the erection of shelter sheds or other amenities along such routes)" be inserted.

I will not read the speeches that followed, but suffice to say the present Minister for Transport, as mover of that amendment, and all other speakers including the then Minister for Transport—I think it was Mr. Marshall—insisted that this amendment was permissive and not mandatory.

It was not intended to direct something to be done by local authorities or make it mandatory, whereas the legislation we are considering at the moment does give the Transport Board the right to do these things regardless of the provisions of any other Act, and it also gives it the indisputable right of taking the cost out of these funds. So we are changing from a permissive thing to something which is compulsory.

The Minister for Transport: We are not changing, because the permissive will still be there and the compulsory will be used only in bad cases where deemed necessary.

Mr. COURT: From a legislative point of view, we have to assume the greater will always include the lesser; we have to review legislation in the light that the local authority will not co-operate and, that being so, under this subsection the Transport Board will erect these shelters. In the average type of suburb, it would not be serious as most are well ahead and the little bit added to achieve the desired result will not matter. The big argument is between the Government and the Perth City Council. In supporting the second reading I would like an assurance from the Minister that under no circumstances will this power be used brutally—brutally is not the word—

The Minister for Transport: In a high-handed manner.

Mr. COURT: —in a high-handed manner and not used or enforced until after proper consultation and the matter has been brought before the Perth City Council. It would be foolish to take action under this measure to erect shelter sheds in the City of Perth until finality is reached with the policy for handling metropolitan passenger transport. The Government would be subject to criticism; the City Council would be subject to criticism and the public would accuse the Government of official bungling. With those qualifications, I support the second reading.

On motion by Mr. Lapham, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 6.3 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 11th December, 1956.

CONTENTS.

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

QUESTION.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

Cost of Farm Improvements.

Hon. A. R. JONES asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Will he inform the House as to the total costs per acre as calculated by the Land Settlement Board for each of the areas—

Rocky Gully;
Many Peaks;
South Stirling

for improvements as set out hereunder:—

(a) Rabbit netting fencing;
(b) Sheep netting or ringlock fencing;
(c) Logging or rolling;
(d) Knocking down of heavy timber with the hi-ball method;
(e) Logging up and burning?

(2) What are the average costs of all clearing for—

(a) Rock Gully area;
(b) Many Peaks area;
(c) South Stirling?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Rocky Gully—

(a) Nil.
(b) Average cost all fencing £2 11s. 6d. per acre.
(c) Nil.
(d) £2 10s.
(e) £8.

Many Peaks—

(a) Nil.
(b) Average cost all fencing £2 15s 5d. per acre.

(e) £4 10s. This area was a mixture of heavy logging, pusher arm and hi-ball, most of which was complete before the advent of the hi-ball.
(d) £1 10s.
(e) Burning and picking up, £3.

South Stirling—
(a) Nil.
(b) Average cost all fencing £1 7s. 3d. per acre.
(c) £1 3s. 3d.
(d) Nil.
(e) 5s.

With regard to the fencing queries, it would not be possible to give an answer as requested. Hinge joint and plain wire fencing are used in various places in the project and do not conform to a set plan; therefore, average fencing costs is given.

(2) (a) Rocky Gully—£17 16s. Includes hi-ball, burning, stacking, two chainings, two pickups and restacking, regrowth control, all camp accommodation and amenities, interest and supervision.

(b) Many Peaks—£11 7s. 2d. Includes bulldozing and logging, burning and picking up, regrowth control, all camp accommodation and amenities, interest and supervision.

(c) South Stirling—£4 11s. 7d. Includes logging, burning and picking up and plowing in the early experimental period; all camp accommodation and amenities, interest and supervision. These costs are considerably reduced in current operations.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Marriage Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Chief Secretary.

2, Mines Regulation Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Railways.

BILL—STATISTICS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Section 25 and part heading added:

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: As the Bill was introduced rather hurriedly, I would ask the Chief Secretary to explain its main points again. I understand that the purpose of the Bill is to amalgamate the State and Federal statistics departments. I believe that, apart from anything else, the measure will result in a considerable saving to the State, as the position will be on all fours with what took place when the State and Federal Taxation Departments were amalgamated. The present officer in charge of the State statistics department will become the deputy commissioner in the amalgamated department. I support the second reading as I think the Bill is a desirable one.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The agreement between the Commonwealth and the State in regard to this amalgamation is exactly the same as that between the Commonwealth and each of the other States in this connection, and in substance it provides—

(a) that there should be an integrated statistical service for the purposes of the State and the Commonwealth.

(b) that the present Government Statistician of Western Australia be also the first Deputy Commonwealth Statistician in Western Australia.

(c) that subsequent appointments of any Deputy Commonwealth Statistician in this State be made after consultation with the State and that the State will appoint the same person to be Government Statistician of the State.

(d) that statistical employees in the service of the State be appointed to the integrated statistical service of the Commonwealth Public Service under conditions similar to those applying in previous cases of such staff transfer. The rights of officers agreeing to transfer will be protected.

(e) that the Commonwealth will meet the full cost of the integrated statistical service.

(f) that there shall be a joint statistical committee to examine and make recommendations should any major difficulty arise out of the agreement.

Those are the essentials of the agreement, apart from the saving to the State of approximately £80,000 per annum.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Will the statistical year book still be available to members and the public? Have arrangements been made providing for its continuance?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That was one of the first questions I asked, when the agreement was put before me.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Will we still get the monthly statistical returns?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I understand so. I made particular inquiries with regard to the pocket year book and was assured that its publication and availability would not be interfered with.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th December.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [4.47]: This is a comparatively short Bill, but I trust that by the time it has passed through this Chamber it will be shorter still. It contains certain provisions to protect human beings from using as food rabbits that may have consumed the poison known as 1080, and it also has certain penal clauses with regard to persons committing offences against the Act.

In Clause 5, the measure seeks to increase the maximum penalty from £50 to £100. I think that is entirely unnecessary; the present Act is severe enough. Even in the notes the Minister was good enough to supply us with an explanation of the contents of this Bill, there is one instance cited by the department where the offender was fined £5 on each of the charges. Therefore, we have to go a long way before we reach the maximum penalty of £50. When the nature of the offence is such that £50 is a fit penalty, then will be the time to make the amendment that is requested in this Bill.

Clause 6 proposes to amend the principal Act by adding Sections 121A and 121B. The proposed new Section 121A reads as follows:—

> (1) An inspector or authorised person may require any person—
>
> (a) to furnish him with such information as the inspector or authorised person requires; and
>
> (b) to answer any question which the inspector or authorised person puts to him;
>
> in relation to any matter or thing, for the purposes of enabling the inspector or authorised person to perform his duties, to prosecute his work, or to exercise any powers vested in him, under the provisions of this Act.

Then follows a proposed new subsection which provides for a maximum penalty of £100. Following this again, Subsection (4) reads as follows:—

> (4) A person shall not—
>
> (a) assault; or
>
> (b) use abusive language to;
>
> an inspector or authorised person.
>
> Penalty: Fifty pounds.

> (5) A person shall not —
>
> (a) incite;
> (b) encourage;
> (c) aid or abet; or
> (d) procure;
>
> another person to commit an offence against this Act.
>
> Penalty: One hundred pounds.

Then a most amazing provision is contained in proposed new subsection (6) which reads—

> A person shall not attempt to commit an offence against this Act.

How a person is going to attempt to use abusive language, I do not know.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: It is to deal with people who may stutter.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I have had a little experience with the heads of the Vermin Branch in the past. My mind goes back to a biennial meeting of the Road Board Association in Perth when the officer in charge of the Vermin Branch at the time was endeavouring to show the representatives of the road boards—who as a rule, control vermin boards in their respective areas—how many of them were neglecting their work; and he instanced one particular board.

He said that the inspector wanted to exercise his duties and to prosecute members of the vermin board because they were not destroying vermin to his satisfaction. He went on to say that it was the members of the board who prevented him from prosecuting offenders. Much to my consternation he mentioned the name of the board of which I was the chairman at the time, and I immediately challenged his statement.

That shows how such officers will wrongfully accuse people. I wonder what would happen if he met some of my farmer friends along a country road and he accused one of them of a similar offence which was also untrue! I should think that such a farmer who was wrongfully accused would use strong language; and who could blame him?

I can also recall another occurrence. I was accused of doing something which I had no right to do unless I held a permit. However, the notice which I was sent in which the complaint was made was about 20 years belated. Due to the circumstances, the notice would have had to be served on me 20 years previously to have been valid. That shows how officers can make errors. Consequently, we could not possibly pass a Bill with a provision such as this contained in it.

Circumstances could arise in which an individual would have just cause to use forthright language to give vent to his hurt feelings. Therefore, I for one will vote to have this clause deleted from the Bill. In fact, I will join the ranks of those who agree to delete Clauses 4, 5 and

6, which will leave the Bill as I think it should be. If those clauses are struck out the Bill will suffice for the occasion.

HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [4.52]: I do not wish to delay the House by speaking on this measure for very long, because it has been dealt with fairly thoroughly by previous speakers. I agree with the first part of the Bill dealing with the trapping of rabbits in the area in which 1080 poison is to be used. That section of the Bill is necessary, and is something that has been asked for by many local authorities. However, with those clauses which set down the penalties, and the powers to be conferred on inspectors or other authorised persons, I entirely disagree.

There are many provisions in the Bill which it would not be wise to implement at this stage. It is only in the last 12 months that farmers have been able to assess what can be achieved from the use of 1080 poison for rabbit destruction. Prior to that time, as I think I said in the Address-in-reply speech that I made when I first entered this Chamber, the 1080 poison campaign was only in its experimental stage.

Now that farmers can see what results can be obtained from the use of this poison, I am sure that they will be more co-operative in the future. They cannot be blamed for being suspicious from the outset; because, when one looks back over the years, all sorts of poison and various types of equipment have been recommended to them for the eradication of rabbits, and all of them have been more or less failures. Consequently, farmers have been dubious of the results that can be obtained from the use of this poison. Now that they see what can be done with it, they will have no doubts.

To put these powers in the hands of inspectors at this stage for the purpose of enforcing the use of this poison would be a mistake, for I feel the farmers will co-operate of their own accord, and if there are perhaps one or two in the various districts who hang back, pressure will be put on them by their neighbours which an inspector could not exercise even if he were given these powers. It would simply create disharmony and prevent that co-operation with the department which this measure in its present form attempts to achieve. For that reason I am in agreement with previous speakers who desire to delete the latter portion of the Bill.

There is one provision which gives the inspector the run of the farm, and power to say from and to which part of the property stock shall be shifted. I consider that to be a mistake. There are plenty of inspectors who would know the carrying capacity of any particular country in regard to feed and water supply, but there are others who would not. If a farmer wants to hold stock on a property for a later sale, but he is told by the inspector to remove them on to country with no feed or water to carry them, he could lose a large amount of money as a result of obeying that instruction. It would be unreasonable to give the inspector this power.

That is all I have to say on the Bill at this stage. I support the second reading and trust that in Committee we shall be able to knock the Bill into shape and make it a good piece of legislation.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [5.2]: I support the second reading because I see the necessity for the provisions in the first part of the Bill, but, like other speakers, I am against the harshness in the clauses dealing with penalties. It is necessary to obtain the co-operation of all the parties concerned—the farmer, the grazier, the inspector and everyone else—to ensure the success of any scheme for eradication of pests; but if a property-owner were to sight this Bill and the language used therein, he would be hostile in the extreme.

In the legislation dealing with soil conservation, there exists penalties to deal with persons who will not co-operate, but that Act is set out in language which is acceptable to all the parties. The Act gives everyone the opportunity to co-operate and makes it easy for the inspector to approach the property-owner. Everyone concerned is given a reasonable and fair chance to do the right thing before any prosecutions are taken. However, in the clauses contained in the latter portion of the Bill now before us, the language used is very strong indeed. It provides that an inspector or authorised person may ask any questions of a person, and he is obliged to answer such questions. If he does not, he is liable to a penalty of £50, and there is no getting away from it. That amount is fixed as the penalty.

Further on in the Bill it is provided that, if a person uses abusive language to an inspector, he shall be penalised. It is not very difficult for a property-owner to be aroused to such an extent by the inspector that he may use strong language. It does not matter whether or not there are witnesses present; the inspector's evidence is accepted and the maximum penalty for this offence is £100. Is there any other Act in which the penalty for such a minor offence is so severe?

Hon. H. K. Watson: What about the profiteering Act?

Hon. A. R. JONES: We will probably find that out in the next 12 months. Rather than put this type of language on the statute book, I suggest that the present penalties should remain. In the meantime, if it is felt that those penalties are insufficient to enforce the law, then amendments phrased in reasonable language could be introduced to encourage property-owners to co-operate, rather than to pit them against the board or the

vermin inspectors from the very start. I ask members to consider the points I have raised and to vote against the penalty clauses.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [5.5]: In reply to objections to the penalty of £100 proposed by the Bill for obstruction to inspectors or authorised persons, I would point out that the amount of £100 is a maximum. In practice, magistrates impose fines of from £1 to £5, and it would need very special circumstances before the maximum fine was imposed.

Endeavours have been made to obtain officers of a high standing, and it is felt that they should be given the very highest protection in carrying out their duties. Failure to destroy vermin is a serious enough offence, but to obstruct officers when they try to do what the offender has omitted or refused to do is surely more serious.

Objections were also formulated to the daily penalty proposed. In the cases envisaged by the Bill a daily penalty is considered very necessary, otherwise the offender can continue obstruction as long as he likes without being subject to a more severe penalty. It has been found that some offenders are prepared to pay a fine rather than do the work required. The rate of £2 per day is already shown in Subsection 2 of Section 121 of the Act as the penalty for an occupier who obstructs an owner or vice versa.

If a farmer fails to comply with a notice to destroy vermin, an inspector has the right to go on to the property and take whatever steps are necessary, after serving a notice if poison is to be used. If the owner brings stock into the paddock which is to be poisoned, or refuses to move any already in it, there is nothing the inspectors can do. Legally he is not obstructing, and inspectors have every right to lay poison, even if it kills all his stock.

Such action by inspectors would not be permitted by the department, of course, and we are seeking authority to overcome the present deadlock. The question arose from an actual instance where the owner could have removed the stock, but refused to do so. The department prosecuted, but the magistrate held there was no obstruction. All the neighbouring farmers had joined in the drive, but this farm had to be left as a source of infestation.

The vermin control officers are highly regarded by the farming community and local authorities. They are instructed to co-operate and assist farmers in every possible way. Prosecutions are taken only when every other approach has failed. The organised drives in which 1080 was used were the Agriculture Protection Board's way of using 1080 to destroy rabbits despite the ban on the use of the poison by farmers. That it was outstandingly successful in conjunction with myxomatosis is evidenced by the lesser number of rabbits now found.

The suggestion by Mr. MacKinnon that signs specifying that poison had been laid should also state that trapping was prohibited, is considered by the Agriculture Protection Board to be a good one.

Obviously this Bill has been designed as a result of the experience of the Agriculture Protection Board whose officers have been obstructed and inconvenienced by people who attempted to commit offences. To cite one case: An officer of the department found a person walking along a track carrying rabbit traps. He was carrying them along a furrow; but as he had not set the traps, he could not be convicted of the offence. There is no doubt that he intended to commit the offence, but he was found before he could lay the traps.

All the provisions in the Bill have been put forward at the request of the Agriculture Protection Board and the department. They are designed to overcome difficulties which inspectors face from time to time. Without the power referred to in the Bill, the board is a joke with some farmers who refuse to co-operate. We know that the great majority of farmers do co-operate, but there are always the few who do not. In most cases they are the unsuccessful farmers, and do not care very much as long as they are able to exist, but they are a menace to their neighbours. It is necessary that power be given to the inspectors to be able to stir them along.

That is the object of the Bill. It will not affect those people who co-operate with the department, but only those who dig their toes in and are in this frame of mind: "We do not mind if there are rabbits or other vermin on the property." Such persons are a menace to the surrounding farmers, and generally they are a source of annoyance to the department.

In the remarks I have just made, the question of moving stock from one paddock to an other was dealt with. Mr. Willmott said that an inspector could order a farmer to take stock out of one paddock to another, and the property-owner would not know anything about it. Such an instance would arise only if there was a drive to eradicate rabbits.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: The officer could direct a farmer to place the stock where he thought fit.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know about that. The provision really implies that the farmer cannot put stock into another paddock where there is poison. If the farmer was able to shift his stock into another paddock where a poison campaign was being carried out, such action could be an obstruction or a nuisance. I ask members to give careful consideration to the Bill before deleting

too many of the provisions. After all, it is necessary for the department to have that power, because without it the officers will not get anywhere in their work of eradication.

