

and see the concern that he had perhaps built up go to the wall under the control of some less competent person.

Hon. A. Thomson: Suppose he were being paid a salary out of all reason?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I will come to that. That is one of the dangers that I see, and I think members could not expect to hold a competent man in a company in such circumstances. There would be no security of tenure for him, and he would look for some way of getting out of the company as quickly as he could if he thought this danger was hanging over him all the time. So far as I can see, the clauses in the Bill are of a most novel and extremely unique nature. I am given to understand by a very high authority on company law that the provisions contained in the Bill do not exist in the legislation of the Old Country or of any of the other States of the Commonwealth. Of all the criticisms I have heard of the Bill, that is one of the most arresting. I do not say we should go along in the same old rut all our lives, but when we get an opinion of that nature, and from such a source, we should walk very guardedly.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Would you say this was advanced legislation?

Hon. W. J. MANN: It would be super-advanced legislation if we passed it. Mr. Thomson interjected something about a director allocating to himself a salary out of all reason. I do not stand behind a man of that type. I have already made some investigations and inquiries into that matter, and am assured by a reliable authority that there is power at present by which such an individual can be dealt with. There are some very pointed precedents in that regard, and I understand they come from as high a source as Lord Halsbury and men of that degree. If it is not possible in this State to deal with such a man, I contend that a very simple amendment to the Act would put him in his place. The amendment I suggest would be that in case a minority of the shareholders, or a number of them who found that the directors were allocating to themselves salaries that were beyond reason, or that they were acting in any way with the company's money that was detrimental to the company, they should have the right to approach a judge of the Supreme Court, ask for an investigation into the affairs of the company, and abide by the decision of the court. That

is all that is necessary at present. I regret I cannot support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Macfarlane, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 6th December, 1932.

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

QUESTION—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS' CHARGES.

As to Barristers' Board's Attitude.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Attorney General: 1, In Local Court proceedings concerning the Workers' Compensation Act, is the solicitor attending alone at the court and conducting the case in person entitled to make the following charges: Drawing brief, 16 folios, 16s.; engrossing copy with documents to accompany, 24 folios, 5s. 10d.; attending counsel therewith, 6s. 8d.; paid his fee and clerk, £5 10s.; attending counsel to appoint conference and attending thereon, 13s. 4d.; paid his fee and clerk, £1 6s.? 2, What legal authority is there for a legal practitioner engaged on a case as solicitor briefing himself as counsel—that is, as the barrister—conferring with himself, attending the court with himself, and then charging

ing two sets of fees as though the solicitor and the barrister in the case were different persons? 3, If not, is the inclusion of such charges a breach of professional etiquette? 4, Will the Attorney General ascertain whether the Barristers' Board are aware of the practice? 5, If so, what is the intention of the Board regarding this practice? 6, Is not the object of allowing persons qualified as solicitors only to practice as barristers under the name of legal practitioners to relieve the public from the necessity of paying counsel fees?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, Yes. 2, Local Court Rules and Workers' Compensation Rules. 3, See answer to No. 2. 4, No. 5, See answer to No. 4. 6, No.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Rockingham Road District (Loan Rate Exemption).

2, Collie Recreation and Park Lands Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Lieut-Governor and Administrator received and read, notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills:—

1, Dairy Cattle Improvement Act Amendment.

2, Pearling Act Amendment

3, Special License (Waroonna Irrigation District.)

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

1, Financial Emergency Act Continuance.
2, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

BILL—MINE WORKERS' RELIEF.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 24th November.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.39]: I agree with the remarks of the Minister for Mines when he introduced the Bill, that legislation of this description should not be made a party question. If there is anything to take exception to, it is that the

legislation is belated. It is a stigma on Parliaments of the past that they did not many years ago provide for the compensation of workers in the gold-mining industry. It is a fact that one Government attempted to pass legislation with that object in view, but the Bill was defeated in the Legislative Council. Scores of miners and their dependants have suffered poverty and anguish arising out of the incapacity of the workers that was brought about because of the nature of their occupation in the mining industry. In 1922 the Miners' Phthisis Act was introduced with a view to relieving the situation, and in 1925 the Act was proclaimed. I agree with the Minister in his statement that the Act has not operated in every direction as Parliament intended. Many men have remained in the mines and continued at work, knowing that they were in ill health, although not suffering from tuberculosis. They knew that until such time as they did contract tuberculosis, they would not be able to secure the benefits of the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act.

