

sion also recommended that the representation in this House should be made the subject of an amending Bill, but nothing was done. The Commission did a large amount of work in preparing an electoral Bill, which was a very good one. What has become of it? No advantage has been derived from it. The measure has been laid aside and another Bill has been introduced, which we cannot support unless it is extensively amended. If this Bill passes the second reading, the House will be able to amend it in Committee, make a satisfactory measure of it, and so improve the Constitution under which we are working. I do not say for one moment that I am going to agree to the deletion of Section 15 of the Constitution. For the adoption of such a course I cannot see any justification.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would it not be better to leave the Act as it is until there is a redistribution of seats?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The question is, when are we going to have a redistribution? We should consider the Bill before us, and try to improve the various clauses. I prefer to do that rather than to reject the Bill. If it is the desire of another place to abolish the Legislative Council and that came to pass, it would be a sorry day not only for the people of Western Australia but also for members of another place. Such a proposal is almost laughable. Our predecessors in this Chamber established the Legislative Assembly, and this Chamber should have the right to say, "If there is now to be only one House, abolish the Assembly."

Hon. J. Nicholson: Do you think some members in the other place still thank the Almighty that there is a Legislative Council?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That sentiment was uttered only yesterday, privately, "Thank God for the Legislative Council!" Undoubtedly the Legislative Council is a wonderful bulwark for the Government of the day.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Honorary Minister acknowledged that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I feel disposed to support the second reading, with a view to improving the Bill in Committee. In fact, subject to the reservations I have mentioned, I shall vote for the second reading.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Wittenoom, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.3 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 24th November, 1938*

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

### QUESTION—RAILWAYS, REGRAIDING.

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What expenditure has been incurred on regrading the railways of the State during the last 10 years? 2, How much has been spent on the Great Southern Railway south of Narrogn?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, £375,788. 2, £10,698.

### QUESTION—MILITARY TRAINING.

*Concessions to Government Employees.*

Mr. McLARTY asked the Premier: 1, Does the Government encourage its employees to join the militia? 2, Is leave granted to Government employees to enable them to join military encampments? 3, If so, does the leave granted interfere with the annual leave of such employees?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The matter is dealt with under Public Service Regulation 9. Leave may be deducted from recreation leave at the option of the employee. Otherwise leave is granted without pay, and any difference between the military pay and the ordinary pay is borne by the State Government. Senior cadets and voluntary cadet trainees (Section 127 of the Defence Act, 1903-1918) are granted leave on full pay. For wages employees, the difference in wages of junior workers only, including apprentices, is paid. Adult workers are required to take leave without pay.

## QUESTION—HOTEL LICENSES.

### *Distribution and After-hours Trading.*

Mr. McDONALD asked the Minister for Justice: 1. How many hotels are there in the Eastern Goldfields Magisterial District? 2. How many hotels are there in the Perth and Fremantle Magisterial Districts? 3. How many prosecutions were instituted last year for breaches of the Licensing Act associated with trading after hours in—(a) the Eastern Goldfields Magisterial District; (b) the Perth Magisterial District; (c) the Fremantle Magisterial District?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, 58. 2, Perth Magisterial District, 87; Fremantle Magisterial District, 40; 3, (a) 5; (b) 15; (c) 6.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1938-39.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 17th November; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

### *Public Utilities.*

#### *Vote—State Batteries, £114,500:*

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not wish to delay the House very long on this particular division, but I feel that I am under an obligation to set forth the case presented to the Minister in correspondence from the Prospectors & Leaseholders' Association of the Murchison. For several years an attempt has been made to obtain a reduction in the charges for the treatment of sands at the State Batteries. I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Mines to the fact that either last year or the previous year the then Minister gave an undertaking that if an alteration that was contemplated in the carting subsidies to prospectors resulted in a saving to the State Batteries Department he would favourably consider the application made to him when he visited Mt. Magnet and was interviewed by the Prospectors' Association for a reduction in the charges for the treatment of prospectors' sands from 2 dwts. 8 grains to 2 dwts. 1 grain. There can be no doubt that the alteration in the carting subsidy has resulted in a great saving to the State Batteries Department, and when the Premier was introducing the Budget, he led me to believe by a reply to an interjection that there would be some pronouncement from the Minister concerning the reduction I have mentioned.

I need not elaborate on the extortionate charges to prospectors, but I would point out that apart from the money value of the 2 dwts. 8 grains that is deducted, the regulations of the department provide for the payment of only 75 per cent. extraction on all sands leached. Further, 10 per cent. of the gross tonnage crushed by a prospector is deducted for losses in wastage and moisture. The actual cost to the prospector cannot be assessed when one bears these deductions in mind. A most remarkable thing is that for many years the department charged prospectors only 7s. per ton for the treatment of tailings, but the arrangement providing for a cash payment was altered to one providing for a commodity payment by way of a deduction of 2 dwts. 8 grains from the tailings after the deductions I have already mentioned had been made. Since the price of gold has risen a particularly high rate has been charged for the treatment of sands at the State Batteries. No doubt the Minister will be able to advance some argument in defence of the refusal to give some concession in this regard, but comparing the value of the commodity payment with the former charge of 7s., the Minister will be hard pressed to justify the extortionate charge made to-day. Another aspect to be considered is that for many years the carting subsidy was not debited against State batteries, but that as soon as the higher price of gold resulted in an increased tonnage crushed at the State batteries the department showed a small profit on them. The opportunity was grasped by the then Minister for Mines to debit the expenditure on cartage subsidies against the State batteries. Accordingly the amount was charged against prospectors' crushings as a capital cost. In that respect the department has not been too sympathetic. When making up the cost to the prospector, excluding deductions on the percentage of extraction and the percentage of tonnage, the department charges 32s. 6d. per ton for treatment of ore at the batteries. Against that should be taken into consideration the cost of crushing a ton of ore by private companies. I readily own that companies have some advantage over State batteries, because they have mass production and have equipped their mines with more modern machinery. If the Government will not keep in step with progressive methods but will adhere to obso-

lete ideas, it cannot assist materially in the development of the mining industry. I am prepared to argue against any Minister that charges for crushing are exorbitant, especially in the case of low-grade ores. They do not give the prospector with a low-grade proposition any chance at all. Low-grade ores seem to be more effective in bringing capital into the State—an aspect that should be carefully considered. Our rich deposits generally occur in small ore bodies, which, experience shows, rarely live to depth. Large low-grade formations retain their value at depth, and therefore are more inviting to companies. I strongly urge what the Prospectors and Leaseholders' Association of the Murchison has been seeking for many years—a reduction of the charge from 2 dwts. 8 grains to 2 dwts. 1 grain. I consider that request to be entirely justified. True, a prospector having ore of high value does not feel the pinch nearly so much as a prospector treating low-grade ore. However, as I have said, low grade propositions appear to be more attractive to foreign investors, and therefore their development should be fostered with a view to the introduction of additional capital into this State.

I wish to inform the officers of the department, through the Minister, that I deeply appreciate the excellent state of the batteries now in my electorate. Members may recall that some years ago I was severe in my criticism of the department. The then Minister for Mines, in championing the department, told the Chamber that I had exaggerated the position, and that if there was one man in the department who deserved commendation it was the Superintendent of State Batteries. The then Minister implied that my statements were even over-exaggerated, and that the batteries in my electorate were not nearly so bad as I represented. However, four of the five batteries in my electorate have been almost entirely replaced, a fact which indicates that my statements were correct. Otherwise what occasion would there have been to re-condition four out of five of those batteries? It was plain that the time had long passed when they should have been re-conditioned. I trust the Minister will give favourable consideration to correspondence now before him from the Prospectors and Leaseholders' Association of the Murchison asking for reduction in crushing

charges. There has been a saving to the department in regard to carting subsidies. Even excluding that consideration, the Government is charging far too much in view of the present value of gold.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: As the previous speaker has said, for some time there has been an agitation for reduction of battery charges to prospectors. I find it remarkable that the higher the price of gold, the less prospectors want to pay for battery treatment. For many years the charge was 10s. 6d. per ton. It was 10s. 6d. per ton when the price of gold was £4 4s. 11½d. To-day its value is £9 4s. 2d. And still there is a demand for reduction. The member for Murchison knows as well as anybody knows that during the last few years there has been a considerable increase in the cost of running batteries, either by the State or by anyone else. There has been a large increase in wages for battery work. In fact, I remember there was an agitation, long before I became Minister, on the score of State battery employees not being paid the same rates as other battery employees. That was rectified. This year the department has increased payment for tailings by 5s. Hon. members are aware that relief has been given by increasing prospectors' sustenance. After all, State batteries do not exist to make profits—they make no profits, or very small ones—and they have to be kept in order and reconditioned, as the member for Murchison has just remarked. Batteries cannot be kept up to efficiency without money being spent on them. The State batteries are there for the benefit of prospectors, not for that of mining companies able to put up batteries of their own. In view of the increased cost of running batteries, the increased allowance to prospectors, the assistance given in the form of cartage over a certain distance, and the charge of 2 dwts. 8 grns. for treatment of sands which has been operating since 1924—

Mr. Marshall: It has been 7s. in between.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In 1924 it was 2 dwts. 8 grns. Prior to that, it was 3 dwts. per ton. In view of the disabilities under which prospectors are working, members may regard as extraordinary the statement in last year's report of the Mines Department that during 1937 the State Batteries crushed 60,031.45 fine ozs.

worth £545,835. That means that the State batteries crushed more than any of the mines except three—the Lake View and Star, Wiluna and the Great Boulder. There is no justification for the member for Murchison saying the department is not doing everything possible to encourage prospectors. His statement that under this system the department is not fostering the development of low-grade propositions is not correct. He infers that if more encouragement were extended, a greater inducement would be offered for the investment of capital in low-grade propositions. The member for Murchison knows probably much better than I that a low-grade proposition has to be extensive before a foreign company will take any interest in it. Such a proposition must be somewhat similar to the Big Bell before anything of that sort could be anticipated. As to the correspondence to which the member for Murchison referred, the reply was signed to-day. I have to tell him with regret that I have found it impossible to agree to the proposals of the Prospectors' Association. The prospectors are being fairly treated to-day, and even with the increased price of gold, and although much of the increased revenue to the department is due to the work of prospectors, we must recognise that the State batteries have been provided for the prospectors themselves. I do not think they have much to complain about. I do not know how the member for Murchison conceived the idea from the Premier's Budget Speech that I had any such ideas as he suggested, because I have not discussed the matter with the Premier or anyone else.

Mr. Marshall: You will find in the "Hansard" report of the Premier's speech he said the decline in revenue was due to the reduction in the charges for the use of the batteries.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That may be so, but I have not discussed the matter with the Premier.

Mr. Marshall: Then the Premier must not mislead me.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The letters from the hon. member, the member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen), the Minister for Lands or the Prospectors' Association had not been received at that time. They have reached me during the last few weeks. We are anxious to assist prospectors, but I do not think they nor yet the hon. member.

expect the Government to run the State batteries at a loss. The batteries are just about holding their own financially. If we are to maintain the efficiency of the existing batteries, erect more of them and increase the head of stamps from five to ten where required, we must carry on as we are at present.

Item, Working and all other maintenance expenses in connection with the running of State Batteries, £112,000.

Mr. MARSHALL: While what the Minister for Mines has said is actually true, his statement nevertheless is misleading. Neither I nor the prospectors complained about the charge of 10s. 6d. per ton for crushing ore. The prospectors have not complained, because they do not pay those charges. If the Minister were more acquainted with the system adopted by the State batteries, he would know that.

The Minister for Mines: I know the amount of money that is paid.

Mr. MARSHALL: Prospectors rarely crush on the basis of 10s. 6d. per ton, but usually crush by time. For every ton that is crushed at the rate of 10s. 6d. per ton, thousands of tons are crushed on the time basis. The prospectors gain an advantage there, and I have nothing to complain about on that score. I do not know why the Minister mentioned it. His argument regarding the cost of running batteries may be true, but it is misleading. He mentioned that years ago wages were lower than they are now, but years ago the maintenance and running costs of the State batteries were exorbitant because they were not running continuously. Prospectors had to pay for services for which they received no return. On the other hand, the batteries are operating continuously now.

The Minister for Mines: No, they are not.

Mr. MARSHALL: Most of them are. In my electorate I do not think the batteries ever stop. One may work periodically, but over extended periods. The department should be able to economise to meet extra costs. That could be done under efficient control. The department adopted the attitude that if the carting subsidies warranted a reduction in the charges at State batteries, the matter would be considered. Apparently it has been considered, and the existing charges are to remain. I do not think the Minister should have mentioned the extra

payments of 5s. per ounce, in view of the fact that for years the department unfairly withheld that amount from the prospectors. The department had no right to take 4s. 11d. per ounce from the prospectors because that money belonged to them. How the amount of £4 per ounce was arrived at by the department I do not know. The Minister would find difficulty in determining how that was done. That the payment has been based on the standard rate for gold in the past is no valid excuse for returning to the prospectors that which was wrongly taken from them for so many years. If the Minister will look up the records of the State batteries, he can ascertain the position, but he was entirely wrong in his reference to 1924. The deduction of 3 dwts. from the tailings was made for a number of years, but I do not know when it ceased. When the deduction was altered, the charge of 7s. per ton was substituted. My memory is not faulty, but I may slip over a year or two. The Minister has been wrongly informed on this question. For a considerable time after the alteration from the deduction of 3 dwts. to 2 dwts. 8 grs. per ton, the charge of 7s. in hard cash was imposed. That applied for a long time.

The Minister for Lands: Where did you get that from?

Mr. MARSHALL: I have the formula that the Superintendent of State Batteries supplied to me.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think it was 7s.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Minister for Lands will look up the records, he will ascertain the facts. I sat in the office of the Superintendent of State Batteries, and asked him to justify the deduction of 2 dwts. 8 grs. as against the payment of 7s., and he worked out the formula for me. He contended that 7s. was the equivalent to 2 dwts. 8 grs. on the old price of gold.

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: Here we have two Ministers, and I suggest that I am correct and those two Ministers, both of who have been or are Ministers for Mines, are not. The memory of the Minister for Lands has failed him on this occasion because I know the charge I have mentioned was made for some time. If the prospectors are not to

enjoy the reduction, I cannot force the department to give it.

Note put and passed.

Note—*Cave House, etc., £2,295:*

Mr. WILLMOTT: I consider myself fortunate that on this occasion it is not necessary for me to urge that the Cave House should be rebuilt, because the Government some time ago recognised the necessity for replacing the burnt-down structure and a very good job has been made of the new premises. I hope, before long, Ministers will celebrate the occasion by attending the official opening. There are one or two matters that require some attention in the Caves district, especially the caves in the Margaret River area. As members know, the Lake Cave is lit by electricity, but the first big thing one notices on arriving there is a small tin shed in which the electric lighting plant is housed. There is abundant limestone there and it would not be a difficult or an expensive matter to erect a building that would not be an eyesore such as the present tin shed is to all. Really, that shed is enough to drive people away from an inspection of the Lake Cave. The footpaths and steps in the caves also need some attention, and the Mammoth Cave, which is the largest and one of the finest in the district, should also be lit by electricity. Visitors taken through there are always escorted with a torch and the light thus supplied does not in any way at all show off the beauty of the cave. Now that we shall probably have the finest Cave House in Australia, the department should also devote some attention to improving the drives around the caves. If that were done, I am convinced it would lead to many more tourists visiting that part of the State. I congratulate the Government on what it has done in the Caves area.

Division put and passed.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolutions reported.

## BILL—BOOKMAKERS.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [5.7]: It is not my intention to congratulate His Majesty's Government in this State on hav-

ing introduced this interesting piece of legislation as a solution of the problem which has been before us for three or four years. It seems to me there are many other aspects of the matter that the Government might readily have considered before coming to the conclusion—which conclusion I must presume it has arrived at—that this legislation is likely to solve the problem. Listening to the speakers who have already addressed the House on the subject, there would appear to be a consensus of opinion that betting is a thing that should not be encouraged, and, as it has progressed in recent years, has become a definite evil. When people have arrived at the conclusion that anything is an evil—and there is no doubt that the great majority of those who have spoken have arrived at that conclusion—there seems to me little justification for supporting a measure which will carry on the evil about which they complain. At the present time, as I understand the position, betting off racecourses is definitely illegal and betting on racecourse is in the same category, although there seems to be some little doubt in regard to the latter. I am not one of those who believe that it should be possible for any one section of the community, in any set of circumstances, to do any particular thing, and for another section of the community not to be able to do that particular thing. I should be quite content if betting were definitely illegal in every part of the State. There is no need to enlarge on that statement. I believe it is apparent that, if it is the evil that has been proclaimed by the speakers in this House, the course of the Government is clear, and it is that it should not be permitted in any part of the State. At the same time, the wisdom of our forefathers provided the instrument known as the totalisator, which may be used on racecourses. As my principle is adherence to the existing law, I do not propose to suggest that the law in relation to the totalisator should be altered. There has been some reference to the proceedings with regard to the suppression, or legalisation, or other treatment, of the betting evil in the other States of the Commonwealth. I am not in the least concerned about what South Australia, New South Wales or Queensland may have done in this matter. To me our duty, as members of this Legislature, is perfectly clear. We must do what we consider right in the interest of our own State. What

does it matter what has been done in any other State of the Commonwealth? There is no evidence before us that their convictions are the same as ours; there is no evidence before us that is satisfactory to me that either a scheme of legalisation or non-legalisation in Queensland has been satisfactory. From the evidence that has been supplied by members of this House, there seems to be a considerable conflict of opinion on that question. So the issue that is for consideration is what course should we in Western Australia follow. Surely we are able to make up our minds without consulting precedents. Those of us who believe that precedents should always be followed are, in my view, very often mistaken. If we had spent all our time following precedents, we should not be here; we should be back in the neolithic period.

Mr. Hegney: We are here to establish precedents.

Mr. WATTS: Exactly, and that is the position in this case. The Bill does not seek to establish any precedent at all; it simply seeks to follow, with modifications perhaps, what has been done in Tasmania. But we are not here to follow what has been done elsewhere; we are here to do that which will benefit the people of our own country, and the question then arises, is the position under the Bill likely to be any better than the existing state of affairs? It has been said that it is impossible to enforce the existing law. I contend that has not been proved, not by any means, because no genuine attempt has been made to enforce the law. The Criminal Code makes a great number of things illegal, and a great effort is made to enforce the provisions of the Code in regard to other matters. Very little, however, has been done to enforce the law in respect to betting. It has been suggested that there is no analogy between offences under the Criminal Code and those that are to be dealt with under the Bill before us. If one can believe the member for Victoria Park and the circumstances he disclosed in connection with transactions on racecourses, then there is a distinct analogy between the crime of false pretences and that of betting, because that hon. member, having explained to the House not only the evil of betting, as he saw it, but the evil practices of which he complained, and having convinced me that he was about to oppose this suggested legislation, he, by

some internal twist, succeeded in declaring that he was going to support the Bill. Therefore, having him as my guide—and he has more knowledge pertaining to racecourses than I have—I have no hesitation in saying that there is some analogy between the offence of false pretences and the offence to be dealt with by the Bill. I ask the Government in a straightforward way whether it proposes to introduce legislation to legalise, regulate and control false pretences. If the Government does that, it will at least establish the virtue of consistency. If that is not done, I shall not be able to understand why it introduced the Bill we are now considering. No genuine attempt has been made to enforce the existing law without fear or favour, or to find a better alternative for dealing with the evil. I do not know whether the Government has given consideration to the question of an extension of the totalisator system throughout the State, and looking for some way out by that means, but there is no reference to it in the Bill, and I am surprised that there was no such reference to it when the Bill was introduced. Whatever we may think about betting transactions, this one fact stands out, that there is no possibility of private gain from the totalisator. This Bill proposes to legalise betting under a set of conditions that will make it possible for some individuals to derive profit from something which has been illegal for a great number of years. It has been illegal from time immemorial, and if the Bill passes we shall leave it illegal, because the Bill carefully preserves the sections of the Police Act and Criminal Code that have been mentioned. I cannot understand the Government setting about the matter in this way. My contention is that every effort should be made, regardless of cost, to suppress the evil which has so greatly increased in our midst during the past few years. Greater evils have been overcome by other countries. I ask members to consider what has taken place in the United States of America and the very determined efforts made there in recent years to suppress evils which previously were regarded as incapable of suppression. I invite members to reflect upon the success that has attended those efforts. What the United States has done should be an example to this Government to make at least a genuine attempt to eradicate what has been referred to as a canker in our midst.

I listened also with interest to the remarks of the member for Nelson (Mr. Doust). That gentleman, if I understood him aright, explained to the House that he totally disapproved of gambling in all its phases. He said he would like it to be abolished altogether. Yet he suddenly came to the conclusion that if two or three minor amendments were made to the Bill—and those amendments, in my opinion, have nothing whatever to do with the evil—he would support it.

Mr. Thorn: He is the greatest rail-sitter we have had in this Chamber.

Mr. WATTS: I regret to say that I am unable to understand a speech of that description. No amendment could make this Bill satisfactory, unless it were an amendment to strike out all the clauses, except the Title. That might prove satisfactory. I desire to refer for a moment to those people who complained that the Government has failed to enforce the existing law. I ask them if it would be easier to enforce the provisions of this measure, if it becomes law. There are as many provisions in this proposed legislation that will be as difficult of enforcement and as capable of evasion as there are in the existing law. In fact, by the time the regulations or rules to be promulgated by the proposed board become effective, many other matters will have to be dealt with. I do not think the enforcement of this proposed law will be any easier than has been the enforcement of existing legislation. In fact, enforcement will become even more difficult if this legislation be placed upon the statute-book. Certainly more offences will have to be dealt with, because the Bill does not propose to limit the number of licenses that may be issued. The proposal is, presumably, to license all and sundry who make application in accordance with whatever regulations may be made.

Again, there are those people who seek to compare gambling in other States of the Commonwealth with gambling in this State. It is unnecessary for them to do so. They lose sight of the fact that there is a self-governing dominion closely allied with us, New Zealand, which has no bookmakers at all but only the totalisator. In all probability, that would be most desirable for our State. We might then be able to find some other method of wiping out all hope of pri-

vate gain from this evil, a method which might—I say might advisably—find favour with the majority of our people. I decline, at this junction to place the cloak of respectability upon persons who have for years been breaking the law and who now claim the right to continue to break it. They call themselves, I believe, the Citizens' Rights League. Rights in what? In illegality? How can they have rights in that which is illegal? There can be no such thing. Until some better proposal is put forward to deal with this matter, I would rather leave the position as it is. The people of the State will then know, when the elections take place, that, bad as is the evil, the only effort put forward by His Majesty's Government—the Government responsible for the good order of the State—is the proposal contained in this Bill.

