

welfare arising out of employment are not within its province.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 17 to 22, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

House adjourned at 10.16 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 20th November, 1941.

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Bills: Potato Growers Licensing, 3R.	2043
Land Drainage Act Amendment, report	2043
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Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment, 2R., Com. report	2044
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Broome Tramway Extension, 2R., Com. report	2054

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

BILL—POTATO GROWERS LICENSING.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILL—LAND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—MAIN ROADS ACT (FUNDS APPROPRIATION) (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.36] in moving the second reading said: This Bill deals with a familiar

subject, namely, the payment into Consolidated Revenue of a portion of the motor license fee collections in order to assist in meeting the servicing of charges on loan funds expended on road construction. The proposal is that in respect of the revenue received from motor license fees in the metropolitan area in relation to licenses operating within the year ending the 30th June, 1942, the 22½ per cent. now payable to the Commissioner of Main Roads shall be paid to Consolidated Revenue, and that an equivalent amount shall be made available to the Commissioner from the petrol tax funds for the improvement, reconstruction, etc., of roads and bridges within the metropolitan traffic area. The operation of the Bill is restricted to license fees collected in relation to the current licensing year.

In 1932 Parliament amended the Main Roads Act to provide that the Commissioner of Main Roads shall have authority to improve, reconstruct, etc., main roads and bridges within the metropolitan traffic area, such works to be financed from a contribution of 22½ per cent. of the metropolitan traffic fees available after the cost of collection had been deducted. Various amounts have been derived from this source for the purposes mentioned, and have gradually increased up to the year 1939-40, when £39,416 was paid to the Commissioner. In the year 1940-41, the amount received decreased to £37,666. It is estimated that under existing conditions the amount will decrease this year to £29,000.

The following is a list of the main works which have been undertaken by the Commissioner of Main Roads with revenue derived from traffic fees since the amending legislation was passed:—

		£
Stirling highway	Widening, re-construction and surfacing	177,950
Canning road	Improvements	23,547
Garrett road bridge, Bayswater		22,730
Perth-Midland Junction	Helena bridge	18,355
road		
Perth-Midland Junction	Construction and surfacing	14,000
road		
Guildford road	Improvements	11,780

When introducing the Budget the Treasurer said that, owing to unavoidable heavy increases in revenue expenditure, the State was faced with the prospect of a deficit of approximately £200,000. In considering the proposal in the Bill, regard should be had not only to the immediate effect on Consolidated Revenue, but also to the very important matter of the effect legislation of this nature will have on the de-

liberations and recommendations of the Commonwealth Grants Commission, which are invariably accepted by the Federal Government.

When a Bill of a similar nature to this was introduced last session I referred to extracts from the 1939 report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission showing that the grant to this State for the year 1939-40 had been reduced by £22,000 on account of its failure to apply some license fee revenue towards the servicing charges on loans expended on roads. The grant payable this year to the State has been reduced by £65,000.

If members have read the report of the Grants Commission they will realise that the Commission takes a firm stand on this matter, and that we are having to pay a very definite penalty because of our refusal so far to pass legislation of this nature. Those are the facts. While this House has not seen fit, on previous occasions, to agree to the proposals put forward, I hope that this time it will agree with the Government and pass the Bill as introduced. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [4.45]: The first question one has to ask oneself, when dealing with this measure, is: Is it worth while prolonging this debate? At the risk of being unpopular—

Hon. C. B. Williams: You do not want to get unpopular at this particular time.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If the hon. member does not mend his ways he will be unpopular.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I do not have to worry for another four years.

Hon. J. CORNELL: One has, more or less, to commend our new recruit, Dr. Hislop, for broadening the discussion on this measure, though it is only a continuance Bill. If members will pause and give reasonable consideration to his remarks, they will find they contain much meat, particularly in regard to hospital administration and accommodation. The one point raised

by Dr. Hislop which transcends all others is the necessity, which has cried out for attention for years now, for reform in dealing with convalescents at present accommodated in hospitals, particularly in the metropolitan area. That has been the position for 20 years or more. That is a new departure, and Dr. Hislop has made a valuable contribution to one of the most difficult phases of our hospital system today. What concerns me in the lottery problem is that during the year ended October, 1941, we only ran six consultations, whereas in the previous year there were several more.

Hon. C. B. Williams: What were the respective profits?

Hon. J. CORNELL: The law was amended to allow 15 consultations to be run. In some years we ran more than 12, and it is safe to say that in the year under review the net profit from lotteries consultations is not half what it was two years ago.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The men who left to go to the war are all gamblers.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It has been urged that this measure was introduced in the first place because of crossword puzzles and bum sweeps. Members will know what happened in the case of crossword puzzles. One Minister and the member mainly responsible for the Bill lost their seats. They will also know that six other men lost their seats. I have made an analysis and I find that the profits last year were £46,600 odd, whereas two years previously the profits were very much greater. The crossword puzzle was never a big evil, and whilst we find the lottery a disappearing concern, S.P. betting is increasing all the time.

