

# COOGEE-KWINANA (DEVIATION) RAILWAY BILL

## Tabling of Plan

Mr. COURT: Mr. Speaker, I would like your advice as to whether I should table the plan I have in connection with this Bill, and which is required by statute to be tabled, before I have introduced the Bill or after I have introduced it.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): At the conclusion of the Minister's second reading speech.

Mr. COURT: Thank you.

## Second Reading

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways) [12.15 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is one that is made necessary for a technical reason, and arises from the ratifying legislation and the agreement which formed the schedule to the Bill considered earlier tonight. I thought it would have been possible to have it incorporated in the ratifying Bill; but the Crown Law Department felt it would be desirable to have a separate measure dealing with the deviation of the railway line.

There was an original line from Coogee to Kwinana, and this represents a deviation. Had this deviation been desired when the line was actually being constructed it would not, of course, have required any legislative sanction, because there are certain permitted deviations inherent in any approval for the construction of a railway line. However, on this occasion it is thought necessary and desirable to have a Bill to ratify the deviation of this line so that it can go around the back of the refinery site.

During the second reading of the other Bill I explained that it would be completely impracticable to operate the refinery and have the present road and railway go through the middle of the site. It is proposed to close the road and railway line, and the road and railway line within the refinery site will be taken over by the company. The company has to make a contribution, in accordance with the agreement, towards the cost of the railway and road deviation. I do not think any further explanation is necessary at this stage and I ask permission to table plan 51602, which is referred to in the Bill.

*The plan was tabled.*

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

*House adjourned at 12.16 a.m.  
(Wednesday)*

# Legislative Assembly

[Wednesday, 13 September, 1961.]  
CONTENTS

	Page
<b>QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—</b>	
Air Freight Subsidy on Perishables—	
Subsidy Dates Alteration : Effect on	
Kimberley Market .....	887
Allawah Grove : Provision for Replacement .....	887
Geraldton Harbour and Wharf : Employment for Dismissed Maintenance and Repair Workers .....	889
Goldmining Companies Insurance : S.G.I.O. Premium Rates for Accident and Sickness Risks .....	886
Gold Stealing : Prosecutions .....	890
Grain Harvest : Shipment Through Esperance .....	887
Kleenheat Gas : Use in Railway Carriages	887
Land Revaluations—	
Basis for Other Rates and Taxes .....	888
Basis for Water-rate Assessments .....	888
Method of Valuation .....	888
MacRobertson Miller Aviation Services : Subsidy Paid by Federal and State Governments .....	886
Pensioners Under 1971-1938 Act : Increases in Pensions Since 1954 .....	889
Rural and Industries Bank—	
Midland Premises : Enlargement .....	888
Railway Sleepers : Number Passed by Forests Department, and Names of Sawmillers .....	890
School Buses—	
Accidents and Children Involved .....	889
Marking of Buses .....	889
Speed of Motor Vehicles : Suspension of Licenses During July .....	886
State Basic Wage : Yearly Increases Since 1954 .....	890
Sulphur : Extraction from Goldmines .....	886
Totalisator Agency Board—	
Investments : Availability of Information .....	888
Trotting Meeting at Richmond Park : Re-run of Race .....	891
Tuna Survey : Inclusion of North-West .....	886
Water Supply at Koongamia : Improvement .....	887
<b>QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE—</b>	
Trotting Meeting at Richmond Park : Re-run of Race .....	891
<b>MOTIONS—</b>	
North-West : Commonwealth Aid for Development .....	899
Tobacco Industry : Inquiry by Select Committee .....	906
<b>BILLS—</b>	
Alumina Refinery Agreement Bill : 3r. ....	892
Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill : 3r. ....	892
Health Education Council Act Amendment Bill : 3r. ....	892
Painters' Registration Bill : 2r. ....	918
Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill : 3r. ....	892
Unauthorised Documents Bill : 3r. ....	892

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### MACROBERTSON MILLER AVIATION SERVICES

#### *Subsidy Paid by Federal and State Governments*

1. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Premier:  
What amounts are paid annually by way of subsidy to MacRobertson Miller Aviation Services by—  
(a) the State Government;  
(b) the Federal Government?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (a) Nil.  
(b) Not known.

### SPEED OF MOTOR VEHICLES

#### *Suspension of Licenses During July*

2. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Police:

How many drivers have suffered suspension of license for speeding offences during the month of July, 1961, committed whilst driving—

- (a) cars, utilities and vans;  
(b) trucks up to 7 ton capacity;  
(c) trucks over 7 ton and up to 13 ton capacity;  
(d) trucks over 13 ton and up to 20 ton capacity;  
(e) trucks over 20 ton capacity;  
(f) motor buses?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (a) 109.  
(b) Nil.  
(c) Nil.  
(d) Nil.  
(e) Nil.  
(f) Nil.

- 3 and 4. *These questions were postponed.*

### GOLDMINING COMPANIES INSURANCE

#### *S.G.I.O. Premium Rates for Accident and Silicosis Risks*

5. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Labour:

What have been the premium rates charged by the State Insurance Office to goldmining companies for—

- (a) general accident risk;  
(b) silicosis risk;  
for the last five years?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

The premium rates charged have been as follows:—

- (a) General Accident Risk—

Year	Per cent
From 1/1/1955	72s. 6d.
1/1/1956	69s. 0d.
1/1/1957	73s. 6d.
1/1/1959	83s. 0d.
1/1/1961	93s. 0d.
30/6/1961	91s. 0d.

These rates are gross and a reduction could be earned by way of a good risk rebate in certain circumstances.

- (b) Silicosis Risk—

20s. per cent was charged continuously since the 1st January, 1955.

### TUNA SURVEY

#### *Inclusion of North-West*

6. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

In reply to a question on the 9th August, he stated that he would make representations to the appropriate Federal Minister to have the present tuna survey extended to the north-west:—

- (1) Has he received a reply to his representations?  
(2) If he has, what was the text of the reply?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) and (2) I have personally discussed the matter with the Minister for Primary Industry and have written to him just recently. However, as yet no reply has been received.

### SULPHUR

#### *Extraction from Goldmines*

7. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

With regard to a visit early this year by an officer of the Mines Department to Kalgoorlie, for the purpose of reopening inquiries into the possibility of sulphur extraction as a by-product from the mines of the Golden Mile, could he inform the House whether the investigations are still being carried out?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Our laboratories have undertaken some preliminary work in regard to the possibility of sulphur extraction as a by-product from the mines of the Golden Mile. Since the return of the officers referred to—

- (a) a literature search has been undertaken and information received on the performance of the Edwards and Field roasters, and

- (b) a representative sample of concentrates embodying characteristics of the Kalgoorlie goldfields has been received from Kalgoorlie, and some preliminary tests undertaken.

The research work is being continued.

**KLEENHEAT GAS***Use in Railway Carriages*

8. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Have there been any reported fires in railway carriages installed with a kerosene primus stove during the last five years? If so, how many, and on what lines?
- (2) How many carriages are now fitted with Kleenheat gas facilities for the purpose of heating water?
- (3) Is it intended that primus stoves will be replaced by Kleenheat gas facilities in railway carriages?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Two AZ coaches have been fitted with Kleenheat gas.
- (3) Yes. A programme is now in progress for the balance of the AZ coaches—nine—to be fitted with Kleenheat gas.

**AIR FREIGHT SUBSIDY ON PERISHABLES***Subsidy Dates Alteration: Effect on Kimberley Market*

9. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for the North-West:

Is he aware that because of his Government's decision to terminate the air freight perishables subsidy one month earlier and commence it one month later than has been the practice since 1953, residents of the Kimberleys are now air-freighting their perishables from the Northern Territory, and as a consequence the Kimberley market could be lost to Western Australian growers?

Mr. COURT replied:

No. Reports indicate that perishables air-freighted from Darwin to Kimberley ports between the 1st June, 1961, and the 31st August, 1961, are less than those air-freighted for the same period in 1960.

**GRAIN HARVEST***Shipment Through Esperance*

10. Mr. NULSEN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the Government decided to ship the grain harvest (wheat and barley) from the mallee area and from areas south of Scaddan through the port of Esperance?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) If the answer to No. (1) is "No," will the Government speed up the building of a land-backed wharf, to enable farmers from the areas

mentioned to gain relief as early as possible from the present heavy freight charges?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The Government is at present considering a proposal for temporary facilities to enable cereal grains to be shipped from the port of Esperance.
- (2) and (3) Answered by No. (1).

**WATER SUPPLY AT KOONGAMIA***Improvement*

11. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Are any plans being prepared to improve water supply at Koon-gamia?
- (2) Is he aware that for approximately one week the people in Jinda Way (Koongamia) have had restricted water supplies?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Whilst pressures in parts of Koon-gamia are not high, generally the supply to the area is considered reasonable, and in consequence it is not planned to alter the system.
- (2) Yes. However, this was not due to the local supply mains. Winter cleaning of service reservoirs at Mt. Yokine and Mt. Eliza, and other such operations involving temporary rearrangement of the distribution system, reduced pressure in Koongamia and other areas. These operations have now been completed and conditions will return to normal.

**ALLAWAH GROVE***Provision for Replacement*

12. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) What provision has been made to replace Allawah Grove when it is taken over by the Civil Aviation Department?
- (2) Are there any other native reserves in the metropolitan area?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) The Civil Aviation Department will not terminate the lease on Allawah Grove for at least one year, and it is possible that the lease will be extended for a number of years. No provision for the replacement of Allawah Grove will be made until there is evidence that the lease will be terminated.
- (2) Yes, at Beechboro.

**RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK***Midland Premises: Enlargement*

13. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Are any plans being prepared to enlarge the Rural and Industries Bank at Midland?
- (2) If the answer is "Yes," will he state when the new building will be commenced?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is expected tenders will be called within three months.

14. *This question was postponed.*

**LAND REVALUATIONS***Basis for Water-rate Assessments*

15. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) When is it proposed that the valuations which are at present being made in East Fremantle will be used for the assessment of water rates?
- (2) What other districts are being currently revalued?
- (3) When was East Fremantle last valued for assessment of water rates by actual on-the-spot valuation (excluding the arbitrary increase of 25 per cent. imposed by office calculation in compliance with the present Government's policy)?
- (4) Will all districts be revalued as regularly as East Fremantle?

*Method of Valuation*

- (5) Is any officer of the Water Supply Department at present engaged in making valuations?
- (6) If there are State officers engaged, what is the number, and upon what basis are they employed?
- (7) What is the nature of the actual arrangement which has been made with the Commonwealth Taxation Department to make valuations for the Water Supply Department?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) As from the 1st July, 1962.
- (2) All districts under control of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department.
- (3) During the year 1958-1959 for effect as from 1st July, 1959.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Three officers under the direction of the department's chief valuer are engaged on work associated

with valuations other than valuation reviews now being carried out by the Taxation Department.

- (7) The honourable member is referred to my reply to question No. 3 on the 8th August.

*Basis for Other Rates and Taxes*

16. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

- (1) Will the new valuations which are being currently made in East Fremantle be used for the assessment of land tax and metropolitan improvement tax, as well as for the assessment of water and sewerage rates?
- (2) When will the new valuations come into operation for the purposes of land tax and metropolitan improvement tax, if they are to be used for such purposes?
- (3) What is the cost to the Government for valuations of land by the Taxation Department for the purpose of assessing land tax and metropolitan improvement tax?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The valuations at present being determined at East Fremantle are annual values for water-rating purposes. Land tax and metropolitan region improvement tax are based on unimproved values.
- (2) The present valuations are not being used for the purposes of land tax and region improvement tax.
- (3) The cost to the Government for collection by the Commonwealth Government of land tax, metropolitan region improvement tax, and vermin rate is £70,000 per annum. The cost of valuations of land for the purpose of assessing land tax and metropolitan region improvement tax is included in this figure but has not been calculated separately.

**TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD***Investments: Availability of Information*

17. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Of the published record turnover of the Totalisator Agency Board of more than £109,000 for the week ended Saturday last, how much was in respect of galloping and trotting races in the metropolitan area?
- (2) Of the total turnover on galloping and trotting races in the metropolitan area, how much was actually invested on course totalisators by the Totalisator Agency Board?
- (3) If, as previously, he refuses to supply the information asked for on the ground that it is not the

policy of the Totalisator Agency Board to divulge it, is the information available to the Government?

- (4) Is it the policy of the Government that this particular information and other information of a similar kind should be withheld from Parliament?
- (5) What interests is the Totalisator Agency Board's policy of not disclosing the amount of totalisator investments intended to serve?
- (6) If it is claimed that the refusal to publish information relative to the amount of turnover which is invested on totalisators by the totalisator board is in the public interest, in what way is this so?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) and (2) The board is of the opinion that it should not furnish this information.
- (3) The Government has no particular interest in this matter.
- (4) A report covering the activities of the Totalisator Agency Board to the end of the last part-year has been prepared and will be tabled in Parliament in due course.
- (5) and (6) The board considers that it should be permitted to operate in a prudent and business-like manner; and, in so doing, the public interest will be served to the best advantage. In addition, the board is not prepared to release any details which may assist those not interested in the board's welfare.

### SCHOOL BUSES

#### *Accidents and Children Involved*

18. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many fatal accidents have been recorded in this State, this year by—
  - (a) children alighting from school buses;
  - (b) children catching school buses?
- (2) How many accidents, not fatal, have been recorded, this year, by—
  - (a) children alighting from school buses;
  - (b) children catching school buses?

#### *Marking of Buses*

- (3) Have school buses any markings or signs on them to warn the motoring public that they are school buses?
- (4) If the answer to No. (3) is "No," would he consider having movable signs or markings placed on school

buses to warn the motoring public, and for the safety of children using school buses?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) (a) One.  
(b) Nil.
- (2) Not available. The Government Statistician's office is unable to assist.
- (3) School buses under contract to the Education Department are required, by that department, to have the buses painted an orange colour and to carry the sign "School Bus" front and rear in letters of not less than four inches. Buses not under contract but receiving subsidies are not required to be painted, nor to carry signs. Public transport buses do not carry signs.
- (4) This is not considered essential on buses used for public transport.

### GERALDTON HARBOUR AND WHARF

#### *Employment for Dismissed Maintenance and Repair Workers*

19. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) In reply to questions on the 17th August, in connection with the dismissal of maintenance men on the Geraldton wharf, the Minister said that every endeavour was being made to place the displaced men on other Government works. Is he aware that these men have not been found employment on other Government work?
- (2) Can he indicate when other Government work will be commenced in the district so that these men can be employed?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Yes. Of the 21 men employed in June last, 11 have not been found employment in Government work.
- (2) No firm proposals have yet been made, but every endeavour is being made to find employment for these men.

### PENSIONERS UNDER 1871-1938 ACT

#### *Increases in Pensions Since 1954*

20. Mr. HEAL asked the Premier:

What increases have been granted to pensioners under the 1871-1938 Superannuation Act since the 30th June, 1954?

Mr. BRAND replied:

1871 Act, 12/11/1955: All pensions supplemented by £26 per annum under Pensions Supplementation Act.

1/1/1958: All pensions up to £1,000 per annum were re-calculated in accordance with the increase in the basic wage from the 1st March, 1939 or, if later, from the date the pension commenced.

1/1/1960: All pensions were further adjusted to the equivalent rates applicable under the 1938 Act, which involved increases to most pensions ranging from £5 to £208 per annum.

1938 Act, 12/11/1955: All pensions supplemented by £26 per annum per medium of the Pensions Supplementation Act.

1/1/1958: Unit values increased from 15s. per week in respect of each of the first eight units to 17s. 6d. per week and from 12s. 6d. per week to 17s. 6d. per week for each unit in excess of eight.

1/1/1960: Widows' pensions were increased from half rate pensions to  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the husband's pension rate.

### STATE BASIC WAGE

#### *Yearly Increases Since 1954*

21. Mr. HEAL asked the Premier:

What has been the yearly increases in the State basic wage since the 30th June, 1954?

Mr. BRAND replied:

1954-55—Nil.  
1955-56—10s. 7d.  
1956-57—11s. 9d.  
1957-58—Decrease 4d.  
1958-59—6s. 7d.  
1959-60—11s. 3d.  
1960-61—12s. 11d.

### RAILWAY SLEEPERS

#### *Number Passed by Forests Department, and Names of Sawmillers*

22. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Forests:

Regarding sleepers inspected and passed by the Forests Department during the year 1960-61, for the W.A. Government Railways, will he detail the names of the sawmillers and the number of sleepers in each case?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

While the supplies of sleepers to the W.A. Government Railways by individual tenderers is made known publicly, it is considered that the quantities of W.A.G.R. sleepers supplied by individual sleeper producers to successful tenderers is private business information which should not be publicly disclosed.

### GOLD STEALING

#### *Prosecutions*

23. Mr. PERKINS (Minister for Police): Some days ago the member for Kalgoorlie asked me a question in regard to prosecutions under the Gold Buyers Act.

Mr. Tonkin: Surely it is not the policy of the T.A.B. that this information be disclosed!

Mr. PERKINS: I now have the information. The honourable member's questions were as follows:—

(1) How many successful prosecutions have been launched by the police of gold stealing detection staff under—

(a) Section 36 of the Gold Buyers Act; and

(b) Section 76A of the Police Act for the years—

(i) 1958;

(ii) 1959;

(iii) 1960;

(iv) to the 30th June, 1961?

(2) How many persons charged with being in possession of gold, or gold matter, under section 36 of the Gold Buyers Act have been able to satisfy a magistrate that they came honestly by the same, and the charges being accordingly dismissed, in each of the years—

(i) 1958;

(ii) 1959;

(iii) 1960;

(iv) to the 30th June, 1961?

(3) How many persons charged under section 76A of the Police Act, for having possession of gold, have proved that such gold was lawfully obtained, and the charge thus dismissed during each of the years—

(i) 1958;

(ii) 1959;

(iii) 1960?

(4) With regard to the second paragraph of section 36 of the Gold Buyers Act, have there been any cases during the years—

(a) 1958;

(b) 1959;

(c) 1960; and

(d) to the 30th June, 1961

whereby prosecutions have failed directly because of the absence of the words "or the said gold matter" subsequent to the word "gold" in the first line of this paragraph, in cases where the possession of "gold matter" has

been parted with by the defendant before being brought before a court?

The replies are as follows:—

- (1) (a) 20 charges were preferred under section 36 of the Gold Buyers' Act for the years 1958, 1959, 1960, and to the 30th June, 1961.
- (b) No charges were preferred under section 76A of the Police Act.
- (2) None of the 20 persons charged were able to so satisfy the magistrate.
- (3) No persons were charged under section 76A of the Police Act.
- (4) No charges have failed because of the absence of the words in paragraph 2 of section 36, as it has only recently been raised. On that occasion the gold material, subject of the charge, had contained free gold.

