understand, bedding and furniture. While I have not had time to read the "Hansard" reports of the debates in the New South Wales Parliament, I take it that Parliament amended that Act last year because they found there was great difficulty in the way of traders carrying out the directions of the Act in regard to goods.

The Minister for Employment: Do you suggest an amendment to Subclause 1?

Mr. McDONALD: I thought there was considered an amendment to Subclause 1. But I am mainly interested to see an amendment to the schedule, and as the Minister has that in view following the legislation in New South Wales, it will largely remove the difficulty that I see.

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

Progress reported.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, Order of the Day for the second reading of the Judges' Retirement Bill (No. 1) was discharged from the Notice Paper.

House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 14th October, 1936.

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

BILL—PEARLING CREWS ACCIDENT ASSURANCE FUND.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.34] in moving the second reading said: As members are aware, men engaged in the pearling industry are excluded from the operation of the Workers' Compensation Act. As a result of that and a desire to have some method by which employees might be compensated if they are injured, or their dependants might be compensated if employees are killed in the industry, this Bill has been submitted. Following conferences between the Minister for the North-West, the Pearlers' Committee, and representatives of the men, the clauses of this Bill have been settled. It is proposed to establish a fund to be controlled by a board to be known as the Pearling Crews Accident Assurance Board consisting of seven members, namely, the chairman of the Broome Pearlers' Committee, the president of the Japanese Club, the pearling inspector at Broome, and four elected members. The Bill provides that the board shall have full power to deal with matters arising from the operation of the fund. They will be able to strike a levy on those engaged in the industry. The holders of pearling licenses shall provide an amount equivalent to that to be contributed by the members of the crews on the particular boats. The Bill contains a scale on which the contributions to the fund shall be based. Provision is made that for the first three years the board shall have power, by means of an insurance policy, to ensure that funds will be available in the event of accidents involving compensation in excess of the amount in the fund at the time. After the expiration of three years, the board will have the right to fix the contributions on the basis deemed necessary to meet the then existing requirements. The scheme is an excellent one; it is one which could very well have been put into operation many years ago. The fund is to be controlled exclusively by the people engaged in the industry, namely the employers and the employees, and payments from the fund to those entitled to receive them will be determined by the board. The Bill empowers the board to make payments to the Consul for the particular country of which the employee is a national, or to the club at Broome to which the employee belonged. That club is different in form from a club as we know it; it is an organisation which looks after the welfare of employees and appears to be satisfactory to them. I do not think I need say anything more because the Bill speaks for itself. It is not intended that the payments to be made shall be anything like equal to the scale provided under the Workers' Compensation Act, and it might be that a claim for death will not exceed £50, while amounts

payable for injuries such as loss of limbs, etc., will be at a lower figure. I believe that the Bill has received the full consideration of all concerned in the industry, and that they are satisfied with it. In the circumstances, I have no doubt that the measure will receive the approval of the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.40]: I have studied the Bill carefully and can say, for the benefit of members, that the Chief Secretary has stated the case fairly and accurately. The measure has been introduced because the men employed in the pearling industry are not covered by insurance. The disaster which overtook Broome two years ago, as a result of which a large number of men were drowned, caused considerable loss to the industry. There were men lost in the cyclone who had served their masters faithfully and well for years, and I can honestly say, from what I learnt at Broome, that most of the pearlers were as much concerned about the loss of their men as about the loss of their boats. I believe it was due to the fact that they were not in a position to pay compensation that this Bill has been brought down. The measure is a fair one. The men contribute to the fund and the pearlers also pay their quota. A board will be created to attend to the proper distribution of the fund. The reason why employees in the pearling industry were not brought under the Workers' Compensation Act was that that law provided for a payment of £600 in the event of death and £750 in the event of total disablement, whereas the agreement with the Governments of the countries from which the employees come provides that, in the event of death, the compensation shall be only £20. While that rate of compensation has applied to Broome for 20 or 25 years, not one claim has been made, but when the Workers' Compensation Act became law and the amount was fixed at £750 in the event of disablement, and £600 in the event of death, claims were lodged before the measure had been operating for 12 months. A Bill of this kind should have been introduced at that time. I have no hesitation in saying that the Government have done the right thing in agreeing to the proposal of the master pearlers and the men to create a compensation fund. The measure has my wholehearted support.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [4.44]: I do not intend to offer any oppostion to the passage of the Bill, but there is one point on which I should like some information from the Chief Secretary, and that is, why such a small amount of compensation is proposed in the event of death or total disablement.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is the amount fixed by the countries from which the men have come.

Hon. G. FRASER: We do not want to fix compensation according to the standards of some of the Asiatic countries. An amount of £40 or £50 for death or total disablement seems to be entirely inadequate.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The men have to be repatriated.

Hon. G. FRASER: At that figure human life appears to be held rather cheaply. But as all parties are evidently satisfied and have agreed upon the amounts of compensation for which the Bill asks, I shall offer no objection. However, I should like some explanation from the Chief Secretary as to why such small amounts have been fixed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [4.46]: That is easily explained. All parties concerned in the fund have agreed that there is no necessity for higher amounts than the £40 and £50 suggested. Those amounts may be inceased in future, but that depends on the contributions to the fund. According to the knowledge we have, the proposed fund will be perfectly sound. In view of the fact that the pearlers themselves and their employees in the industry, who are mostly Asiatics, have also agreed—the employees through their representatives—we should offer no objection on that score. As pointed out by Mr. Nicholson, most of the Asiatics are indentured labourers and have to be returned to their country upon the expiration of a given time. The probability is that £40 or £50 in their country would mean wealth compared with what such amounts mean here. In the circumstances, though the amounts may appear small, nevertheless from the point of view of the people concerned they are equitable.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Duties and powers of board:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: As regards paragraph (d) of Subclause 2, empowering the board "to effect an insurance with the State Accident Insurance Office or with other insurer, being a company or underwriters who have complied with the provisions of the Insurance Companies Act, 1932 (Commonwealth)", I have been assured by the Minister that he is of opinion the quoted words mean that the board must insure with an insurance company who have deposited a sum of not less than £5,000. The Commonwealth Act provides for a deposit of not less than £5,000 and not more than £40,000, I believe. The provision, I understand, is inserted in order that the board must insure with a company that has lodged a sufficient deposit to meet any claims likely to arise.