The Minister for Mines: That was not always the whole trouble; many could not prove total incapacity.

MR. MARSHALL: When a man was examined medically, he was notified as to his actual condition. Many of them thought they might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, and consequently remained working in the industry. They did that because they knew that at that stage they could not secure adequate compensation.

The Minister for Mines: They could not get compensation if they left the industry because they could not prove their total incapacity.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes; under the provisions of the Third Schedule, they realised that they had to keep working until they dropped, so to speak. That was a bad feature of the industry, which prevailed for many years. The Minister has, I confess, conceded the points that were stressed when a conference was held with him some years ago. To the extent that the Bill embodies those necessary reforms, I feel inclined to support it, but I cannot bring myself to agree to all its provisions as they appear at present. While I do not object to Consolidated Revenue being relieved by those responsible, provided that the rates prescribed in the Bill conform to the rates

included in the Miner's Phthisis Act, I still have objections to raise to some of the provisions contained in the Bill. As the law stands to-day, a miner who is prohibited from working underground is granted compensation equal to the basic rate operating in the district where he was employed. The basic rate on the goldfields to-day is £3 18s., and if the Bill becomes law the maximum amount payable as compensation to a miner prohibited from working underground will be £3 10s., or a reduction of 8s. a week on the existing basic wage. I do not see that I could do justice to men prohibited from working in the industry if I were to agree to that proposal. A close scrutiny of the Bill will disclose to members the fact that the position may be aggravated because should the basic rate be increased, the miner who is prohibited from working underground cannot secure any benefit arising from the cost of living on the goldfields. His compensation will remain at £3 10s., notwithstanding that the basic rate may rise to £4 5s. Thus the discrepancy will be more apparent under the Bill than it is at present. I would remind the Minister that the cost of living has by no means been reduced although the basic wage on the goldfields has come down.

The Minister for Mines: But the miners will not be required to remain on the goldfields.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but when a man is prohibited from working underground he will get the basic rate I have mentioned, provided that he has the number of children or dependants that will entitle him to that rate. If the Bill be agreed to, the maximum amount he will be able to get will be £3 10s.

The Minister for Mines: They need not stay on the fields.

Mr. MARSHALL: I agree with the Minister, but if a miner should change his abode, it means the provision of a new home.

The Minister for Mines: They do that now.

Mr. MARSHALL: Not all of them. Many have migrated to the city because it has been compulsory for them to do so. They have been declared unfit for further service by a very reliable doctor, whose decision I would not challenge. They have been compelled to migrate to the city in order to qualify for their compensation. Men who

have been prohibited from further working in the industry, that is men who have been declared totally incapacitated and have received their compensation, may remain on the goldfields as long as they like, and I venture to suggest that most of those men have remained there. The greater number of those who have migrated to the city have been compelled to do so; otherwise they would have been disqualified from receiving compensation under the existing law. If a man is declared fit for light work, the obligation is on the Government to provide employment for him, and he is bound to accept it on pain of losing his compensation. Therefore he must move to the locality where the work is provided, however much he may object to moving. Very few men have migrated from the goldfields of their own volition. They have mostly remained in the homes in which they had lived for years. That is one feature of the Bill I cannot support in justice to the miners. There is not only the discrepancy now existing; we cannot say when the cost of living may rise and the basic wage may be increased, and to subscribe to a provision that for all time, no matter what the basic wage on the goldfields may be, every beneficiary shall be limited to a benefit of £3 10s. a week, is wrong. The Bill is very indefinite. We should have been given information as to the rates to be prescribed by regulation. We are working in the dark. We have no idea what will happen to the beneficiaries when they have exhausted the amount granted under the third schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, namely £750. It would take approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ years to exhaust that amount. If a man left the industry physically incapacitated and survived the $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, he must be in worse health than when he was prohibited from further working in the mines. As soon as the $4\frac{1}{2}$ years expired, he would be transferred to the fund to be created under the measure, and we know nothing about the rates, except that they will be prescribed by regulation. It is quite possible that they will be the rates prescribed by the present Mine Workers' Relief Fund. Even those rates are indefinite; I do not think any definite sum is laid down. If a beneficiary dies, his widow receives £2 per week for life or until she re-marries, but we do not know what will happen under this Bill. She will become a beneficiary under the Mine Workers' Relief