#### **TROTTING MEETING AT RICHMOND PARK**

##### *Re-run of Race*

24. Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Chief Secretary): I wish to reply to a question that was asked on Wednesday of last week by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The reply is as follows:—

On Wednesday last the honourable member sought some information from me concerning an incident at a trotting meeting on the 19th August, 1961, at Richmond Park. I advised that I was having inquiries made into the legal implications and that I would advise the honourable member as early as possible.

The Crown Law Department now advises me that in respect of this particular incident, the stewards acted correctly.

The advice given is to the effect that by-law 94, as set out in the appendix to the Western Australian Trotting Association Act, 1946, has no application.

It further goes on to say that by-law 94 applies in the event of the stewards ordering a race to be run over again. A race cannot be run over again unless it has already been run once, and it is not considered that this description can be applied to a race that has been started and then stopped before it has run its course.

Mr. Tonkin: What a lot of nonsense!

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The reply continues—

In the present case, the stewards stopped the race before it had run its course; and in announcing

that the race would be re-run later in the evening, they were in effect announcing that the race would be restarted. In this context, it was competent for the stewards to declare that all bets invested on the totalisator would be refunded, and that new betting would be opened on the race to be restarted later in the programme. In making this decision the stewards were acting pursuant to the powers conferred on them by No. 72 of the Rules of Racing, or alternatively pursuant to rule 73 (g). Their decision was not contrary to the by-law.

In these circumstances, I have to advise the honourable member that there can be no grounds for a direction from me in the manner indicated by him. As the honourable member has also written to me concerning this matter, I have replied to him in writing in accordance with the advice given to me by the Crown Law Department.

#### **QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE**

#### **TROTTING MEETING AT RICHMOND PARK**

##### *Re-run of Race*

Mr. TONKIN asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Is he aware that the by-law 94 is very similar to the by-law under the W.A. Turf Club Act, and that that by-law makes reference to each attempt at running a race?
- (2) Will the Minister tell me what set of circumstances by-law 94 is intended to cover, if it is not intended to cover the set of circumstances mentioned by me relative to the 19th August?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

I believe the set of circumstances, or the sets of circumstances under which by-law 94 has application are where a race is found to be too long after the completion of the race; or where it is found to be too short; or where the judge is not in his box; or for other reasons of that sort. There are one or two other reasons that I cannot remember off the cuff, at this stage; and in regard to those reasons, by-law 94 has application.

Reference to other by-laws indicates that the word "re-started" is used on at least one occasion, and therefore the words "run over again" and "re-start" have to be taken into consideration.

If I might be permitted at this juncture, I would urge the honourable member to advise Mr.

Christiensen to avail himself of the offer made by the trotting club, when he will be paid the dividend struck on *Minton Hall* in the last race.

Mr. Tonkin: No; I think we shall issue a writ.

### BILLS (4)—THIRD READING

#### 1. Health Education Council Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Health), and transmitted to the Council.

#### 2. Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Chief Secretary), and transmitted to the Council.

#### 3. Unauthorised Documents Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Watts (Attorney-General), and transmitted to the Council.

#### 4. Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

### ALUMINA REFINERY AGREEMENT BILL

#### *Third Reading*

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [4.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

~~I~~ **I** am moving that the Bill be read a third time. I want to give some information that I promised the member for Boulder. It will be recalled that he was unable to speak during the Committee stages last night and he particularly wanted to query clause 9, subclause (7). Subsequently I undertook to re-examine the provisions in the agreement in respect of the Mines Regulation Act and with particular reference to that clause. The position appears to be covered by the Act wherein the definition of "mine" reads—

"Mine" means a place within a mining district where any operation for the purposes of obtaining any metal or mineral has been or is being carried on, or where the products of any such place are being treated or dealt with or where explosives are being used.

There is a further provision in the Act which says—

The Governor may from time to time exempt from the operation of this Act or any of the provisions thereof any

mine or class of mines for such period and on such conditions (if any) as he may think fit.

As to what will be the actual position in practice at the refinery itself, when the company commences operations, no-one could be specific at this juncture in view of the second provision in the Act itself; but I think it is fair to say that the position is amply covered by the provisions of the agreement and the existing statute.

MR. MOIR (Boulder) [4.54 p.m.]: I am quite concerned about this provision, and the Minister's answer does not allay my fears; because if we go back to clause 3 (2) of the Bill we find it says—

Notwithstanding any other Act or law, the agreement shall be carried out and take effect, as though its provisions had been expressly enacted in this Act.

To me that conveys the impression that unless there is particular reference to it in this Bill, the other Act or law does not have any effect at all. Clause 9, subclause (7) of the agreement, reads—

The mineral lease the leased area and the Company in its operations thereon shall be subject to the provisions of the Mines Regulation Act 1956 and the Company shall comply with and observe such provisions.

As it says, that clause applies to the mineral lease where the ore will be mined, and also to the leased area; but unless the works-site, which is defined separately in the agreement, is also covered, the Mines Regulation Act will not have any application. We note that in the Mines Regulation Act there is a wide definition of mining because it says—

"Mining" or "to mine" means to disturb, remove, cart, carry, wash, sift, melt, refine, crush or otherwise deal with any rock, stone quartz, clay, sand, soil, or mineral by any mode or method whatsoever for the purpose of obtaining gold or any other mineral therefrom.

This matter is of particular concern unless the Mines Regulation Act has application to the refinery site, which is referred to as the "works site." If it does not, then of course the health and safety of the workers in this industry will not be covered. It must be remembered, too, that the ore that will be treated will undoubtedly have a percentage of silica—what percentage I do not know, but probably it will be quite high. Therefore the workers in this industry will be subjected to the risk of silicosis which, if the Mines Regulation Act does not apply, means that they will be left without any protection at all; because there are other Acts which branch off from the Mines Regulation Act and which take care of workers who are injured in the course of their employment.



There are other aspects, such as the effect of gases that might arise from the processing and which may be injurious to the workers concerned. I hasten to say that my previous knowledge of this company makes me strongly convinced that the company itself would take every possible step in its efforts to provide for the welfare and health of the men. However, I am not unmindful of the fact that this company has only a minority shareholding, 51 per cent. of the shares being held by a large American concern.

I am disturbed about the position, and I ask the Minister to place the issue beyond all doubt before the Bill is dealt with in another place. I am sure the Minister is of the same opinion as I am; and if this matter has not been covered, it is merely through an oversight; because, knowing the company concerned as I do, I am sure it would not want to be absolved from any liability in this respect. I ask the Minister to have the matter determined so that, if necessary, amendments can be made in another place.

**MR. W. HEGNEY** (Mt. Hawthorn) [5.0 p.m.]: Before the third reading of the Bill is agreed to by the House, I wish to record my emphatic protest against some of the clauses in the schedule which to me, and I am sure to most members of the House, are, to say the least of it, most obnoxious. I refer firstly to clause 23 which appears on page 29 of the Bill. One has to study this clause closely to realise its implications. It reads—

The State will not at any time by legislation regulation or administrative action under any legislation of the said State as to prices prevent products produced by the Company or by any subsidiary or associated company from being sold at prices which will allow the Company or subsidiary or associated company to provide for such reasonable depreciation reserves and return on the capital employed in the production of those products as are determined by such Company.

As a representative of the people of this State of ours, which has sovereign rights and powers, I say most emphatically that this clause is extremely objectionable. The Minister would have been more honest if he had introduced it with a straight-out exemption from any legislative action which may be taken at any future time by any constituted Government. I am not criticising the company, but congratulating it on the agreement it has effected. However, the Government is most culpable in permitting a clause of this nature to be inserted in the schedule, and to expect both Houses of Parliament to agree to it.

I will draw the attention of members to a couple of other clauses closely related to clause 23. Firstly, I will deal with what an associated company means. That definition is as follows:—

(a) any company incorporated within the Commonwealth of Australia the United Kingdom or the United

States of America which establishes manufacturing operations on or adjacent to the works site and whose business is or operations are substantially dependent on the products or services of the Company and in which the Company holds directly or indirectly not less than 20 per centum of the issued capital and of which the Company gives notice in writing to the State;

- (b) any company of which the Company is a subsidiary company (as defined in section 130 of the Companies Act, 1943); and
- (c) any company which is a subsidiary (defined as aforesaid) of the company referred to in paragraph (b) of this definition.

That is the definition of an associated company. We now come to the definition of a subsidiary company which is—

“subsidiary company” means any company incorporated within the Commonwealth of Australia the United Kingdom or the United States of America in which the Company either directly or indirectly holds not less than 50 per centum of the issued shares for the time being and of which the Company gives notice in writing to the State.

This definition is most discriminatory in favour of the company. It is similar to the wording of some of the clauses in the agreement made by the Government with the Hawker Siddeley Group Ltd. which, during the term of the agreement, prevents the sovereign State of Western Australia from entering, at any time, the timber industry regardless of the circumstances, and which confers upon the company a minimum price of £21 a load for timber supplied for a term of 20 years. That is most discriminatory action on the part of the Government. In contrast, I propose to read part of clause 20 of the schedule to this Bill. Members have heard the clause I have just read, which is most discriminatory in favour of the company; although I wish to repeat that I am not criticising the company in any way. Clause 20 reads as follows:—

The State shall not impose nor permit nor authorise any of its agencies or instrumentalities or any local or other authority to impose discriminatory taxes rates or charges of any nature whatsoever on or in respect of the titles property or other assets products materials or services used or produced by or through the operations of the Company or any adjacent subsidiary or associated company in the conduct of business incidental to the Company's business hereunder nor will the State take or permit to be taken any other discriminatory action which would deprive the Company or any subsidiary or associated company of

full enjoyment of the rights granted and intended to be granted under this agreement.

I quite agree with that clause, because it confers on the company the same rights as other people have in other instrumentalities and companies within the State. There is no discrimination against the company, and nobody would argue against that for a moment. Clause 21 of the schedule makes a provision in regard to rating, and it reads—

Notwithstanding the provisions of any Act or anything done or purporting to be done under any Act the valuation of the works site shall for rating purposes be or be deemed to be on the unimproved value and shall not in any way be subject to any discriminatory rate: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, that nothing in this clause shall apply to any portion of the works site which shall be occupied as a permanent residence or upon which a permanent residence shall be erected.

That is quite sound and equitable. There is no discrimination against the company; and neither there should be.

I now come to clause 25 which is only a short one; and the marginal note against it reads, "Non-discrimination against Company." The clause itself is as follows:—

The State shall ensure that fees taxes or other charges or levies imposed by the State on the cartage of goods by road or by rail shall not discriminate against the Company.

That is quite fair, and I agree with it. I now come to the last clause I wish to quote, which is clause 31 and which reads —

Any dispute or difference between the parties arising out of or in connection with this agreement including any dispute or difference arising under subclause (4) of clause 3 or clause 4 (1) (a) hereof or any agreed variation thereof or as to the construction of this agreement or any such variation or as to the rights duties or liabilities of either party thereunder. . . .

It then goes on to say that it shall be subject to the provisions of the Arbitration Act, 1895. That is quite all right, and a relevant provision in an agreement of this nature. Not for a moment would anyone quarrel with that.

I now wish to revert to the basis of my protest; and I reiterate that there is no criticism against the company. As a matter of fact, the member for Boulder, who knows the representatives of this company very well, agrees it is a company of high repute; and, as I said before, I congratulate it on the agreement it has made with the Government. What I am concerned about, however, and what every other member should be concerned about,

is the authority of this Parliament, of future Parliaments, and of this State of ours.

In late 1939, or early 1940, the Commonwealth Government gazetted and imposed upon the people of Australia the National Security Regulations during the time of war. The reason it did that was that it was necessary to impose certain restrictions to protect the people and to ensure that there was a continuous flow of essential supplies in the interests of the people of Australia. In wartime, it was most necessary to impose the restrictions. The National Security Regulations are now repealed, but in 1948 a Liberal Party Government of Western Australia introduced legislation into this Parliament which had some relation to this clause against which I am protesting.

The legislation that the Liberal Government introduced in 1948 was known as No. 3 of 1948 and was an Act which might be cited as the Prices Control Act of 1948. No Government wishes to introduce price control unless it is necessary to do so. But why did the Liberal Government of 1948 introduce a Prices Control Act? It must have had some reason for doing so.

Of course, the reason for doing so was to protect the people of Western Australia against unfair prices and to ensure that when there was a shortage of material and of goods, the people would not have to pay exorbitant prices for essential commodities. The Prices Control Act was placed on the statute book and administered in a judicious and fair-minded manner. In due course this Act was repealed.

But the time may come when it will be necessary, or it may be necessary, in the interests of the State—and here I am not saying anything derogatory about the company—for Parliament to take some specific action in relation to certain materials or in relation to the supply of certain goods.

A clause of this nature in an agreement would prevent the people of Western Australia, through their representatives, from doing anything to remedy the position. There would be no protection for the people whatever, no matter what the circumstances might be. In passing, I might say that I am very surprised that members of the Country Party should agree to this clause being included in the schedule. That is the position as I see it.

I repeat that it would have been far more honest, and far more decent on the part of the Minister for Industrial Development, representing the Government, if he had placed a straight-out clause in the agreement which exempted the company in every way from any legislation in regard to the fixing of prices. After all is said and done, the field is wide open: the company will be the sole arbiter. Do you not think, Mr. Speaker, it would have been more honest?

Mr. Court: What is this business of being more honest?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I say it would have been far more honest—

Mr. Court: Don't talk nonsense!

Mr. W. HEGNEY:—if the Minister had agreed, or decided, to insert a clause in this schedule completely exempting the company from any sort of price control; because after all, it is not this company so much but its associated companies and subsidiary companies which will also be affected.

The reason I rise to record my protest is not that it may be necessary to introduce price-control legislation in the future—say in 10, 20, or 30 years—but to point out that if, during the course of this agreement, the Government of the day finds circumstances are such that it should, in the interests of the people, do something to alleviate the position, it will not be able to lift a little finger to do so. It is wrong for a Government to tie up future Governments in such a manner, and to prevent future Parliaments from taking any action they may think necessary in the interests of the people of Western Australia.

**MR. ROWBERRY** (Warren) [5.14 p.m.]: At this late hour of the debate on this Bill, I want to bring before the notice of the House something which has been touched upon earlier. I refer to the effect this mining is going to have on our prime jarrah forests. We have the assurance of the Minister that the Conservator of Forests is satisfied that no lasting damage will be done to our forest areas. I am a bit doubtful about that, however, knowing that in his report of June, 1959, the Conservator of Forests said, among other things—

#### A Warning on the Jarrah Forest.

Jarrah is not only one of the most valuable hardwoods, but there is more timber produced from jarrah than from any single species in Australia—approximately 10 per cent. of Australia's total timber production.

The regeneration of the jarrah forest presents some unique aspects and problems.

That is what concerns me—the regeneration of the forest after the overburden has been cleared and restored. To continue—

In the seeding stage it remains dormant for many years, before it is ready to develop from a low bush to a sapling. This dormant period is seldom less than 20 years, while it is developing a ligno-tuber, and a deep underground root system to enable it to meet the harsh conditions of the poor gravelly ironstone (laterite) soils, and the heat and drought of long summers. In the natural forest there is usually a good stocking of this

advance growth merely awaiting the opening up of the forest, by logging or natural death of older trees, to come away vigorously and develop saplings. This long dormant period is thus of little effect on regeneration in forest conditions.

If, however, this forest is cleared for agriculture, and the existing seedling growth destroyed by cultivation, it is doubtful whether such land could ever be economically reconverted to jarrah forest, if in the future it was deemed desirable to do so.

In the light of the remarks by the conservator in 1959, I find it very difficult to reconcile the Minister's statement that the present-day Conservator of Forests is entirely amenable to the destruction of one of our best prime forest regions. The conservator continues—

The very long dormant period of the seedling stage, especially on open sunbaked land, would render it an uneconomic proposition.

The karri seedling does not have this dormant period and cleared fields will quickly revert to karri forest, if seed is available.

Consequently, when an area of jarrah forest is properly cleared, it is lost beyond recall, on any economic basis. There is no road back. Further alienation of jarrah forest should therefore not be lightly undertaken without the fullest consideration of all that such an irrevocable step involves.

Attempts to grow jarrah forests in other countries have failed miserably. It remains a uniquely Western Australian forest.

We heard last night that bauxite exists all over the world; that it is one of the most common elements on the earth's surface. Yet here we propose to destroy our jarrah forests—which are unique to Western Australia, which grow nowhere else in the world—for a common mineral that is found all over the world. I was very impressed, when I first heard about this proposal, to read a letter written by J. Gentili, of the University of Western Australia, whose particular subject is geography of all descriptions. Any opinion expressed by Dr. Gentili should, I think, be given the most earnest consideration. This is what he says—

The report of the intended agreement on the bauxite and alumina industry raises several important issues. Bauxite, unlike most other ores, is found on the surface and is quarried or scraped; the removal of the ore therefore affects relatively large areas.

The map showing the intended leases shows that the following vital areas may be affected:—

The catchment areas of the metropolitan water supply.

Most of the land with a rainfall of more than 40 inches a year.

Most of the prime jarrah forests. The Forrest National Park.

We should be particularly careful before we embark on a proposition such as the one before us. We should make sure that we do not lose a priceless heritage which, once gone, will be lost for ever. It is an asset which has proved to be of great value to the economy of this State. The article continues—

Before anything binding is signed the company should disclose its methods of removal of the bauxite. Detailed reports should be obtained from the Public Works Department, the Metropolitan Water Supply experts, the Department of Agriculture, the Forests Department, the Government Botanist and the Town Planning Department on what the intended exploitation of the deposits is likely to cause. From what I know about the balance of nature, I should say that great caution is needed.

I would also emphasise that great caution will have to be observed in the extraction of bauxite. When the overburden is returned to the site it is intended to sow pines over the area. We can grow pines anywhere in this State where the necessary trace elements are present. The soil of Western Australia will grow pines in great profusion; but only certain portions of the State can grow good jarrah. Therefore, the greatest caution should be observed to preserve, as far as possible, that portion of our jarrah forests which lies within the area to be exploited.

**MR. J. HEGNEY** (Middle Swan) [5.22 p.m.]: I am a little concerned about the provisions contained in clause 4(2) of the agreement relating to the emission of dust and gas from the works. I cannot see any need for the inclusion of this provision at all. It is provided in another part of the agreement that the company shall do everything practicable and reasonable to prevent the emission of dust or gas into the atmosphere. I would like the Minister to inform me, when he replies, whether this provision in clause 4(2) of the agreement will prevent the inspectors under the Factories and Shops Act from entering the works and making inspections.