Similar power has been inserted in other legislation, where the department is given the power to make persons who refuse to co-operate comply with any direction given by the department. I can remember that in the legislation covering codlin moth infestation in the fruit industry, similar power was given to the authorities, and also in the legislation dealing with the prevention of fruit-fly. Power is given to see that offenders are compelled to co-operate; and if they do not, severe penalties are imposed. It is very necessary that this power be given. I would point out that the fines mentioned are the maximum.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Minister for Railways in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 102A added:

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The clause provides for giving notice. Under this provision a decision may be made to publish the notice in "The West Australian." At times it is easy to miss notices of this nature in that paper. I believe the notice mentioned here should be published in the local newspaper, or newspapers circulating in the district, because practically all people in country areas get the local newspaper and go through it thoroughly in regard to notices of this kind. I move an amendment—

> That after the word "Gazette" in line 20, page 2, the words ", the local newspaper or newspapers circulating in the area," be inserted.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Although I cannot see any great objection to the proposal, I suggest that before any drive was commenced by the Agriculture Protection Board, the local farmers' organisation and the local road board would be advised, and everyone concerned would know about it. The district would be known as an infested district; and ample time is provided, because this is a question of protecting human beings. This matter would be well advertised. I do not think we should impose such expense. This raises the question of whether we can impose any expense on the Crown in this respect, but I have not had time to look into it.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: This would be mainly for the information of trappers. Sometimes these people go out for a fortnight at a time, and they would have the local newspaper brought to them whilst they were out in the bush.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not know why we should say the notice should be published in the "Government Gazette" only.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: More than likely the "Government Gazette" is mentioned because most Government officers and departments receive it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They never read it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I fancy they read it pretty thoroughly. This matter would be well advertised, and the "Farmers' Weekly" would probably have a paragraph on it. I hope the Committee will agree to the clause as it is.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I suggested, when I spoke to the Bill previously, that an area having been closed and trapping prohibited, the prohibition be lifted as early as possible. We know of instances where the prohibition has remained longer than was necessary. Members might notice the penalties provided. Boys and youths who are in the habit of going out and shooting an odd rabbit will do so, knowing that the prohibition is long past its useful period, and they could be fined a minimum of £10.

The possibility of trapping rabbits in these areas is serious and warrants the retention of a heavy penalty, but we should not make a laughing stock of the provision by allowing the prohibition to remain at the whim of some local inspector.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The department has had regard for Mr. MacKinnon's suggestion and has evidently taken some notice of it. I suggest that it will see that the signs are not left there. However, this matter will again be drawn to the department's attention.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Both Ministers repeatedly object to minimum penalties being provided in legislation. I can remember that about a fortnight ago objection was raised to minimum penalties, but here they are included. If we are going to be just in one way we should be in another, and we should leave it to the magistrate to decide what portion of the penalty he shall apply. This Chamber has always objected to minimum penalties, and recently the Ministers have been among those objecting most strenuously to such penalties. I move an amendment—

> That all the words in lines 26 to 28, page 3, be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is most important that there should be a minimum. The hon. member said that both Ministers here have strenuously opposed the minimum penalties and that the

Chamber has strongly objected to them; but I can remember the Chamber strongly insisting on them in regard to several traffic offences, and requiring them to be a little higher than the Ministers might have introduced.

Hon. A. R. Jones: For the second and third offences.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member's grounds for moving the amendment would not stand a long and searching investigation. This is a matter concerning the safety and health of human beings, and I suggest there should be a minimum penalty. It is known that trappers go on to poisoned land. They do not care what happens to the unfortunate purchaser of the rabbits. So it is highly desirable that there should be a large maximum penalty, and I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: The object desired by this clause is a laudable one. I have sat on benches on numerous occasions as a justice of the peace, and I have always been guided by the minimum penalty because it is an indication of how seriously the offence is regarded by the legislature. There can be a tendency in a district for a magistrate or a justice to be sympathetic or to allow feeling to govern his decisions; but it is a guide if one can turn to the section of the Act to see what minimum is provided.

Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I am rather inclined to agree with Dr. Hislop. The only provision for the cancellation of prohibition is by advertising the fact in the "Government Gazette." If a youth or someone shooting rabbits inadvertently breaks the law he will be up for a minimum penalty of £10; the court will have no option. Although I agree with a heavy maximum, I do not think the minimum penalty is necessary.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I think we are a little confused about this provision. The major portion of it deals with rabbits that may be detrimental to human health when consumed as food. Could not action be taken against any trapper under the Pure Foods Act? I think that is the way to tackle the problem, and not through this legislation.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: We have to decide whether as a Parliament we are going to adopt a minimum penalty or leave it to the court or the judge to decide. If we start this principle of minimum penalties, goodness knows where we will finish up! This could mean that, even with mitigating circumstances, the court would have no option but to impose the minimum penalty. We heard an extraordinary story from Mr. Teahan. He said that, as a justice, he liked to be guided by minimum penalties. Surely the maximum penalty would tell him how the legislature regarded certain offences! I think this is a wrong principle.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Mr. Willmott's arguments would not cut much ice with me as a justice of the peace. If a youth inadvertently broke the law, and the notice was not pulled down, the justice of the peace would use his own discretion and would not apply a penalty.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: But there can be no mitigating circumstances.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I agree with Dr. Hislop, and I do not agree with the Minister. In the case of second and third offences, we do say that minimum fines shall be so much; but for a first offence I think a fine of £10 is very harsh. As Mr. MacKinnon told us, a youth could go and shoot or trap a rabbit with no intention of selling it—he could even take it home for his dog—and if he were caught he could be fined, under this provision, a minimum of £10. That is too ridiculous. If a person were a professional trapper or supplier of rabbits for sale, and he broke the law in this regard, I think he should be subject to the biggest penalty possible. But I would suggest to the Minister that he consider adding a further clause reading something like this—

> An offender convicted in a children's court shall be subject to a maximum penalty of £5.

That would give the magistrate some discretion, and he could decide whether to warn the lad or fine him £1, or something like that. That would protect the youth under 18 years of age and anybody over that age should be responsible for standing up to his own obligations.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: So should the justices.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I would like to ask the Minister whether it is not a fact that the Vermin Control Board can nominate to have its cases heard before a police magistrate instead of a justice.

The Minister for Railways: I could not answer that question without looking up the Act.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: For 60 years I have been in places where poisoning has been carried out by strychnine water, arsenical water, pollard and that sort of thing; and I have never heard of any human being suffering from the poison. I do not know why such drastic penalties are required.

The Minister for Railways: 1080 is a new poison.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: So was strychnine when it first came in.

The Minister for Railways: It does not go right through the body.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It gets into the blood. A maximum of £100 should be sufficient for any person to

realise that the department regards it as a serious offence. I had experience of poisoning in New South Wales as a boy, and I had to pick up 3,000 dead rabbits which had been poisoned by strychnine water. Some of the crimes that are being committed around the city are serious, and yet the offenders are fined only small amounts—they are patted on the back. Yet under this clause a man can be fined a minimum of £10.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: While I agree to a certain extent with Dr. Hislop I must inform members that we have already agreed to minimum penalties under this Act.

The Chief Secretary: And in many other Acts.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In Section 99 there is a penalty for a first offence of not less than £5 or more than £50, and I would be agreeable to the same provision here. I think a minimum fine of £10 for a first offence is too much, and that we should make this clause conform to the rest of the legislation.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: A big reason for the inclusion of this provision is that with the trail method of laying 1080 poison some trappers have been setting their traps on the trail, and the squealing of the rabbits has frightened the other rabbits off; this has rendered some of the poisoning absolutely useless. This provision is not purely and simply necessary for the protection of the public; there is that other aspect as well.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: That is the main reason for it.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Yes; 1080 poison works on the body weight, and human beings require a reasonably large proportion; whereas, with dogs, it is entirely different. I would hazard a guess and say that it would take more rabbits than a man could possibly eat to cause him any ill effects. The main reason for the provision is to keep the poisoning effective.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: There is one trap in regard to the minimum penalty—namely, that if young people go out shooting birds and rabbits for the sake of shooting, they will be subject to the minimum penalty of £10. Reference has been made to signs and notices, but there is no mention that signs and notices will indicate that poison has been laid.

The Minister for Railways: It would not be 100 square miles.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The only notification is that it should be published. A person from the city would not know the area in question; and though the Minister for Railways said it would not be 100 square miles, it would be a large area. I do not know the toxic results of 1080 poison, but I do know that pigs which have eaten rabbits killed by strychnine have not been affected at all. It is ridiculous to lay down this minimum penalty. Surely a magistrate or justice of the peace would use his own discretion. There should be no minimum penalty.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I think there should be a minimum penalty and I would be prepared to accept one of £5. Everybody would surely know where the 1080 poison was laid—even the local boys who might go out to those districts and shoot.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: A person from Perth would not know.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A few might not. The provision is there to place a penalty on those who trap for sale on the furrow.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 and 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Section 121 amended:

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This clause doubles the penalty from £50 to £100 for anyone who obstructs an officer. Let us view the provisions in the Act. Section 94 deals with the destruction of vermin and empowers the protection board or inspector to take such steps as he thinks fit for the destruction of vermin. Section 95 makes it mandatory for every occupier of a holding who has vermin on his property to notify the board or inspector. If he does not, he is liable to a penalty of £20. The owner must then get rid of the vermin; and if he does not do so to the satisfaction of the inspector, he is liable to a penalty not exceeding £10.

Section 97 gives the inspector the power to enter on a property at any time he likes to see whether there are any vermin on that property. Section 98 provides the board or inspector with power to gazette a drive in a certain locality for the destruction of vermin. If the owner or occupier does not comply with the conditions of that drive, then, under Section 99 of the Act, he is liable for a first offence to a penalty of not less than £5 or more than £50; and for the second offence, not less than £10 or more than £50.

Section 100 gives the inspector the right to go on to the property, with or without assistance, to take such measures as he thinks fit to carry out the destruction of vermin of which the owner or occupier has already been given notice, and which he has failed to do. The cost of the work is charged against the owner, and eventually becomes a charge on the property itself.

Section 121 deals with persons who obstruct or resist and the penalty provided is one not exceeding £50. If a person does not carry out the instructions of the protection board the penalty is only £50; and yet, because he obstructs or hinders an inspector, the Bill seeks to subject him to a maximum penalty of £100. The Minister

said the court usually fines people £1 to £5. If that is the case, and there is no evidence to show that a court has fined a person £50, why should we raise the penalty to £100? I hope the clause will be defeated.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have no information as to whether the maximum penalty has or has not been imposed. The reference in my notes was to penalties of £1 to £5. The notes I have say that the clause is an important amendment to the section; and that while failure to destroy vermin is a serious offence, for which the penalty is £50, the obstruction of officers who endeavour to destroy vermin which an offender has failed or refused to deal with is surely more serious; and that is why the department is asking for an increased penalty.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	13
Majority against	2

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. G. MacKinnon	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche

Clause thus negatived.

Clause 6—Sections 121A and 121B added.

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

> That the words "one hundred," in line 29, page 5, be struck out and the word "fifty" inserted in lieu.

I like this clause no better than Clause 5. As a matter of fact, it is considerably worse, but I have no intention of going into it as a whole. When the Bill first came down, I placed amendments on the notice paper—not knowing what support would be forthcoming—with the idea of reducing penalties to what they are in the Act at the moment. There is no evidence that the maximum penalty of £50 has yet been used; and it seemed reasonable, under these circumstances, to leave it at the original amount.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: This clause deals with the position where a person is required to give an authorised officer information and meet other requirements. Apparently the department thinks the penalty should be increased and there should be a maximum of £100. It is a maximum penalty only. No mention is made of a minimum. It takes us back to previous arguments in relation to penalties which are left entirely to the discretion of the magistrate or justice or whoever may hear a case. To keep in line with our previous arguments, I think the penalty should be left as it is. It could be £1 or £100, and is in line with the Committee's previous views. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The Act has operated with a great deal of success with a penalty of £50, and the tendency of departmental officers to be clothed with greater powers and for penalties to be imposed for an infringement of their orders seems unreasonable. The amount in the parent Act is adequate, and I hope that the Committee will agree to this amendment. The success of this Act depends to a marked degree on co-operation, and there is a psychological effect when a man walks on to a farmer's property and the farmer knows he can enforce penalties. There is more co-operation on both sides if penalties are kept within reasonable bounds.

Hon. G. Bennetts: There is no fear if the farmer is honest.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I hope the Committee will agree to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I supported the amendment moved by Mr. MacKinnon, but I hope the Committee will not agree to the clause.

The CHAIRMAN: When Mr. Logan rose from his seat, there was no reason to assume he was not going to move an amendment, and that is why I allowed him to continue. There are further amendments to be moved by Mr. MacKinnon.

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

> That the words "one hundred," in line 11, page 6, be struck out and the word "fifty" inserted in lieu.

This clause deals with a penalty of £100 as the maximum if a man incites, encourages, abets or procures another to commit an offence against this Act. I am sure it is absurd for an offence of this nature to carry that maximum penalty and hope the Committee will halve it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: This is a more serious offence than those previously mentioned. It is more serious than the offence of a person who refuses to give information. This deals with a man who incites somebody to commit an offence, and I think he is worse than the man who commits the offence. If the Committee considers that the man who commits an offence should be fined to a maximum of £50, surely the person who brings pressure for an offence to be committed should be subject to a higher penalty. I point out that the penalty is

£1 to £100, according to the seriousness or circumstances surrounding the case. I hope the amendment will not be carried.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: May I point out that any justice of the peace, in looking at an offence of this kind, is quite entitled to judge its seriousness by the maximum penalty. I will give an example of "incite" according to its dictionary meaning. If I am a farmer, and my next-door neighbour comes to me and says, "I have the so-and-so rabbit inspector coming tomorrow;" and I say to the other person, "You tell him he is a so-and-so" that would be using words to incite, and an offence would be committed under the Act, because abusive language is an offence. I would then be liable to a maximum penalty of £100, and the justice of the peace would be entitled to fine me anything from £1 to £100. If the position is as serious as the Minister suggested, we should have had more by way of explanation. I hope the Committee will agree to cut it down to £50.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member does not seem to agree that this is more serious than committing an offence. He has quoted one extreme case, but we can take another. If a farmer picks up a labourer in the town and says, "Trap some rabbits along that furrow," the farmer is encouraging him to commit an offence, because the man knows nothing of the position. I think the penalty should be severe. If a chap is working on a place, and the farmer says, "I want you to do that," the man may feel that jobs are hard to get, and therefore does the trapping.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: He is still punished.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. The person who commits the offence is punished, but the Committee says the chap who incites him to commit the offence should not be punished any more. I think he is worse than the other person. This Committee says that the maximum penalty for a person committing an offence should be £50, but does not consider that the offence of somebody who incites or procures is more serious.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Amendment put and passed.

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

> That the word "fifty" in line 14, page 6, be struck out and the words "twenty-five" inserted in lieu.

I think we should retain the proportion laid down and reduce the amount to £25.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Notwithstanding the fact that the Committee has agreed to the amendments that have been moved, I hope that members will not pass the clause as amended. During the second reading debate, I mentioned what I considered to be the deficiencies. I sympathise with the Minister for Railways who has just come back from a trip to Darwin and is not au fait with what has been going on. It is hard for him to take over the reins without having had an opportunity to read what other members have said. However, I would point out that this clause goes too far. There are penalties for not giving information, for assault an inciting an dfor using abusive language. But a conviction in a common court of law for any one of those offences would not result in a fine of anything like what is set down here.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: Ten pounds at the outside.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Yes. Furthermore, an inspector is given the right to go on a man's property and shift his stock to wherever he thinks fit. That is going too far. No indication has been given of the absolute necessity fo rthis. One case only has been cited in regard to assault, but no reason has been given for the rest of these provisions. The notes on the introduction of the Bill occupied only three pages of half-foolscap size. Unless the Minister can give us further information, I hope the Committee will vote against the clause.