**MR. SEWARD** (Pingelly) [5.22]: I do not desire to cast a silent vote on this Bill. Personally, I am not opposed to gambling, although I do not indulge in it. When I left school, I entered a bank. I went to the races and invested a few shillings, but it did not take me very long to convince myself that all I was doing was contributing to the keep of the bookmakers. From that day I have left gambling alone, although, as I say, I have no objection to people gambling if they so desire. I see no wrong in it, provided people do not over-indulge. If by over-indulgence in gambling a man deprives those dependent upon him of the necessities of life and the enjoyments to which they are entitled, then gambling becomes wrong. That statement implies a belief that gambling is not permissible to all and sundry. It follows, I think, that those well endowed with this world's goods are able to indulge in gambling, whereas others not so well endowed cannot do so because of the fact that they have not the money to spare. I cannot agree with those who contend that if gambling is permissible for one person, it should be permissible for all and sundry. Other people argue that we should endeavour to control gambling. Other people, again, are of opinion that gambling should be altogether prohibited. I do not agree with that. Gambling cannot possibly be prohibited. It seems to me to be instinctive to the Australian.

**Mr. Withers**: And to every other race.

**Mr. SEWARD**: Yes, not alone Australians, although it is fairly well developed in us. If gambling cannot be prohibited, then it becomes our duty to control it. The last speaker referred to New Zealand. I had the opportunity to inquire into the control of betting in New Zealand when I was there. As the previous speaker said, there are no bookmakers in New Zealand. Betting in New Zealand is done entirely on the totalisator. Incidentally, only tickets to the value of £1 each can be purchased for investment in the totalisator. A ticket can not be obtained in New Zealand for 5s. or 10s. One of the root causes of the evil in this State is that betting is within the range of the income of almost every person. In New Zealand it would be necessary for persons with small incomes to combine to purchase a ticket at £1, and then difficulty might arise as to the horse to be backed. It would be well for our State if we could introduce such a system.

**Member**: Are there any starting-price bookmakers in New Zealand?

**Mr. SEWARD**: Not at the time I was there.

**Mr. Raphael**: New Zealand will try anything once.

**Mr. SEWARD**: When I resided in New Zealand bookmaking was legalised. I will give members particulars of the fees paid by the bookmakers, so that they may form an idea of the profits to be derived from the calling. The totalisator was in operation and was the only form of betting in New Zealand until bookmakers were legalised. As I say, bookmakers were legalised, and I ask members to bear in mind that there are four principal racecourses in New Zealand—at Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin. Each club holds four meetings a year which consist of four days' racing at each meeting. The fee charged to the bookmaker was £100 for each meeting, so that if he attended all four meetings at Wellington he paid £400 a year, and he paid it willingly. That will give members some idea of the profits to be made from gambling.

**Mr. Rodoreda**: A bookmaker here pays £70.

**Mr. SEWARD**: In New Zealand, as the result of confining betting to the totalisator, the clubs have some of the best racecourses I have seen. They are equal to any of our gardens in Australia. This has been made



possible by reason of the fact that a percentage of the totalisator receipts is paid to the clubs, which devote the money to the upkeep of the racecourses. So much for New Zealand. I am not aware whether bookmakers are now legalised in New Zealand.

Mr. Patrick: There are no bookmakers in New Zealand.

Mr. SEWARD: I wish to refer to one or two remarks made by the Minister when he introduced the Bill. One of his statements was that it was the concern of the State what the effect of gambling transactions was on the community or what attitude the State ought to adopt to them. He said that if gambling was an ineradicable instinct, the conclusion to be drawn was that it was useless to endeavour to cure gambling propensities. I regard that as a shocking statement coming, as it did, from a responsible Minister, more particularly from the Minister for Education. He said that as gambling instincts were ineradicable, we should not do anything to cure them. Has the Minister any doubt about the effect of gambling? Does he imagine for one moment that gambling will do anything to promote the welfare, prosperity and happiness of the people? The very day on which the Minister introduced the Bill, there appeared in the evening paper a report of the calamitous effect of over-indulgence in gambling by a young man. This young fellow had allowed his passions to run away with him, and, as a result, his unfortunate wife and family are now placed in a most unfortunate position. I sincerely hope the Minister will take notice of what is happening around him. If he will read the Press, he will learn of the calamitous effects of over-indulgence in gambling. Legislative effort will not cure it; nevertheless, the bounden duty of members of Parliament is to take steps to control the evil and remove it as far as possible from those most likely to suffer from it. The Leader of the Opposition made a statement about weak-minded people. It must be remembered that we are not all the same. A certain passion may be more highly developed in one person than in another. For instance, one person may not indulge in alcoholic liquors, but that may be because he has no inclination for them. Another man finds it impossible to resist the temptation. It is the same with gambling. Some people

cannot resist it, whereas others are not interested.

Mr. Rodoreda: Some people do not desire to resist.

Mr. SEWARD: They have the instinct in them, and when they have the temptations all around them, as they will have if betting shops are licensed, they will experience greater difficulty in resisting them than if betting were confined to racecourses on which it is not so easy for them to indulge their passion. Several members have stated that betting on a racecourse is illegal. I find that Section 2 of the Police Act, 1894, makes it illegal to bet on a racecourse, but by an amendment to the Police Act of 1898 that section was repealed. If that is so betting on a racecourse must be legal.

The Minister said it was useless to endeavour to cure gambling propensities. I cannot agree with that statement. Our duty is if possible to prevent people from doing those things that will lead to their degradation and the ruination of their happiness. More particularly is this so when the people concerned are those the present Government says it represents, seeing that if the Bill is passed they will suffer most. Young fellows will inevitably drift into the betting shops. They will see the crowds in them and will be lured to their downfall. If they are obliged to go to a racecourse to bet, they first must have the money with which to get there, then the money with which to pay their entrance fee, and then the money with which to bet. We would thus be placing obstacles in their way for their own good. I am aware that a young fellow could give a man a commission to put money on a horse, but that would not be the same thing. A person who bets on a horse likes first of all to get the latest information he can about it, and may like to put his own money on. If betting were confined to racecourses people would certainly be hindered from indulging in their gambling propensities.

The Minister said that the stage had been reached when the State's attitude should be towards controlling and limiting the undesirable social consequences of gambling. I agree that we have reached that stage. There is something higher to which our youth can attain than the endeavour to pick winners. Lads leave school and obtain their first positions in life. The most important thing to them is what is going to win on the following Saturday. They pore over the news-

papers and listen closely to the racing news that is broadcast for their information. They go through the lists of horses, bet their 2s. or 3s., and try to make easy money. The temptation is there for them to indulge in this propensity. The only thing for us to do is to deprive them of the means so to indulge. According to the Minister, complaints have been made by bookmakers and the general public that the charges for admission to racecourses are too high, and too high for racecourse licenses. He also said that if people were not able to meet these charges they could stay away. I was inclined to agree with him when he said that the racecourse charges were too high until I had read the report of the South Australian Royal Commission. This question was fully investigated. I find that the attendances have greatly declined in South Australia despite the fact that in many instances no charge is made for admission to the courses. As stated by the Royal Commission, in the case of the South Australian Jockey Club the attendances fell from 9,358 in 1927-28 to 5,089 at the time the report was issued; in the case of the Adelaide Racing Club the attendances fell from 7,134 to 3,283, although admission to the flat was free, and in the case of the Port Adelaide Racing Club the attendances fell from 10,000 to 2,857, although admission to the course was free on the last occasion. It is not because of the charges for admission to the courses that people keep away.

The Minister for Mines: Night trotting was started there. That may have had some effect on the attendances.

Mr. SEWARD: I am dealing with racing clubs. If the charges here are too high, the Government cannot be accused of doing anything to reduce them. When a person wants to go to Belmont or Ascot by rail on a week day, he pays only a fraction of what is charged on a race day. The Government is not willing to forego any extra money it can get out of racing by reducing the passenger fares. The reason why people are not going to races in increasing numbers is the fact that they are not interested in races as a sport. They go to gamble. That is borne out by the report of the Commission which pointed out that in South Australia, whether on or off the course, 53 per cent. of the bets were made on races that were not run within the State. Racing is pandering to the gambling instincts of the people, and

is not a good thing for them. I would like to see every obstacle put in their way. The Minister declared he could say what had specifically taken people away from the galloping courses in Perth. It was competition in their own line of business. The turf clubs hated to concede, for instance, that trotting was a superior attraction, a better spectacle, or a more accessible entertainment. I find from the South Australian report that the Minister was wrong in his conclusions. He could not have read the report.

The Minister for Agriculture: I was not referring to South Australia.

Mr. SEWARD: He said that trotting was better conducted and was a superior sport, and that was why people were going there. He was wrong. The South Australian Commission visited every State in the Commonwealth but Western Australia. It had this to say about all the States, that the night sport was prospering in every State whereas the day sport was languishing. It did not matter whether it was horse racing, coursing or anything else. In Tasmania speed races are held at night and the clubs conducting them are prosperous; in New South Wales and Victoria greyhound races are held at night and are very popular. The Commission also said that in Western Australia trotting was very prosperous. This indicates that people find it more congenial to attend sports meetings at night than during the heat of the day. It is not that the charges are high or that the sport is better conducted at the trotting meetings, but rather that the people find the night entertainments more enjoyable.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is what I said.

Mr. Rodoreda: You are upholding the Minister's argument.

Mr. SEWARD: The Minister said trotting was better controlled and more accessible.

The Minister for Agriculture: I said that as a spectacle or an entertainment it had proved a greater attraction.

Mr. SEWARD: People attend greyhound racing, tin hare racing and many other forms of sport at night. The attraction lies in the fact that the sport is held at night, and patrons do not stay away from day sports because of the excessive charges or lack of accessibility.

The Minister for Agriculture: My statement was that apparently it is a more attractive spectacle.

Mr. SEWARD: I repeat what the Minister said, namely, that what had specifically taken people away from the galloping courses in Perth was the competition in their own line of business. The Turf Clubs hated to concede that trotting was a superior attraction, a better spectacle or a more accessible entertainment. It is the fact that trotting is conducted at night that attracts people to it. No matter what the entertainment is, people will attend it when it is held at night.

When looking through the Bill I was particularly struck by the clause fixing a heavy penalty in the case of youths under 21 who are found in a betting shop. For the first offence they are liable to a fine of £10, and for any subsequent offence a fine of £50. How does the Minister think a youth of 21 could find either £10 or £50? If he cannot find the money I presume the only alternative is that he goes to gaol. What a terrible thing that is to put to the youth of the country! The presiding magistrate in the Children's Court is doing everything he can by lectures and advice to steer youths into more correct channels, and I wish him well in the work he is doing. If this Bill is passed, betting shops will be licensed in various parts of the city. As soon as some unfortunate youth gets away from the precincts of the Children's Court he will run into his friends, visit one of these shops, and will thus be led into those very paths the magistrate has been endeavouring to keep him from. I find it difficult to understand how the Minister for Employment can stand behind a Bill of this kind. He took a courageous step when he appointed the present magistrate of the Children's Court, and I commend him for doing so. How he can follow that up by supporting a Bill that will lead to the imprisonment of youths under 21, if they are found in a betting shop, I cannot understand. Bookmakers will do nothing to keep them out, for they will be only too pleased to get their money.

The Minister for Mines: The bookmaker will himself be liable to a fine of £100.

Mr. SEWARD: He will be liable to a fine, but I am talking about the penalty in the case of a youth. Should the Bill reach

the Committee stage I shall move an amendment to provide that for the second offence of taking a bet from a youth the bookmaker shall have his license cancelled.

Mr. Rodoreda: We agree with you.

Mr. SEWARD: I would not myself fine the youth but would penalise the bookmaker.

Mr. Raphael: Do you believe that youths should be allowed on racecourses?

Mr. SEWARD: I see no harm in that.

Mr. Raphael: And yet you see harm in a youth going into a betting shop.

Mr. Patrick: A person may go to a racecourse without necessarily making a bet there.

Mr. SEWARD: The Bill proposes to fine youths £10 or £50 if they are found in betting shops. We cannot expect a lad of 21 to be able to pay a fine of £50, but failure to pay will land him in gaol. This will undermine the work the magistrate in the Children's Court is doing. By his influence and advice he is endeavouring to lead young people into the paths they should tread, but so soon as they get away from his influence they will run into their friends, drift into the betting shops, and fall into the very evil ways out of which the magistrate has tried to keep them. I do not want the youths of the country to be brought up to that kind of thing.

Reference has been made to the revenue that would accrue to the State should the Bill become law. The tax to be levied is 3d. on all bets over 10s. and 1d. on all bets under 10s. The Minister declares that the Government has no desire to make revenue out of the tax and that the money would be devoted to the assistance of the clubs. I am not convinced it is not intended to make money out of this measure. Let me instance the figures quoted by the Leader of the Opposition, who said that 34,109,000 bets were made in South Australia last year. If we take a quarter of those bets, and we work them out at 3d. each, we get a total of £106,590. Then if we take the other three-quarters of the bets under 1d., we find that they represent the same figures, and we get a total of £213,180. We deduct from that amount the expenses of the board, which I am putting at £8,000, and we get £205,180. Half of that amount is handed over to six racing clubs, and the other half goes to the Treasury. I am quoting these figures simply to show that quite a nice amount of revenue

will be collected by the Government if the Bill goes through. When introducing the Bill, the Minister made the statement that the Commonwealth Government, through the Telephone Department and the Broadcasting Commission, and he added also the newspapers, were making handsome profits out of racing, and that if any of those concerns had desired to assist in eliminating the evil, they could do so by disregarding the profits they were making and setting a good example to the people. But it is not the province of a newspaper or the Telephone Department or the Broadcasting Commission to set a scale of morals; it is the task of the Government of the State. The Government's plain duty is to call the interested parties together and tell them that it is desired to cope with the evil, and that their co-operation is needed. It is not the organisations mentioned by the Minister alone that are making huge profits out of racing; the Government itself, according to figures that were given in reply to a question asked a few days ago in the Legislative Council, is getting a handsome revenue. Those figures show that from 1934-35 to the end of last August no less a sum than £56,698 was collected by way of fines from starting-price betting shops. Could not the Government set an example by taking active steps to suppress the evil, and forego the revenue it is now receiving through the police courts?

The Minister for Mines: Would you increase the fines, or put the offenders in gaol?

Mr. SEWARD: I would not do either. One member mentioned last night that if a person left his car unattended in one of the city blocks, he would probably receive a summons. If a person broke into a store, or if an unfortunate sustenance worker were to steal a loaf of bread, a term of imprisonment follows.

The Minister for Mines: That is not the question. You were complaining about the Government having collected fines to the extent of over £56,000. Do you want to increase that amount, or would you put the offenders in gaol?

Mr. Raphael interjected.

Mr. SEWARD: There are certain offences in respect of which heavy fines are provided, or the offenders may be put into gaol, and active steps are always taken to prevent the commission of those offences. Here, however, we find that the Government is continually, week after week, collecting fines

from the starting-price bookmakers, and making no attempt to stop the evil altogether. The fines began with £7,070 in 1934-35, £10,153 in 1935-36, £12,646 in 1936-37, and £16,596 in 1937-38. Does the Minister want me to believe that starting-price betting is not increasing, and does he want me to understand that efforts are being made to suppress it altogether?

Mr. Raphael interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Victoria Park must keep in order. It is not fair continually to interrupt other hon. members when they are speaking. I have allowed the hon. member a certain amount of latitude, and if he persists in interjecting, I shall have to take other measures.

Mr. SEWARD: There has been no determined effort to put down starting-price betting. I read in the newspaper the other day that a man was taken before the court at Northam, and the magistrate there fined him a certain amount, and warned him that if he appeared again the penalty would be doubled, or perhaps trebled. I have not read of a similar warning having been given to offenders in Perth.

The Minister for Mines: Mr. Moseley has given that warning a number of times. The same offender never comes back; it is always somebody else.

Mr. SEWARD: All I can ask is whether there has been a prosecution of the same betting establishment twice. I know that the same offender does not again appear before the court, but there must be an enormous number of betting places in Perth, because prosecutions are at the rate of half-a-dozen or more each week.

The Minister for Mines: They are being prosecuted almost every day in my electorate.

Mr. SEWARD: It is not the duty of the Broadcasting Commission to take steps to suppress shop betting, although I do not say that the broadcasting of races does not contribute considerably to betting. I often wish to goodness that the Broadcasting Commission would shut down on racing so that we might hear something of greater interest. But we get racing on Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and Saturday night! I am convinced that if an invitation were issued to the Broadcasting Commission and the postal authorities to meet the Government in conference on the question, there would be no difficulty about securing the

co-operation of those two departments. When the Minister was speaking, I think he mentioned, as the result of an interjection of mine, that an attempt had been made to secure the co-operation of the other departments, but it had failed. We have heard it said that nothing can be done by the Broadcasting Commission. That is not correct. It is only a way of throwing off a duty that belongs to the Government. That is what the South Australian Royal Commission has to say on the subject of the broadcasting of races and the control of wireless—

The control of wireless is a function of the Commonwealth Government, but we think that a State Government may pass a law making it an offence for a person to broadcast certain matters or to use a "place" for that purpose, so long as the law does not purport to operate beyond the boundaries of that State.

Such a law has been passed in Queensland and has not been challenged. In the course of the debate it has been stated by some members that the Queensland legislation has not resulted in abolishing illegal betting. I wish to turn to the latest report of the Commissioner of Police of Queensland, and read what he has to say—

As previously reported, organised gaming which existed, particularly in North Queensland, is now non-existent. Off-the-course betting, which had been a serious problem for many years, has been brought under control with the enactment of the Racecourses Acts, and other Acts of 1936. It has not been totally eliminated, as this is not possible until such time as law-breakers are denied the use of the telephone.

This is something of which we can take notice. I read in the newspaper this morning that the newly appointed Deputy Postmaster General had promised to give to the Police Department the numbers of silent telephones if it is the desire of that department to take action to prevent the spread of betting by telephone.

The Minister for Mines: I have a silent telephone.

Mr. SEWARD: But the Minister is not a bookmaker; I am referring to bookmakers, and the Minister surely does not come under that category. The member for North-East Fremantle last night said that after making exhaustive and impartial study of the South Australian Royal Commission's report, he had been induced to support the legalisation of off-the-course betting. The hon. member who usually

makes a careful study of any subject that he investigates, did not as closely scrutinise that report as he might have done. If he had studied it very carefully, he would have noticed that first of all the Commission was charged to investigate—

(1) Every phase of the existing betting laws in South Australia and other States and the practice thereunder relating to betting and cognate matters; (2) What changes, if any, in the South Australian laws are desirable and practicable.

It might be as well to recall that when the present Commissioner of Police in that State was appointed to that position, there was a considerable amount of illegal betting going on, and he was asked to suppress it. He took steps, and eventually put it down on racecourses, but he drove it into the city. Then the Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the position with a view to seeing whether anything further could be done, particularly as to the evil effect of attendances at racecourses. The Commission, however, pointed out that it was not part of its duty to deal with the ethical and moral aspect of gambling, because that was the duty of the Legislature. Thus, after all, it was their duty to regulate or increase or decrease betting or improve the existing law, and not wipe out altogether betting in South Australia.

Mr. Tonkin: You will be disillusioned a little later on in the evening.

Mr. SEWARD: I may be, but I am perfectly open to conviction. I was struck last night by the remarks of the member for Avon, who said that in his electorate there was one sergeant and three constables to control an area of 3,600 square miles. The hon. member asked what chance had such a small force of doing anything against starting-price betting? I reply to him by asking, what earthly chance such a small force will have of looking after the betting shops in his district if the Bill becomes law? I think he made the statement, though I am subject to correction, that he thought the penalties that would be imposed on the bookmaker would make him observe the hours laid down. There are probably more stringent penalties provided under the licensing laws, yet I venture to say that fear of consequences does not prevent hotel licensees carrying on business after hours. If the penalties provided under the licens-

ing laws do not prevent hotels being open after hours, heavy penalties will not have the slightest effect upon bookmakers, and book-making will be carried on during all hours of the day and night in the country.

I do not know much about the North, but I gather that the opportunities for enjoyment in that part of the State are very limited. I can therefore see nothing wrong with the people in that area being given an opportunity for betting; but I cannot see how we can make such a provision without affording similar opportunities for the more populous parts of the South. If it were possible to make this concession for the North, without the South being involved, I would not object to its being done, but I cannot support any attempt to make such facilities available to the younger generation down here who have many other means of enjoyment. I intend to oppose the second reading.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [G.1]: The present condition of society in Western Australia has caused many people to give attention to problems they formerly ignored. Admittedly, those problems have grown considerably in recent times. It is generally conceded that a solution may possibly be found for some of our present difficulties, but the suggestions that have been submitted to the House for solving the betting problem are unlikely to achieve the desired effect; in fact, I consider that they are more likely to intensify the evil. Unquestionably, the Bill has received the consideration of Cabinet, but my sympathy is with the Minister. I am sure that in his opinion the Bill was a measure calculated to do good, but I doubt not that, after having noted the statements made by hon. members and the public generally, the Minister now has a different opinion. Unfortunately, we are faced with the fact that tens of thousands of people really believe that they benefit from betting, and they consider that the right to indulge in starting-price betting is a part of their liberty. That viewpoint is held in spite of the fact that a question submitted to anyone with the slightest knowledge of public matters would receive the reply that starting-price betting is illegal.

The Minister for Mines: What about taking a referendum through the Wyalkatchem "Advertiser"?

**Mr. SAMPSON**: The Minister is keen on advertising. Perhaps he was responsible for that particular part of the Bill. The objection to the Bill has been spontaneous and its unpopularity is apparent. Nobody can question that. I have been surprised to note how definitely the feeling against the Bill has manifested itself. The denunciation has been widespread. I admit that betting is more ancient than history. Sargon, the great lawgiver, who was Emperor of Babylon long before the Christian era, had something to say on his play tablets about betting. The principles of betting were set out but he did not condemn the practice. But in those days there were no betting shops. As a matter of fact, the system of betting through bookmakers is little more than 100 years old. Betting has the sanctity of antiquity, and I am prepared to admit that I do not believe it will ever be eradicated. In the old days people bet with each other. Whether that is a better method than the system under which certain people regard bookmaking as a profession is a question members may consider for themselves. Last year approximately £17,000 or £18,000 was paid in fines in Perth by bookmakers running so-called starting-price betting shops. Incidentally, those men are not starting-price bookmakers because the odds given are very much less in many cases than the starting price. The maximum they pay, I understand, is ten to one. On the Melbourne Cup, although an outsider in the field started at 200 to one, starting-price bookmakers in Perth would limit the payment to ten to one. As they pay no license fee they should be able to pay out higher amounts.