Board, but we do not know how much she will receive. It is objectionable having to support a Bill so indefinite in that respect. At the same time, the Bill contains much that is commendable. I approve of the provision for ex-miners. Men have been out of the industry and have been forced, through economic pressure displacing them from their present employment, to attempt to return to the industry. Such men have been prohibited from returning if they have been out of the industry for two years or more. If men are incapacitated, that is if they are suffering from silicosis, fibrosis or other disease that prevents their returning to the industry, and the industry has been responsible for their becoming incapacitated, they are justified in asking to be re-admitted. It was the industry that caused their incapacitation and, although they have been out of it for some years, I do not think anyone would claim that they are not entitled to return under certain terms and conditions. Those terms and conditions are embodied in the Bill, and I approve of them. I agree with the Minister's proposals to cover prospectors. Those provisions should have been included in the original Act. Men who have left the industry when notified that they were suffering from silicosis early, in order to follow a more healthy occupation, and who have subsequently found themselves incapacitated, should be entitled to compensation, provided they have kept themselves financial with the fund. I admire the provision to that effect. The Minister is right in his efforts to get men suffering from silicosis only, particularly in the advanced stage, to leave the industry, if it is possible for them to do so. Still, he should not be so hard as to penalise them if they remain. Some men would be influenced by soft persuasion to remain at their work. Some of the men employed in the industry are giving services that are almost indispensable. It would not be right to say that they are indispensable, but their services are of great importance to the industry, and they receive fairly high pay. No doubt if they were advised to leave on the pain of being penalised to the extent of having to prove total incapacity, they would do so. Another good feature of the Bill is that which gives a miner declared to be suffering from tuberculosis the right of appeal. It is remarkable how doctors' opinions differ.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They have the right now.

Mr. MARSHALL: I was not aware of that. There have been a number of controversies as to whether miners were or were not suffering from tuberculosis, and right of appeal should be provided to enable any doubt to be removed. The Minister, in moving the second reading of the Bill, stated that all the mines and mine employees were not subscribing to the present Mine Workers' Relief Fund. That is hardly correct. In very few instances have the miners refused to contribute to the present fund. I cannot see where the money will be obtained to meet all the liability that will ultimately accrue if this measure becomes law. The only alternative will be to increase the contributions now being paid. This Bill proposes to alter the existing position regarding miners suffering from tuberculosis only. Tuberculosis cannot be said to be an occupational disease; doctors state that something like 90 per cent. of the people suffer or have suffered from T.B. in some form or other. Consequently it cannot be declared an industrial disease. Miners prohibited from further working in the industry on the score of being T.B. cases will not come under the third schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, but will go direct on to the fund of the board. Other beneficiaries will go on to the fund of the board after the expiration of four years. Hence I cannot see any escape from increasing the present contributions, and the workers will be required to contribute to a greater degree than they are doing at present. That will shift much of the responsibility from Consolidated Revenue to the employees and the employers. The Government will subscribe only one-third as against providing the whole amount under the present Act. I do not know what the Minister has in mind. The Bill provides that if there is an excess of funds, contributions may be suspended, but I fear that in the next year or two it will be necessary to increase rather than to suspend payments. The number of beneficiaries ultimately to come on the fund will be fairly large. All T.B. men will go direct on the fund and other beneficiaries will ultimately become a liability on the fund.

The Minister for Mines: When those men have T.B. only.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes; they will not come under the third schedule.

The Minister for Mines: In a year or two the T.B. will not be there.