Hon. L. Craig: Have not all the insurance companies operating in Australia deposited £5,000?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They may have done so, but a new company may start operations to-morrow. If what I have stated is intended, the provision should be there.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Holmes has not got the figures quite correctly. The Commonwealth Insurance Companies Act provides for a deposit of £1,000 for every £5,000 of premium income, and a maximum deposit of £40,000. The Act is designed to ensure that an insurance company operating in Australia shall be in a position to meet any obligations.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The paragraph mentions the State Accident Insurance Office. No such office exists, legally. I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (d) of Subclause 2 the words "the State Accident Insurance Office or with any other insurer, being" be struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not follow Mr. Parker's reasoning. He says there is no State Accident Insurance Office, though he knows that in fact there is.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I do not know legally.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: For the hon. member's information I may say that the State Accident Insurance Office has given a great deal of assistance in the preparation of the Bill. The carrying of his amendment would mean that the State Accident Insurance Office would be barred from doing any of this insurance during the period of three years for which the Bill gives the committee the right to take out an insurance policy in order to cover any risks incurred. What would happen then would be that any private insurance company which complied with the Federal Act could make its rates for these risks anything it liked, and the parties to the fund would have to accept those rates, or the measure could not operate. I do not see why the hon. member should object to the State Accident Insurance Office doing insurance of this kind.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I object on principle.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then the hon. member has not got very much principle.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Neither has the State Accident Insurance Office.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The effect of the amendment is to say that though the State Accident Insurance Office operates in connection with the mining and other industries, it shall not operate in connection with the pearling industry.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I cannot follow the Minister's argument that because the State Accident Insurance Office assisted in the preparation of the Bill, the name of the office should go in. Private companies frequently assist in the preparation of Bills. I take it the Government Actuary chiefly assisted in the preparation of this measure. If a Bill which was presented here last night should go through, then surely an amendment could be inserted in that measure to say that the State Accident Insurance Office should be considered a company within the meaning of this Bill. At present we are permitting insurance in an office which has no legal right to exist. For that reason I object to its name appearing in the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The State Accident Insurance Office does not comply with the conditions laid down by the Commonwealth Act. There is no necessity for that office to do so, seeing that it is a Government institution and is backed by all the resources of the State. I do not consider the hon. member's attitude to be fair.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I fully appreciate the point raised by Mr. Parker. The hon. member raises a point of principle, and has a right to do so. He says that the State Ac-

cident Insurance Office is functioning not with the consent of Parliament. It is quite true that the office is carrying on.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There must be no debate on State insurance, but only on the legality of the office.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Mr. Parker's point has justification, because he says, "I object on principle to it." Any hon. member is justified in so objecting. I suggest, however, that in view of the circumstances which exist, and to save the necessity for the suggested amendment in another measure, the principle might be preserved, and the difficulty got over, by simply inserting words which would give effect to the purpose of the clause, in this way. We should strike out the words "State Accident Insurance Office or with any other insurance company" and insert in lieu thereof the words "to effect an insurance with any company or body or office carrying on such form of insurance." That, I think, would meet the position and still maintain the recognition of the principle that Mr. Parker has before him. Also it would obviate the difficulty raised by the Chief Secretary.

The Chief Secretary: But the State Insurance Office has not complied with the Federal Act.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Then of course my suggested amendment would not be of any use.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are stultifying ourselves by dealing with the State Insurance Office.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We are in a measure recognising it, but in this instance the position can be safeguarded.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: If the State Government Insurance Office Bill passes, the necessary provision can be inserted in it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I suggest that a provision covering this difficulty could be inserted in the State Government Insurance Office Bill—that is if that measure passes this Chamber. In the meantime the Minister would do well to report progress until the other Bill has been dealt with.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Members are splitting straws, for this clause does not make it obligatory to insure with the State Insurance Office.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No, but it recognises the right of the State Insurance Office.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am of opinion that members are not called upon to decide whether the State Insurance Office is carrying on legally or illegally. It has been carried on for a considerable time, and legislation has been previously approved whereby other forms of business have been similarly carried on. The important thing is that there is no obligation on the board to insure with the State Insurance Office. I cannot see anything wrong with the clause.

Amendment put and a division called for.

The CHAIRMAN: I give my vote with the noes.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	.. .. ..	11
Noes	.. .. ..	10
Majority for	.. ..	1

Ayes	
Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. V. Hamersley
Hon. W. J. Mann	*(Teller.)*

Noes	
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. E. Heenan
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. E. H. H. Hall
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I move an amendment—

That "any" be inserted in lieu of the words struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If we were to take out the words "who have complied with the provisions of the Insurance Companies Act 1932 (Commonwealth)" we would get over the difficulty raised by the Minister. The men controlling this fund will be controlling their own money. I move an amendment—

That in lines 3, 4 and 5 of paragraph (d) the words "who have complied with the provisions of the Insurance Companies Act 1932 (Commonwealth)" be struck out.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If another Bill goes through, there will be a short clause to the effect that the State Insurance Company shall be deemed to be a company within the meaning of the Bill we are now discussing.

The CHAIRMAN: That will be dealt with when we consider that other Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: I oppose the amendment because I want to safeguard these moneys. I am not prepared to take the risk of allowing the moneys to be invested with perhaps a mushroom company. Generally speaking such companies are made up of go-getters and there lies the risk.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But a company cannot be formed without complying with the Commonwealth legislation.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is no necessity for the words to be there at all, for the simple reason that no company can carry on insurance business unless this is made possible. If the words are left in we will complicate the issue as between now and the passing of another Bill to which I am not allowed to refer.