**Hon. C. G. Latham**: They pay substantial license fees in the way of fines.

**Mr. SAMPSON**: Yes, but they do not pay any straight-out license fee and should be in a position to pay bigger odds than the bookmakers on the course.

**Mr. Stubbs**: You mean, they toil not neither do they spin.

**Mr. SAMPSON**: I admit that the conditions relating to starting-price betting are clearly displayed in the starting-price betting shops. The Bill before us is more or less a slavish copy of the Tasmanian Act. We must admit that the conditions in this State are different from those that apply in Tasmania. In Tasmania there is comparatively little local racing, and most of the betting in Hobart is on mainland events.

Therefore the taking of the Tasmanian Act as a copy was questionably wise. It appears, and it has been stated by members, that the object of the Government is to clothe starting-price bookmakers, by virtue of this legislation, with the mantle of respectability. That, of course, would be done if the Bill were passed, but I cannot conceive of the measure passing. Even if it passes the second reading stage, its hope of becoming an Act is very remote indeed.

Nowadays we hear much talk about democracy and many people are afraid that democracy is definitely on its trial and will not emerge successfully. The claim is made that there should be tolerance and fair play, and that the normal liberties of the individual should be protected. That is all very well so long as we can come to a definite conclusion as to what comprises tolerance, fair play and normal liberties. Most of this talk is probably what is known as eyewash. To-day I received a copy of the "Weekly News" from Auckland. That paper contains a report of an interview with Sir James Parr, who recently relinquished the High Commissionership for New Zealand in London. Amongst other things, he said—

After 40 years of public life, I have certainly enjoyed the spell I have had these last two years, but all through Europe one could feel the greatest tension and fear. People on this side of the world have no conception of what life is like under the autocracies. You cannot even open your mouth in safety. Everything you say is repeated, first to the police and then to the higher authorities, and more than once I found myself in trouble and had some difficulty in escaping punishment. There is an irksome restriction on speech and movement of which Australians and New Zealanders can have no idea. But there is no doubt that dictator rule is unquestionably more efficient than democratic, which makes us pause and think.

The Minister and his colleagues would find it worth while to give consideration to that, because if there is one menace that faces parts of the British Empire and other parts of the world it is the possibility of the establishment of dictatorships.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not think they do. Hitler is definite in respect to anything he considers uneconomic and if the Minister told me that Hitler had approved of starting-price bookmaking, I should like to

have some proof of it before I accepted his word.

The Minister for Mines: I merely said that I wondered whether he had.

The Minister for Agriculture: Hitler would not stand for gambling.

Mr. SAMPSON: Many features of the Bill could be criticised. One provision that is open to criticism is that providing for a registrar of bookmakers and the appointment of a board, but that may not be necessary.

The Minister for Mines: Why.

Mr. SAMPSON: I anticipate it will not be necessary, but if the Bill is passed, I shall endeavour to secure an amendment of that provision in Committee. The provisions in the Bill suggest that bookmaking, under legal control, would become quite a godly act, something that would not be harmful to the community. The provisions decreeing where bookmaking may be carried on are mere pious hopes. It is expected that the bold, bad bookie will comply with the law. He does not do so now, but somehow or other it is expected that if the Bill is passed, there will be a new era, a new heaven and earth. An alteration will take place that will result in an entirely new condition of affairs. If the Bill is passed, the Minister for Police will certainly have to appeal to the Treasurer for a considerable increase in his grant, to provide for the appointment of officers to ensure that its operations are put into effect. At present there has been so severe an economy in the supply of police that the law making starting-price betting illegal has apparently been easily flouted.

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

Mr. SAMPSON: Undoubtedly large numbers of extra constables, or a young army of betting board officers, will have to be appointed. Statements are made now that the police cannot control illegal betting. The question arises, how do they hope to control it when, under the Bill, they would have additional duties thrust upon them? Personally I have faith in our police, and am not prepared to admit that they could not secure observance of the law. And so the question arises, what should be done in the circumstances? It can easily be said that whatever one does in certain

cases is wrong; and betting is one of such problems. I do not desire to be dogmatic on this subject, at least not as to on-the-course betting which I do not oppose. I doubt whether it is possible to stop betting. Most people agree that such cannot be done. I acknowledge, everyone acknowledges, that speculation is common in all walks of life. The farmer when putting in his crop bets on a rainfall. The cattle-raiser, the sheep-farmer and the squatter stake their all on the hazard of the seasons. The orchardist and every other primary producer does the same. The orchardist may lose his crop because of a hail storm. Not so long ago, in the Bickley Valley, many settlers were wiped out by a storm. The excuse offered by the Government for its failure to render them assistance amounted to a statement that those who endeavour to produce must accept weather risks and so on. We need not stop even with the producer, because the businessman, the importer, the exporter all do some gambling. In some cases gambling becomes an obsession. It has become an obsession in starting-price betting. Truthfully it has been said that every phase of life is subject to excess. Comparatively few people complain of horse-racing, and I certainly do not complain about it. Our King, many leaders of the Empire, and in our own State many of our legislative leaders, social leaders, and businessmen attend race meetings. I do myself.

Mr. Thorn: Do you know whether those men bet?

Mr. SAMPSON: If they do bet on the racecourse, I shall not find any fault with them. To try to stamp out on-the-course betting would be futile, and I would say that such betting is quite proper. On occasion I have attended a race meeting, and I know something of what is termed the sport of kings. On the racecourse one may meet many of one's friends, good friends. One may meet church dignitaries and other leaders in the religious, social, and business worlds. Apart from the sporting aspect of racing, it may well be regarded as industrially important. Horse-breeding is an important industry. The production of fodder and similar activities may be noted. I recall that when I worked on the "Sporting News" in Adelaide under the late "Smiler" Hales I did something in sporting journalism. When in 1928 I went to London I called to see "Smiler" Hales. On the second occasion,

having previously left my name and stated where I came from, there was a message for me. It was to the effect that in no circumstances was "Smiler" prepared to meet any Australians, as he had no money to lend. In a way, this was a blow to me, I had hoped he would remember the young writer.

Mr. Doney: Perhaps he did.

Mr. SAMPSON: If he did so, I think he might have been prepared even to regard a small loan with equanimity.

Mr. Stubbs: Perhaps you were not a good tipster.

Mr. SAMPSON: I was an excellent tipster. I know I am not a good tipster to-day, because I have not been out to clock the early-morning gallops for years. Monotony is one of life's problems. We must never forget that. It is frequently one of the tragedies of human life. The question is how to prevent monotony. We may sip at the pleasures of life, but if we gulp them we suffer. A good horse race, with the thunder of hoofs on the turf, is exhilarating to watch; and so is a cycle race with a number of lads trying themselves out against each other; or a good game of football or cricket. By these games an antidote to monotony is provided; and that is very well. Men and women thrill to the pleasure and satisfaction of watching a well-contested race or match.

This is all apart from starting-price betting. However well the broadcaster may describe the race, there is no substitute for an actual view of it. To-day we have to face the position as it is, and starting-price betting, I regret to say, is bringing Western Australia into disrepute. Only to-day I was advised of a Saturday incident in a starting-price shop. A man described to me as the proprietor's dummy was arrested. The man was at once handed £20 to provide the necessary bail. When he was taken to the charge room at Roe-street, he paid over the bail money, and I am assured he was then advised to get back to the shop, as there were still three races to be run on that Saturday afternoon and no doubt his services would be required. Again, in one of our suburbs there are two starting-price shops separated by about three other shops. Recently the clerk in one of the starting-price shops—he might be termed the dummy doing the business—was arrested; but the other shop was not entered. That is a seri-



ous commentary on the present position, and indicates that the attitude adopted amounts to a scandal. It is a serious reflection on our laws. I was assured that the people connected with the betting shops always knew when a raid was coming. I said to the clerk or dummy who had not been arrested, "Do you realise that your time will come, and that you will be taken along and charged?" "Well," he replied, "what if I am? I shall be no worse off then than now. I can't get work, and I do get some employment as an s.p. clerk." Moreover, the clerk does not pay the fine. The fine is paid by the principal: and the principal continues, so it appears, in complete immunity. He has all the protection of a very real recluse. But the clerk who is taken along to Roe-street, is he not done a permanent injury when he is charged with breaking the law and a conviction is recorded against him? There are certain positions which that man might later hope to fill, but the filling of which by him would be prevented because he had been charged and convicted in a court of competent jurisdiction. That, surely, is not a good thing to happen. Every week we see lists of men who are charged. Most of them are labourers, but the lists also include men who appear to have a trade—something for which we may all feel very regretful indeed. I hope that whatever happens to the Bill, the present position will not be permitted to continue. It is wrong that a man because of economic circumstances should be required to become a dummy for, perhaps, 30s. a day. Starting-price clerks are well paid for the work they do, but not very well paid in that their character is besmirched forever. Whether the Bill passes or not, this state of affairs should end. It is a reflection on every person who lives in Western Australia.

The position to-day—this has been proved by statements made here—is that the carrying-on of starting-price betting is increasing. It is for us and for the Government, and for everyone who has any influence whatever, to try to stop it and save the good name of these people who are carrying the burden of the responsibility. They are charged, and, as I said, a conviction having once been recorded can never be removed. I repeat, the present position is a scandal, and a serious reflection on our citizenship; and I hope there will be some indication of a definite desire to secure

observance of the law, for until that is obtained there can, I am convinced, be no real solution of the problem. I am not prepared to support the Bill. I consider ample opportunity has been afforded the Government to try out the powers of the police and even at this late hour it would be in the interests of the public if such an attempt were made. I am convinced that it would be successful.

**MR. McLARTY** (Murray-Wellington) [7.46]: I did not intend to speak on the Bill but since most members have expressed their views, I do not think it advisable to cast a silent vote. Legislation dealing with starting price betting will not be satisfactory, in my opinion, so long as we have six different States promulgating six different sets of laws with no co-operation with the Commonwealth, which controls the national broadcasting stations. Some time ago I thought the State Premiers intended holding a conference to discuss the problem, and I feel that a successful solution will be achieved only as the result of such a step. I have followed the debate closely. No pressure has been brought to bear upon me either to support the Bill or to reject it. I am afraid that if it becomes law the measure will not have the desired effect. I believe that starting-price betting will be encouraged and I do not wish to do anything that will tend to increase it. I certainly do not want a repetition of the South Australian experience. However bad starting-price betting and its attendant evils may be in other parts of Australia, the position is worse in South Australia. In that State we have the spectacle of clean sport being affected because young men prefer to spend their time at betting shops rather than to take part in clean, healthy sport.

**Mr. Styants**: That statement is not borne out by facts.

**Mr. McLARTY**: It is.

**Mr. Styants**: It is not.

**Mr. McLARTY**: We have been told that even cricket and football clubs have not been able to get full complements because players would not leave the betting shops.

**Mr. Styants**: That is definitely untrue.

**Mr. McLARTY**: I am correct in my statement.

**Mr. Thorn**: When we tell the truth, Government members always squeal.

Mr. Marshall: We never squeal when you speak.

Mr. McLARTY: We find that the betting evil is seriously affecting the life of the country.

Mr. Styants: The sporting clubs have increased their membership from 500 to 1,000.

Mr. Patrick: What evidence have you to support that statement?

Mr. Styants: More than you can advance to the contrary.

Mr. McLARTY: The growth of starting-price betting has been so rapid that we should be careful not to encourage it.

Mr. Raphael: We do not desire to encourage it; we want to put it down.

Mr. McLARTY: The point has been made that if we legalise starting-price betting, those interested will go out after business. That is quite natural. Since legislation was passed authorising State lotteries, we have found that people have gone out after the business. I do not think any member dreamt, when we passed that legislation, that there would be such extensive advertising of State lotteries as we have witnessed. If that tendency is shown in connection with State lotteries, it will certainly be evidenced if we license starting-price betting shops. In fact, the position will be intensified.

Mr. Rodoreda: Advertising has not made any difference to the number of tickets taken in lotteries.

Mr. McLARTY: The statement has been made that it is no worse to bet off a racecourse than on one. I do not agree with that contention.

Mr. Thorn: In one instance you bet on the blind.

Mr. Raphael: That applies in both instances.

Mr. McLARTY: Those who go to the racecourse see some sport, and gain some satisfaction from seeing the horses run.

The Minister for Mines: That all depends on the way they run.

Mr. McLARTY: By attending race meetings, people do something else. They encourage those engaged in the breeding of blood stock.

Mr. Fox: A lot of good that does.

Mr. McLARTY: The breeding of blood stock in a country like Australia is essential. I regard as tragic the fact that people are going out of horse breeding. I know of no country in the world more in need of horse

breeding than Western Australia, especially from a defence point of view.

Mr. Raphael: What is the use of breeding horses when we have so much mechanisation?

Mr. Styants: How many race horses are fit for defence purposes?

Mr. McLARTY: The breeding of horses is useful from a defence point of view, especially in a country where we produce no oil and have to depend on other forms of transport. When betting is carried on openly on a racecourse, people have a better chance of knowing what is going on. The proceedings are open to the public. On the other hand, it is quite different with the betting that takes place in shops, for those participating cannot see what is happening.

Mr. Thorn: They do not even know whether horses are "dead" or not.

Mr. McLARTY: The more we keep the business open to the public, the better for all concerned. I do not wish to do an injustice to any section of the community. That certain people should be allowed to bet and others denied the opportunity is not just. The racecourses are available for the people in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Fox: If they have the money to get there.

Mr. McLARTY: The number of weekly galloping and trotting meetings is sufficient. If we pass legislation that will require men to go to racecourses in order to bet, Parliament should dictate the admission charges to be imposed and should see that those charges are reasonable. The position of the man in the country has already been referred to by previous speakers. His position is quite different from that of the resident of the metropolitan area. Racing in the country is mostly confined to mid-week meetings when the great majority of the people there are working and consequently cannot attend. In my electorate there is a racecourse at Pinjarra and trotting grounds at Harvey. The trotting meetings are held at night, but the race meetings are held in the middle of the week when, as I say, many people cannot leave their work to attend. I suggest that the country districts be granted a proportion of the week-end racing so that they can hold meetings at which many more people could attend. If that were done, it might mean a reduction in racing generally, but I do not think that would do any harm.

Mr. Rodoreda: You would have an outcry from the owners and trainers in the metropolitan area.

Mr. McLARTY: Whatever we do, we shall harm someone.

Mr. Rodoreda: I thought you wanted to assist the horse breeding industry.

Mr. McLARTY: I do.

Mr. Rodoreda: This Bill will do so.

Mr. McLARTY: We are tackling a big and difficult problem.

Mr. Fox: And doing so courageously.

Mr. McLARTY: Probably we shall not reach finality during this Parliament, but members should feel grateful that a start has been made. It will be agreed that members generally have still much to learn regarding the betting problem. Unquestionably the more a nation gambles, the more suffering it bears. No member will disagree with that statement. I am not influenced by the views of certain people in the Eastern States. If one wires to the Premier of a State where a Bill has been introduced to deal with this problem, one is bound to receive a favourable reply. The only thing for us to do is to decide for ourselves whether this legislation is calculated to be beneficial or otherwise. I do not think we should pass the measure, although I realise something must be done. Such legislation should not be made a party matter. In any future action that is taken, irrespective of what political party may be in power, to put the betting problem on a more satisfactory footing, I shall be prepared to lend every assistance. I do not know that I need say anything about the existing law beyond expressing the opinion that it is highly unsatisfactory. Even if we do not reach finality during the life of this Parliament, now that we have tackled the problem, we shall be so much better fitted to deal with it in the future and, perhaps, arrive at a satisfactory solution. I intend to vote against the second reading.

**MR. DONEY** (Williams - Narrogin) [8.57]: Except for the fact that the Minister did not deal with the moral and economic issues of this question, he submitted the question to the House in a very fair manner. Members will give the Minister credit for honestly holding the opinions he expressed when he moved the second reading of the Bill. I do not share the Minister's opinions.

The Minister for Mines: Too bad!

Mr. DONEY: The Minister pleaded earnestly indeed that the Bill might become law. During the last few weeks, the fact has become strikingly manifest that if the measure does become law, it will be in defiance of the wishes of the vast majority of the people of Western Australia.

Mr. Rodoreda: How do you know that?

Mr. Raphael: Did you read what appeared in the "Daily News" to-night?

Mr. DONEY: If the Government seeks a lead from the people, as it should on such an important matter, assuredly it has received that lead. The Bill therefore should be dropped. Members themselves have reacted to the debate in a manner quite unusual in this Chamber. They actually showed willingness to be influenced by the arguments of their colleagues. That is most unusual here. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall), my very forthright friend, is a case in point. He commenced his very interesting speech by flogging the Opposition in his usual unmerciful manner. As he progressed with his utterances, he seemed to become imbued with wisdom. Whether he derived it from interjections or not, I cannot say, but ultimately he found himself flogging the Bill instead and finished up by announcing himself in strong opposition to it. His conversion to sanity, if I may put it that way, gave a great deal of pleasure to everyone on this side of the House and, by the same token, to a few members on the other side of the House. The member for Victoria Park, in an outspoken though, strangely, inconsistent speech, said—

Mr. Sampson: Not strange!

Mr. DONEY: Well, we will call it his customarily inconsistent speech—said that the Bill was bad indeed, but he would support it. I wish the hon. member had exercised his ingenuity in trying to find some reason for adopting an attitude of that kind. Next in what might be described as a high light of the debate, the hon. member produced a letter from a Queensland lawyer. He read that letter, which set out that the racing bodies of Queensland had found £30,000 from somewhere, and had handed that amount to the Government of the day in that State—a Labour Government, of course. He told the House that that was in return for legislation to assist the interests of the bodies I have mentioned. I do not, of course, vouch for the truth of that assertion.

I can say no more than that the member for Victoria Park received such a letter. Members were naturally very curious to know from whom that letter came. The member for Victoria Park disappointed a very expectant House, when he concluded by saying that the letter ended, "I am, Yours, etc., So-and-So."

Mr. Sampson: Did not he put it on the Table of the House?

Mr. DONEY: It was suggested that he should do so, but the hon. member on this occasion was not quite as game as he usually is. He did not divulge the name, and did not lay the letter on the Table of the House. This looks to me very much like Taumany. It certainly seems to me as though we have slipped a great deal in Australia when we ape the meaner points of the Yankee character in the manner alleged by the hon. member. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) changed his attitude to the Bill, but for quite a proper reason in that he had ascertained from the speech delivered by the member for Avon that that member intended to move in Committee certain amendments that were likely to be unfriendly to the liberties of the people of East Perth. As a family man, and as one having some regard for the future of this State, I feel impelled to speak and vote against the Bill. I honestly believe that the Bill has not a dog's chance of achieving its professed objective, which is the reduction of gambling in this State. The Government has claimed, through the Press and in this House, to have laboured in recent weeks long and anxiously over its consideration of the measure. If that is so, my comment is that the time spent on it has been completely wasted. The Government claims to have produced an instrument that will drastically lessen organised betting in this State. I do not for one moment want to impugn the bona fides of the Minister, but that claim is just plain rubbish. I put this question to the House: Would the big Perth bookmakers be besieging hon. members as they are doing with appeals for support for the Bill, if the Bill is actually designed to cut the incomes of those bookmakers in halves? I suggest that there is no need for an answer, because the position is plain enough. The Bill will not reduce betting. Members will recall that a few years ago this House threw a cloak of legality and respectability over the lotteries. With what good result? None whatever, that I am able to see.

Mr. Raphael: Has not your hospital received any benefit from the lotteries?

Mr. DONEY: The results I specifically referred to were the results bearing on figures in the reduction of betting. My remarks in connection with the lotteries must not be construed as an attack upon Mr. Kennelly. I have always had and am glad to say now that I still have a deep regard for Mr. Kennelly as an honest man and, irrespective of who may form the Government, I shall be quite content to see Mr. Kennelly remain in charge of the Lotteries Commission.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Lotteries Commission is not under discussion, and is not connected with the Bill.

Mr. DONEY: It is connected with the gambling question, though certainly another form of gambling. I might add, and this will be the only further reference to the lotteries, that the lottery gamble and starting-price betting are just a couple of cute methods of taxing the poor. It seems to me that the Government is not game to tax the poor people through the recognised taxing channels. But the Government never does mind taking down that section of the community through the medium of lotteries and starting-price betting. The House has been told that in 1933 South Australia faced the same problem as we are facing at the present time, and solved that problem by the same corrective methods that we now propose to employ. What happened there? The very reverse of what was expected. We all know that thereafter the bookmaking business in that State flourished to such an extent that for the year ended the 30th June, 1938, no fewer than 34,000,000 bets were made by the bookmakers in South Australia, involving, as we have been told, the huge sum of something like £6,000,000 or £7,000,000. Those are staggering figures. They are figures that would have been absolutely impossible had it not been for the Government protection stupidly given in South Australia to that business. There has been a lot of nonsense and pretence spoken with regard to those figures, and we cannot go far wrong if we quote the official details. On the 30th June, 1934, there were 244 betting premises in South Australia. Four years later the number had increased to 321. The reduction that we profess to expect has certainly not been evidenced or realised in the sister State.

In 1934, there were 22,000,000 bets recorded, and in 1938 the number had increased to 36,550,000. There again it does not look as if legislation of the type to which we are looking forward here is to have any effect in reducing the sum total of betting. The turnover in 1935 was £3,449,000, while last year it had increased to £6,029,000, and as I stated before, the number of bets made last year exceeded 36,000,000. Queensland, which is a very much larger State, and without the protection given in South Australia, registered only 5,000,000 bets last year. The Government is handling a most thankless task. That has to be conceded. Members will realise that in introducing the Bill the Minister could hardly follow idealistic lines but had necessarily to deal with the facts and the conditions as he found them. We agree with the Government as far as that goes, but the point is that those facts, etc., should have meant all the facts and conditions that bear materially on the problem instead of just a few. What I wish to lead to is that the Minister's introductory speech dealt with practically no facts other than those that were concerned with the machinery of organised betting. The Minister gave no hint whatever that he was concerned with any of the moral issues. He did not even mention the alarming increase of betting among young people and children, at any rate not so far as I can recall. Nor did he mention the poverty that springs from the practice of betting, or for that matter with any additional taxing of the people that would be necessary to cope with the poverty, or even with any other national aspects of the question. I call the Minister's attention to the fact that all he needs to do to secure the wholehearted support of every member is to show his Bill to be nationally desirable and nationally beneficial. If this is the good Bill the Minister and his friends pretend it is, it should not be hard to prove all that, and I tell the Minister if, when replying, he can do what I have suggested, I for one will be ready indeed to vote for it, and I have no doubt other members also will be ready to support it. Regarding all the disabilities I have been referring to, the Government's plea is that they are unable to enforce the law. May I point this out to the Government? How does it know it cannot enforce the law? It

has never tried. It cannot be said by any member on the Treasury benches that the previous Government did not attempt to enforce the law. That Government certainly did make an effort, but it did not meet with the success it deserved. The present Government, however, has not made any effort to enforce the law. Has the Government considered the effect of its methods upon the morale of the police force? There is no finer body of men than our police. I have known police forces in many British colonies and other parts of the world, but never have I known a body comparable with our force. I am constantly boasting of it, and with good reason, too. The point is that the Government of the day has hamstrung the police.