Mr. MARSHALL: If any miners contract T.B. they will go on to the fund. There is provision for such men receiving the same rate as under the third schedule, namely, £3 10s. a week.

The Minister for Mines: They will not be there.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not want to see any of them there. Provision is made for the re-admission of miners, but I cannot find anything in "Hansard" to show exactly what will be the position of men who get employment under the special certificate. I am assuming, of course, that the men are suffering from silicosis or silicosis, advanced; but a worker suffering from either silico-sis or silicosis, advanced, plus T.B., would not be permitted to return at all, because he would be entitled to compensation almost immediately if he did. Therefore, he has no chance whatever of getting back. It is consequently safe to assume that the specially certificated men will be suffering from silicosis or silicosis, advanced. They will be permitted to return and work in certain parts of the mine only, and while prohibited from working will get no compensation at all. I hope that the Minister, when replying, will explain the Bill a little more fully. That is how I understand it. As far as the proposed board is concerned, I cannot find any fault with that. The system proposed in the Bill is acceptable and no one can complain about it. What worries me, however, are the rates to be prescribed by regulation. Could the Minister give us some idea what they will be? The Government's responsibility ceases when they have paid one-third of the amount contributed to the fund. There is also the provision in the Bill under which the Government may make advances to the board, but if they do, they can claim repayment of the amount, plus interest. I am of the opinion that the contributions to the fund will have to be materially increased within the next year or two in order to provide for the liabilities which will ultimately accrue. Another alteration effected by the Bill and to which I subscribe is that which makes provision for men who contract diseases which are peculiar to their occupation and which are not provided for under the Third Schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act. I think that is an excellent provision, because there are quite a number of men who

are contracting such diseases, particularly at Wiluna. Workmen there are contracting arsenical poisoning and some are suffering acutely from the effects of it. If this Bill becomes law, at least they will be entitled to some little compensation. The chief objection I have to the measure is that it proposes to make an immediate reduction in the amount to be paid to the beneficiaries in the case of married men with one or two or more dependants. They are the persons about whom I am most concerned. The single men can struggle along on half pay fairly well, but not so a man with three, four or five children. I cannot subscribe to a Bill which proposes to reduce the benefits to be paid to such a man to the extent of 8s. a week. I congratulate the Minister upon his attempt to alter existing conditions. I agree with him that men have been compelled to remain in the industry until they have practically fallen down. They have had to work right up to the last minute, so to speak, and until they have expended the last ounce of their energy, before they could get compensation. The Bill proposes a material alteration of those conditions. When we reach the Committee stage, I hope the Minister will allow opportunity for the making of amendments. I propose to make some myself in regard to the rates to be paid. Even to-day one can find the anomaly of men having come out when the basic wage was £4 5s., as compared with the men who have come out with the basic wage fixed at £3 18s. Two wrongs do not make a right and I shall watch very closely what may happen in the future. I do not think the cost of living will remain for very long as low as it is at present. The basic wage will increase, and men may be given £3 a week no matter how high the cost of living may soar on the goldfields. That is what influences me in saying that I cannot support the Bill. I would like to do so, because of the many undoubted advantages that will accrue if it is passed, but there is such a wide divergence in the rates of pay to be made to the two classes of workers, those now in work and those who will be out of work, that I cannot subscribe to the Bill. If the Minister will give us some assurance that he will be sympathetic towards us when we reach the Committee stage, then I would not mind supporting the second reading. As the Bill stands, however, I cannot bring myself to support a measure which will reduce payments to these unfortunate workers to the extent of 8s.

per week, and which will put them on a fund after they have exhausted the £750 payable under the Workers' Compensation Act. The objectionable features of the Bill overshadow its good features. I think the Government might have been a little more considerate, because of the fact that in future they will have to subscribe only one-third of the fund, and will then be free from further liability, as against carrying practically all the liability at the present time, with the exception of those who come under the Third Schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act. I have no more to say at this juncture, except that I cannot support the Bill because it will have the effect of redrawing out of all proportion the benefits to the workers and also because of the objectionable feature that a flat rate will be paid irrespective of what the cost of living may happen to be in time to come.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Hannans) [5.9]:

I desire to deal with this Bill in the following way. Firstly, I will point out the innovations, or what might be called the benefits under the Bill; secondly, the disadvantages as compared with the present Miners' Phthisis Act; thirdly, consider if the advantages balance or outweigh the disadvantages. Dealing with the first point, the best feature of the Bill, in my opinion, is the opening clause, which provides that the existing conditions for all those who have been withdrawn from the mine and for all those who will be withdrawn from the mine prior to the date of the proclamation of the Bill will continue. They will draw the same benefits as they do to-day under the Miners' Phthisis Act. All those men who are withdrawn after the proclamation of the Bill will, of course, come under this measure. Another good feature of the Bill is that it certainly does extend the scope of the benefits to a very great number of men working in the industry who, under the conditions prevailing to-day, have no hope of getting any benefits whatever. The Bill also includes prospectors under certain conditions. With this provision I agree. Prospectors should have the right to contribute their quota and receive the benefits of the measure. The Bill also provides for those who to-day are suffering from silicosis, advanced: they will get the full benefits as provided by the Workers' Compensation Act. The Miners' Phthisis Act has probably been responsible for a considerable number of men contract-

ing T.B. earlier than they would otherwise have done. That is due to the fact that they continued to work after they were suffering from silicosis, advanced. No one can blame those men for continuing to work, because under the conditions prevailing to-day they have to prove that they are totally incapacitated before they can receive any benefits. In 99 cases out of 100, if a worker is suffering from silicosis, he goes to the laboratory and is examined. He is probably certified as suffering from silicosis, advanced, and after attending at the laboratory in the morning he proceeds to work at 4 o'clock on the afternoon shift. Under the Workers' Compensation Act it is necessary for a worker to prove that he is totally incapacitated: the doctors say he is not totally incapacitated because, in fact, he is actually working. The Bill, if it becomes law, will provide that the worker shall be deemed to be totally incapacitated if he produces a certificate issued by the laboratory stating that he is suffering from silicosis, advanced. He will then be entitled to receive workers' compensation up to the sum of £750. I believe that is the correct interpretation of the Bill. There is a condition in the measure which says that if the employee who is suffering from silicosis, advanced, desires to take advantage of the Workers' Compensation Act, he must cease work within one year. If he continues to work for more than one year after he has been notified that he is suffering from silicosis, advanced, he will place himself in exactly the same position as the men stand to-day. He will then have to prove that he is totally incapacitated. There is another good feature about the Bill, in that it will protect the individual under the Workers' Compensation Act even though the employer may default. A man may be working for a company or syndicate and after drawing, say, £100 under the Workers' Compensation Act, the company or syndicate may become bankrupt, and he will be unable to get any more money. The Bill, however, will protect him to the extent that if the company becomes bankrupt, the board will have to take the responsibility of payment up to £750. The Minister said he had had drafted regulations to amend the other regulations under the Mines Regulation Act. It is his intention to table those amendments to bring that Act into conformity with the Bill we have before us. If a man has left the industry for more than two years, no matter

how slightly he may be dusted, he cannot get back into it on an initial certificate. In fact, he cannot get a certificate for re-employment in the industry. The Minister said it was his intention to amend the regulations to provide for the issue of a re-admission certificate from the laboratory, so that a man who is only slightly dusted may re-enter the industry. That will be of advantage to many. It may, however, be questionable from the point of view of the health of the individual whether he should be allowed to go back into the industry that was responsible for his partial incapacity. To do so may cause his end to be hastened. I do not agree with the definition of a man who is "early silicotic but not permanent." According to the evidence of all the medical men with whom I have discussed the matter, once a man becomes silicotic, he is permanently silicotic. There is no hope for a man throwing off silicosis. Another good feature about the Bill, if it is wise that men should go back into the industry when they are slightly dusted, is the provision dealing with dusted men leaving the industry. When a man working on a mine is affected by silicosis early, the Mines Department notifies him that, in his own interests, he should leave the industry. The men receive the same notification whether they are silicotic advanced or silicotic early. Of course they do not know whether they are one or the other. They only know they are silicotic because they have all received the same notification. The Bill provides that when a man becomes silicotic early and leaves the industry, if during the first year after he has been re-examined by the laboratory and is found to be suffering from silicosis advanced, or silicosis with T.B., he will be entitled to £750 under the Workers' Compensation Act. The best feature of the Bill in this connection is that it does not matter if 10 years have elapsed since such a man left the industry, if he registers with the Mines Department and pays his contribution to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board, he will still be entitled to the £750. This money will come from the funds of the board. It will not come from the £4 10s. per cent., or be paid under the Workers' Compensation Act. That is a big step forward in the interests of these men. We are more likely to get men to leave the industry under these conditions than under existing conditions. If a man receives notice under