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

Clauses 5 to 16, Title—agreed to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the consideration of the report be made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 4.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is not possible; the Standing Orders provide that a Bill which has been amended cannot be recommitted on the same day on which a motion is moved for the consideration of the report at the next sitting.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I have a recollection of Bills having often been recommitted on the same day.

The PRESIDENT: The custom has been not to recommit a Bill in circumstances such as these.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would it not be better if the Chief Secretary moved that the report be adopted at this sitting instead of at the next sitting of the House?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is it the position that we cannot recommit a Bill on the same day after it has been reported? If I remember rightly we have done this often.

Hon. J. Cornell: Yes, after the Standing Orders have been suspended.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Very well, we can let it go until to-morrow. I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Question put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—ABORIGINES ACT AMENDMENT.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.22]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to enable the Aborigines Act Amendment Bill to pass its remaining stages at this sitting.

My reason for submitting the motion is that I am anxious to get the Bill to another place this week, and on account of the state of our Notice Paper there will be no need to bring members back to-morrow, provided, of course, we complete the Bill to-night. Therefore it is necessary to comply with the Standing Orders that the motion I have submitted be agreed to without a dissenting voice.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.23]: I second the motion. The Chief Secretary mentioned this matter to me last night, and I understand the Clerk will expedite the reprinting of the Bill. The desire, as pointed out by the Minister, on account of the state of the Notice Paper, is not to bring members back to-morrow.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: There being an absolute majority of members present, and there being no dissentient voice, I declare the motion carried.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clauses 13, 21, 26 and the Title.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 13—Amendment of Section 17 of the principal Act:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of proposed new Subsection 2 the word "employment" be struck out, and "to employ" inserted in lieu.

This is an amendment I desired to insert last night, but was prevented from doing so by the Standing Orders. The object is to meet the position pointed out by Mr. Parker, who informed the House that there was no such word as "employment" in the Act, and there-

fore it is necessary to substitute the words "to employ."

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That after the word "includes," in line 2 of paragraph (c), the words "the act of" be inserted.

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

Clause 21—Insertion of new sections:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That after the word "shall," in line 5 of proposed new subsection 5, the following words be inserted:—"as soon as is reasonably possible provide free transport for the native and send him to the nearest and most accessible hospital; or (i) as soon as is reasonably possible provide free transport for the native and send him to a protector; and (ii) if required so to do by a protector arrange and pay for the transport of the native to such place as the protector specifies."

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

Clause 26—Amendment of Section 43 of the principal Act:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Committee reduced the penalty of six months imprisonment to one of three months for offences against natives. Imprisonment, for however short a period, constitutes a taint upon the character of any young fellow who commits an offence of this character. Some of the half-castes are absolutely white. If a young man commits an indiscretion in the case of a girl belonging to the white races, he may not in certain circumstances suffer any penalty, but if the white girl is a native half-caste, he may be sentenced to three months' imprisonment. If such a case came before the magistrate who is largely responsible for the framing of the Bill, he would undoubtedly be very strict in the sentence he imposed. I move an amendment—

That in line 6 of paragraph (b), the words "not less than three months and" inserted by a previous committee, be struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We have had a full debate upon this point, and the Committee arrived at a decision which was very satisfactory. I have already compromised on the original punishment by agreeing to a reduction of the penalty by 50 per cent. Mr. Baxter now desires to delete any reference to imprisonment. I am afraid many individuals are already tainted in respect to this matter, though they have not suffered imprisonment. By giving publicity to the facts, as I did yesterday, we are not doing the reputation of the State much good. We do not want a repetition of what has occurred in the last few months. Responsible people in London have written out asking if Ministerial statements on this subject are correct, and what the intentions of the Government are regarding the Royal Commissioner's report. This is a bad advertisement for the State. The position is developing in such a way that we must have a deterrent such as imprisonment. If that deterrent is deleted from the Bill, the law will not have much effect. It will not be mandatory upon the magistrate to sentence the offender to imprisonment, because he will be at liberty to impose a fine if, in his opinion, nothing more serious is warranted. This is a Bill to protect the aborigines. White people are already protected, and if any of them place themselves in the position disclosed, that is their lookout. Should the present trouble continue at the rate it has been developing, at the end of another 10 years we shall have to deal with many times the present number of half-castes. In fact, the position is rapidly getting out of hand.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The statement made yesterday by the Chief Secretary helps us to understand the troubles confronting the authorities when dealing with this serious question. It may be desirable to recast this clause. We must consider those who may, unfortunately, be brought before the court for committing an offence which is nothing less than a compliance by the individual with what is a kind of law of nature. When we try to legislate against what we know to be natural laws, we are confronted by a mighty problem. No more can we say by legislation that water shall not run uphill than, by Act of Parliament, can we say that a young man shall not have intercourse with a woman. Are we by Act of Parliament to attempt to say that the natural impulse in a man should not——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member's argument might be all right if he were opposing the clause, but I must ask him to speak to the amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I realise the difficulty confronting the department in the endeavour to control what is undoubtedly a serious position. If a young man has association with a white girl, and the girl is a

consenting party, there is nothing in the law to prevent the association, nor is any offence committed. In the Bill, we seek to protect the native, with the avowed intention of placing the risk——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is again speaking against the clause. I desire that he shall confine his remarks to the amendment.

Hon. G. W. Miles: He is giving his views as to why this provision should be cut out of the Bill. I certainly disagree with your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is speaking against the clause.

Hon. G. W. Miles: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I distinctly object to the Chairman of Committees interfering with members in this way.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not desire to burke discussion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are doing so. Mr. Nicholson was giving his views in opposition to this provision.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well; Mr. Nicholson may proceed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is proposed to delete the minimum penalty, and leave the maximum penalty. It is true that the young man who has association with a white girl may have to pay the penalty arising out of his action, but that is another matter with which we are not concerned at the moment. The Bill proposes that should the young man take a similar liberty with a native woman, he can be imprisoned, whereas there is neither imprisonment nor penalty if he should do the same thing to a white girl with her consent. Why in the name of Heaven should such a penalty be enforced against a young man who commits the same offence against a native woman?