Mr. Sleeman: Who said that?

Mr. DONEY: I have just said it. I repeat that the Government has hamstrung the police.

Mr. Raphael: You are one of the weak-minded people that your Leader spoke about.

Mr. DONEY: I do not mind discussing that with the hon. member later. Our policemen know their duty, but the Government will not let them do it. We have heard much nonsense about prosecutions against dummies each week, after officers of the police force, at the instruction of the Government, have advised the proprietors of betting shops of an impending raid. That is a half-baked method for any civilised state to adopt.

The Minister for Mines: You are romancing.

Mr. DONEY: Despite the hilarity of my juvenile friends on my right, surely what I have pointed out is a sign of the deterioration of the race. Should we stand for such stupidity?

The Minister for Mines: You are romancing.

Mr. DONEY: What is the function of the Government? If the Government has any stamina at all, it will govern in accordance with the laws passed by Parliament. Where are we heading? What will happen if the people follow the Government in choosing exactly what laws they shall obey and what laws they shall ignore?

The Minister for Employment: You do not even sound serious.

Mr. DONEY: I know the Minister is not. I assert that I am. I have never been more serious.

The Minister for Mines: You do not look serious.

Mr. DONEY: During the 10 years I have been a member of this House, I have never regarded a measure more seriously than I regard this Bill. I do not know of a measure likely to produce worse results than will this measure, if passed. The Bill even discriminates between bookmaker and bookmaker and punter and punter. The balance is plainly in favour of big racecourse owners and bookmakers operating in a big way and against the small bookmaker. The Bill appeals to me as falling into the category of what the Government often refer to as class Bills. It will protect those who are strongly entrenched and give a very raw deal to others.

The Minister intimated during his speech that he would not support the view that bookmakers were criminals. We do not expect him to. I do not know whose view he was quoting when he said that. He does not consider bookmakers to be criminals, nor do we on this side of the House. That observation of the Minister was intended, I take it, to convey the idea that all those in opposition to the Bill regarded bookmakers as criminals. Far from it. We have good and bad bookmakers. Bookmakers must be honest and must create for themselves a reputation for honesty if they are to maintain themselves in business. All that bookmakers have done is to take advantage of the friendly weakness of the Government. In those circumstances I agree the Minister can hardly regard bookmakers as criminals.

My colleague, the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle), touched on this aspect of the question. He is of opinion that the question of morality is not involved in betting; he would not permit anyone to say that betting is wrong. If the hon. member himself felt no sense of wrong then plainly there is no wrong where he is concerned.

Mr. Boyle: You are saying that.

Mr. DONEY: A man can hardly be adjudged wrong if he acts in accordance with beliefs that are honestly held. To that extent I am in agreement with him. The point, however, is that with this type of legislation we have to deal not so much with individual

effects as with mass or national effects. So that the hon. member's view regarding morality hardly applies. I ask the hon. member whether he considers that the balance of betting results will be on the side of good. If that is his contention, then he is in a hopeless minority. Probably not even the most ardent devotee of betting would go so far as to support that contention. If we accept the hon. member's view and decide that gambling does produce more good than harm, then let us have it, and the more the better.

Mr. Boyle: That is not my view.

Mr. DONEY: I am pleased to hear that. Probably the hon. member did not mean what he was saying, but if gambling does produce more harm than good then assuredly we must abolish it. If that is not the argument of the hon. member he certainly had no right to speak last night in favour of a Bill to restrict betting. I am not insisting, as has been suggested by members on the Government benches, that betting is a crime. In my opinion it is rather one of the weaknesses that poor old human nature is prone to. That is all. Nevertheless, it can be a most regrettable weakness if the family income cannot stand the strain of a daily bet. There might be some excuse for betting by sustenance men, because, as the Minister for Employment knows, theirs is a very dull and colourless life. I know relief workers—the Minister knows them even better than I do—whose position is so utterly miserable that about the only ray of hope that enters their home is the possession of a lottery ticket or the anticipation of the result of a bet, notwithstanding that the chances of winning are remote. For that reason I myself frequently am unable to suggest to men in such a position that they should refrain from an occasional bet. The only remedy to keep such men from betting is to increase their earnings. That leads me to say—and in doing so I am repeating what one of my colleagues said a little earlier—that there is one member on the Government side of the House who should certainly oppose a Bill such as this, and that is the Minister for Employment, who cares for the unemployed and controls the Child Welfare Department. It is difficult for me to understand the mentality of the Minister. I do not know whether he has any qualms of conscience. I hope he has—I think he must have, knowing

him as I do and knowing the opinions he holds—yet he has decided to support this measure.

The Minister for Employment: Your job is to understand your own mentality.

Mr. DONEY: I do not mind admitting to the Minister that sometimes I have a little trouble in that respect. Were the Minister as candid as I, he would make a similar admission. I ask the Minister who introduced the Bill just exactly what contribution he thinks it will make to the national well-being. The Minister is listening; I hope that later he will answer that question. That is the test. Does not the national aspect of large-scale betting worry him sometimes? Presumably he knows that to-day, more than ever before, our State stands in a position of considerable danger. The Minister must know that certain European and Asiatic factors may at any time so shape themselves as to force this country upon the defensive. Even now we should be placing ourselves in a position to meet such an emergency. I believe that to be common knowledge, but apparently it is not shared by the Minister in charge of the Bill. We should be endeavouring to improve ourselves physically, mentally, and morally. It is the duty to-day of every public man to preach the gospel of physical fitness. Therefore, the present is no time to launch this Bill, to give organised betting the protection of the Government and to increase poverty, and, for that matter, also to increase laziness. Even admitting the great difficulty, if not the impossibility, of changing the outlook of our adult population on this matter, we should at least consider the children. As a family man, I certainly do not want my children—or any children—to grow up with the idea that what we now see in our streets in respect to betting shops is a necessary and natural part of the civilisation into which they have been born. I do not know whether the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) will speak on the debate. He is a member for whom I have a deep regard. As he is amongst the wisest of men who have ever sat in this House, and seeing that he is supporting the opposition to the Bill, his attitude should count for a great deal. Time was when his word went for much, indeed for almost everything, with the Government. I submit that the Government would show considerable shrewdness at this juncture if

again it heeded the advice of the hon. member.

The Minister blamed the Postmaster General, the "West Australian" and the Broadcasting Commission for increasing betting facilities in this State. Everyone else blames the Government. Has the Minister approached the organisations to whom he referred in an attempt to secure their co-operation for the suppression of betting?

The Minister for Agriculture: The answer is "Yes."

Mr. DONEY: Ample evidence was given to the South Australian Commission by the General Manager of the Australian Broadcasting Commission of his readiness to discuss the question of restriction. Recently the local Press indicated that the new Deputy Postmaster General was also amenable to reason in this regard. How the "West Australian" would respond to a little coaxing I am not in a position to say, but perhaps the Minister will refer to that point, too, in the course of his reply.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do not encourage him to be too long-winded in his reply.

**MR. LAMBERT** (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [8.33]: Some excellent speeches have been made on this Bill, and almost without exception they were worthy of a better cause. It has been said that life's greatest paradox is to sin and remain pure. Many who have shown a vacillating attitude towards legislation of this kind would come within that category.

The Minister for Employment: Especially the member for East Perth.

Mr. LAMBERT: He performed the finest political Blondin act that has ever characterised him. His Blondin-like tricks will no doubt receive the endorsement of the Dominion League, if of no one else. It would appear that people on the other side have performed a handspring to convenient virtue.

Mr. Thorn: You had better sit down before you spoil a good speech.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not want any of the hon. member's inane remarks, otherwise I will deal with him in a manner that he will find distasteful.

Mr. Thorn: Inside or outside the Chamber?

Mr. LAMBERT: In the Criminal Code of 1913 I find Section 210 which reads as follows:—

A person who keeps for gain any place to which persons resort for the purpose of playing at any game of chance; or keeps any place which is kept for playing therein of any game of chance, or any game of mixed chance and skill, in which (a) a bank is kept by one or more players exclusively of the others.

Paragraph (c) of Subsection (1) of Section 211 of the Code says—

Any person who opens, keeps or uses a common betting-house is guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to imprisonment with hard labour for three years.

Since 1913 what attempt has ever been made by Governments to give effect to this law? In 1916, during the regime of the Wilson Government, a Bill was introduced for the suppression of betting, gambling and other relative purposes.

Mr. Hughes: You are not going to make a Charlie McCarthy speech too, are you?

Mr. LAMBERT: The Bill passed another place, but in this House was discharged from the notice paper on the 16th December. No attempt has ever been made reasonably to control betting in this State, notwithstanding that we have had the Wilson Government, the Lefroy Government, the Scaddan Government, and others.

Mr. Warner: You have been here a long time, too.

Mr. LAMBERT: Section 211 of the Criminal Code gives the Government almost unlimited power not only to restrict but to suppress betting in Western Australia. Under that section offences are punishable by three years' imprisonment. The "West Australian" and other local newspapers, within three months of the general elections, find that the Government has not administered the law. No Government has done so. I have never heard of such a cloak of hypocrisy as people don when discussing questions of this kind. The position is exactly the same in connection with our liquor licensing laws. Clubs and other privileged places are not interfered with, but, when the working man wants to put 2s. on a horse with a decent bookmaker, he will be penalised, and if he wishes to buy a pot of beer after hours he will again be penalised. Another man can go to one of his fashionable resorts, the Weld Club or the Perth Club, and obtain all he requires.

Mr. Hughes: And the Peppermint Grove club.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know where that is. Why all this hypocrisy? Why not square up to ourselves as men, and admit that the mere changing of the betting venue from a shop to a racecourse will not in any way lessen the evil. In no sense will such a change of venue give to the business dignity or moral stability. I know this Bill will not be passed and will never have the force of law. When the Wilson Government introduced the Bill in 1916, it intended to clean up racing and place it upon a footing that would give it the costume of respectability, but it did not pass this Chamber. Ever since the codification of our laws in 1913 the law to which I have referred could have been enforced. At one time the Leader of the Opposition was Deputy Premier. If he had thought there was any great wrong in any one having a bet on or off a racecourse, he could have taken action. No Government has ever done anything to put the law into force. For the last few weeks there has been a newspaper controversy as to what the present Government should have done or has failed to do. I saw in the "West Australian" an expression of opinion from an officer of the Salvation Army. I have the greatest respect for the "Army," as I have for established churches. The "Army" parades the fact that it will not take a shilling from the Lotteries Commission, but when one goes to the racecourse, either on entering it or leaving it, one is asked to put money into the "Army" boxes.

Mr. Rodoreda: They are getting it each way.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. Officers of the "Army" go into every hotel on Saturday to obtain donations.

Mr. Hegney: That is direct giving.

Mr. LAMBERT: May I say that direct giving is foreign to the hon. member? The Salvation Army does a great amount of good. I always teach my children never to pass an officer of the Salvation Army if they have a few pence in their pocket to spare for the cause. Why all this unvarnished hypocrisy? People talk about not taking money that is the result of gambling. Some members who have said they would not bet on a horse are prepared to take the money by an indirect route, through the printing of the bookmakers'



tickets. That is not a crime. The "West Australian" takes advertisements from the W.A.T.C., and publishes tips on Saturdays. Does Mr. P. A. Connolly or Mr. Ernest Lee Steere want the "West Australian" tips? The tips are published to induce other people to buy the newspaper so that they may, acting on the published advice, make their bets on Saturday mornings. That is the only reason why the information appears. Do members think that Mr. Connolly wants to be told by tipster No. 1 of the "West Australian" what he should back? Probably Mr. Connolly would know long before the tipster. A great deal has been said about Mr. Connolly and his association with the turf. Mr. Connolly has been honourably associated with this State ever since he has been a young man and apart from being a breeder of fine horses, he has proved himself to be one of the most benevolent men Western Australia has ever had. He has given away thousands of pounds and therefore it is distinctly wrong in this coward's pulpit, where members are protected, to discuss that gentleman in the manner in which we have heard him referred to. I do not think there is any possibility of the Bill finding a place on the statute-book. We should approach the question of betting at a more seasonable period when calmer consideration could be given to it. Certainly it should not be brought up three or four months before a general election. It is not a question of transcending importance to Western Australia especially when we remember that there are many starving farmers in my district and in other parts of the State to whom we should give prior attention.

Mr. Hegney: The Government has done a good deal for them and is still doing what you suggest.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is true. The Government is doing all that it is possible for those people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member connect his remarks with the Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT: I regret the necessity for this legislation and I regret also that the Lefroy-Wilson and Mitchell-Latham Governments failed to administer the law that is to-day on the statute-book. If it was thought that wrong was being done, why did not one of those Governments resort to Section 211 of the Criminal

Code which provides that to make a bet is punishable by three years' imprisonment? There is also an obligation on the Government to provide healthful recreation for our people. In South America where racing is conducted, other healthful sports are also provided and if those who go to a racecourse do not take an interest in the racing they can watch polo or other games, all for the nominal amount, equivalent in our money to between 8d. and 1s. Instead of suggesting that it will be the beginning of the end of all things if we close a few betting shops in the metropolitan area, why not throw open beautiful grounds like those of the Trotting Association where women and children could congregate for healthful sports? If it is desired to popularise racing, why do not the committee of the W.A.T.C. extend to every one the concessions they grant to their immediate friends? Let them cut out their free liquor and afternoon teas and free tickets of admission to the grounds and reduce the entrance fees and thus facilitate indulgence in the sport of racing at the course by those who cannot afford the present high charges of admission.

**HON. P. COLLIER** (Boulder) [8.55]:  
Mr. Speaker—

The Minister for Mines: After many years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: After two years. I am sorry that I find no friends on this side of the House, many of whom but for me would not be here. Members of the Opposition were sufficiently friendly when I rose to my feet to applaud me. I come into this debate with a great deal of hesitation. We have heard many speeches on the question of betting during the time the Bill has been before the House, and many of them have been characteristic of the balderdash we have just heard. First of all I should like to ask a question. Why is it that the Government has pushed this Bill forward at this stage? The Government has had ample time to bring in a Bill to regulate betting and that kind of thing. We have read in the newspapers that a sub-committee of Cabinet has been dealing with the question for weeks, indeed I may say for months; and having come to a decision it was brought down and treated as a matter of great moment. Does the Government consider that this is the most important item amongst the orders of

the day? Let us look at the notice paper and see whether it is of greater importance than some of the other measures that appear there. For instance, is it more important than the Superannuation Bill? I cannot agree that it is; but for some reason or other the Government has pushed it forward day after day in an endeavour to get it through. I object to this Bill being given precedence over the other Bills that I regard as being more important altogether. I do not propose to traverse the Bill argument by argument or clause by clause as has been done by other members during the debate. My intention is to discuss one or two points in regard to it, and I hope to be able to do so without detaining members for more than 15 minutes. There has been much talk about the impossibility of eliminating or suppressing betting and, therefore, the necessity for regulating it. Of course, nobody believes that betting can be entirely eliminated, but it can be reduced to a minimum by the enforcement of the laws in existence to-day.

Opposition members: Hear, hear!

Hon. P. COLLIER: If they are not sufficient—

Mr. Rodoreda: Why did not you have a go at it when you were Premier?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I expected that. Why did I not have a go at it? Because I was never a Hitler, and I never obtained the backing I wanted.

Mr. Coverley: Rubbish!

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is no rubbish about it. The hon. member cannot say that.

Mr. Coverley: No one had a more loyal party than you had.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not speaking about the party, but about other circumstances.

Mr. Rodoreda: You always have an excuse.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And it is always a good excuse. I never had the backing that would have enabled me to stop the evil. I am asked why I did not stop it. Some years ago when I was Premier and betting was developing in this State, I went over the head of the Minister for Police and asked the Commissioner of Police, to see me. He did. I said, "Look here, the way in which betting is growing is outrageous. You come with me on Saturday." He did, and we went around the city. I showed him what was taking place, and said, "This

has got to stop." No police officers have received instructions from me—nor do I think they have received instructions from any other Minister; indeed, I am certain of it—to "hold off." The streets were blocked in front of the betting shops, and pedestrians were forced to go out into the road and walk around the crowd, in order to get where they wanted to go, risking their lives on the way. My answer to the interjector who asked why I did not take action when I was in office is that I was not a Hitler. I did not bring the matter before the party. There were influences at work besides party influences. That is why.

Mr. Rodoreda: That is not a satisfactory answer; it is a weak answer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is not weak at all.

Mr. Needham: What do you mean by "other influences"?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I leave that to you.

Mr. Hughes: I can answer that; the same influences that are at work to-day.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I leave the hon. member to judge for himself what the "other influences" were.

Mr. Rodoreda: You have said too little and you have said too much.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not want to say any more at present.

Mr. Rodoreda: We would like to hear more. You cannot leave the matter as it is.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It will not suit the hon. member, or this movement, if I say any more.

Mr. Rodoreda: That is a weak get-out.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Very well; I will leave it at that for the present.

Mr. Rodoreda: That is a coward's way. It is no use leaving it at that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will leave it at that for the moment, but probably I will not leave it at that in the next month or two.

Mr. Rodoreda: It is a pity you kept quiet so long.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We shall see. The question of gambling in betting shops has been argued over and over again. As I understand the Labour Party and have understood it for the last 40 years, our object is to elevate the working man, to do everything possible to improve his position, but if this Bill becomes law it will drag him down. It will provide facilities for working men to waste their substance in directions in which they cannot afford to spend money. It is all very well for members to

indulge in the sort of claptrap of which we have heard so much, concerning the poor man having his bet. It is all very well for the man described by the member for East Perth last night, who is getting £20 a week, to put £5 on a racehorse. He is able to meet his obligations. If he oversteps the £5 and spends the whole £20, he can recover that money in a week or two. But can the man who is able to wager 5s. in a betting shop stop at the 5s. if he has money in his pocket? Of course he cannot; of course he does not. It is not use telling me that. I know the workers of this country as well as any man on this side of the House. Men in such circumstances waste their money, and their homes go short, because they cannot stop at 5s. Not much harm would be done if they could, but they take their wages to the shop and do not stop at the 5s. bet. They attempt to recover their loss, and spend 10s., and then half their wages, and the home suffers as a result.

If the Labour Party stands for anything, it stands for the elevation of the workers of this country. Is the legalising of betting shops going to contribute to the elevation of the workers? Of course not. If men will examine their consciences, they will see that this shop betting will lead to degradation. In my young days, and later on, when men were striking for higher wages and better conditions, our greatest weakness was the man who did not have £1 because he had spent it in other ways; he soon gave in. This Bill will provide opportunities for that waste to occur. Somebody has said that we are going to control and regulate betting. Does anybody believe that if this Bill becomes law we will control or regulate betting? Of course not. Someone else has said that people bet in clubs, or that they play cards and gamble in other ways. But clubs are not open to the public. They are open only to those who are members, and only members can go into a club and play poker, or any other game. But this Bill will establish betting shops that will have the sanction of the law. There will be an open door, and the shops will operate with the respectability that the law will impart to them. Those places are called "parlours." I could find another name for them.

Mr. Patrick: "'Will you come into my parlour?' said the spider to the fly."

Hon. P. COLLIER: Members have said that the measure will reduce betting, but

every sensible person in this country knows that betting will be multiplied fivefold. All those who have been betting in the past will go to bet in these registered, respectable, legalised shops. If it stopped there, it would be all right; but these shops will be an invitation to everybody to go along and bet. I view the matter this way: There are men to-day that bet in these shops. If the shops are legalised and made respectable, not only will they be frequented by the men who at present bet in them, but they will be an inducement to other men to bet who formerly would never bet at all. That is the position.

Mr. Rodoreda: Could not the same argument apply to hotels?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know whether it does or not. As a matter of fact, it does not, because when a man goes into a hotel he wants a drink. He goes in to have a drink.

Mr. Rodoreda: But he has six or eight before he leaves.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so; but there are men who do not drink or gamble at all, and they will pass along the street and see the betting shops open to them. The open shops will be an invitation to them to enter, and the legalising of betting will result in the roping-in of the young men of our country who otherwise would never take to betting.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is perfectly true.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The legalised shops will be an invitation to those men to enter and have a bet. Boys leaving school will walk along the streets, boys who previously never thought of betting, and had no instinct for gambling at all. They will see open shops inviting them to enter and bet. But for the presence of the shops and the fact that they were legalised and made respectable, those boys would not bother about gambling.

Mr. Rodoreda: One would have thought that you would have done something about it when you had a chance. The same conditions obtained.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We would have done something.

Mr. Rodoreda: Well, why did you not? You would have had the party behind you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Rodoreda: I will not keep order. Why should I?

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the member for Boulder to resume his seat. The member for Roebourne will keep order when I call upon him to do so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no objection to the interjections, but the member for Roebourne does not know the facts.

Mr. Rodoreda: I want you to tell me, but you will not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will not tell you, and the public, at present.

Mr. Rodoreda: You make innuendoes like the member for East Perth and are not game to say what you mean.

Mr. Hughes: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement. I have said too much for him and his ilk and have exposed them too often.

Member: Don't make a speech!

Mr. Rodoreda: Very well, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw. I did not think a statement like that could upset the member for East Perth.

Mr. Hughes: I ask that that statement be withdrawn. If the hon. member wants to make insults, let him make them elsewhere.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw.

Mr. Rodoreda: Very well, I withdraw.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I can understand the attitude of the member for Roebourne. Perhaps the hon. member will understand later the reason I refused just now to explain why I did not take action when I was Premier.

Mr. Rodoreda: It is not very fair to us to say what you have said.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not casting any reflection on any member of the party. Does the Labour Party stand for ideals? It does, I think. That is what I have understood during all the years I have known the party. Are the ideals of to-day to provide facilities or inducements for people to squander their money in betting shops?

Mr. Styants: Or in drinking?

Hon. P. COLLIER: People go in for a drink only when they want a drink. The opportunity to bet and gamble is to be provided for people, whereas there is no instinct to go into a hotel. We are informed that starting-price bookmakers have this year paid £14,000 in fines. Are they philanthropists? Do they pay that money because of the goodness of their hearts? The

mugs pay it, mugs who have no hope of winning. Here we are to provide facilities and opportunities. As someone has written—and this is highly appropriate—

How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds  
Makes ill deeds done!

