

The Minister replied in part—

Decentralisation is a policy of the Government and the most widespread decentralised development in the State's history is currently being undertaken.

Industry cannot be directed to particular towns and regions but every opportunity is taken to encourage decentralised industry having regard for local needs, raw materials, and other appropriate factors.

That is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard! Mention is made of raw materials; yet, despite the fact that not an ounce of wool is produced in Fremantle, five scouring works exist in the area. Would it not be better to have scouring works in close proximity to the agricultural areas where the sheep population is increasing? A small percentage of another type of wool could be brought in to make the blend and the wool could be scoured near the agricultural areas.

The establishment of such enterprises in the country would have many advantages, including stability of employment with a consequent lack of necessity to change personnel, and the retention of skilled workers in the industry. In the city, of course, opportunities for employment are greater, and because of the diversity of industries, men shift from job to job.

Consider the position of the woollen mill. We have seen it go through bad patches because of imports and certain trends in the textile trades; but today that mill competes with something like 40-odd mills in the Eastern States; and although it has had a slight recession, so has every other mill in the Eastern States and in the world. Today we find that it is on the up and up. It is advertising for adult males for the first time I can remember, and the balance sheet is on the mend. There are 1,300 miles between Albany and Melbourne, but the mill is able to compete on a comparable basis on the Eastern States markets and has a fair percentage of the Western Australian market. I commend the Premier for placing orders for State requirements with that mill. The action is worthy of commendation, and it is very sensible to stimulate our own economy.

The other point I would make on decentralisation is that there is congestion of the populace in the metropolitan area. I do not think the Government really likes it; but it is a trend; and we must do something to establish industries in country centres which will create other smaller industries in those centres and in nearby areas. For instance, I visualise industrial development in Albany leading to the establishment of subsidiary enterprises there and in Mt. Barker, Denmark, and Gnowangerup. With the natural harbour

and port of Albany to serve them those places would have an equity in their own areas; and I can see that happening too.

For the first time, in 1965, we find we will have five wool sales. Our price this time topped the poll as they say. That is a good thing for that portion of the State. It puts us in a better category. The people there get their prices and buyers are attending the sales. The sheep population has increased greatly—I would say by more than a third. I do not need to emphasise again how economically important this primary industry is to this portion of the State and the State as a whole.

That could never be denied, and that is why the people from the southern part of the State are entitled to get equity from their zone. The Premier has dealt with this matter and I know he wants all the money from the southern portion of the State to develop harbours. I know the member for Geraldton is anxious about this also. I would say the fault is with the Government because of its failure to recognise the need for a harbour in the southern portion of the State. This fault will echo through the corridors of time, and will re-echo as a mistake which occurred in the 1965 Budget. It will not be denied and it will re-echo.

I have nothing more to say this evening. I will speak again on the general Estimates and I hope the Premier has listened to sound reasoning and will see the common-sense of putting some money into a worthy port in the southern portion of the State.

#### Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Rowberry.

House adjourned at 10.32 p.m.

## Legislative Council

Thursday, the 7th October, 1965

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

**QUESTIONS (3): ON NOTICE****MARKETING OF ONIONS ACT AMENDMENT ACT, 1953***Tabling of Papers*

1. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Local Government:

Would the Minister table all papers relevant to the Marketing of Onions Act Amendment Act No. 39 of 1953, including those which give reasons why this Act was not proclaimed?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

Yes, for one week.

*The papers were tabled.*

**WILLIAMS-DARKAN ROAD***Funds: Allocation and Expenditure*

2. The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is it a fact that the following allocations were advised to the Shire of Williams as funds available for the Williams-Darkan Road?

	£
Financial year 1963-64 ....	10,600
Financial year 1964-65 ....	11,600
Financial year 1965-66 ....	9,000
	<hr/> £31,200

- (2) Would the Minister advise how much of these funds were spent during the years mentioned, and on which sections of the road?
- (3) Could the Minister advise the department's intentions regarding the balance of the allocations,

in view of the sealing and bridge construction within the Shire of West Arthur, and the resultant heavy loading that the unsealed portion within the Williams Shire is being subject to?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Of the total allocation of £31,200, an amount of £20,011 has been spent to date: £15,165 on the construction, prime and part seal of the section between 15.8 mile (OO Darkan) and the 21.3 mile, and £4,846 on construction of a bridge over Meeking Pool.
- (3) Part of the balance of the allocation will be spent on sealing sections already primed, and the remainder applied to a short section over Coralling Brook, and construction and priming of a section extending north from Meeking Pool bridge.

3. *This question was postponed.*

**DENTAL HYGIENISTS REGISTRATION BILL***Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health), and read a first time.

**BILLS (5): THIRD READING**

1. Audit Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and returned to the Assembly with amendments.
2. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill.
3. State Tender Board Bill.
4. Laporte Industrial Factory Agreement Act Amendment Bill.
5. Builders' Registration Act Amendment Bill.  
Bills read a third time, on motions by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

**CATTLE INDUSTRY COMPENSATION BILL***Second Reading*

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [2.42 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The procedure for cattle testing and payment of compensation is at present contained in three Acts—the Milk Act, the Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Act, and the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Act. Some administrative difficulties and problems of operation in the field have

been encountered as a consequence, and it has for some time been considered desirable, when the time was opportune, that the three funds established under the Statutes should be amalgamated under the one Act.

This Bill, which proposes the consolidation of the existing cattle compensation funds into one fund to provide for the testing of cattle and payment of compensation to cattle owners whose animals are found to be diseased with tuberculosis or actinomycosis (lumpy jaw), or such other disease as may be from time to time declared by proclamation, is essentially the same as the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Act, except it provides for all cattle instead of purely beef cattle. Therefore, it is proposed the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Act of 1963 and the Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Act of 1960 be repealed and some necessary amendments be made to the Milk Act in another Bill, which was the one introduced yesterday.

So, in order to enable the necessary arrangements to be made for the operation of the combined scheme, there is provision in this measure that it will come into operation as an Act on a day to be proclaimed. It is desirable to outline briefly some aspects of the respective funds established in the Treasury under the provisions of the existing Acts.