the present Act to leave a mine, and has been out of the industry for two years, not only can he not get back into the industry, but he cannot get any compensation no matter what stage of illness he may have reached. A further benefit provided in the Bill is that regulations can be made to grant benefits to mine workers who become incapacitated from any cause other than those set out in the Third Schedule. Cases have occurred under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board where men have become totally incapacitated, although they have not contracted silicosis, fibrosis or tuberculosis, but have been certified as being incapacitated through having worked in the industry. Under existing conditions those men cannot get anything. Under the Bill they will have the right to get what is prescribed by regulation under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board.

Mr. Marshall: I do not know how the board will find all that money.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The final benefit given by the Bill is that which provides for arming the board with statutory power to collect contributions from the employers and employees as well as from the Government. The mine owners may cease their contributions at any time, because there is no law to compel them to continue paying. If that happened, the board would have to go out of existence. It may not be generally known that the board distribute relief almost all over the world to the extent of about £2,000 a month. If one party or the other ceased to contribute to the board, it would go out of existence and the beneficiaries would be left destitute. We do not want that to happen. The Bill will prevent that. To bring about these benefits, the Minister has embodied certain clauses in the Bill which more or less compensate the taxpayers for what is being done. A man who is withdrawn from the industry is entitled to the basic wage—this is now £3 18s., but was recently £4 6d. The Act provides that a man is entitled to receive up to the basic wage operating in the district in which he was working at the time he was withdrawn from the industry. If the Bill becomes law it will mean that the maximum payment he can receive will be £3 10s. per week. So under the worst conditions that have prevailed up to date, the amount under the Miners' Phthisis Act, as against the amount

under this measure, shows a practical loss in the maximum payment of 8s. per week. The worker loses that while he is drawing the £750 compensation at the rate of half wages, and 7s. 6d. per week for each child up to the maximum of £3 10s. Then comes the worst cut of the lot; when he has drawn the whole of that £750, instead of coming under the benefits provided by the Miners' Phthisis Act he will then come under the benefits provided by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board. The Minister in his speech was not too definite, but I do not think there is any doubt about its being the intention that if the Bill become law the benefits, at the beginning anyhow, will be those now prescribed by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board. The Minister said that, it is in "Hansard," and I am dealing with the Bill from that aspect. Under the Miners' Phthisis Act immediately the doctor certifies that a man is not capable of doing light work, that man comes under the compensation provisions of the Act by regulation prescribing that a man shall get half wages, with £1 per week for his wife and 8s. 6d. per week for each child under 14 years of age, up to the basic wage paid in the district in which the man is residing. It is also provided that if the man dies his widow is entitled to £2 per week until death or remarriage, with 8s. 6d. per week for each child under 16 years of age, up to the basic wage. I suggest to the Minister that instead of making that compulsory reduction of 8s. when the man is withdrawn, we should make the maximum a man can draw £3 10s. per week. I hope the Minister will let us have an amendment which will provide that a man with more than two children shall be entitled to 8s. 6d. per week for each child, up to the basic wage. It would mean no extra cost to the Government, for it would merely reduce the period over which the man would be drawing the £750. All men withdrawn as they would be to-day will have to come back to this scale after drawing their £750.