Some years ago, we were concerned with the emission of dust from the works of the Swan Portland Cement Co. at Rivervale. For years the residents in this locality suffered considerable inconvenience, and the cement dust from those works became a public nuisance. At that time there was nothing in our laws to compel the company to take steps to overcome the difficulty. There was no redress until I brought down an amendment to the Health Act. As a private member, I took

this course of action in an attempt to put something into the law so that local authorities would be able to deal with such problems. The Minister for Industrial Development at the time, who is now the Attorney-General, after consultation with the authorities introduced an amendment to the Factories and Shops Act. The Bill passed both Houses of Parliament and became law; and, under it, power was given to deal with problems like the one I am referring to.

When I spoke on this matter on previous occasions I said that Western Australia was in the early stage of industrial development, and that industries would continue to increase. I said that as industry developed, these problems would become greater; and that if there was no control by the Minister or by the Factories and Shops Department, the industries could do what they liked.

We are all aware that in many parts of the world, bitter complaints have been made about smog and the pollution of the atmosphere. These nuisances are present in many industrialised countries. The United Kingdom experiences great difficulty in controlling this problem which arises from industry. In that country it is a vital matter. When I was there, I discussed this matter with experts in the planning office to find out what was being done. They told me that atmospheric pollution by industry was a real problem and they had to obtain great power to deal with it.

The Minister, in reply to questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition, pointed out that Kwinana was an industrial area but nevertheless when the dust from the proposed works is emitted into the air, it will be blown backwards and forwards over the metropolitan area, according to the prevailing winds. If there is a considerable emission of dust into the atmosphere it will be spread far and wide particularly when a south-westerly wind is blowing.

That happened in the case of the cement dust from the Swan Portland Cement Co. works at Rivervale. Motorcars which were parked miles away from the work were affected by the cement dust. During rainy or damp weather, the fine cement dust would settle on top of the cars and set or solidify. I have seen red granolithic surfaces on front verandahs of nearby houses turn to a greyish colour when the moisture in the air set the cement dust.

If the company is to comply with the provisions of the Factories and Shops Act and if it is to make every effort to avail itself of modern methods to prevent the emission of dust or gases into the atmosphere, the problem will not arise. Inspectors of the Factories and Shops Department would then be able to enter the works and discuss with the manager any problem which might arise.

I am concerned with the question of atmospheric pollution not only in areas close to the city, but also in areas close to Kwinana. As the population of the State grows, so will the residential area expand. As has been proved in the U.S.A., such atmospheric pollution can be spread over a great distance. I would ask the Minister when he replies, to indicate whether the inspectors of the Factories and Shops Department will have the right to inspect the proposed works to enable them to ensure that the law is being complied with.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [5.30 p.m.]: In replying to comments that have been made, I will firstly deal with those of the member for Boulder. I really cannot see why he is so terribly concerned about this. If there had been no reference to the Mines Regulations Act in the agreement; or if, alternatively, a clause had been incorporated in the agreement exempting the company from the provisions of the Mines Regulation Act, he would probably have had more cause for concern than he has now. If we had remained silent on this particular matter in the agreement, no doubt he would have accepted the situation.

I think the clause from the Act that I have read out fairly summarises the most important point. I deliberately did not read the definition of "mine" on its own without reading the other provision, which is an important part of the existing statute. I feel the honourable member is suggesting we incorporate into this agreement and into the legislation something more than is in the existing law. Frankly, that would be unrealistic, unfair, and unthinkable in an agreement of this nature.

**Mr. Moir**: Would you agree that the Mines Regulation Act should cover the works-site?

**Mr. COURT**: I have given the definition of "mine," and I am not prepared to go beyond the actual law and say what it is and what it is not, because there is provision for exemption. That provision is not new in relation to this agreement. It is already inherent in the existing statute.

**Mr. Moir**: Would you say the Mines Regulation Act covered the works-site?

**Mr. COURT**: Perhaps I had better read it again to make my point.

**Mr. Moir**: I have read it many times.

**Mr. COURT**: It says—

"Mine" means a place within a mining district where any operation for the purpose of obtaining any metal or mineral has been or is being carried on, or where the products of any such place are being treated or dealt with or where explosives are being used.

**Mr. Moir**: What does clause 3 of the agreement say?

**Mr. COURT**: Does the honourable member mean clause 3 of the Bill?

**Mr. Moir**: Yes.

**Mr. COURT**: It says—

Notwithstanding any other Act or law, the agreement shall be carried out and take effect, as though its provisions had been expressly enacted in this Act.

I think the honourable member is getting confused at that point. He is implying that this provision in the Bill itself is virtually creating a lot of new statutes. In effect, all it is saying is that the provisions of this agreement can be given effect to and—

**Mr. Moir**: It is supreme over other Acts.

**Mr. COURT**: Only in respect of the matters expressly referred to in the agreement. There is no hocus pocus about it—there is no hidden mystery or meaning about it. The agreement is explicit in certain particulars; and this Bill of necessity has to provide that in order to ratify it, the Government of the day has the power to carry it into effect. That is a normal provision that goes into every ratifying Bill. Otherwise, ratifying legislation would have no effect.

This is not creating a new set of laws; it only goes so far as the agreement itself, because where any particular provisions of an Act have to be overridden, they are either mentioned in the agreement itself or have to be mentioned specifically in the ratifying legislation.

**Mr. Hawke**: That is not so.

**Mr. COURT**: It is not possible to override a law in a common law agreement. If it is subject to ratification, then the law is amended so far as the agreement provides for it, and the ratifying Bill ratifies the agreement.

**Mr. Hawke**: But when this Bill passes, subclause (2) of clause 3 becomes the law.

**Mr. COURT**: That is so. It gives the Government the right to implement this particular agreement as written. The Government cannot go beyond the agreement. It cannot write a lot of new laws; but the member for Boulder virtually wants us to write a new statute into this particular agreement.

**Mr. Moir**: All I want you to say is that you agree the works-site should be covered by the Mines Regulation Act.

**Mr. COURT**: I am not going to go beyond the law as it is written.

**Mr. Moir**: You are just evading the point.

**Mr. COURT**: I am not. I am not going to keep going over it. I have already said what the terms of the law are; but it is now the desire of the honourable member to write something extra into this agreement. If there had been no mention

of the Mines Regulation Act in this agreement, the honourable member would have accepted the statute as it is.

Mr. Moir: It does not include the worksite, but mentions the lease and the leased area.

Mr. COURT: If the clause said, "The Mines Regulation Act does not apply for the purpose of this agreement" the honourable member would be on very sound ground. If it said that it applies only to certain areas and not to others, then he would have some cause for being concerned. But it does not say that. It has said in effect, that, the Mines Regulation Act will apply in these areas, and has remained silent on the others. Does it not follow that the statute then prevails?

Mr. Moir: Does not the Minister know that where it is specifically mentioned it prevails, and where it is not mentioned it does not apply? Otherwise why specifically mention it?

Mr. COURT: I am not going to agree with that at all. That is not my understanding of the situation. What the honourable member is saying in effect is that any law on the statute book not mentioned expressly in this agreement can be ignored by the company. That is not so.

Mr. Moir: Does the Minister agree that the works-site should be covered by the Mines Regulation Act?

Mr. COURT: I am not going any further than I have. We will have to rely on the existing statute. I am not going to go beyond the law.

Mr. Moir: The Minister is evading it.

Mr. COURT: Nothing of the sort; I could not be more specific. I am not going to imply something that is not in the law. The member for Mt. Hawthorn spoke about clause 23. He must have had a bad night.

Mr. W. Hegney: I had a good night.

Mr. COURT: This clause has been before this Parliament several times before; and I have not, at the short time at my disposal, been able to find any reference to an objection by the honourable member. There is a very good reason for it. A company, seeking to make a long-term agreement, that left itself exposed without this type of provision would leave itself open to the erosion—as I explained last night—of its capital by a Government that set out maliciously to defeat the company and defeat the agreement by the back door.

Mr. W. Hegney: It is obnoxious. What Government would do that?

Mr. COURT: It is not obnoxious. There have been Governments here that would have had a try. On the question of forests, raised by the member for Warren, I covered this in the course of my second reading speech—

Mr. W. Hegney: It was a poor explanation.

Mr. COURT: —and during the further debate that took place. I can assure the honourable member there has been close co-operation between the Mines Department, the Forests Department, and the company; and the method of operation has been clearly defined for all to know. Dr. Gentilli, I think, asked that the proposed method of mining be clearly defined—and it has been clearly defined. The Mines Department, the Forests Department, and the company propose to go beyond that and to definitely keep this matter under review and see whether, in the light of experience, any better method can be adopted to ensure that every care is given to regenerate this ground to the maximum extent and cause the minimum damage.

It must be realised that in the production of 550,000 tons of bauxite per annum, these areas are not as extensive as some people think. The programme provides for afforestation—the planting of pine trees. The company has to provide fertilisers and trace elements, and the Forests Department will provide the seedlings and do the planting. The Conservator of Forests actually drafted the clauses relating to forests, because he is the expert. He also nominated the sum per acre that should be paid to the Forests Department, not only for the regeneration of that area with the planting of seedlings, but also for work in other areas. In other words, the Forests Department expects to show a surplus out of this £100 per acre.

Mr. Rowberry: Did he agree to this without pressure?

Mr. COURT: Of course he did. The honourable member is implying that the man would not take a stand on a matter of principle and great importance to his department. There was no pressure whatever brought in respect of this. It was a matter of good sensible negotiation between the conservator and the company, and it was eventually adopted on recommendation by the Government. In this regard I think it is most unfair to suggest that the conservator did it under any pressure.

Mr. Rowberry: I am thinking of what he said in 1959.

Mr. COURT: He is a professional officer, and if he said that in 1959, I am sure he still believes it. That does not mean to say that what is proposed in respect of this regeneration is wrong. On the contrary. This is to deal with pockets of country throughout the mineral lease areas.

It is interesting to note that even at this early stage, natural regrowth is taking place in the areas that were worked in 1960; that is, the natural vegetation is re-appearing without any positive programme of planting. That is indicative of the fact that this area can and will be regenerated.

The other point mentioned by the honourable member was that of other difficulties involved, such as water supply. I have

already told the House that the professional officers of that department were consulted in these negotiations. In fact, all departments affected were consulted, and they are quite satisfied that the method of mining proposed will not expose these areas to any danger of erosion or of any diminution of the run-off to any extent that matters, and so on. They have no reservations about this programme whatever.

**Mr. Bickerton:** What about the private properties concerned?

**Mr. COURT:** They are covered by the provisions of the Mining Act which deal with mining on private property. There is provision in the Act for access to mining areas; and in this case further protection is provided because in gaining access to the areas the company has to collaborate with the Forests Department, particularly in respect of the roads it constructs.

If ever there was a mining operation which was going to be carefully controlled and sensibly managed, this is it, because we were mindful of the fact that there would be some misgivings on the part of certain people if the bauxite was to be extracted over very wide areas.

**Mr. Bickerton:** Is there very much private property in the leased areas? Are such properties protected?

**Mr. COURT:** There is a lot of private property in the area, but the company has no inherent rights under the agreement to that property, only over Crown lands as defined by the Mining Act.

The fourth member to speak on the matter this afternoon was the member for Middle Swan, and he raised the question of clause 4, subclause (2). I can only repeat what I said last night; and that is that the previous subclause is the governing provision which requires the company to follow modern practices and do all it can to ensure that there is no nuisance. So far as the rights of the factory inspector are concerned, there is nothing in the agreement restricting his right of entry.

This subclause (2) of clause 4, to which the honourable member has referred, is a clause to give the company some reasonable protection; and it is important that Governments from time to time make sure that their town planners, and others responsible, zone their areas properly so that we do not have tremendous conflict in respect of these industrial sites. In the old days there was a tendency, of course, to allow residents to build almost on the boundary fences of these factories, and it was only a matter of time before complaints of noise, smoke, gases, and so on, were made.

**Mr. Hawke:** The houses were usually there first. The factories came afterwards.

**Mr. COURT:** Today, especially in areas like this, the tendency—where it is possible to do so—is to zone so that industrial

sites are reasonably removed from residential sites without having excessive distances over which workers must travel.

Therefore it does come down to a matter of commonsense on the part of the Government and the local authorities to ensure that, when zoning, nothing is done to provoke unnecessarily a situation where the nuisance causes inconvenience to local residents. I still feel as we did when this particular clause was under negotiation, that subclause (1) is the important clause which binds the company to observe the best modern practices in respect of an alumina refinery.

Our research shows that these particular refineries do not create a very great nuisance so far as smoke, gas, and dust are concerned. The main problem is in connection with red mud and sand effluent, in regard to which we have taken elaborate precautions. I think I have covered the points raised by speakers this afternoon.

**Question put and passed.**

**Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.**

## NORTH-WEST: COMMONWEALTH AID FOR DEVELOPMENT

### *Motion*

**MR. BICKERTON** (Pilbara) [5.48 p.m.]: I move—

That, in view of the satisfactory result obtained from the case presented by the all-party committee to Canberra in 1955 (as a result of a motion moved in this Parliament in July, 1954), and the works completed and in progress in the Kimberley area of the State, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Government, this House is of the opinion that a further all-party committee should be appointed to present as soon as possible to the Commonwealth Government a case for the development of the area lying between the 20th and 26th parallels of south latitude.

**It further requests—**

- (a) that a programme for development of this portion of the State be drawn up by a committee consisting of the Premier, Deputy Premier, and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly; the Minister in charge of the Legislative Council, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council;
- (b) that this committee submit such programme at an interview with the Right Hon. the Prime Minister, and the Federal Treasurer;

- (c) that a special Federal grant of an amount considered necessary for this work for a period of ten years be requested in order to stimulate and carry out this vital development.

This House also desires that the Legislative Council be acquainted accordingly, and asks for its concurrence.

The purpose of this motion is to find additional means by which the northern half of this State may be assisted for further development. There is nothing new in a motion of this nature. In fact, a reference to *Hansard* will reveal that there have been many motions of this type calling on all-party committees to look into matters, particularly in the north-west. They have met with varied degrees of success. The most recent motion of this nature was one moved in 1954 by the late Mr. Hugh Ackland; and this was possibly the most successful one.

The present Opposition was, at that stage, the Government; and the success that came from that particular motion, which was carried in this House, has more than a little to do with the one before us now.

To acquaint members with that motion, the outcome of which I consider was most successful so far as the north-west is concerned, I will read it. It is to be found in Vol. I, of *Hansard* for 1954, on page 610, and is as follows:—

That this House expresses its opinion that that portion of the State which lies north of the 26th parallel of latitude is incapable of being fully developed if wholly dependent upon such finance as is only obtainable from State resources.

It therefore requests—

- (a) that a programme for the development of this portion of the State be drawn up by a committee consisting of the Premier (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, M.L.A.), the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Sir Ross McLarty, K.B.E., M.L.A.), and the Leader of the Country Party (Hon. A. F. Watts, C.M.G., M.L.A.);
- (b) that this committee submit such programme at an interview with the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer;
- (c) that a special Federal grant of £3,000,000 a year or an amount considered necessary for this work for a period of 10 years be requested in order to carry out this vital developmental work.

This House also desires that the Legislative Council be acquainted accordingly and asks for its concurrence.

You will see, Mr. Speaker, that there is a similarity between that motion and the present one; except that the preamble to the present motion recognises the success that came from this earlier motion and calls for a similar committee to investigate the area from the 20th parallel south down to the 26th parallel. In other words, the results of the previous all-party committee did, in the main, benefit that area of the north-west known as the Kimberley area. People in the other areas of the north feel they have perhaps been a little neglected or overlooked as a result of the ventures which are taking place in the Kimberley area.

Let me say at this stage that I agree very much with the work that is going on in the Kimberley. I think it is greatly assisting to develop the north, and will do very much more in that direction. I would like to see it proceed to plan, and I would like to see the tempo of development increase. Therefore this motion is in no way designed to detract from what has already been done in that area. In fact, if anything, it would support it.

This motion arose from representations made to me by local authorities in my area. At a meeting of the Pilbara ward held last year, attended by representatives of all councils in my area, the following motion was moved:—

Pilbara Ward Development. Moved by Mr. B. E. O'Neill, seconded Mr. A. L. Spring, that the Secretary inform Mr. A. Bickerton, M.L.A. and Mr. P. Brown, M.H.R., that the Pilbara Electoral Ward is "a no man's land" between the southern part of the State and the 20th parallel and that it is not sharing in the interest expressed in the North-West, and suggest that an all-Party Committee be formed at State level to investigate this problem.

They may be a little over-enthusiastic when they say that it is not sharing in the interest of the north-west. There are certain works going on in that area which, of course, are benefiting their area. However, they do feel that, owing to the success that was derived from the last all-party committee, a similar body to investigate that mid-section of the north could do a lot of good.

The previous motion of the late member for Moore was at that particular time supported by the Government of the day. It was supported by the then Leader of the Opposition, the member for Murray; by the present Premier; by the present Deputy Premier; and by speakers of all parties on both sides of the House.

I will not weary the House by reading extracts from the speeches which took place at that time; but they are quite



interesting to anyone who feels that this motion should receive more than the mere consideration of being heard and then thrown out. I feel that all the speeches could be summed up very capably by a quotation from the speech of the present Deputy Premier made at that particular time; and I would like to read his final remarks as reported on page 884 of *Hansard*, 1954, Vol 1. I quote as follows:—

So I want all members to look at this motion as a genuine attempt to co-ordinate our ideas upon this subject; to impress upon the Commonwealth the need for its co-operation; to indicate to it that we do not come as mendicants. We should make it clear that we approach it as representing the people of Western Australia who know the tremendous value that exists in the north-western portion of Western Australia, not only to this State, but also to the Commonwealth as a whole. We should seek to determine that it be placed in a position whereby we can hold it by developing and populating it, and to assert that that can only be done if both the State and the Commonwealth are able, with a greater measure of generosity than they have been able to display in the past, to assist its essential development by public and other works.

I think that probably sums up the purpose of this motion equally as well as it did the purpose of the previous motion.

You have probably heard, Mr. Speaker, of the potential of the north-west. I suppose all members of this House have; and, quite frankly, so have I. Indeed, I have heard of the potential of the north-west to such an extent that the mention of it almost tires me. Of course the north-west has a potential. So has the south-west; as, indeed, has the north, east, south, and west, and other more defined points of the compass of every State of Australia. In fact, any piece of land which in these troubled times has the courage to protrude its head above sea level has a potential. But talking about it does not, of course, do very much good.