Contributions are as follows: contributions by licensed milk suppliers to the Dairy Cattle Compensation Fund under the Milk Act at the rate of 0.0036d. per gallon of milk; contributions by other milk suppliers to the Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Fund under the provisions of the Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Act at the rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the pound on the sales of butter fat; and contributions by cattle owners to the fund set up under the provisions of the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Act—these amount to 1d. in the pound on sales of cattle up to a maximum of 5s. for any one animal. Payments to the funds are levied by way of stamp duty under the Stamp Act.

It will be appreciated, therefore, in view of the foregoing, that dairy cattle owners when effecting sales contribute to the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Fund, though they may have already contributed to one of the dairy cattle compensation funds.

Under the proposed amalgamation of funds, a single levy will be made of 1d. in the pound on all cattle sales by both dairy and beef cattle owners similar to the levy made at present to the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Fund.

At the present time, contributions are matched on a pound for pound basis by the Treasury. Proceeds from the sale of condemned animals are also paid into the funds. These provisions have been retained in this amending legislation.

The state of the three funds as at the end of June, 1965, was as follows: Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Fund, £73,776 4s. 2d.; Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Fund, £60,293 6s. 5d.; and the Milk Act Compensation Fund, £38,237.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is marvellous how the pennies and fractions of pennies accumulate.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The interjection of the honourable member reminds us of the old saying that looking after the pennies—as in this case—certainly pays off; and by looking after the pennies and fractions of pennies very sizeable compensation funds have been accumulated.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: In the case of bulk handling the contribution of  $\frac{1}{32}$ d. has meant millions.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This has resulted in protection being given not only to the industry but also to the people in the virtual eradication of the disease of tuberculosis. As some members would be aware, the testing for tuberculosis in cattle and the payment of compensation were introduced in an effort to reduce the incidence of disease in cattle. To date, these measures have been very successful, particularly as regards dairy cattle, for which legislation has been in force over a considerably longer period than that existing for beef cattle, this latter being proclaimed to come into force last year.

The suggested amalgamation of funds occurred in 1963, the same year as the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Bill was introduced. There were, however, difficulties at that time concerning the disposal of funds. For instance, the Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Fund had a credit of approximately £60,000 at that time, and there was some opposition from dairy farmers to pooling these moneys in a general compensation fund.

Some members in this House might recall there was a discussion here on this very point. It was said at the time some advantage would be gained in leaving the funds until they had arrived at a more even basis before their amalgamation took place. Two or three members have nodded their heads, and that indicates there are some in this House who recall the occasion. Therefore, in view of the high degree of eradication of TB in dairy herds and a desire to reduce the Dairy Cattle Industry Compensation Fund, the dairy cattle fund levy was reduced from 2d. to  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. as previously mentioned. Meanwhile the Beef Cattle Industry Compensation Fund was built up to a stage where amalgamation could take place with less difficulty. It is considered this stage has now been reached and, with the proposed consolidation of funds, owners of dairy and beef cattle need contribute to one fund only.

This procedure has the support of the dairy section and the whole-milk section of the Farmers' Union, which groups have

indicated they consider that to continue with the three funds would not be in the best interests of the producers, and so they favour the consolidation of the funds under one comprehensive scheme.

With the considerable decrease in the incidence of TB, there does not appear to be any prospective need to draw on these funds for the purposes of TB control to any substantial extent. There again I must interpolate to say that some members will recall that in the earlier days of this scheme there was on occasions the need to destroy quite large percentages of individual herds. It is felt that this situation will not repeat itself at this stage.

There is good reason, however, for maintaining such funds in order that compensation may be available in the event of a necessity for wholesale slaughtering of cattle should herds again become seriously affected by disease. Reintroduction of rinderpest, or devastation of herds by pleuropneumonia reaching the southern portion of the State, would be indicative of circumstances requiring large scale slaughtering in the interests of the industry as a whole. Should such incursions into our herds take place without funds having been reserved to meet the contingency, the cost of compensation would have to be met from Government sources.

It is desired to emphasise that no injustice is to be done to any group by the introduction of this measure amalgamating the various schemes and funds. In the progression of time, the contributions made to the reserves, now to be used in the general interest, will build up a substantial fund upon which the industry may, with assurance, rely. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan.

## **FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

## **AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.53 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Members will recall having in 1963 agreed to the passing of an amendment to the Agricultural Products Act making it obligatory for bales or packages of wool to be clearly marked before being removed from the producer's property in order that the identity of the producer would be established.

During the course of inspections carried out in 1964, however, it became evident that, whilst consignments received at brokers' stores complied in the main with the requirements of the Act, many others purchased direct from properties by itinerant wool buyers, and some taken direct to the merchants' stores at Fremantle, were not so identified.

It will be readily appreciated that there is no means of obtaining evidence to enable legal action to be taken against an offender once an improperly labelled consignment has been removed from the producer's property.

With a view to overcoming this difficulty, it is proposed now to make it an offence for any person to have in his possession any wool packed in a bale or package unless it is marked, branded, or labelled in such a manner as to clearly and legibly indicate the identity of the producer of the wool.

Similar provisions are contained in other Acts, such as the Plant Diseases Act and the Factories and Shops Act, and will enable inspectors to take action against the person having an unbranded bale in his possession.

The other amendment concerns the Apple Sales Advisory Committee established by legislative action in 1962 at the request of the Western Australian Fruit Growers' Association. The committee was set up initially for a term of 12 months and this period was extended by an amendment in 1963 for a further two years to the 31st December, 1965.

The object of setting up this organisation was to provide a means of determining the size and quality of specified varieties of apples being sold on the local market. It was considered at that time as something of an urgent measure necessary for the control of the sale of apples to prevent prices declining to glut levels due to the sale of inferior fruit at very low prices.

The association has given much thought to the need for legislation of a permanent nature. Crop variability over the three-year period during which controls have operated has, however, made it quite clear that quality control by itself is not effective in ensuring satisfactory marketing of the crop.

For instance, the 1964-65 apple crop was a record one and, though record quantities were exported, the balance remaining for local consumption was much larger than normal. Under the existing controls, the purchaser received on the average higher quality fruit than he was offered before the controls were instituted; but, on the other hand, unfortunately, many growers received very poor prices for their local market fruit.

The association consequently desires a further period within which to assess the situation before submitting proposals of a

permanent nature. An extension of the term of continuance of the present Act for a further 12 months has been requested and there is provision in this Bill for such extension to be effected until the 31st December, 1966. I commend the Bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson.**

## FRUIT CASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.56 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The proposed extension of the activities of the Apple Sales Advisory Committee for a further 12 months—that is, until the 31st December, 1966—under the provisions of the Agricultural Products Act, necessitates a complementary amendment of the Fruit Cases Act, as contained in this measure.