Provided in those shops is the invitation to many men to enter, whereas they would not dream of entering the illegal ramps of to-day. But men will go where it is made respectable, by law, to go. They will enter licensed shops.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The men of to-morrow will provide women's parlours for gambling.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am an Australian, and so are all my friends who differ from me in opinion. I cannot imagine that they have projected their thoughts to the next generation, and the succeeding generation, if they provide these facilities for gambling, and train those generations—for it is a training—to enter betting shops and spend their time and their substance there. Of course my friends will not agree with me, but that is my opinion. If I had my way, I would prevent the thing altogether. In a slapdash manner it has been said that betting cannot be suppressed. No law can be administered 100 per cent.; but restrictive laws, applying to things considered undesirable for the life of the community, can be so administered as considerably to minimise evils. I entirely approve of the Act which the Queensland Parliament has passed. Without any proof, without any evidence at all, we have been told that illegal betting continues in Queensland. That is not true. The Queensland law entirely suppressing shop betting is as effective as any such law can be.

Mr. Rodoreda: How long do you think it will last?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It will last as long as Forgan Smith is Premier of Queensland.

Mr. Rodoreda: You are more optimistic than I am. I do not mean the legislation, but the betting.

Hon. P. COLLIER: After the Queensland Act had been passed, the first defendant to come before the courts was a man who kept a billiard saloon. He had never been known as a bettor, but he started betting because there are always some people who want to wager under the lap. He was caught, and the penalty was no paltry fine, but three months in gaol. Gaol is the only effective stop for illegal betting. That man got three

months, and so far as I know there has not been another case of the kind. For members to say that a bet can be got anywhere in Queensland is altogether wrong. I heard the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) say that there are many betting shops in the city of Melbourne. The hon. member furthermore stated that tradesmen's carts carry boys to collect bets.

Mr. Patrick: That was stated by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall).

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think I am entitled to speak with some authority about Victoria and about Melbourne. I am a Victorian. I lived in Melbourne before I came to the West. I have gone to Victoria every year for the last 15 years. I spent June and July of this year there. I know Victoria and Melbourne perhaps better than any slapdash critic who may present his observations. To say that tradesmen's carts go around with boys collecting bets is rubbish.

The Minister for Justice: Did you ever hear of Wren's tote when you were in Victoria?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I did. But that is long years ago. I am glad that matter has been mentioned. Many years ago, when I was young and my friend was young, there was only one tote operating in Melbourne. It was controlled by Wren. The police used to chase him, but they could not suppress him.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They could not get into his tote, as a matter of fact.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is correct. However, what eventually happened was that the Victorian Parliament passed a special Act to suppress Wren. After that, he did not carry on.

Mr. Raphael: Do you know that nearly every pub in Melbourne to-day has a book-maker on the premises? One of the biggest criminals from Perth is doing that business in Melbourne.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Victoria Park must keep order. There will be no more latitude given.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I took particular pains to travel around Melbourne, and I say that the position there was not as has been stated. In legalising betting we shall be taking a retrograde step. We are opening the door of gambling not only for hardened citizens like ourselves—if I may put it that way—but also for boys and girls coming along, who otherwise would never go into a

shop to bet. There is the invitation. To legalise betting will not diminish betting. On the contrary, it will multiply betting five-fold, because men and women will go into licensed betting shops who never would go near an illegal betting shop, would not have anything to do with an illegal shop. And the young people growing up will be brought into line as regards shop betting if the Bill passes. Anyone who draws a comparison between betting on a racecourse and betting in a shop does not understand the question. If betting is to be legalised, rather than legalise betting on horses, I would have betting on two-up legalised. There the bettor has an equal chance. In two-up it is fifty-fifty, but there is not one chance in betting on horses.

Mr. Styants: You will continue betting on racecourses, where the bettor has not a hundred to one chance.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Those who visit racecourses have their chance. Betting on horses does not appeal to everyone: it appeals only to those who go on the racecourse. But an open shop in the street induces men to go in and bet who would never dream of visiting a racecourse. There is the invitation, and that makes all the difference. I find that the member for Victoria Park—and I take strong exception to this—spoke as follows:—

I have here a communication which I intend to read to the House. It is from a non-interested party, a solicitor in Queensland. I shall read the letter, because on the Address-in-reply I spoke on the betting question and made certain allegations. I do not know the writer of the letter, and he does not know me very well.

The letter was incorrectly addressed. Its writer did not know the name of the member for Victoria Park. That hon. member vouchsafed to this House that it was a letter from a solicitor in Queensland. Does the hon. member know the solicitor at all? Does he know whether the writer is a solicitor or whether he is a scallywag who perhaps was a solicitor but has served a term in gaol and been struck off the roll? The hon. member does not know. Yet in order to buttress his argument he read this letter from a man he does not know, and he refused to give the writer's name because—

Mr. Raphael: On a point of order. The member for Boulder—not that I object—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must state his point and not make a speech.

Mr. Raphael: The member for Boulder has a "Hansard" copy of my speech. I want to know whether he is in order in reading it?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am watching the member for Boulder. He is quite in order.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I was about to read the letter which the member for Victoria Park has already read for the benefit of the House. However, it does not matter. Everybody who listened to the hon. member knows the contents of the letter.

Mr. Patrick: It is a scurrilous letter, any way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: A low-down, scurrilous letter from a man who would not sign his name to it.

Mr. Raphael: He signed his name to it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He did to you, but not to those to whom you read the letter.

Mr. Raphael: Other members saw his name.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I venture to say the name will not appear in "Hansard."

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Victoria Park did not disclose the name. To support his case he read a letter from a man supposed to be a solicitor.

Mr. Patrick: Attacking Forgan Smith.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am coming to that point. We do not know whether the writer is a solicitor. Who he is, we do not know. I suspect that writer very much. The member for Victoria Park had no right to read that letter in which charges were levelled against the Government of Queensland, and at the same time withhold the name of the fellow who wrote it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He cannot vouch for the fact that the writer is a solicitor.

Mr. Raphael: I can. I verified that before I read the letter.

Hon. C. G. Latham: At any rate, it was pretty low down.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Victoria Park did not tell us that. The letter contained the usual sort of thing that we have heard so often—"I have been a Labour supporter all my life." There were words of that description.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Could that be "Mr. Scalpel"?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was a mistake. The writer says "I have been a Labour supporter all my life." That is the old, old story. I object to this sort of thing. I do

not want to read the letter, but the member for Victoria Park said the letter contained a statement that a certain amount of money—

Mr. Patrick: £30,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: —was paid by John Wren. He said, furthermore, that the racing clubs in Queensland had paid a substantial amount of money. To whom was that money paid? To the Government?

Mr. Patrick: He said it was paid to the party funds.

Hon. P. COLLIER: To the party funds, he said. If I am in order, Mr. Speaker, all I desire to say is that it was the most shocking, low-down, rotten thing I have ever heard read in this House.

Mr. Raphael: It is not so rotten as some of the things you have said.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I shall send a copy of the hon. member's speech to Forgan Smith.

Mr. Raphael: You can send it, and you can send that speech that you made too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I knew Forgan Smith long before I knew the member for Victoria Park.

Mr. Raphael: What has that got to do with it?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Anyone who knows Forgan Smith, the Premier of Queensland, knows what he is, and yet some slipshod critic has seen fit to impugn his honour and his integrity. To read a letter of that type in this House is to give out to the world that a certain amount of money had been paid over—

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is tantamount to saying that the Queensland Government is corrupt.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is exactly the same thing.

The Minister for Employment: And that was what the member for East Perth said against your Government.

Mr. Raphael: The member for East Perth got the member for Boulder in the box but he sidestepped the member for East Perth, with whom he is siding now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not siding with anyone.

Mr. Raphael: Yes, you are.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not sidestepping anyone. I object to this sort of thing, and I protest, in the name of Labour, against any Labour man who can come forward and read a letter of such a description

from a man that he does not know, and whose name he will not disclose to the House.

Mr. Raphael: I do not want to know him.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yet the hon. member can read a letter in which that man levels charges against the honour and integrity of the Queensland Labour Government. And a Labour member reads that sort of letter in this House! He gives that information to the public without authority or justification, without any knowledge of who the fellow is. He has never met the writer, and knows nothing about him. The fellow may have just left gaol for all he knows.

Mr. Raphael: Or he may have just bought two pubs.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Never mind about that! I do not run a dentist's shop—with-out legal authority.

Mr. Raphael: Never mind about that either. You have drawn the teeth out of some people.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yet the hon. member can give to the world what this unknown writer says about the Queensland Labour Government!

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Your worst opponents never said that sort of thing.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They would not descend to such tactics. It is left to a Labour man in this Parliament to make such statements about the Labour Government in Queensland. It is my intention to communicate with Forgan Smith, and I only hope that the member for Victoria Park, who made this wretched statement, will go outside and repeat it. He will find then that he will have Forgan Smith against him.

Mr. Hughes: And woe betide him if he has to stand his trial before Percy Hart!

Hon. P. COLLIER: What are we coming to? I have spoken longer than I intended. I oppose the Bill from A to Z. I shall have much more to say in Committee, if the measure passes the second reading stage. Has Labour reached the stage when it seeks to legalise betting and provide facilities for men who cannot afford to lose their money? If it has, well, there it is! In a sustenance camp at Manjimup—

The Minister for Employment: There is no sustenance work.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Well, relief work.

The Minister for Employment: There are no relief workers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There are.

The Minister for Employment: There are not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Near Manjimup.

The Minister for Employment: There is no relief work of any kind.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is a camp down there. In a shop there is a starting-price betting man—call him sustenance worker, relief worker, or what the Minister likes—and he is given 30s. a week. A wireless is installed there so that people can hear the racing results. That man collects his 30s. and in turn collects money from his men there. That sort of thing is going on all over the State. We know that, and we are asked to throw the cloak of legality over it all. We are to say, "You can all go on now. All this is legal." I have no hesitation in saying the present conditions are wretched. No one can support them. The existing practices should be suppressed. They are not sanctioned by law. The business could be stopped to-morrow. On the other hand, once we legalise the business, we shall not be able to stop it. It could be suppressed to-morrow, but once legalised there will be the open door.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And no future Government will be able to stop it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know how difficult it is to amend a law once it is placed on the statute-book. I know of several towns in this State where the legitimate rent for a shop is £2 a week. At that rental a trader occupies the premises and carries on his business. A starting-price bookmaker comes along and offers a rental of £5 for the premises, and the trader is put out that the other man may go in. That will happen everywhere if Parliament legalises starting-price betting. Once we register starting-price bookmakers and give them legal status, that is what will happen. For my own part, I can look back over the long years that I have been associated with Labour. I had its ideals in mind long before some of my critics were born. I can look to the future in the same way. To legalise starting-price shop betting is to let down young Australians of to-day and young Australians of the future.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [9.40]: There are times when it is difficult to speak but impossible to be silent.

Mr. Patrick: It is better to be silent on this matter.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Usually Ministers leave a Bill to be dealt with by the Minister who introduces it. If compromises are to be effected or alterations made in the present Bill, I propose to leave such considerations to my colleague who is in charge of the legislation. References to the Government have been made by my old friend and ex-Ministerial chief, the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier). I assure the House that I do not intend to indulge in innuendoes. The object behind the Bill is justice, and that surely is something. We could have introduced a measure that would probably have been more popular, but I can assure members that the Government comprises men who are accustomed to arriving at decisions and making up their minds on evidence submitted. They do not need even the "West Australian" to tell them what they should do on any given question, nor do they need advice from organisations that have interested themselves in this particular problem. Ministers accept responsibility for the Bill. We are asked why we have brought such legislation before Parliament. There has been an insistent demand by the Press, public bodies, and members on both sides of the House for legislation to be introduced. Side by side with that demand there is also another that the Government should suppress starting-price betting. There are whole-hoggers who say that off-the-course betting should be suppressed. If it is possible to gauge public opinion, I claim it is that legislation should be introduced. For that purpose it is necessary to introduce legislation that will mete out justice to all sections of the community. A lot has been said about gambling. I do not pose as one who has never taken a chance. I am not a plaster-saint, nor yet am I Simon Pure; I am merely an ordinary average Australian, living a normal life and refraining from posing as being better than my fellow man. When it comes to a question of my political party, I say there is no man in Australia that has done more for the Labour movement than it has done for him. The claim also holds good with respect to other political parties. I shall not pose as having conferred great benefits on the party I represent. My friend the member for Boulder showed pleasure because cheers came from the other side of the House. I can remember the time when he was proud

not of the cheers but of the opposition that came from members sitting on the other side of the House. I say to him that he knows full well, and he has read sufficient, to realise that he should beware of the Greeks when they bring their gifts.

Mr. Patrick: The member for Boulder was on sound ground this time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: On this occasion a non-party measure has provided the opportunity for the cheers from Opposition members.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What the member for Boulder said was perfectly true.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Does the Leader of the Opposition think for one moment there is one man on the Treasury bench who would not willingly stand aside if our old friend and leader could take his place as in days gone by?

Hon. P. Collier: I agree with you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I mention that to indicate to the House what we think of him.

Hon. P. Collier: I appreciate that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If members opposite think I would indulge in a personal argument with our old leader, they are quite wrong, but when party matters are concerned it is different. We may get an occasional cheer for what we have done, but what we do for one we are prepared to do for all our colleagues. There has been a disposition during the discussion for some to pose on the question of gambling, to suggest that they are a little better than others in that respect. In dealing for a moment with that phase, I would refer them to a writer of earlier days who wrote of people who were prepared to—

Compound for sins they are inclined to,  
By damning those they have no mind to.

I suppose it is hardly necessary to point out that, as the Minister for Lands remarked on one occasion, "we do not go down the street with our records placarded on our backs." It is not usual for public men to pose as being better than other men. I am not one of those. Therefore I should say we can approach this question in the manner in which the Government has approached it. We have brought down a Bill for the consideration of the House and I say to the Leader of the Opposition, "We make you a present of the Bill." It seems to me that in this Assembly there are three



schools of thought. One we might call the whole-hogger who would wipe out all off-the-course betting, and including Tattersall's Club and all the wagers made there amounting to perhaps many thousands of pounds. He would say, "If you people want to bet, get into the train or some other form of transport and go to the racecourse." I am not one of those who take the view that betting is illegal on the racecourse. It may be illegal; but let me explain. There are usages that take precedence even over laws. After all these years, since we have had horse racing in Western Australia and when betting on racecourses and trotting has become almost a tradition, there remains such a thing as an unwritten law. I am not taking up the ground that it is necessary at this stage to legalise betting on racecourses. We have done that in the Bill for the sake of consistency. I had to speak against a Bill that was introduced by my friend the member for Murchison, a Bill that was on the lines of the Act of South Australia. At that time we were not prepared to go so far and neither are we at the present juncture prepared to go as far as South Australia has gone. So we find the hon. member is not supporting the Bill we have introduced because it does not go far enough. Practically the majority of members in this Chamber take the view of the Government that betting should be regulated, and therefore we have introduced the Bill that is before the House. Already there has been commendable enterprise shown by the number of amendments that appear on the notice paper, amendments that will be consistent with the Bill and not inconsistent with the title. We have the machinery to do what everyone says should be done in Western Australia and that is to regulate off-the-course betting. I say to those members who smugly think that they can relieve themselves of all responsibility and put the onus on the Government, and a certain amount of ignominy also, that they have succeeded in making a certain amount of political capital out of the position. I am not blaming anyone in particular.

Hon. C. G. Latham: In the circumstances I think there has been very little of what you suggest.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Very good. I am prepared to make a compact with the hon. member and say that this will not be made an issue. I agree with the

member for Boulder that we are not going to fight the elections on an issue such as this.

Hon. P. Collier: I agree we should not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No one will induce me to do that. The question is not so important after all. If it were as important as some would make out, what have we been doing all these years? I heard an enthusiast say that it was not mentioned at the last elections. It did not raise its head until the last few months, although it has been one of those problems that has been with us for the last two years. Yet no one has tackled it. We would not even permit the courageous member for Murchison to tackle it. It was not one of those things that we liked. Many speakers that have handled the subject have done so with tongs; they have, so to speak, pulled their garments around them when the subject has been mentioned and allowed someone else to take the responsibility. However, the Government has brought down the Bill that is now before us and it provides the machinery that we think is required. I tell members opposite that there is just as great a responsibility in rejecting the Bill as there is in passing it. We cannot absolve ourselves from that responsibility. The Bill is capable of amendment. The whole world says there must be a Bill, but is it entirely the Government's responsibility? The Bill is the property of the House and the responsibility therefore is that of the House. If the Bill is rejected, it will not be the Government that has rejected it, nor will it have been rejected by the majority of our following either. It will be rejected by the Parliament of Western Australia that refuses the Government the opportunity to place legislation of this kind on the statute-book. I do not know that there is much courage required now, because it is the property of Parliament, and if members say it is going to be rejected to-day, to-morrow or one day next week, I remind those who smugly say "vote against it"—

Hon. C. G. Latham: We are not more smugly opposing the Bill than you are, smugly introducing it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have not smugly introduced it. The hon. member himself has done a lot of kite flying.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Who did? I meant every word that I said.

Mr. Rodoreda: Two and a half hours and you said nothing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am prepared to believe the hon. member meant every word he said and I am prepared also to believe that what he said was meaningless. He simply preached about the evils of gambling; but we know all about that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I told you what the Bill would do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There are other evils and the party to which I belong has been fighting them for years—economic evils and social evils. Even the leaders who preceded us in this State and the leaders in other States, too, did not tackle this question when it was not so prominent in the scheme of things as it is to-day. There are many questions of greater importance that have been dealt with, moral questions, too. So that to say that this is the only one and that all that has been done in the past counts for nothing, and that this becomes the test, is wrong. We are told even by decent people outside that those who vote against the Bill are to be opposed for that reason only. How many people in this world can afford to be condemned for one sin, even if this be a sin? If they say this is a sin and if they trim it up and decorate it as is done in picture shows until the sin becomes attractive, with a spare woman thrown in, then the young people will have a shot at it. That however is not my idea. In respect to gambling I declare myself as a man of some experience in whom the fires of youth have somewhat subsided, and to those about to bet, I would give this advice, "Don't." Not because it is wicked, but because it is foolish. The man who bets has not a chance and I would warn him against betting just as our fathers used to warn us against the person who manipulated the three card trick or any other form of gambling of that type carried on by experts for the sole purpose of taking down mugs. But we had better be careful even in regard to our preaching, and if there is anyone who wants to give a warning, let him take the young people along and show them how foolish it all is and how the odds are always against them. To prove how little people understand the question of odds, let me refer to what was said here yesterday by an hon. member, one who claims to have a special knowledge of figures, that the totalisator paid the average price. It does no-

thing of the sort. A horse may open in the betting ring at ten to one and it is backed down to two to one. If the bookmaker were asked what the average price of that horse was, he would say six to one, but the price before the race had started would be a third of that and that would really be the dividend paid by the totalisator, actually the price at which the horse was being called in the ring at the death knock. I even heard the member for Katanning say that all the evidence he wanted was here. I can tell him that the evidence that is here is not reliable. A lawyer usually makes up his mind on the evidence with, of course, a slight leaning towards precedent. On this occasion, however, no evidence is required, and the hon. member made up his mind on his observations. With regard to the Bill itself, I have already explained that we have done our job. Surely there is enough wisdom in the House that will produce a measure regarding which we can say, "That is the opinion of Parliament." If not, we must admit that this is one of the problems that we are not capable of solving. Even so, it would not be the only one. I do not say that this is a satisfactory solution of the problem, and neither can anyone here say that. We have endeavoured to be consistent. Having thought the matter out, we say, "Since it is the opinion of practically all people that a man may bet on a racecourse because he happens to be within easy reach of it, why should not other people"—as was pointed out by the member for Avon and one or two other members—"who live outside the metropolitan area and cannot attend race meetings each Saturday, also be privileged to bet?" Why should we deny that privilege to men living in far-distant places like Meekatharra and Wiluna? Members who take the opposite view are welcome to hold it. The duty of the Government was to introduce a measure that would mete out justice to all. It was not a case of introducing a popular measure. This Government has introduced a Bill which it believes will be just to all sections of the community. I am not considering bookmakers, starting-price and other kinds; they do not come into the picture at all. The Government is legislating for the whole community. I contend this Bill does mete out justice to those who can attend race meetings as well as to those who are unable to do so. I am surprised at members representing country districts ad-

vancing the view that half the population of Western Australia may bet because they can conveniently do so, but that the other half may not do so, except upon rare occasions—perhaps once a year when a country meeting is being held. If members examine the Bill, they will find it embodies all the elements of justice. That being the case, the Government is not ashamed of it, nor does it offer any apology for introducing the Bill. It is no easy matter to devise machinery either to regulate or abolish betting. The Government is comprised of nine members. I challenge any other nine members of the House to get together, devise similar legislation and bring it before the House. They would find out how many failures they would make. After all, our party is still in the majority. There are three schools of thought in the House, and we are in the majority and believe in regulating betting.

I now come to another point that possibly I should leave to my colleague. The statement has been made that the Bill will prove ineffective, because it will be impossible to stop bookmakers from betting during certain hours on race days within a given radius of the racecourse. I do not know whether I am the Minister for Police that has been referred to.

The Minister for Employment: You are not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have never known any member who has angled for the portfolio of Minister for Police. However, I have never refused a post, even if it was not a particularly nice one. During my term as Minister for Police, I was associated with Commissioner Connell, Commissioner Douglas and the present Commissioner. Here I may say that off-the-course betting has caused all those Commissioners much worry. It is by no means easy for a Commissioner and his staff to control off-the-course betting. Australians are a wonderfully law-abiding people in the main, but when they want to do a certain thing they will try their utmost to do it. So in the case of betting, men observe other men betting on the racecourse, and immediately think they also should be permitted to bet and, because they cannot afford to attend the races, they bet off the course. Do not members consider it difficult for the Commissioner of Police to convince a good, old, independent Australian mob that they must not have a bet? That is the job which the

Commissioner of Police has been given. So far, not one Commissioner of Police—and the Commissioners have been men of considerable strength of character and experience—has been able to devise a satisfactory solution of the problem. Not one Commissioner has controlled betting to the satisfaction of himself, the Minister, or any Government. Arm-chair critics should realise that the problem is an exceedingly difficult one. My experience has been that the existing law is not sufficient to control betting. The Government now provides this machinery. Although we are assured that the proprietor of a betting shop can be identified, an examination of police court reports will disclose that it is very rarely a man is brought before the court twice for this offence. Under this proposed legislation the bookmaker will be licensed. He therefore can be identified, and so can his shop. It will be useless for him to employ a dummy. Not only will the bookmaker be subject to a fine if he breaks the law, but after one or two offences he can be delicensed. I do not desire to stress that clause of the Bill, because members know what happens in other walks of life. The licensed victualler does not object to paying a fine, but he has a wholesome dread of losing his license. Now, a bookmaker earning a modest £500 a year will not do anything to imperil his license, because if he loses it his living is gone. That is the hold the Government will have over the bookmaker.