The total of the fines inflicted in the case of S.P. betting throughout the State for the year ended the 30th June last—which is almost comparable with the last lottery year—was £39,000. The difference between the profit from the Lotteries Commission and the amount of money that went into Consolidated Revenue as the result of fines imposed on S.P. bookmakers, is only £7,000. Seven years ago the fines totalled about £2,000 for the year; now a sum of £39,000 has been reached. This is a source of revenue no one expected, and I suggest that in view of the reduced profits from the lotteries, the amount obtained from S.P. bookmakers by way of fines should be added to the lotteries fund and thus balance up the position.

I do not accept the statement that the departure of so many men for the war is the explanation of the falling off in lottery receipts, because the other aspect of betting has increased by leaps and bounds. To say that because men have gone to the war the lotteries receipts have declined is nothing more than hooey and is certainly not the full explanation. In view of the fact that the fines imposed on S.P. bookmakers totalled £29,300 in 1939-40 and £39,000 last year, therein is to be found the sole cause.

Hon. L. Craig: They are now getting justice instead of mercy.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The betting turnover in South Australia last year declined by £1,100,000.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I venture to say that the betting turnover in this State has not declined, and proof of that is found in the fact that the fines imposed on S.P. bookmakers last year showed an increase of £10,000 over those of the previous year. That money has come out of the pockets of some of the people who previously patronised the lotteries.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is because the police are doing their duty.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have no complaint to find with the Lotteries Commission. I have known three of the four members for many years. There is no more conscientious man than the chairman, Mr. J. J. Kenneally, and I am satisfied that Mr. Clydesdale and Mr. Hunt are excellent men, well fitted for the positions they hold. The Commission has done its job conscientiously. The question whether the body that raises the money should spend the money might be debatable, but I think it can be discussed only from the point of view that those who raise the money have the requisite knowledge to enable them to distribute it satisfactorily. There is only about £1,000 in the balance and so the question of the money value does not enter into consideration at all.

During the debate Dr. Hislop and other members have analysed the position of the hospital service. Whether people like it or not, the day is drawing closer when we shall have to consider the nationalisation of the medical and nursing professions.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Not in this House.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Even before the number of medical men had been depleted by departures for service abroad, the tendency was for the man who could get to

the metropolis, where the big money is, to go there, while nurses who could get work in the metropolitan area would not go into the country. I know of country hospitals that could employ special nurses at £4 4s. a week, but when they advertised for them could not get one. The medical and nursing and hospital situations can be dealt with in only one way, and that is by taxing the community so that the hospitals may be properly equipped and maintained and by putting doctors and nurses in a position similar to that of school teachers and other public servants, who have to go into the country as required. If ever there was a time when there was need in this direction for reform, not improvisation, it is now. The position today is that the country hospitals are practically run by the Public Health Department, and its idea is to cut down the Government subsidy. I venture to say there is no one in the department, apart from the Principal Medical Officer, who knows anything about the matter.

The Honorary Minister: That is wrong.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not think it is.

The Honorary Minister: I know it is.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not think the Principal Medical Officer ever comes into the picture. Until some board is constituted to deal with these matters, the situation will go from bad to worse. I know of two country hospitals that were ordered by the department to come down to a lower average weekly bed level and the subsidy was cut accordingly. For six weeks afterwards the weekly average of beds occupied in one hospital increased by five. The Southern Cross hospital is somewhat similarly situated.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The Lotteries Commission put it in.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Lotteries Commission can provide equipment and other assistance, but the fact remains that after a hospital has been built, it has to be staffed and maintained, and for this money is essential. Every country hospital in the State is being starved financially.

Hon. T. Moore: That is the point; it is money we need.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am satisfied that we are also approaching the stage when private hospitals will go out of existence. There is only one class of private hospital that will remain—the private hospital not bound by the award and not subject to the conditions of the award. That cannot

last. Those hospitals that pay award rates to their employees must go sooner or later.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Does not the type of private hospital you refer to have employees bound by the award?

Hon. J. CORNELL: An infinitesimal number.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They have some.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In the case of the other private hospital, all the employees come under the award. Sir Hal Colebatch has asked, why not abolish the lotteries and tax higher for hospital purposes? My reply is, let the Lotteries Commission remain as it is but let it be a disappearing quantity, and let it function in the direction originally intended. It got the name of "Charities Commission." Why? Because in its earlier stages it was intended mainly to assist charitable institutions and charitable purposes, and not hospitals. A reference to "Hansard" will show that one of the reasons advanced for passing the original Bill here was that it would stop cadging in the streets for charitable purposes. In fact, that was the main reason.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It did stop that pretty well, too, until the war.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It was diverted from its original purpose to embark upon a multiplicity of ideas and ways whereby it lost most of its original value.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It relieves the Government.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, and other people.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Who are the other people?