The section of this Act, amended in 1962, when the committee was established for a period of 12 months—a period later extended for a further 2 years—defines a direct buyer of apples and provides for his registration.

The records of registration provide the means of identifying wholesalers and retailers who buy direct, and this ensures that the grades of apples prescribed under the Agricultural Products Act can be checked effectively. As a result, uniform standards in quality are maintained irrespective of whether fruit is purchased through normal channels or direct from the grower.

As previously mentioned, the amendment in this Bill is purely a complementary requirement brought about by the request of the Western Australian Fruit Growers' Association for the extension of appropriate legislation for another year, in this case also until the 31st December, 1966. I commend the Bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee.**

## MARKETING OF ONIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed, from the 6th October, on the following motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**THE HON. A. R. JONES** (West) [2.59 p.m.]: It is not my intention to speak at any length on this Bill, as I feel it has

already received a fair amount of airing by members. However, one or two features of it need some further explanation, if that be the right word; but perhaps I should say some of us should express our thoughts on them.

The most important purpose of this measure is to repeal an Act of 1953 which was never proclaimed. I do not know the reasons it was not proclaimed, but perhaps the Minister might care to tell us some of them later. The fact remains it must be repealed so that other amendments can be made.

**The Hon. R. Thompson:** The file is here now, so you can have a look at it.

**The Hon. A. R. JONES:** One of the other amendments in the Bill is designed to cover what is now an open season—the period from the 1st July to the 1st November—when onions do not come under the control of the board. As more onions are now being grown in the Spearwood, and other market gardening areas of the State, as distinct from those areas which the Act was originally designed to protect—namely, Carnarvon, Kalgoorlie, and a few growers at York—and as it seems that a smaller quantity of onions is grown in those areas, I believe it is necessary to cover the position, and therefore the amendment in the Bill should be agreed to to ensure that onions grown at this time of the year come under the jurisdiction of the marketing board.

This, of course, is a board matter and the board has asked for the amendments. Apparently it has plans in this regard, although I have not been able to discover what they are; and it is hoped to control the marketing of onions at this time of the year also. It became clear to me in the brief time I spent in the Spearwood district the other day, and from the talks I had with the growers, that unless the board has some plans in view which it proposes to introduce fairly quickly to cover next season, when the white, flat onions are grown, the growers will not worry about growing them unless they are assured of getting a much bigger price for them than they receive today through the board.

This type of onion is much harder to grow and it does not give the same return as the brown onion. In fact we were told that it gives only about one-third of the yield that the brown onion variety gives per acre. Also, this variety needs more attention, and more spray has to be used to cope with diseases. All in all, the difficulties associated with growing the white onion are very great compared with the brown variety and it is necessary for growers to receive three or four times the price they are receiving at the moment for their brown onions to make it a payable proposition. Of course, if an increased price is not agreed to the growers will not worry about planting the white variety.

If that happens there will be a shortage of onions at this time of the year, and we do not want this. Therefore, if the board has any plans in mind to cope with the situation, I hope it will put them into effect as soon as possible.

Another amendment in the Bill relates to the qualifications required for a person to be classified as a grower. Under the present system an acreage basis is used, but by the amendment in the Bill it is intended that a grower shall be a person who produces three tons of onions per annum. This is a much easier way of determining who is or who is not a grower of onions; but I wonder whether we should not retain the acreage basis instead of dispensing with it altogether. It is possible, if the board reviews the whole situation, that it will be found desirable to reintroduce the acreage basis; and whether it is altogether wise to change the system now I do not know. This is an aspect to which further attention could be given.

It was revealed yesterday, and I learned of it recently, that a number of onion growers—probably a hundred, or may be even more—are not eligible to be classed as growers, or to be enrolled as growers and have a vote. I think this is wrong. Whether these people are citizens of this country or not does not matter; they are here and they are engaged in this industry, and they should be permitted to vote on something which concerns their livelihood. They should be allowed to have a say and, if necessary, criticise something which they feel should be criticised if it is connected with their industry. After all, they have been accepted here as people who work in a certain industry and they should be given the right to have some control over it, particularly as they can be advised by their fellow-countrymen—and there are plenty of foreigners in this industry.

I think it is necessary to pass the legislation, but I would point out that the industry is in a pretty hopeless position; and I feel sure the production of onions between the 1st July and the 1st November will fall considerably unless some new system of selling is put into effect and the growers receive a greater return.

I shall follow the affairs of this industry with very great interest, because I am sure that unless the amendments which are proposed in this Bill have the effect that the board anticipates, there will be a need to have a searching inquiry into the ramifications of the whole industry in an endeavour to put it on a sounder footing. There is no doubt that at present it is not on a sound basis; and if we want to have sufficient onions available at all times of the year we will have to make sure that the industry is placed on a firm basis and that growers are assured that they will be compensated for the extra work and the extra costs which are involved in producing a particular variety of onions at a difficult period of the year.

We must also give the board sufficient power so that it can police the industry and deal very severely not only with the people who buy onions which are not being handled by the board but also those growers who persist in supplying onions to the black market. It is difficult for me to understand how any grower can do that sort of thing, because he is really acting in a manner which is against his own interests and those of other growers. It is just like scabbing in regard to labour. Every grower should be fully behind any proposal which has as its object the improvement of his industry. Only by doing that can it remain stable; and, at the present time, the onion growing industry is far from stable. There are too many people, growers, and merchants, who are not doing the right thing by it.

**THE HON. N. E. BAXTER** (Central) [3.9 p.m.]: The marketing of onions is a rather complicated matter from the board's point of view because onions grown in Western Australia are not easily stored and, therefore, the board is handling a difficult commodity. The Egyptian onions, which we have imported at times, and even the Eastern States onions, are recognised as much better keepers than Western Australian grown onions. The situation which exists in Western Australia at the moment is a very difficult one, and under the amendments in the Bill the board will be given a lot of discretionary power. It will become the bailee for all onions grown in Western Australia. The meaning of that is that the board will be more or less the vested owner of the onions, but the responsibility for keeping the onions until they are delivered to the board will be with the grower.

