plication has been made by the prisoner, and the reports received, that the "well qualified investigators" commence their study of the circumstances, and presumably these investigators are departmental officers whose identity may change from time to time. Under the Western Australian system the Board and the Comptroller-General replace the departmental investigators, but the members of the Board are each appointed for three years, and it is the statutory duty of the Board and of the Comptroller-General to keep close touch with all prisoners in the reformatory prison, and it is suggested that their knowledge of the prisoner must be at least equal to and almost certainly greater than the knowledge of departmental investigators.

(d) The next and final step in the Canadian procedure is for recommendation for release on parole to be made to the Governor General. The system is the same in Western Australia for all serious and sexual cases, but in other cases the Board and the Comptroller-General may agree to grant release on probation for periods up to 2 years on conditons as above outlined.

8. It is suggested therefore that the Western Australian system achieves the same aim of the Canadian system but by a better method.

Although I know little of the Canadian system other than what I have read here, it seems to me that if we could carry out our system as effectively as the system in Canada is administered, then ours would be just as good. I do feel, however, that I should discuss the matter with the Comptroller of Prisons and if, when I do, I find there are any features of the Canadian system that will favour our prisoners, I feel we should adopt them. There is no harm in approving the motion. If it is passed, it will give me the opportunity to work on this matter. I am sympathetic towards these unlucky people, and I feel that we should do all we can to bring them back into society so that they can be used in the development of the State rather than being a charge on it.

On motion by Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.14 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 17th September, 1953.

CONTENTS.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Audit Queries on Commission's Accounts.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Housing:

As the report of the Auditor General upon the audit of the Housing Commission accounts raises various queries, will he indicate what corrective action has been taken—

(1) Re File 6434/48 and misrepresentation as to qualification of "worker"?

(2) Re Prototype Econo steel-framed prefabricated house at Carlisle?

(3) Ministerial consent under Section 21 (c) for £12,351 16s. 7d. for completion of shops?

(4) Suspense accounts £1,526 14s. 5d., re cost of engine, etc., at Nyamup?

(5) Re rentals of army huts?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The Auditor General's report makes no reference to misrepresentation. The applicant concerned is a carpenter and unregistered builder and the State Housing Commission's interpretation of his eligibility as a "worker" is based on the fact that the total stated income includes Saturday and Sunday work and any other overtime and expenses. For the purpose of assessing income under the State Housing Act, overtime is disregarded. Notice was taken that his employment throughout the year was not continuous.

(2) The Econo-Steel prefabricated house was brought under State Housing Commission notice in August, 1949. The Commission was at that time, as it is now, interested in new materials and new construction methods. This prototype house was erected on a block of land provided by the Commission and although the cost was not known until the house was completed, it was not expected to exceed £2,000, which was then the maximum advance under the State Housing Act. In any case it was intended that the purchaser of the house, when the cost was known, would arrange finance under the War Service Homes Act. Negotiations are still proceeding. Since the house was completed, the maximum advance under the State Housing Act has been amended to £2,500.

(3) The Commission had already received Cabinet approval in October, 1948, to proceed with the erection of these shops.

(4) The cost of the engine at Nyamup, which was installed for the production of precut houses, has been recovered by loading each precut house with £6. These recoveries had offset the cost to £1,526 14s. 5d. as at the 30th June, 1952, and had further offset the cost to £60 1s. 11d. as at the 30th June, 1953. It is expected that by the end of this month the whole of the cost of the generator will be extinguished by recoveries.

(5) All of the army huts now carry a number and plans are held in the office of the State Housing Commission showing the various groups and numbers of buildings from which the number of tenancies can be determined.

(b) As to Homes for Aged and Indigent.

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has he seen a report in "The West Australian" this morning where Senator Spooner advised Senator Paltridge that the Commonwealth had informed the State Government that it had no objection to the inclusion of housing for the aged in the State programme for 1953-54 under the Commonwealth-State agreement?

(2) Will the Minister inform the House—

(a) as to the date that representations were made to the Commonwealth re housing the aged and indigent;

(b) the date on which advice was received from the Commonwealth, and

(c) what action has been taken to implement this advice?

(3) Will the Minister assure the House that housing for the aged and indigent will have priority over any other new projects?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, but the report gives a totally false impression.

(2) I am unable to state the exact date on which representations were made, but they were made earlier this year by me through the Premier and subsequently advice was received from the Commonwealth. At a later stage I announced through the columns of the Press my bitter disappointment at the attitude of the Commonwealth Government.

(3) Consideration will be given to the needs and requirements of the aged and indigent together with other sections of the community. It has been long known by this, and the previous Government, that there is power to use funds under the Commonwealth-State housing agreement for the erection of houses for both large and small unit families. In fact, quite a number of houses have already been provided for small unit families and the announcement by Senator Spooner indicates no departure whatever from the state of affairs that has been in existence since the inception of the Commonwealth-State housing agreement.

(c) As to Giving Notice of Question.

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Speaker:

In view of the unsatisfactory reply of the Minister for Housing, have I your permission to place my previous question on the notice paper? The Minister for Housing gave a general answer to direct questions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Replied:

Yes.

Mr. J. Hegney: It should have been put on the notice paper in the first place.

The Minister for Housing: Why did you ask, without notice, for exact dates?

WATER SUPPLIES:

As to Cost of Kalamunda Scheme.

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What is the total expenditure to date on the Kalamunda water scheme?

(2) What is the estimated cost to—
(a) complete the whole scheme;
(b) complete the main pipeline from Mundaring Weir and supply water to the summit reservoir;
(c) complete the scheme sufficiently to enable water to be supplied to a central point in the town?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) £53,300.

(2) (a) £55,000.
(b) £15,000.
(c) £17,000.

TRANSPORT.

As to Road Charges, Perth-Carnarvon.

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Transport:

Will he give the House the full schedule of fees charged by the Transport Board on all classes of goods which may be carried, by special license, by road hauliers between Perth and Carnarvon?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Transport) replied:

The following is the general scale of fees for journeys exceeding 400 miles:—

Class of Loading.	Unit.	Permit Fee. s.	d.
Fuel	Drum	5	0
Wool	Bale	5	0
Beer	Ton	30	0
General Station Stores	Ton	10	0
Other General Stores	Ton	30	0
Perishables	Cwt.	5	0
Bricks	1,000	40	0
Sawn Timber	Ton	5	0
Tiles (Cement)	Ton	10	0
Tiles (Terra Cotta)	Ton	15	0
Other Building Materials	Ton	20	0
Logs	Ton	12	6
Firewood	Ton	12	6
Road Material	Ton	2	6
Machinery	Ton	20	0
Empty Returns	Ton	7	6
Piles	Individually considered.		
All other	Ton	30	0

The foregoing list is subject to variation by the board where special cases require individual consideration.

SWAN RIVER.