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member interjecting is one of them. The hospital tax was opposed by Mr. Williams and his party when it was introduced.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am not responsible for the Government continuing it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The measure imposing the hospital tax of 1½d. in the pound was a companion measure to that which levied the financial emergency tax of 4d. in the pound. Those taxes were not abolished by Mr. Williams and his party. Those who came to curse remained to pray. Not only did they continue the hospital tax, but they raised the financial emergency tax four-fold. The Financial Emergency Tax Act eventually became a measure for imposing income tax. I have yet to learn that there is any general clamour against the

hospital tax. Last year it brought in £284,910, at 1½d. in the pound. The amount increases every year. It was laid down that the fund was to be used mainly for hospital expenses and buildings.

What does the hospital tax cost a man on £5 a week when it is raising £284,910 in 12 months? It costs him 7½d. a week, or £1 12s. 6d. per annum. Mr. Williams and Mr. Moore know that throughout the goldfields the people, in addition to paying this impost, tax themselves for hospital purposes. Take Southern Cross and Norseman, the people there tax themselves. So do Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie residents tax themselves. The Wiluna people tax themselves. What for? In addition to paying the taxation, they tax themselves to provide hospital accommodation and medical attention. Have those people complained? They have complained, but they are forced to tax themselves as it is almost a condition of employment, whereas the great majority of the people in the metropolitan area do not tax themselves at all for hospital purposes. What percentage of non-payment is there in connection with the Perth Hospital? I would like the Chief Secretary to give that information in his reply. I venture to say that not 50 per cent. of the Perth Hospital patients pay for the attention they receive. On the other hand, every man working in the mining industry pays for hospital accommodation.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And he is a loyal Labour supporter, thank the Lord!

Hon. J. CORNELL: I often wonder about his loyalty. If the hospital tax were increased to 3d. in the pound, what would it return? It would mean about 1s. 3d. in the case of a man earning £5 a week, or taxation equivalent to £3 5s. a year. Even then the man in the mining industry pays more. The total yield of a tax at 3d. in the pound would bring in double the present yield, would bring in £569,820 a year.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It would cause a big argument too, would it not?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, among the malingerers, among the people who do not pay for hospital accommodation. However, I think it will be agreed that those who grouse and growl are very few. No one objects to being taxed if he gets a quid pro quo.

Hon. L. Craig: People who pay most of this tax do not get any quid pro quo.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Most of those who pay hospital tax get no quid pro quo, and that is why a few of them do grumble. I have yet to learn that the taxpayer grows if he gets some value. If the tax were increased to 6d. in the pound, the man on a salary of £5 a week would pay 2s. 6d. weekly and £6 10s. annually. What would be the yield of such a tax? On the present figures it would produce about £1,150,000. I think Dr. Hislop will agree with me that with over £1,000,000 available, the hospital, medical and nursing systems of this State would be revolutionised.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We can be certain that the amount would be spent.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is the purpose for which the amount would be raised; but we would require institutions knowing something about economic spending. The one departmental aim now is to cut down subsidies, without any consideration for the people who are to be served. By the way, the Government is singularly silent regarding the achievements in this respect of New Zealand's Labour Government.

Hon. C. B. Williams: New Zealand is not Australia, anyway!

Hon. J. CORNELL: The New Zealand Government has practically kept alive the medical and nursing systems.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Stick to your own State!

Hon. J. CORNELL: Different men have different ways. This is how the situation appears to me. Public men are asked to go out and tell the people, "We are in the greatest war in history. Our freedom, everything we hold dear, depends on our coming out on top."

The PRESIDENT: I am afraid the hon. member is wandering away from the subject.

Hon. C. B. Williams interjected.

The PRESIDENT: I do hope that I shall not have to invoke the standing orders with regard to the hon. member who is interjecting.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Well, Mr. President—

The PRESIDENT: I was only calling the hon. member to order.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I think my colleague, Mr. Williams, is more nuisance to you, Mr. President, than I am.

The PRESIDENT: I ask the hon. Mr. Cornell to connect his remarks with the Bill.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I was deputed to go to Norseman to ask the people to subscribe money for the purpose of securing our freedom. I think the Norseman quota was £2,000. The Norseman people subscribed £12,000. Yet we are afraid to attack such a problem as this hospital problem, which relates to the proper care and administration of the hospital system of Western Australia.