It will be seen that this will create quite a problem for the grower if he has to wait till the board tells him it is prepared to take delivery of the onions. If, as has happened before, the board delays and does not want to accept delivery of the onions for several months, it will be necessary for the grower to store a number of tons of onions in his own shed; and because they will not keep, he could perhaps lose half, or more than half, of the crop he has grown.

Mr. Jones said he could not understand why some growers sold onions on the black market to the detriment of other growers. This is quite understandable. If a grower is to have onions left on his hands and he sees an opportunity to get rid of them, rather than lose his crop by storage he will try to cut his losses, particularly if he has not received a delivery order in writing from the board. That is only human nature, and that is where the weakness lies in the discretionary power; it can leave a man holding the baby—or in this case a bag of onions

which he could stand to lose. How we can overcome this difficulty I would not like to suggest at the moment. We might perhaps be able to do it by controlled growing of onions in Western Australia. That would be the only answer to the problem.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Why not pay the grower a storage premium?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: If we paid a storage premium, we would then come down to the economics of selling onions. I doubt whether the board could provide enough money from its marketing conditions to pay such a premium. After looking at the 1963 report I doubt whether the administrative account would cover the payment of a premium. The total gross sales by the board in the year 1963-64 were £252,555, and the net payment to growers was £172,679. There was a matter of £79,000 in costs, made up of freight, railage, handling charges, commercial insurance, and so on of £51,000; contribution to the administrative side of the board of £10,000; together with bags, which cost nearly £18,000.

If we consider those figures and look at the board's balance sheet we find there is a total of about £18,000 on the assets side from which it provides bags for the growers. As I have said, these cost about £17,000 or £18,000. What the board keeps for the fund has to provide enough bags for the growers for the next season. So all in all I do not see where it will have any surplus for premiums to meet storage by growers, or for anything else, unless we increase the 5 per cent. contribution made by the growers for the board's administrative account. I think that provides an answer to the interjection made by Mr. Ferry. Even if a premium were paid to growers for the storage of onions it still would not overcome the problem of losses suffered by the grower.

I doubt whether the repeal of the 1956 amending Act is in the best interests of the grower. It may be in the best interests of the board from the point of view of policing, but I do not think it is in the best interests of the grower, particularly if he has to wait on the board to write to him and ask for his onions to be delivered; or if he loses a big proportion of his crop. This will certainly not encourage growers to continue growing onions.

Mr. Jones also raised the point about having two pools. A look at the Onion Marketing Board report shows that the number one grade early brown onions are sold at £26 a ton, whereas the white onions are listed at £51 8s. a ton. If the board decides to have one pool throughout the year, as is the case with wheat, the growers of both brown and white onions would receive an equal price per ton. The man who would suffer most severely would be the grower of white onions, which are

grown between July and December. That is because the brown onion crop returns from 12 to 13 tons per acre, whereas it is recognised in the industry that the white onions will not return more than four tons per acre. So the limit a man could get with his four tons per acre would be about £104 per acre; whereas the brown onion grower, with his 12 tons per acre and an average of £26 per ton would receive three times as much per acre for his onions.

When discussing this suggestion of two separate pools, the idea was considered to be rather ridiculous. It is far from ridiculous. I think there should be some provision in the Act for the board to form two pools, because we are dealing with a commodity which is quite peculiar in its nature. It is during the period from July to December—so I have been assured by people who know about the marketing of onions—that there is a huge demand for onions. There is no question about that. The demand is there; the buyer is there; and the onions are readily snapped up.

To illustrate this point: one merchant who had an order for five tons of onions a week with the board increased his order to 40 tons a week from July to December. That indicates he was buying his surplus on the black market. But during the slack period of July to December he could not obtain onions, so he increased his order with the board.

So it would appear that even with the amendments in the Bill the scheme will not operate successfully unless the board is very careful and adopts careful tactics in regard to marketing, and unless it separates the onions by having two pools in a year. Unless the board takes some action I can see the growers of white onions going out of the scheme completely, and between July and December we will be importing quite a lot of onions into Western Australia.

This would be a bad thing, particularly in view of our trade balance with the Eastern States at the moment. It would not be good if we had to import onions instead of exporting them as we have done in the past.

It is rather interesting to see from this report the trend of sales over the seasons since 1945. In 1945 the onions sold amounted to 6,922 tons; in 1950 the figure rose to 17,619 tons; and in 1951 it again rose to 21,167 tons. In 1960 it was 20,733 tons. Strangely enough, in 1961 the sales dropped to 5,825 tons; and during December 1964, they were 6,771 tons. It seems that either there was a huge drop in the production of onions between 1960 and 1964, or a big quantity of onions—double the amount marketed by the board—was sold on the black market.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: It does not look as though the board is getting much trade.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: As the honourable member has said, it does not look as though the board is handling much of the quantity available. I am afraid I am not very happy with the amendments, but perhaps we could try them for, say, 12 months to see what the result is. I hope the actions of the board do not discourage the growers of this State so that they will not grow sufficient onions for the local market between July and December. This is a primary producing State and we should encourage producers to grow everything we need instead of importing our requirements from overseas or obtaining them from the other States.

I would say this to the board: This is a matter which the board will have to handle carefully if we pass this amending legislation. The board will have to treat this bailee clause carefully, particularly during the period between July and December; and during that period the board should grant a permit to growers for the sale of onions on the open market rather than have them held until the board can handle them.

If the board says automatically that it will handle the onions for the whole of the year and will not issue many permits to sell on the open market during the period I have mentioned, the growers will simply stop growing onions; and this would be a very bad thing. I trust the board will treat this matter most carefully and that it will mete out equitable treatment to the growers rather than take a big quantity of onions from one grower and a small quantity from another. If one grower has 30 tons and another has 20 tons, the board should take an equitable proportion from each grower and see that all growers are treated equitably under this scheme. I support the measure at present—

The Hon. J. Heitman: A quota system.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: —and hope the board will treat this matter in a delicate and judicious manner.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan.

## MILK ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed, from the 6th October, on the following motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan) [3.24 p.m.]: We support the Bill as we feel it will give a measure of relief and justice to certain dairy farmers who are either whole-milk producers or butterfat producers, because previously they had to pay three levies. They had to pay on their gallonage of milk, on their pounds of butter fat, and into the dairy cattle compensation fund.