The MINISTER FOR AILWAYS: If this clause is deleted, all power will be taken away from the board in relation to obstruction. This provision is a new one, dealing with offences mostly relating to obstruction or inciting. If a person refuses to move his sheep out of a paddock that is to be poisoned, he obstructs, and there is a deadlock. The farmer refuses to move his stock and the officer will certainly not lay poison while they are there. If this provision is removed, the others will be worthless, because there will be no power to enforce them.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	9
Noes	....	....	....	13
Majority against				4

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham

Clause, as amended, thus negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—FREEMASONS' PROPERTY.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th December.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [7.43]: I feel that this Bill is an adopted child and has been given a doubtful parentage by having been taken under the wing of the Government and introduced as a Government measure. Many members have taken part in the debate so far, but primarily they have spoken for one side only in regard to this question. There is a small minority whose case has not yet been put to the House; and as a member representing the district which is most concerned, and from which the Bill originated, I think the view of that minority should be heard in this Chamber. I realise that is is a minority which is unpopular for the time being, but I am prepared to be its mouthpiece in this House at least on this occasion.

The practice of delivering bread—among other essential household goods—is one that has existed for probably uncounted years: but in certain districts of this State, the delivery to the home of various commodities has from time to time and for a number of reasons—generally economic reasons—been discontinued. Meat in the majority of cases, has not been delivered for a number of years. There are probably many members in this Chamber who can remember the old cutting carts which were a feature of almost every town, and which gave a valued and welcome service in those days, although it would be now considered most unhygienic. The same thing has been said about bread and the conditions of its delivery over a number of years, and attempts have been made to rectify what has been considered to be an unhealthy method of handling that commodity.

Although there is much to be said for the more hygienic handling of foodstuffs I cannot recall a single instance of its having been proved that anyone's health had been impaired seriously as the result of the accepted method of delivering bread unwrapped and carried in an open basket in a vehicle drawn behind a horse, where the driver or breadcarter handles dirty and soiled leather reins and harness and perhaps handles the horse itself at some time during the day as well as having his hands in contact with a great number of other unhealthy and soiled articles. The thought of those same hands handling our bread is not pleasant; but, despite the admission that such handling is unhygienic, I doubt whether anyone—except perhaps under conditions of epidemic—has been harmed in health by bread being delivered in that way.

In latter years, and in enlightened countries, the trend has been towards the more hygienic handling of easily soilable goods; and in many instances there has been introduced a system of self-service, the latest manifestation of which in this State is the supermarts. There are many beneficial aspects associated with the supermart type of trading, as the food is handled more hygienically and is fresher and, in many cases, quite a bit cheaper.

If, however, we followed to its logical conclusion the principle contained in this Bill, we would compel the supermarts to deliver goods. That has not been suggested up to the present, but it easily could be. In this measure we are asked to force the baker, irrespective of his own wishes to deliver bread. On the Goldfields there are three perishable commodities delivered at present: fruit, vegetables and milk.

I understand that the price of milk is now controlled, but there is a certain come-and-go in the case of vegetables, because they are bought in open market and the trader can assess his profits or losses according to the goods he has bought and the charge he makes. But that course is not open to the baker; nor has it been open to him for a long time, because the price of his product is strictly controlled. This has not yet been said, but it must be said and it is true—

The Chief Secretary: I thought everything possible had already been said on this subject.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The Minister will learn that that is not so, if he listens. The fact is that the delivery of bread is the policy of the master bakers where possible. Admittedl ythe group of bakers on the Goldfields are not at present associated with the Metropolitan Master Bakers' Association, but the fact remains that it is the policy of the master bakers to deliver bread where possible. Approximately two years ago the master bakers on the Goldfields found, for reasons I will deal with later, that it was uneconomical for them to continue the delivery of bread. Many factors influenced that decision and there were certain conditions laid down about the time that bakers and carters could work.

Despite those conditions, which were laid down at the request of their various unions and associations—conditions such as not being permitted to start work before, I believe, 6 a.m.—owing to the heat and other factors on the Goldfields, the working bakers themselves requested the employers to permit the mto start work early, in the cool of the night; and in agreeing to that, the master bakers rendered themselves liable to prosecution.

I know what I am talking about in this regard because years ago I delivered bread for many years on a baker's cart while in the employ of one of the largest baking

firms in the metropolitan area. I therefore know the circumstances surrounding metropolitan bread deliveries. I also worked for some years on a baker's cart in the Murchison area and consequently know something about the delivery of bread in country districts.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: You know what a hardship it is for the housewife when there is no bread delivery.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do know something about it, and the hon. member had a lot to say about the hardship to people to whom bread was not delivered. I prefaced my remarks by saying that that side of the subject had been fairly fully dealt with, and that the views of the other side had not been voiced in this Chamber; and it is primarily for that minority that I am speaking tonight.

I do know something of the alleged hardships of the consumer, but I also know a great deal about certain of the problems of the bakers. Members have all heard of instances where bread carters have not given a fair return for their wages, and it is easy and quite open for them to do that sort of thing. Not long ago we had the instance of a bread carter who, half-way through his round one day, had a better job offered to him. He accepted the job, tied his horse up in the street, and later in the afternoon rang the baker for whom he had been working and told him where he could pick up his horse, after simply stating that he had taken a better job.

Members can imagine the hardship of the master baker whose job it was to see that the housewife got her daily bread delivery, in circumstances such as that. He probably would not know the complete round, or who owed money, or what bread various people usually took. The average man would not be able to learn a complete metropolitan bread round in less than a week—

Hon. W. R. Hall: The instance you have mentioned would be an isolated one.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes; but that is the type of thing the master baker is up against. It must be remembered that the bread carter's job is neither pleasant nor lucrative, because there is simply not sufficient money in the trade to make this an attractive form of employment. The result, of course, is that the master baker must be content to employ men who look on the work as a stopgap, or others who are without ambition and who are prepared to continue in employment of this sort. If I said that that applied in all instances, I would be doing an injustice to some people, because there are employees who have given good and faithful service as bread carters with the one employer for long periods of years, and in the old days there were many such.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I know of a man who worked on a baker's cart for 20 years.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes; but there are not many bread carters today who have been in the job for 20 years with one firm, or even with successive employers. I can recall the time when one of the greatest celebrations in the district was the bread carters' annual picnic. All that sort of thing has now gone, and bread carting is today looked upon simply as a stopgap job. For that reason one of the greatest problems of the baker is to obtain the services of loyal staff who know their job. If a baker is to have a prosperous business, he must have the ability not only to get his product to the people but to ensure that he receives the return for it promptly and in full.

The second major problem of the baker is to get back anything like a 100 per cent. return for his product; in fact, I would say it is utterly impossible for him to do so. It must be realised that the baker has hundreds of small accounts which must be paid regularly—weekly, fortnightly or even monthly—if he is to remain solvent and show a profit. It is not uncommon in places such as Kalgoorlie, where there are only seven bakers, for a single baker to have anything up to £1,000 owing to him.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It must be simply neglect on his part in that case.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: A certain tolerance must be observed; and if the hon. member had ever been in business, he would know that a businessman cannot demand his pound of flesh on the spot at all times. I know there are those who go into business with the idea that their terms will be cash on the knob; but how far would that get them in a place like Kalgoorlie, where there is a fortnightly pay, and where it is common practice to let accounts go for a fortnight at least, and many of them are on a monthly basis? One often has to let the account go for a month, and perhaps also for a second month; but the trouble is that if the person concerned cannot pay at the end of the first month, there is even less chance of getting the money at the end of the second month.

It is quite conceivable that the person who is unable to pay has quite a good story—such as sickness or something of that nature—and often the tradesman is told that the client can pay only a few shillings off at the moment. That sort of thing is quite common; and by the time the master baker wakes up to the position, he is in trouble. I am putting forward a factual picture of what applies to butchers, bakers, milkmen and others who have a large number of small accounts—

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The milkman still delivers.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Much has been made of that fact, but I do not see that just because the milkman delivers we can assume that he does not have losses

also, although he may have some means of making up his losses because he is not as strictly controlled as is the baker.

The Chief Secretary: Are you suggesting he waters his milk?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Members representing the Goldfields know that bakers there often have members of their own families on the carts in order to try to minimise their losses. In spite of that, the fact remains that bread carting on the Goldfields was found to be uneconomic and was therefore discontinued.

In discussing this problem with a Kalgoorlie atmosphere speakers have said that at present on the Goldfields there are queues of women carrying their children and answering the tinkling of a bell or the blowing of a horn or whistle to get their supplies of bread. However, I can assure members of this House that that is not true. When this problem first arose, an attempt was made to get an overall bread delivery coverage. Every little store in the district was canvassed in an endeavour to ascertain whether it could be made into a depot for the delivery of bread. Even private houses were considered with a view to making various residences throughout the district bread depots, at which bread would be delivered for cash.

A great deal of pressure was exercised at the time, and a great wind blew with a lot of force behind it. As a result, many people were dissuaded from handling bread; but despite this, certain sturdy souls agreed that they would handle it. Covering the period since then the general feeling is that, if there is not actually satisfaction, there is generally no resentment that this took place. Further, at least 70 per cent. of the Goldfields residents obtain their bread from fixed depots, and the loaves are wrapped according to health regulations; and therefore this method is far more hygienic than it was in the past.

In those instances, where a shop or private residence could not be set up as a depot to supply bread, the bakers themselves instituted a service to deliver bread to specific points by van or cart; and on arrival at those points, they rang a bell or blew a whistle or a horn. That is a service that they gave voluntarily so that those people who were unable to obtain their bread from a nearby shop or depot were sure of getting their supplies. Those points at which they gave that service were very few.

I am not saying that the Goldfields would not be happy to have bread deliveries again. I, for one, am satisfied that it would be convenient. But I would say that one-third of the 6,000 houses on the Goldfields would represent those people who were living in close proximity to shops and who were not in the least interested in bread being delivered. If a person were used to getting his bread supplies from a shop, he would not be concerned about getting it delivered.

However, I am quite positive that at least one-third of the people, if they are anxious to have bread delivered, are not prepared to pay the extra cost for delivery. If we are to recommence bread deliveries, it is unthinkable that we should force any business or any individual to give such a service without adequate compensation. In regard to the charge for delivery, over the week-end I had a letter published in the "Kalgoorlie Miner." It is only a short letter, and I intend to read it to the House with the idea of illustrating the feelings of the public about bread being delivered at an extra charge.

I have been taken to task by some members who have referred to this matter, because I have said or implied that they spoke in favour of bread deliveries even at increased cost. I would like to point out that, unfortunately, although I had intended to have this letter published on the Friday or the Saturday, so that people could have their answers published if necessary, my letter was not published until the following Monday, so I have not yet heard what the reaction was to this letter, should there be any forthcoming. The letter reads as follows:—

> Sir,
>
> May I suggest that the people of the Goldfields be given an opportunity to deny or endorse for themselves the amazing allegation made by every Labour speaker so far on the Bread Bill—
>
> > That the people are unanimous in their demand for bread delivery even if it means an increase in the price of their bread, variously assessed at 3d. or more per loaf—

Unfortunately, members have read into this letter a meaning slightly different from that which was intended and I admit that it is capable of being so interpreted.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I can only put one meaning on it.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It can be read this way—

> People are unanimous in the demand for bread delivery even it it means the payment of an extra 3d. per loaf.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Why put the paragraph in inverted commas after making the statement which is printed above?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: This is what led to all this: "people are unanimous" and so forth right down to the end, making it appear that I was quoting a specific or identical speech made by all members. That is rather ludicrous. If every member who is complaining is implying that each member made exactly the same speech and I quoted word for word what was said, that would be ludicrous.

The objections to this published letter that I have had hurled at me are wrongly based, because I had no intention of its being interpreted in the way it has been and I think members will admit—if they be fair—that that was not my intention. I could make reference to the actual speeches made by various members, but I am precluded from doing so.

About two years ago a public meeting was held in Kalgoorlie at which probably every Goldfields member supporting the Government was in attendance. One of the staunch Labour supporters at the meeting advocated the delivery of bread, and he quoted the cost of delivery as being 3d. per loaf. That was a statement made by Mr. Hartrey, and it was not denied. Subsequent to that statement being made, members have spoken in this House in similar vein, and their statements also were not denied. Other statements have been made from time to time in regard to the delivery of bread. When bread deliveries ceased the price to consumers was decreased by ½d. a loaf, and the master bakers complained it cost more than 3d. per loaf to deliver the bread to the houses. People were prepared to pay to have the bread delivered. That is a definite statement that the cost of delivery was 3d. per loaf.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Was that made by a member of Parliament?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, by the member for Kalgoorlie. The price of bread has altered considerably since that time. I can quote what was said by various speakers, page and verse, from Hansard. At the time I particularly noted that, with one exception, every member definitely stated that the people were prepared to pay for the extra cost of delivering bread. They cannot deny that.

Hon. J. J. Garrigan: We did not state the price.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I did not say that members stated the price, but the very fact that members are so disturbed about this point brings me to the painful conclusion—

Hon. W. R. Hall: How painful?

The Chief Secretary: You don't look pained.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I am pained! I can assure the Chief Secretary that I am pained! There are two conclusions that one can draw as a result of this controversy, the first being that members addressed the House on this problem while they were ill-informed and did not know what the cost of delivering bread would be; and therefore took it upon themselves to advocate bread delivery for the people on the Goldfields being unware of the fact that it would cost an extra 3d. per loaf; or, if they do not admit that, they must have been well aware that it would cost an extra 3d. per loaf to deliver and they were deceiving the people by not stating that it would cost them this extra charge.

Hon. W. R. Hall: No one mentioned 3d. per loaf.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is the point! If 3d. per loaf was never mentioned, it was not mentioned for one or the other of the reasons I have enumerated.

Hon. J. D. Teahan: By how much did the master bakers reduce the price of bread when they ceased deliveries?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: At the time, there was a voluntary reduction of 1d. in the price of bread by the master bakers.

Hon. J. D. Teahan: Therefore, that was the cost of delivery.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not accept that. The hon. member says that that is what it cost to deliver a loaf. However, the master bakers maintain that they were losing on the delivery of bread. They did not say they were making a profit and were covering expenses, and that they would reduce the cost or the delivery charge. They said that they were losing money by continuing to deliver bread, and they voluntarily dropped the price per loaf by 1d., so implying that they were losing 2d. per loaf by delivering it.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They knew that they would get cash.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: However, the price of bread subsequently was compulsorily reduced by 1½d. per loaf. Since then there has been an increase in the price of bread, from which we might gather that the authority responsible for fixing the price realises that the master bakers were not having a fair go. Flour went up a little in price and consequently the price of bread was increased. The authority realised the justification of the claim that the bakers were undergoing difficulties.

If master bakers could not deliver bread on the Goldfields at the price then charged—and I believe that was the case—is there any justification for forcing a service on them under which they will suffer a further loss, or alternatively be compelled to deliver bread without receiving anything for the service? Should that be the position, I am not prepared to agree to a further increase in the price of bread in Kalgoorlie unless the people say definitely that they want deliveries to be made.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Delivery is made only if it is asked for.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: As I said, probably one-third of the people will not be interested in deliveries. There might be a few scattered at some distance from bakers who want deliveries, and the bakers would be obliged to give that service. I can remember the days when it was considered an obligation for a baker to deliver even half a loaf of bread to a prospector living in an isolated place. This happened at Meekatharra, and the

baker had to deliver this quantity of bread to the prospector's camp, which was 1½ miles along a bush track. That was not an isolated instance, even in a place like Meekatharra, where there were only two delivery carts. Circumstances have changed.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: The trend is for the housewife and the cart-horse to be the same.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: In isolated cases the housewife might suffer hardship. That is granted. But are we to force a concern to give a service which will force that concern out of business? Do not think that is an idle statement! In this case one or more bakers might go out of business rather than make deliveries for no charge.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I would rather see the housewife being given a service.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Would the hon. member prefer to see that, even if it meant forcing the baker out of business? I am sure the housewife would be much happier in being able to obtain bread, even if it meant a short walk for her child or herself than to be without bread at all, or having to bake her own bread as was done years ago. I can remember, as a boy, having to walk for miles to obtain yeast for my mother twice a week when she used to bake bread herself. I would prefer to send my child along on his bicycle for a quarter of a mile to the bakers to obtain bread rather than to get no bread at all.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Let us see what the housewife thinks of you.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That remark indicates to me that the hon. member considers every question and subject with the prime idea as to whether it will gain her votes, and how many votes are attached to her speech. I started off in this debate by saying that I was speaking for a minority whose voice had not been heard in this House. I know that it is a dangerous attitude to adopt, and I am prepared to let the hon. member use what I am saying for the purpose of going on a Roman holiday if she wishes to.

It is not the first time that I have been on a lone stand in this Chamber in speaking for a minority in my district. As a member of Parliament I am prepared to speak for all sections, and I have proved that time and again. I note the hon. member's minatory attitude towards me, but I can assure her that it will in no way make me change my stand in this House.