As to those who may be in control of the legislation, I shall leave that to the Minister. Personally, I am of opinion that men can be obtained of sufficient capacity and character to carry out the duties that will be required of them by the board. The registrar will be a Government servant. I am quite convinced that the proposed law can be administered. I am convinced that betting can be regulated. If the Bill is not passed we shall be in the same position as we are today. Not one member of the House is satisfied with the position that now prevails. Therefore, the Government, as a result of many years of experience, have brought forward this measure. My ex-chief says there has been procrastination, and wants to know why it was not brought down before. Others want to know why it was not brought down months ago. Members of our own party are inquiring why it was not brought down last year. Well, it is here now. This is

the earliest opportunity the House has had of discussing the measure. We give members the opportunity. My final word is that the Bill represents the best that the Government can put into it. It has been compiled as a result of experience, and the best information we could gain anywhere in Australia. I am positive that here we have the essence of what is necessary upon which to frame a Bill to regulate what is termed the betting practice or evil. Those who say they are opposed to gambling outright are inconsistent unless they also say it should not take place even on a racecourse. Once they agree that gambling may take place on a racecourse, they cannot consistently be opposed to gambling as gambling. That is the view of the Government. The intention is to regulate gambling on the courses—though that would be left to the clubs themselves—and off the courses. The only alternative is to endeavour altogether to suppress it. People cannot agree as to the extent of regulation that is necessary. This Bill represents the views of the Government. To those who object I would say, "You have your remedy." I presume we are prepared to stand by the Bill that this House produces.

The Premier: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We would have to do so. I think there would be no question of dropping the Bill.

The Premier: No.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Bill, therefore, belongs to the House. Instead of members suggesting that the responsibility belongs entirely to the Government, they must see that it is the responsibility of the Parliament of Western Australia. They cannot get away from that. I think perhaps members have asked for a pet about which they do not now care very much. They must either kill it, or knock it into shape, rear it and set it on the road. If the Government be challenged for bringing down the Bill, when it comes to logical reasoning I think we can show that we have done what we were asked to do. The time has arrived when the Government has to accept the responsibility for bringing down this measure. It is the best we could possibly produce. All the discussion that has arisen has not produced anything better. The responsibility now lies with the House. I am not going to be led astray by the cheering that took place.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are envious.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member cannot bluff me. I have been too long in the field to allow a man such as he to bluff me.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There is such a thing as courtesy.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not need to learn courtesy from the hon. member either. I have been in Parliament for many years and have never yet abused any member nor indulged in any personalities. When, however, my loyalty is questioned, I am obliged to rise to my feet.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said anything about that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member either said too much or not enough. I felt stirred at the time. It will take more than a twopenny half-penny Bill like this to divide the Labour movement, or to divide Collier and Willecock. We have given the member for Boulder more than cheers: we have given him a lifelong friendship.

Hon. P. Collier: And I have given a lot, too.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not deny that; we are not ungrateful.

Hon. P. Collier: I know.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This is neither the time nor the place in which to take up misunderstandings. A little talk over a pot would soon settle any differences that might arise. As a member of the Government I am not ashamed of the Bill. No other Government has produced a better one. The measure will do the job that we say it will do, and wholeheartedly I support it.

**MR. HEGNEY** (Middle Swan) [10.15]: I listened attentively to the speech of the Minister who introduced this Bill, and I also read his remarks in "Hansard." I was interested in the historic retrospect he gave of the gambling laws of England since the fourteenth century. He traced the development and activities of gambling down the centuries to the present time, and indicated that the frailty of human nature was the same to-day as it was in the days gone by. The Bill is brought down in the endeavour to restrict betting in and around the metropolitan area and throughout the State. The intention is to overcome the difficulties that exist and to limit the betting evil. From the speeches that have been made we can see there is one

point upon which all are agreed, namely, that starting-price betting and its ramifications have become a public scandal, and a canker upon the body politic. The Bill sets out to register starting-price betting shops. The business will then immediately become respectable, so that every member of the community may make his bets within these establishments.

As has been said by the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) gambling will immediately increase; this has been proved by the betting activities in South Australia. Because of the legalisation of the business there it has increased tenfold. The Bill is a contribution towards the solution of the trouble and a limitation of the operations of starting-price betting. In my opinion it will only perpetuate and extend betting in Western Australia, whereas the desire is to limit or restrict it. That is the reason why I cannot support the measure. It is admitted by all that betting has become an evil in the community. I do not hold the view that gambling is unlawful or sinful. But when it becomes a fetish amongst people who cannot afford to indulge in it, and they overstep the bounds and become enmeshed in the business, it is an evil and a scandal. Starting-price betting shops provide the means whereby betting facilities are available to the people, and it is time that Parliament endeavoured to curb their activities. The Bill, however, will not have that effect.

I have been a member of the Labour movement for many years, and know something about its history. It stands for the uplifting and the betterment of the worker. We have the benefit of the work of those who have preceded us, and we know something about the struggles of those who took part in the movement in the early days. All that occurred before I became a member of the Labour Party. The rotten conditions that existed in this country and in other parts of the world have, to a large extent, been remedied. Many years ago men and women worked in the coal mines of England under appalling conditions. Would it be suggested that we in Australia should not have agitated to get those women away from the coal mines in the Old Country? Naturally, no such argument would be advanced. We are told that the betting evil has persisted for so long that it is not possible to remedy it. Over a long period of

years efforts have been made to improve the standard of living, to break down rotten conditions of exploitation and sweating, and other conditions obnoxious to so many. To alleviate the position of the people generally has been the aim of the Labour movement. We are told that the Bill has been introduced because it is in the interests of the public. I am afraid the Government does not appreciate the psychology of the people of these days. It is out of touch, or no such measure would have been introduced. I come into contact with many workers and I know they do not desire this class of legislation. Many have become enmeshed in this wretched business, and they desire the suppression of starting-price betting. They want to wipe out the whole despicable business. Nevertheless, Parliament is asked to agree that starting-price betting in this State shall be legalised and thereby restricted! My view is that we should follow the Queensland legislation, where the Government has been eminently successful in suppressing the evil. The legislation was passed in 1936 and has been operating ever since. Critics of the Queensland legislation assert that though it provides for the suppression of starting-price betting, no difficulty is experienced in placing bets if desired. To some extent that may be quite true. Either the Minister's statement regarding the effects of the legislation in Queensland was wrong, or statements made to me in that respect were not correct. In the course of his second reading speech, the Minister said that the question had been put to him: What is your explanation of the tremendous increase in the attendances at race meetings in Queensland? In furnishing a reply to that inquiry the Minister said—

There are several reasons for that result. One is that the charges for admission to patrons of the flat have been reduced almost to nothing.

The Minister also made a point of the necessity of racecourses as being the principal factor in the increased attendances. In point of fact, racecourse attendances have increased in Queensland almost tenfold. People who formerly bet in shops now go to the racecourses and bet if they so desire. The Minister gave one explanation for the increased attendances, but on the other hand the critics of the Queensland Act, which

aimed at the suppression of starting-price betting shops, say that the evil has simply been driven underground. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) quoted the report of the Queensland Commissioner of Police for 1938, which indicated that illegal betting activities, particularly in the back country districts, have been practically wiped out, apart from the business that was transacted by telephone, which phase had been found difficult to deal with at present. I was charged by a previous Minister, when opposing certain legislation, with not understanding the Bill, and I was told that if I had given as much attention to it as I had to starting-price betting in Queensland, I would have been the gainer. When I was in Queensland in May last, I was for some time with three prominent members of the Labour Party, with one of whom, Mr. O'Keefe, I spent six days. I questioned those Labour men closely about the effects of the legislation, and I asked how the Labour Government had dealt with the problem. They told me that the Government had made the betting legislation a party issue. From my point of view, it is fortunate that the Government in this State has not made the Bill a party matter, otherwise I would be required to vote for it. However, it deals with a subject that is not embodied in the party platform. Moreover, the betting question was made an issue at the general elections in Queensland last year, and so the people have had an opportunity to express their views. The Labour Government showed that it had done the job effectively. I would be far better pleased to-night to be supporting the Government on a measure along the lines of the Queensland Act than in having to oppose the Bill now under discussion. We are told that a sub-committee of Cabinet considered this legislation for many months and had the advantage of a report furnished by Mr. Justice Wolff when he made investigations in the Eastern States. For my part, I am surprised at the result of Cabinet deliberations. I find that the Bill is very little different from the Queensland Act. I wish the Government had introduced the legislation at a much earlier stage of the session. However, it is now before members and I find I cannot support the measure. My principal ground for opposing it is that the betting evil has become a canker that is affecting the youth of the State. I am mostly concerned about our young men and I do not desire them to be

subject to the evil influences of starting-price betting. The evil has reached such a stage that in the State schools boys are making bets. I have been informed on most reliable authority that at the Perth Boys' School there are at least six boys who make bets. The same thing applies in Belmont. Such a state of things is scandalous. In my school days betting was never mentioned. Boys then never had any money to bet, but now juvenile betting is rampant. The question becomes one of morality when it affects the youth of the State. There are racecourses in my electorate, but I am not a gambling man. It has been stated that I would not risk much on a racecourse. That is perfectly true. I speak not at all from the racecourse point of view, but from that of guarding youth. I greatly regret that the Government has brought down a measure which will increase betting rather than restrict it. The Bill proposes that starting-price shops shall be opened and registered, and allowed to issue standing invitations to bet. As the member for Boulker (Hon. P. Collier) said, the effect must be to extend the evil. Thus the object we have in view will be frustrated. I object strongly to the Bill in its present form.

When visiting New South Wales in March last, I met many Labour members there. The evil we are now attempting to deal with was rampant in New South Wales then. During my stay there, four hotels were declared common gaming houses, and the chief of police threatened that if other hotels did not get gambling and its apparatus off their premises they too would be declared common gaming houses. The New South Wales Government was forced to try to cope with the evil, and it introduced a measure which has proved largely successful. However, the Act has not been in operation long enough to enable the final result to be judged. You, Mr. Speaker, were recently in New South Wales and there conferred with the Premier, the Attorney General, and the Minister controlling police, and you were informed by them that the difficulty was being met and that the evil had been curbed in New South Wales. This being a small community, it should be much easier for us to cope with the evil. Our Government should be on a much higher plane than that indicated by this Bill. Our Government should be in the vanguard, as a crusader going out to combat an evil. But to pass the Bill

would be to increase the evil. There is need for crusaders here to conquer the evil in our midst. That may not be possible with regard to the older section of the community, but an example can be set to youth.

The Premier: The Bill definitely stops betting by youths.

Mr. HEGNEY: The Bill will not stop that.

The Premier: Yes, it will. Boys are not now seen drinking in hotels, and after the Bill passes, boys will not be seen betting in shops.

Mr. HEGNEY: Boys are betting now promiscuously. It should have been stopped long ago. The enactment of the Bill will mean that more people will gamble. The Government should be a leader in the fight against the evil, a crusader on behalf of the well-being of the community. It has been said that if a referendum were taken, there would be a preponderating majority against the Government's proposal. In my own electorate I cannot find many people in favour of it. I believe that at least 70 per cent of the electors of Western Australia are against this Bill. The measure placates a certain number who desire to frequent betting shops, but many who now spend a few shillings weekly in those shops would welcome an Act prohibiting shop betting. The Minister who introduced the Bill made a statement which rather astonished me—

An attempt is made in the Bill to improve the existing social conditions.

The social conditions of whom? Certainly not of the people who will be invited to bet. Men with more knowledge of betting than I have state that in betting only one can win. I fail to see how the social condition of the people can be raised by the enactment of this Bill. We were told that only recently a Royal Commission reported on the South Australian Act. To-day's newspaper states that more than half of the Royal Commission's recommendations have been rejected by Parliament, though some have been endorsed. However, South Australia has no lotteries. The South Australian Premier has taken the matter in hand and is trying to get as much revenue as possible from the operation of the Act. He is in a different position from our Treasurer and the Treasurers of New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania. Those three States, like ours, have lotteries for charitable purposes, and therefore are not in such urgent need to exploit

their people by a betting law. South Australia is an impecunious State, and has been up against it for years. No doubt its Premier is reluctant to let slip an opportunity to get more revenue. The operation of lotteries Acts helps hospitals and other charitable institutions, for which the Treasury would otherwise have to provide.

Supporters of the Bill assert that its passage would eliminate problems associated with betting. The Criminal Code and the Police Act already deal with gambling, and it has been suggested that the Government ought to enforce those existing laws. Doubt exists as to whether such action would prove effectual, because the laws have not been put into force. If the Government admits that it cannot enforce the existing law, I do not see how it will be able to enforce the proposed Act. Provision is made for the betting shops to be closed between 1 p.m. and 5.15 p.m., but in view of the experience we have had, we know that bookmakers will carry on their activities during the prohibited hours. There is an obligation on the Government to enforce the law. All Governments undertake that responsibility. If this Government desired to enforce the law at present, it could do so. Governments use the police, and, in many places, the military, to assist in the enforcement of the law. If a democracy refuses to enforce the law, it is heading for dictatorship. Is a democratic Government going to admit that it cannot enforce the law? That appears to be the position at present. If this measure is rejected, that will be a direction to the Government to take action immediately against the evil existing in our midst. I have held these views since I came into the House, and the sentiments and opinions expressed by the member for Boulder coincide exactly with my own. I agree with him about the fundamental principles of gambling. I am sorry to have to disagree with the Government of which I am a supporter, but I am certainly opposed to this measure, which conflicts with the principles I hold.

**MR. McDONALD** (West Perth) [9.43]: I do not propose to traverse the various arguments that have been raised for and against the Bill. Those arguments have been stated very fully, and the case against the Bill has, to my mind, been presented with

great force. I am unable to accept the principle of legislative sanction of starting-price betting shops. By legalising these shops, we shall abandon the sentiment and tradition that have obtained in Australia for the last hundred years, except in the case of two States. If we consider the balance of experience and precedent, we must realise that three of the States of Australia—and the three most populous States—have decided against the legalisation of starting-price betting.

The Premier: Has Victoria made that decision?

Mr. McDONALD: Queensland and New South Wales have considered this aspect of the matter and, after exhaustive investigations, have decided to continue their policy of legislating against starting-price betting. The legalisation of starting-price betting is opposed by the New South Wales legislation very much in the same way as it is in Queensland. Victoria has uniformly, by legislation, refused to sanction any form of off-the-course betting. On the experience of the past and on the precedent of the majority of the Australian States, legislation to legalise starting-price betting should not, in the interests of the public, be adopted. It has been said that we can support the Bill on the precedents of South Australia and Tasmania. In Tasmania, there appears to be extremely little experience or data as to the effect of betting legislation compared with the experience of the past, but fortunately in the case of South Australia we have extremely full and authentic facts from the reports of three Royal Commissions. It seems to me that the experience of South Australia in legalising starting-price betting shops has been unfortunate, to say the least of it. I do not intend to quote extracts from the report of the South Australian Royal Commission of 1938 which have been referred to in this House, but the report of that Commission indicates that since 1933, when the conditions in that State were similar, from a legal point of view, to those existing here to-day, the volume of betting in South Australia, to use the words of the Commission, has increased to an alarming extent; that is, since the legalisation of starting-price betting shops. On reading the report of the Royal Commission, I am bound to feel that if the people who voted in Parliament in 1933 for the legalisation of starting-price betting shops could have known

what would be the outcome of the investigations of the Royal Commission of 1938, they would never have voted to depart from the existing legislation.

The recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1938 represent a retreat from the whole principle of the legalisation of starting-price betting, but, as has been pointed out here to-night, once legislation of this kind is passed, once vested interests are created, and once men owning property are entitled to legal rights under an Act of Parliament, it is extremely difficult for any legislature to deprive them of those rights and to interfere with that property. The Royal Commission retreated as far as it could from the principles of the legalising Act of 1933, without going to the extent of recommending the entire abolition of off-the-course legal betting. The present law is the declaration of a principle. It is a statement by the Legislature and the people of the State that they will not sanction and will not tolerate as lawful, betting, possibly on the racecourse but certainly off the racecourse. It is the statement of a moral conviction.

True, as the member for Bunbury said, if one took all the people who go to starting-price betting shops to-day—and there are many more than one would wish to see—they would represent but a small fraction of the people of the State. The great majority of our people have been brought up in the influence of the law and will not indulge in illicit betting, because they recognise the principle that is involved in the law. I say that the law, the principle, the conviction, and the ideal contained in our legislation to-day have been substantially observed. The law has been a real and effective guide to the majority of our people. As to the minority who are prepared to break the law and indulge in illicit gambling and betting, the law has not been fully enforced. I do not propose to refer to matters that have already been dealt with by previous speakers. I do say, however, that the practice of the police in going week by week to betting shops and arresting dummies who, as the police and everybody else know, have no more to do with the running of the betting shops than have members of this House, is a travesty on the administration of the law. It would be difficult to find a parallel in any other British country.



This Bill throws overboard the principle, the ideal, the moral conviction and the guide to conduct that have actuated the people of our State and our Legislature for 100 years. What we have said is anti-social we now propose to legalise. We are proposing to allow betting to be carried on under the sanction and with the approval of the law in every home, every office and every shop in the State. I agree with those who oppose the Bill that, by doing so, vastly greater numbers will indulge in betting. I have no fears about driving betting underground, as has been mentioned. The proper place for it is below ground. Its proper place is where people feel and know they are doing something illicit, something against the policy of Parliament and against the law. I infinitely prefer that betting should be driven underground rather than that it should be elevated in the streets and throughout the whole life of the community as something on which the Legislature has set its seal of approval and in which any person who has attained the age of 21 years is invited to participate as being something that Parliament has considered to be reasonably necessary to the life of the people.

I would go further than some members have. I appreciate that betting on racecourses stands in a rather different category. If the Legislature did not succeed in sanctioning betting on racecourses it meant to do so, because in 1898 it repealed the previous law which forbade betting on racecourses. I have referred to the Parliamentary debates of 1898, from which it is clear that the members of the then Parliament thought they were legalising betting conducted on the racecourses of the State, even if they left all betting outside the racecourse still under the ban of the law, as it is to-day. So that even if betting on the racecourse, on the strict interpretation of the law, may be illegal to-day, beyond doubt Parliament in 1898 meant to allow it to be carried on legally. It has been excused as being a feature of an industry of value to the State, in just the same way as the lotteries have been excused and retained year by year, because they add to the revenue for the hospitals and charities centres of the State. If betting on racecourses were considered to be a social menace, and anti-social in its consequences, I would not have the slightest

hesitation in abolishing it, as I would abolish it elsewhere.

I hope no more bookmakers will be registered to operate on racecourses. I would not interfere with those now plying their trade; but I would not replace them as they retire. All betting on racecourses should ultimately be on the totalisator, so that it might be said that no person is directly gaining a livelihood from gambling and that no person, for the purpose of his livelihood, is interested in the promotion of gambling.

I shall not go into details, but in the recent report of the Royal Commission in South Australia, it is stated the South Australian bookmakers admitted that in the last financial year they took from the public £540,000. That was their gross profit, but the Commission believed the actual sum was much in excess of that amount. If betting were conducted throughout Australia to that extent, the annual bill to the public of Australia would be £6,000,000, which is more than double the amount that Australia spent on her defence forces in the year 1936-37. On the same parity, but allowing for difference in population, the annual bill that would be paid to bookmakers for gambling in this State would amount to £400,000, or nearly double the amount that we raised by taxation for the maintenance of our hospitals. If we were to legalise starting-price betting throughout Australia, the sum of £6,000,000 which I have mentioned might well be increased by many more millions. The report of the Royal Commission in South Australia states that principle in this matter has to yield to expediency. That may be justified, but I prefer to stand by principle. No one expects that any law will abolish the crimes at which it is directed. Starting-price betting laws are no different from any others, but they would greatly minimise and restrict the operations of starting-price betting. The law as we now have it declares a principle. In order to maintain that principle it is a matter of continuous war by the community and by the police on behalf of the community. The war will continue so long as human nature remains unaltered. We should be prepared to accept the challenge of that warfare. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) said we should accept the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1938. He pointed to

the personnel of that Commission and to the weight it carried. I agree as to that, but would point out that the chairman of the 1938 Commission was also the chairman of the 1936 Commission, and that he recommended against any lotteries legislation, particularly such as that which we have in Western Australia.

To be consistent, we should repeal the Lotteries Control Act. I mention that to show that we might well be justified in using our own judgment in the matter without following implicitly the recommendations of the South Australian Commission. This Bill appears to me to yield to the enemy a part of the battle ground. If we purchase a truce by doing this, it will bring us no security. The forces that make for gambling will not rest on that limitation nor will the people over whom they now have control rest upon it. They will reach out to more and more people and over a larger area in the life of the State. I propose that we yield nothing of what we hold at present. We would be better advised to enforce our present legislation. I could sum up by saying that this House and the State would be well advised to retain the principle set out in the existing law. I agree with the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) that when this field is likely to become so much increased in size by the added feature of broadcasting, it will be the function of this Legislature to point the way to the people, to stick to its principles and convictions, and if Parliament thinks as I do, to maintain the ideals that are set out in our present law.

**MR. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [11.5]: It is not right that I should cast a silent vote on this Bill. I have taken a lot of trouble to inquire into betting laws in this and the other States. I am sorry the member for Beverley (Mr. Mann) is not in his seat, otherwise I might be tempted to tell him something of the hypocrisy he has practised. The night before last he attempted to show the House that I had changed my views on gambling since the first Lotteries Control Bill was introduced. That Bill was brought down by the party now sitting opposite, and the hon. member was a member of it. The party to which I belong was sitting in opposition. He endeavoured to make the House believe that I had changed my views, by saying that on that occasion I was opposed to any form of gambling and that on this

occasion I had reversed my opinion. I would like to read from "Hansard" what I did say:—

I am not opposed to a man having a bet provided he can afford to do so. In my opinion the gambling laws of Western Australia have been administered less effectively than laws in any other part of the world. Irrespective of what Government may have been in power, our gambling laws have been administered most rottenly. It has always been class administration. A man can go to the racecourse and bet as much as he likes. If a man takes up a position on the other side of the river and desires to have a shilling bet, the police become active, and he is put inside. Gambling is either right or wrong. If it is right, a man should be allowed to gamble on the racecourse, at pedestrian, cycling, or other athletic meetings, or wherever he so desires. Should a man desire to put a couple of shillings on himself at a pedestrian meeting, the arm of the law is stretched out. During the course of the debate someone interjected about betting at Mullewa. I was at that town on one occasion when a Sheffield handicap was run. A man who was endeavouring to make a book was immediately spoken to by a policeman and told if the book was seen again, he would be arrested.