Under this Bill, all cattle owners are brought on to the same basis and they will pay into only one fund, and at the same rate; and payment for any animals destroyed will also be made from the one fund. The dairy cattle compensation fund will pay £10,000 as its fair quota or share into the new fund, and the balance is to be held by the Milk Board for its purposes, the principal one being to see that the consuming public get the best milk that can possibly be supplied to them.

I understand the Milk Board has in mind certain projects on which the funds at its disposal will be used. One of these is to build appropriate office accommodation in keeping with an industry of this standing. The board also proposes to build a laboratory, the purpose of which will be to carry out investigations into milk and its purity, and to ensure that everything possible is done for the industry.

I feel this moment is appropriate to offer praise to the Department of Agriculture for the magnificent work done in the field of disease among dairy cattle, particularly bovine TB. From figures I was able to obtain, I notice that in 1947, when the first testings of our dairy cattle for TB were made, there was an incidence of 23 per cent. of reactors; and the latest figures reveal that this figure has dropped to 3 per cent.; that is, three in every 1,000 tested.

I feel the results achieved are worthy of the utmost commendation, and we certainly offer it. This position was achieved in two ways: One, by immunisation or vaccination; and the other, by the destruction of animals found to be diseased. Constant vigilance and testing by departmental officers will be necessary so that when the disease is discovered the remedy can be immediately applied.

We feel that the Bill is a move in the right direction and we support it.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West) [3.28 p.m.]: I think it will become apparent that perhaps a better understanding could have been had of this Bill had it been debated in a more correct sequence, as it was in another place; that is, it should have followed the debate on the Bill, the second reading of which was taken today. I refer to the Cattle Industry Compensation Bill. This Bill we are now dealing with is complementary to the other measure, and the sequence I have mentioned would have been the more logical one to take.

I would like to take this opportunity of fairly briefly presenting the history of this part of the Milk Act. I think I can say that the rapid development of the whole-milk industry, particularly in Western Australia in the post-war years, entailing as it did the greater sophistication, not only of dairies and farms, but also of treatment plants, retail establish-

ments, and so on, made it axiomatic in what is professed to be an advanced country that there should be some attention given to certain very important features in the supply of foodstuffs, as referred to by Mr. Dolan.

These features, in my opinion, are: firstly, the provision of facilities in treatment plants enabling the supply of a bacteria-free or germ-free product. I suggest it would be unthinkable for the health authorities to condone the sale of a product, such as milk, which has a high potential for the spread of disease through a population which those authorities are charged to protect.

So we came to accept pasteurisation; and I use the word "accept" quite advisedly because a good deal of opposition existed at the time. In fact some opposition still does exist, and I think the town of Bunbury is at present debating this very question: that of compulsory pasteurisation.

The other matter, apart from treatment plants and pasteurisation—and this I suggest would appear logical—is that of prevention, at its source, of at least one form of a serious infection, and the eradication of this disease in the milk supply and the herds in Western Australia.

I think that probably the Department of Agriculture and the Milk Board have made a fair enough estimate of the TB incidence in the herds. I suggest the task of embarking on this job of complete eradication was not for the faint-hearted or foolhardy. I also suggest, and I would agree with and support the comments of Mr. Dolan when he referred to the departmental officers, that the people of Western Australia—and so many of them are not aware of this—can forever be indebted, quite beyond calculation, to a man who was not foolhardy or faint-hearted; and I refer to Mr. Toop, the Chief Veterinarian.

Because of that man we have virtually eradicated tuberculosis, which is an improvement on the position which existed many years ago. That position existed not only with tuberculosis, but with many other diseases in livestock in Western Australia. Mr. Toop was not alone when he embarked on his long and lonely campaign. There had to be a climate of public opinion supporting the project, and there had to be co-operation by the farming community. I think it must have been a long and lonely campaign, and I say this where such campaigns are not unknown.

As a consequence of the campaign there was a form of insurance to cover anticipated losses by some of the farmers under the Act of 1946, which is the parent of this particular Bill. A compensation fund was provided for. I understand that in 1947—and well do I remember the year—just on 9,500 cattle were condemned.

I should mention that TB testing had been carried out in a fairly cursory fashion for a number of years. Likewise, there were in existence two compensation funds. One was contributed to by the milk vendors, and the other was contributed to by the dairymen. However, under the 1946 Act, the two funds were combined. As a result of that combination, all sections of the industry were then contributing to the one fund, as has already been referred to here today by the Minister.

We have come a long way since then and the scheme has been expanded and extended into the butterfat areas—that is virtually covering the whole dairy industry of Western Australia—and more latterly it has extended into the beef cattle industry. I know that it has been stated by the Minister in another place that the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in the South-West Land Division has been reduced to something less than 1 per cent., and in the dairy industry to probably less than .5 per cent.

I would like to think that the real significance of this achievement is not lost or members in this House. Probably they may have an opportunity, as I did some years ago, of surveying at close quarters—and it was quite interesting—the incidence of disease in herds in western countries overseas. I would suggest to Dr. Hislop, with his deep appreciation and knowledge of the subject, that what he has applauded in the advance of tuberculosis control in Western Australia has its parallel in the animal world; and, as he would know, these two are not unrelated.

So, we have arrived at a situation, which I might describe as a most satisfactory state of affairs, where an Act dealing specifically with testing and compensation can now be repealed, its job having been done. Not only has the scheme brought about a highly favourable balance to the tune of some £38,000, but it now becomes possible to do certain things. Firstly, we are able to incorporate those funds into a much wider scheme, as has been prefaced in the Cattle Industry Compensation Bill. Secondly, we are able to reduce the contributions payable and enable payment to be made in one form only. At this stage I would like to say to the Minister that in his explanation he mentioned the rate would be 1d. in the pound on cattle sold. I note that the Minister in another place has designated this amount as 1d. in the pound. Perhaps the Minister could check on that point.

The third matter I wish to refer to, which is consequential on the repealing of this fund, is that the present Bill enables the disposal of a portion of the fund to improve facilities enabling the provision of a better milk supply.

This was outlined to the House a few moments ago by the Minister when he said that the remaining balance will be retained by the board to be used in the interests of the liquid milk industry. That balance is

approximately £28,000. Mr. Wise drew attention to the extent to which funds can grow from small contributions. The amount of £28,000 is not really a very great sum of money. I understand that the money will be incorporated into the administration of the Milk Board and used for the development of the administration centre and, presumably, for laboratory facilities and the like, which, I believe, are not inappropriate uses for the funds.