We are afraid to tell the truth and say there is only one way to do the job properly, and that is to tax the community. We are afraid that on election day that may count against us. It is just about time we told the plain, honest unvarnished truth. The truth of the hospital situation today is that the Lotteries Commission, however desirable and laudable that body may be, does not represent an effective method of attacking the hospital problem. The proper method to adopt is to tax the community sufficiently to raise adequate funds, and to see that those funds are properly administered. Then we shall have done something to solve the problem. Let us deal with the question in the only manner in which it can be successfully tackled. I support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.14]: I am afraid that the income from the charities consultations has become such an important factor in the financial and economic structure of our hospitals that it would be highly difficult to do anything but vote for the continuance of the Bill now before us. I would at this stage like to add my congratulations to those tendered by other members to Dr. Gordon Hislop for his excellent speech, and for raising the issues he did in that address. I had the good fortune to be present at a lecture given by Mr. McVilly, who is the chief executive officer of the Charities Board of Victoria. As a result of hearing that lecture, and also as the result of talking the matter over with various medical people, I feel that the suggestion made by the hon. member is worthy of the Government's consideration. Like other speakers I feel that it would not be difficult to increase the hospital tax. I do not think there would be much protest from the aver-

age wage or salary earner if the hospital tax were doubled, and until some alternative method to that of raising money by charities consultations is promulgated and put into force, I feel that we are compelled to carry on with this plan.

Hon. G. Fraser: If the tax were doubled would benefits be given?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: All people who contribute to the tax should have benefits in the way of hospital accommodation. Mr. Moore showed some interest in the Victorian Act and said he would like to know where the revenue came from. I have before me a report of that board for last year and it discloses the various sources of revenue. There is an appropriation made by the Government which represents 43 per cent. of the total. The Government contributed £467,000, the municipal grants represented £276,000 and charitable contributions totalled £169,000.

Hon. T. Moore: How would the charitable contributions be secured?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: They are made up of generous donations by different people, and money collected on Hospital Saturday and Hospital Sunday and in street collections. Payments by patients amounted to £291,000, and interest on investments to £31,000, while the total income was £1,090,500. That is a substantial sum of money. Those facts, I think, cover the inquiry made by Mr. Moore.

Hon. T. Moore: I am pleased to have that information.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Mr. Fraser referred to the possibility of the setting up of a board being a costly and extravagant business. This report reveals the total cost of administration in Victoria, and that includes the administration of the Totalisators Act. Incidentally, a lot of money comes from the totalisators for this purpose.

Hon. G. Fraser: They have gambling even there.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Yes. The administrative costs total £9,150, which is less than 1 per cent. of the total income. Salaries paid to the staff controlling the fund amount to less than £3,000, that is .3 of 1 per cent. of the total amount collected. If such a board were constituted in Western Australia there is not much doubt that it could be administered with a paid staff plus voluntary help for a sum of money

representing less than 1 per cent. of the total income. I intend to support the second reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [5.19]: In listening to the remarks on this Bill, my mind went back two or three years. Arguments have been advanced as to whether we should agree to the Lotteries Commission being given a permanent place in the life of this country or to it being permitted to carry on for one year only. Time after time over the years we have had hours of discussion in this Chamber along those lines and constant repetition of the same old arguments.

Hon. L. Craig: And with the same result.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: We always come back—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: To one year!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: —to the same position. Members say that the Commission has done a good job, that if it was not for the money the Commission raises and the way it distributes the funds, we would be much worse off than at present, and that we have no option—that is the usual expression—but to agree to the continuance of the Commission for another year.

Hon. G. Fraser: It would be better to make it three years, and give to the Lotteries Commission a donation of the amount saved, would it not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: With deference to the wishes of members of this House the Government has in recent years brought down continuance Bills each for one year only. It would appear that on this occasion members have been influenced to speak at length on this measure by virtue of the fact that two of the most recent additions to the membership of the House have seen fit to give expression to their views on the subject, which views have to some extent differed from the remarks we have had in previous years from older members. While the discussion at times seemed to me to get a long way from the subject-matter of the Bill, nevertheless there were some interesting contributions, and the remarks made could, of course, be connected in some form or another with the question of lotteries control and the distribution of the funds that are raised by the Commission. I feel that I am justified in replying to at least some of the assertions made.

I first of all deal with the remarks of Mr. Cornell, because they are perhaps most fresh in my memory. Mr. Cornell made some very strong statements. He referred to the administration of our country hospitals as being in the hands of men who did not know the first thing about them. What justification any member can have for making such a statement, I do not know.

Hon. J. Cornell: They have no sympathy with them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My experience of country districts is that they are very appreciative of what has been done in recent years by our hospital administration, and while everyone will admit there is room for improvement in many places in regard to buildings, and—in some instances—in regard to equipment and, at the present time, in the staffing of certain hospitals, I do not think any member is justified in making the strong, sweeping statements that the hon. member made about the Commission. He drew a comparison between the city or the metropolitan area and the goldfields areas. He repeated what he has said on many occasions: that the people he represents not only pay the hospital tax but in addition tax themselves for hospital accommodation. He infers that the people in the metropolitan area get their hospital treatment free, whereas people in the mining areas have to pay every time. But the hon. member must be aware that statements of that kind do not bear examination.

Hon. J. Cornell: Can the Chief Secretary tell me the Perth Hospital's percentage of bad debts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not want to deal with this matter extensively, but I am justified in saying that every person in the metropolitan area receiving the wages of the average person employed on the goldfields has to pay for his hospital accommodation.