The Chief Secretary: Very well: I shall have to start all over again!

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I suggest to the Chief Secretary that he should have the clause re-drafted. Although I am advancing this argument, I appreciate his point, and I do not wish to oppose the legislation.

The Chief Secretary: You are doing your best in that direction.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am not; I am merely advocating what I regard as safe principles. I am decidedly against the man who cohabits, or habitually lives, with a black woman. I do not think that practice is in accord with nature or the proper scheme of things. Such a man should suffer the punishment he deserves. When the offence is of a casual nature, it is different.

The Honorary Minister: It is merely a matter of degree.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No. When it is a question of a casual offence by a young fellow——

Hon. G. Fraser: It is not always the young man, but very often the old men.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There is a difference in the enormity of the offences. It would be better to re-draft the clause so as to provide a heavy penalty against the individual who habitually cohabits with a native woman, and leave the penalty as suggested by the amendment regarding the other type of offence.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Only a small proportion of the offenders live with native women.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I favour the amendment, for it will leave the court free to impose a penalty in conformity with the seriousness of the offence.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: The court has that discretionary power now.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The hon. member is wrong. As the clause stands, there is no alternative, but that will be provided by the amendment.

Hon. G. Fraser: That applies only to imprisonment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The point I raise is worthy of serious consideration.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am prompted by Mr. Nicholson's remarks to speak again. Great stress has been laid on the fact that young men may be involved. Our experience is that it is not the young men who are troublesome but rather the middle-aged men, those who have been living in close association with the natives for many years.

Hon. G. Fraser: The young men are more particular.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Proof of cohabitation is very difficult, but proof of frequent sexual intercourse is not so difficult. There is a great difference between the legal interpretation placed upon the term "cohabitation" and that placed upon "frequent sexual intercourse." A point that I do not remember stressing previously at any time during the discussion is that no complaint can be laid under the clause without the authority of the Chief Protector. If the Chief Protector, therefore, were satisfied that a young man had inad-

vertently slipped, it would be possible for him not to authorise proceedings. That in itself provides protection for the young man to whom so much reference has been made. I hope the Committee will not accept the amendment. The Royal Commissioner was very severe in his comments on this particular point. He was not prepared to recommend a monetary penalty at all, but recommended six months' imprisonment without the option. In other parts of the Commonwealth it has been found necessary to be just as strict as the Royal Commissioner advocated.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is much ado about nothing. I do not think any member would be prepared to accord latitude to persons who continually committed offences of the description referred to. It appears that it is the desire of the Committee to protect the young man or the old man, whichever it may be, who on one occasion commits such an offence. Under the clause as it stands he has that protection now, inasmuch as it is left to the discretion of the magistrate as to whether he fines or imprisons the offender. I have sufficient faith in the magistrates to know that in such cases as have been mentioned fines would be inflicted and only in cases where there were no extenuating circumstances would imprisonment be ordered. What does it matter whether imprisonment is for one week, three months or six months? The stain on a man's character is there just the same.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is an argument in favour of wiping out the minimum.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Chief Secretary has given good reasons why it is necessary to have something that will be a deterrent to others. When I said it did not matter whether a man were imprisoned for one week, three months or six months, I was speaking from the viewpoint of the stain on his character.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The question under discussion is whether we shall fix a minimum penalty of three months or leave the matter to the discretion of the magistrate. I consider that the House was—probably unknowingly—misled by Mr. Parker who, when discussing minimum penalties in relation to imprisonment yesterday, said that it was customary to do this sort of thing and that it was done in the licensing cases.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It is done under the Act.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Nothing of the sort; there is no minimum imprisonment penalty under the Licensing Act. This House will make itself absurd over the Bill if members are not careful. The Minister has said that we will not do ourselves any good or justice to the cause if we talk about what is going on in this country in connection with the treatment of aborigines. He read from the Chief Protector's evidence before the Royal Commission that one woman—I am not sure whether it was a half-caste or a full-blood—had given birth to six children by six different white men. That statement has gone forward to the public. How did the Chief Protector arrive at that conclusion? Was he present on each occasion? If so, had he the authority to stop it? If not, did he apply a blood test such as is applied in the courts to-day in the case of illegitimate white children? If he did, I respectfully suggest that he is wasting his time as Chief Protector of Aborigines and there is a better job awaiting him somewhere else amongst the white population. This is the sort of evidence put up by the Chief Protector, and we are asked not to mention these things for fear of damaging the cause. Then we have the other astounding statement of the Minister that the demand for half-caste children is greater than the supply. There is something wrong somewhere. There are any number of these half-castes in the country. If the department had done their job they would have got hold of the half-castes and trained them so that the supply would be equal to the demand.

The Chief Secretary: You have it all wrong.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have not got it wrong. It does not sound too nice when analysed. Did not the Minister say the demand for these half-caste children was greater than the supply? We have to maintain hundreds of white boys for whom we have to find funds and the Minister, in effect, tells us that they are not in the same demand as the coloured children.

The Chief Secretary: Even if I did we are not responsible for that. It is employers such as yourself who are employing these boys.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is stated that the half-castes rear big families. On the other hand, the complaint against white

people is that they will not rear big families. Where are we getting to? It is not that the white section of the community cannot have families: they will not have them.