I was recently reading the journal of a famous man by the name of Francis Thomas Gregory, who was the first inland explorer in the north-west. He landed at a place called Nickol Bay not far from Roebourne; and, per medium of horseback, he explored most of the inland areas—the Roebourne area, the Hamersleys, the Marble Bar area and through to Port Hedland, and then back to his starting point. Throughout his journal he makes many references to the great potential of the area.

Early this year, two Federal Ministers—Mr. Holt and Senator Spooner—took a trip up through there and, on return, both gentlemen made references to the great potential of this particular area. The first fellow made his remarks in 1861; and the

remarks of the second two gentlemen were made in 1961—a mere 100 years between the two utterances; and, in the interim, many famous people, and some not so famous, have all discussed the great potential of the north-west. Yet, Mr. Speaker, in that time we have put a mere 10,000 people into approximately 500,000 square miles of Australian territory.

At that rate, in another 100 years there will be 20,000 people; or in 200 years' time, 30,000; and if we look 300 years ahead there will, at the present rate of progress, be no more than 40,000 people occupying the area. That thought, to say the least, is rather horrifying.

In 1901 the population of the north-west was about 5,500; and at that time the population of Australia was about 3,500,000. The population of Australia today is about 10,000,000, and the population of the north-west is only 10,000; so while the population of Australia as a whole has practically trebled since that time, the population of the north-west has barely doubled. Therefore it would be safe to say that we are not keeping pace but rather that we are dropping back.

I think we have to decide at this stage whether we can do something about increasing the tempo of development in that area, or whether we are going to leave the problem for posterity to solve. If we do that, and succeeding generations do the same thing, how long will we be able to hold the north-west? I am of the opinion that we will need to do something drastic unless we can increase the rate of development in those areas. As I have said, what has been done in the Kimberleys recently—much of it as a direct result of the work of the previous all-party committee—is a good thing; and I think that is possibly one way we could get things moving in some of the other areas.

As the population of Western Australia as a whole is very low in comparison with the other States, it is obvious that the work cannot be done from funds made available by the Treasury of this State. In my view the State of Western Australia has done wonders with its under-developed areas, particularly considering the size of the State's population and the extent of the under-developed areas that have to be attended to. Taking everything into consideration, I think past Governments, of all colours, have done wonders with the small amount of finance available to them.

I also realise that we have received Commonwealth assistance in many directions, but I have shown the rate of improvement in the area up to date and what finance has been used. The position is far from satisfactory and I believe it is only right that a special plea should be made at this stage, because the present is as good a time as any to increase the Commonwealth financial assistance which should be made available to that part of the State. The best

way to do this is to have definite projects in mind; and I think a programme could be drawn up by an all-party committee rather than by a committee comprised of members of only one party.

Now I think you can see, Mr. Speaker, the reason why not only the members representing that area, but also the local authorities involved, believe that something should be done; especially when they look further north and see and hear of the great expectations of the Kimberleys. They believe they are missing out at a time when they should be right in the middle of all this development.

I would think that if this motion is agreed to and the committee is appointed, it will operate in much the same way as the previous committee did. It will look at all possible projects that it may be worth while to finance for the north. To my way of thinking there are many such projects, particularly on the mining side. For instance, there is the asbestos industry. We have rather huge deposits of blue asbestos, and at present one company is operating its leases. However, I feel there is room for other companies to do likewise without in any shape or form interfering with the activities of the company at present engaged in the mining of blue asbestos. Some leases are also held by other companies which, I have no doubt, could be mined if sufficient finance could be made available and development difficulties overcome.

The way I visualise the position is that the Commonwealth financial assistance would enable preliminary work to be done and specific grants would be made available for such things as roads, the building of houses, the provision of water supplies, and so on; and then tenders could be called, on a world-wide basis if necessary, to get someone interested in operating shows similar to that now being operated by Australian Blue Asbestos Ltd. I believe there is adequate room in that part of the State for more than one company to operate.

These matters, and many others, would be investigated by this all-party committee. Also, there is the question of iron ore. The present Government has called tenders in this regard, and at this stage we are not aware of the outcome of those tenders. But even if they are not satisfactory, and the Government cannot find a company that is interested, because of the large amount of finance it will have to lay out to carry out some of the conditions relating to the harbour, roads, or railway line that it will not be left at that. I sincerely hope the Government will be able to find a company that is prepared to do the job.

If the tenders are not satisfactory the committee should obtain an amount for putting in a deep-water port at Port Hedland at Government expense, which

would be approximately £3,000,000 according to the investigations that have been made. The Government should then be prepared to provide the road or the railway; and, if fresh tenders were called in the event of its not being a satisfactory proposition initially, it certainly would be satisfactory the second time. However, I hope it is already a success, in which event what I have suggested will not be necessary.

Mr. Brand: What do you think about the establishment of a deep-sea port for Depuch Island?

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not know the relative characteristics or advantages of both sites; but in the report I have, the figure of £2,250,000 is given for the establishment of a deep-sea port at Port Hedland. I have no idea what it would cost to establish such a port at Depuch Island; but any objection I would have to that site would be on the ground that it would mean the establishment of another townsite or centre when already we are having great difficulty in maintaining the necessary water supplies, public works, housing, electricity supplies, and so on in the towns that are already established.

I think that to have at least one good deep-sea port established with all the necessary facilities to enable people to live in reasonable comfort would be much better than having several inadequate ports scattered along our coast. That is the only factor I would have against the establishment of a deep-sea port at Depuch Island.

Mr. Brand: The real issue is that if we spend the £3,000,000 which we could get from the Commonwealth Government, we could not get ships of more than 12,500 tons into Port Hedland, whereas if a deep-sea port were established at Depuch Island, ships of 40,000 tons could be berthed.

Mr. BICKERTON: There are probably factors of which I have no knowledge, but I know that even under the scheme proposed for the establishment of a deep-sea port at Port Hedland, it would still only be able to accommodate ships of up to 10,000 and 12,000 tons. The port, at present, of course, can only accommodate ships of about 4,000 tons.

Mr. Court: The greatest factor against Port Hedland is that the finance needed for the maintenance of the harbour would be extremely great.

Mr. BICKERTON: If this all-party committee were appointed, that would be a matter that could be investigated. To weigh the advantages and disadvantages of Port Hedland as against Depuch Island could also be a matter for the all-party committee to consider; but I am not in a position to comment on that, because I only know the difficulties that exist at Port Hedland. I am certainly not acquainted with any difficulties at Depuch Island.

The copper areas of the Pilbara district are another matter that could be investigated by this all-party committee. There are many of these areas in the Pilbara district which, at present, may be considered to be somewhat uneconomical. Of course, a proposition which is considered to be uneconomical because a large amount of money has to be spent to build roads or to lay railway lines, following which great expenditure must be made on developmental work, may not be uneconomical if those facilities or the bulk of the expenditure necessary to provide them has already been expended by the Government. If that were so, the proposition would then become attractive to someone to operate it by concentrating on the mining work alone. The same comment also applies to the mines which are already in operation.

At present they are operating perhaps on a limited scale, and the operators could be encouraged to increase their production considerably with the grant of loans on a low interest rate and by finance being made available by the Commonwealth Government to provide the necessary roads, houses, and other attendant facilities. That is one of the most suitable channels along which Commonwealth finance could be pumped at present in order to assist the existing companies in their operations and, furthermore, to open up new leases.

The same problem exists on the tin-fields. There are vast alluvial tinfields in the Pilbara area; and I feel sure the present production of tin could be trebled with very little financial assistance. Such assistance could be applied to establish roads, to provide water supplies and, perhaps, to a limited extent, to provide housing.

However, when we have an area which has to be opened up by a private company, that company would virtually go bankrupt by the time it had built roads over any great distance. Its prospecting programme for water could run into thousands of pounds, and that is one of the first essentials if one is to obtain this mineral. The money which a company would normally use to develop its leases would all be expended before it carried out its developmental programme at the mine. Only wealthy companies would be in a position to do that.

Therefore, I would hope the committee would endeavour to obtain and make available an amount of money which could be allocated to the various mining operators by way of loan at a low rate of interest to assist them in their actual developmental work. There is a great potential for the establishment of a tin industry in the area which would, I feel sure, flourish and become of great benefit to the area in general.

Another huge area is the Nullagine conglomerates, but unfortunately any real investigation of these deposits has been restricted by the limited finance available

to the Mines Department to equip geological teams to investigate the area to the fullest extent. I feel certain that if a grant were made available for such a survey, the Nullagine conglomerates could become gold-producing, provided a company was not obliged to find the initial amount of money for the development, which would be extremely expensive. Other minerals already existing in the area are beryl and, to a certain extent, gold in underground deposits.

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

Mr. BICKERTON: Before the tea suspension I was making some suggestions as to matters that could be looked into by this all-party committee which I suggest should be formed. One of these matters was the necessity for additional mines personnel, geologists, and the like, to investigate further minerals of the area. One of the areas to which I referred, and which could receive some consideration if the money were available is the Nullagine conglomerate area. There is also the fact that many mining ventures are at present being operated efficiently and successfully; and these could extend considerably if more financial assistance and—what is more important—more technical assistance were available.

The committee could get from the Mines Department much of the information it required on any of the matters I have mentioned. This information would be readily available to the committee; and I feel sure that if these things were knocked into shape as worth-while projects, then an approach to the Commonwealth authorities, along the right lines, could bring financial assistance which would help the area greatly from the mining point of view.

The question of transportation generally in the northern areas could also be considered by this committee. Transportation, of course, covers both road and air transport. This is one of the biggest problems—as it is anywhere—throughout the north; and the emergency, of course, is for additional Commonwealth assistance for roads, and particularly for river crossings.

Most of the high cost felt by anyone endeavouring to make a living in the north-west at the present time could be attributable to the tremendous cost of transport, and also to the inaccessibility of some areas on account of the condition of the roads, and particularly their unreliability in the wet weather. I feel the area will be greatly assisted by a more frequent air service to all inland centres.

The air service that operates at present is heavily subsidised; and, of course, the number of trips that can be made into these inland towns is limited, and regulated by the amount of money made available to subsidise them. So we hope that

that would be a point to which the committee would give particular attention—that is, to have the subsidy on air services increased to enable a more frequent service to operate in most of those areas.

As I have mentioned previously in this House, possibly the biggest drawback of all, in the north-west, and particularly in the Pilbara area, is the lack of water. I think I am on pretty safe ground when I say that in my opinion this has never been really prospected for earnestly, because finance has not been available in any large quantity to enable the work to be carried out by a team of technical borers; that is, a boring team with technicians attached to it. These technicians would include geologists and the like. If finance were available they could have made an all-out effort to find water in usable quantities to assist both the mining and the pastoral industries and, also, the town life of the area.

I believe it is equally important to find water in good large quantities in the north-west as it is to discover oil. It is certainly so from the point of view of the north-west. I have often thought that had we spent half as much on finding water in that area, and on testing our underground water resources, as we have on prospecting for oil, the north would be far more productive.

The north-west is not desert country; it is not arid; it is purely country which lacks a reasonable water supply. Although there is a fair rainfall, this is confined to a very small portion of the year. But the country itself is quite capable of growing almost anything if water were available. The stations in the north-west have great difficulty through the lack of water; and so has the mining industry.

I would like to see a well-organised water-boring and water-prospecting team operating in the north-west, to do nothing more than locate the supplies, after which private enterprise could carry on with the development. It is perhaps not so much the cost of putting down a well or a bore that matters, if one knew one would be successful after putting down that well or bore, but the fact that the average private company is not in a position to do the necessary prospecting work, which, to my knowledge, has never been done along any set or well-organised plan.

The finding of sufficient quantities of water would be the salvation of the areas of the north-west; as it would be of those lower down through the Gascoyne and in part of the Murchison. If water could not be found in certain places, it would at least save people spending huge sums of money looking for it in those areas.

After considering the exploration for water, this committee could then turn its attention to its conservation. It could study the methods being used now in the Kimberley area; and apart from this, there

are a number of places in the Pilbara area where damming could be carried out. The Fortescue River project is one that was looked into many years ago and was found to be a likely proposition. But here again this, of course, was far beyond the resources of the State.

If this motion is successful, I suggest that water exploration and water conservation should be high on the list of priorities for the north, in an endeavour to see what can be done in that matter. There are such places as Mill Stream; and many who know the area are aware that many millions of gallons of water flow out from one spot, travel a matter of yards, and then disappear again. I feel sure that if that water supply were thoroughly investigated, it could be instrumental in furnishing the needs of irrigation for the raising of crops such as stock fodder; and in particular, lucerne. I would place the emphasis on the availability of water supplies.

The pastoral industry is another aspect which the proposed committee could examine with a view to seeking Commonwealth assistance. Only a little while ago this Government appointed a three-man committee to investigate the conditions of the pastoral industry in the Pilbara district. Many of the recommendations made by that committee were worth while; if they were implemented they could be the means of improving the pastoral industry.

I have no doubt the reason they have not been put into operation is the lack of finance. We could not have chosen three better men than those who were appointed to that committee. They know the north very well, and their report was an excellent one. The committee which I advocate in this motion could well examine that report. If the recommendations made in the report were implemented we would be going a long way to solving the pastoral problems in the Pilbara area.

Over the years the pastoral industry, which has been the backbone of that area, has suffered greatly. Today the sheep numbers have decreased by more than half compared with former years. Many reasons have been given for this reduction, such as overstocking and bad management. I do not know that we would get very far in blaming the efforts of the people who were engaged in that industry in the past. The object of the committee I propose will be to rectify the wrong methods which were practised in the past, and thus put the pastoral industry back on its feet.

At present the industry is going downhill, and going down fast. One station in my area, which in 1934 had 49,000 sheep, at present runs about 13,000. The sheep numbers in the Pilbara district in 1934 were approximately 630,000; but at present, according to the latest statistics, they have been reduced to 300,000. That is the extent

to which the sheep population has decreased. We cannot blame overstocking and bad management entirely. However, this industry, which has kept the district going, is slipping, and something has to be done. An investigation such as the one I propose will go at least part of the way towards solving many of the problems.

We need more agricultural officers and veterinary surgeons in the area to assist the pastoral industry. We need men who are experienced in animal husbandry and whose services can be made available to stations which it is desired to improve. The difficulty we face is that the Department of Agriculture, like most Government departments, is extremely short of funds.

I have no doubt that these officers could be obtained if adequate finance were available. That is another reason why Commonwealth assistance is absolutely essential to assist Western Australia in developing the northern portion of the State, and in bringing it back to what it was from the pastoral point of view.

Much has been said about the size of leases and holdings. I can do no more than recommend members of this Chamber to read the words uttered by a member in another part of this building—The Hon. F. J. S. Wise. His comments are reported in No. 5 of *Hansard* of this year, and they deal with the pastoral industry. Much of what he said and advocated is of great value to the area I am referring to. Like my own words, they boil down to the fact that assistance involving a great deal of finance is necessary for restoring the pastoral industry.

Public works are another feature which the committee could consider. Educational buildings, such as high schools, are very necessary if this State is to have an increased population in the north, and to maintain that population there. Commonwealth assistance is essential in order to relieve the State from providing the huge amount which is involved in developing the north-west.

Whilst the State continues to drain the Treasury to the extent that it does, naturally works in other electorates must suffer as a result of the decreased Government funds. If we could obtain additional Commonwealth assistance for the development of the northern portion of the State, then the funds of the State Treasury could be expended on urgent work elsewhere in the State.

We have to do something about the north-west from the national viewpoint. We cannot allow it to go along as it has in the last 100 years. The development in that time has not been of any credit to us. It might have been a credit to those who did their best as individuals in developing the area; but, as a whole, the development is not much credit to the State.

I realise that the Northern Territory and the north of Queensland are in the same position as our north-west, and no doubt the two former areas will be tackling the problem from the same point of view; that is, from the point of view of obtaining Commonwealth financial assistance.

If this House saw fit to agree to the motion and the proposed committee got under way, with the forthcoming Federal elections this State would no doubt receive additional finance for the development of the north-west. Such a committee would do a lot of good, because the investigations which it would carry out up to the stage when Commonwealth assistance was received would be the starting point for the expenditure of the finance which no doubt the Commonwealth Government would provide, in view of the coming elections in December.

Whatever way we go about this matter, the approach to the Commonwealth Government should be on a non-party basis. This area is too big to be kicked around like a political football. The parliamentary representation of the area as a whole comprises three members in this House and three members in another place, with one Federal member who represents, in addition, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, and Esperance. Such representation is quite insufficient and inadequate to bring enough pressure on the Commonwealth Government to provide the necessary finance.

Assistance can only be obtained by the appointment of an all-party committee, similar to the one formed in 1954. If such an all-party committee were appointed, it would carry a great deal of weight. When the members of that committee went to Canberra to put its views before the Prime Minister and the Treasurer, no doubt more notice would be taken of them than if the representations were made by one political party; and that would apply particularly if this motion is passed by both Houses of this Parliament. That is the best way of appointing the committee; I said it should be a non-party matter, and that an all-party committee should be formed to deal with it.

I do not wish to suggest that the committee be tied down to any particular project, as I think that committee, as was done on the last occasion, would investigate the matter thoroughly and find the most suitable projects it considered would assist the areas to which I have referred—and those areas would be the ones the committee would push the hardest.

As for the amount of money required, it is difficult for anyone to say. It is not possible to quote the maximum figure that would be absolutely necessary to develop this area. However, to start development, and keep it going, it might be necessary to spend £10,000,000 per year for perhaps 10 years. This would probably enable

development to reach a stage where the area could produce sufficient to enable it to become a lesser liability on this State and also on the Commonwealth.

Mr. Brand: What about finishing off the Ord project? That will want a few million each year.

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not think the Ord project should be interfered with, but I would like to see the north-west move forward as a whole more than it is doing at the present time. The Ord project, combined with the suggestions I have made, would not cost anywhere near the figure involved in the Snowy River project. After all is said and done, the Commonwealth, at this time, has been relieved of much of that expenditure as the Snowy River scheme is nearing completion. Therefore I think the north of this State and even the under-developed areas of the Northern Territory should be the next areas to be pushed by the Commonwealth. I believe this is the best way to go about getting finance to do just that.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for the North-West).

## TOBACCO INDUSTRY: INQUIRY BY SELECT COMMITTEE

### *Motion*

MR. OWEN (Darling Range) [7.52 p.m.]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon—

- (1) the factors which have contributed to the present position of the tobacco-growing industry in this State;
- (2) ways and means which might be adopted to place the industry on a better footing;
- (3) whether it is practicable to endeavour to expand the production of cigarettes and tobacco in this State.