Until I can get an indication from the people of the Goldfields that they are prepared to pay an increased price, I shall oppose the Bill. I cannot conceive of anyone being forced to deliver bread without being given an increase; and if the increase as assessed by those who should know is 3d. a loaf, it will be too much.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Who said it will be 3d. a loaf?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If the hon. member is not aware, he should make an attempt to discover from those who do, and should know the correct charge. It is very easy to find this out. Unless the people indicate to me that they are prepared to pay an extra impost, I shall not support this Bill.

On the other hand, I admit that I have not been approached by the minority, or the seven bakers on the Goldfields. As a matter of fact I resent that I have not been approached. Members opposite have had the opportunity to discuss this matter with the people on the Goldfields from time to time because I am aware of the representations that have been made to them and their organisations—relating to the increase, delivery and non-delivery of bread. I was completely ignored by those people. Only one of those bakers lives in my area, whose vote affects me, so I shall not be gaining any increase in voting strength on the stand I am taking. I do not apologise for my action. I am quite prepared to tell the whole story as I told it tonight.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [8.22]: I am not going to waste so much time on this Bill as other members have done. What surprises me is the long debate over such a small measure.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The principle involved is not small.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What is the principle?

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The old one of compulsion to do certain things.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are two sides to that argument. The hon. member is saying that the Bill seeks to compel the bakers to make deliveries, but I am now taking the other side to show where the bakers compelled the public on the Goldfields to do certain things. There are two sides to this question of compulsion. As this service is given in the metropolitan area and many other places, I would have thought that country members would support the measure by adopting their usual attitude that what was provided in the metropolitan area should also be provided in the country. Nobody disputes that policy. There has not been any complaint from the Goldfields about the price of bread. I have the official notes here. The reason advanced for the bakers stopping deliveries was not because the price was not high enough, but because of labour shortage. That is the truth of the matter.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: It was the statement that was made.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not talking about statements but about facts.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: You said the truth of the matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is the truth of the matter. All that members are asked to do is to extend to other parts of the State the facilities enjoyed in the metropolitan area.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Delivery is on a voluntary basis in the metropolitan area.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: So it should be voluntary on the Goldfields and other places. Quite a number of members have attempted to use the Goldfields as the solitary centre where there is any difficulty in regard to deliveries. During the last four or five years the same difficulty has cropped up in many other parts of the State, even in the outer suburban areas like Armadale. The hon. member who has just spoken is so keen on control that—.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I am not keen on controls.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Have the bakers not wanted to control others in the trade? Possibly if I was in that business I would have done the same thing. Instances have occurred where a new baker was prepared to make deliveries of bread, and control was exerted to prevent him from establishing himself. That happened to the baker at Canning Bridge; he was obliged to make his own yeast for several months because the supply was stopped. So we can see there is more than one type of control. Those things were attempted.

Without the trimmings, all this Bill attempts to do is to give the Minister power, where he is satisfied that delivery of bread is possible, to proclaim an area for such deliveries. No one expects any baker to deliver bread for no extra cost. Just as there is a difference between the wholesale and the retail price of bread, so there will be a difference between the price of bread delivered and the price not delivered.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I take it the Minister will see that a margin is made.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course! Nobody wants to see a service being given without any extra cost. What that cost will be will vary according to circumstances. No one is able to make a wild guess at it. An instance was mentioned by Mr. Logan, but I can tell him how charges were made by bakers in Geraldton at one time.

Hon. L. A. Logan: How they took off extra charges.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: How they put on extra charges by making an impost of 5s. for an old flour bag containing bread sent to fishermen on the surrounding islands.

Hon. L. A. Logan: You do not know the whole story.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Well, the hon. member does and I do not. I never like arguing the point.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Will this delivery charge be applied to bakers now delivering bread?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. The price now being charged already covers the delivery cost. All that this Bill is concerned with is an area for which the Minister has made a proclamation. In that area the bakers will be compelled to make deliveries for which they shall be paid an extra cost.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Bakers now delivering could discontinue deliveries and then ask to be paid for making deliveries.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That obstacle will be overcome when we meet it. We can consider it when it is necessary and after an area has been proclaimed. Some members seem to think that the provisions of the Bill will apply to the whole State; that is not the case. They are only to be applied to areas which have been proclaimed. No Minister, whether Liberal or Labour, will force something on to the public which is not warranted.

If it is necessary to proclaim an area, the Minister, no matter what brand he is, institutes something by the proclamation, and then a regulation has to be gazetted so that any member will have the opportunity of disallowing the regulation if he considers it is not in the best interests of the people concerned. It is in the hands of members to see that justice is done in this matter.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Some time ago you had a request from a public meeting at Kalgoorlie, to have bread delivered.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. I have had many such requests. The Bill merely gives the Minister power to make a proclamation where it is necessary, and no Minister will make a proclamation unless he is satisfied about the position. Kalgoorlie has been mentioned; that is a storm centre. In addition, difficulties have arisen in the last four or five years in the Midland-Guildford, Armadale-Kelmscott, Wanneroo, Wembley-Floreat Park, Mt. Pleasant-Applecross, Helena Vale, East Belmont-Kewdale metropolitan districts and at Albany, York, Merredin and other large towns. The Government appreciates that it is necessary that some power of this description should be available so that where incidents occur, as they did on the Goldfields, an order can be proclaimed.

There are two lots of dictation, and at the present time it is the baker dictating to the public. Under this measure it will not be either the baker or the public dictating, but the Minister investigating and making a decision the same as the Arbitration Court does; and we do not say that it is dictating to anyone. The Minister will give a decision on the evidence adduced by both sides in a manner similar to that adopted by the Arbitration Court; or by any other person presiding at an

inquiry. There will be no dictation—the scales of justice will be evenly balanced. I hope that members will agree to the second reading.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	12
A tie	0

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. W. F. Willesee (*Teller.*)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott (*Teller.*)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham

The PRESIDENT: Under Standing Orders, in the case of an equality of votes, the President may vote and give his reason for voting. I vote with the ayes for the simple reason that some members are absent, and this will give a chance for them to have some discussion on the Bill and to make a decision on the third reading.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 4th December.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [8.36]: The Bill is practically identical with one which has come down to us for several years—at least as to the question of women on juries. Previously the Bill has been passed; but in the Committee stage, the questions of compulsory qualification, and of the age being from 21 to 60 or from 30 to 60, have been the subject of conferences between the two Houses; and as the Houses could not agree, the Bill has been dropped.

The difference of opinion between the two Chambers is very little. I held the view, with which most of my colleagues agreed, that in the matter of jury service I was quite prepared to abide by the decision of the House to accept women on juries, but I raised the points that, first, the age should be from 30 to 60; and, second, that women should be eligible to vote on application for enrolment rather than be compulsorily enrolled if their names appeared on the electoral list.

My reasons, briefly, were these: At the age of 21 a young woman who has just emerged, in many cases, from her adolescence, may be suddenly called upon to act as a juror in a case which might easily be of a most unsavoury character; because, as all people know, juries are empanelled only for certain types of cases that come before the courts. The majority of such cases, I would say, concern misdemeanours which reflect sins against society; and most of us hold the view that they are not the type of case which is suitable for young women to hear.

The second reason was that a young woman of, say, 21, is not likely to have had much worldly experience, and the foreman of a jury is generally chosen from the ranks of the old people—very often a man of dominant personality—and she would be much more likely to be influenced by a man of that type than would a woman of the age of 30, who had grown to the stage when she might have a mind of her own. By that time she would have had a good deal of experience of the world and its problems, and could stand up to the opinions of others, and would not be intimidated to nearly the same degree as would a young woman who had just attained the age of 21 years. Those are the two reasons I gave for opposing the Bill in the first place; and, in the second place, when the Bill was passed, for suggesting that those qualifications should be made.

I need hardly remind members—because this measure has been before us many times—that the reasons I have stated would not prevent any woman in the age group to which I have referred from serving on juries if she so wished. In one case she would be compulsorily enrolled, whether she liked it or not, and in the other she would be able to serve by applying for enrolment. The position we put forward had other aspects which I think are worth considering. One was that, in the opinion of those who knew, it would considerably lessen the clerical work of those who compile the jury lists; and it would at once segregate those who were quite prepared to undertake jury duty from those who, perhaps, were suddenly apprised of the fact that they were being empanelled for jury duty, many of whom would like to contract out of such an obligation.

On this occasion I am opposing the Bill for a different reason altogether, and it is this: This House in its wisdom, earlier in the year, appointed a select committee to consider various aspects of the Jury Act. The members of that committee had many sittings and they prepared a report which was circulated among members. Even while that report was being prepared, this Bill was being presented to another place so that the report of the committee, which had done a very good job in studying the ramifications of the jury system and

which made certain recommendations, was entirely ignored. As the committee was appointed by a resolution of this House, I think great discourtesy has been shown to the House because of the Bill being brought forward. For this reason I oppose the second reading.

I will not say that I am entirely in agreement with all the recommendations in the select committee's report. But it is a matter for each individual member to decide for himself—or in the case of our lady member, herself—which recommendations he agrees with. However, I do think that to go ahead with an amendment to the Jury Act while the committee was preparing and presenting its report was an act of discourtesy to the committee. We had ample time to receive the report and to prepare a jury Bill based on it.

In any case I hope that at a later stage the report of the committee will receive due consideration; and that, perhaps, next year a Bill may be brought down based on the recommendations in the report, when we can give the matter fresh consideration. In the meantime, I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (Suburban) [8.44]: In speaking in support of the Bill, I am rather surprised at the reasons put forward by Mr. Simpson for opposing the second reading. I would hesitate to say that discourtesy has been shown in the House by not examining the select committee's report.

From my observations of the evidence that was taken, I would say that it was overwhelmingly in favour of the principle of the Bill. A Bill had already been prepared; and similar measures have been presented to the House on previous occasions. The main principle in the Bill is to give women the right to serve on juries

I think members will agree that now an investigation has been made it is quite evident that this is a very vexed social question, and the time has long since passed when we should question the right of women to serve on juries in this State. We are far behind other countries. In our own mother country, Great Britain, women have served on juries, since 1919, without causing any ripple on the surface of society in general.

Hon. H. K. Watson: But they serve on the same basis as men.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Yes; and we would be quite prepared for women here to serve on the same basis as men; and the basis there is the age of 21 to 60 years.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Why don't you put that in the Bill?

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: That is in in the Bill; that is the crux of it. Women will be eligible for jury service between the age of 21 and 60 years.

Hon. F. D. Willmott: But that does not apply to men.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: It applies to men between the ages of 21 and 60 years.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You want to read the Act.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I have the Act.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Then read it.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You want to read the qualifications.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: If any small alterations are required, it would be quite competent for members to move amendments during the Committee stage, or by an amending Bill once the principle of women serving on juries was established. When we know that a case has been put up—and I know what sort of case was put up—it is beyond question that women should have the right to serve on juries. I certainly do not want to see the present conditions go on for one day longer than they need do. Women should be given the right to serve on juries as soon as possible, and I do not want to see this Bill postponed.

I would be very willing to agree to anything that would improve the Jury Act; but at this stage I cannot see anything which would justify women being prevented from serving on the jury, taking their place in our society, and serving in the halls of justice in this State. I have with me a photograph showing the first woman judge to be appointed in Great Britain. If a woman in Britain can be raised to that eminent position, surely members here would no longer deny the right of women in this State to serve on a jury which, after all, is only a minor function. This cutting which I have from the newspaper reads—

> Miss Rose Heilbron, Q.C. was defending an American soldier on a charge of murder when the announcement came through. The clever, 42-year-old lawyer is to become Britain's first woman judge.

That shows that women's intellect is recognised in other parts of the world; and to refuse to recognise their right to serve on juries in this State is to deny them justice. Their requests to serve on the juries in this State can no longer be questioned.

It has been said before in this House that women could not listen to evidence of a certain nature. Leaving sentiment out of it altogether, I think we were created men and women to carry out the partnership of life itself. To my mind that is the perfect answer to that argument. Nature decides the gift of intelligence, irrespective of sex, and there is no division of intellect between men and women.

No one could say that a man has a higher intellect than a woman. It is a happening of nature and sex has nothing to do with it; it is beyond our will or say-so. Full and equal rights of citizenship is the answer to a balanced society. That is becoming more and more evident in our modern society. Every day we see instances where both sexes are being called upon to play a major part in the building up of a balanced society.

My view is that women have a right to take their places, wherever or however they are asked, in the service of society. Above all, the Creator himself made women the custodians of life. Women nurture the young and through that understanding, they are well fitted for serving on a jury. A woman, through being a mother, understands the impulses of children more intimately than does a man. Very often, because of intuition and her close association with the child life of the nation, a woman is able to understand things more clearly. She recognises certain impulses that might cause someone to commit a grievous offence against society. Women have that balance; they have balance when it comes to standing up against difficulties that confront everybody. A woman is not emotionally carried away as many men might be in certain circumstances.

I would say that this pressure for women to serve on juries has come well knowing that while they are denied this right an injustice is being done to society. With all due respect to members, I would say that no one here has put up a logical argument as to why women should not serve on juries in the same way as men. Women can judge a case just as well as men, and so there should be no objection to a woman serving on a jury. If we were to suggest to a man that a jury be composed of all women, he would hold up his hands in horror at the thought of it. Yet men have never thought it an injustice to have all male juries. But there is no difference between a jury of all women and one of all men. We women say that there should be neither all-men nor all-women juries; they should be balanced with half men and half women.

There is no difference in the intelligence of a girl of 21 and a boy of 21. We recognise them as adults at 21 years of age. They are liable to the full effect of the law, and are recognised as adults; they can be called upon to serve their country in the armed forces and they vote to put people into Parliament. At 21 years of age they are recognised as responsible citizens, and responsible for anything they might do. A woman of 21 is just as responsible as a man of 21.

When I spoke on this matter on the last occasion, I said that women should be allowed to decide what they wanted. I do not want to make this a contentious Bill, because I know that members have had demonstrated to them very decisively that the time has come when this provision should be agreed to and women should be given the privilege of serving their country on the jury and in the halls of justice in this State. I hope members will put aside their prejudices and will forget all about what has previously been said on this question. As the only woman member in this House I have had a very onerous task in putting before members all sides of this question. Women have asked before that they be permitted to serve on juries, but their arguments and requests have been turned down.

No doubt we can do many things to improve the Jury Act; I would agree to do anything possible to help improve it and bring it up to date, because there is a good deal of our legislation that could very well be overhauled and brought up to date. I hope, every time such legislation is introduced, to be able to give it my support; and I will be always ready to agree to bringing any legislation up to the times.

We have previously debated the principle in this Bill, and I do not think Mr. Simpson was quite right in his criticism on this pont, because the measure was introduced in the lower House before the select committee was appointed. We have a heavy legislative programme in front of us, and everyone knows that we cannot chop and change at this late stage in the session. I am very keen to see justice done at long last; and to see women given the right to serve on juries. I do not think they should have to apply, because that nullifies the whole business.

That principle was applied in the Eastern States; and it was found that, when women applied, they were never called on for service. I checked up on that point when I went over there a few months ago, and they said, "Whatever you do, do not have a provision in your legislation for women having to apply. If you do, you have not any worth-while legislation."

I am hoping that this Bill will be agreed to and the principle of women serving on juries will be adopted. This will bring us on to a level with other countries. It grieves me to find that countries which are not nearly so emancipated as we are, and which do not have such a high standard of living, have legislation which provides for women to serve on juries. Their women are recognised in public life to a much greater degree than are women here.

A year or two ago, I had the pleasure of meeting the Deputy Director of Education from Bombay. She was a wonderful woman, and it amazed me to think that they had a woman Director of Education; and yet here we have never had a woman in a position such as that. We have a long way to go in this regard; and I venture to say that the women in Western Australia are very intelligent.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Perhaps that is why they are not serving on the juries here.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: That is why they are pressing for the right which this Bill gives them. Since I have been a member here, I have tried to get Bills similar to this passed, and I have tried to put before members the woman's angle. That is what I am endeavouring to do now. The Bill provides that a woman between the ages of 21 years and 60 years, who is of good fame and character, is enrolled as an elector on the Assembly rolls and entitled to vote for a member of the Legislative Assembly, and who resides in a proclaimed area, is qualified and liable to serve as a common juror in all civil and criminal proceedings in proclaimed areas.