Hon. G. Fraser: They don't get enough money to keep them.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They get about three times as much as my father got, and I am one of 12. I want to point out the absurdity of the position. At Cottesloe or at any of our beaches on any summer day one may see young white women lying about in the sun with very few clothes on, and doing their best to make themselves like half-castes. If a young man were charged under this Act with having to do with a coloured person, would it be sufficient defence to say he thought it was a white girl? We are told that no prosecutions are to be launched under this section without the consent of the Commissioner. There are rumours in the air about the Commissioner having been subjected to political influence and here we are opening up a great avenue for political interference. We are trying to do the impossible. Consider the great men of the British Empire, or of the world. One has to admit that they were fond of the opposite sex. Young men of brains in the South of this State, unable to get a job, go North. If they should chance to follow the example of the great men of the Empire, we are proposing to send them to gaol for three months. Consider the Biblical story of how scorn was pointed at a woman taken in adultery. To her persecutors it was said, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone" and there was not a stone thrown. I venture to suggest that if the same question were put to a good many people in and around Perth, there would not be too many stones thrown. We know this sort of thing is going on and that it will continue to go on, yet we ask that if a young man in the North slips he shall be fined or imprisoned.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I hope the section will go through as amended and that there will be no further amendment to it. This is a very vital problem and the speeches indicate that most hon. members consider that it should receive serious attention. We have Mr. Moseley's report which speaks in very strong language of the position we have to deal with and it is no use quoting examples of characters who have made the British Empire in the past. If they helped to make the British Empire by cohabiting with natives, we cannot feel very proud of them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Nobody said anything of the kind. Natives were never mentioned.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am sorry if I have misunderstood the hon. member's remarks. Undoubtedly the problem is a great one, though I must admit it is unusual to fix a minimum penalty of three months.

Member: That is the reason we do not like it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It is justified by the gravity of the situation. The Act will be enforced by our magistrates, each one of whom has travelled much in Western Australia and is well experienced. The question of circumstances will, I am sure, be always taken into consideration by the magistrate and when it is not justified a fine will not be inflicted, let alone imprisonment.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I have not heard of anything to lead me to believe that last night we did not do the right thing. Therefore I cannot support the amendment. Many members appear to lose sight of the fact that the Bill is designed to protect the natives. Some of them seem to be out to protect indiscreet men.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Not at all.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The hon. member's solicitation was for men who might be indiscreet. What about the unfortunate native girl? Surely Mr. Nicholson must realise that natives are of very low intelligence. One great traveller declared that our natives were probably of the lowest intelligence of any similar people. We have drastic legislation to punish any man who deals with a white girl under the age of 16, but the intelligence of such a girl is beyond that of a native of over 16 years of age. I understand that a number of native girls are simply taken, and that must be prevented. The native girl should be treated as a girl under the age of consent and the penalty must be made fairly drastic. Probably for every case sheeted home, 30 or more cases would go undetected. Therefore, when a conviction is obtained, the penalty should be such as will prove a deterrent.

Hon. A. Thomson: Why not have a maximum penalty and leave it to the discretion of the magistrate?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Again I refer to the fearful record presented by the Chief

Secretary last night. It showed that when there was no minimum penalty, offenders were not punished as they should have been. The old Act has proved no deterrent. If we are going to make an earnest endeavour to end what I consider is a disease, stern measures are necessary.

Hon. A. Thomson: That sort of thing applies to every country where there are native people.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, and in other countries the penalty is far more drastic than that proposed here. I hope members will help the Government to suppress this great evil. If we fail to do so, no one can tell what the end will be. Mr. Baxter told us that only yesterday he had noticed some half-caste girls who were almost white, and that there was a danger of a young man not observing it. Mr. Baxter knew that they were natives.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Their dress showed it.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The fact that they were with people who obviously were natives would also show it. If he could appreciate the position at a glance, how much more so could a man who had other ideas?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What about the girls on the beaches?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Those girls have had education and a good up-bringing, and if they are fools enough to make their bodies like that of a half-caste, it is their own fault. I do not think any man would be attracted by those girls. In the interests of the unfortunate natives and the good name of Western Australia, we should adhere to our decision.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I agree with the Minister that there is need for drastic action, but one would conclude from Mr. Angelo's remarks that we proposed to abolish the penalty. All we propose is the deletion of a minimum penalty. I am just as anxious as is Mr. Angelo to protect the natives. The most important part of our laws is the administration, and what guides the magistrates is the intention of Parliament. If we inserted a minimum, magistrates would regard it as a direction by Parliament. Magistrates come and go, and some of the cases would be tried by justices.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: That is the very reason why a minimum is needed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: But to insert a minimum would give a direction that offenders must be imprisoned, thus inflicting a taint probably for an act of indiscretion. If we insert a minimum in this legislation, where will it end? The amendment would enable magistrates to inflict any punishment up to the maximum.

Hon. J. Nicholson: After hearing the evidence.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. Let offenders be fined as much as members like, but let us not give a definite direction for a penalty of imprisonment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no direction that imprisonment shall be imposed.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: But to prescribe a minimum is a definite direction.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is provision for a fine or imprisonment.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: In the Bill it says imprisonment or a fine.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Anyhow, there is an alternative. The magistrate or justices would have the option of inflicting the minimum fine or the minimum term of imprisonment. Therefore the statement that imprisonment must be ordered is not correct.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The real point at issue is simply whether a term of imprisonment should be prescribed or whether it should be left to the discretion of the magistrate or justices. To contend that the prescribing of a minimum would amount to a definite direction is not correct. The direction is for a term of imprisonment or a fine. If there were extenuating circumstances the magistrate would inflict a fine, but if the case called for drastic punishment, imprisonment would be ordered. Should the amendment be carried, I will move to reduce the fine to £10. I inquired about the remuneration generally paid to young men on the stations and found that they received £1 or 25s. a week. To fine those men £25 would be more than a fair thing. Whichever way this vote goes, I shall move a reduction of the fine to £10.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	9
Noes	8
Majority for	1

Ayes.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	(*Teller.*)

Noes.

Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. E. H. H. Hall
	(*Teller.*)

Pair.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. A. Thomson	Hon. E. H. Gray

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (b) of Subclause 1 the words "twenty-five" be struck out, and "ten" inserted in lieu.