Hon. G. Fraser: They even try to get a "bob" a week out of the old-age pensioner.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no question about that. It has to be admitted, of course, that there are numbers of people who are not in a position to pay for their hospital accommodation, and there are large numbers of country people similarly placed. In both instances, I understand, the patients are treated in the same way.

Hon. J. Cornell: But there is a fundamental difference. The taxpayer carries the burden here but not up there.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The taxpayer there carries the same burden as does the taxpayer down here.

Hon. J. Cornell: He does not.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is only one other of Mr. Cornell's statements to which I wish to refer. I do not like the suggestion that the people who do not pay their hospital bills in the metropolitan area are malingerers. I cannot think that the hon. member meant what he said. He must know that there are hundreds of very deserving people, not only in the metropolitan area, but in other parts of this State, who are not able to pay for medical and hospital attention and who could not by any stretch of the imagination be placed in that category.

I now desire to deal with the remarks of Sir Hal Colebatch who stated very definitely that he obtains what he described as malicious satisfaction from the fact that the support accorded the Lotteries Commission is dwindling. In answer to an interjection at a later stage of the debate he said he was not objecting to the Commission on moral grounds but on economic grounds. For that reason he has a malicious satisfaction in knowing that there is a smaller amount of money being provided for the purpose of assisting the charities of this State. That is not like the hon. member. It is so different from his attitude on many other subjects which have some connection with charities in this State.

He complained that the cost of administration of the Lotteries Commission has increased as compared with some years ago. Is not that only natural? Some two years ago the Commission altered its method of conducting consultations to the extent of increasing the number of subscriptions to each consultation to 200,000, and it was considered at that time that there would be very little difficulty in securing the necessary subscriptions in practically the same time that the smaller consultations had taken previously. For various reasons they have not received the support in the last two years that they received previously. But that is not the fault of the Commission. Notwithstanding the remarks of Mr. Cornell in that connection, there is no gainsaying the

fact that the absence from this State of thousands of men on active service has had an effect on the sale of lottery tickets.

Hon. J. Cornell: How do you reconcile the turnover in other departments?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I will come to that in a moment. One has only to visit country districts in this State to observe the scarcity of men. It is only necessary to speak to the country storekeepers or hotel-keepers to know the difference the absence of men has made in those districts, and it is common knowledge that farmers are embarrassed in many instances because labour is not available. Those are the people, generally speaking, who regularly patronise the lotteries in this State. But I did not suggest that that was the only reason for the reduction in the revenue of the Lotteries Commission. Other members have mentioned it and I agree that that is one reason.

What I did say when I moved the second reading of the Bill was that the large amount of money that was being contributed to patriotic funds throughout the State had had a very important effect upon the revenue of the Lotteries Commission. I think I have mentioned on a previous occasion during this session that the money contributed to patriotic funds in this State since the commencement of the war has reached the magnificent sum of approximately £300,000. I believe the aggregate amount is more than that, but I am on the safe side in mentioning £300,000.

Hon. T. Moore: That is very good indeed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The common experience of all has been that, owing to the calls made upon them for patriotic purposes, they have not been able to spend as much on the purchase of lottery tickets, either here or in the Eastern States, as they did formerly. Then again, the increase in taxation, particularly in the last 12 months, has made it impossible for many people to invest in the lotteries or in any other direction. In the circumstances, I think I can quite safely claim that there is no reason to assume that because the revenue of the Lotteries Commission has been falling off during the last two years, it may be regarded as an indication that the lotteries are less popular than formerly or that the commissioners are not carrying on their work to the liking of the people. The facts point the other way.

It was rather interesting to hear the remarks of Sir Hal Colebatch as to the method he would adopt if he had the opportunity as against the present activities of the Lotteries Commission.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: I would increase the hospital tax.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is another idea. During the course of his speech Sir Hal suggested direct giving as the proper method to adopt. I do not know if he is aware of the fact, but in 1940—I believe he was associated with the appeal launched that year—the objective set by some people was to raise £25,000 by direct giving for the purpose of assisting the charities of Western Australia. They were very optimistic that they would not only raise the amount I mention, but would considerably exceed it. What was the result? Some of the most responsible and eminent people of the State were associated with the appeal and when it was finalised they found they had raised about £8,000! So much for direct giving at the present time. There again I must admit that the ability of the people to give in support of an appeal of that description is limited today as compared with the position years ago because of the contributions being made to various patriotic funds.

I would like to correct Sir Hal Colebatch concerning his references to the three members of the Lotteries Commission, because there are four members. That may have been a slip of the tongue on the hon. member's part. If it was not I may inform him that there are four commissioners—the chairman and three others. Sir Hal had a lot to say concerning the qualifications of those gentlemen in regard to the distribution of funds collected. He admitted that they had all the qualifications necessary from the standpoint of the collection of funds by means of lotteries, but as for the distribution of such funds, they were the last men in the world so far as he was concerned for consideration from that standpoint.