As to Pollution and Discolouration.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What remains to be dealt with in the prevention of pollution and discolouration of the Swan river?

(2) Is co-operation being obtained by the interests involved?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Apart from a few minor discharges from washdowns of garages and workshops which are being progressively diverted from stormwater drains, the major sources of industrial waste diverted to the Swan river are from the two breweries.

Negotiations and investigations are still proceeding concerning the disposal of these wastes.

The Swan River Reference Committee is carrying out regular inspections between Midland Junction and Fremantle and is closely studying the problem. In addition, the Metropolitan Water Supply Department has a full time inspector employed supervising disposal of trade wastes within the storm water drainage areas. Inspectors of the Public Health Department operate within the whole of the metropolitan area.

(2) Yes.

RAILWAYS.

As to Increased Freight Charges.

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Railways:

Does the Government consider its action in increasing freights but not passenger fares discriminatory against people living in the country?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied:

No.

KINDERGARTEN UNION.

As to Financial Assistance.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What is the total financial assistance to be granted to the Kindergarten Union for the year 1953?

(2) Is it intended to increase the amount as recommended by the Royal Commission?

(3) If so, by what amount?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) £17,000 plus the deficit incurred up to £1,200.

(2) and (3) This is a matter of negotiation between the Kindergarten Union and the Government at the present time, and until these negotiations are concluded, I am not in a position to inform the hon. member of what amount will be found by the Government for next year.

PRICES CONTROL.

As to Ministerial Conference and Proposals.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY (without notice) asked the Minister for Prices:

(1) Did he receive a request to attend the meeting of State Prices Ministers held in Melbourne on the 16th instant?

(2) If the answer is "Yes", what were the reasons for his non-attendance?

(3) In order to cut down administrative costs, is it proposed to decontrol in Western Australia certain items as agreed to by the Prices Ministers?

(4) Does he contemplate the decontrol of any other goods in Western Australia?

(5) If so, when can an announcement be expected as to the nature of these goods?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The conference was convened for the purpose of determining future policy in regard to price fixation. The viewpoint of the Western Australian Government was conveyed to the chairman of the Prices Ministers Conference, Mr. Lander, by telephone and letter.

(3) and (4) The decontrol of commodities is constantly under review. No official advice has been received as to the number of further commodities which it is proposed to decontrol or recontrol. However, a number of items which are about to be decontrolled, or may be decontrolled, have already been released from control in Western Australia.

(5) Decisions, when made by the Prices Minister, are published in the "Government Gazette" and in the Press for the benefit of those concerned.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, Vermin Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

2, Collie-Griffin Mine Railway.

3, Western Australian Government Tramways and Ferries Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Railways).

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Mine Workers' Relief Act Amendment.

2, Associations Incorporation Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—PIG INDUSTRY COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren) [2.33] in moving the second reading said. As members will note, this is an extremely small Bill, its object being to amend only one section of the Pig Industry Compensation Act, 1942-51. The provisions of the parent Act are being well received by everyone concerned and it is having a good effect on the industry, except that difficulty has been experienced with regard to Section 9, which provides that no compensation shall be payable unless application is made by the owner within 21 days after the destruction of the pig or its death from swine fever, swine erysipelas or paratyphoid, or after condemnation of the carcass or portion thereof.

Mr. J. Hegney: I cannot hear the Minister from here.

Mr. SPEAKER: If members will refrain from indulging in conversation in the Chamber others will be able to hear.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill seeks to increase the period in which application can be made for compensation from 21 days to 90 after the death or destruction of a pig. However, all applications that are received after a period of 21 days will have to be accompanied by a written statement explaining why the claim was delayed and not submitted within the prescribed period mentioned in the Act. Such applications must then receive the approval of the Minister before compensation can be paid.

Before going any further, I will quote, for the information of members, relevant portions of the Act. Section 6 reads as follows:—

> Subject to this Act, compensation shall be payable:—
>
> (a) to the owner of any pig destroyed by or by order of a meat inspector or other authorised person pursuant to any Act or any regulation or proclamation under any Act because the pig is suffering from or is suspected of suffering from disease;
>
> (b) to the owner of any pig destroyed with the consent of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon or an approved person because the pig is suffering from or is suspected of suffering from disease;
>
> (c) to the owner of any pig which is proved to the satisfaction of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon or an approved person to have died of swine fever;
>
> (d) to the owner of any carcass or portion of a carcass which is pursuant to any Act or any regulation or proclamation under any Act condemned as unfit for human consumption because of disease, by a meat inspector or other authorised person.

The compensation fund, which is the basis of the Act, is maintained by revenue received through the Commissioner of Stamps and by the collection of stamp duty that is required to be attached to all statements relating to the sale of pigs. Under the Act, once an owner sells a pig he is obliged to make a statement to the purchaser clearly setting out the number of pigs, the price of them and the amount of stamp duty that has been paid.

The Act provides that the Governor may, by proclamation, prescribe the amount of stamp duty to be paid for every £ or part of a £ exceeding 10s., so long as this figure does not exceed 3d. At present the levy that is being made to

maintain the fund is one penny in the £. The legislation further provides the maximum amount that can be collected in this manner and sets the figure at 3s. 9d. per pig. As to the payment of compensation, if a pig is suspected of suffering from disease and is destroyed by order of the meat inspector or any other person but is then found to be free of disease, the market value of the animal is paid. If the disease is established, however, threequarters of the market value is paid to the person claiming compensation. That briefly explains the operation of the Act and the compensation fund.

Referring again to the proposed amendment which seeks to increase the period in which an application may be made from 21 days to 90, I wish to point out that in the majority of cases such applications are received by the department well within the prescribed period of 21 days. However, in some instances it does occur—in fact it frequently occurs—that the owner, through no fault of his own, finds it impossible for him to obtain the application form for compensation, complete it and return it to the department within the period permitted by the Act.

For instance, sometimes a form of this description is delayed in transit. The moment a pig is slaughtered in the Metropolitan Markets an application form for compensation is sent to the owner of the animal destroyed. It could well be that he lives in some remote area of the State and either because of distance or because he was away from home at the time, or maybe he was incapacitated through illness or for another dozen reasons one can imagine, he is unable to meet the requirements of the Act and get his application back in time for compensation. I remember that there was a case recently, a claim for £545 in respect to 76 pigs that had died from para-typhoid.

Because of the Act as it now is, great difficulty is sometimes experienced in making compensation available. I am not saying it is not paid, but the manner in which the Act works at the present time is that when a situation like that develops, it devolves on the Minister himself to closely examine the position and, if he is satisfied with the claim, he may then grant payment. Unfortunately, however, this can no longer occur; the department cannot operate the Act in this manner any more because the Solicitor General now advises us that there is no authority under the Act for this procedure to continue.