I have just given my reasons for the amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I must oppose the amendment. Hon. members have freely said that they do not care how much the fine is, but that they object to imprisonment. Time after time magistrates and justices have refused to inflict what I regard as adequate penalties for this offence. Fines of 10s. and £1 have been imposed for repeated offences. The Bill is being watered down to a replica of the Act. We are now dealing with the very crux of the Bill. The carrying of the amendment would make the position as bad as it was 20 years ago. In view of my experience of the department, I would not press for minimum penalties as I have done, did I not think there was occasion for them. I am a man of the world, and have special knowledge of the subject. In view of my experience, the fact of my advocating what I do advocate should suffice to convince hon. members of its necessity. A fine of £10 would be inadequate.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: My objection was to the minimum term of imprisonment. As regards the fine of £25 the Minister will have my support. Like the hon. gentleman, having had experience of the department, I realise that a fine of £10 will not be a deterrent, though a fine of £25 may be.

Hon. L. CRAIG: As the mover of the original amendment eliminating the minimum penalty, on this occasion I retract and support the Minister. Since moving my amendment I have discussed the subject with Mr. Moseley, who informs me that it is not so much a matter of protecting aboriginal women from white men as of protecting white men from disease. The amount of disease among white men in the North, Mr. Moseley said, is appalling. Only a drastic penalty will protect them. The minimum term of imprisonment having been deleted, the fine should be substantial.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I was amazed at the ideas expressed by some hon. members. For two hours we have been hearing about unfortunate jackaroos in the North paid only £1 a week and their keep. We have been told about the dire consequences the Bill would have upon them if they erred in any way. Now we are given to understand that the position is not quite the same, that for those men a fine of £10 would be a mere nothing, and that the minimum fine must be £25. However, £10 is a substantial penalty for a first offence. Any magistrate would certainly increase the fine substantially for a second offence.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I cannot be classed as one of the members who have been referred to as satisfied with any minimum fine. I adhere to what I said previously. The maximum can be what anyone likes. There can be a maximum term of imprisonment of five years, and a maximum fine of £500. I never argued that a minimum fine of £25 ought to be imposed.

Amendment put, and a division called.

The CHAIRMAN: I give my vote with the ayes.

Result of division:—

Ayes	6
Noes	12
Majority against ..	6

Ayes.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. C. G. Elliott
	(*Teller.*)

Noes.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. E. H. Angelo
	(*Teller.*)

Pair.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. A. Thomson	Hon. E. H. Gray

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I move an amendment—

That after "pounds" in line 9 of paragraph (b) of subclause (1) there be inserted the words "and for a second offence to imprisonment for a period of not less than three months nor more than 12 months, or to a penalty of not less than £50 nor more than £100."

In deciding the previous amendment, the Committee went very much on the belief that it was not a fair thing to imprison a lad who might have been led astray by natural instincts, and perhaps ignorance. My amendment will have the effect of helping to put down this evil. On the second reading I said it might be possible to adopt a lenient punishment for first offenders, but that there should be a special penalty for subsequent offences. If the amendment be carried, the Government will be able to go ahead and do what is necessary, so I ask members to assist the Government by carrying the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: If the amendment be agreed to, we shall have for a first offence a maximum imprisonment of two years and for a second offence a maximum imprisonment of 12 months.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have no objection to an amendment which provides a special penalty for the second or subsequent offences. If the hon. member will agree to make the maximum period of imprisonment two years instead of 12 months, so as to avoid disproportion between the first and second offences, I will accept the amendment.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will amend my amendment by providing for a maximum imprisonment of two years.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	6
Noes	11
Majority against ..	5

AYES.	
Hon. E. H. Angelo	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. J. M. Drew (*Teller.*)

NOES.	
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. C. G. Elliott	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	(*Teller.*)

PAIR.	
AYE.	NO.
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. A. Thomson

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause, as further amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill again reported with further amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [8.47] in moving the second reading said: In submitting this amendment of the State Transport Co-ordination Act I trust I shall receive the same sympathetic consideration that was shown to me when I introduced a Bill of a similar character last year. In the Bill now before the House there are one or two alterations which I will explain as I proceed. The State Transport Co-ordination Act has been in existence for about two years. My desire is to give a road board or any person who is desirous of applying for a license for a commercial vehicle the right of appeal to a resident magistrate. It is an amazing thing that Section 10 of the Act provides that the board shall submit a report to the Minister. We find that licenses have been refused and that no report has been submitted to the Minister, giving the reasons for the refusal. Therefore it is felt that in view of the fact that the Act has been in existence for two years, existing anomalies should be remedied. I desire to amend Section 33 of the principal Act by striking out the word "fifteen" in each of the paragraphs (a) and (b) and substituting in each case the word "thirty." The reason is that people in the metropolitan area and country districts are suffering great disabilities. I propose to read letters which I have received on this subject, but for obvious reasons the writers who sent the communications to the secretary of the Transport Association do not wish their names to be disclosed. I assure members, however, that the letters are genuine. The first reads—

We have to refuse service to a number of regular customers at the following places:—Armadale, Roleystone, Glen Forrest, Spearwood, Upper Swan, Bedfordale, Rockingham,

and Mundaring. We have constant inquiries for large-size goods such as furniture for which we have to obtain a special permit or refuse delivery. Naturally, customers do not purchase their full wants because of the peculiar restriction, whereas an extension to a 30-mile radius would obviate these troubles. At present we pay £6 per annum for one special license which restricts our fleet should a surplus load be required, or in the event of breakdowns. We are frequently put to great inconvenience in the event of extra deliveries having to be dealt with beyond the 15-mile limit, and it would be a great advantage to have a delivery service to many of our customers who reside between that distance and a 30-mile radius.

Another firm writes—

With reference to the writer's conversation with you regarding application for the extension of the radius which at present operates as laid down by the Transport Board; in the course of our delivery service we would welcome the extension as it very frequently occurs that goods can be delivered with far less handling per medium of our trucks than by some other method which necessitates increase in cost of packing, and so forth We frequently have applications for the extension of our service beyond the present limitations, and on special occasions we have obtained permits; as you know, under 15 cwt. loads cost 2s. 6d. and over 15 cwt. 5s. We quite realise that whatever limit is made, there will always be someone just outside, as is frequently the case to-day, where we are serving thickly-populated districts, and we would very much welcome the extended area if permission can be obtained.