I put the matter in another way. I ask Sir Hal if he can name four other members of the community throughout Western Australia with better qualifications than are possessed by the four members of the Lotteries Commission. Each one of them has had years of experience. Each is well and favourably known to the community generally and to members of Parliament in par-

ticular. I do not think anyone would question any single member of the Commission from the standpoint of ability to deal with matters with which that body has to concern itself. The mere fact that for years the commissioners have distributed from £40,000 to £60,000 or more annually amongst the hospitals and charities of the State without any serious complaint being raised concerning their decisions should be sufficient evidence of their capacity to deal with that phase.

Then again I would point out that when the Lotteries Commission was inaugurated the original Act provided that at least one member of the Commission should be a representative of the Returned Soldiers' League. Everyone agreed with that proposal because prior to the establishment of the Lotteries Commission the R.S.L. had certain rights regarding the running of lotteries. From that source the league usually secured from £2,000 to £3,000 each year.

Hon. J. Cornell: That provision is not in the Lotteries (Control) Act now, but there has always been an R.S.L. member on the Commission.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I mention the matter merely as one of passing interest. From that standpoint a representative of the R.S.L. has been engaged in this work for many years past. There is no doubt that over the years the commissioners have given satisfaction to every section of the community.

I do not know that I need say much more about the remarks of Sir Hal Colebatch except to deal with his references to the Irish Sweepstakes. It was very interesting to hear the figures quoted by the hon. member, for they were really tremendous. Sir Hal made one significant point to which I would draw members' particular attention. Sir Hal mentioned that certain private individuals made fortunes every year out of the promotion of the Irish Sweeps. That is not the position in Western Australia. No private individual here derives any benefit from the operations of the Lotteries Commission apart from the fees prescribed in the Act. For the information of members not acquainted with the fact, those fees cannot amount to more than £1,000 of which £500 is paid to the chairman of the Commission and the remaining £500 is distributed among the other three commissioners.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: That is little enough.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, for the responsibilities they have to shoulder. Sir Hal talked in millions and I know from what I have read that his figures may be regarded as quite authentic. The hon. member said that he did not know what was the position today. For his information I can state that the position today is that the Irish Sweepstakes do not exist.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Is that so?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: What are the people doing?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know what has been substituted for the consultations, but I was sufficiently interested in the hon. member's remarks to inquire what effect the war had had on the Irish Sweeps. My information is that they ceased to exist two or three years ago.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: A couple of years ago I heard that the sweepstakes were dying.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: So much for that phase. Sir Hal also suggested that certain classes of persons should be represented on the board that might be charged with the distribution of funds raised by the Lotteries Commission. He suggested that a medical man might be appointed to represent that profession; the R.S.L. should have a representative; the country hospitals and the metropolitan hospitals should also have their representatives. There are many more charities than those indicated by Sir Hal. If one should be entitled to representation, other charities should be equally entitled to similar treatment.

For the life of me I cannot see, where we are dealing with matters of this description involving the distribution of approximately £50,000 every year, that there is any necessity whatever to consider an alteration respecting the Lotteries Commission from the standpoint of the distribution of funds. In addition to very wide experience which the members of the Commission have gained during the last few years, they have the advantage of the advice to be secured from various Government departments that may be associated in any way with hospitals or other charitable institutions to be assisted. The commissioners have consulted the Health Department with regard to hospital matters. I think they have

also had the benefit of advice from medical practitioners generally and they have not failed to seek such advice. They have indicated by their actions that they have been prepared to follow the advice tendered to them from time to time.

Now I come to the remarks of Dr. Hislop. May I again say that I appreciate very much indeed what he had to say with regard to the Bill, although I imagine that with further thought on the subject he will probably agree that we cannot possibly compare the Charities Board of Victoria with the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia. There is no real basis for any such comparison. In the one case, the commissioners are charged with the duty of distributing amongst the hospitals and charities of the State whatever surplus funds they have at their disposal. Generally speaking, that has nothing to do with the building requirements of the country with respect to charitable institutions or hospitals. Admittedly, the Commission does from time to time provide a certain amount of assistance, but it has no authority, and so far as I know has very little opportunity to influence any of those organisations as to what they should do during the year or as to what their building or equipment requirements should be. It does provide money in some cases, and in other cases it provides equipment; but in every instance it acts on the professional advice of those in a position to tender it.

In passing, may I refer to the statements made by Dr. Hislop when he spoke of the provision of small X-ray plants for country hospitals. I understand that in every instance where such plants have been supplied, the Commission has certainly had the support, if not of the medical profession as a whole at least of certain members of it, and that it was never intended that the small portable X-ray plants would be used for all X-ray purposes. I believe, from what we have been told, that some medical practitioners have endeavoured to use them for purposes for which they are not suitable, and consequently they have not been of very much value. We must remember that in this State we are somewhat differently situated from the other States in that, in places like the Far North, and in some of our inland districts, the hospitals are a long way from the metropolitan area or large centres. For such

cases as simple fractures, however, I am told that the small portable plants are suitable.