I would like to explain to the House that this motion has been prompted by the serious position in which the tobacco industry in Western Australia has been placed, due to the fact that a considerable portion of last year's crop of leaf is still unsold. This year's sales, held a few weeks ago, have brought lower prices; and more than 50 per cent. of the crop still remains unsold. That shows this industry is in a very parlous condition; and, if it is to survive, quite a few changes must take place.

I must explain to the House that since notice of this motion was given, there has been a move at Federal level to undertake some inquiry by a committee set up by the Federal authorities. Just to give some

idea of that, I wish to quote a Press statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Mr. John McEwen. It reads as follows:—

Following on earlier representations to the Commonwealth Government and the recent Conference of the Australian Tobacco Growers' Council in Perth, representatives of the Growers' Council today conferred with Commonwealth Ministers.

The Ministers who were present were: The Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Trade (Mr. McEwen), the Minister for Primary Industry (Mr. Adernann), the Minister for Customs and Excise (Senator Henty) and the Minister for Air (Senator Wade).

Following a full discussion about the current problems of the industry and the agreed necessity for policies which give a secure future to tobacco leaf producers, the Council representatives requested the Minister to make available Commonwealth technical officers to work with members of the Council in the conduct of a factual examination of the position in the industry in the light of experience during the 1960-61 tobacco selling season.

They said it was their intention also to approach the State Governments concerned with a view to seeking the services of State Government technical officers to co-operate in this factual examination.

The purpose of the examination is to provide sufficient factual information to place the Council in a position to put before Commonwealth and State Governments an accurate account of the financial problems of growers flowing from the results of the tobacco leaf sales this season and also of those issues which should be recognised as bearing on the future of the industry.

The Ministers agreed that they would give careful consideration to the request made by the Council and promised they would seek an early Government decision.

I understand that that inquiry is already under way, and that these officers are likely to visit this State next week. Undoubtedly, that inquiry will throw quite a lot of light on the state of the tobacco industry, not only in Western Australia, but, I understand, in Queensland also.

Mr. Nalder: And Victoria.

Mr. OWEN: Yes; and Victoria. I feel that the motion I have moved will be agreed to by this House so that an inquiry may be set up to turn over some of the ground that may, perhaps, be left untouched by that other committee.

To gain some idea of the conditions in the tobacco-growing industry in this State, it is necessary to have a little knowledge

of the tobacco industry in Australia. I think we all know that tobacco is an item of considerable interest to the Federal Government because in Australia—and indeed in most other countries of the world—tobacco which is manufactured for smoking purposes is subject to excise duty. In Australia the rate of excise duty on tobacco prepared for cigarette manufacture amounts to 31s. 10d. per lb.; and for manufactured trade tobacco the excise is 18s. 5d. per lb.

Australia still has to import large quantities of leaf to satisfy the demand of Australian smokers; and on this leaf not only does excise duty have to be paid, but there is also an import duty of 7s. 6d. per lb. Members will understand the necessity for import duty because much of the tobacco produced overseas is produced so much more cheaply than under Australian conditions. Therefore, to protect the Australian grower, some duty must be imposed on imported tobacco.

To give the Customs Department officers full control over Australian tobacco, every producer must be registered with that department. In addition, every producer must account for all the tobacco he produces; and no grower can use any of the leaf he grows for the purpose of smoking. I understand the excise people keep a close watch over the position so that they will not be deprived of any of the excise duties which they are empowered to collect.

To encourage the production of tobacco leaf in Australia and also to limit to some extent the import of overseas tobacco leaf, the Federal authorities each year fix the proportion of Australian leaf which must be used in the preparation of tobacco, whether it be for cigarette smoking or other smoking. This has been done by the Controller of Customs in conjunction with members of the Australian Tobacco Growers' Council, which council consists of representatives from each of the four Australian tobacco-growing States. These are Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia. Also the representatives of the manufacturers are consulted.

This proportion of Australian leaf which the manufacturers are compelled to use is closely related to the quantity of suitable Australian leaf available each year. Of course it cannot be fixed until the year after that tobacco leaf is grown, because until it is grown no-one knows just what the production will be. The leaf which has been grown during the last season and which has just been sold will not be manufactured for at least 12 months. So the proportion is fixed after the crop is grown but well before that tobacco leaf is manufactured into cigarette tobacco or other smoking mixtures.

There have been generally increasing quantities of Australian-produced tobacco used in the smoking industry in Australia

every year. For instance, in 1948, only 3 per cent. of the tobacco used in cigarettes was Australian grown, and 5 per cent. of other tobacco leaf used was Australian grown. Last year the proportion was 35 per cent. Australian tobacco for cigarettes and 32 per cent. for other forms of smoking requirements; while the proportion for this coming year has been fixed at 43 per cent. for cigarettes and 40 per cent. for other types.

It may be possible at some future time to use 100 per cent. Australian tobacco leaf. I believe that this has occurred in South Africa; but I am afraid it will be quite a number of years before that position is reached in Australia because, as most of us realise, smoking tobaccos are prepared from many different grades and types of tobacco; and apart from the quantity produced in Australia, I am doubtful whether it will be possible to produce all the varieties necessary for the types of tobacco used by smokers in this country.

With regard to this proportion fixed by the Customs Department, our Western Australian growers feel it could have been raised from 43 per cent. to 49 per cent. this coming year. That is based on the amount of tobacco which has been produced this year; and I could not understand the reason it was not raised to that maximum level. However, it may be, of course, that some of our tobacco is not considered to be of a sufficiently high quality to qualify for inclusion in our smoking tobaccos.

The total production of tobacco in Australia last year amounted to 15,528 short tons. Of that amount, Western Australia produced approximately 675 short tons; Queensland—in the northern tobacco areas around Mareeba—produced 5,800 tons; and, in the more southern tobacco areas of that State, 2,100 tons; New South Wales produced 1,400 short tons in the north and 606 short tons in the south; while in Victoria a total of 4,947 short tons was produced. Therefore Western Australia produced approximately 4.3 per cent. of the Australian total.

Tobacco, suitable for smoking, must have certain inherent qualities to satisfy the tastes of smokers; and the smoking tobacco, as we know it, consists of the dry or cured leaf of the tobacco plant which contains certain chemicals including sugars, organic acids, and drugs—mainly nicotine. It also contains a number of minerals. It must in addition possess certain burning qualities.

As I explained before, in order to get something near the ideal smoking mixture, it is necessary for quite a number of different types and grades to be blended, and this blend varies according to the maker's formula, as it were. I understand that there has been, and still is, a trend towards more and more cigarette smoking.

I have heard it stated that this might be because the increased number of women smoking demand what we know as the tailor-made cigarette. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the older form of cigarette smoking—that is, the roll-your-own type—is going out of favour very rapidly. It may be again that a slightly different type of leaf is necessary to satisfy the demands of the manufacturers. Nevertheless, as I have said, whatever is the cause, there has been a change in the type of tobacco required; and I feel that that is one of the main reasons that so much tobacco has been unsold in Western Australia.

The history of Western Australian tobacco growing goes back to the very early days of the State. I understand that small quantities were grown here and there as trials; and undoubtedly many of the pioneers had one or two plants which they used in the preparation of their own tobacco. After all, we must remember that in those days means of communication were few and far between, and I am sure that some of those old pioneers did their best to look after their own needs in that respect.

As we all know, our main tobacco-growing area is in the Manjimup district. From my own personal knowledge I believe it goes back some 30 years or more, because it was around the 1930's that the growing of tobacco was started down there more or less as a sideline. Those who are familiar with the history of the district up to that time will appreciate that when the group settlement plan was introduced there, quite a few new settlers were put on to dairy farms; and we all know that dairying at that time was in the doldrums and the position of those people was not very good.

Therefore I feel it was possibly because of that fact that those on the land looked to some other form of income and thus some tried tobacco growing; and apparently with some success, because for several years there was rather an influx of growers who decided to give tobacco growing a trial; and quite a few people invested their savings in tobacco growing—not as growers, but in financing those who were interested in growing tobacco. I have friends in that area who had a flutter at tobacco growing, and they had their fingers severely burned—and not with cigarette smoking, either, but financially.

Tobacco-growing conditions were very crude. No-one knew much about it. They were not sure of the type of land to be used. In fact, land was rather limited, because the areas which had to be cleared were rather small; and, in order to grow tobacco—which grows during the warmer months of the year—the land needed moisture, and people chose the lower or more moist land; and some of that land

produced only the heavy type of leaf, unless minerals were added to lighten the type of leaf.

Some of the Manjimup tobacco used to be likened to cabbage leaves. On one of my visits to the area I was told that a buyer who purchased on the grower-to-buyer basis selected what he thought was fit to use and the remainder was left on the hands of growers; and this heavy and very inferior leaf was purchased by local manufacturers at 4d. per lb.

However, tobacco growers persisted, and as more dairy farmers walked off the land, so the land became vacant. There were people from overseas who were interested in the land. Those people came from southern Europe and eastern Mediterranean countries. They had, perhaps, been employed in the timber industry; and knowing the tobacco-growing industry in their own country, those people took over the vacant land. It is a fact that in pre-war days there was a large proportion of people from overseas engaged in tobacco growing in the Manjimup area.

As I have said, the tobacco-growing industry is based mainly at Manjimup. However, there were areas grown in other districts such as Pemberton, Northcliffe and, I think, some grown this side of Manjimup and in the Margaret River area. However, in the main, the tobacco-growing industry is based mainly around Manjimup.

As a greater interest developed in tobacco growing, the Department of Agriculture took an interest in the industry and provided a tobacco adviser. Later on, the department established a research station just out of Manjimup. The department undertook research work and extension work; and I am sure that the advice given by the officers of the department has been of immense value in building up the industry to what it has eventually become. Also, a local tobacco manufacturer took an interest, not only from the buying angle, but by taking over the land and engaging in tobacco growing. A plantation belonging to this firm contained by far the largest holdings for a number of years. The firm of Michelides in one year grew as much as 310 acres on its own plantations.

The tobacco-growing industry in that district received quite a shot in the arm during the war years, although times were difficult with regard to labour conditions because so many people were engaged in the war and in war production. However, there was a big demand for Australian-produced tobacco; and I think that had quite an influence on increased production.

After the war the industry continued to make progress and there was a steady increase in production. To give members an idea of the increase in production, I would like to read out the figures supplied to me from a departmental source. In 1949-50 the acreage was 671 acres. The



total leaf sold was 418,404 lb., of a gross value of £103,830. The average price was 59.5d. per lb. The average return per acre was £155; and the average yield per acre was 624 lb. of tobacco leaf. It showed an upward trend.

By 1952-53 the acreage had increased to 1,109, and production to 811,549 lb. of leaf. With the increase in costs, the price had also risen, and that year it was 90.1d. per lb. The average return to the grower was £274 per acre. This increase was maintained rather slowly for a while, until there was a small jump in 1957-58.

In 1958-59 the total acreage was 1,456, and the total leaf sold was a record—and, I think, is still a record—being 1,144,000 lb. The gross value was £566,878. The average price in that year was 119.1d. per lb.; although even then there were a few pounds unsold. They were sold later at a low figure which reduced the average price. The average return per acre was £388. I would like to add that in the previous year, the record average return was £414 per acre to the grower.

The figures given by the statistical department show that the number of holdings producing tobacco had increased, but had fluctuated from approximately 1953 to 1954 onwards. The average number of holdings was in the region of 150 to 160. The average return per holding for that particular year was worked out, and it was something over £4,000. Members can therefore see that the industry was flourishing; and the fact that it brought into the district something over £500,000 in one year shows that it was an industry of considerable importance. The following year there was a slight recession in the average price per pound. There was slightly less tobacco leaf produced and sold. In 1959 to 1960 the leaf sold amounted to 1,017,414 lb., and the gross value was £434,619. The price had receded to 102.5d. per lb. There was a considerable amount unsold, and therefore there was a carry-over which still remains in the State and cannot be sold.

In the 1960-61 season the acreage decreased slightly compared with last year. The rate of yield was slightly increased, but the amount sold up to date has been only 629,702 lb. and there is still 658,240 lb. unsold. The average price for leaf sold was 63.1d. per lb. and the average return per acre has dropped; on the figures up to date, it is only £112 per acre. So members can see that the fortunes of the tobacco growers in the Manjimup area have suffered a severe reverse. The figures I have quoted do not include the production at Michelides plantations, which ceased to operate in 1955-56. They were not involved in the record year's production, nor are they involved in any way in the unsold tobacco which still remains in the State.

As regards the quality of the leaf, I will enlarge on this aspect later, but from the point of view of growing the quality of any tobacco leaf is largely dependent on the type of soil in which it is grown and the treatment and preparation of the soil prior to planting—that is, what crops have been grown previously and whether those crops have built up the soil or caused it to become run down. That sort of thing influences the type of leaf produced as also does the manurial treatment given to the crop; and also, of course, whether the land is irrigated or non-irrigated.

Water is fairly readily available in the Manjimup area, mainly from soaks or dams which conserve the water from the abundant winter rains. Some growers even draw the water from creeks that are still running during the drier part of the season. But it was the advent of irrigation in the Manjimup area which, I would say, permitted a much larger area to be placed under production, and possibly gave growers a much better control over the type of leaf produced; because I know from my own observations in that district that in the early days, growers, anticipating a dry year, would plant on the lower and wetter soils. This meant that the success of their crop was in the lap of the gods—if it was a dry year they came out of it fairly well, but if the summer happened to be wet they would produce a rather heavy, poor type of leaf. On the other hand if they anticipated a wet season, and they planted on the high ground, very often the crop would be deficient in moisture and the yield would be very low.

However, it has been proved that the quality of the leaf can be greatly influenced by the treatment the crop receives in the type of soil used, the cultural methods employed, the manurial treatment given, and so on. The quality, too, is slightly influenced by the time of picking. Experienced growers and advisers, of course, can tell to a fairly close degree of certainty when the leaf is mature and fit for picking.

But it must be admitted that at times growers who have a big programme of picking ahead of them are inclined to start earlier; and that can account for some of the low grade or poor-quality leaf. In fact I have been told that this year some of the poorer quality of leaf was due not so much to the general inexperience of growers in picking before the leaf was mature, but because a false maturity developed. The leaf had all the signs of being mature, but actually it was not fully mature; and that could and possibly did account for some of the poorer quality of leaf that was produced in this particular year.

Mr. Nalder: Was that caused through the hot weather?

Mr. OWEN: I would say that it was caused through the hot weather; or, shall we say, the peculiar seasonal conditions;

because, as we all know, we had very hot conditions in the early part of the summer, and then the summer broke very early and we had rain about Easter time. That could have influenced the maturity, or given an indication of maturity. However, I have been told by some who should be in a position to know that a certain amount of immature leaf was picked this year.

After picking, of course, the tobacco grower's work really starts, because it is then necessary to cure the tobacco leaf. Although it is picked when it is mature, it is still in a green state and contains quite a lot of moisture. When it is picked it is usually strung on stakes or wire and put in a drying kiln where it is under controlled heating conditions and controlled ventilation conditions. It is the care and attention given during the curing process which greatly influences the quality of the dried leaf. In Manjimup most of the curing is done by the growers themselves, and practically every holding has its own curing kiln.

As members can imagine, some of the growers are highly skilled in this operation and others, of course, may be a little careless. However, it is a very trying time for the tobacco growers. Most of the kilns use timber or wood fuel, and the growers have to be in attendance for practically 24 hours of the day to see that the furnaces are kept under control, the temperature is kept fairly regular, and the ventilation is fully controlled. So the curing period is a very anxious time for all growers in the tobacco-growing district.

I think it was two years ago that a co-operative concern moved into the tobacco-growing industry, mainly, I think, to give what assistance it could and to develop its operations in that district.

Mr. Rowberry: Last year.

Mr. OWEN: That is, the last 12 months?

Mr. Rowberry: They handled one crop.

Mr. OWEN: Yes. The co-operative established a larger packing and grading shed and had a more or less community kiln where those who wished could have the necessary treatment carried out by this co-operative concern, and the leaf could be cured, graded, and packed there. However, they could operate only during this one season, and naturally most of the tobacco was grown, cured, graded, and baled by the individual growers.

From the drying kilns tobacco is eventually allowed to sweat for a short time before being baled. Each bale would weigh approximately 150 to 160 lb. They are then sent forward to the selling floor where the leaf is sampled and appraised in somewhat similar fashion to the normal practice followed in the wool trade in order to obtain some idea of values.

Samples of the leaf are classified according to a system by which the so-called grade is classified as being a certain type

or given a name which is tied to a price range. I understand that system was introduced several years ago by an organisation known as F.A.T.G. That stands for Federation of Australian Tobacco Growers, I think; but I believe it is now defunct. Nevertheless, the system was used to classify the tobacco to obtain some idea of the value of the leaf.

It appears, however, that the buyers have abandoned that system of valuing the leaf, and now buy on the basis of what they consider the leaf is worth from the manufacturer's point of view. In discussing the matter with those who are interested, I am led to believe that if the system were altered to dovetail more with the buyer's values, that would, perhaps, be of some advantage.

I was further advised, however, that the buyers would resent any downgrading of the tobacco leaf. For some reason or other it would appear that they still prefer to adhere to the classified grading system, despite the fact that they are not getting the values that were indicated in previous years on what that particular grade of tobacco leaf was worth.

That is the reason why there is a great deal of dissatisfaction among the growers: namely, because there has been an alteration in the requirements of the trade which has affected the value of the leaf. Indeed, the values received have been extremely disappointing to the growers, apart from the fact that so much of the tobacco crop has remained unsold. When the tobacco has been appraised and set out for classification the buyers' representatives inspect it and obtain some idea of the values according to their needs. The leaf is then sold by auction and each of the buyers can bid according to what he considers to be the value of the leaf.

I understand that the buyers who represent tobacco-manufacturing firms in Australia are comparatively few; and, until recent years, there were, perhaps, fewer still. There was one firm which bought the bulk of the Australian tobacco leaf production, and there were other lesser firms which bought some. In post-war years, however, other tobacco manufacturers have entered the Australian market by dint of considerable and expensive advertising, perhaps coupled with the fact that there was, as members know, quite a scare a short time ago about cigarette and tobacco smoking being the cause of lung cancer.

Such reports were widely publicised in America and some of the older European countries, and those reports apparently affected the sales of cigarettes and tobacco; and one of the firms that entered the Australian market came in on that wave of apprehension—if one might call it that—on the part of cigarette smokers and, in a large way, it conducted an extensive advertising campaign for the sale of filter-tip cigarettes.

That has resulted in that company being firmly established among the cigarette and tobacco-manufacturing companies of Australia; and apparently its requirements are of a different type and it seeks a different grade of tobacco compared with what the older-established firms were used to buying. It could be that, in their endeavour to keep up with that firm, other manufacturers have altered their grading or their requirements and, as a result, there is a bigger demand for varying types of leaf.