This is from another firm—

It is only reasonable that merchants should be able to deliver their goods with their own transport to such places as Armadale, Mundaring, Kalamunda, Bickley Valley, Darlington, Greenmount, Spearwood, Rockingham, and similar districts beyond the 15-mile limit provided for in the Act. Some of the districts such as Rockingham and Greenmount have no railway communication at all, and the others can only use a carrier who lives within 15 miles of their centre. It will probably be contended that a license can be obtained in such cases at a small cost, but our contention is that an ordinary traffic license should suffice without putting the merchant or truck owner to additional expense and trouble. The request is purely for simplification of present methods, and will not in any case interfere with railway revenue.

That of course deals with the matter as far as it affects the metropolitan area. It certainly would be of great benefit to us in the country districts. I may use Katanning as an example. It means that people are compelled to use the railway where it would be much more profitable to pick up the goods themselves and go back to the outside districts. This would be of advantage to the people in the metropolitan area as well. The next point dealt with in the Bill is the repeal of Section 37 of the principal Act, and the substitution of another section. It is proposed that any owner of a commercial goods vehicle or any other person feeling aggrieved by any decision of the board refusing or varying the application or attaching any terms or conditions to a license granted by the board on such application, may appeal to the Resident Magistrate in whose magisterial district is situate or principally situate the area or route which would be served by the service or proposed service. It is also proposed to give a road board or municipality whose district is affected by any decision already referred to, on being petitioned by at least 20 ratepayers, power to exercise the same right of appeal as is given to an owner under the preceding paragraph. As I said last year, in New South Wales the owner of a commercial vehicle has the right of appeal to a resident magistrate in whose magisterial district is situated the area of the route which would be served by the proposed service. The position today is that there is no appeal against the decision of the Transport Board. Members will agree that if it is just and equitable to give the right of appeal to natives in the Bill which we have been considering, just recently, it is equally just and right that it should be given to other sections of the community.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Will the hon. member explain why he brings in the road board or municipality instead of the individual?

Hon. A. THOMSON: An individual may, at the request of a number of ratepayers in particular districts, who are desirous of securing licenses for motor commercial vehicles, make application for such a license. The Transport Board will refuse the application and the individual may not be in a position to take the case to court. Therefore it is felt that the provision in the New South Wales Act should also be included in our Act.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member's Bill amends the Road Districts Act and the Municipalities Act.

Hon. A. THOMSON: No, I am simply saying that the road board or municipality affected may, on being petitioned by at least 20 ratepayers, exercise the same right of appeal as is given to an owner under a preceding paragraph. After all, possibly,

and very probably, the matter will be of vital importance to a district. Let us take Kojonup, which I dealt with last year. That district feels that it has a distinct grievance. It is very much closer to Perth by road than by rail and yet the Transport Board say that they will not issue licenses. If it is considered fair and just that an aboriginal shall have the right of appeal to a resident magistrate against the decision of the Minister, then surely it is just and equitable that a taxpayer desirous of following his calling, and is denied that right, shall have the same opportunity to appeal.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Does the hon. member think it wise that a municipality or road board should take up the matter for an individual?

Hon. A. THOMSON: The road board or municipality would not be doing it at the request of an individual but at the request of at least 20 ratepayers.

Hon. G. Fraser interjected.

Hon. A. THOMSON: If an objection can be raised by 60 ratepayers, and if the hon. member's contention is correct, an appeal can be made, but the Transport Board need not take action. If it is reasonable that 20 ratepayers should be able to petition a road board in connection with the expenditure of money, it should be possible to take similar action in the direction I propose.

Hon. G. Fraser: In that case they take a referendum of the whole district.

Hon. A. THOMSON: There is nothing to prevent those in opposition to the petition taking action exactly the same steps as those who are opposed to the borrowing of money.

Hon. G. Fraser: But you have not got that provision in the Bill.

Hon. A. THOMSON: They have power to object.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The danger I foresee is that you may have 40 or 50 different decisions given by 40 or 50 different magistrates.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That can apply in any case that comes before a resident magistrate. The parent Act takes away from men in the country their right to a livelihood. It does not affect the metropolitan area. It does not place any additional expense upon people resident in that area. The whole burden of the Transport Co-ordination Act falls upon the shoulders of people in the country. One would imagine, if a person applied for a license when he wished to trade between Katanning and Perth, between which there is an efficient and adequate railway service, that the board would be justified in refusing the request. There are, however, places in the country, such as Kojonup, where it has been proved beyond doubt that the residents have been penalised to a very great extent. Notwithstanding that, there is no appeal against the decisions. All one gets from the Transport Board is, "We are appointed to look after the interests of the Railway Department."

Hon. J. Cornell: The bus drivers cannot appeal against an Arbitration Court decision.

Hon. A. THOMSON: They have gone on strike.

Hon. J. Cornell: Those you speak of could go on strike.

Hon. A. THOMSON: They cannot do so. The following appeared in the "West Australian" newspaper in 1934:—

> "Are railways favoured," "The test of a service's value": Competition between railways and road transport received prominence in Victoria when the Transport Regulation Board heard an application by a truck owner for a license to carry a road-making plant and material throughout Victoria for the country road board. Mr. Burt Kelly, who appeared for the Victorian Railways, suggested that the board should subscribe to the principle that wherever there was competitive motor transport it would reduce railway revenue, and was therefore uneconomic. The chairman of the board (Mr. P. D. Phillips) emphatically dissented from this view. Where goods could be efficiently and cheaply carried by road rather than by rail, he said, road services should be encouraged. It was broadly economic to locate and determine the growing sphere of road transport. All transport must be tested by the substantial benefit offered the community, and not in consideration only of railway finances.

Mr. Munt, chairman of the Transport Co-ordination Board, was interviewed concerning these statements I have read, and he said—

> He was not disposed to offer comprehensive comments offhand, other than to say the board in this State agreed with and acted upon the principle (mentioned by Mr. Phillips) that "all transport must be tested by the substantial benefit offered to the community, and not in consideration only of the railway finances."