In the course of his speech Dr. Hislop also dealt very fully with the operations of the Victorian Charities Board. As pointed out by Mr. Dimmitt, that board is in a very different position from the Lotteries Commission here. If we desired in this State to adopt the same method as has been adopted in Victoria, I believe it would be necessary for us to amend quite a number of our Acts of Parliament. In the first place, there is our hospital fund. Mr. Cornell mentioned the sum of £280,070 as being the amount raised by that fund last year. That is provided for by one of our Acts of Parliament. Before that fund could be administered in a different way, the Act would either have to be amended or we would have to bring down another by which that piece of legislation would be superseded. The various charities in this State are in a somewhat different position perhaps from those in Victoria. Our Child Welfare Department provides a certain amount of money towards some of our charities, and it would be necessary, if we decided to adopt the Victorian methods, to provide in any legislation that was introduced for that part of the Child Welfare Department's work to be included. I am not suggesting that that would be impossible.

I agree that the Victorian Charities Board has done and is doing very fine work, and I understand that the organisation is an extraordinarily good one. The board, however, is placed in a different category from that in which we find ourselves here. I do not wish to quote too much in connection with the Victorian Charities Board, but in addition to the figures given by Mr. Dimmitt I point out that in the report of that organisation for 1940, dated the 30th June, 1940, it is stated that the sum available to the board for allocation was made up as follows:—

Remaining in hospitals and charities fund on the 1st July, 1939, £43,038 0s. 6d.; appropriated by Parliament for hospitals and charities fund, £440,000; receipts from operation of Totalisator Act, £179,709 8s. 6d.

Hon. J. Cornell: Would they be the fractions?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I presume that would include not only the fractions but whatever percentage was devoted to that

purpose. The report also shows that the receipts from the hospital magazine totalled £836 3s. 3d., making a grand total of £663,583 12s. 3d. That was the amount available for allocation at the commencement of the year. In addition to that, there are the sums mentioned by Mr. Dimmitt, such as charitable contributions, patients' payments, interest on investments, etc., making the total amount available considerably over £1,000,000.

Notwithstanding all that, there is one feature of the report to which I would like to draw attention, not with a view to criticising the Victorian Charities Board, but to show the position it is in. Under the heading "Bank Balances at the end of the Year" the report states—

The cumulative effect of the results of previous years is shown in the closing balances recorded on the Maintenance Accounts of the hospitals.

At 30th June, 1940—	£
48 hospitals had overdrafts total- ling	239,498
16 hospitals had credit balances totalling	7,742

With all the disabilities from which we suffer in this State, I do not think we have ever been in that position.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: There are considerable assets available in Victoria in the form of substantial hospital buildings.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, but I am dealing with the maintenance of those hospitals. There are considerable assets in Victoria, just as we have here. I quote these particulars to show that notwithstanding the large amount of money the Victorian Charities Board has at its disposal, and notwithstanding the very good work it does and the support it receives from the people of Victoria, that was the financial position of the hospitals there at that time. I do not think it has improved in the last few months. One could quote figures to show that hundreds of thousands of pounds are owing as the result of money that has been loaned to various hospitals in the State in question for buildings. After all, there is something to be said for the system in vogue at present in Western Australia. I may perhaps be excused for not wanting to draw an exact comparison between the two States, for it cannot be done.

I am also reminded of the remark made by Mr. Cornell when he said that the Lotteries Commission appeared to have reversed

the idea that prevailed at the time when that organisation was established. He seemed to suggest that the Commission was not established to finance hospitals in any way, but for the purpose of assisting the charities of the State. The hon. member is not strictly correct in that statement. During the last few years the development has been in the direction of giving more assistance to hospitals. Last year the expenditure by the Lotteries Commission on hospitals only amounted to £20,391; but on the other hand the amount of the hospital tax last year was £284,910, while the expenditure by the Medical Department was £298,998.

Hon. J. Cornell: A great deal of that money was spent in buildings.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, so far as the hospital tax was concerned. I have another note dealing with a suggestion made by Dr. Hislop, that there should be a medical representative on the Commission. I think I have said sufficient about its constitution. I have an idea that the hon. member referred to the fact that the board in Victoria had a system of collective buying for the hospitals, and had shown a considerable saving in expenditure. That system has been in vogue in this State for many years. In that respect there is no difference between Victoria and this State.

Hon. J. Cornell: Collective buying of what—of gear; not of stores?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of stores.