If members will bear with me I would like to develop this line of thought because the subject interests me greatly; and it is also a line on which I can claim some little experience both in the field and on the scientific side. My interest goes back 25 years when I demonstrated at a University exhibition and conversazione, with the complete co-operation of the Milk Board, and the chairman at that time, a milk treatment plant then being established in Western Australia. Later I was granted an opportunity to study the operations of the Milk Marketing Board in England and, through the Ministry's National Agricultural Advisory Service the administration and the functioning of the 1947 Agricultural Act of Great Britain.

With this background I express myself strongly. That is the reason and qualification for my speaking with some experience on this matter, quite apart from the fact that I represent a milk-producing area and was, for some time, an agricultural extension officer in that area.

With this experience, I believe those features to which I have referred have a considerable bearing on the structure—that is the entire complex—of the dairying industry in Western Australia and its gradual or rapid development as the case may be.

I am going to ask your indulgence, Sir, for a moment because it may appear that some of the things I will say are not within the ambit of this Bill, but I assure you that they are and that they have the closest connection with the use to which this sum of £28,000 is to be put, as indicated by the Minister in his explanation. I think that you, Sir, with your appreciation of agriculture, will understand the relationship I will attempt to explain. I refer to these words: The remaining balance will be retained by the board to be used in the interests of the liquid milk industry. Those words are, in my opinion, not accidental ones when one bears in mind that the functions of the board are mainly to ensure a regularity of supply of a pure and wholesome product; for which purpose the board is authorised to exercise control—

1. For production through the operation of a quota system.
2. For the circumstances under which milk is firstly produced, then treated and sold.
3. For the prices for this product at all those levels.

Also, as we saw by the Bill, the board has been responsible through the compensation fund for TB testing and condemnations. This, I would suggest, is an extremely wide coverage or ambit for the board, but it will be noted that most, if not all, of these functions are administrative or inspectorial; but of course there has to be very close liaison between the Department of Agriculture and the board, and in particular with the veterinary branch through its TB control work.

So one can understand, I think, the omission in the Minister's explanation of any reference to the words "research" or "investigation" when describing the use to which this money will be put. There will be laboratories. But, we imagine, they will be for the purpose of inspection and testing; or will they?

So perhaps one is led to believe that with the Department of Agriculture being held responsible for research and advisory work and the Public Health Department for contamination, adulteration, and so on, it begs the question as to what degree of liaison there was between the Milk Board, the Treasury, the appropriate branches of the Department of Agriculture, and the Public Health Department on the consolidation of these funds by this Bill.

I repeat, and I emphasise, that I entirely support every feature of the Bill, but I would be failing in my responsibility to the dairy farmers of this State if I did not use this opportunity to say these few words. The funds are, in the main, farmers' and Treasury funds, and I consider it very necessary before we condone the growth of individual enterprise—and I refer to government departments and semi-governmental instrumentalities—that we should look closely at the degree of integration that is possible, and perhaps desirable, between every feature and phase of the dairy industry complex; because right at the very base of this structure is the person or medium by which this food is produced—the farmer; the person on whom all this actually depends.

I have attempted to say—and it is a considered statement—that the dairy farmer is rapidly losing his freedom; and I ask members to consider, bearing in mind the debate that has already taken place in this House today, and just recently, that initiative and private enterprise can be easily whittled away; and perhaps members of the farming community are becoming more and more the butt end of more and more controls and strictures.

Unless there is close co-operation—in the case of the milk industry—between research, extension, and inspection, or policing, I suggest that the task of the whole-milk farmer, or the dairy farmer, will become an almost impossible one. I suggest, too, that this has been the case, to a degree already, and that it has been so for a number of years.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.5 p.m.*

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I was at the point of elaborating on what I consider to be the activities of all those authorities concerned in the dairy industry of Western Australia, and I was making particular reference to the effects or functions of the Milk Board and the Department of Agriculture as they have directly affected the operations of the individual dairy farmer in producing his pure, wholesome food product.

I have mentioned that there is a need for a very close integration of the research activities and extension and the inspectorial duties so that the farmer himself, in attempting to meet the requirements of the Act as administered by the board or other authorities, has a reasonable chance of achieving the production of an adequate quantity of milk of desirable quality to satisfy the market and the authorities, and, at the same time, of maintaining the health of his herd, so as to permit of improvements and developments of his property, and the living conditions of himself and his family.

All these factors I believe are closely related, and are certainly desirable. For many years, perhaps, there has not been this close co-operation or integration; and, as I have indicated, this has possibly been most apparent in the whole-milk industry in relation to the quality of the milk, and with particular reference to solids-not-fats.

In closing, I would ask, in all sincerity, that the Minister and the Government be extremely mindful of the dangers that are inherent in what may appear to be quite logical legislation involving the use of a certain sum of money which has been contributed by those engaged in the dairy industry, in conjunction with the Treasury, for the overall improvement of the dairy industry itself and for the benefit of those engaged in it. I support the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. G. Hislop.

## TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed, from the 6th October, on the following motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee:—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [4.8 p.m.]: This Bill seeks to make only one amendment to sections 30 and 30A of the principal Act for the purpose of broadening the definition of the word "road" so that in the event of an accident occurring in a parking area, a drive-in theatre, or a similar place, which results in bodily injury, such accident shall be reported to the police. As far as I can see, the principle is accepted, I think, by each and every one of us.

I think it is only fair and just that if one is required to report an accident that occurs on any road, one should also be required to report an accident that occurs in any other area. I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed, from the 5th October, on the following motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan) [4.12 p.m.]: Although I intend to support this Bill, I am going to deal with certain matters relating to the three portions of the Act which the measure seeks to amend; namely, sections 7 and 13, and the first schedule to the Act. At the outset I want to say that I am disappointed that a more comprehensive Bill is not before us.

In 1963, the Trades and Labour Council conducted a great deal of research into workers' compensation throughout Western Australia and published a voluminous document which was presented to the then Minister for Labour (The Hon. G. P. Wild) with a request that it be studied and that the matters raised by the council be given due consideration. Since 1963 there have been interim reports sent to the Trades and Labour Council in the form of brief letters, but no decision has been made and forwarded to that body.

I should imagine that the Trades and Labour Council would represent 85 per cent. of the workers of Western Australia, which indicates that it is a very representative body; yet that council has been ignored and its submissions to the Minister have not been taken into consideration at any stage.