On the racecourse the "sport of kings," as it is called, is privileged. A person may go there and bet illegally, for there is no doubt about betting there being illegal. I ask the Leader of the Opposition whether betting is a greater vice if conducted at one of the large athletic meetings in York than if it is conducted on the York racecourse? I see no difference between the two places. A man may bet to his heart's content on the York racecourse, but if he goes about two miles away to the athletic ground, where the largest meeting of the kind in Western Australia is now conducted, and bets on a cycling or pedestrian event, he is immediately arrested. Does the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) think there is any more harm in a man having a bet on the Subiaco Oval, where some pedestrian event is being run, than there would be if he made a bet on the Goodwood racecourse about a couple of miles away? I do not think she would say it was any worse on one place than it was on another. The laws of the country are rotten in the extreme. There is a law for one man but not for another. I have not deviated a fraction of an inch in my opinions since the first Lotteries Control measure was brought down.

**Hon. C. G. Latham**: Your arguments have always been the same.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Beverley did not have the courtesy to congratulate me on my support of his Government when the Lotteries Control Bill was under discussion. Only six members on the then Opposition side of the House voted with the Government in favour of that legislation, so I do not want him to tell me what my attitude was on that occasion.

Mr. Mann: You will have me shedding tears soon.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not want to indulge in cross firing with the hon. member. He should sit in his place and take what is coming to him.

Mr. Mann: I will take all you can give me.

Mr. SLEEMAN: His attitude was most hypocritical. I was one of six who supported the Lotteries Control Bill.

Mr. Mann: I opposed it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The least the member for Beverley can do is to give credit to those who went to the assistance of his party.

Hon. C. G. Latham: He was a renegade then, because he voted against our legislation.

Mr. SLEEMAN: He was always a renegade.

Mr. Mann: I voted against the Bill, so what are you talking about?

Mr. SLEEMAN: For a long time I have been endeavouring to find the most effective way of dealing with the gambling evil. I visited South Australia and Queensland and made inquiries in Victoria. My only desire is to do what I conceive to be best in the interests of the community. I take no notice of the threats against one side or the other. I understand that threats have been made against Opposition members who have been told that if they adopt a certain course they will be opposed at the next general election. I have also heard that members who have indicated their support of the Bill, have been told what will happen to them. I take no notice of threats of that description. A man in public life has to do what he thinks best in the interests of the people as a whole. If he does that, the electors will never let him down. I tell those people who have been indulging in threats that it is about time Parliament authorised an inquiry into such matters, including the threats against members and the flouting of the electoral laws. I support the second reading of the Bill,

although it may not represent all that I desire. I believe it will improve the present position. There is an unholy alliance at the moment and we see the racecourse people and the churches cheek by jowl.

Mr. Mann: Members have a perfect right to decide this issue for themselves without being lectured by you.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not think the hon. member has a mind of his own.

Mr. Thorn: Too right he has!

Mr. Mann: My mind is as good as yours.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The hon. member is party-ridden and will do anything he is told. If the Leader of the Opposition holds up his finger, the member for Beverley will obey.

Mr. Mann: What a statement to make!

Mr. SLEEMAN: When the division is taken, we shall see what takes place.

Mr. Mann: Yes, and where you will be.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not prepared to be told what I shall do or what I shall not do by outside interests. I believe the church people are sincere in their desire to do what is best for the country, just as I am sincere in my desire to achieve the same end. I am not prepared to concede that with regard to the racing clubs. I cannot view their attitude so generously. To my mind there is too much hypocrisy about the objection of people connected with racing clubs to people having their shilling bets. That reminds me that I read the following statement in the Press quite recently:—

#### Betting Bill Criticised.

Criticism of the Bill for the Bookmakers Act, 1938, was expressed in Perth to-day.

Racing Club Chairman Connolly was not satisfied that the Bill went far enough to protect clubs and the public morals; Associated Bookmakers' president Begley said he felt certain it would solve the betting problem.

I have nothing to say against Mr. Connolly personally, but I would ask him in what way he would expect to assist the morals of the people. Does he suggest that if we drive all the people to the Helena Vale racecourse, their morals will be improved? I think not. Naturally, I am not prepared to be so generous in my attitude to the racecourse people as I am to the churches. I believe the former know they are wrong when they make their assertions. I am prepared to believe the churches are out to seek reforms, but when we find racecourse people propounding such theories, I am not prepared to concede that they believe what they say. The claim has

been made that shop betting in Adelaide reacted to the detriment of racing clubs there. That is not in accordance with the information I have received.

Mr. Marshall: And your information is authentic.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I shall read some of the information to the House. What I shall quote from is not a pamphlet such as the Leader of the Opposition referred to. I received it because I wrote to Adelaide for the latest information. The report I have contains the views of the executive of the Country Racing Clubs Association of South Australia, which comprises 47 clubs. Therein I find the association indicates that it views with alarm the recommendations of the South Australian Royal Commission and states—

The members of the executive of the Country Racing Clubs of South Australia (representing 47 racing clubs) view with alarm the report and recommendations of the Royal Commission on Betting Laws and Practice. We are definitely of the opinion that if Parliament approves of the recommendations of the Commission, particularly in regard to the closing of registered betting premises at 1.30 p.m. on race days and the restriction of service and broadcasting facilities, it will sound the death knell of country racing clubs.

How do the views of the racing clubs in this State fit in with that statement? The South Australian organisation urges that if the betting shops are allowed to continue it will be to the advantage of the country racing clubs. Here is another portion of the statement—

Country race clubs are the very lifeblood of the racing industry of South Australia. Without them it would be impossible for the metropolitan clubs, owners and trainers to carry on successfully.

Turning now to the last page of the report we find this—

Finally, this year 95 per cent. of all the income tax assessments of the State were paid before the end of the financial year. This wonderful achievement on the part of the public is striking evidence of the financial stability of the State, and it constitutes a record of which we should be justly proud. It gives the lie direct to those who cast aspersions upon respected members of Parliament when they say that the legislation passed to control and supervise betting has created a state of affairs which is deplorable.

There we have the evidence of the representatives of the Country Racing Club's executive to the effect that if the betting shops in South Australia are closed at 1.30 p.m.

the death knell of racing in that State will be sounded.

Mr. Marshall: And the clubs have improved materially under the present system and have increased the prize money.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The country clubs in South Australia hold that view and another organisation interested is the Licensed Victuallers' Association. In the bad old days of illegal betting, most of it was done on the hotel premises. Now we have a protest from the licensed victuallers to the closing down of betting shops at 1.30 p.m. because they fear that illegal betting will break out again in the hotels as in the bad old days. The licensed victuallers do not want that. They do not desire to revert to the time when they found it so difficult to know when a bet had taken place. They did not know what was going on, yet if the police entered the premises and found that starting price betting was being indulged in, they not only arrested the starting-price bookmaker but charged the licensee of the hotel with having allowed his premises to be used for betting purposes. By that means the licensed victuallers incurred heavy fines. The report shows that the licensed victuallers ask that the betting shops should not be closed. They do not want that business in the hotels and do not want to revert to the bad old illegal betting days. So much for the racing clubs and the licensed victuallers. Some people say that if a measure will benefit country racing clubs, it will not benefit metropolitan clubs. When in Adelaide I waited on a number of racing men. The secretary of the South Australian Jockey Club was bitterly opposed to shop betting, but the secretaries of other clubs were strongly in favour of it. Mr. S. J. Pullman, the secretary of the Port Adelaide Racing Club, said, "Look, Sleeman, we have never been better off in our lives. Since shop betting has started, we have installed a new electric totalisator, have increased our stakes, have improved our course, and still have a good balance." The same things were said by the Port Augusta and Murray Bridge clubs. When the controversy re-opened here, I thought I would find out whether things were still the same as they had been at the time of my visit to Adelaide. Accordingly I wrote to the three clubs, and received answers from the Port Adelaide and Port Augusta clubs, though not from the Murray Bridge club. Mr. Sulli-

van, the secretary of the Port Adelaide club, wrote to me as follows:—

Adelaide, 26th October, 1938. Dear Sir,—Pardon my delay in answering your enquiry, we are in the throes of the Commission on betting and it has taken up a lot of time.

As to how things are in this State I think the following "authentic" figures will answer that—

| Year.         | Days. | Stakes. | Profit.<br>£ |
|---------------|-------|---------|--------------|
| 1932-33 .. .. | 7     | 6,931   | 714          |
| 1933-34 .. .. | 7     | 8,025   | 3,053        |
| 1934-35 .. .. | 9     | 9,440   | 1,794        |
| 1935-36 .. .. | 9     | 11,025  | 3,478        |
| 1936-37 .. .. | 9     | 12,147  | 2,201        |
| 1937-38 .. .. | 9     | 12,829  | 2,188        |

(Excluding depreciation.)

Stake money is the true indication of a club's finances. In addition maintenance has been given every attention.

Attendances.—Last year ending 31st July, 1938, was a record for seven years, exceeding the previous year by 3,282.

Bookmakers were licensed in December, 1933, and in premises during the following months.

Stakes for the South Australian metropolitan area—

|               |         |
|---------------|---------|
| 1932-33 .. .. | £39,489 |
| 1937-38 .. .. | £59,662 |

(excluding Oakbank, which was abandoned and whose stakes would have been £4,025).

I am forwarding under separate cover some literature which may be useful.—Yours faithfully, J. Sullivan, Secretary.

From Mr. E. M. Hutton, the secretary of the Port Augusta club, I received this reply—

Port Augusta, 23rd September, 1938. Dear Sir,—Replying to your letter of the 14th inst., we enclose copy of our last balance sheet for 1937, which will show you the revenue we obtained from s.p. betting.

This year we increased our stakes to £1,150 for two days and paid £120 freight rebates and still showed a good profit.

Trusting this is the information required,—Yours faithfully, Port Augusta Racing Club, Limited; E. M. Hutton, Secretary, per M. D. Hutton.

I believe that you, Mr. Speaker, as a breeder and owner of horses will agree with me that the racing clubs are not conducting the business as they should. That is one of my complaints against the Bill. The measure should have been more comprehensive, dealing with every phase of racing. At this stage, however, it is too late to introduce such a Bill. I notice that you, Sir, speaking at a social gathering of

the Bassendean Bowling Club, expressed yourself as follows:—

I love to see a racehorse and occasionally to back one. In fact, I own one and enjoy seeing it race, because I bred it. But it gives me the creeps to go on to a racecourse, because the sport to-day is not clean, not healthy.

I agree with those sentiments, Mr. Speaker. The sport to-day is neither clean nor healthy. You will remember that not long ago the stable connections of a horse named "Hybla" were up before the stewards on a charge that the horse was not trying to win. The trainer and the jockey were disqualified. For some unknown reason the owner, Mr. Lee Steere, was held to be not blameable at all, because he was not on the course. Did you, Mr. Speaker, ever hear such a ridiculous argument? Take yourself as the owner of "Wembley." Fancy the horse being sent to the racecourse and you sitting at home. Suppose something happened, would you not be as blameworthy as the trainer and jockey? But that is not the way racing clubs view things. A small owner would be disqualified in such circumstances, but the big owner is not, though the trainer and the jockey are. Jockey and trainer appealed, and the trainer was let off but the jockey had to take the lot. A few weeks ago on another course a horse was rubbed out for six months on a charge of not having tried to win. The stewards, after hearing the evidence, said it did not try to win; and so they disqualified it. On the appeal, the committee evidently did not return a finding of not guilty; otherwise they would have lifted the disqualification. However, they said to the trainer, "Although you are guilty of not trying to win the race, we will reduce the term of your disqualification from six months to three months." If the man was guilty, the term of disqualification should have been increased from six to twelve months. Not trying to win is one of the worst offences that can be committed on a racecourse. On the other hand, if the trainer was found not guilty the disqualification should have been lifted.

Mr. Marshall: And in view of such happenings people wonder why Western Australians favour Eastern States races!

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) recommends people to go out to the races and put their good money on the totalisator. But the clubs

are getting away with thousands of pounds annually through the fractions. A man who wins on the racecourse wins little enough.

Mr. Styants: The fractions amount to £19,000 annually.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There may be 500 tickets on a race, and the winner might pay 10s. 11d., 11s. 11d., or 12s. 11d.; but the club gives the bettor only the even shillings and keeps the 11d. That is permitted only in Western Australia. Eastern States clubs keep merely the fractions under 6d.

I have shown that in one case the horse was found to be not trying and the trainer and the jockey, as well as the horse, were sent out for a spell. Then, when a bettor puts on his good money and is lucky enough to strike a winner, the club will keep the fractions that rightly belong to the bettor. A good deal has been said about what is done in South Australia and Queensland. I am in a position to say that I have seen what is done in those States. In my opinion the system in operation in South Australia is a vast improvement on that existing in this State. The system here needs a clean-up. I admit to my sorrow that there are bookmakers in Western Australia who allow juveniles to bet with them. But there are not very many. Unofficially I know a number of starting-price bookmakers. Officially I have never been to their shops. I go to the racecourse and have my bet; I do not profess to be a saint. I do not, however, go to the betting shops, but I know that there are some bookmakers who allow juveniles to bet. In South Australia juveniles are not permitted to enter the shops.

The question has been asked as to how the Act will be policed. In South Australia the bookmakers themselves police the Act because they have everything to lose and nothing to gain by not doing so. I said to some of them, "We have heard a lot in Western Australia about juveniles betting in these shops." They said, "It would not pay us to allow them to do so. If an inspector were to find juveniles in our shops we would lose our licenses." Drunks are not allowed on the premises. When I arrived in Adelaide I was asked whether I intended to remain for the Saturday. The Commissioner said, "We will place a car at your disposal; you can go where you like, see what you like and say what you like." That day I visited a shop where a bookmaker was ejecting a

drunk. He said, "We do not want drunks. We are glad to get rid of them. If an inspector were to come in and find a drunk on the premises, we would lose our license." So the Act in South Australia does not require much policing. With his license at stake, the bookmaker looks after the job. Before I left Perth I heard a lot about boys being in starting-price shops in Adelaide but I saw nothing of that. The member for Subiaco said she had a photograph of children outside one of the shops. I have never seen any; I do not say that the member for Subiaco does not believe the photo is genuine, but I am not prepared to admit that it is without knowing more about it. The brand of the betting shop is nowhere visible on the photograph. Over the betting shops in South Australia is the sign, "B.C.B.," which stands for Betting Control Board. If the people that took the photo did so in order to strengthen their case against legalised betting, they were very short-sighted in not including that sign in the picture.

I was surprised to see the manner in which the starting-price shops were conducted. I have no feeling in the matter of starting-price betting. I went there with an open mind. I have children of my own, and I do not think they have ever had a starting-price bet. I hope not, because it is a mug's game. I went to South Australia with an open mind to see things for myself. During the whole time I was there I never heard a bad word used in any of those betting shops. I cannot say the same for the racecourses. I defy anyone to go to a racecourse in Western Australia or anywhere in Australia without hearing swear words during the day. That has been my experience. I never heard a swear word in any of the betting shops. They went to work in a businesslike way. A quarter of an hour before a race the prices were called out, and five minutes before the race the latest price from the course was announced. The people in the shops were so quiet that one might have thought he was in a church. There was no fuss; no excitement. I am not here to put up a tale about the place. I said to the inspector, "I never thought such quietness could prevail in a betting shop." Those are the reasons for my giving support to the Bill. If the South Australian system were in operation here it would be a vast improvement on the existing system.

The member for Boulder said there was no illegal betting in Queensland. When I was there the new system had been in operation for only a few weeks. My escorts said: "Come with me, keep your eyes and ears open." In the first pub. we visited, there were four bookmakers in the bar. The man with us went to one and wanted to put 10s. on a Melbourne race. The man said, "We are not betting here." Then he had a second thought. He said, "Are you with the crowd over there?" The man replied, "Yes," upon which the bookmaker said, "Then you are set." And a bet of 10s. was made. After the bet had been made a big lump of a chap came in the door and we were told, "This is the bookmaker coming in. He will never be caught. These others are wages men, working for him. He will not be on the premises again to-day. This afternoon he will be on the course." We went to another hotel and I saw more bookmakers, two in one room and one in another. In another hotel I did not see a bookmaker, but there was a "nitkeeper" at the door. I was told, "When you are going in, look on the floor and you will see a brass knob." That knob was the size of a man's finger nail and I was told that immediately the police came within sight the "nitkeeper" pressed the knob and bells were rung inside.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Don't give away those secrets.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The ringing of the bells heralded the approach of the police. It is no use telling me there is no betting in Queensland. The new system had been in operation only three or four weeks when I arrived. I think that by now they must have got back to the bad old days of South Australia. Then I visited Victoria, the State in which I was born, but which I had to leave for my own good, having been starved out. Victoria is a place where there are good-living people and where there is supposed to be no betting. That was the place about which the member for Boulder spoke. He said there was no betting in Melbourne outside the course. But there is more betting done in one day in Melbourne than is carried on in a month elsewhere, with the exception of Sydney, of which I do not know anything. Every shop, warehouse, factory and Government office in Melbourne, has its own bookmaker, and in some of the large places there is a moneylender as well. I

have a brother-in-law working in a big warehouse. He said to me, "If we have no money on the Wednesday, we can borrow up to a tenner and pay it back on the Saturday. I can get the money from the moneylender and pay it to the bookmaker without leaving the job."

The Minister for Agriculture: That is service for you!

Mr. SLEEMAN: In a place in which I stayed a bookmaker called twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, like a butcher going for his order for a pound of chops. He said, "What do you want to-day, Mrs.?" She said, "Two shillings on this, 2s. on that, and up the lot on something else." I do not hesitate to say that of all the States of Australia Victoria is the worst in this respect. Yet Melbourne is instanced as a place which has no betting shops at all. I hope that people will not continue to say there is no starting-price betting in Victoria, and that Queensland has stamped it out, and that the shops in South Australia are so immoral that people should not be allowed to frequent them. I asked business men, police and other people about the South Australian shops, and with very few exceptions they told me they would not go back to the bad old days. Policemen told me they would resign from the force if the old system were re-introduced and that they would never again go through the experience they had previously had. An inspector said he had seen men on the footpath trying to chew up their betting tickets in order to avoid arrest. At a later stage men used to carry out their transactions by means of conversation lollies of the kind that the member for Williams-Narrogin used to eat when he was going to Sunday School as a boy. They wrote their betting transactions on those conversation lollies. Smith would have a conversation lolly, Jones would have one, and so on. Immediately on the approach of the police, the men would put the lollies into their mouths and swallow them.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That might be dangerous, because the bookmaker might not honour the bet.

Mr. SLEEMAN: One thing I learned was that there were no men more honourable than the bookmakers. Their word was their bond. Although the men swallowed the evidence of the bet, they never lost if the bet was successful. The refusal of a

bookmaker to pay one of the punters would have put him out of business. A police inspector took me to one place and said, "Notice that window three storeys up. That was one of the hardest places we had to tackle. A man on the bottom floor telephoned to a man in the lavatory on the third floor. The lavatory had barbed wire entanglements around it." On an alarm being given to the man upstairs of the approach of the police, he simply leant out of the window and dropped his books into the lane below where they were caught by a companion. The inspector told me that this had gone on for three years, until one day the man upstairs dropped his books into the hands of a policeman in the lane. It was impossible to stop the betting. It was carried on miles out of Adelaide by telephone. Betting cannot be stopped. As I have said, the shops can be closed, but starting-price betting will still go on. The Lord Bishop of Adelaide, I believe, said that prohibition only made matters worse. In my opinion, gambling is not immoral; it may be a social crime and a stupid pastime. The man who thinks he can make money by betting on or off the course is deluding himself. He is bound to fail.

Mr. Coverley: Cocktails are worse.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Kimberley mentions cocktails. My experience is that when a working man or a working woman finds some amusement that involves the expenditure of 6d. or 1s., a hue and cry is raised against it. No hue and cry is raised against cocktail parties given by the wealthier people. Should a working woman give a cocktail party, however, she would be told it was not a poor woman's sport, but should be reserved for the rich. If I considered betting to be immoral, I would vote against the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Betting is stupid and expensive.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Regarding the talk of abolishing betting, you, Mr. Speaker, will no doubt recall better than I, that in 1908 or 1909 some well-meaning religious people in Perth thought they would better the community by stopping races. Not being able to get it done by Act of Parliament, they decided to achieve their object by purchasing a morning newspaper and refusing to publish all sporting news. They actually did that. I remember well the cry that

went up from the "sports" when the sporting pages were cut out. Those people were acting with the best of intentions in trying to prevent racing, but in less than six months the paper shut down. If there is a public demand for something, no matter what the cost the public will have it. Betting cannot be abolished. We may be able to minimise it; we may close the betting shops, but to do so would be unwise. It is better to regulate betting.

Last evening some members mentioned the South Australian Royal Commission's terms of reference. Members even said that the commission could not have brought in findings other than those they arrived at, because of the terms of reference. I was aware I would not be believed unless I got the information direct from the Premier of South Australia. I therefore wired him on the subject and am now in receipt of the following telegram in reply:—

Terms of reference commission betting laws and practice as follows:—(1) Every phase of existing betting laws in South Australia and other Australian States and practice thereunder relating to betting, gambling and cognate matters; (2) What changes if any in the South Australian laws are desirable and practicable. Stop. This appears to cover your question. Playford, Premier.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You had that information in the first page of the report.

Mr. SLEEMAN: But the Leader of the Opposition would not believe me unless I got it from the Premier of South Australia. He inferred the other night that the members of the commission could not do otherwise than find as they did.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not I. Do not blame me. Do you want me to carry all the sins of the members of the Opposition?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The hon. member is big enough to carry them.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I would like to carry you out.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Betting Commission in South Australia made certain recommendations. By this morning's paper we find that the Government of South Australia, which was returned to put down betting, and the Country Party were defeated, but not on the question of betting control. We were told that some Independents were elected because of their opposition to betting control. Now we find those same Independents have decided that the betting shops must con-



tinue, irrespective of the recommendations of the commission.

Hon. C. G. Latham interjected.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Leader of the Opposition will not entice me off the track in that way. He knows very well the reason for the defeat of his colleagues in South Australia. The Independents were elected on the question of the five-year term for the Government. That was the issue on which the Government was defeated and 15 Independents elected. We find that 20 of the 38 recommendations of the commission were defeated and that it has been decided to allow the shops to remain open as usual.