I will give members some idea of what happened during the recent Western Australian tobacco sales conducted at Fremantle. They commenced on the 8th August and continued until the 16th. On the first day, the sales figures were: 1,021 bales, of a total weight of 163,295 lb. offered for sale, of which approximately only half—that is, 519 bales—were sold, the unsold bales numbering 502. The average price for the bales of tobacco offered was 61.6d. per lb., which was not much lower than the average price offered on the previous year's keener market.

However, the fact remained that half the number of bales offered for sale remained unsold on the first day, which caused consternation among the growers and those interested in the growing of tobacco leaf in Western Australia. The same results were practically repeated on the following days, 1,218 bales being offered for sale, with only 680 bales being sold; 1,403 bales offered for sale, and only 602 bales sold; 1,424 bales offered for sale, and 762 bales sold; 1,409 bales offered for sale, and 586 bales sold; and, on the last day, 189 bales were offered for sale with only 78 being sold.

Some bales were re-offered on the 16th August. These numbered 63, but only 28 bales were sold. The average price of the tobacco sold was 63.2d. per lb. The bales of tobacco sold were distributed among the three buyers. One bought 3,417 bales, representing a total weight of 552,519 lb., at a value of £137,587, the average price being 59.76d. per lb. Actually, that firm's proportion of the purchases was 87.66 per cent.

There was another firm which bought 115 bales of which the total weight was 19,413 lb., and the total value £9,083 8s. 10d. The average price paid by that firm was 112.29d. per lb. Unfortunately it bought only 2.95 per cent. of the tobacco offered. These figures will give some indication of the requirements of the various firms. The particular firm in question was in the Western Australian market to buy a particular type of tobacco which was fairly scarce; and it succeeded in buying that small quantity at a very much higher-than-average price.

The other firm, which bought lesser quantities than the first buyer, and possibly three times the amount of the one I quoted, paid an average price which

was somewhat lower than that of the second buyer but much higher than that paid by the first buyer. That firm paid 79.08d. per lb. and purchased 9.39 per cent. of the total.

I quote those figures to show that different buyers have different requirements. The tobacco they buy in Western Australia and from other States, together with that which they import, is mixed to make a particular blend which they think might be popular among the smokers of Australia. The other firm, perhaps, has a different clientele. Not being a smoker myself I would not know the details; but so far as Western Australia is concerned, they would perhaps be of more value to the industry in this State, because the firms bought much more of the tobacco even though they did so at a smaller price.

I think I mentioned that the other half of the tobacco offered at the recent sale remained unsold. I do not know what the future of that tobacco will be. I understand that quite a few bales were not sold last year, but there was an inquiry from overseas, and it was hoped that they would be sold, though perhaps at an even lower price than the average price received last year. The latest information I had, however, was that the sale was likely to fall through. So it is still not sold, and I do not know what will happen to it.

If it is sold and used for tobacco in Western Australia then, of course, the Excise Department will demand duty on it. So far as I know, there is no market where it can be used as a by-product which perhaps might bring a significant financial return to the growers. It could possibly be used in the preparation of nicotine sulphate or some other insecticide; but if that were done, or if it were sold for that purpose, I am afraid the grower would not get much return. The fact remains that the leaf has not been sold; and, of course, up till the present the growers have not received anything for the tobacco which is unsold.

I understand that many of these tobacco growers are financed on advances from local tradesmen. It would appear, therefore, that the future of the grower, and of those who supported him, is certainly not bright from the financial point of view. This poses the question as to just what is wrong with Western Australia's tobacco. The buyers say that much of it is not the type or quality required for the Western Australian trade. That may be so; but I have been told that this tobacco is of comparable quality with that which was sold and which realised almost twice the price two years ago.

Whether there has been a sudden change in the demand for certain types of tobacco, I would not know, but this committee, if appointed, might be able to throw some light on that aspect. I would have thought

it would be possible to arrange through the tobacco growers' council, in consultation with representatives of the industry, for the manufacturers to state their requirements both in quantity and type for the years to come. On the surface that would seem to be quite simple. But I am informed that the grades and blends of tobacco used by manufacturers are, to some extent, trade secrets; and it is said that if a manufacturer states that he wants so many hundred tons of a particular type of tobacco, his rivals will know all about it and upsets could result.

I believe that in spite of what has been mentioned by some of the growers, there is no collusion between the buyers. I understand that competition is very keen and the practices in business are more or less cut-throat. If one firm is able to secure any small advantage over another it accepts it with both hands.

The poor quality of the tobacco—if it is poor quality—or the quality not suitable to manufacturers, could be due in some measure to immature picking brought about by an unusual growing season. Where there was evidence of false maturity the leaf was actually picked before its time.

Another complaint that is made about Western Australian tobacco is that it is too high in chloride content. Undoubtedly this is true. Western Australian tobacco has a very high chloride or chlorine content. But I have been told by officers of the Department of Agriculture that Western Australia is not alone in producing tobacco with that fault. I am informed that other tobacco-growing areas in southern Queensland also produce a leaf which is high in chloride content. Apparently it is somewhat similar in chloride content to the Western Australian leaf.

It is quite easy to imagine that a percentage of chloride or other mineral salts could quite easily interfere with the smoking and burning quality of the leaf. It is possible that something could be done about this aspect; and if this committee were set up to inquire into the matter, much information could be given by the departmental officers, because over the years those who were engaged in giving advice and in extension work had expert knowledge of the requirements of tobacco growing. Further, many of the growers also know how to produce various types of tobacco leaf.

There is a good range in soil types in the Manjimup district. If the proper treatment to the soil is given, and if the soil is built up in organic and nitrogen content where necessary, particular types of leaf can be grown. Some lead should be given to the tobacco growers as to the types of leaf required by the manufacturers. Growers and the Agricultural Department in this State have not had full knowledge of what tobacco buyers and manufacturers require from year to year.

For a number of years there was a good demand for the thin papery type of tobacco leaf. Perhaps that type was needed to blend with the other types of leaf which were grown in abundance in other districts in Australia. It is a fact that much of the thin papery variety of leaf which was produced in Manjimup sold very readily.

Now the growers have been informed that the demand is for a more full-bodied leaf, perhaps not quite as light in colour as the thin papery variety, but still a medium light colour. The difference in the type is as the difference between thin paper and parchment paper. Provided the growers know the type of leaf which the buyers and manufacturers require, it will be possible for them to vary their methods of production and grow more of the desired type.

Quite a number of pests affect the tobacco leaf, but they can be controlled with the normal insecticides used. I am informed that the general insecticides which are applied to rid the plant of pests do not influence the quality of the tobacco leaf, or the smoking quality of the tobacco. We have had increasing evidence that the minute underground pests can be of serious consequence to the tobacco plant.

In that regard I quote from the annual report of the Department of Agriculture for the year ended the 30th June, 1960, on page 43. Under the heading of "Nematology" the following appears:—

Root knot eelworm attack on tobacco has become more prevalent recently in certain areas and at Manjimup tests of pre-plant fumigation both in autumn and spring were initiated to determine the best time of application and the optimum dosage. Fumigation at both periods gave excellent control of eelworm.

My experience is that where the eelworm is prevalent, the root growth of the plant is so reduced that the growth of the tobacco plant can be influenced. To get over the limitations in the growth of tobacco, the natural inclination and practice is to apply more manure. That practice is carried on in all walks of primary production: if a plant does not grow well, more fertiliser is applied.

Fertiliser treatment is quite important in the production of first-grade tobacco. It can also affect the chloride content of the tobacco leaf. To give some indication of that, I quote from page 41 of the same report. Under the heading of "Tobacco," the following appears:—

Fertiliser experiments on new and old land at Manjimup coupled with glasshouse sand culture work in Perth are providing data on the influence of various fertilisers and nutrients on tobacco leaf composition and quality. Fertiliser effects on leaf composition have been followed by analysis for nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and

chlorine. High phosphate fertiliser and irrigation each improved yields, but unfortunately both raised chlorine content, reduced burn times and lowered quality.

It is evident from that report that some of the cultural practices which have been used in Manjimup will have to be altered; and they can be altered. There is enough evidence to show that trends in altering existing practices are successful, although some of them are not final, because research work is still continuing. However, it will be possible to change the type and the general quality of the tobacco which is produced in the Manjimup area, but it will be necessary to obtain some lead from the manufacturers and buyers as to the quality required.

The tobacco buyers take the Australian-produced leaf as a whole. In the past they have gone to Manjimup and bought the total crop, which was of the required grade and quality to be successfully blended with the other types of Australian-grown leaf and imported leaf, in the proportion prescribed by the Customs Department. So, in the past, the buyers could make use of all the leaf produced in Western Australia, and that led to a high buoyancy in the tobacco-growing industry.

With the increase in the production of tobacco in other parts of Australia, particularly in Queensland, where the rate of increase is very high, the total Australian production reached a high figure. In the last few years the Queensland production has more than doubled. If we are to regard a high chloride content in the leaf as a fault, it is quite likely that the buyers can obtain what they require of the type that is growing in Western Australia from Queensland and other tobacco-growing centres, leaving a surplus in Queensland and a surplus of more than 50 per cent. of the production in Western Australia.

The Select Committee which I propose would have quite a happy hunting ground in investigating some of the matters I have mentioned, and other points which no doubt would be brought up by the growers and others in the course of the inquiry. One of the main concerns, of course, is to see that there is a future for those who have been growing tobacco.

Mr. Norton called attention to the state of the House.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I have counted the House and there is now a quorum present.

Mr. OWEN: Naturally the growers want to know where they are going. I understand that applications have been made to the Government for financial relief; and I can personally understand the Government's concern about affording this relief. It is not much use providing finance, thus enabling growers to produce more

tobacco of the quality that was produced this year and have the same proportion unsold at the sales next year. By doing that, we would not get anywhere at all. Therefore, something should be done by way of an inquiry. Whether the answers can be discovered by this Select Committee, if it is appointed, or by the Federal committee that is coming here next week, remains to be seen.

There is another point which I should mention, and I do not know whether it would be covered by the terms of reference of this Select Committee. I refer to the future outlet for alternative crops grown in the Manjimup area. That is something that must be considered. I have heard that one grower who realised the position did not plant as much this year and is endeavouring to make a venture into tomato growing. Other forms of primary production on small holdings could include the growing of peas and vegetables. Perhaps that is something that would be outside the scope of this inquiry.

Another point which I feel could be inquired into is whether cigarettes and tobacco can be produced in this State. As most members are aware, the Western Australian manufacturer who carried on for so many years is not now interested to anything like the extent he was. Therefore, to get him to show further interest would be a matter of Government policy. This would be the position, too, in regard to inducing other manufacturers to set up in Western Australia; and the position would have to be examined to learn whether a small manufacturer could successfully compete against the bigger manufacturer in the Eastern States.

I have mentioned something of the background of the industry and some of the points which I feel could be and should be investigated; and having moved the motion, I hope the House will carry it so that we can have some better knowledge to pass on to growers in order that the tobacco-growing industry will be in a healthier state than it is at present.

MR. ROWBERRY (Warren) [9.4 p.m.]: I support this motion very heartily and commend the member for Darling Range for bringing it before the House. I listened with interest to his speech and to what he had to say about the Federal committee that has been set up. He posed the question whether we should wait on the deliberations of that committee before we went on with our own Select Committee. I would say emphatically, according to a questionnaire which I read in Manjimup during the week-end, and which was issued by the committee set up by the Federal Government, that that committee will not deal with the questions contained in this motion. In addition, it will not give its deliberations until late in October, according to a report contained in the *Farmers'*

*Weekly* of the 7th September. Therefore, we should continue with our efforts to set up this committee, and deal with the peculiar situation as it has arisen in this State.

The member for Darling Range dealt with several points including percentage, prices, quality, and manufacturers' attitude. In regard to percentage, I would like to put him right. There is no compulsion whatsoever upon the manufacturers to take any Australian tobacco—there is no statutory compulsion. What is offered to manufacturers is an inducement of a reduction of 1s. 5d. in the pound excise duty on cigarette tobacco, and 1s. 6d. in the pound excise duty on pipe tobacco.

The amount of tobacco that will be grown is estimated by the Minister for Customs, and from that amount the percentage that will be included in the ultimate blending is determined. So when the honourable member says that 35 per cent. will be included, he means that if the manufacturers do include that 35 per cent., they will qualify for the reduction in excise duty. However, there is no compulsion whatsoever upon the manufacturers.

Mr. Owen: It is fixed in consultation with the growers and manufacturers.

Mr. ROWBERRY: I wish to read an article from the *Australian Tobacco Journal* concerning the percentage system. It reads as follows:—

Growers understand well enough in general the operation and effect of the Statutory Percentage System. There are misunderstandings on the part of some as to the coercive power of the system.

It is not proposed here to go into detail except to recapitulate the main point of the percentage system which is that provided an Australian manufacturer of tobacco products incorporates into his product a certain percentage of Australian leaf fixed by the Minister for Customs, he qualifies for a rebate of 1s. 5d. per pound of the customs duty on cigarette tobacco and 1s. 6d. per pound on tobacco type tobacco.

This is an inducement.

"Inducement" is underlined, and in heavy type. The article continues—

It does not impose an obligation on any manufacturer to use any quantity of Australian leaf. If he judges not to do so, of course, he has to pay the full rate of duty on his imports.

In conversation with a South African producer, who was at Manjimup last year, he told me that tobacco was sold in South Africa at 4s. 6d. to 5s. per lb. so a manufacturer can elect to use the whole of his blend or have no blend at all of Australian tobacco. He can use entirely

imported tobacco and still show a profit. In fact, he can show a profit of 1s. 6d. per lb. by using entirely imported leaf.

Knowing these facts, it can be seen that the allegations of the manufacturers that they did not buy Western Australian leaf because of quality is slightly suspect on these grounds alone. What this really implies is that we are required to go into competition with tobacco produced with black labour. That is one point that makes me suspect the manufacturers' attitude when they talk about quality.

Mr. Owen: What would be the price of overseas tobacco landed in Australia, plus duty?

Mr. ROWBERRY: It is stated in this publication I have here that the manufacturers would import 32,000,000 lb. of tobacco during the year July, 1962 to 1963, the bulk of which would be for the production of cigarettes, and 1s. 5d. per lb. rebate on this quantity would be approximately £2,266,000. The value of inducement, therefore, is considerable; and viewed as a total for the industry, it is a sizeable slice of revenue which otherwise would find its way into the public account.

Therefore we can see that that still does not overcome the argument that if tobacco is produced at between 4s. and 5s. a lb. and pays full excise duty of 7s. 2d. per lb. it still can be sold and manufactured at a much lower price than the home-grown tobacco; and it is sold at the same price to people of Australia. The member for Darling Range mentioned that some tobacco was bought at 4d. per lb.

Mr. Owen: That was years ago.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Some tobacco a few years ago was 2s. a lb. when the reigning price was 122d. per lb.

The prices gained on the floor probably ranged in good times from 72d. up to 140d., but there is no difference in the price of the cigarette when it is eventually purchased by the consumer. It makes no difference whatever whether the tobacco in the blend is all of a top grade or a combination of some grades in between. In fact, in a review of the trends of tobacco smoking in Australia, the results of which were published in the *Weekend News* some six months ago, it was estimated that for the year 1960, £150,000,000 was spent on the consumption of tobacco in Australia. Of that amount, £138,000,000 was paid in as revenue and the remainder went to the manufacturers and growers.

Therefore when the question is asked why of all the primary industries the tobacco industry should receive special treatment from the Government instead of standing on its own two feet, it should be remembered that the Government is obtaining £138,000,000 income every year. Therefore the industry should receive special treatment.

The allegation of the manufacturers that Western Australian tobacco was not bought because of its quality does not stand investigation either, because this problem obtains in every State of Australia this year. Everywhere the manufacturers are refusing to buy tobacco. Whether that is because of the fact that year by year the Minister for Customs is raising the percentage of tobacco which manufacturers must agree to use to qualify them for the reduction of 1s. 5d. a lb., or whether it is because of the smoking trends of the public of Australia, is a moot point. In fact, if their assertion is correct that they have to get a good-quality product to conform to the tastes of tobacco smokers in Australia, why then do they find it necessary to spend millions of pounds to persuade people in Australia to smoke their own particular brand of cigarette or tobacco?

Could it be that, having spent so much on trying to persuade the public that this is the best cigarette they can buy—king size filters, and such like—they have nothing left with which to pay the growers; and so they have to fall back on the cheap imported tobacco to make up for the money they have spent on their persuasive advertisements by means of radio, TV, and so on? It could be like the man who built a ship—a private yacht. He wanted to have the biggest whistle that ever was made. He had it built and steamed along the shore blowing his whistle to stir up the people of the country along the seaside. Eventually a storm blew up and he told his captain that they had better steam off, but the captain said, "We have no steam left; we have blown it all away on the whistle." It could be that the manufacturers have blown away too much in advertising and have not enough left to pay the growers.

The growers all over Australia have been striving to produce a commodity which is acceptable to the manufacturers. This is not a problem peculiar to Western Australia. I would not like members to think that Western Australia is the only State in Australia that has been accused of growing bad-quality tobacco. The manufacturer says that he has to produce a commodity of a certain quality, and that quality depends on the raw material used.

The growers and the growers' associations have been striving for years to try to persuade the manufacturers to indicate just exactly what they require in the matter of quality.

The quality of the leaf is judged by certain factors, as the member for Darling Range stated. The green tobacco could have come about because the leaf was picked too immaturely. It could have ripened too soon because we had a very good dry season with plenty of sunshine. If that is the case, how is it that tobacco grown in the northern part of Queensland

is the best-quality tobacco produced in Australia? It is grown under the sunniest conditions that obtain in Australia and is produced entirely under irrigation, and in a soil which is very dry and will not hold moisture to any extent at all. Therefore that allegation of the manufacturers will not hold water either.

There are two types of green tobacco: One is the green tobacco which is picked mature; the other is the green tobacco which develops its greenness during drying. This is acceptable to the manufacturers in certain quantities. Provided there is not too much of it, then this tobacco is acceptable. Here again, the manufacturer or the buyer can use his caprice in buying and say, "This is green tobacco." Whether the greenness came after the maturing period in the kiln, or was green when it was picked, does not matter—it is green tobacco. If he says it is green, there is nothing we can do about it.

Another type of immature tobacco is the bright tobacco and flat tobacco. These indicate to the buyers certain qualities. At least, we assume that. They will not tell us. Nor will they tell the growers or the Department of Agriculture just what relation there is to colour and nicotine content or chloride content. They will not indicate in clear and concise terms.