Dealing with the amendment to the first schedule, which proposes to increase the compensation payment to a widow from £800 to £1,120, at first glance this would seem to be a fairly steep and reasonable increase, but if one examines the true figures which are ruling at present, it is found that the actual rate is now £1,022.

Therefore the amount is to be increased by £98, which is the minimum payable to a widow under the first schedule. Likewise each child under 16 years of age will receive £100 under the proposed amendment in the Bill. The actual figure at the present time is £93.

Sometimes I think it is useless to point out to the Government that legislation which it is introducing is wrong in principle and out of step with the Act. It will be recalled that last year I moved an amendment to the schedule, but it did not see the light of day. To refresh the memory of members I quote from page 2640 of the 1964 *Hansard* in which I am recorded as having said—

Let me compare the position of a worker in Western Australia with that of the worker in New South Wales or the Commonwealth Territory. Let me assume that a man with a wife and two dependent children is killed in the course of his work, and that the ages of the children are 10 and 11 years. The widow of such a worker in New South Wales and in the Commonwealth Territory would receive £4,300, plus £2 3s. a week for the 11-year old child until it reaches 16 years of age—or a sum of £550—and £2 3s. weekly for the other child until it reaches 16 years of age—or a sum of £660—making a grand total of £5,510.

In Western Australia the widow of a worker under the same circumstances would receive £3,500, plus £200 for the two children, making a total of £3,700, or £1,800 less than the amount that is paid in New South Wales or the Commonwealth Territory. The basis of my argument is illustrated in the comparison and in the figures I have given.

I went on to say that a widow in Western Australia would be worse off by £1,800.

During the Committee stage I moved an amendment to clause 8 which sought to amend the first schedule. I moved that the words "eight hundred" be deleted and the words "one thousand five hundred" inserted in lieu. It will be recalled that at that particular time we were establishing our base figure on the amendments which appeared on the notice paper in order to bring the base into line with the base figure applying in the Commonwealth, New South Wales, and, to a lesser extent, in Tasmania and South Australia, where it was near enough, if not equivalent to that applying in the other States; that is, the figure of £4,300. I moved at the Committee stage that the base figure be £4,300, and that the minimum payment to a widow in Western Australia be £1,500.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order! The honourable member is now referring to what he said in the Committee stage of a similar Bill which was dealt with last year. I suggest that this portion of his remarks should be held over until the Committee stage is reached.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have finished. I was pointing out that the anomaly which existed in the first schedule was shown to the Government,

but it would not listen. This year, however, it is bringing forward an amendment to remedy the anomaly that was pointed out last year. The point I make is that the Government does not listen to the remarks of Opposition members when it is told there is something wrong with legislation being introduced.

The Bill seeks to amend section 7 of the Act, which relates to the to-and-from clause. On page two of the Bill we find that a person who is eligible under the to-and-from provision will, should he be injured while travelling to or from a pickup, have to make some prior arrangement with the employer before he can become qualified for compensation.

In another place, much stress was laid on the effect of this amendment on waterside workers. From memory I do not think I raised the case of the waterside workers, because I realised they would be covered by the legislation that was before the House last year, for the reason that waterside workers are ordered to a pickup by the Australian Stevedoring Industry Commission in accordance with the requirements of the shipping companies. For that reason they would be covered.

The people about whom I am concerned are those who have to attend other places of pickup where prior arrangement cannot be put into effect. Let us consider the Co-operative Bulk Handling installation at North Fremantle. Daily, workers are picked up to handle the bulk wheat going in and out of the terminal. Therefore it cannot be said that it is by prior arrangement with the workers that they are picked up on any day. The same applies to the workers at the abattoir engaged in the export of meat. When the chain system is in operation, butchers are used to slaughter the lambs.

Similarly, the oil companies pick up casual labour, as do the wool stores. Casual labour is also picked up for the export of apples and grapes. Even the Commonwealth Employment Service uses the pickup system and gives directions to workers to go to different places of employment. How then can the wording—

For the purposes of this section, any place at which persons, ordinarily employed in a particular employment, customarily attend, by prior arrangement,

be inserted in the Act? If it is, then Western Australia will have the most restrictive travelling provision in the whole of Australia. Very few workers will benefit by the insertion of such snide wording in the Act.

If we examine the figures which I supplied to the House previously, we find that in New South Wales the total claims under the journeying provision to and from a pickup, or a camp, to the permanent place of abode amounted to 2.61 per

cent of the grand total of all claims. Comparing New South Wales with Western Australia, we find that possibly 1,000,000 people daily in New South Wales use transport to travel to and from work, but not a fraction of that number would use public transport.

In the main, in Western Australia, those who ride bicycles to and from work and workers travelling by public transport would be covered by the journeying provision, because people using private transport and cars would not be able to claim under this legislation. However, they would be able to claim against the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust, under which higher compensation is paid.

In the past we have been very critical of the provisions of the Victorian Act. This Act has been amended, and the amendments came into operation on the 1st July of this year. The existing journeying provision is as follows:—

- (i) is travelling between his place of residence and place of employment; or
- (ii) is travelling between his place of residence or place of employment and any school which he is required or expected by his employer to attend, or while he is in attendance at any such school; or
- (iii) is travelling between his place of residence or place of employment and any other place for the purpose of receiving a medical certificate or advice, attention or treatment in connection with any injury for which he is entitled to receive compensation, or for the purpose of submitting himself for examination by a duly qualified medical practitioner pursuant to any provision of the Act or any requirement made thereunder, or is in attendance at any place for any such purpose; or
- (iv) is travelling between his place of residence and a place of pick up. S. 8 (2) (b).

#### Place of Employment

Where there is no fixed place of employment the term shall be deemed to include the whole area, scope and ambit of employment.

Legislation such as that does give an injured worker some chance of recovering damages, but the insertion of the wording "by prior arrangement" into the Act will certainly limit the compensation payable to other than permanent or semi-permanent employees. Mr. Do'lan has placed an amendment on the notice paper which seeks to delete the words to which I have referred.

I think the portion of the Bill which deals with the right of workers to claim compensation under common law is quite

sound. The position is now clarified. I compliment the Government and the Parliamentary Draftsman for the way in which the clause has been framed. There should be no doubt in the minds of those who are concerned, because, if an injured worker is still in receipt of compensation at the expiration of 12 months from the date of his injury, the employer has to find out from him what he elects to do—whether he elects to resort to common law or to receive compensation payment. That is a very good provision.