Members can well imagine that there will be grave injustice done to quite a number of owners of pigs who have lost them through disease and who happen to be contributors to the fund but have failed to get their application form in within 21 days, particularly when sometimes it is absolutely impossible to do so. I am quite certain that we shall in the future, as we have in the past, receive a number of these overdue claims and, as they are received, in justice to the owners of those animals, they should be given an extension of time that would enable them to have their applications duly recorded and approved.

I do not think that any real objection can be raised to this amendment as most claims are, as I have already stated, lodged within the 21-day period. The Bill will ensure that there will be no injustice meted out to any person. The most prevalent reason for a lot of claims is where a pig has died and 21 days have elapsed before the diagnosis can be formally established. There have been many instances such as that, through no fault of the department, or of the inspector, or of the owner of the animal concerned. After 21 days an explanation has to be placed before the Minister in writing, as I have already said, and therefore the amendment contained in the Bill will not in any way at all weaken the operation of the Act in its intention to control diseases in pigs. I move—

> That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Nalder, debate adjourned.

BILL—COLLIE CLUB (PRIVATE).

Second Reading.

MR. MAY (Collie) [2.45] in moving the second reading said: The reason for and the object of this Bill is to resolve certain difficulties which have arisen and which require parliamentary action to deal with them. The Collie Club was registered on the 16th September, 1907, under the Companies Act of 1893 as a limited company under the name of the Collie Club Limited. The nominal capital was £100 divided into 100 shares of £1 each. In 1912 the capital was increased to £200 and, by special resolution passed on the 21st May, 1951, the nominal capital was increased to £1,000.

The rules of the club, together with such parts of Table "A" of the Companies Act, which are not inconsistent with them, constitute the articles of association of the company. The scheme of the rules is that members, on election, shall be the shareholders of the company and that each member, on election, shall be allotted one share. As a fact, each member with his nomination pays the sum of 2s., which is intended to be on account of the purchase of a share, such being regarded as being paid up to 2s.

Provision is also made in the rules that, on death or on a cessation of membership, all interest of the member shall be immediately forfeited and his name struck off the share register. The rules do not provide any machinery for the transfer of a share to any other member or members. In practice, no scrip has

been issued to a member on election and no share register has been kept, so far as I have been able to ascertain. The records of the club are complete back to the 30th June, 1942, but only incomplete records exist for the period from 1907 to 1942, and it is quite impossible to determine who are now the present legal shareholders of the company.

The number of shareholders is, by reason of the amount of the nominal capital, restricted. At first it was limited to £100, then to £200 and it is now £1,000. It is obvious that this number was exhausted very many years ago on the theoretical issue of one share to each member. By rule 35 of the club no dividend whatsoever shall be declared paid or payable out of the profits arising from the business of the club and such profits shall be used for and applied to the bona fide purposes of the club.

There is no specific provision in the rules for what would happen on the winding up or dissolution of the club, and this is one reason why it is necessary that the club be dissolved by Act of Parliament and a new body incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act. The assets of the club consist of a club house in Collie, together with the furniture and fittings therein, and five houses and vacant land in Wittenoom-st., Collie, the last mentioned of which has been kept for the provision of a future club house. The club also has £800 on fixed deposit at the Commercial Bank, Collie; Commonwealth bonds to the extent of £7,500; shares in the Collie Industrial Co-operative amounting to £102 16s. 11d. while the current account in the bank stands at £3,633 17s. The balance sheets for the half-years ended the 31st December, 1952, and the 30th June, 1953, have been audited and presented. There are no liabilities owing by the club. The legal position of the club cannot be rectified by any procedure under the Companies Act or by any approach to the courts. The only possible way of putting the position in order is by Act of Parliament.

The first proposal is to constitute the present members the shareholders of the company, each with one share paid to 2s. Other types of members, such as honorary members, have naturally been excluded. Secondly, it is proposed to form an association under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1895-1947, to take over the assets and activities of the company. The reason for this is that an association under that Act is much more suitable for the conduct of a club of this nature; in fact, that is the object of that Act. Once the shareholders have been legally constituted, an extraordinary meeting of members will be held to pass a special resolution under the Companies Act approving of the vesting of the club's assets in the new association. A general meeting of members was held on the 15th December, 1952, at which the proposals of the committee of the club as outlined, were approved, and there is no doubt that approval to the vesting in the new association will be given.

The main reasons for the desire to change the Collie Club from a limited company to an association under the Associations Incorporation Act are that no share certificates were ever issued; there was no proper forfeiture of shares; there was no proper reallotment of shares; and over the years some of the records of the club have been lost; and further, because of the impossibility of ascertaining who are the present shareholders, the directors —the committeemen—would not be properly elected. I believe that most of the clubs that previously functioned in circumstances such as those connected with the Collie Club have, by Act of Parliament, been reregistered as associations under the Associations Incorporation Act, and the Collie Club Ltd. is merely following the trend in that direction.

The club has been in existence since 1907 and is regarded as a distinct asset in the town of Collie. It has served a very useful purpose as an amenity to the people who use it. It has always been very well conducted, and I have no hesitation in asking the House to agree to the Bill, for the reasons stated. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (KWINANA AREA) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [2.55] in moving the second reading said: This Act was passed last year to enable land to be taken for the purposes of industry, public works and town planning. The main object for which the Act was introduced was to enable the Government to obtain land, in the first instance, and primarily for the oil refinery that was then to be built in the Kwinana district and to ensure that the land required for the industry would be obtained at a reasonable price. The establishment of the oil refinery meant, too, that considerable land would be required for public works, including water supplies, roads and other services that are indispensable to a population of any considerable size, such as the one which will build up at Kwinana and which, in fact, is already building up to some extent.

There was also the industry proposed to be established in the district by the Broken Hill Pty. Coy., and action by that company for the establishment of that industry is already under way. Again,

there was the proposed cement industry, and it was essential in all those important circumstances to ensure that such land as might be required to develop the district as a first-class industrial area, should be obtained at reasonable prices and should be made available to those who were prepared to invest large sums of money in the district and in the State for the purpose of bringing about much greater progress in Western Australia than would otherwise have been possible. That, in brief, gives the House, and particularly new members, some broad idea of the main features of the parent Act.

It is desired by this Bill to make three separate amendments to the Act. Section 5 at present provides power to take land that may be required for an industry or a public work, or for any town planning purpose set out in the First Schedule to the Town Planning and Development Act. The first amendment proposes to insert in the proper place in that section the words "or industry generally." The powers of resumption set out in the parent Act will operate only to the 31st December of this year, and it will not have been possible by that time to take all the land that may be required for industry generally, although it would, of course, be possible to take all that was required for particular industries, of which there is certainty regarding their establishment, either immediately or in the future.