We know that the chloride content affects the burning quality of the tobacco. But here is the peculiar thing: The tobacco grown in America, which is acceptable to most manufacturers, is known to have a very much greater chloride content than the Western Australian tobacco. In fact, Western Australian tobacco has been sent to America and judged to be of a better quality than the American leaf—as was pointed out at a meeting in Manjimup last Sunday week by a very prominent grower.

We therefore see that the attitudes of manufacturers and buyers are not very helpful when we come to make a decision on what is quality. This is the trouble not only in Western Australia but throughout the whole of Australia. This journal which I have before me has this to say about quality tobacco:

Enough has been said already to make it clear that quality tobacco is required.

And we do not deny that quality tobacco is required. Tobacco must be grown, and it is a very difficult plant to grow. In fact, after attending lectures and some field days associated with research into tobacco growing it is a wonder to me that any type of tobacco is grown at all. The article in the journal continues—

But what is quality? Growers find quality to be a rather elusive characteristic and have suggested at times

that as understood by manufacturers, it is as difficult to track down as a chameleon.

That word should be of great benefit to the member for South Perth. I believe he used it last night in connection with his description of members on this side of the House. The journal continues—

We have been at some pains to try and obtain a definition of quality as understood by the manufacturers so that the grower would know what he should be producing even if he found it difficult to produce it. Many others have been engaged in the same kind of investigation, and scarcely a meeting of interested parties takes place without an appeal by the growers to be told what the buyers want.

Furthermore, the major proposals put forward by manufacturers at the Central Tobacco Advisory Committee conference this year in relation to the expansion of the industry, was that it should proceed on "sound quality lines." It sounds an admirable proposition but in view of the marked inability of manufacturers either individually or collectively to give a very clear cut picture of quality, it would appear to be a rather flimsy base on which to build a well-conducted primary industry.

We therefore see that the matter of quality, and the battle that seems to be going on between growers and manufacturers, is not new; it has been going on for some time. As the member for Darling Range pointed out, last year the manufacturers wanted a light-coloured leaf. This year they want a dark-brown mahogany-coloured leaf. That was the trend in smokers' requirements in Australia.

To return to the review I mentioned earlier that was conducted by the *Western Sun*, the review found that there was more and more Australian tobacco being smoked by smokers of this country. In fact, it found that most tobaccoists in Western Australia, and in Australia, had ceased to stock imported types of cigarettes because the public was going more and more for tobacco and cigarettes which included a percentage of home-grown leaf.

There again, the allegation by manufacturers that the types of tobacco grown and the quality grown are unacceptable to the public of Australia falls—to speak in the vernacular—flat on its face.

I think I have indicated enough to show there is room not only for a Select Committee to be appointed to inquire into the tobacco industry of this State, but for an inquiry into the state of the industry throughout Australia. There is room for a Royal Commission into the whole of the industry. This Select Committee would deal with only one side of the tobacco-growing industry. The industry has three components: There is the manufacturer; the general public who smoke the tobacco;

and the growers themselves. This Select Committee would deal only with the deficiencies of the growers. It would not take into consideration the attitude of the manufacturers.

Some people say that Governments should not interfere with private enterprise. If private enterprise does not want to do a thing there is no reason why Governments should take any action to force it to do that thing. Yet we have legislation passed day after day which regulates the actions and projects of the community; which interferes with what some people want to do. In fact, judging by the questionnaire that has been sent around to the individual growers, the Federal committee that has been set up is going to regulate the growers' attitude; and is going to tell them whether or not they should grow tobacco.

But manufacturers are operating within the ambit of the Australian Commonwealth. They are obtaining money which is being spent by Australians on tobacco. The Australian people have the right to demand—and Governments have the right to impose—a restriction upon these people as to what they shall do for the good of the community, which should be the paramount principle.

The statement that this Government does not believe in the principle of preventing people from doing what they want to do, if they really want to do it, is not borne out by the terms governing the assistance which has been offered by the Government to the growers, because the Government is only offering certain terms to certain people. It is offering £40 an acre as a special grant and £60 an acre on 300 acres as a loan.

In Manjimup last year there were 1,462 acres under tobacco cultivation, which means that the Government, by its action, is determining the fate of four-fifths of the tobacco growers in Manjimup. By its offer to give help, the Government has accepted the principle that it has a responsibility for these growers.

The help which the Government is going to give is also contingent upon this clause in the terms—

It will also be necessary for the Department of Agriculture to agree to the procedures adopted for the growing of the tobacco.

We have no quarrel with that; but the Government goes on to say—

The scheme can only apply to those whose creditors are prepared to postpone claims for at least a year.

I think that is going too far. The Government is not doing anything by legislative action, but it is bringing compulsion to bear upon the creditors of the tobacco growers by saying to them, "Unless you carry these people for another year the tobacco-growing industry in Manjimup will die."



In the first part of his motion, which asks that a Select Committee be appointed, the honourable member has moved that it shall inquire into and report upon—

- (1) The factors which have contributed to the present position of tobacco-growing industry in this State.

I think that could be investigated with advantage to everybody, although the motion does not go far enough in that respect. The three sides of the tobacco-growing industry should be investigated.

The second matter into which the Select Committee would inquire and report upon is—

- (2) Ways and means which might be adopted to place the industry on a better footing.

I am reminded that about a week ago I asked the Minister for Agriculture, a series of questions to ascertain the results that the Department of Agriculture had obtained from the tobacco which it had placed upon the floor. With all due respect to the department, the results were not very good; in fact, they were below average.

Sixty per cent. of the leaf that the department had on the floor was not sold, and 52d. per lb. was received for it. Of course the Minister will say that the department is not primarily engaged in growing tobacco as a commercial proposition, but that it is more interested in finding out what types of tobacco will grow on certain soils; the types of tobacco that will respond to certain treatment; how irrigation will affect the type of leaf; how spraying will affect the leaf; and how certain varieties within the types will react to certain stimulants.

Of course we accept all those statements. But the primary object of research is to find something which is commercially acceptable to the public and to the manufacturers. That should be the primary and overriding principle behind research; otherwise we are just playing with the problem.

Mr. Owen: They must have scientific checks to prove whether one method is better than another.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Of course; but with one end in view: to find the best possible product; and the best possible product is the one which is most acceptable to the buyers. I am not criticising the department. The department and its research officers in Manjimup have played a great part in building up the tobacco-growing industry. However, I do not think they should have full power over the growers, and they should not dictate to them regarding what they ought to do. They should act in an advisory capacity, yes, and in conjunction with certain growers who have been growing tobacco in that district for 20 years, and who really ought to know how to grow it. It should not be a case of

the Department of Agriculture dictating to the growers, but they should work together.

The third point which the Select Committee would inquire into and report upon is—

- (3) Whether it is practicable to endeavour to expand the production of cigarettes and tobacco in this State.

I would remind the Minister for Industrial Development of a statement made three or four weeks ago when we had a deputation of British manufacturers in this State looking us over. They said there was a possibility of setting up a tobacco factory in the State of Western Australia, and they had found that in certain British dependencies—in quite small countries—lucrative businesses had been built up with small factories manufacturing locally-grown tobacco leaf. This is an aspect that could be investigated. I think it would be more economic to manufacture our own tobacco in this State.

I made inquiries as to why the tobacco-manufacturing industry in this State died, and I found that the reason was that the product was not acceptable to the smoking public. Probably the tobacco that was grown 15 years ago was not of the same quality or of the same type as the tobacco that is grown now. Therefore the type of leaf we are growing now, because of the conditions under which it is being produced, could be more acceptable to the Western Australian smoking public; and the local leaf could be blended with overseas or Eastern States leaf.

There is no reason why the whole of the tobacco grown in Western Australia should be incorporated in cigarettes manufactured in this State; it could be blended with tobacco from other places. It could be blended with tobacco imported into the Commonwealth; and I think that proposition is worthy of investigation.

The tobacco-growing industry in this State has grown quite considerably. There are now 242 growers in Manjimup, and a number of them employed labour in the last two or three years, which means that probably 1,200 to 1,500 people could be sustained by tobacco growing if something were done to keep the industry going. That is a point worthy of consideration; and I think the ultimate object of bringing industries into the State is not that the industries will earn so much money but that they will provide gainful employment for so many more Western Australians.

Economically, that is a factor of greater importance than the earning of large profits. The amount of money earned by its industries does not indicate the prosperity of a country, but the amount of money spent in the country by industry. It is that factor which dictates whether an industry is an economic proposition.

So whilst we are busily engaged in spending millions of pounds to attract large industries to this country, we should not forget that we have a duty to those already employed in an industry already established, and to assist the industry to develop and prosper, and to encourage its workers to remain where they are.

I strongly support any move to investigate the tobacco industry of Western Australia with a view to ascertaining ways and means of putting it back on its feet, and finding out whether it is capable of producing a type of leaf which will be equal to any leaf in other parts of the world. I think I have indicated there is good reason to believe that it can. People from Rhodesia, America, and other parts of the world have expressed the view that the Western Australian tobacco leaf is equal to, if not better than, their home-grown leaf.

Therefore I think that if action is taken by this Parliament to appoint a Select Committee to conduct investigations into the tobacco industry, the recommendations it makes should be disclosed as soon as possible and immediate action taken. If we are to continue to have a place in the Australian tobacco-growing industry, it is necessary for our growers to be given sufficient encouragement to plant their crops for next year; because if we lose four-fifths of our industry this season we will have insufficient tobacco leaf to place on the auction floor at the end of the season to induce buyers in any force to come to this State.

If we fail to give close consideration to these factors we are liable to lose not four-fifths of the industry, but the whole of it. In view of the points I have raised I strongly support the motion for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the tobacco industry of this State.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture).

## PAINTERS' REGISTRATION BILL

### *Second Reading*

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth) [9.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Perhaps the first reaction of members to the introduction of this Bill could be: "What, more restrictions?"; but immediately I want to reassure members, because they will find on a study of the Bill that its intention is to provide protection, and this will become more obvious as the provisions of the Bill are explained.

I use those introductory remarks because I think the majority of members have, directly or indirectly, some unpleasant experiences of the Builders' Registration Act. I think that, after having studied this measure, they will agree that, as far as is practicable, all of the points to which

they might find some exception in the statute to which I have made reference, have been overcome in the drafting of this Bill.

If it becomes law this Bill will break new ground in the painting trade in Australia. A number of States, particularly Queensland, are at present giving consideration to legislation designed to achieve what this Bill seeks, and some of them are awaiting the result of the passage of this Bill so that a final decision can be made.

The Master Painters' Association and the Painters' Union are both in agreement on the principles contained in the Bill, which provides that, in the future, before a person can engage in the painting trade other than as an employee, he must be registered; and, before he can be registered, he must be qualified.

Here let me hasten to assure members that, as is customary in the launching of legislation of this type, exemption is provided in the Bill for those already engaged in the trade or profession as the case may be. The Bill provides that those who are practising the trade of painting—that is to say that it is their business, or they are master painters—at the time this legislation comes into operation, notwithstanding their lack of qualification, if they apply within a period of six months from the proclamation date of the Act they will be automatically accepted by the proposed painters' registration board.

Industrial law requires the youths of this State, if they desire to practise the painting trade in all its ramifications, to serve an apprenticeship of five years, at the end of which time it is necessary for them to pass an examination laid down by our Court of Arbitration. That would account for practically all of those engaged in this trade at the present moment, with the exception of those who come from overseas and other places.

I want to emphasise that there is a preference to unionists in Western Australia in existence at the present time in relation to the building trades which, of course, embrace the painting trade. I would like to quote from the building trades award, No. 24 of 1958, as issued by the Western Australian Employers Federation. I will quote from paragraph (b) of clause 8 which is entitled, "Preference to Unionists." It reads—

In engaging or dismissing labour other than apprentices or cadets preference of employment shall be given to unionists provided that such unionists are adequately experienced in the class of work to be performed and are otherwise competent to perform the work.

In paragraph (d) of the same clause it says, *inter alia*—

Workers other than apprentices or cadets who are not unionists shall, within seven days of being supplied

with the necessary application form for membership and a copy of this clause by an accredited representative of the applicant union apply in the prescribed manner for membership and if accepted as a member maintain financial membership whilst employed by a respondent to this award.

I mention these things to indicate that this trade of painting is an art; it is an accomplishment. The Arbitration Court lays down a lengthy period of training and the necessity for an examination to be passed at the expiration of that term; and subsequently power is given to industrial organisations to enforce a preference-to-unionists clause thereby, to some extent, going in the direction of providing a measure of protection for those who have been under the custody, virtually, of the Arbitration Court itself.

By contrast to that situation we have what applies to the other side of industry; namely, the employers, or master painters. To engage in the business of painting requires no training, no experience, and no competence. All that is needed is a tin of paint and a paint brush, and a person can set himself up as a master painter, undertaking contracts, assessing what work has to be done, and determining for himself whether it is satisfactorily done.

Unfortunately, quite a number of persons, previously rejected by the union because of their lack of qualification, meet the situation most conveniently by setting up business themselves, either singly or in a partnership—many of which are bogus partnerships, so arranged for the purpose of defeating the industrial laws of the State. Yet this trade of painting is one where it is so easy to cover up unfair work. Faulty work is not evident, as a rule, for some time; and of course there is the great difficulty of establishing deficiencies.

I am told, for instance, that it is a hard task to tell whether two or three coats of paint have been applied to a surface; and unless there is a supervisor or an agent of the client, or the client himself knows something about the business of painting, it is the easiest thing in the world for what I might term a confidence trick to be put over the client. Whilst this sort of thing is going on—and unfortunately it is rather prevalent—it is being done at the expense of nearly 1,500 qualified painters in Western Australia; and over 100 apprentices.

Of course, in addition to that there is the honest master painter who has a name and reputation and a pride in his work. He is virtually being sabotaged by these people who do not know the trade, and who find it necessary, in order to make ends meet, to skimp their work and to resort to all sorts of devices.

I could give an instance, including all the details, of a painter engaged in some work not very far from the capital of my leader's electorate. Because this painter was so "watering down" his paint it became obvious what was occurring; and he, the painter, was requested to remove a 44-gallon drum of kerosene which he was using for the purpose of diluting to the nth degree the paint which was being applied to public property.

So I emphasise the point that this legislation would help to stabilise a most important industry; but—what is more important—it would reduce the degree to which the public can be preyed upon; and some details of this will be given by me shortly. I cannot help but stress that this Bill is the very essence of fairness in its application and what it seeks to achieve. It is fair to those who are now in the business of painting; it is fair also in the future operations of the Act, and the method under which the Act will apply. Again, and importantly, it is fair to the public who at the present moment are practically unprotected from exploitation.

In the Bill it is proposed that there shall be established a painters' registration board of five members to be appointed by the Government for terms not in excess of three years in each case. The chairman is to be an independent person; that is to say, a person who has no pecuniary interest in the painting trade. There is to be a painter—and shall I, in order to make it easier, call him a master painter?—to be appointed by the Minister, entirely of his own choosing; there are to be two painters nominated by the Master Painters' Association; and one person to be appointed on the nomination of the Painters' Union.

It will be seen that under this set-up the Master Painters' Association will be in the minority, in that it will nominate only two of the five members of the board; further, the composition of the board is a little unusual in that there is to be a union representative, notwithstanding that the provisions of the measure are to apply to master painters. I use that term in the broadest sense. I think it will be agreed that the composition of the board is quite fair and reasonable, as are the other provisions in the Bill.

There is to be no retrospective application of the provisions in the Bill. When the measure becomes law, all persons who at the time are engaged as *bona fide* painters will be allowed to become registered provided they make application within six months from the date of the commencement of the Act. Anyone who is not at the time a master painter will in future have to make application to the board for registration. Certain measuring sticks are prescribed in the Bill, such as the serving of a five-year apprenticeship and the passing of the examination set by

the Arbitration Court. Provision is also made to cover cases of persons who come from other parts of Australia and other parts of the world.

The scope of the Bill is that it shall apply in the South-West Land Division, as well as an area contained within a radius of 10 miles of five large country towns. In other words, the far flung parts of the State like the north-west will not be encompassed by the measure.

I desire to point out that painting as an art, and painting of furniture and motor vehicles, ticket writing, and so on, will not be affected by the passing of the Bill. Overall, it is to apply to the painting of fixtures, and mostly to the painting of buildings; that is, the painting of ceilings, and walls both external and internal. The definition in the Bill will establish clearly the class of painting to be covered.

Mr. Nulsen: Will the measure apply to the paintings of poppets on goldmines?

Mr. GRAHAM: No. I do not want to deal with side issues such as that, because the scope of the painters' award is defined by the Arbitration Court. It is specifically provided in the last clause of the Bill that it shall not interfere with the rights or rivalries of trade unions.

Mr. Perkins: Five pounds will not go very far in these days for painting jobs.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am anxious to answer any points that are raised, but there is no need for that query, if the Minister will be patient. This legislation will not in any way interfere with the right of a person to paint his home or the home of a friend or relative, or to render any painting service on a friendly basis. This measure is to apply only to persons who set up in business as painters.

The Bill will permit minor jobs to be carried out, where the cost of the job does not exceed £5. It is agreed that not a great deal of painting can be performed for that amount; but unless some exemption is prescribed, then even minor painting jobs cannot be carried out, as when alterations are made—alterations in the form of shifting the position of a window or a door in a home and touching up the paint work, or the painting of a wall. If no exemption is provided, it will be necessary to call in a separate contractor to carry out the painting. For that reason it was considered desirable to insert some provision in the Bill to enable minor painting jobs to be performed by anyone.

Mr. Perkins: Do you think this measure will cover the painting of poppets referred to by the member for Eyre?

Mr. GRAHAM: Whatever is the procedure in regard to the painting of poppet legs, it will not be disturbed by the passage of the measure.

Mr. Perkins: I have grave doubts.

Mr. GRAHAM: Without knowing anything about that matter, the Minister has grave doubts! I do not take very kindly to inane interjections. I have studied this matter and I have given an assurance on the point which the Minister has raised.

Mr. Perkins: The measure is to apply to Ravensthorpe and to the painters down there.

Mr. GRAHAM: If the Minister wants to engage me on the painting of poppet legs, he can make his speech and I shall endeavour to meet him in reply. I shall appreciate the opportunity to continue my remarks.

Mr. Grayden: What about the unemployed painter who has an opportunity to earn a few pounds?

Mr. GRAHAM: If I may be permitted to state my case, the honourable member will have some idea of what the Bill is about. If I do not cover the point which is disturbing him, he can remind me before I resume my seat and I shall be pleased to enlighten him. When a member is introducing a Bill in which he has no personal interest—a Bill which is sought by the employers and the employees in the industry, as well as many dissatisfied members of the public—it is preferable that he should be permitted to continue his introduction without interruption. I do not mind pausing later on to answer questions if, in the course of my speech, I do not cover the points which are exercising the minds of certain members.