I think the Government might have been goaded into taking this action by the comments of the Ombudsman which appeared in the *Daily News*. On two occasions he wrote articles pointing out how workers were, through ignorance of the law, being done out of compensation to which they were entitled. Not every person knows his rights at law and not many people can afford to elect to resort to common law, as the Minister rightly pointed out in his speech.

I have great feelings about this clause. I think it is a good one. Although 12 months is the period stipulated in the Western Australian Act, the Victorian Act provides for two years. However, I think that most people should be in a position to make up their minds within 12 months. If that time is not satisfactory, provision has been made for it to be extended.

With regard to the journeying clause, let us have a look at what a worker is entitled to in Western Australia for injuries and compare it with that offered in the other States. I have here the complete conspectus of all States of the Commonwealth, and of Papua and New Guinea. This year the Victorian Government has seen fit to legislate to raise the compensation level from £2,800 to £4,500. The maximum limit in Western Australia is £3,500, while in Victoria the limit in all cases is £4,500. This means that a Victorian worker can collect that much money for his injury; but, in Western Australia, compensation that has been received is deducted from that lump sum. That was another point that was mentioned in the large document which was sent to the Minister for Labour and to which no reply has yet been received.

The workers in Western Australia pay the same amount of tax as do others in Australia. There have been plenty of taxes levied on workers and others during the last two Budgets; namely, the Commonwealth Budget, and the State Budget which came down to us a few days ago. Under the latter Budget workers are to be some £1 16s. out of pocket each week. Yet we find that for the same type of injury the Commonwealth pays a maximum of £4,300, as do also New South Wales and Victoria. From memory, Tasmania pays £4,750; but the workers in

Western Australia receive only £3,500, less any payments that have been made to them.

Do we consider our workers to be second-class citizens? Do they not suffer as much pain? Do their families not suffer as much loss of earnings as their counterparts in the Eastern States? Is this justice when the major States of Australia and the small State of Tasmania can be far in excess of payments than we are in Western Australia?

Let us have a look at the total liabilities applicable in the case of incapacity. In New South Wales no limit applies for either total or partial incapacity. The weekly compensation payments are based on average weekly earnings. There is no limit to the amount of payment, provided it does not exceed the average weekly earnings. In the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory, and New Guinea, no limit exists for total incapacity, but there is a limit of £3,000 for partial incapacity. That would be far in excess of what any worker would receive in Western Australia.

In the seamen's award there is no limit for total incapacity, but there is a limit of £4,300 for partial incapacity, being at least £800 more than the workers in Western Australia receive for partial incapacity. In Victoria the figure is £4,500, with power to increase in the case of total or permanent incapacity. In Queensland the figure is £3,925 and in Western Australia and South Australia, £3,500; and I now correct the Tasmanian figure I gave earlier. It is £4,459, with additional payments for scheduled injuries to a maximum of £8,352; or a combined total of £12,811, adjustable with the basic wage.

We give our workers who are injured and who suffer either total or partial incapacity the meagre maximum of £3,500, less all compensation payments and hospital and doctors' bills which have been paid up to the date of settlement. I consider it is not justice; and the Government has a responsibility to introduce legislation under which workers in Western Australia, who are asked to march forward with the progress of Western Australia, would receive the same rates of compensation as do their brothers in the other States.

Contractors from the Eastern States are at present working in Western Australia and some of them have brought their own labour with them. If the labourers come from New South Wales and they are employed in Western Australia by the same employer, they come under the scope of the New South Wales Act. Under a recent amendment to our Workers' Compensation Act, if an employer from Western Australia takes his workers to another State, they still come within the scope of our Act. Therefore people

coming from New South Wales have no limit placed on them, but our workers going out of the State have a limit of £3,500 placed on them.

We are told that the average wage paid in Western Australia is in excess of £25 a week, and yet our maximum compensation payment for a man with two children is £15 16s. a week. Other States apply the average weekly earnings, and I think it is about time that the same provision was made in Western Australia. No-one wants to get injured or tries to get injured. No-one can afford to be injured under such meagre pay-outs.

Although I agree with some of the principles in this Bill, it does not go far enough and it does not give the workers the justice which they should receive. I am going to support the Bill, but I trust the Committee will agree to take out "by prior arrangement", because in all justice these words should not be included in the Act.

I repeat that this is the most restrictive legislation covering workers going to and from work in Australia—the most restrictive! If the Minister disagrees with that remark I would ask him to prove to me where I am wrong. In another place questions were asked about this, and the Minister for Labour replied in this tone—

There has been a genuine effort on the part of the draftsman to make this provision a little clearer.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: From what are you quoting?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Continuing—  
I am inclined to agree—

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order! Is that an issue of *Hansard* covering the present session?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He knows full well it is.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): I will request the honourable member not to quote from it.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I will just relate what the Minister in another place said then. He said it is questionable, that he did not like the wording of it himself, and that he would carry out investigations to see what could be done about it.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You should have read this one.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Did the Minister cut the piece out of *Hansard*? I did not want to ruin my copy of *Hansard*. I had reached the stage where I said I would agree to the Bill; but I think that when we do put some study into workers compensation Bills and when we suggest amendments to them, Ministers should not ride roughshod over us and reject our amendments simply because the department—I will not say the Minister in this

House, because I could not—has not given sufficient study to all the provisions in the Bills.

Even at present, with this latest amendment, an anomaly still exists in the Act and will have to be amended by another Bill. However, as the anomaly is not of great consequence to the workers generally, I will let the Minister and his department find out what it is. I support the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. H. R. Robinson.

House adjourned at 4.44 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 7th October, 1965

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS (18): ON NOTICE

#### ASTHMA TREATMENT AT KALGOORLIE

#### Investigations on Climatic Conditions and Establishment of Sanatorium

1. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:  
 Would he make overtures to the Asthma Foundation and offer the assistance of his department, if necessary, for the purpose of having research conducted as to climatic conditions on the gold-fields having in mind possible benefits offered by a dry climate to the treatment of asthmatic patients and the possibility of an asthma sanatorium being built in Kalgoorlie?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:  
 The honourable member's suggestion will be referred to the Asthma Foundation for its advice.