I believe racing clubs should have some attention paid to them. Cheaper travelling facilities to courses should be provided and the entrance charge reduced. To allow boys and girls to enter betting shops is, in my opinion, wrong. Yet we find they are not prohibited from entering racecourses. As a matter of fact, at headquarters a sign is exhibited as follows: Gentlemen, so much; Ladies, so much; Children—. I have seen small children on the racecourse make a tarpaulin muster to get sufficient money to buy a ticket on the tote.

Hon. N. Keenan: Where do their mothers go?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The mothers go to the course. The hon. member would object to a woman going to a betting shop with her child. I also would object. When parents go to a racecourse they should leave their children to be looked after at home.

Hon. N. Keenan: By whom?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not under cross-examination. My wife and I have five children, and we could always get someone to look after them when we went to the races. We experienced no difficulty about that. I know the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) will assist me in seeing that race clubs are not permitted any longer to cater for children. I believe some children attend betting shops, and that some race clubs cater for children. I have on two courses seen children making a tarpaulin muster so that they might raise enough money with which to buy a tote ticket. No assistance should be given from the betting tax to proprietary clubs. Actually, such clubs should not be allowed to exist. I do not believe in proprietary racing, which should be abolished. In some parts of the world their abolition has been recommended. When the Bill is

in Committee I will make an attempt to deal with proprietary clubs.

Mr. Cornell has been held up as an example by some church people for the fearless manner in which he has attacked this subject. I have here a cutting from the "West Australian" of the 27th November, 1936. Mr. Cornell had just returned from Adelaide and had made certain inquiries there. The cutting is as follows:—

While in Adelaide Mr. Cornell renewed acquaintance with the South Australian Commissioner of Police (Brig.-Gen. R. Leane). Mr. Cornell said yesterday that when the Commissioner was asked to comment on South Australian betting control, he replied, "For over 13 years I unsuccessfully made use of all the art and strategy possessed by the South Australian police force to suppress street and shop betting. Under the present law, the police are able, not only to control this betting, but to hold it in check. I consider that the introduction of our betting laws has brought about one of South Australia's greatest social reforms, especially throughout the Adelaide metropolitan district."

Brig.-Gen. Leane's early goldfields experience and Great War experience had well equipped him to express an opinion on what was undoubtedly Australia's greatest diversion, said Mr. Cornell. The Commissioner's slogan in regard to betting was "control and regulation, not suppression." He (Mr. Cornell) had spoken to a member of the South Australian Betting Control Board, bookmakers, racing officials and other citizens, and all agreed with the Commissioner's views. A feature of the South Australian Act that stood out was that it was a serious offence for any bookmaker to accept a bet from any person under the age of 21 years.

Mr. Cornell led the people to believe that he was in favour of the South Australian system, but he is now applauded for his opposition to the very thing he was then in favour of.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: It is possible for people to reform.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Quite a lot of people reform. I wish to refer to a statement made by an officer of the Salvation Army. I was sorry he made it, as his organisation is one for which I have a lot of time. I generally put something in the box when it comes round. The Salvation Army does good work and uses well the money it receives. This officer said the "Army" did not agree with lotteries and would take no money from the Commission for any of its social work. He led the people to believe he would take no money that came from gambling. Anyone who attends a race meeting or trotting meet-

ing will always find a Salvation Army officer there. Those officers are very shrewd. They get hold of a man when he is going in, in case he has nothing when he comes out, and they are waiting for him at the gate on his way out in case he has had a win. I am sorry the "Army" tried to make people believe it did not take money from gambling. I have the greatest admiration for the organisation, but it is not correct for any officer to say that it does not take money from gambling.

The member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) said she had been in Tattersall's Club, Adelaide, and was told that women were not admitted. She asked the reason why women were not admitted and was told that the lights might go out. That is not the only place where people will not bet with women. Legally women have as much right to go in as has anyone else. If a woman wishes to have a bet, she is as much entitled to bet as is a man.

Mr. Marshall: They will have their bets.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Not with some South Australian bookmakers. Tattersall's Club will not bet with women. I said to a bookmaker there, "Why will you not bet with women?" He said, "We would rather have their room than their company, because we do not want their business. If we do not bet with them they will not come to the place. We do not want either women or children." A woman has just as much right to bet in Adelaide as a man has.

Mr. Needham: And just as much chance of winning as a man has.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Subiaco said that garages had been converted into betting shops. The inspector with whom I went round the city said, "I suppose you have heard about the stable that is used as a betting shop." I replied that I had heard of it and he said, "Would you like to see it?" We pulled up outside a place and the inspector said, "This is the place." Thousands of people in this State would like to have it as a home. It was a stable at one time, but when the bookmakers took possession of it they did it up, cleaned it, and made it look quite natty. I said, "This is the place they talk of as a stable?" He replied that it was, and I said, "Thousands of people would like to live there if that was a stable."

I did not see any books, or afternoon tea served in the betting shops. I travelled from

Adelaide to Semaphore and saw no such thing. Neither did I see more than a few women in any betting shop in West Adelaide, which I believe is the poorest part of the area. In one shop I saw eight women who seemed to be rather poorly clad. They were black, white and brindle in colour. In other places I saw three or four women, and in another place I saw no women. I have done my best to investigate these problems and endeavoured to find some better way to deal with them. I never go near a betting shop myself and have no feeling in the matter. As the Commissioner in Adelaide said, "If you try to suppress betting, you will set up something worse in its place." I am not enamoured of the Bill before us, but when it reaches the Committee stage I will do what I can to make it a measure that will be as well suited to the conditions as it is possible to make it.

**HON. N. KEENAN** (Nedlands) [11.58]:

As I intend to vote against the Bill I desire to give my reasons for so doing. A large proportion of the debate has consisted of allegations and denials. The allegations have often been foreign to the subject matter of the Bill as, for instance, the reference of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) to the "Hybla" case. Apparently the hon. member wants us to accept his version of the affair, and believe that it is relevant to the Bill. As the matter has been mentioned, let me tell the House that it would be an extraordinary proposition if the owner of a racehorse that was not under his control but which had been left in the hands of a trainer, were to be held liable.

Mr. Sleeman: That is an easy way out.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is not. It would be impossible for any other view to prevail.

Mr. Tonkin: All the owner would have to do would be to keep out of the way.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the owner has participated in a swindle, then naturally he must be held responsible, and pay the penalty. But to make such suggestions against Mr. Lee Steere, who has been one of the most outstanding supporters of clean racing in this State, simply revolts me. There is nothing that anyone could take exception to in the "Hybla" case, except maybe that the trainer was somewhat fortunate in securing a remission of his sentence, whereas the jockey was not.

Mr. Tonkin: What about the injunction that was secured to allow the horse to race before the inquiry was completed?

Hon. N. KEENAN: Injunction?

Mr. Tonkin: Yes; an interlocutory injunction that enabled the horse to be raced before the inquiry was held.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Perhaps the hon. member is referring to the racing rules. There was no injunction. One of the Australian racing rules is that if there is an appeal, a horse may be allowed to race pending the appeal being decided.

Mr. Tonkin: Why was not the jockey accorded the same privilege, and allowed to ride?

Hon. N. KEENAN: Perhaps he was, in the meantime.

Mr. Tonkin: He was not.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I agree that the trainer was fortunate, and the jockey was unfortunate. I have intervened in the debate because of the aspirations attempted to be made on Mr. Lee Steere, who is one of the cleanest sportsmen Western Australia has ever known, and has done a lot to promote clean racing in this State. Although the debate has proceeded largely on allegations and attacks very foreign to the Bill, there is one matter about which, as the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) said, there can be no question, and that is that starting-price betting is an absolute curse to the community. One has to ask oneself whether the Bill will cure the evil? The member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) has persuaded himself that it will.

Mr. Sleeman: I am not likely to persuade you.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Certainly the hon. member will not. The only argument he used to persuade himself was the itinerary he made through the Eastern States when he was entertained by some people who, no doubt, wished him to see the brightest side of life in Adelaide. They certainly would not desire him to see the objectionable side of it. So it was on those grounds that the member for Fremantle has been prepared to give his support to the Bill. I prefer to depend upon commonsense. The Bill will make legal what was illegal. It is beyond question that to-day a large number of persons refrain from going into these illegal shops because they will not commit a breach of the law. Those who frequent betting shops illegally will continue to frequent

them, as the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) pointed out, but that army will be augmented many times over by the other section of people who will go to those shops as soon as they are clothed with legality.

Mr. Raphael: Do not you think we should clean up the conditions as they exist to-day?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not want to bother about cleaning up any conditions, but if I were to do so I might clean up more than the hon. member would desire. I have previously asked the House to bear with me while I endeavour to point out the ground more particularly upon which I shall vote against the Bill. That particular reason is that I am satisfied that if the Bill becomes law, the number of persons who will frequent betting houses will be multiplied many fold. Those that frequent the illegal shops now will still do so, but a vastly greater number will go there when the premises are legalised. I propose to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

#### THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne—in reply) [12.5]: I find I am the 26th speaker on the Bill, which has probably been the most debated in recent years. I shall not delay the House for more than an hour or two in reviewing the opinions expressed by members who wandered, as the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) suggested, through various processes of reasoning to the attacking of one principle or another. For my part, I am not at all disappointed in regard to the opinions expressed against the attitude of the Government, or against the opinions to which I gave utterance in moving the second reading, for those opinions still stand uncontradicted, and little adverse comment was directed against them. I can only conclude that after an examination of my remarks, even though some members did not pretend to listen to them, those remarks were not found wanting in principle. In presenting the Bill to the House, I made a plea for tolerance. The comparative freedom of the debate from acrimony certainly affords me some satisfaction, although it dealt with a subject that could have been handled vigorously and unpleasantly. Instead of that, the matter has been debated quite differently.

Member: With one exception.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Perhaps with more than one exception. During the course of the debate, some members

endeavoured to introduce philosophical considerations, even philosophy of their own making. I am prompted to comment on the philosophical side. We have heard of "Philos." The Greek word "Philos" has been availed of by the gentleman who makes some observations from the Press gallery. He is that part of "Philos" which means "loving." I am glad that the loving wisdom of philosophy has not only actuated most of the speakers who have participated in the debate, and I hope, in spite of any bias or fixed opinions, that, because it has been clearly enunciated that no member was actuated by party considerations or party spleen, that same philosophy will prevail. In a review of the speeches that have been delivered, it is necessary firstly to ascertain whether the facts are dependable, then to consider the basis upon which to analyse them, and finally to arrive at a conclusion following on that analysis. It is necessary to hold the balance between impulse and action. Whether we are dealing with bad habits or vices of individuals or communities, no matter whether we are considering gambling, smoking—which in my view, as perhaps a person intolerant of smoking, is a very bad habit—or drunkenness, we must calmly and unemotionally deal with those things. When they become matters for repression—as these and many other habits as well have become, whether they are personal or national habits—but prove irrepressible, has time not proved that some form of legislation is necessary for the repression and suppression of such habits? Whilst it is true also that much depends on a man's intentions in relation to any act he does, so it is with Parliament. On this occasion, it seems to me, my reply could have been extremely hostile, and the debate could have engendered a feeling which would have made necessary not only a forceful speech in reply, but a warlike one. Therefore it is the intention of the Government and the intention of Parliament that we should review. It was indeed a pleasure to me to find that the House was so divided on the subject that at least two members of Opposition parties were sufficiently courageous to state that no matter what was the outcome of the introduction of the Bill, certainly no stigma attached to the Government for its introduction, in view of the Government's intention to do what in its view was the right thing to do. I suggest to hon. members that during the course of

this debate it could have been deduced that the gambling and liquor laws are the only laws that are evaded, or the only laws that are daily violated. What a ridiculous assumption to place before the community! Thousands of laws are redundant, and hundreds of laws passed by this Parliament are violated daily, and many of them are forgotten. But it is a fact that the laws which control in any way the bad habits of mankind are the laws that have the searchlight put upon them, the laws for which apparently all Governments stand condemned in point of not having been able to enforce them.

Let us be fair in the matter. The Leader of the Opposition made reference to what his Government could do and could not do. If we are to review the bad habits of mankind and to provide legislation to control or repress them, we must bear in mind that there are many moral as well as civil laws which are disregarded by many of our citizens. Can we say that the most important laws on earth, the marriage laws, are treated as seriously as they might be? Can we say that those laws are not violated, and that many of those who violate them do not boast of their conquest? Therefore, when such is undoubtedly the case, I submit that tolerance one with the other of all fixed opinions on such matters is the only means of coping with them successfully and dealing with them impartially. One is responsible to oneself for the moral life that one leads. But it is a heavy responsibility, because so many others are involved. After all, if we assume that gambling is immoral—I have not submitted that—then it is a matter for a man's own decision. Certainly it is immoral if it adversely affects any of his fellow-creatures.

That is my view and, because others do not share that view, I ask now, as I asked in the beginning of my introductory speech, for their tolerance of and also for their respect for my views. I cannot agree with those who are able to condone their own bad habits and see only in other people habits which are dreadful. In point of fact, some people who have very bad habits, habits obnoxious to other people, habits which may be just as sinful as gambling, are the most intolerant of all—the most intolerant of any other person's habits or vices. That is unfortunate. The fact has been amply demonstrated in this Chamber that those with the

most marked bad habits of their own are the most intolerant of and unjust towards other people's weaknesses. So that in all such matters it is highly necessary to consider the subject in a spirit of compromise.

The Leader of the Opposition, in his review of conditions as they existed prior to the advent of this Government, admitted that he had had many problems during the years 1931, 1932 and 1933. But they were very similar to the present problems of this Government. I think the Leader of the Opposition is generous enough to concede that. I believe he will also admit that our intentions are as earnest as his in this connection. He had problems relating to the difficulties attendant upon the administration of certain laws. I challenge the hon. gentleman to say that that is not so. I suggest, too, that members opposite desired to meet the situation, and endeavoured to meet it. And so have we. They had no measure such as this, which might have proved of help to them. Therefore this is a matter for compromise. The Leader of the Opposition was almost heated when he said that we at the moment on this front bench are sworn to administer the law. He himself was in the selfsame position. Whilst I believe he did not make that remark in any spirit of unfairness, it is just as well for the House to know that there is no difference at all between the position as it exists now and the position as it existed in his day.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But it has become a little more blatant.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** It has become a little more common because of certain circumstances which I challenge all members opposite and on this side who spoke either for or against the Bill to analyse successfully against the deductions which I drew in my introductory speech. If that is not so, why were all those facts ignored by members who criticised the measure? There was not one answer to them. The only observation I will make in that connection will be in relation to the leading article in the "West Australian" which airily brushed aside as being entirely irrelevant certain matters it did not suit the leader writer to deal with. That is a very simple and easy way out for leader writers. I wish to quote the statement of the Leader of the Opposition, who said—

If the Minister thinks he is going to enforce the law, he is wrong. I assure him he will not

be able to enforce it any more than it has been enforced in the past.

I was very careful in writing down those words. He made use of them when he was referring to the Tasmanian legislation. He said, "I assure him he will not be able to enforce it." Do not let us be ungenerous in this matter, one with the other. The most ungenerous action of all would be for anyone to strive to make political capital out of this matter.

I feel it is incumbent upon me to make some reference to the objections raised by certain members. First of all, I will refer to the objections of the member for Murchison, who very consistently and persistently objects to any benefits being received by proprietary race clubs. The member for East Perth shared that view. The member for Nelson said that if I would give the House an assurance where the Government stood on this matter and on another matter, he would support the Bill. I will tell the hon. member where I stand. I stand exactly in the position indicated by the amendment suggested by the member for Murchison. I neither agree with nor support proprietary racing and will support any member in a move, if it is the wish of Parliament, to ensure that proprietary race clubs shall not benefit under this legislation. But I would point out that it is on the parent body—the West Australian Turf Club—that the very existence of the other clubs depends. They operate with the sanction of the parent body. Their dates are allocated by that body. I support the view expressed by the member for East Perth and the member for Victoria Park that there is a necessity for an investigation as to the possibility of a different form of control.

Mr. Hughes: That is one case in which the Turf Club has fallen down on the job.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Another objection raised by the member for Murchison concerned the formula for the distribution of the tax. That is a matter for the consideration of the House. It cannot be said that at any stage the Government has shown itself adamant that the Bill should remain entirely as it was drafted with every "t" crossed and every "i" dotted. The tax on turnover gave the member for Nelson some concern. It is a fact that we cannot control the rentals of the shops, and yet can control the

fees charged under the Bill. That is a subject that can be amply reviewed in a fashion to suit the hon. member if the Bill is considered in Committee. The aim of the Bill is to do no other than a fair thing by all members of the community. I would refer also to two points raised in the rather generous speech of the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver). She said that the people made laws in an endeavour to prevent evils that were said to be inherent and that if such laws were not made people would revert to a state of savagery. By that statement, I suggest, the hon. member expressed herself in favour of some form of control of inherent evils. That is exactly what this Bill is designed to do. The member for Boulder said we should examine our consciences in this matter. I think we should. The only successful criticism that can be levelled is that made on the score of excesses or over-indulgence. The evidence of the ages points to the necessity for the control of over-indulgence. We have the American experiment of prohibition to guide us in these matters. The contempt for the law engendered by those—the majority—who did not desire to go to excess meant the failure of the whole structure.

Mr. Patrick: The amendment to the Constitution was inserted on the vote of the people and removed on the vote of the people.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so. But the whole success of the experiment depended on the view of the majority who did not condone excesses, and the aim of the movement for reform was the control of the small percentage of people who indulged in drinking to excess.

Mr. Patrick: Prohibition was introduced on the vote of the people and abolished on the vote of the people.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but it was introduced to control those who indulged in drinking to excess. Everybody was affected as the result of the attempt to control a minority. That is so in this case. Members will not assert that the majority of people bet excessively. That brings me to the division of thought referred to by the Minister for Works. There are four schools of thought on this subject. One would endeavour by legislation or by some other means to abolish all gambling. Another considers people should be permitted

to gamble on a racecourse. A third school contends that all betting and gambling operations should be free and open and wide as the poles are apart. The fourth school steers a middle course. That course is the only practical one and the one suggested by this legislation. The other three schools of thought represent a minority opinion. Not one of those three sections could submit its viewpoint to Parliament or to any body of people with any hope of securing a majority vote in its favour. The programme suggested in the Bill steers a middle course, reveals a tolerance for the point of view of the various sections of the community and is most likely to meet with the approval of the majority. That point cannot be contradicted. Notwithstanding all the lack of constructive criticism of the principles of the measure, there is not a majority opinion on any one point against it in this Chamber. The matter seems to me to be one for compromise, as I have suggested all such matters are. I would not be very far in my desires from many of the reverend gentlemen who have expressed their views, nor would I be very far in my desires from others who have expressed an entirely opposite view, and I therefore suggest that what matters is not our desire or our belief. We must be tolerant of the views of other persons and not condemn them if our own view is unworkable. We must face facts. Never mind the empty criticism of what may happen or what is possible under the Bill. The Bill has not yet been given a trial. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) indicated to me a line of public thought, were the majority of the public courageous enough to express it. Let us get together and examine what will be the result if the Bill is not passed. No solution of the problem has been suggested by those opposing the measure. To those members who are afraid of what will happen when the Bill reaches the Committee stage because amendments unsuitable to them might be passed, the same applies. They should have no fear at all. There was a weak point in the argument of the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). I was surprised at his putting up such a feeble excuse. He said he was actuated by what the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) said and would vote against the Bill. If that attitude be adopted, no Bill could ever be introduced into the House. No one would be so foolish as to believe that a Bill

introduced into this House will finish in the form in which it was introduced. The member for East Perth, I suggest, was not serious in the reason he gave for his intention to vote against the Bill.

I shall not say all I wish in reply to the various speeches that have been made. I hope that on behalf of the Government I have faithfully expressed its views when introducing the Bill. I am prepared now or at any subsequent time to submit further reasons for the consideration of the House. Fortunately, there is no political flavour in the Bill. There has been no shifting of ground by the Government. The Government believes that the Bill is the mean of all viewpoints that have been expressed within and without the House. Let the critics bear that in mind. Let those whose business in life is to endeavour to uplift the people and to try to make the world less sinful review practicalities fearlessly and openly and then submit a better solution. Let them bear in mind also that a better solution is not the mere statement that the existing law should be enforced. They must go further than that. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) has said that the Bill is responsible for acquainting us with strange bedfellows. I think, however, notwithstanding the divergence of views, that we can get together and do something for those for whom some members have made a heart plea—the youth of the State. As one who also has responsibilities in that direction and would not evade them, I say to those who indulge in those heroics that they have not submitted a better solution of the problem, although there will be jubilation in some quarters if the Bill is defeated. The onus will to some extent be on those who, without reason, without opinions of their own, will vote against it. From the speeches that have been delivered we cannot anticipate what the voting will be; so many members will be suspended in mid-air because of lack of courage that it is impossible for us to anticipate the voting.

In conclusion, I say the Government has earnestly and fearlessly submitted the Bill for the consideration of the House. In spite of all the criticism of the measure and in spite of all the condemnation, I hope there will be sufficient tolerance both within and without the House to admit the spirit in which the Govern-

ment introduced the Bill. We believe it is the right course. The Bill is different from other similar legislation in Australia. Whilst I would like to review many points that have been overlooked in the examination of the Bill, I do not think it would be right for me to do so at this hour. Those are our views, Mr. Speaker. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

|      |    |    |    |    |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 21 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 24 |

Majority against .. 3

#### AYES.

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Boyle      | Mr. Raphael        |
| Mr. Coverley   | Mr. Rodoreda       |
| Mr. Cross      | Mr. Sleeman        |
| Mr. Doust      | Mr. F. C. L. Smith |
| Mr. Fox        | Mr. Styants        |
| Mr. Hawke      | Mr. Tonkin         |
| Mr. Lambert    | Mr. Troy           |
| Mr. Leahy      | Mr. Willcock       |
| Mr. Millington | Mr. Wise           |
| Mr. Needham    | Mr. Nulsen         |
| Mr. Pantou     |                    |

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Mrs. Cardell-Oliver | Mr. Patrick     |
| Mr. Collier         | Mr. Sampson     |
| Mr. Ferguson        | Mr. Seward      |
| Mr. Hegney          | Mr. Shearn      |
| Mr. Hill            | Mr. J. M. Smith |
| Mr. Hughes          | Mr. Stubbs      |
| Mr. Keenan          | Mr. Thorn       |
| Mr. Latham          | Mr. Warner      |
| Mr. Mann            | Mr. Watts       |
| Mr. Marshall        | Mr. Willmott    |
| Mr. McDonald        | Mr. Withers     |
| Mr. McLarty         | Mr. Doney       |

(Teller.)

#### PAIR.

|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| AYES.      | NOES.     |
| Mr. Wilson | Mr. Welsh |

Question thus negatived; Bill defeated.

### BILL—WORKERS' HOMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with an amendment.

House adjourned at 12.42 a.m. (Friday).