Mr. Roberts: You mentioned that the employers and the employees have approached you. Do you know whether they have approached the Government in respect of this matter?

Mr. GRAHAM: I can settle the point which is disturbing the member for Bunbury. Approaches were made to the previous Government in respect of this matter. A number of discussions took place between individual Ministers and the Painters' Union, and in some cases with the Master Painters' Association. Those two bodies considered that, having proceeded a certain distance with the members of the previous Government, they should continue along the same lines.

As this Bill does not require a message and as it is not a party measure, they thought the wisest course was for me to introduce a private members' Bill. In discussion with the president and the secretary of the Master Painters' Association I submitted that it might be of some advantage to approach the Government to have a Bill introduced by the Government or by a private member on the Government side; but those two individuals felt that so much groundwork had already been done that my suggested course of action would result in further delay. They

could see no reason why the present Government should be offended, or why umbrage should be taken because the measure emanated from a member of the present Opposition.

Mr. Grayden: It limits the opportunity to be employed.

Mr. GRAHAM: I ask the member for South Perth to be patient; or perhaps if he wants the question answered he can read for himself a copy of the Building Trades Award, and he will find that what he is interjecting about at the present time is legally impossible.

Mr. Grayden: It is still done.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course it is; but what I am suggesting is that a tolerant attitude and a commonsense attitude has been adopted by the Master Painters' Association and the Painters' Union. It is their desire that that state of affairs shall continue.

Mr. Grayden: It is hard enough for an unemployed man now.

Mr. GRAHAM: I will lose patience with the member for South Perth in a moment. I know he has his reasons for endeavouring to upset me, and he might succeed in that desire if he persists with his interjections on this one point because I know that whatever I say that might satisfy other members in this Chamber will not satisfy that honourable member. He will assist me in the introduction of this measure if he leaves the Chamber. This Bill—

Mr. Court: That is something the Speaker will decide.

Mr. GRAHAM: —does not impose any restrictions such as requiring any applicant to pass a special examination. That is, perhaps, one of the criticisms of the Builders' Registration Act—that one does not serve an apprenticeship and become qualified as a builder in the course of one's training. But it is not necessary to pass a special examination in the case of painters in order to be registered. As I have already pointed out, those who go through the ordinary course and pass the ordinary examination are interfered with to no extent whatsoever by either the Master Painters' Association or the Painters' Union. All of them are eligible for automatic registration under the terms of this Bill.

I want to stress that where faulty or inferior work has been done, the board, under the Bill, is given power to fine the painter responsible, to suspend his registration, or to cancel his registration; and, in addition to that, it can require him to repair or make good the inferior work or have this inferior work made good at his expense.

This is a point I desire to emphasise: that every decision which the proposed painters' registration board is empowered to make, whether in the matter of refusing

registration to anybody or in the matter of inflicting a penalty—that is, with regard to a fine or suspension or cancellation of the registration or the requirement to repair shoddy work—is subject to appeal to the Minister, and the Minister's decision is final. So there cannot be any suggestion of an autocratic body of vested interests, even though it be master and servant, being created for the purpose of exploiting anybody or endeavouring to limit the number of people who can engage in this particular trade or practice, or of doing anything that might be regarded as harmful to the welfare of the public. The safety value lies, I suggest, in the fact that the Minister has the final word if an appeal is made to him.

In all of the operative matters, the board will finance its operations from the fees which will be charged. It is proposed that three guineas shall be lodged as a fee for application and that the annual contribution shall be ten guineas. I am not familiar with professional bodies, but I know that the Painters' Union—and it can be checked from the award—has been given authority by the Arbitration Court to charge an entrance fee or nomination fee anywhere from ten shillings to ten pounds. In actual practice it is a minimum of £2 10s. at the moment; and in some cases it is up to the £10, and the membership fee is £6 per annum. This is for the operative painter—for the unionist.

In the case of the Master Painters' Association—and it is optional whether any painter belongs to it—I understand the fee is £10; but, in any event, this amount of money is required to enable the board to do its job in the interests of the public and also in the interests of the master painter. If he pays ten guineas per year as his contribution, he will be repaid many times for the protection which the board will be able to give him, provided he is an honest and conscientious exponent of the particular trade.

Apart from the administration and conduct of its activities, the board may use its funds for sponsoring scholarships in the painting trade, and it may also use its funds for any other purposes that the Minister may determine. There is a requirement that this list or supplementary list of all registered painters shall be published annually in the *Government Gazette*. Audited financial statements and reports of proceedings shall be submitted annually to the Minister.

The legislation, I repeat, protects the employers, of which I understand there are somewhere in the vicinity of 600. That 600 master painters—if I may use that term—is a guess, but it is as reliable a guess as can be made. If the facts were known, there may be less or there may be more; but it is as close as can be reckoned by those persons who have a close association with the painting and building industries generally.

A master painter who is proud of his work and his name has nothing to fear; and, I repeat, he welcomes this legislation. The painting operative will be protected, because, if the Bill becomes law, there will be an assurance to him that virtually, as far as is possible, work is being performed by reputable painters—and there are about 1,500 operative painters at the moment. There are about 120 trainees or apprentices to whom there will be a measure of protection because to them there will be some assurance that either as a master or servant in the trade which the youth is following, there will be some future for him. And the public initially will derive only partial benefits; because, as already explained, all of those who are at present operating in the painting trade will be able to achieve registration if they desire; but hereafter only those who have certain qualifications—which, of course, would be every member of the Painters' Union, taking Western Australia—would be eligible for registration under the terms of the Bill.

But the saving provision is that, where the public has been taken down by the painters, there will be some competent authority to inspect the work to evaluate the shortcomings and insist that they be put right. In connection with that, it is perhaps interesting to mention that in the last four years the Master Painters' Association has been called out on no fewer than 166 different occasions to investigate work which in the opinion of the client was poorly done: the number of specified coats of paint had not been applied; the wrong type of paint had been used; and so on. I have in my office and could present to the House if need be, every one of those cases, which are documented, including the transactions which subsequently took place.

I have mentioned that in Holland in 1940 legislation was passed in this connection. I am certain that the member for South Perth and others would be horror-stricken if they knew the terms of the legislation and requirements in that country; because article 2 of the translation which I have reads as follows:—

Without the consent of the Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures it is forbidden to establish a business designed for or also designed for the carrying out of painting as far as regards the carrying out itself.

So it appears that what seems to me to be the joint Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures in that country is the determining factor. The qualifications laid down are that before a person can start in business as a painter as distinct from an operative the minimum requirement is that he must have a knowledge of book-keeping; commercial methods; commercial arithmetic; a legal knowledge regarding business contracts and the rest of it; a knowledge of the Netherlands language up to a certain standard; some principles of modern business economics; and so on.

It is not sought by this Bill to interfere with or go any further than the Arbitration Court has in deciding what shall be the position. I do not desire this Bill to be related to the Builders' Registration Board, but I think it is informative so I will read paragraph 8 from the report of the Royal Commission appointed by the Legislative Council last year to inquire into the Builders' Registration Board. The chairman was Mr. Baxter, the other members being Messrs. Davies and MacKinnon, all three of whom are from the Legislative Council. Paragraph 8 reads as follows:—

Your Commission is firmly of the opinion that the Builders' Registration Act is desirable to provide a means of assuring that only properly qualified persons are conducting building operations, and the public are protected from exploitation and inferior workmanship, so far as possible, and in addition are provided with an avenue through which complaints can be channelled and adjusted to mutual satisfaction without the necessity of litigation.

As all members are aware, legislation has been agreed to by the Parliament of Western Australia in respect of architects, legal practitioners, chemists, chiropodists, dentists, licensed surveyors, nurses, optometrists, physiotherapists, and so on. Therefore there is nothing novel in respect of this Bill except that I contend that this is more generous in its concept and preservation of rights and protection of the public than, I venture to suggest, any one of the pieces of legislation to which I have referred. Indeed, in some cases there are boards set up in the manner of the Architects' Board, which is composed of nine members, six of whom are elected by the architects themselves. Therefore the practising architects have the dominant control.

The Pharmacy and Poisons Act, Compulsion Act, which deals with the chemists, provides for a board of seven, all of whom are elected by the pharmaceutical chemists themselves. There are some differences contained in the Acts in certain cases, but in none of them is the balance as fair and as generous as that provided in this Bill. I think it will be appreciated by members in view of what I have said earlier, that there are two parties on opposite sides, so to speak—the master painters on the one hand, and the union on the other; but their desire is that this Bill should receive the blessing of all members of both Houses of this Parliament, because there is nothing which has any party-political origin in any portion of the Bill which it is my honour this evening to present.

Mr. O'Neil: One question I wanted to ask is whether all journeymen painters will be required to belong to the union and be registered as painters.

Mr. GRAHAM: No. Perhaps I should have stressed that point. I draw attention to clause 4 where the operative words are "otherwise than as a *bona fide* employee." In other words, employees as such are exempted.

Members might recall that earlier this year a Commonwealth Technical Training Week was staged throughout the British Empire. It was opened by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh; and in the course of his broadcast address he said—

I believe, therefore, that it is one of the responsibilities of parents, teachers and employers to help those who are on the threshold of their working lives by displaying for them the wide field of employment possibilities and the qualifications needed so that they can choose a career which gives full scope to their aptitudes. They must also be made aware of the opportunities that exist for further education and training and the very considerable improvement in their future prospects which will result if they make proper use of the facilities available.

His final words were—

The Week may soon be forgotten, but I hope very much that the things which it has tried to bring before the public will live on.

So it will be seen that that distinguished person was emphasising the necessity for training, for technical education, and for skill.

I might give another quote which is from a circular sent by the Minister for Local Government (Mr. Logan) to local authorities in this State in connection with the Commonwealth Technical Training Week. He said—

It is the duty of every leader to lend maximum support to every movement designed to improve the way of life of the people who look to him for guidance.

That could be, amongst others, ourselves. I quote further—

This is just as true of the community leader as it is of the world leader, the national leader, or the State leader. Therefore, on behalf of the State Government, I have no hesitation in urging members of all local authorities, who play a vital role in community leadership, to give the maximum practical support to the promotion of Commonwealth Technical Training Week in Western Australia. The aims of Technical Training Week are—

- (1) to persuade young people and their parents of the value of technical training in meeting the challenges and opportunities of modern life,

- (2) to persuade employers of the economic advantages to themselves and the nation of an investment in the training of their staff,

- (3) to bring home to the community at large the essential contribution of technical training in maintaining and improving their standard of living.

This Bill, apart from its protection and assistance to the public, seeks to do those very things. We are all aware that Governments from time to time are making decisions to establish trade schools of one sort or another; that many tens of thousands of pounds—indeed, hundreds of thousands of pounds—are being spent annually in training the young people of this State in certain trades. Surely it is the antithesis of all that is reasonable, in view of these appeals—and in view of the expenditure of public money in developing training schools for technical trades, and spending money in coaching these young people—to tell them at the expiration of their time that all of that training and the money spent on their training has been for nought; and that any Tom, Dick, or Harry with a pot of paint and a brush can set up a business and join his brothers or friends in a loose-knit partnership; and these young people are denied an opportunity or future, either as servants or as master painters on their own account.

If there is no skill or no training required, then, of course, we are fools; and the Arbitration Court is foolish; and if the training be necessary—and nobody would suggest otherwise—then surely it is essential to ensure that those who have had the benefit of such tutoring and practical experience in the course of their training should be given an opportunity of following that pursuit, and not be swamped out by these other people of whom I have made some mention.

I have said that the Master Painters' Association has investigated 166 cases of complaints made by people over the last four years—that is, very dissatisfied clients. There have been a few cases where members of the Master Painters' Association have been at fault; but in every case, I am informed that when the association has said that some further attention was necessary, that has been carried into effect without any quibbling or haggling.

But, of course, where the person performing the work is not a member of the Master Painters' Association, then the association has no authority whatever; although it has managed to bluff its way through—if I may be permitted to use that term—and so satisfaction has been obtained in a few cases.

I will give some examples: There is the case of a hotel that was investigated by the Master Painters' Association, in September, 1959. As a consequence of its intervention, the painter made good; in other words, he did additional painting work to the extent of £98 in order to meet standards. Early this year there was another hotel that was investigated, and £350 worth of additional work was done in order to make good the faulty work which had previously been performed.

In March of this year a woman who lives in Bicton—I have the correspondence here—was charged a sum for work; and it was found, when the painter had finished, and following an inspection by the Master Painters' Association, that there was £125 worth of work which still had to be done in order to comply with the contract. The work was such that only an expert could ascertain the situation.

This is work which, by and large, is done in a completely honorary capacity by the Master Painters' Association. I think I might use this one example and quote some of the shortcomings as listed by the Master Painters' Association. This is a survey of faults found in one particular residence:

**Lounge:** Cracks in walls not stopped up prior to painting. Woodwork has not been rubbed down. A further coat of white finishing paint should be applied to the woodwork. Opacity is poor. This remark regarding woodwork is applicable to all interior painting. Door frame where the position of the old lock is obvious is in need of filling.

**Front Hall:** Crack in wall not patched up. It is recommended that a further coat of paint be applied. Cupboard—Woodwork not sanded down especially so on inner panel of door. Additional coat required.

**Main Bedroom:** Walls and woodwork require additional coats. Paint spots on bedroom floor should be removed.

**Inner Hall:** Additional coat of paint required.

**Inner Passage (rear):** Ceiling requires additional coat.

**Nursery:** Woodwork—additional coat required.

**Rear Entrance:** Woodwork—additional coat required.

**Exterior:**

**Rear Door:** Additional coat required.

**Windows:** All west windows to be rubbed down, primed, undercoated and finishing coat applied. East window—to be burnt off—primed etc. Paint spots on various glass-work to be removed.

**Sleepout:** Right entrance asbestos wall—additional coat of paint required.

There is nothing unusual about this case. I repeat that all of the documents in connection with the cases are in my office at the present moment, and I am prepared to lay them on the Table of the House, if that be desired, so that any member can peruse details of them.

The Master Painters' Association has been able to render a signal service to exploited members of the public by bringing about the correction of faulty work in quite a number of cases.

In my view, provided it is understood, the Bill very largely speaks for itself. I might say here and now that it does not go as far as the Master Painters' Association or the Painters' Union would like. For instance, one of the parties considers there should be a form of bond contributed by the painter who is registered, in order to ensure that there are some funds available to make good the damage or the deficiency in any job, as there could be cases in which painters have no resources with which to carry out the work, notwithstanding the order of the Painters' Registration Board.

Then there is another school of thought which suggests that if a master painter has been consistently underpaying his men—denying them overtime and other things in accordance with the award—and in addition thereto has been rather remiss in meeting his obligations to the merchants, such person should not be permitted to continue as a registered painter.

My feeling is that there are certain laws and processes to meet those situations and, at least for the time being, they will suffice; but if we have this comparatively simple measure which establishes certain principles and certain protections, then a great deal has been achieved. Therefore I humbly submit that this Bill is a genuine attempt to put an honourable trade on to a sound basis, and to give protection and recompense to those members of the public who have been victims of shoddy work.

There is in connection with this Bill no need for anybody to get wildly excited; it is completely non-party in concept, and I assure the Minister, and indeed all members, that I will be found to be quite flexible in the matter of amendments if some members feel that certain modifications would be helpful, so long as certain guiding principles are maintained.

**Mr. Roberts:** Before you sit down, did I understand you to say in the earlier part of your speech that there is no like legislation enacted anywhere else?

**Mr. GRAHAM:** No; I did not say that. I said we would be breaking new ground in Australia.

**Mr. Roberts:** In Australia?

**Mr. GRAHAM:** Yes. I know that the Queensland Government has been considering this matter for a period of some months, but what its determination—if



any—is, I do not know at this stage. However, I am informed that that Government is sympathetic to legislation designed broadly to achieve what is being sought in this Bill.

Mr. Roberts: Whereabouts is this legislation in operation if not in Australia?

Mr. GRAHAM: I indicated earlier that in Holland there is legislation which, if introduced here, would be regarded as being vicious in the extreme and most unrealistic. However, I think this is quite fair and reasonable, and it seeks deliberately to avoid some of the shortcomings of, shall we say, a partner Act in the Builders' Registration Act.

In any event, I would be pleased if the Minister would investigate the matter; and I am certain that if he does he will not find anything damaging in the Bill or anything which unreasonably interferes with the liberty of the subject either in the performance of the work of painting, or at the other end of the line as a client. If this Bill is passed, people will be able to proceed as hitherto, but on a sounder basis and with a greater assurance that the work which is performed has been honestly and properly carried out.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Wild (Minister for Works).

House adjourned at 10.43 p.m.

## Legislative Council

Thursday, the 14th September, 1961

### CONTENTS

#### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—

Page

Claremont Mental Hospital: Accommodation for Female Children and Adolescent Boys	928
Five-day Banking Week: Opposition by Employers Federation	925
Israelite Bay: Survey of Blocks	925
Road Rollers: Vibrator Type—Damage to Residences	926

#### STATE HOUSING COMMISSION FILE—

Assembly Member's Allegations Against Minister	926
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### CONTENTS—continued

Page

#### BILLS—

Alumina Refinery Agreement Bill: Receipt; 1r.	928
Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill: Receipt; 1r.	927
Gold Buyers Act Amendment Bill: 3r.	926
Health Education Council Act Amendment Bill: Receipt; 1r.	927
Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: 2r.	928
Mining Act Amendment Bill: Intro.; 1r.	926
Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill: Receipt; 1r.	927
Unauthorised Documents Bill: Receipt; 1r.	927

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### FIVE-DAY BANKING WEEK

##### Opposition by Employers Federation

1. The Hon. G. E. JEFFERY asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of the expressed opposition by the Employers Federation of W.A. to the proposed legislation for a five-day week for bank employees—

- (a) who are the members of the executive of the Employers Federation;
- (b) of what businesses are these persons directors, managers or executives; and
- (c) which, if any, of these businesses work a six-day week?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) to (c) The decision affirming the federation's policy of opposing the five-day week for bank officers was made by the council of the federation comprising 62 members representing industry working from five to seven days a week. The information requested in part (b) of the honourable member's question is not available.

#### ISRAELITE BAY

##### Survey of Blocks

2. The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN (for The Hon. J. J. Garrigan) asked the Minister for Mines:
  - (1) Have any townsite or residential blocks been surveyed at Israelite Bay, east of Esperance?
  - (2) If so, when will the blocks be available for selection?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).