When we first found that Kwinana would be developed as a big industrial area, we anticipated that many manufacturing firms would be interested, and inquiries are being received every so often from the principals of firms who could easily before the end of the year have become interested in a very practical way. Therefore it is desired to have power in the Act to take land for industry generally so that such industries as seem likely or are almost sure to come may be given the benefit of the Act and may receive the necessary encouragement to establish branches here.

Section 5 contains other powers in addition to the one I have mentioned conferring on the Minister certain authority. The Minister charged with the administration of the Act is the Minister for Industrial Development. Where the land and the purposes for which it is to be used are associated with an industry, the Minister for Industrial Development is the one to initiate and take whatever action may be required. However, it is considered that where the purpose is associated with town planning and where action must be taken under the provisions of the Town Planning and Develpoment Act, the sensible thing to do is to give the administration of that activity to the Minister in charge of the Town Planning Department. The second amendment in the Bill makes provision to that effect.

The clause provides that where action is being taken in connection with industry generally, the Act will be administered by the Minister for Industrial Development, and where it is being taken for any purpose associated with town planning as mentioned in the First Schedule to the Town Planning and Development Act, the administration will be under the Minister for Lands.

This part of the Bill also proposes to authorise the Governor-in-Council from time to time to transfer the management of any particular area of land from one Minister to another. As time goes on, it will be found that an area set aside for industrial purposes may be required for some other purpose, and when that occurs, there should be power to enable the Governor-in-Council to authorise a transfer of the administration of the land in question, say, from the Minister for Industrial Development to the Minister for Lands or vice versa.

The third amendment has to do with the amendment passed to the parent Act known as No. 37 of 1952. By that Act a new Section 11 was added to the principal Act providing for the setting apart or the resuming of land for town planning purposes. Not only does this apply to land for town planning generally; it applies also to land that has been taken and made available for the purposes of the housing requirements of the oil refinery. Subsection (2) of Section 11 provides—

> Where any land mentioned in Subsection (1) of this section is set apart, taken or resumed under the provisions of this Act, the land may be reserved and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Land Act, 1933-1950.

That subsection is quite satisfactory when any land that is taken, resumed or set apart is not required for industrial purposes within a town-planned area. When it is required for purposes such as a garage the subsection creates much difficulty and could be quite confusing when land had to be dealt with in accordance with the subsection. As a matter of fact, it could not be dealt with at all satisfactorily if the subsection is permitted to stand in the Act as at present worded. The Bill proposes to delete the words and figures in lines 4 and 5 of the subsection and substitute other words so that the subsection will then read—

> Where any land mentioned in Subsection (1) of this section is set apart, taken or resumed under the provisions of this Act, the land may thereafter, by the Governor on the recommendation of the Minister for Lands subject to the provisions of the Oil Refinery Industry (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Limited) Act, 1952, be reserved, used, developed, leased, sold

or otherwise disposed of for an estate in fee simple or otherwise in such manner including public auction, private treaty or by tender and upon such terms and conditions including the reservation of restrictive covenants and for such rentals, price, premium or other consideration or by way of gift as the Governor, on the recommendation of the Minister for Lands, approves.

Members will see, if they study that portion of the Bill, and compare it with the section of the Act to which I have been referring, that the intention here is to provide more scope and freedom, as it were, to enable land to be used and finally to be disposed of under conditions which would be reasonable and proper to the circumstances that would develop following the taking of the land and the using of it for whatever purpose was approved by the Minister in the first instance. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Watts, debate adjourned.

BILL—HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 15th September.

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [3.12]: After the discussion on the Bill the other evening I thought the Government might withdraw it for the time being and redraft it. As was pointed out then, it consists of two parts, one relating to powers of borrowing from the Commonwealth Bank to enable work on the Royal Perth Hospital to proceed. I have no objection, nor was objection taken the other evening by those who spoke to the Bill, to this particular portion of it.

Strong objection was taken to the other part, and I am sure that members who followed the discussion will agree that, if it is accepted, an injustice will be done. I consider that the second part of the Bill relating to hospital charges as they affect seamen is a most iniquitous proposal. I am sure I have never before seen such discriminatory legislation. I marvel how such a proposal can be contained in a Bill. The Minister, when introducing the measure, did not make a long explanation about it, but from my observations he seemed to be rather uncomfortable when this particular part was being attacked.

Dealing with the first portion of the Bill, that relating to borrowing to enable the Royal Perth Hospital to be completed, the Government of which I was a member was favourable to this proposal. I noticed a question asked in another House whereby it was shown that representations were made to one of the associated banks to provide this money. I understand those representations were made because the Commonwealth Bank offered some objection to the term of the loan, or something else.

When the Commonwealth Bank found that the private bank was willing to provide the finance, it came into line. I do not appreciate this sort of thing. If the private bank was willing to provide the finance when requested, it should have been given the business. The Commonwealth Bank apparently only came into the matter again on the terms which the associated bank was prepared to extend because it was compelled to do so if it wanted the business. The Minister has pointed out that if more money can be made available to allow the work on the Royal Perth Hospital to continue, greater efficiency will be obtained, and on that account I am prepared to support this particular part of the Bill.

I offer the strongest possible objection to the second part, however, and I hope it will not become law. Any influence I might have will certainly be used to defeat it. I cannot understand why there should be discrimination with respect to hospital charges against a particular section of the community. In this case it is against the seamen. I understand that the charge at the Fremantle Hospital is 35s. a day, but under the suggestion here the seamen will be charged £3 7s. 4d. per day.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The company, not the seamen.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Yes. The shipping companies will be charged £3 7s. 4d. against the normal charge of 35s. I understand, too, that this charge would also relate to the seamen of our own State Shipping Service. I would like to hear the explanation of why a charge of nearly 100 per cent. above the normal rate should be levied against a seaman in a hospital. It is true, as the member for Fremantle has pointed out, that the seaman does not pay it, but the shipping company. But does it matter who pays it? The principle is the same. The shipping companies are astounded to know that they should be mulcted in this additional charge.

Hon. C. F. J. North: It is free in England.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: If one of our seamen were injured in a British port, he would get the same treatment as any other British worker. Assume a seaman has an accident in his home port of Fremantle. The Navigation Act does not then apply and he comes under the Workers' Compensation Act. As I pointed out, the fee then is 35s. a day. Another seaman, whose home port is Melbourne, is, let us say, involved in the same accident. Both are in the same hospital ward and receive the same treatment, but the account in the latter case is £3 7s. 4d. per day.

Surely there is some explanation! I confess I find it exceedingly hard to follow and certainly think—to use a common expression—that the gun is being held at their heads. These matters were discussed at considerable length the other evening by the member for Subiaco and the member for Cottesloe and I am just repeating, largely, what they said. I am sorry the Minister for Health is absent as he might have been able to give an indication of his reaction to the debate.

