. They have neither the knowledge nor the training the departmental inspectors have and cannot be expected to do their work or carry similar responsibility. We should have workmen's inspectors to protect the interests of the men from certain standpoints only. I have no intention of reducing the number of workmen's inspectors unless the financial position becomes such that we shall have to carry on with perhaps two instead of three. I can tell hon. members that I have dispensed with the services of all the workmen's inspectors in the timber industry because there is nothing for them to do owing to the condition of that industry.

Mr. Marshall: What was the explanation for the alteration in the duration of the appointments?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That was to enable us to consider whether we should continue employing the present number or not. There is no intention at present of altering the number of workmen's inspectors, but should a vacancy occur then we might have to reconsider the position.

Item, Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery, £600:

Hon. M. F. TROY: Will the Minister tell us what are the duties of this particular officer? The inspection of machinery branch has a small staff. I had a lot to do with this branch and I found impositions. I found there was a Chief Inspector of Machinery, but another man in the office was doing the work. I found a lot of window dressing that tended to magnify the importance of the office, and the cost was a charge on the general community.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Chief Inspector of Machinery is also the State Mining Engineer and the Chief Inspector of Mines. The Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery is the only man who is filling an office position in charge of the district inspectors who formerly numbered eight, but now number six. The officer's work cannot possibly be undertaken by the State Engineer, who has to carry the responsibility but naturally requires assistance.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The State Mining Engineer has an assistant who is receiving £804. The department is not active.

The Minister for Mines: Which department?

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Mines Department. I administered it and I know all about it. At one time the department was most active, but unfortunately it is not active now. The State Mining Engineer has an assistant and then, as head of the machinery branch, he has a deputy chief inspector of machinery. I am interested in this department, for it has been consistently built up in many respects. I carried out certain re-organisation, but since the department was re-organised—

Hon. P. Collier: It has re-organised itself back to where it was.

The Minister for Mines: And I would hate to interfere with your work.

Hon. M. F. TROY: When I left the department there was no assistant for the Chief Inspector of Machinery.

Hon. P. Collier: Now you are criticising your own re-organisation.

Hon. M. F. TROY: No, but there was no deputy chief inspector of machinery. That post was wiped out and two other positions were amalgamated. It is not necessary now to have a deputy chief inspector of machinery. And I believe there is also a senior inspector of machinery. There is no necessity for an officer to sit down in an office doing largely clerical work and styling himself Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery. He should be able to find more suitable work out in the field. The Minister might well effect a saving there.

Item—Inspector of Mines, special services, £24:

Mr. MUNSIE: I should like the Minister to tell us who is now making inquiries and securing the information necessary to the Miners' Phthisis Board. This work was previously done by the workmen's inspector, Mr. Darcey.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I asked the chairman of the Miners' Phthisis Board how they proposed to carry on with the lesser number of members, and he said there would be no difficulty whatever. He repeated that to me quite recently. The work is not nearly so great now as it was in the early stages.

Mr. MUNSIE: Is Mr. Phoenix doing the work?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Mr. MUNSIE: I have no objection to that. Mr. Phoenix, the chief of the district inspectors, is recognised as the ventilation expert. Until quite recently none but Mr. Phoenix and the workmen's inspector, Mr. Darcey, made any test of temperatures. Mr. Phoenix is exceptionally well qualified for the purpose, but if he is doing also the work for the Miners' Phthisis Board, I think he is being asked to do too much. Whenever the examinations are being held and the doctor is away from Kalgoorlie, Mr. Phoenix, because of his knowledge of the work, has to carry extra responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: So far as I can obtain the information, Mr. Phoenix



finds no difficulty in doing this work for the board.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Council of Industrial Development, £1,175—agreed to.*

*Vote—State Labour Bureau, £3,421:*

Mr. H. W. MANN: I should like to know from the Minister what steps he intends to take for the re-organisation of the bureau, which is really useless as it is to-day.

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY: I have lots of intentions but I cannot announce them yet, because if I start re-organising this department I do not know quite where it will end. But certainly I have intentions.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Minister for Police £254,842:*

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.29 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 23rd October, 1930.*

	PAGE
Assent to Bills ... ..	1257
Question: Mining permits ... ..	1257
Motion: Traffic Act, to disallow regulation ... ..	1258
Bills: Main Roads, 3R. ... ..	1260
Vermion Act Amendment, report ... ..	1260
Education Act Amendment, report... ..	1260
Parliamentary Allowance Amendment, 2R. ... ..	1261

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. High School Act Amendment.
2. Supply (No. 2), £970,000.

### QUESTION—MINING PERMITS.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Minister for Country Water Supplies: 1, Under Section 31, Subsection 4, of the Mines Regulation Act, 1906, how many permits have been issued since the 1st January, 1930—(a) originals, (b) renewals? 2, How many such permits, or renewal of permits, have been refused? 3, What permits have been issued under this section since the 12th July, 1930? 4, What are the names of the persons to whom, and the names of the mines on which (a) permits have been issued, (b) renewal of permits has been refused? 5, What were the reasons for such refusals? 6, Have any complaints been lodged regarding the safety of the mining hoists? 7, Have any suggestions been made as to the desirability of amending the Act, and/or do the Mines Department contemplate amending the Act? 8, How many permits are in force?

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, (a) ten; (b) one. 2, Three. 3, Five. 4, (a)—

Permits issued since 1-1-1930, date expired or to expire, and mine.

J. A. Smith, 15-9-30—Horseshoe Mine, Boulder.

Southcombe, W. A., 18-9-30—Lake View South, Fimiston.

Gunn, Richard Trail, 27-9-30—Enterprise G.M., Boulder.

Gunn, Richard John, 27-9-30—Enterprise G.M., Boulder.

McKay, John Howat, 5-11-30—Glencairn Extended, Greenbushes.

De Paoli, Giacomo, 5-11-30—Great Victoria Mine, Burbidge.

Douglas, Keith Dunbar, 13-2-31—Lake View Lease, Fimiston.

Gaynor, William, 21-2-31—Great Boulder G.M., Fimiston.

Smith, James Albert, 16-3-31—Lake View and Star (Horseshoe), Fimiston.

Edwards, George, 3-4-31—Claim 952, Greenbushes.

Rosewarne, Albert Edward, 10-4-31—Lake View G.M., Fimiston.

(b)—

Permits refused.

Gunn, Richard Trail, 1-10-30—Enterprise G.M., Boulder.

Gunn, Richard John, 1-10-30—Enterprise G.M., Boulder.

Greenhill, Thomas William, 1-10-30—Enterprise G.M., Boulder.

5, It is considered that permits should be granted only for a limited depth. The Enterprise shaft is down 400 feet, and in