The woman may make application to be excused from jury service for certain reasons. We realise that there must be certain reasons for a woman to apply. We do not want them to neglect their families, as some members have said will happen. That will not happen, because there is this saving provision. There are quite enough women who are eligible and who would serve on juries, without our needing to ask those who have to stay at home to look after small children, or who may be bearing children. There are many other reasons why a woman may have to be excused, and there is that saving clause in the Bill. Also a woman may, for some reason or other, want to be excused for a year or two but she may then want to apply again for jury servce. That is quite fair and, after all, only common sense.

We object to the fact that the women's voice has never been raised in the halls of justice in this State, to put the woman's point of view. In the past mistakes have been made, and I feel this could have been avoided had women been serving on those juries. It may have occurred more than once in this State. Women would be eminently suitable in serving on juries in cases dealing with indictable cases of childbirth, rape and the like in which they appreciate the point of view of other women—they would certainly know the woman's point of view better than a man would. A woman is not afraid to use the knowledge she possesses; nor is she backward in carrying out her duty.

Temporary exemptions can be permitted on account of health and family obligations; but it does not seem to have made any difference to the smooth working of the jury system in Great Britain, where women have served on juries since 1919. That is accepted as a matter of course, and passes without public comment. It has a very special significance for me.

It is taken as a matter of course in England; and one woman told me that she remembered her mother having to serve on a jury. She remembered it because it was necessary for her—she was then 14 years old—to cook the dinner. She accepted it as one of those things which was expected of her.

I hope we will now pay a tribute to the women of Western Australia for the great public work they have done in the past. Women played a major part during the war, and I am sure no member would deny them the tribute they deserve. They did what was required of them intelligently and uncomplainingly. I am not speaking from any party political angle but on behalf of all the women of Western Australia. Again I would say that the House will not regret passing this Bill, and I would be the first to give whole-hearted support to any legislation brought in to improve the Jury Act generally. If nothing is done, it will upset me very much, because of the women who have made representations to me. When asked to do so, they were not in the least bit backward in giving the necessary evidence required of them. Women should be permitted to serve in the halls of justice of this State, and we should not deny them that privilege. I support the second reading of the Bill, and I trust that other members will do likewise.

HON. J. D. TEAHAN (North-East) [9.4]: A Bill of this nature has been before this Chamber on a previous occasion, and the arguments in connection with it have been well voiced. I think it could be fairly said that, due to the agitation of Mrs. Hutchison, and to her fervour on this subject, we have heard more on this matter than has usually been the case. The women's organisations have given voice to something on which they were previously silent. I have been surprised in the last two years at the number of women's organisations that are really interested and make this a subject of their debates.

It is far from a political matter. Some of these women's organisations are affiliated politically—some with Labour, some with anti-Labour organisations—and some are neutral. But each one of them seems to take this subject more seriously than previously, and they are practically unanimous in their desire that women shall be included in the jury lists. It is suggested that a woman of 21 might be too young. I think it could be conceded that a young woman is more mature at 19, 20 or 22 than a man of that age.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It has been proved.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: It is the woman who very often shows the judgment necessary in the selection of a home. She also adopts the initiative in other matters affecting her family. If youth is to be a barrier, then these young women can be challenged when the jury is empanelled. Those who attend the court will know that

we do not often see young men on a jury. Why it is so I do not know. It is possible that they might not be listed but it is also possible that they are challenged, and because of that we do not see too many young men serving on juries. The same practice could be adopted with women.

I have made a bit of a study of this subject since it was debated here two years ago. I have three organisations in my electorate which are essentially for men —they comprise the members of the committee. In two of those organisations the president is a woman; and in the other, a woman is the vice president. This means that when the men were assembled and were asked to nominate a president they voted in favour of a woman—as I pointed out, these are essentially men's organisations.

If we made a study of the Children's Court, we would find that there is always one woman serving. They seem to do an excellent job and I have not heard any magistrate demur, or comment adversely on their activities. When speaking to some of these women I have asked them whether they ever heard cases in which the evidence was revolting and they replied that they took these things in their stride; that there was nothing unusual about it; and that the men who sat alongside them did not regard it as out of place. In some verdicts a woman's voice and sense of responsibility could perhaps guide us a little better than we have been guided in the past.

The biggest objection to this measure was raised by Mr. Simpson. I think the Chief Secretary said that another Bill would be brought down next year and for that reason this should be passed. I would say that should this Bill pass it could be made to dovetail into any action that may be contemplated next year. Members should consider the various arguments put forward and should bear in mind that whatever is done can be made to fit in with any action that is taken next session.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: You still believe the report you signed?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I cannot discuss the report I signed.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: But you still believe it?

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: Yes; but I have refrained from making any reference to it, much as I would like to. I support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [9.10]: We have seen some extraordinary things in this House in our time.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Too right!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: And some extraordinary people.

The Chief Secretary: On this Bill as well.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Recently we saw the Chief Secretary rise and speak emotionally, with righteous indignation, about an organisation which was considered in some way to have damaged the prestige of this House. Yet I do not think that in the 15 years I have been here I have seen a greater piece of disregard for the opinions and actions of this House than was exhibited the other night by its being refused a discussion on the report of the select committee which has a bearing on the Bill before us. This means that even Mr. Teahan was not able to criticise or mention the report to which he appended his signature. I suppose I am not at liberty, either, to discuss this report.

Here we have action called for by this House providing information on the whole of the Jury Act being flagrantly brushed aside so that this Bill can be brought forward. If anything is tending to bring disregard on this House, surely this second act is that thing. It is extraordinary that a person who signs a document which says that it is essential that if women are to take their place on juries there should be a balance between the sexes can now give his vote to a Bill which will completely unbalance the proportion of sexes on the jury.

The PRESIDENT: I would ask the hon. member to make no reference to the select committee which looked into this matter. I have refused Mr. Teahan and Mr. Griffith that privilege, and I cannot permit the hon. member to proceed along those lines.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: You have no objection, I take it, Sir, to my mentioning the flagrant disregard of the wishes of this House.

HON. G. E. JEFFERY (Suburban) [9.13]: In rising to support this Bill, I hope members will not think I am taking a mean advantage of those who are opposed to it. I realise that there are two classes of people opposed to a measure of this kind: the first are those who are confirmed bachelors; and the others are those who possess great courage or trust that their wives will not read Hansard.

I was going to speak at great length; but on account of the time of the year and the business yet to come before us, I shall be brief. If this Bill were carried, one qualification that would not apply would be the property qualification. After reading a great deal on the subject, I frankly feel that a property distinction, when it comes to service on juries is a relic of the ages when a man's material position in the world was safeguarded; when he had education. I refer back to the 15th or 16th century when the average man had no education whatever—and I refer to the ordinary man in the street. I feel sure it would be admitted that the ordinary man in the street today is certainly educated and level-headed.

I have had previous experience of jury service; and, after all, the purpose of a jury is merely to judge the facts and the evidence as presented by our legal system; and I see no reason why women should not be capable of performing this service equally as well as men. If the Bill is passed, I do admit that there will be more women eligible for jury service than men. I feel the Jury Act should be amended so that the discrepancy could be caught up with. The property qualification for service on a jury is no longer necessary these days.

Regarding the age for a woman being raised to 30 years, I think the average woman of 21 years today is equally as intelligent as her husband, or a man of the same age. I am sure members will agree that most women are far superior to their husbands in domestic financial matters. The Bill does provide for cases of exemption where a woman, on being sworn for jury service, can apply for relief because the nature of the evidence might be repugnant.

My experience during the last war was that women were able to stand up to the various strains and stresses of warfare and in many circumstances did it so much better than men. In regard to professions, women graduate from universities at the same age as their male counterparts; they practise in various professions; they are engaged in various occupations, and do as well as the average male. Without further ado I support the second reading, reminding members that, if necessary, the Bill can be amended in the Committee stage.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [9.17]: Surely it should be obvious to all members what is attempted by the passing of this Bill. We have already had a select committee and had an opportunity of reading the report, to which I am not going to refer. We have been told the Government intends to bring down a Bill next year to cover the ramifications of that select committee; and we have been told there was a Bill prepared in 1945, which could have been used as a basis any time since then for a review of the Jury Act. Now we are asked to accept an amendment to the Jury Act on one particular point of view.

There is one fundamental point which members seemed to miss in the introduction of this Bill: we are making it mandatory for every woman between the ages of 21 years and 60 years in a proclaimed area to have her name recorded on the list. She has to have it there whether she wants it or not, and we are enforcing it. She does not want it; so why make her put her name on the roll? That is what I object to. And most women will do so if they appreciate what is in the Bill. That is the fundamental principle which members are not realising is in this Bill.

We would have 80,000 or 90,000 women on the jurors' roll and then it would be necessary for them to write in to be taken off. In most cases they would not know their name was on the list. Against this, the jury list for men is 6,000.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is nonsense.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is not. It is a fact, and the hon. member knows it. At the present time there are a little over 6,000 men on the jury list. That is a known fact; so why argue about it?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Many more can go on if they do something about it.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Why do they not do something about it?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They can make application to the sheriff.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not want to increase the list.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is a fundamental principle we have to deal with at the moment and I do not think we should decide whether women should be on juries or not. The Bill forces them to be on the list and if they do not want to be they have to ask for exemption. I do not think we have any right to do it.

There is another point I would like to bring forward in regard to this matter. I happened to read the report of a Gallop poll taken on questions asked of women in the street as to why they wanted to serve on juries; and nearly everyone said, "To put the woman's point of view." Surely that is not a very logical approach for a woman wanting to serve on a jury. If a woman goes on a jury, she should do so to assess the evidence presented. That is the duty of jury service. Yet when asked in a Gallop poll why they wanted to serve on juries, they said, "To put the woman's point of view". Where is the logic of that?

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is misconstrued.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It is not. Have a look at the Press. These are the facts. We have been told there has been a very decisive demonstration for women to go on juries; but it seems a strange thing that I have not had one letter from one woman asking for me to support this Bill.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Who would write to you after listening to you?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Not one woman has asked me to support this amendment, and I know this applies to most members of Parliament. If there were an outstanding demand for women on juries, surely we would have received approaches, not from a whipped-up organisation, but from women to their members of Parliament, as has happened on other occasions. All electors do it. It is their right and privilege. They know it is their privilege; but on this occasion they have not done so.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: They came and gave evidence.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They were organised by the hon. member.

Point of Order.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I object to that remark. It is not a true statement. The hon. member said women were organsied to give evidence by me. Women gave evidence whom I did not even know, and I ask the hon. member to withdraw his remark.

Hon. L. A. Logan: I withdraw if the statement is not true.

Debate Resumed.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I have already said that to my knowledge quite a number of members of this Parliament have not received an approach by women and there is no demand.

The Chief Secretary: They did not write and ask us to pass it.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No—

The Chief Secretary: There are two ways, you know.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: —but I am certain of this: that if they had known what was in the Bill, they surely would have done.

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. J. D. Teahan: Men do not like serving on juries either.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Quite true. Why should they want to serve on juries? After all is said and done, it is not a pleasant job to sit in judgment on one's fellow man, especially when one has to make up one's mind on evidence as to whether a person is guilty of murder, and that person may lose his life by hanging. It certainly is not an easy one.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: We know that.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I appreciate the fact that a lot of women between the ages of 21 and 30 years would not want to take part.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: There are plenty of men, too.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: However, under this Bill we are being asked to force these women to have their names on the jury list. I think there is need for a little clearer thinking on the part of some of the women who are desirous, at the moment, of having that done. If they will appreciate and realise what this Bill means, I am certain they will change their attitude. I am not opposing women serving on juries—far from it—but I am objecting to the fundamental principle in this Bill that we force them to have their names on the roll, and then they have to apply to get their names taken off. It is wrong, and I oppose the Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [9.26]: To say the least, I am astounded at the remarks of Dr. Hislop in connection with some alleged discourtesy of mine regarding this matter. The hon. member referred to the "wish" of this House. One member asked a question whether I would take a certain action. But does one member convey the wish of this House? The question of one member does not represent the wish of the House; and that is the only approach that has been made to me in regard to this matter.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Wasn't the select committee appointed by this House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, but I will deal with that in a moment. A statement has been made that I have been discourteous in regard to the wish of this House. I was asked a question by one member as to whether I would have the report of the select committee discussed beforehand, but no one can claim that one member asking a question is submitting the wish of this House. The select committee's report has not been discussed because it dealt with different matters. The select committee inquiry referred to the Jury Act, which has been on the statute book for many years.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: It had a lot of bearing on this measure.

Hon. L. A. Logan: There was special reference to the putting of women on juries.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This Bill deals with a different principle altogether, which does not appear in the Jury Act.

Hon. L. A. Logan: It is not different from what the select committee considered.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is something which has never before been in the Act.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: You are dodging the issue.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have never dodged anything, and I am merely stating the facts.

Hon. L. A. Logan: What were the terms of reference of the select committee?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: He doesn't know.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This Bill was on the stocks long before the select committee was appointed, and it was kept down after the appointment of the select committee with the idea that, if it were at all possible, its recommendations could be examined and discussed and if time permitted, legislation introduced this year. It was not possible, in view of the legislation to be dealt with, for the Government to consider the select committee's report with the idea of making alterations to this Bill. That is the reason why the select committee's report has not been discussed by this Chamber.

Mr. Griffith approached me when he was moving for the appointment of the select committee and asked what the position would be so far as legislation and the recommendations of the committee were concerned. I told him, before the select

committee sat, that whatever its report contained, it would be considered by the Government; and, if suitable, it was thought legislation would, if possible, be introduced this session or, if not, next session. That was the answer I gave to Mr. Griffith. I think Mr. Griffith told the House last week that that was the answer I gave him before any evidence was taken by the select committee. That is the reason the select committee's report has not been discussed. It is an entirely different matter from the Bill. The Bill deals with a principle that has never been adopted before in this State.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What did the select committee's report deal with?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not permitted to discuss the report. But it deals with the whole of the Jury Act and suggested amendments to that Act.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Read the terms of reference!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill does not do that. It deals with a separate matter: one that has been dealt with for the last three or four years.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: And was the reason for the select committee's appointment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may or may not have been.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: It was.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I don't know about that. If it was, the select committee dealt with the whole of the Jury Act and not with one phase.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Two phases only.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The promise I made before any evidence was taken by the select committee will be honoured by the Government. I do not know how members can salve their consciences on this matter. Of course, I cannot refer to the select committee's report.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: That is your own handicap.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In due course, members will have an opportunity to discuss that report, but on this Bill I cannot discuss it. However, I cannot understand any member who agrees with the principle in the Bill but who says that because something is not done regarding another part of the Jury Act, he will vote against the Bill.

Hon. L. A. Logan: We want to discuss the report first.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: During the debate I have heard members admit that the principle has been established, but that they will not vote for this measure because certain other things have not been done. I do not know how they salve their consciences. The principle is either good or bad, irrespective of anything else, and the provision should be inserted or rejected on its own merits. I could be pardoned for being suspicious, in view of the attitude of members in past years; but mine is not a suspicious nature. If I were suspicious, I would say that this was only another excuse being invented for throwing out the Bill again.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: There could be another side to the suspicion.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There may be.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: You said you would bring in another measure next year, anyhow.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That does not excuse the rejection of this measure, which we want treated on its merits. It is either good or bad. Whatever might have happened, and whatever recommendations might have been made by a committee in connection with other phases of the Act, this Bill should be considered on its merits. I gave a promise that the other matters would be considered by the Government; and if it agreed with the suggestions made, legislation would be introduced. I cannot do more than that.

But we want this principle to be debated and decided on. When we know that it has been accepted, amendments to the Act in other respect will be made much easier. I know it has been suggested that the alteration of one word would do the job. I do not know whether it is in the report or not, but it has been suggested. Let members try to put one word in and see how they get on! They would be in a terrible muddle. These things are not as simple as they look on the surface.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: That is true.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is rather remarkable, too, that members are taking the stand that because the whole of the Jury Act is not being amended, they are going to throw this Bill out. This is the first occasion on which I have heard that argument put up.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I made that suggestion three years ago.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was so long ago that I had forgotten. No other member made the suggestion, even if Mr. Watson did.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I did.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Don't say it is the same Bill that was put up in 1953 or 1954!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The principle is the same. In fact, it is almost word for word the same.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I know it is.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is almost word for word the same as the Bill put up in other years. We want to establish the principle of women being allowed to serve on juries.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Allowed—not forced.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are not forcing them. Who said we were? The hon. member cannot show me anywhere where that is stated.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: They have to go on the jury list.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes; but not serve on a jury.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: We say they should be allowed to if they wish to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is the difference, and it is a distinction for which we make provision. Members have raised the question of compulsion. Perhaps half a dozen times this session members will be supporting measures providing for compulsion in some respects. It is always dangerous to protest against something on the ground that it involves compulsion, because soon afterwards it may be necessary to support a Bill embodying compulsion. No more is required in this measure than is required under the Electoral Act today, which is that all females between 21 and 60 shall go on a jury list.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Does that apply to men?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The age does.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: But there are other qualifications.