I hope it is not the intention to rush this Bill through the Committee stage this afternoon, because the member for Cottesloe has an amendment that he intends to place on the notice paper and which seeks to see that justice is done. I think it would be advisable for the Committee stage to be held over at least until some time next week. I support the second reading—only because of the first provision of the measure—but again emphasise that I think this is one of the most unjust pieces of legislation that has ever been introduced into this House. I hope that when the Bill is in Committee members will see that justice is done.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [3.23]: I think that in considering this measure we should look the facts squarely in the face. I was speaking to the secretary of the hospital committee and he told me that the charge being made to the shipping companies for employees placed in hospital is only the actual cost of keeping them there. I do not know that they can complain much about that, although I admit that the charge seems high.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Does it cost more to keep those employees in hospital than it does to keep our own workers there?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: No, but I understand that the hospital charges our own people less than it costs to keep them in the institution.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Are not some of the employees of the shipping companies our own people?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There is that possibility, and the State Shipping Service might come into it.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Why the discrimination there?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I cannot explain that. At all events, the position has been examined by the hospital board, the members of which are Mr. Stitfold, Hon. E. M. Davies, M.L.C., Mr. R. Hutchinson, M.L.A., Mr. W. Wauhope, chairman of the Licensing Board, Mr. Greenslade, a merchant in Fremantle, Dr. Gilroy, Dr. Davidson and Mr. Preece. I understand that those people went through the proposals and were fairly well satisfied with them.

Mr. Hutchinson: I was not satisfied.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Then, with the exception of one member, the board was satisfied.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Do you agree with the discrimination?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I have to agree that the fee seems high and the shipping companies appear to take that view. When an Australian goes into hospital in Great Britain he is treated free of charge, but that is under a different scheme. In England it is a contributory scheme and anyone entering hospital is admitted free of charge, so I suppose the authorities there do not wish to single out one or two lone Australians to be charged.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Do the employees in question here get the benefit of the allowances paid per day under the Commonwealth scheme?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not understand the question.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Do they receive the benefit of the 8s. or 12s. per day allowed by the Commonwealth?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: They get the full benefit of the health scheme in England.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Do these people get the benefit of the 8s. or 12s. per day here?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: No.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Why not? There should be some reciprocity.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That would have to be argued with the hospital board or the department. I suppose the Minister would be pleased to explain it. I am told that the charge made is only what it costs to keep the patient in hospital.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Does the hospital collect the 8s. or 12s. per day from the Commonwealth?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It collects only the charge made to the shipping company. The hospitals in Great Britain are run on an altogether different basis. It seems to me that the Leader of the Opposition wants to give these people a cheap scheme—

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I want merely to give them equality with other hospital patients.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The hon. member likes to see the farmer repaid every part of the cost of producing wheat, for instance, yet he does not want the hospital to be reimbursed for the cost of treatment of these patients. I admit that the charge—over £3 per day—is high, but I am informed that it is the actual cost of treatment. I was told that the hospital board was in favour of the proposal and, if the member for Cottesloe was not, I believe that the rest of the board were. I do not know what else

could be done unless we were to allow these patients to be treated at a charge less than the actual cost.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I think we should give them equality with all other workers.

Sitting suspended from 3.30 to 3.58 p.m.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [3.58]: I just wanted to say a few words concerning the New South Wales Bank and the Commonwealth Bank in regard to the question of money being made available to enable the Royal Perth Hospital to be completed. The main point is that the Commonwealth Bank was first approached on the basis of the bank making available the money required for a period of 10 years. The Commonwealth Bank could not see its way clear to do that.

Subsequently there were some negotiations and the Bank of New South Wales intimated its willingness to make the money available, but only for a period of four years. It was felt that if the Commonwealth Bank had been approached initially on that basis it would have agreed and, in the circumstances, it was thought fair that the Commonwealth Bank should be given the opportunity of considering that offer. That was done and the Commonwealth Bank readily agreed to make the money available for a term of four years as against the term of 10 years originally proposed.

I have not had time to make any worthwhile inquiries regarding the other part of the Bill which has raised some contention. I have no doubt that the hospital authorities, particularly at a place like Fremantle, and the officers of the Health Department, do have a lot of worry arising from the fact that seamen from overseas ships are often in hospital.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: And from our own State ships.

The PREMIER: We know what seamen can do when they get into port. Probably a lot of the seamen, or some of them, who get into hospital in this State are there for reasons that would be within their control on some occasions; and it might very well be that the hospital authorities concerned, and officers of the Health Department, have considered that the cost to the State involved in providing hospital accommodation and service from those people should be met by the shipping companies concerned.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I understand that if a seaman were injured while not at his work—injured, say, while engaged in sport or some other activity—he would be charged only 35s., or the normal charge, but if he were working for a company the charge would be £3 7s. 4d. That is the objection offered.

Mr. Hutchinson: Where an illness or injury is sustained through misbehaviour, he is liable himself.

The PREMIER: I have not had time to look into this question.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I think the Premier should have a look at it.

The PREMIER: It is intended to take the Bill into Committee and pass the non-contentious clauses, after which progress will be reported and the contentious clauses will then be investigated.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [4.4]: I hope the Premier was fully informed in connection with his statement about the banks, because I have heard a story that does not quite fit in with what he said. It is stated that the Bank of New South Wales did not receive fair treatment over this matter. I heard that certain members of the board said it was going to the Commonwealth Bank because it was Government policy, and on no account would they let it go to the Bank of New South Wales. That may or may not be a true story. It is not within my knowledge, but I wondered whether the Premier, in the absence of the Minister, had been fully informed in making his statement.

The Premier: I based it on replies to questions given by a Minister in another place.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I raise that point in justice to the other bank. The Commonwealth Bank turned down the offer pretty firmly. There was no suggestion of offering to do it for any lesser term—none whatever.

The Premier: Ten years was the term required.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That was asked for, but the Commonwealth Bank did not offer to do it for a lesser term or make any offer. The bank people said, "We will not touch it." That is the story I heard. Then approaches were made to the other bank but certain members of the hospital board said that on no account would they have it as it was against Government policy. There is no reason why it should not be Government policy, but I think that in fairness to the bank the Premier should be fully informed. I know he would like to make an accurate statement.

The Premier : My statement was based on official answers to questions in another place a few days ago.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Premier (for the Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 17 amended:

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT : I suggest that as it has been proposed to insert other amendments it might be as well to report progress at this stage.

Progress reported.

BILL—INCOME AND ENTERTAINMENTS TAX (WAR TIME SUSPENSION) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [4.8] in moving the second reading said: I think I will find it much easier to explain what this Bill aims to achieve than to explain all of the things that happened in 1942 and have happened since in the Commonwealth Parliament and in this State Parliament in relation to the reason why the introduction of this Bill is necessary. I propose to do the easier job first.

If members will have a look at the Bill, they will find it proposes to amend the Act, and that the present measure is to come into operation on the first day of July, 1953, that being the first day after the last day of the first financial year that commenced after the last war was officially regarded as having ended.