Hon. J. Cornell: For Government hospitals?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. J. Cornell: Country hospitals?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I wish again to refer to the X-ray plants. I was interested in Dr. Hislop's remarks, and made inquiries of the department as to its point of view. I find that the Commission has been assisting in providing better X-ray plants in a number of hospitals which may be regarded as being the type of base hospital to which the hon. member referred. I would mention Kalgoorlie, Merredin, Cunderdin, Collie and Geraldton. When the Commission first began to provide these portable X-ray plants we had not the same excellent transport facilities we have today. Roads were not as good as they are now, and motor transport was not as efficient in those days as it is now. I agree that if we were strong enough financially to adopt the suggestion of the hon. member with regard

to base hospitals in country districts, great advantage would accrue.

Other remarks were made by Dr. Hislop and Sir Hal Colebatch to which I might possibly refer, but I think I have said sufficient to indicate that, whilst the suggestions that have been advanced are excellent in their way, many difficulties require to be overcome before they could be adopted. The remarks of Dr. Hislop may be said to constitute an ideal that we might aim for, something that might be evolved as a result of closer consideration, as he would say, being given to the medical services administered to the charitable institutions of the State. I am prepared to do all I can to improve the position either of our hospitals or charities. Over the years I think I have added my contribution, even if it has been small, towards endeavouring to bring about the improvements we all so much desire.

We are, of course, limited in our activities by the money that is available. In all the circumstances I do not think we have anything to complain of in this State. Our position today is much better than it was a few years ago. So far as the Commission is concerned, the fact that we have had no complaints, that wherever its members go—and they do inspect these institutions from time to time—they are welcomed by the people of the districts, may be taken as an indication that it has a place in the life of the community that would be difficult to fill if by any mischance this House decided that the Lotteries Commission should not continue its operations.

Hon. J. Cornell: The commission is a kind of Father Christmas to the country hospitals.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Perhaps there may be room for improvement so far as charitable assistance is concerned, but the Commission can only distribute for charitable purposes the amount which is available after it has met its liabilities under the Act. I agree with those members who have said on more than one occasion that the Lotteries Commission has, in view of all the circumstances, done an extraordinarily good job. We should be thankful that it has been able to do as much as it has done not only for the hospitals of the State, but for various other charitable institutions and organisations.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Plant Diseases (Registration Fees).

2, Factories and Shops Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—BROOME TRAMWAY EXTENSION.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [6.6] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill to authorise the construction of an extension of 42 chains to the Broome tramway from a position adjacent to the Broome jetty to the freezing works conducted by Messrs. Farrell Bros., who commenced operations in May last. The Broome tramway was approved by Parliament in 1902. The freezing works have been established in order to satisfy the needs of the pastoral industry in the locality and they will, to some extent, eliminate losses sustained in the overland droving of stock for market purposes.

Under Section 96 of the Public Works Act, Parliamentary authorisation for permanent construction of the line is necessary. Its construction, however, was undertaken without this authority by the North-West Department under an arrangement with the local authority in the matter of traversing streets, etc., as the construction was of extreme urgency in order to meet this season's requirements of the works. The Bill now seeks necessary Parliamentary approval.

It is estimated that 2,000 carcasses will be handled by the works. Provision has also been made for the treatment of fish, which have found a ready market locally and in the Eastern States. The cost of the line is approximately £1,000, whilst the required additional rolling stock involves an expenditure of £1,000. Maintenance costs will be negligible.

It is estimated that 700 to 800 tons of inward and outward cargo will be handled annually by the works and carried on at

the siding, the net return to revenue being £250 to £300 per annum. This briefly explains the provisions of the Bill, the object of which is, as I have already stated, to authorise the construction of a line urgently needed to meet the exigencies of a situation which demanded that the matter be finalised without delay. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short Title:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have here a plan of the district which I shall lay on the Table for the information of members.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The plan will be of no use if you are putting the Bill through the Committee stage.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Works completed or commenced before the commencement of this Act to be authorised works:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Does Clause 3 correspond with Clause 2? The latter states, "It shall be lawful for the Minister for Works, or the Minister for Railways, as the case may require, to construct and maintain," etc. Clause 3 states that the tramway has already been constructed.

The CHAIRMAN: It should read "to authorise and confirm."

Clause put and passed.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 20th November, 1941.

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

QUESTION—TAXATION.

Betting Fines as Allowable Deduction.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Treasurer: 1, Whether the admission by the Taxation Department that fines imposed by the law courts in connection with illegal starting-price betting operations are allowable deductions under income taxation was made after legal advice? 2, If not, will the decision be submitted to the Crown Law Department for an opinion?

The TREASURER replied: 1, No. 2, The administration of the Income Tax Assessment Act is vested in the Commissioner of Taxation who is satisfied that the deductions are properly allowable.

QUESTION—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION COMMISSION.

Mr. ABBOTT asked the Minister for Industrial Development: The State Government having appointed two Government engineers to represent it on the Western Australian Industrial Expansion Commission, will the Government take steps to secure also the appointment of a representative of private industry?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT replied: This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government and it is understood representations along the lines suggested have been made to that Government.