The CHIEF SECRTARY: Yes; and while there are other qualifications for men, there are certain reasons, from a woman's point of view, why she need not serve. So where the qualifications cut some men out, the reasons will permit some women to be exempted. The argument about the number of names on the list is rather remarkable. The measure makes provision for an area to be proclaimed, and in that area there may be 20,000 or 30,000 males and only 6,000 on the jury list. Even if there were 90,000 to 100,000, there might be only 6,000 males on the jury list. But members contend that if there were 90,000 to 100,000 females, there would be that number on the list. The arguments do not dovetail. If out of 90,000 to 100,000 males, only 6,000 are on the list, is it not only logical to assert that if there were 90,000 to 100,000 females there would be only 6,000 females on the list?

Hon. L. A. Logan: No; it is a different basis entirely.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: In the other States enrolment is voluntary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: All that is compulsory about this measure is the enrolment.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Why not make it voluntary?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Service on a jury is voluntary; because, if a lady does not want to serve, she writes in.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: After she has been made compulsorily eligible.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The only compulsion is with regard to having her name on the list.

Hon. L. A. Logan: How does she know that it is on the list?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is the same as with regard to the Legislative Council rolls, though it is not compulsory to be enrolled and vote. The only difference in the two cases is that in one instance it is compulsory to be on the roll, and in the other it is not; but it is not compulsory to serve. Many loopholes are available for ladies who do not want to serve.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Why should we differ from the other States?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is this difference—that we get a much better cross-section of females.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: They will be cross all right!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I suppose the hon. member is taking the same attitude as Mr. Logan, who said that no woman had asked him to support this Bill. But by the same token, no woman has asked him to oppose it.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: They are just not interested.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are not concerned. If called upon, they will give service. That is the peculiar thing about the Australian. He will not go out of his way to do anything; but if it is imposed on him as a duty, he does not mind doing it and will do it. It is the same with women. In this case their names will be on the list. Some who are concerned will write in and have their names removed; others will not. They will be called up for service and attend willingly, and by that means we will have a nice cross-section of women on juries. All I ask members to do is to treat this Bill on its merits. Do they consider women should be permitted to serve on juries or not? That is the question. In view of the services of women to the nation, that is very little to ask the Chamber to permit them to do.

Hon. A. R. Jones: That is not the question at all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes it is.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: No.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I don't care how members get around it—that is the question. Will they permit women to serve or not?

Hon. H. K. Watson: On the terms in the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On their own terms. If they do not want to serve, they will write in and say so. It is for them to say whether they want to serve or not; but at least we will be giving them the opportunity. That is not asking very much. Why should we set ourselves up as judges as to whether women do or do not want to serve?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: None of the women I have spoken to want to serve.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not saying they should serve. All I am doing is supporting a Bill which will give them the right to serve if they want to. But the hon. member takes the other attitude. He says he will not allow them to.

Hon. L. A. Logan: No; we have not said that at all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is what you say.

Hon. L. A. Logan: We haven't said that at all.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am giving members the choice.

Hon. L. A. Logan: You be honest!

The PRESIDENT: Order, please!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am giving members the choice. They are making use of a word that they have held up their hands in horror about. By compulsion, they will not allow women to serve.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Don't swing words around.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members will not allow them to serve—by compulsion.

Hon. L. A. Logan: That is wrong. You are twisting words.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The vote of members on this will show what the position is. I have heard of going around a corner, or going on a straight track to get to a destination.

Hon. L. A. Logan: You stick to the principle in the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The principle is—Are women to be permitted to serve?

Hon. L. A. Logan: No it isn't!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member cannot get away from that cardinal point, which is: Shall we permit women to serve on juries?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: On what conditions?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will not be long now before we know the attitude of members; but I say that it is high time that women of this State were given an opportunity to serve on juries, and this Bill will allow them to do that.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	12
Majority against	1

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. E. M. Davies
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham

Question thus negatived.
Bill defeated.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [9.46] in moving the second reading said: This is the first of three Bills which I am introducing and which deal with land and vermin taxes. It seeks to delete all reference in the parent Act to income tax. I think I would be right in saying that members are aware that the Government has been giving very careful consideration to what can be done to bridge the gap, at least partially, between our expenditure and revenue so far as the Consolidated Revenue Fund is concerned.

Each member, I am sure, appreciates fully the fact that costs to all Governments have been increasing very substantially in recent years. Unfortunately revenue has not been increasing at the same rate and this is a situation which cannot be permitted to continue. If it were allowed to go unchecked the effect on the community could well be imagined.

My Government has been, and still is, averse to any action which would increase charges to be met by the people of the State. We have felt that increased government imposts upon the public and upon our industries would increase substantially the burden of inflation with deleterious results in many directions. The Government was hopeful that our policy would be accepted as an example by the Commonwealth Government and also by at least the larger companies with whom the Government was transacting business. In this regard, however, we found that we were almost alone in our efforts. Increases in Commonwealth taxation imposed

a heavier burden not only on the people of Western Australia but also on the State Government.

When introducing the Budget in another place the Premier explained that the Government pays in total an amount of over £1,000,000 per year alone in payroll tax to the Commonwealth Government. Furthermore, costs in relation to the Government's responsibilities are practically all increasing.

Members all know that the Government is the biggest consumer in the State, and by far the biggest single purchaser of goods. The purchase price of these goods has been increasing steadily and is far above the proportion of increase in the total of the goods bought. In addition, the wages and salaries bill of the Government has increased considerably in recent years.

All those factors and others have meant that the financial position of the Government and of the State has become such as to make it essential and urgent that substantial measures be taken for the purpose of trying to reduce the deficit to reasonably manageable proportions. There are, of course, open to a State Government in these days only a limited number of fields in which large additional sums of money can be obtained.

The State Government no longer has the legal authority to levy income tax upon industry and upon the people, and consequently that main source of governmental income is not available. After having considered carefully the avenues from which additional revenues might be obtained to a fairly large degree, it was decided that the land tax field was a field which, in all the circumstances of the present day, was one which could fairly be drawn upon to obtain an increased amount of revenue.

I think most members will be aware that the land tax on improved rural lands was suspended in 1931 as the result of a Bill introduced by the Government of which the late Sir James Mitchell was Treasurer and Sir Charles Latham was Minister for Lands.

It was argued in support of the Bill that prices for primary products had fallen to such disastrously low levels that the position of most, if not all, primary producers, had become sufficiently serious to justify Parliament being requested to suspend the payment of tax on improved rural land.

Perhaps it is hardly necessary to emphasise the extent to which the agricultural industries have improved since those grim and depressing days. Even allowing for the reduction which has occurred in money values since 1931 the price today of most primary products is high and most primary producers are now in a substantially better position than they were then.

Hon. H. K. Watson: They would need to be, wouldn't they?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are. We certainly would not want them or anyone else to be in the position they were in in those days. These circumstances too, have applied for quite a number of years. It may be, of course, that some of the smaller dairy farmers are not in as good a position as are farmers engaged in other types of activity.

Now, from the fact that, generally speaking, farmers' fortunes have so greatly improved for perhaps the last 15 or 16 years, and that tax on improved rural land has not been reimposed, it would appear that farmers have obtained a considerable advantage, particularly when it is remembered that land tax on town lots has never been suspended or reduced. It appears, therefore, difficult to sustain a justifiable argument against the reimposition of this tax on farming lands.

It is the view of the Government that the raising of a fair proportion of the additional money required can best be achieved through the medium of land taxation. Some of the money so raised will be applied towards meeting a part of the estimated railway deficit for the current financial year. The only alternative to this proposal would be the increasing of rail freights.

Until the 1st July, 1952, land tax was imposed both by the Commonwealth and the State Governments. When the Commonwealth vacated this field of taxation it did so with the intention of enabling the States to raise greater revenue from this source. Until recently the States did not take advantage of this opportunity; but in view of the serious financial circumstances and the restrictions on the States in obtaining revenue, there is now little alternative but to do so.

It is anticipated that over £5,000,000 will be expended this year on hospitals and health generally, and there is a large and ever increasing bill to meet in connection with education matters. The departments concerned with these activities return very little revenue to the Treasury and it would be most unfortunate if their very important work had to be curtailed through the inability to obtain money elsewhere.

It is a fact that the financial position of each State Government has become increasingly serious during recent years. On the other hand, the financial position of the Commonwealth Government seems all the time to become increasingly better and brighter.

These happenings are not of mushroom growth. They have developed at least since the end of the last war and much of the reason is the increase in State commitments caused by the rapid increase in population. In this regard it must be remembered that for some time the growth in population in Western Australia was in proportion the greatest in the Commonwealth. Another important

reason was the lag in essential services during the war and the early postwar years when all States found it most difficult to cope with needs such as education, health, etc. As a result a great deal of money was required in following years in endeavours to overcome this lag.

It is of interest to note that this year the Government will be faced with a bill of approximately £1,000,000 for the operation of school bus services, alone. I wonder if those who initiated the central or area school system would have thought the scheme would eventually result in a bus service expenditure of £1,000,000 in one year!

A small feature of the Bill is that it proposes, in future, to eliminate assessments where the amount of tax to be paid would be £1 or less. It is considered that the work and inconvenience of assessing these small holdings is not worth the small amount of revenue received. The Bill I will explain next will indicate details of the proposed amended tax. As I have said, land tax is payable and has been payable for many years on town lands.

The Bill proposes to repeal the provision in Section 9 (1) of the parent Act that improved land shall only be taxed at 1s. 2d. of the rate provided in the Land Tax Act. The reason for this is that the proposed new rates do not provide for the flat rate of assessment that prevails at present for unimproved values of over £250.

The Bill also seeks exemption from taxation for hospitals conducted by and on behalf of religious bodies. The parent Act exempts only public hospitals and the amendment will ensure that the other hospitals to which I referred can be definitely exempted.

The greater part of the Bill is taken up with amendments deleting from the Act all reference to income tax. The Income Tax Assessment Act of 1937 repealed all provisions in the principal Act which did not deal with land tax, but the amendments in the Bill will remove any confusion that might occur by the continued reference in the principal Act to income tax matters. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILL—LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [9.57] in moving the second reading said: This is the Bill which seeks to alter the amount of land tax to be paid. A glance at page 3 of the Bill will reveal that it is proposed to insert in the parent Act a new second schedule which provides the land tax rates to be paid on improved land as from the assessment year which commenced on the 1st July, 1956. The present tax rates which appear in the first schedule to the parent Act operate until the year ended the 30th June, 1956.

The Bill also proposes that all unimproved land will be rated at the amounts shown in the schedule plus one penny for each pound of its assessed unimproved value. It is the opinion of the Government that persons in rural areas who are holding land out of production should pay a higher rate of tax than is imposed on improved property. The same opinion applies to people who are holding unimproved town lands.

"Improved land" is defined in Section 9 of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act as land on which improvements have been effected to an amount equal to one pound per acre, or one-third of the unimproved value of the land, whichever amount is the lesser. Any improvements made on any one piece of land extend to any other one piece under the same ownership if the nearest boundaries of the two pieces are not more than one mile apart.

Hon. H. K. Watson: The Bill you have just introduced withdraws that provision.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They all dovetail. The term "improvements" is defined to include houses, buildings, fencing, planting, roads, dams, wells, windmills, drains, ringbarking, clearing, pastures, grasses, and any other improvements whatsoever which are still of benefit to the owner.

It is clear, therefore, that the opportunities to get the benefit of the lesser rate of tax are substantial, and the amount of improvements which are to be made to a property to bring it under the "improved" classification is not very much. The Government feels that some concession should be given to those who improve their lands, whether they be rural or town lots, as against the person who has made no attempt to improve his land. I admit that this principle could have a harsh effect in individual instances.

Cases do occur where town lots have remained in an unimproved condition for reasons which might be regarded as legitimate. The same could possibly apply to rural lands. However, the number of legitimate instances in those two directions would be very small.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Why are you not increasing the tax on unimproved land up to £5,000?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We thought we would give what concessions we could and not place too big a burden on the individual on the lower range.

Hon. H. K. Watson: But you are hitting the improved land in that range.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We will iron all those things out when the Bill is in Committee. Departmental officers dealing with the assessment and levying of land

tax would be prepared to take special circumstances into consideration to try to make a reasonable adjustment. A comparison of the amounts proposed in the Bill to be paid on improved land with those paid when the combined Commonwealth-State taxes operated prior to the 1st July, 1952, is of interest.

The proposal for land valued at £500 is £3 2s. 6d., an increase of 10s. 5d.; on £1,000 it would be £6 5s., an increase of £1 0s. 10d. and on £5,000, £31 5s. or an increase of £5 4s. 2d. No Commonwealth tax was payable on land of these values. On land valued at £20,000 the Bill proposes a tax of £156 5s. or a reduction on the combined tax of £120 2s. 9d. The figures for other values are £40,000, £281 5s., a reduction of £449 6s. 1d.; £60,000, £906 5s., a reduction of £456 5s.; £120,000, £2,656 5s., a reduction of £1,218 15s.; £200,000, £4,989 10s. 8d., a reduction of £2,302 1s. 8d.; £400,000, £10,822 13s. 4d., a reduction of £5,010 13s. 4d.

These figures refer, of course, to town land which prior to the 1st July, 1952, was paying both State and Commonwealth land tax. Rural lands, of course, have been paying no land tax since the Commonwealth tax ceased on the 1st July, 1952. The proposals in the Bill will therefore be all increase so far as rural lands are concerned. Compared with the Commonwealth tax they are:—

£		£ s. d.		£ s. d.
500	....	3 2 6	an increase of	10 5
1,000	....	6 5 0	"	1 0 10
5,000	....	31 5 0	"	5 4 2
20,000	....	156 5 0	"	52 1 8
40,000	....	281 5 0	"	72 18 4
60,000	....	906 5 0	"	593 15 0
120,000	....	2,656 5 0	"	2,031 5 0
200,000	....	4,989 11 8	"	3,047 18 4
400,000	....	10,822 13 4	"	8,738 6 8

The approximate number of land tax assessments in the various categories are:—

£		£					
1	—	10,000	....	....	....	....	110,000
10,000	—	20,000	....	....	....	....	300
20,000	—	30,000	....	....	....	....	100
30,000	—	40,000	....	....	....	....	60
40,000	—	50,000	....	....	....	....	40
	Over	50,000	....	....	....	....	200

This is a total of 110,000 in the £1—£10,000 groups and 700 in the ranges over £10,000. In addition there are about 6,000 non-taxable pensioners.

The taxpayers' association has complained that the proposals are sectional. This is hardly so as the tax is levied on all land on a sliding scale based on the value of the land. They also complain that the tax is not based on profit or income. This is correct as under the Commonwealth-State financial arrangements the fields of income and profit tax are left to the Commonwealth. The State must therefore enter the non-income tax field to obtain essential revenue. The association alleges also that increased land taxes would deter the introduction of foreign capital. That statement is hard to believe in the light of recent Victorian and New South Wales experience. Both these States have substantially increased their land tax.

The association also said that the increased tax in New South Wales was expected to yield £2,000,000, a much lower rate per capita than the Western Australian proposals. This statement also appears wide of the mark as an article in the "Financial Review" estimated that the annual tax in New South Wales would amount to £5,250,000. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. K. Watson, debate adjourned.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [10.6] in moving the second reading said: This is the third of the three complementary taxing bills. It proposes that, as from the 1st July, 1956, the special vermin rate imposed under Section 103 of the principal Act shall cease. In its stead the Bill provides that every year a sum of £100,000 or such greater amount as shall be approved by the Treasurer, shall be paid out of land tax into the vermin tax account.

The amount of vermin tax that has been collected averages about £100,000 in a year. It is considered that with the reimposition of land tax on rural land this proposal will provide more economical and efficient administration than would be the case if vermin and land taxes were collected separately. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. K. Watson, debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 6th December.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	10
Noes	....	....	....	13
Majority against			....	3

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. D. Teahan

(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. N. E. Baxter	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. Sir Chas. Latham

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th December.

HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM (South-East) [10.11]: This is one of the most important Bills the Government has brought down this session. Much of the material I have before me tonight I gleaned when a private member introduced another Bill to amend the Traffic Act earlier in the session, which Bill has been relegated, from time to time, to the bottom of the notice paper. However, although each Bill applies itself to a different phase of the Traffic Act, the material that I obtained does relate, generally speaking, to the principle behind both measures.

Traffic today presents one of our greatest and most terrible problems. In Australia, by this time tomorrow night, six people who are alive at the present moment will be dead.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That is terrible!

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It is terrible. The figures show that the average number of people killed each day is about three aged people, two in the middle-aged group, and one child under seven years of age. That is a terrible state of affairs. Every 4½ hours someone in Australia loses his life on our roads through traffic accidents. That is apart from 10 times the number of people who are injured as a result of road accidents.

Just how terrible this road toll is can be emphasised by the fact that according to the figures supplied by Mr. W. Lonnie, the State President of the R.S.L., the death toll in Australia, as a result of road accidents, is over double the number of fatalities that were recorded in the three world wars, despite all the savagery of war. Those figures show that in the Boer War, 251 Australians were killed; in World War I, 59,352 met their deaths; in World War II, 34,223 were killed. In the Korean War, 331 men were killed in action, which figure, strangely enough, shows that more men were killed in that conflict than in the Boer War. The total number of men killed in all three world wars was 92,207.

But that is less than half the number of lives that have been lost on Australian roads over approximately the same period. Only as recently as the 17th October last publicity was given by the Road Safety Council to the fact that some time during that week the millionth life would be snuffed out through a traffic accident. Before the week was passed the council was not able to tell us who the millionth victim was, because the number of deaths in Australia was so great, comparatively, that it had difficulty in ascertaining the one-millionth victim.

That is an awful toll. No one can stress too greatly the importance that must be attached to any legislation related to the control of traffic. It is terrible to think that any member of our families can be included within the six people who will lose their lives in the next 24 hours. It is frightening to think that not only will that number be reached, but the cause is primarily human error—carelessness in control or inspection of vehicles, carelessness in stepping off the kerbside, carelessness of a young couple in taking a curve after a dance, carelessness of a person in consuming the one extra drink which he could have done without.

Sitting suspended from 10.17 to 10.43 p.m.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not know that it is within my power to introduce any humour into the Bill. Although my opening remarks may have been somewhat morbid, I still feel that the importance of the Bill is such that it cannot be taken lightly. This is particularly so in view of the grave consequences to the nation because of lack of safety regulations where traffic is concerned. So any measure that the Government sees fit to introduce, dealing with traffic, cannot, I feel, help but be beneficial.

The Bill seeks primarily to increase the licence fees of vehicles. This is long overdue. I know it is a contentious point, but as one interested in local government in country towns, I know that licence fees form one of the mainstays of local government finance. This State has enjoyed one of the lowest scales of licence fees for vehicles. The fact that licence and registration income has not been of any great value has been important to local authorities. The users of the roads, the vehicle-owners, are expecting and getting better roads all the time, but they are not contributing any greater amount to the upkeep of roads. That money is coming from other revenue raised by councils.

I know that many local authorities, particularly municipalities, are very hopeful that this measure will pass, even with the comparatively high licence fees that the Bill envisages. After all, though heavy, it must be remembered that so far as money derived by local authorities from

licence fees and registrations is concerned that money is more directly returned to the people than if collected in other ways. In the first two or three clauses, where the Bill seeks to consolidate some of the amendments which have occurred over a number of years, it is rather confusing. Clause 10 is difficult to understand, but by using the Minister's notes as a guide one can see the idea and the reason behind it. I am perfectly prepared to accept that as being a step forward.

I notice that under the Bill it is proposed to cut out quarterly licences. Admittedly that was a wartime measure. But when we remember that the increase in licence fees, particularly for some of the heavier commercial vehicles, will be fairly steep, it might be better to leave this quarterly licensing. At present many people might not avail themselves of the quarterly licence but with this large increase in some vehicle fees many owners might be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity. I agree that private vehicle owners might not find any great benefit in licensing their vehicles for a quarter and will avail themselves of the half yearly or yearly registration. But the owners of heavier vehicles might wish to avail themselves of this concession.

There is also a clause in the Bill that allows for short-term licensing for caravans which are used for holiday purposes. Many of these vehicles spend ten months of the year in a backyard and only two months of the year, during the holiday period, in use. It seems an imposition that such a vehicle should have to be licensed for a period of six months and the Government is making a concession in that it is allowing such a vehicle to be licensed for a shorter period. I entirely agree. Also farmers who use certain haulage vehicles on seasonal work, and leave those vehicles lying idle for a great portion of the year, will be able to license their vehicles for the time they are most useful to them. That is a consideration on the part of the Government and I think it is very good.

I have one amendment on the notice paper which, although small, is, to my mind, necessary. I think it has probably been an oversight. Section 25 of the Act states that a police officer can, without a warrant, arrest and charge a person who is driving a vehicle while his licence is suspended. In other sections of the Act, where there is a similar provision in regard to drunken driving, and the like, a policeman or a traffic inspector may arrest without warrant. But in the case of a person driving while his licence is suspended only a police officer can arrest him.

As I said, I think that that is an oversight because in country districts the traffic inspector knows most people in the district and he knows if any person has had his licence suspended. If he sees such a person driving he is not permitted to arrest him but must get a police officer to do the job. My small amendment seeks to add the words "or traffic inspector" after the word "policeman" to bring the section into line with other sections in the Act and will give the traffic inspector the same right and powers as a police officer so that he can do something on the spot about any offence which he detects.

Section 59 of the Act forbids the advertising for a lift and also the advertising by a person offering a lift in a private vehicle in travelling from one place to another. At present it leaves no opening for any emergency that might happen and in country areas a person might, through an emergency, want to get to some place quickly. If he advertises over the radio asking if anyone knows of a vehicle going to Perth, as an example, he is liable to a penalty.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Do you mean to say that a man owning a car cannot give anyone a lift in that car?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It does not say that, but it says that he cannot advertise for or offer such a seat. A man cannot advertise in the paper that he is travelling from Kalgoorlie to Perth and that he has a seat for a passenger. On the other hand a person cannot advertise that he is wanting to get to Perth in an emergency, and that he is prepared to pay for such a seat if one is available. The Bill also precludes him from doing so.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He is not allowed to do so now.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: The Bill makes doubly certain of it. I believe that emergencies can arise and a provision such as this makes it fairly difficult. The Bill will add a proviso that it cannot be done without the permission of the Minister. That makes it possible for a person to get a lift, or offer a lift, under certain circumstances. But the most likely circumstance would be sickness or an emergency such as that. In that event it would not be possible to obtain the Minister's permission to advertise for a seat in a car. He would not even have time, if it were a real emergency, to advertise over the air. That is forbidden without the permission of the Minister. There might be no seats available on the train or in the aircraft and in such an emergency a person, without the permission of the Minister, would be forbidden to advertise for a seat in a car going from one place to the other.

There are important clauses in the Bill providing for drastic increases in penalties for certain offences. Members will know that in the past anyone apprehended for taking possession of a vehicle illegally could not be charged with stealing that vehicle. Usually, of course, the offence is detected after the person has abandoned

the vehicle and when he is finally caught the fact of his having abandoned the vehicle indicates that he had no intention of stealing it.

Therefore he cannot be charged with stealing and roundabout methods have had to be adopted to make him pay for the consequences of his act. This Bill seeks to make the offence one of taking possession of a vehicle without the permission of the owner; and the only person relieved of this provision are police officers or traffic inspectors in the course of their duties. That is only reasonable and for the first time the person who takes possession of a vehicle will be made to feel very sorry for his action because the penalties are very severe.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They ought to be.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I agree whole-heartedly.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Are you going to leave the minimum penalties in the Bill?

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: That is the one quarrel I have with the Bill. I will not discuss the provision at length, because we will deal with it in Committee. In the Bill there is a provision that where a person is charged with unlawfully taking control of a vehicle, for the first offence, there is a fine of £50 or, at the discretion of the court, one month's imprisonment. It is a minimum and irreducible. The only quarrel I have is in regard to the first offender. The penalties for subsequent offences jump alarmingly, on the face of it—£200, £250, six months in gaol and with an irreducible minimum—but I am quite happy about that. But when we picture a lad—I suppose not necessarily a youth, because older people take charge of vehicles for the first time—being fined £50 or one month in gaol for the first offence, it seems rather hard.

But I want members to mark the fact that it says "first offence." This person may have offended before and never been caught and so it would be his first offence —or the first one detected. Such a person might get away with it as only his first offence, without the full penalty provided in the Bill; but I think that is preferable to having a lad subjected to such a severe penalty for what is definitely his first offence. We could picture a young lad going out with a gang of boys to a dance, with an old offender amongst them—the ringleader with a strong will.

The youths may not know it but this individual might have a vehicle that he has stolen and he invites them to go for a ride with him. They may be quite unaware that the vehicle is stolen and would not know anything about it until they were apprehended. The one who has had previous convictions will go for a row—and I am fully in agreement with that—but it is difficult to imagine any of the other boys—and it might be my son, the Minister's son or anyone else's son—being convicted and given a month's imprisonment. Many of those lads are perfectly normal, well-meaning boys but they would be found guilty and with that irreducible minimum could spend a month in gaol or be fined £50. A fine of £50 is severe but the thought of such a lad going to gaol for one month for the first offence is something I dislike intensely.

I would like to see that irreducible minimum removed from the Bill in the case of a first offender taking possession of a car. I do not know whether in the case I have outlined, a boy could be accused of having possession of a car if he were only riding in it as a passenger. But the irreducible minimum is there and I think it is possible that he could go to gaol. That is the only thing in the measure I would like to see removed because I think it is too severe. I shall certainly do my best to have it removed.

One other little point I would like the Minister to explain when he replies is the reference in the second schedule to a motor carrier designed primarily for aged or invalid people A motor carrier is a three-wheeled vehicle and normally the vehicle that is precluded from these increases is the ordinary invalid chair that is pushed around, or which might have a small motor attached to it. But there is another type of vehicle that is coming into use—the three-wheeled vehicle driven in much the same manner as a car. It is still only a large chair and members have perhaps seen one about. But the Bill is aimed at this larger commercial vehicle which is a three-wheeled vehicle driven like a car.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is used by the maimed and limbless.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. It is not a chair and it is primarily used by aged people, paraplegics and so forth.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: A three-wheeled scooter.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. I would like the Minister's assurance that such a vehicle would not come under the increase in licence fees.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I think it is called a mechanised chair.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That is a chair with a two-stroke motor attached.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: It is a three-wheeled mechanised motor chair. Those are the points on which I would like the Minister to elaborate. Apart from that I commend the Bill to the House. If it becomes an Act I think we will see a sharp drop in the insidious offence that is so prevalent today of costly vehicles being taken over and smashed up by irresponsible people to the detriment of the owners, who probably have no redress in the matter at all. All in all, I can see nothing but good coming from the measure and I support the second reading.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [11.2]: This is a very interesting Bill, and in many ways I think it is an effort to control traffic in a manner that must be commended. When reading it, however, one must come to the conclusion that surely this tremendous spate of words is hustling at the very least and quite unnecessary! I have tried to read on more than one occasion since this Bill came before us all the implications of this question of licences, the variation of the date of commencement and all the other charges under the Act, and I am convinced that I do not understand it. I am equally convinced that no lay person outside the House could understand it. Sometimes I wonder if we should not set up a small committee to look at Bills of this nature to see that they are understandable. They may be understandable to a legally trained mind, but surely they can be put into simpler language than is used in this measure!

There are one or two principles in the measure that are quite new. One of them that is very interesting is the provision to set aside money from licences, I think it is, to pay for the lights at railway crossings, and also on the approaches to the Narrows bridge. It is a new principle to charge sections of the community for certain works and it seems that the metropolitan area is to carry the entire burden of the cost of railway crossings in that area, which perhaps can be regarded as reasonably fair. We must remember, however, that they are also going to pay the cost of providing, improving, maintaining and repairing railway road crossings including subways, overhead bridges, etc., situated in the metropolitan area. Some of those are to be associated with the Narrows bridge as the Bill mentioned later.

In making passing reference to the Narrows bridge in this measure, one must consider the huge pile of earth that one sees and which apparently is to remain at the northern end of the bridge, which completely blocks the view of the city as one comes around Mounts Bay-rd. It certainly destroys the beautiful approach that we had to the city previously.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Is that to remain there?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I understand it is to remain as the northern approach to the bridge so that the view of the city will be blocked as one comes around the bay. If we had realised that that was to be an essential part of the design we might have had a lot more to say about it before we agreed to that legislation.

There is one provision in the measure on which I propose to move an amendment. I cannot say that I am completely happy with the wording of the amendment, but it is one that we must consider and discuss. It was added in another place and then withdrawn. In Clause 18 of the Bill there is no defence at all apparently to a charge of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which, after all, is a drug. There are cases occasionally where individuals have been treated for a particular condition and because modern drugs have been used, they may have been affected temporarily and consequently driving for them has been made difficult.

A case was reported recently in which it would appear that an individual had had a severe reaction to either an overdose of insulin, or a failure to take food at the proper time after a dose of insulin had been given. This sort of thing does occur. If we made it a defence when the individual followed strictly the orders of the medical practitioners or had reacted unfavourably to medical treatment, I do not think we could say it would be evading the conditions necessary to maintain control in traffic: because if the individual claimed that that was the reason why his car was moving erratically he could then be charged under another section of the parent Act and the magistrate or whoever was making the decision could deprive him of his licence as being a person unfit to drive a car because of this possible habit of reacting unfavourably to medical treatment or drugs.

One must realise that it is the duty of every citizen who is affected in such a way to pull his car to the side and stop. But there is the odd case where that individual is deprived temporarily of the ability to drive. Should he continue to drive, it may possibly be considered as an offence. While on that subject I would like to agree with the remarks made by Mr. Roche to the effect that a more paternal relationship between the members of the Police Force and those charged with driving offences would do a lot to instil confidence into the minds of the travelling public. I believe there is considerable room for improvement in the relationship that exists between those two parties when an individual is charged with being under the influence of alcohol or some other drug.

It does not make one happy when statements are made to one by reputable individuals that they had the misfortune to be arrested on some charge of this sort which, in the cases I am thinking of, proved groundless, but against whom statements of an extravagant nature were made when they reached police headquarters. For anyone to be locked up for the night is a most unpleasant experience and there is the great possibility, which I have learned does exist, that they may be warned the following morning that it is easier for them to plead guilty, which they do; and having pleaded guilty they have no chance whatever of appeal. I have also had statements made to me that individuals have been refused the right to communicate with their relatives.

Hon. E. M. Davies: That is right, too.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: When we know that to be right, I think we should insert something in this Bill to make certain that it does not continue. If members will read the clause that follows, in which I propose to insert an amendment, they will see that the wording is very loose in that it merely says that the individual shall be made aware that he can communicate with a doctor of his nomination if one is available. In some cases I do not think any great effort is made to see that one is available.

Secondly, when one hears from medical men that after they have gone down to the station they have been left standing around for some time and have later been told, "There is the individual; you can go and see him in that room," one can understand why medical men fight shy of responding to a call of this nature. One medical man told me that after having gone down and having said that he did not appear to be of very much use on that occasion, he was summoned as a witness against the person who called him for medical aid. The whole thing needs careful investigation to see whether the individual who is charged is receiving fair and adequate treatment at the hands of those who arrest him or look after him at police headquarters.

There is no evidence of any desire on the part of those people in charge at present to institute blood tests for alcoholism. They have proved to be of such great value and have been used to prove that people were under the influence of alcohol. During inquests these tests have proved that the deceased had been under the influence of alcohol, and yet there is no provision in this Bill to make it possible for blood tests to be taken. I have looked at this measure and I cannot see how we can clear this matter up. If an individual claims he is suffering from the effect of drugs or that he has been unjustly arrested on a charge of being under the influence of alcohol, he should be taken to the nearest major hospital such as Fremantle Hospital or Royal Perth Hospital in order that his condition can be checked by medical men.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Would it be necessary to go to a hospital for that?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is difficult to get a person with the knowledge and necessary equipment at hand to take blood tests. It is easier to take the person to an established institution, which can always be ready for that type of work as it would have sterile syringes and so on and containers which are necessary for collecting the blood. It is so much easier at a major hospital than for a person to be called to the lock-up to make the test. I think—and there are others who think the same as I do—we should take every step possible to see these things do not occur as they have in the past.