The Bill proposes to amend four sections of the principal Act, which, as its title suggests, suspends in this State the operation of certain of our prewar taxation measures. Those measures deal with income tax, goldmining profits tax, hospital tax and entertainments tax. Those Acts were suspended during 1942 and for all practical purposes have remained suspended ever since. They were suspended because in that year the uniform system of taxation was established, primarily to meet the war needs of Australia. The Commonwealth, under special defence powers that reside in the Constitution and may be used effectively in time of war, passed legislation that had the effect of creating a uniform system throughout Australia for the collection of all forms of income tax, and the uniform system was extended at that time to cover entertainments tax.

In order that the Commonwealth might, during the war, operate the uniform tax system legally, this State—and probably all the other States—passed legislation similar to that contained in the Income and Entertainments Tax (War Time Suspension) Act of 1942. Information has been received from the Commonwealth by the Solicitor General that the war, from the legal point of view, had ended and that certain provisions in Acts of this sort, consequently, had no longer any legal effect. As the State Government now proposes to bring into operation the State Act that imposes entertainments tax, it is necessary for us to amend this Act, and while we are amending the Act in relation to the entertainments tax angle, we should do the right thing legally and amend the Act in regard to income tax, hospital tax and goldmining profits tax.

The entertainments taxation section of the Act is No. 4, and we propose to delete from that section the words "up to and including the last day of the first financial year to commence after the date on which His Majesty ceases to be engaged in the present war", and insert in lieu the words "until the thirtieth day of September, one thousand, nine hundred and fifty-three". This would mean that the entertainments tax had been suspended until the 30th September, 1953, and no longer. This is necessary because the State Entertainments Tax Act will—if another measure I shall introduce shortly be passed—became effective on the 1st October of this year. It is also necessary to put in the date, the 30th September, 1953, I am advised by the Solicitor General, in order to cover the period between the 30th June and the 30th September of this year.

The legal advice is that the State Entertainments Tax Act should have been in operation from the 30th June of this year because that was the date on which the Commonwealth officially declared the war to have ended. Thus, on the first day following the last day of the previous financial year, this Entertainments Tax Act should have come into operation. So, indeed, should the other taxes covered by this Act.

Regarding the other sections of the Act, Nos. 2, 5 and 6, which deal individually with income tax, goldmining profits tax and hospital tax, it is proposed to delete the same words from Section 4 "up to and including the last day of the first financial year to commence after the date on which His Majesty ceases to be engaged in the present war," and insert in lieu the words "and until Parliament enacts otherwise". This would mean that Sections 2, 5 and 6 covering respectively income tax, hospital tax and goldmining profits tax would remain suspended under the State Act until Parliament declares that the whole three or any one of them shall come into operation as an enforceable State law. This Bill, then, proposes to bring the Act into line with what has been laid down by the Commonwealth as the official end of the war.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: How was that done? Was it proclaimed?

The PREMIER: I understand that it was proclaimed by the Commonwealth Government in April and had full legal effect for all legal purposes, so far as Acts of this sort were concerned, so that the provision about the end of the war ceased to operate as from the 1st July of this year. We propose to deal with the three taxes other than the entertainments tax by ensuring their suspension until Parliament takes action to bring them into

operation and, in connection with the entertainments tax, to legalise its suspension until the end of the present month.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Would it not have been better to wipe them all out?

The PREMIER: I should think not. The Commonwealth is still operating the uniform income tax system and we are still legally entitled to reimbursement from the Commonwealth, provided we do not impose income tax, hospital tax or goldmining profits tax. Therefore it is desirable that we should continue the suspension of those three taxes legally until such time as the Commonwealth and States can agree upon a basis under which the States can again enter the field of income taxation and raise taxes such as income tax, and maybe hospital tax, and perhaps also goldmining profits tax if there is any profit in goldmining in those days.

I hope I have made the contents of the Bill clear and also the reasons for the State passing the parent Act in the first place, and why we are proposing to take action now in connection with a continuity of the suspension of the State income tax, hospital tax, and goldmining profits tax. It is not necessary for me at this stage to refer to the next Bill because it will come on immediately and I will then have the opportunity of explaining what the Government proposes, through the Bill, to do in Western Australia in connection with State entertainments tax as from the end of this month. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Ross McLarty, debate adjourned.

BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [4.23] in moving the second reading said: The Bill seeks to amend Section 4 of the Entertainments Tax Act of 1925, which was later amended in 1933. It is proposed, if Parliament approves the Bill, to bring the measure into operation on the 1st October this year.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: You anticipate it will have a speedy passage?

The PREMIER: Yes. Members are aware that the Commonwealth Government, in the Budget recently presented to the National Parliament in Canberra, decided to abandon completely the entertainments tax field in Australia. As I suggested in dealing with the previous Bill, the Commonwealth has had a monopoly in that field as from about the middle of 1942, although the States have received, by way of reimbursement payments from the Commonwealth, certain amounts with regard to entertainments tax. That was agreed upon originally in 1942 when the States indicated their willingness to allow the Commonwealth to take over completely this field of taxation. The Commonwealth at the time agreed that the States should receive, from the Commonwealth certain payments by way of reimbursement money.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Have they received it up to the 1st October?

The PREMIER: I suppose it could be argued that they have, or even up to the 30th June next, but there could be a lot of discussion on that. The question opens up a wide field of argument upon which I do not propose to enter more than I have already done. It would help members to a better understanding of the Bill if I were to read a schedule which has been prepared for me by officers of the Treasury. The schedule deals with entertainments tax, and is as follows:—

Admission charge (excluding tax).	Commonwealth Rates.		State Rates.
	General Rates.	*Special Rates.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
9d. to 11¼d.	Nil	Nil	2
1s.	2	Nil	2
1s. 0¼d. to 1s. 6d.	4	3	3
1s. 6¼d. to 2s.	5	4	4
2s. 0¼d. to 2s. 6d.	7	5	5
2s. 6¼d. to 3s.	9	8	6
3s. 0¼d. to 3s. 6d.	10	8	7
3s. 6¼d. to 4s.	1 0	9	8
4s. 0¼d. to 4s. 6d.	1 1	10	9
4s. 6¼d. to 5s.	1 3	11	10
5s. 0¼d. to 5s. 6d.	1 5	1 1	11
5s. 6¼d. to 6s.	1 8	1 3	1 0
Over 6s.	1 10	1 5	
	Plus 2½d. for each additional 6d. or part thereof.	Plus 1½d. for each additional 6d. or part thereof.	Plus 1d. for each 6d. or part thereof over 6s.

* Special rates apply to :
(a) Live stage shows, a ballet, a musical performance, a lecture, a recitation, a music hall or variety entertainment, a circus or travelling show; and
(b) Game of sport where human beings are sole participants (but not including dancing or skating unless conducted solely for competitive purposes) conducted by a body not established or carried on for profit.