The Minister for Mines: In any other industry, under the Third Schedule he ceases to draw anything.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That is so. Exception has been taken to the existing method. In some cases where a medical officer certifies that a man is suffering from T.B., that man is permitted to work in certain

places in or about a mine, the doctor having certified that he is of no danger to anyone else in those places and that no harm will result to himself. So men have been permitted to work, and that will continue under this Bill also. Now let us see what the benefits are under the Mine Workers' Relief Board which will be paid under the Bill if it becomes law. For a single man the maximum is 25s. per week. For a widow under 40 years of age with no children the rate is 20s. per week for three months after the death of her husband, and then 10s. per week for another three months. For a widow under 40 years of age with one child the rate is 30s. per week for six months after the death of her husband, and then 7s. 6d. per week for the child until it reaches 14 years. For a widow under 40 years of age with two children the rate is 15s. per week and 5s. per week for each child under 14 years of age. For a widow over 40 and under 50 years of age, the rate is 20s. per week for three months after the death of her husband, and then 15s. per week for another three months, followed by 10s. per week until remarriage or death, with an extra 5s. per week for each child under 14 years of age. For a widow between the ages of 50 and 60, the rate is 20s. per week until remarriage or death, with an extra 5s. per week for each child under 14 years of age. For a widow 60 years of age and upwards the rate is 10s. a week, with assistance rendered to apply for an old-age pension, and an extra 5s. per week for each child under 14 years of age. For a dependant, mother or son, the rate is 10s. per week. There we see the difference between the two scales of payment. The Minister said in his speech that after the commencement of this Act the prescribed rate would be that already adopted by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board. There is in the Bill another feature, which can be argued both ways. The Minister is practically putting out of operation an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act for which we fought for 20 years or more before getting it. Under the Bill the Minister is taking away that right. I refer to the provision that if the employer forces an employee to take a lump-sum settlement—

The Attorney General: The employer cannot force the employee to take a lump-sum settlement.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, but he can take him to court, and if the court awards a lump-sum settlement the employee is then entitled to draw workers' compensation up to £3 10s. per week, or as provided by the magistrate; but when he has drawn the total amount provided he can continue to receive the benefits prescribed by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board. On the other hand, if the employee elects to take a lump-sum settlement and goes to the court, he may get that lump-sum settlement, but immediately he has drawn it he is cut off altogether from any right to go under the board. Why that discrimination? Seemingly the Minister wants to discourage phthisical men from applying for or accepting a lump-sum settlement because in the past frequently it has been abused, and the money has not been carefully expended. But under the Workers' Compensation Act the case has to go before a magistrate, who has power to allocate that lump sum, and so I do not think there is any longer the danger that there used to be. Let me give an instance: you may get a man employed in the mining industry who is quite a young man with a wife and three or four children. He may be silicotic advanced. Under the Bill he could get the benefits up to £750. I admit that if it came to a lump-sum settlement, the insurance office would capitalise the amount at 4 per cent. over the period he would draw it, if he drew in weekly payments. That would mean that instead of £750 he would get about £650. But to this young man with a wife and two or three children it would be highly advantageous to get a lump-sum settlement through which to establish himself in some little business and so have a living for himself and his wife and children for life. Of course if a man had T.B. it might not be practicable for him to take on such a business, but a man with advanced silicosis may live for a considerable time, and if he desired a lump sum with which to buy a small business the Bill should give him the same rate as it gives the other man. When he has exhausted it, it should represent £3 10s. in weekly payments, and if that man was in difficulties he should have the right to go back to the mine fund. From a financial point of view, I do not know what is at the back of the Minister's mind; I do not know where he thinks the board are going to get the money to finance the responsibility he is placing upon them. Personally I do not think it would be possible

for the board to exist and finance this scheme as outlined in the Bill with the money made available as proposed in the Bill. As a matter of fact, the only extra finance the board will be able to get as compared with what the board have been able to get for the 16 or 18 years they have been in existence will be the fines imposed for breaches of the Act or the regulations which will go to them instead of to the Treasury. That is the additional finance the board will get. I hope the Minister will go back a bit in history, if he has not done so already, to find out what the position of the board was in the past. He knows well that prior to the proclamation of the Miners' Phthisis Act the board was operating and that employees were contributing one-third, the employers one-third and the Government one-third. The Minister, however, will find that the Government had to pay a little over 50 per cent. of the total amount to keep the board in existence.