I have always wondered why we have to arrest the alcoholic in the street, and why we do not do what is done in so many other countries and put him in a car and take him to a hospital. These people are, in the main, sick people and need treatment rather than being arrested and regarded as having acted in a criminal sense. Our whole approach to the problem of the alcoholic is a poor one, and I think the approach in this Bill is also poor.

A lot of the alterations which have suddenly descended upon the metropolitan area, I take it, did not come from any new amendments in this Bill, but from regulations laid down under the Traffic Act. I would like to commend the department for a number of them. I think at the moment it is possible that the distance between cars is extravagant, but it does permit of even the biggest car going into one of the bays by driving it forward and not having to back into the traffic. Whether that is the intention I do not know; but previously, when parking, everyone was advised the correct method was to back into the space. Now that seems to have altered as there is no need to back into the space, and I think that the longest car could move in forward.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And quicker.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is now no need to take the risk of backing into traffic, such as one finds in Hay and Murray-sts. Again, I think, the distance allowed is in some cases excessive, and it may have to be lessened as time goes on. I have in mind an area on the north side of Hay-st. east of King-st. That is an excessive area, and I do not think dividing it into half would mean any impeding of the traffic going around north into King-st. These are things which will iron themselves out.

There is one regulation which I would bring in very smartly, and that is to prevent U turns in the city block, because I think they are extremely dangerous. In the United States, seven years ago, anybody who took a U turn would find himself apprehended by a policeman and charged. It is very dangerous. If one watches in St. George's Terrace, he will realise how dangerous it is. Somebody moves out of line and puts his vehicle half way across the road which impedes traffic in other directions.

Another thing I would like to see done in order to stabilise traffic is some control over pedestrian crossings. I think that when a car is stationary at a pedestrian crossing, no other car should be allowed to go on either side across the crossing, because it is very easy for a person to be crossing thinking it is safe and another car goes over the crossing. It is very dangerous and frequently happens in this city.

Some control over pedestrians is also necessary because it becomes a question of infiltration by pedestrians, or infiltration by cars. In other parts of the world they have regulations which state that when a pedestrian is crossing, no car shall cross; but equally so, when a car is stationary, no pedestrian shall cross. That means these crossings can be controlled as they should be. If we watch these crossings which are not controlled by a policeman, it is a procession of cars gradually moving little by little to edge across and prevent the pedestrians from crossing while pedestrians race across from one side of the street to the other.

In the main I would like to commend a lot that is in this Bill, but I do not hope to understand at least one third of it, unless somebody explains it to me. However, there are many features to be commended and I will certainly vote for the second reading and perhaps the major portion of the Bill—being a Committee Bill—will receive very generous consideration.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Davies, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th December.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [11.23]: I am one of the proudest members in this Chamber to see what has taken place in the Esperance district. Over the period since I have been a member of Parliament I have taken a great interest in that district. Many years ago my father said to me, "If ever you are in a position where you can do anything for the Esperance district—which is the main seaport of the Goldfields—you will be doing a good job for the Goldfields." I believe this area has always been held back by the big interests in the metropolitan area.

The American syndicate which has taken over the Esperance district will not only develop that land, but will also have a big interest in the State and will assist in defence, in addition to putting money in the Rural & Industries Bank.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It will be a good opportunity for the Treasurer to get an overdraft.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: The first year I was a member of this House I received a letter from the late Mr. Fraser who put himself up as one of the members of the Land Board in Esperance, and he asked if I would visit them in connection with the possibilities of Esperance land. I happened to go to Esperance and learned that there was a committee set up to inquire into its possibilities and the Hon. Sir Charles Latham was one of its members, together with the Hon. E. Nulsen. It was said at the time that Esperance had died a natural death. Mr. Nulsen was working single-handed in trying to get people interested in the district, but it died a natural death.

The late Mr. Fraser and Mr. Douglas—he is there at present—asked me to have a look at the property of old Mr. Bow, who was a man of about 85 years of age. We looked at this property and they explained to me what had taken place over a number of years with a small amount of super. I could see then that super gave the land the extra kick it required, and I was very impressed with it. I went to the property of Mrs. Cartledge and saw the vegetables which were being grown, including peanuts, which were very good. I was then taken to another part where they were growing onions, and I took samples and displayed them in Boulder and Kalgoorlie. In addition, I saw potatoes growing.

I was asked by members of this committee whether I would call on the Lands Department in Perth and see if I could get an aerial photo survey made of the district. I saw the Surveyor General, Mr. Fyfe, who was very pleased that I, as a new member, was inquiring whether something could be done about that land. He hoped I would be successful in doing something for the district as he considered it had great possibilities.

Then I went to the Dutch Consul to see whether I could do anything about a land settlement scheme similar to that now being undertaken. However, he said his country was short of good farmers owing to the war and could not go on with the scheme at Esperance. Later on I went to the Italian Consul and received the same reply.

Former members of this House who have passed on, and some members who are now in the House, including the President, laughed at me every time I mentioned Esperance. They thought I was on the wrong track. I think there was hardly a session of Parliament in which I did not mention Esperance. I was wrapped up in the district from the early days and believed that something would come of it.

I was contacted in Kalgoorlie by a Mr. Pavlinovich and by Mr. Keogh, one of our leading engineers on the Goldfields. They went to Esperance and had a look over different parts of the district and bored 6 to 10 ft. at certain places with a view to testing the land for water supplies.

When they returned, they asked me if I could get them a map of Esperance, which I did, and they selected the part they required. A couple of days afterwards we came to Perth and called on the Lands Department where we interviewed Mr. Denny. They made an application for the block they required. We also called on

the Rural Bank regarding the possibility of utilising old machinery that had been lying idle at Salmon Gums for many years.

This machinery was obtained for a very small figure and Mr. Keogh remodelled it, and it was taken to Esperance. At that time tractors were hard to get. They obtained an old one, which Mr. Keogh rebuilt and it was put into use on the property. Several departments which we called on in Perth praised these people very highly for the interest they were taking in the Esperance district. Another pioneer of the district was Mr. Button, who had a property in the Salmon Gums area.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: He went to Esperance a long time after the Bows.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Years afterwards. The Bows had been there for 40 or 50 years, but Mr. Button was the first to go there from the Salmon Gums area after I came into Parliament.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He was one of the new settlers.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Yes; he saw the possibilities of the district. I remember him and his wife going there in an old truck with their furniture piled on top of it. He built a little humpy down there. Both of them were practical farmers. His wife was an outstanding woman who could do anything on a farm—drive a tractor, load hay or anything at all. Those two really dug in. Materials were hard to get in those times, and I was able to do a lot to assist them to obtain different requirements.

When I came into Parliament, Mr. Nulsen and I took an interest in the Esperance district. I think that Mr. Keogh influenced more settlers to go to the Esperance district than any other person. There were other pioneers who took up land around the same time as Mr. Button, and I give a lot of credit to them for the development of that district. For instance, there were the Sampson brothers, a person named Draper, Mr. Reeves, Mr. Berryman, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Noel White and the Baker family. The family consisted of a widow with two sons, and they had a plantation where they grew fruit. There was also Mr. Kent, a chairman of the road board at Esperance; Mr. Jessop, a contractor at Kalgoorlie; and Mr. Paterson, who is now the chairman of the Esperance Road Board. There were also the Kirwan brothers and others.

I met the Kirwan brothers the first year I came into Parliament. They had been prospectors at Widgiemooltha. They sold out at a small price and went to the Esperance district with their mother, who is now 75 years of age. They had an allotment in the town, and they took up land on the east side and, with little capital, went out and worked like Trojans. They found that their money was cutting out, so one of the brothers went into town and worked in order to provide the family with food. He would go back to the allotment after working in the town, and the brothers would labour on their property until midnight every day of the week. There were no good roads in those days, and during the wet season they had to remain in the bush because they could not get to the town.

It was people like that who really pioneered the district. They spent their money and showed what could be done down there. At that period the Kirwans could not get any money. On one occasion, Mr. Diver went down there; and when he saw the hard work they had done, and found that they had no money to stock their property, he told them that if he could not get funds for them from one of the stock firms, he would put the stock on for them. I think that does the hon. member great credit. However, he was able to obtain assistance from a stock firm, and now those folk have assets worth £50,000 to £60,000. I am very pleased to say that all the persons I have mentioned are on top of the world and have really good properties.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Now they are going to be taxed on their land!

Hon. G. BENNETTS: That may be so. Later on, Mr. Nulsen and I approached the late Garnet Wood, when he was Minister for Agriculture, with a view to trying to persuade him to take a trip to Esperance. That was the year that Mr. Cunningham came into Parliament and, along with Mr. Nulsen and me, he worked to get certain things for Mr. Button. We went to Esperance with Mr. Wood, and we were accompanied by Mr. Ackland from another place. Mr. Wood was amazed and very pleased with what he saw. We asked him to establish a research station, and he said he would give the matter consideration.

Subsequently, he did, in fact, establish a research station; and it has been a wonderful asset to the farmers of the district and has been of considerable assistance in enabling them to attain to their present positions. That research station has shown what can be done with light land in a very short time.

Reference has been made in the debate to the carrying capacity of the Esperance land. Mr. Noel White of Esperance went there from Meekatharra, taking most of his materials overland. I think he has about 30,000 acres.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It is 50,000 acres.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Last year he ran 500 head of cattle on 1,000 acres for 12 months; and when we inspected the property, we could hardly see where the stock had been, the growth was so abundant. The Kirwan Brothers are running five sheep to the acre and they have plenty of feed. Mr. Jessop has been running

250 head on his 1,000 acres for some time. The Alfred Bros. went from Black Flag and took up a holding.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The Russells have a good property.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Yes, but they are newcomers.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: But they have a nice property.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: There is no doubt of that. When we were on Mr. Button's property about 12 months ago, he was cutting 30 cwt. of clover, and that was in his second year. Some four years ago, I took down to Esperance with me 22 farmers from the Cunderdin and Meckering districts—men who are well known to some members here as being farmers of high standing.

One of them, Mr. Dennis, was one of the biggest farmers in the Cunderdin district and he gave valuable advice, during his stay, to the farmers in that area with regard to stock and sheep and how to improve their properties. He was so amazed by what he saw there that he applied for land in the district. However, he could not get the area he wanted and so he gave it up to someone requiring a smaller block.

All those visiting farmers stated, at a meeting there, that the district had a great future but they pointed out that it needed a decent road from Esperance to Albany because the freight on super to the Esperance area was too heavy. They also said that if Esperance had a super works and a meat works the district would be able to produce plenty of stock for the overseas market.

In the following year Mr. Diver visited Esperance, in company with those same gentlemen and again they were amazed at the progress that had been made in the intervening 12 months. I have never, like one of my colleagues, suggested that Esperance should have a super works to supply the whole of the State, but I do think that a super works there could supply that south-eastern portion of the State because the huge deposit of pyrites at Norseman is only 120 miles away and production there could be stepped up to meet the whole needs of the State for the next 50 years.

There is a down-grade from Norseman to Esperance which would allow loads of up to 20 per cent. above the average to be hauled, and that should make for cheaper freight. With the coming of the Chase syndicate, I think the Esperance district is now assured of both a super works and a meat works and eventually there will have to be a shipping service to take meat and other products to the overseas markets.

Together with certain other members, I recently went on a deputation to the Premier with regard to the loading of copper from Ravensthorpe. With some alterations to the wharf at Esperance 2,000 tons of copper per month will soon go through that port, and within 12 months or two years that tonnage will rise to 5,000, and Japan will arrange the shipping. There is also a huge deposit of salt at Widgiemooltha, which could supply thousands of tons per month and the Japanese market would take that, also. Esperance undoubtedly has a great future, but shipping facilities to lift meat and other cargo will have to be supplied. In the agreement entered into with the Chase Syndicate the Government has undertaken to bituminise the road from Albany to Esperance.

Hon. A. R. Jones: What about the lumpers there?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: The lumpers at Esperance have the best record of any in the State. The Minister has given an assurance that the road from Norseman to Esperance will be sealed and the last information I have had from him is to the effect that the work will be done from Salmon Gums, on both sides, as money becomes available. When at the Kirwans' property recently I heard a discussion on stocking, and we were informed that so far there was no footrot in the Esperance district. However, if the farms become overstocked, care will have to be taken about which districts stock is imported from; as otherwise footrot and other diseases could easily be introduced into the Esperance area. Fortunately, the sheep brought in in recent years have all come from station properties and have been free from disease.

About three years ago I was in Adelaide, on my way to Brisbane and while there I was asked to take part in some speeches. The practice there was for Labour men on Sunday mornings to speak in the park on Labour policy and matters in connection with the party. I accepted the invitation and spoke on a stump there for about an hour, on the subject of Esperance and the Goldfields. On concluding I was amazed to find among the audience a man who had been one of the champion firemen on the Goldfields years ago. There were many others who expressed keen interest in the Esperance land and asked me a number of questions in relation to the price of land there and the possibilities. As usual, I boosted Esperance and said it had a marvellous future. Some years ago the late Garnet Wood and others from this Chamber visited Esperance—

The Chief Secretary: I was with you.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: That is so. We persuaded the Premier of that day, Sir Ross McLarty, to visit that area also; and when we were on the aerodrome there, he remarked to me on the great deal of seed

that was on the ground and said, "If we had a broom we could make £100." When the aerodrome was put down there during the war they planted grasses—wimmera rye grass and subterranean clover—to keep the sand down, but they soon found they could not keep the pasture down and they stocked it with about 10 sheep to the acre. Sir Ross McLarty could hardly credit the amount of seed that was lying on the ground and he made a remark against a certain other part of the State—a remark which I will not repeat—in making a comparison with Esperance.

When we got to Bow's property the late Garnet Wood and his wife and I walked into a crop of oats. Their heads were just visible above it, but it was well over my head and again Sir Ross McLarty was amazed and said, "I never thought to see a place with the possibilities that this area has."

The other evening Mr. Cunningham mentioned the natives in the Esperance area, and I want to make my views in regard to native missions and natives quite clear. Over the past 60 years I have seen a lot in regard to the way the natives have been hounded and exploited. In the early days of the Goldfields, gold was often taken from them in return for a little bit of food or tea. I was droving in the North-West and I came from a station at Marble Bar down to Cue with 428 head of stock. That station was fully staffed by natives and they made its wealth; but all they got was bully beef, a pair of dungarees, a shirt and a red handkerchief for their necks, in addition to a bit of twist tobacco. My instructions for the trip were to treat the natives as they were treated on the station and give them nothing but damper and bully beef, as I was cook—

The Chief Secretary: What did they call the cook?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I broke away from that and gave them the same as we had; because I had to return to the station with those three natives, and if they had deserted me, anything could have happened. If we are to put natives on the land at Esperance I want to see them trained for the work and then given blocks with no strings held by the missions. I want to see the natives on their own properties, earning money for themselves and not for the missions.

The only reason I have risen to speak on this Bill is that I want to see the right people receive the credit for the future development of Esperance. I do not want all the credit. I have contributed my share towards the development of that area, and I have always said that Esperance would come into its own; but on many occasions the members of this House have laughed at me.

The Minister for Railways: We will have to send the "Kybra" down there now.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I did not mention Sir Charles Latham, but his report on the Esperance district was very favourable.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That was with your help.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: No; that report was submitted before my time. Recently, when Mr. Wise was serving as administrator of the Northern Territory, it was fortunate that Mr. Chase came to that part of the country looking for tracts of land on which to grow rice, and it was at that time that Mr. Wise mentioned the Esperance Downs area to him. He deserves every credit for that.

Also, the Government sent Hon. L. F. Kelly, the Minister for Mines, to the United States of America with a view to ascertaining if capital could be obtained to develop this State of ours. With him Mr. Kelly took all reports of the work that has already been done by the pioneers of Esperance. He, of course, approached the representative of the Chase syndicate in America and as a result one of its officers was sent to this State to inspect the Esperance Downs.

He was there for only a few days because after seeing the development that had taken place on the various holdings, he had no doubts about its future, and he submitted his report accordingly. Following this, Mr. Chase visited the area and confirmed the report that had been given to him by his agricultural adviser. Many people have also referred to the fact that Esperance has been retarded in its development as a result of the seaport of Western Australia being located at Fremantle. Therefore, I am extremely pleased that the port of Esperance will grow in importance as the agricultural areas increase in production.

Dr. Hislop has visited the Esperance Downs and, after making his inspection, he was satisfied that I was on the right track. I hope that within 10 years we shall see shipments of stock going to all parts of the world from the port of Esperance. I support the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 12.5 a.m. (Wednesday).