The general rate, I might say, is the rate that applies to entertainments generally including, of course, motion picture theatres. I do not quite work out how the Commonwealth collects the ¾d. in a case where it is a single ¾d. Members who have been able to comprehend the schedule as I read it out—I admit that that would not be easy—will see that the Commonwealth special rate is considerably below the Commonwealth general rate, particularly where we come to the higher admission charges. They will also have understood that the State rates are generally

well below the Commonwealth general rates, and in some instances also below the Commonwealth special rates.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: How did the special rate apply?

The PREMIER: I explained earlier what the Commonwealth special rate was, and to what sort of entertainment it applied, and still applies, under the Commonwealth Act. If members have been able to study the Bill—I do not think they will have had that opportunity yet, to an extent that will enable them to understand what is intended—they will have seen that it proposes to abolish the State tax rates on all charges up to 1s 6d. If the measure becomes law, there will be no entertainment tax of any kind in this State after the 30th of this month, on any charge for admission up to 1s. 6d.

We are abolishing the 2d. tax on the 9d. to 11½d. range of charges, and also the 2d. rate on the 1s. charges, and the 3d., rate on the range of charges from 1s. 0½d. to 1s. 6d. That means that, as amended by this Bill, the State entertainment tax will commence to apply only where the charge for admission is 1s. 6½d. or more, and to that extent we are trying to make a concession to those who patronise entertainments where admission charges are low. By that means I believe we are exempting children almost altogether from entertainment tax, except where they go to a higher-priced entertainment.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: For what entertainment is the charge to an adult less than 1s. 6½d.?

The PREMIER: I know of none at all, but I have no doubt that there are such, and I could hazard a guess that there are in this State many organisations that run entertainments for various purposes for which the charge for admission of adults would be 1s. I am not now referring to professional entertainments, but to those sponsored by the sporting organisations. Admittedly, such entertainments may be nothing special, and usually those who provide the programme give their services in a voluntary capacity. The football clubs at Northam often run entertainments to which the admission charge is not more than 1s. 6d. for an adult, and I have no doubt that every member could find in his electorate some similar entertainment.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: In future I will do my dancing in Northam.

The PREMIER: In the schedule which I read and which members will have an opportunity of seeing later if they care to obtain a pull of the "Hansard" proof, it will be seen that the new rates to operate under the State Act are as follows:—

1s. 6½d..	to 2s.	4d.

That will be the first range of charges where the entertainment tax will operate—

2s. 0½d.	to 2s. 6d.	5d.
2s. 6½d.	to 3s.	6d.
3s. 0½d.	to 3s. 6d.	7d.
3s. 6½d.	to 4s.	8d.
4s. 0½d.	to 4s. 6d.	9d.
4s. 6½d.	to 5s.	10d.
5s. 0½d.	to 5s. 6d.	11d.
5s. 6½d.	to 6s.	1s.

plus 1d. for each 6d. or part thereof over 6s.

Today I gave notice of my intention to introduce a Bill to amend the Entertainments Tax Assessment Act. To enable members to get a better understanding of what is involved in the three Bills concerned with the question of entertainments tax, I might add that the only purpose of the Bill to amend the Entertainments Tax Assessment Act is to exempt the north-west portion of the State altogether from the imposition of the tax. That part of the State will not be called upon to pay the tax, no matter what the admission charge to any entertainment may be. I refer to that part of the State above the 26th parallel.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Does the Premier intend to keep in the assessment legislation the provision that the funds collected must be applied for hospital purposes only?

The PREMIER: The Entertainments Tax Assessment Act is not at present being altered beyond providing exemption for the north-west portion of the State. Cabinet has had little time in which to consider the State Act and to decide whether it should be altered in some other respects. We had to make decisions quickly and had to have the legislation prepared in a short space of time. A considerable period is involved in preparing the necessary machinery with which to put the State Act into operation again. We had to have printed the forms and tickets, and to make arrangements throughout the State to ensure that the tax will be put into operation properly and fully on the 1st October next. I repeat we have had little time in which to do those things, and no time in which to consider altering more fully the basis of the State entertainments tax system.

I have an idea, from the experience I have gained over the years, that some other very desirable and even valuable amendments could be made to the system. I have had experience in my own electorate, from time to time, of people being called upon to pay entertainments tax in respect of entertainments which were being carried on for some of the best purposes imaginable; purposes in which everyone would find a great deal of merit. Yet those particular entertainments, because of the term "entertainment" in the Act, could not be exempted and a good deal of the profit obtained had to be paid out in entertainment tax.

I think all members know how much it costs these days to employ an orchestra—that is, a professional one. As a matter of fact, it has been my impression in recent years that most entertainments carried on for desirable and valuable purposes have more or less been a benefit for the orchestras. If the suppers provided at these particular forms of entertainment had been paid for instead of being provided completely or partly for nothing, the entertainments sponsored by the organisations I have in mind would have suffered great losses.

Then, of course, there is the question of the live show, a form of entertainment to which the Commonwealth gave special consideration in its legislation. The Commonwealth Government provided for lower rates of tax than were imposed on what could be classed as the ordinary forms of entertainment. We have not been able to give any consideration to that aspect, but it might be desirable to encourage the live shows which came under the special Commonwealth rates.

I refer particularly to ballets, musical performances, lectures, recitations, music hall and variety entertainments, circuses, travelling shows and games of sport where the organisation conducting the sport is not carrying on for the purpose of making profit. It might be desirable to give some encouragement and practical help to those people through our entertainment tax system. Therefore it is the intention of members of Cabinet to have a look at these angles as soon as time permits.

Hon. Sir Ros McLarty: When? During the course of the debate? ?

The PREMIER: During the current session. I hope that before the session is ended we may be able to introduce some further amendments which will enable some concessions to be given along at least a number of the lines I have been discussing.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Would it not be better to withdraw the Bill and wait until you arrive at a decision?

The PREMIER: No. I think if the Leader of the Opposition would give a little more thought to that aspect, he would realise that such an action would be rather hopeless and somewhat fatal. The Commonwealth entertainments tax is to end on the 1st October. If, on the 1st October and on a number of succeeding days people go to the picture shows and other forms of entertainment and pay no entertainments tax, and one of two months later the State Act is suddenly saddled on them—

Mr. Bovell: It would make the Government more unpopular than ever.

Mr. Oldfield: Is that possible?

The Minister for Lands: Don't be funny!

The PREMIER: They would have a complaint and one which I consider would be justified to some extent.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty. They will have one now.

The PREMIER: There would be no excuse for the Government or Parliament delaying action in this matter until the Commonwealth taxation ceased to function and then some time afterwards imposing a State Act. So, although I appreciate the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition, I regret that it would not be practicable or wise to accept it.