Mr. Munt added that he used the word "community" in its fullest sense. The residents of Kojonup may well ask whether the Transport Board of which Mr. Munt is chairman, has considered the interests of the community from an economic point of view. The board says, "The railway is there, and you must use it." People living 20 miles nearer to Perth than Kojonup have to cart

their wool to the Kojonup station, and pay the additional transport charges to Perth. The action of the board suggests that it is not co-ordinating the services and studying the interests of the community, and giving impartial and equitable treatment to all conflicting interests. It has been proved conclusively that it has only one object in view, namely, the protection of the revenue of the Railway Department. I am not attacking the railways, because I know the Commissioner is in a difficult position. I have on three occasions in this House endeavoured to have a select committee appointed to inquire into the ramifications and workings of the Railway Department. We know the result of the findings of the Agricultural Bank Royal Commission. A large amount of money is invested in our railways. The Commissioner is expected to pay interest and working expenses on a very much over-capitalised system. To a great extent that burden is being borne by people in the country.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The burden is the greater because of the construction of many railways which should not have been authorised.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Money has been spent which should not have been spent. There have been waste and extravagance on the part of all Governments. If the owner of a commercial vehicle has a grievance, he should have extended to him the same right of appeal as is given to a native under the Bill we have just been dealing with. My measure provides that in the third schedule the words "or wool" be inserted. That schedule gives the owner of the truck the privilege of carrying livestock, poultry, fruit, vegetables, dairy produce, etc., perishable commodities or wheat. I want the words "or wool" added to those commodities. I propose to show that the present position inflicts great hardship upon the grower. I do not ask that a man should be allowed to compete with the railways. All I ask is that if a farmer has a truck he should be allowed to cart his own wool to market. The present position is a restriction upon the rights of the individual. I am going to quote some figures relative to Gnowangerup in relation to Fremantle. I want to show how the restrictions on the cartage of wool affect the individual farmer. From Gnowangerup to Fremantle is a distance of 288 miles. The fixed freight on wool is £3 11s. 7d. per ton. The following items are taken from the rate book. In class (a) the minimum weight is four tons. If a man wants to send four tons he pays £1 16s. 10d. If he sends less than that he is charged the (b) rate, the minimum in which is two tons, £2 10s. 11d. per ton. If he is sending less than two tons he is charged (c) rate, £3 4s. 3d. per ton. Petrol comes into the first class, and the rate is £5 3s. 11d. Crude oil is also in the first class. The minimum weight is five tons and it is possible to obtain a rebate of 10 per cent. The same thing applies to kerosene. If a farmer has a truck he should be permitted to cart his wool from Gnowangerup to the wool stores at Fremantle. On two tons he would save £7 3s. 2d. in freight. If he desired to take back two tons of fencing wire in his truck he would save on railway freight £5 1s. 10d., or a total of £12 5s. For the two road trips he would take 32 gallons of petrol, which would cost £4 3s. If he bought his petrol in Perth it would be much less. He could leave his farm in the morning, and deliver his wool in Fremantle on the same day. If he had a day's rest he would get there and back in three days. The average farmer does not earn £1 a day, but I allow his time as being worth £1 a day. For oil and sundries I allow £2, and with the petrol and the allowance of £1 a day for his time, the amount works out at £8 4s., and he would still be saving £4.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does the hon. member suggest he should cart back his own super?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am surprised at the hon. member making such a suggestion, in view of the fact that he represents a number of farmers. Does he think it is fair that a man who desires to cart his own wool to market should be prevented from doing so? The gag about super for backloading is a very old one that has been put up by the Railway Department, and we are rather tired of it. At any rate, I have shown that the farmer would effect a saving of £4 on that particular trip. Let members consider the position from another standpoint. I have already shown that if the farmer took down two tons of wool, that would represent a saving to him of £7 3s. 2d. If he had a tractor on his property, it would be essential for him to procure motor spirit or power kerosene.

That is provided for at first-class rates and would represent £5 3s. 11d. It will be seen, therefore, that if he were to come down himself, he would save £7 3s. 2d. on his wool and on the fuel for his tractor, £10 7s. 10d., or a total of £18 11s. If we deduct £8 4s. from that, he would still show a substantial saving on his three days' work, amounting to £10 7s. I have given members that illustration to indicate the distinct hardship that is imposed upon the farmer who has a motor truck and desires to transport his own wool. I have been as brief as possible in dealing with the Bill, which I submit to members for their favourable consideration, feeling that this House will see that justice is done. People in the country districts have to bear the burden of isolation and increased freights. The farmers have to pay freight coming and going. If they sell goods, freight has to be deducted on all that they despatch by rail, and if they buy goods, they have to pay the freight on those requirements. On the other hand, the people in the city have their goods delivered to them free of cost. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [8.47]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.48 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday 14th October, 1936.

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

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLIES, HYDEN AREA.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Water Supplies,—1, Has the boring party which was carrying out operations in the Hyden area completed its work? 2, If so, in which localities were operations carried out? 3, What is the result of the work done, and does it justify further operations?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES replied:—(1) Yes. (2) Over an area of approximately 600 square miles extending 18 miles eastward and westward of Hyden Rock and 10 miles northward and southward. (3) (a) 27 bores were sunk, none of which was fully efficient. (b) No.

QUESTION—LOTTERIES COMMISSION, AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM asked the Minister for Police,—1, Has the Auditor General at any time caused an audit to be made of the accounts of the Lotteries Commission? 2, If so, will he lay the report upon the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE replied: The Lotteries (Control) Act does not require or authorise the Auditor General to audit the accounts of the Lotteries Commission. Section 15 (b) of the Act provides that the permit holder (*i.e.*, the Commission) shall appoint some qualified person to be approved by the Minister to audit the accounts and the conduct of each lottery. The same section provides, further, that the