The Minister for Education: Nor is it one which would be acted upon if he were over here.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty. Does the Minister know of any shows that charge only 1s. 6d.?

The Minister for Education: Yes.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Where are they?

The Minister for Education: In Melville.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: But one would have to pay bus fares to go down there.

The PREMIER: It is not easy to make a reliable estimate of how much the State will receive as a result of the operation of the State entertainments tax. For instance, we are relieving altogether from taxation a number of classes and no one knows, even approximately, how much that will mean. We think that from the 30th September until the 30th June next year we should receive about £130,000 and that in a full year we should receive as much as £170,000 or £180,000.

Perhaps if people become more keen on entertainment and the population continues to grow, the figure received from taxation could rise to as high as £200,000 in a full year, depending, to some extent, on whether during this session we bring down some further amendments which would mean that less revenue would be received. There can be no doubt about the need for the money which this taxation will bring to us. The Minister for Education, when he introduces his Estimates, will be able to tell members of the tremendously increased cost associated with his department, costs which are growing all the time.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Has he just realised that?

The PREMIER: If my memory serves me rightly, it now costs us approximately £750,000 per annum to operate the school bus services. It is a tremendous figure and one that has grown at a fast rate.

Hon. C. F. J. North: More than the whole Vote of a few years ago.

The PREMIER: Indeed it is, and I have considerable doubts as to whether we have yet reached the peak. Then again, kindergartens, through the Kindergarten

Union, require more help from the Government. All the time we are being asked, as I am sure the Leader of the Opposition was being asked when he was Treasurer, for money to be made available in connection with health services. All these services are desirable, valuable and necessary in every way.

There is the question of increased superannuation payments for retired Government employees, helping our surf lifesaving clubs, organisations in which the members for Cottesloe, Wembley Beaches and Claremont, and others who represent districts where these clubs operate, have an interest. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Subiaco recollect that their Government agreed to give the Home of Peace authorities—

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: £30,000.

The PREMIER: —£30,000 towards a building programme, the total of which, I think, was £90,000. The authorities of the Home of Peace saw me the other day and told me that the original estimate for this work has been greatly exceeded—

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: It has.

The PREMIER: —with the result that instead of the work costing finally £90,000 I think it is more likely to cost £150,000. Naturally those people are asking the Government to increase the offer which the previous Government made from £30,000 to £50,000 or more. The previous Government conditioned the offer by making it clear that the money could not be made available until 1954. The authorities of the Home of Peace are now anxious to have the money made available this financial year, and so members will have no difficulty in understanding how essential it is for the Government to receive this entertainments tax money if we are to assist these worthy purposes, even to some small extent, let alone to the full extent that might be justified if more money was available to the Government.

There are, of course, a number of other institutions similar to the Home of Peace and the Leader of the Opposition or the member for Subiaco would have no difficulty in bringing to mind very quickly the names of those other matters to which I have made general reference. For instance, there is the problem of child welfare in this State. That is a field in which there is urgent need to introduce new methods to deal with child delinquency, to establish new institutions to treat them mentally, to improve their attitude and so on. In the past we have dealt only with the physical side of child welfare which, of course, is important in the primary sense. However, if child welfare is to be child welfare in fact as well as in name, we have to go beyond that, as has been done in at least one other State in the Commonwealth.

We, as a Government, are anxious, as I am sure every other member of the House is, to see some progress made in this field. Therefore that is one other direction in which additional money will be required if a worth-while effort is to be made to deal with it. I am sure every member of the House could tell me quite a number of other good purposes, in addition to those I have mentioned, for the benefit of which the Government could, with every justification, provide financial assistance. It seems to me that here is an opportunity which no one a fortnight ago thought would present itself whereby we can get some extra money with which to assist these extremely worthy objects to which I have referred.

At this stage in our development there will not be any legitimate argument against the imposition of a tax on entertainments. Members know that in recent years charges have had to be increased upon our people for essentials such as rail services, water supplies—

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Irrigation, gun licenses—

The PREMIER: Yes, and motorcar drivers' licenses, motor licenses—

Mr. McCulloch: Tax on betting.

The PREMIER: —and other charges that have been imposed on the people from the end of 1947 to the end of 1952. However, we need not go into details. It is sufficient to state that during the last ten years, shall we say, to make the matter completely non-party, it has been necessary for the State to impose additional charges upon its citizens to provide essential services and to me it seems that in this period we would be lacking in our duty to the people of the State if we did not ensure that money, which could be obtained by an immediate tax on entertainments, was not raised. It would be most unjust to increase charges such as those I have mentioned on the people and then allow entertainments to go scot free from taxation. That would be setting up a degree of irresponsibility in government and in Parliament which would not bring credit upon government and certainly would not bring any credit upon Parliament.

No doubt there are people who would like to be able to attend picture shows at a cheaper rate. We would all like to have our entertainment more cheaply but the question that has to be looked at is not that one but what is reasonably fair in all the circumstances. We cannot keep on increasing the charges for essential services and not have some immediate rate of taxation provided by entertainments. It is quite certain that if the Government does not get its money from this field it will have to get it from another source.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Have you any other additional charges in cold storage?

The PREMIER: Up until this session the Leader of the Opposition was a very patient man. I used to admire his patience and I tried to match mine with his. However, this session he has changed very greatly and he has become most impatient. I think, in all the circumstances, if I may pursue this line for a moment, that this Government has taken the House into its confidence very greatly before the Budget for this financial year has been presented to the House. Admittedly, there have been pressing circumstances that have moved the Government to act as it has done.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: It looks as though there is more to come.

The PREMIER: I think the Leader of the Opposition need have no fear as to what is likely to come because, if my memory serves me aright—and it can be very treacherous—the other extra charge that is to come would not affect him until after he has passed to Heaven.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I tipped that one! I thought that one would come!

The PREMIER: That charge will be the worry of those who live on after he has left this earth.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: An increase in probate duty! My forecast was fairly accurate.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Ross McLarty, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.58 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 22nd September, 1953.

CONTENTS.

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

QUESTIONS.

HEALTH.

As to T.B. Treatment and Chest Clinics.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What facilities exist in the State for the treatment and control of tuberculosis?

(2) Is the Minister satisfied with the voluntary attendance at chest clinics?

(3) What is the Government's intention regarding compulsory examination for tuberculosis?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Well-organised facilities exist for case-finding, diagnosis, treatment, after-care and rehabilitation.

(2) Yes.

(3) The intention is to continue with the compulsory examination of certain groups of the population with special risks, and of certain districts receiving a visit by a mobile unit.

HOUSING.

As to Location of Railway Department Land.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary:

Was he able to ascertain the information I requested of him in connection with the situation and area of the land the Housing Commission is endeavouring to obtain from the Railway Department?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

No. I have not had an opportunity of ascertaining that information.