The Minister for Mines: It only operated over a small section of our goldfields.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That was not the case. When the board had the whole of the mine workers contributing under that fund—all were contributing at that time—the board found it impossible to carry on to the extent that the Government had to go to their assistance and pay a little more than half in one year and up to a half for two or three years. That was only to give the benefits that are being given now and not the increased payments the Minister proposes to impose on them under the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: The two positions are not comparable at all.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I do not want to argue with the Minister on the second reading; I want him to allow me to state my case and I hope he will take notice of it and that he will be able satisfactorily to reply to me. I agree with the compulsory clauses of the Bill which will bring every employee and employer in the mining industry under the measure. That will mean increased revenue because there are many employers and employees who are not contributing to-day, but there will be no advantage to the board arising from the increased revenue because they will certainly be faced with increased expenditure. No benefit will accrue by all coming in as against the number coming in to-day, because the increased revenue will be counteracted by the additional expenditure. The board were in trouble when they had to

provide the benefits as set out in the existing schedule. They could not have carried on but for the additional assistance rendered by the Government. Just let us see what extra burden the Minister now proposes to place on the board. They now have to meet the increase resulting from all the men who are withdrawn with T.B. only: they have to meet an extra liability of paying those men at the same rate as the men who have silicosis advanced or silicosis with T.B., a liability which is £750 at the rate of £3 10s. a week. That is the board's extra liability.

The Minister for Mines: That is T.B. only; it is not likely to arise.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Whether it does or does not, I want the Minister to agree to make some amendment to the Bill. As a matter of fact there is a proviso that if a man is employed in the gold mining industry and is found to be suffering from T.B., and has not worked for a period or periods of two years, he is not entitled to the £750 at £3 10s. a week; he is entitled only to the amount prescribed by the regulations under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. I do not think the Minister should make that differentiation. I can quite understand the Minister introducing a clause such as that in the Bill, if there has been no laboratory examination of the men. But he has the most expert and up-to-date system of examining the employees of the industry in any part of the world. I know of no other set of employees that have to undergo such a thorough examination: these employees have to be most physically perfect before they can get an initial certificate to be admitted to the mines. If they undergo such an examination and then within two years they contract T.B., surely the Minister is protected enough by the examination they have had and should not want the two years clause inserted.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I know to what the Minister refers; that can easily be arranged in the Bill without debarring the man who has the certificate. Take any of the outback places, for instance, Wiluna, Meekatharra, Gwalia and the centres distant from Southern Cross.

The Minister for Mines: And the North-West.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, any of them. The laboratory has never travelled to the North-West, but it has travelled to all the other places. I know of one instance where it was impossible to complete an examina-

tion because we could not get a Commonwealth doctor to take on the job. We had to abandon the laboratory examination there. The Minister has provided in the Bill that where practicable a man shall be examined at the Kalgoorlie laboratory before entering the industry, but where that is not practicable—and it would not be practicable at say Meekatharra and Wiluna for a man to undergo examination by the laboratory, but he would have to be examined by a doctor appointed by the Government as medical practitioner under this Bill—and the doctor certifies that the man is not suffering from T.B., he is admitted to the industry. Then when the laboratory travels around in six or nine months' time, it may be that the laboratory doctor will certify that the man is suffering from T.B. In one case I know of the laboratory doctor not only said that the man had T.B. when he was examined, but that he had it when he was examined by the other medical man and had it also a long time before that. We are not in a position to say for how long. I hope the Minister will amend the Bill as far as T.B. men only are concerned. If a man has been admitted to the industry after a laboratory test, irrespective of the period he has been in the industry, if he has been examined by an outside doctor who has not the facilities that are available at the laboratory, and is found to be suffering from T.B. when examined, the position should then be as the Minister prescribes, though that should not be made general.

The Minister for Mines: I have no objection to an amendment on those lines.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am pleased to hear the Minister say that. It will be an extra payment that the board will have to make. They must find the extra £750. I agree with the Minister that there will not be too many such cases in the future. I hope not anyhow. But that is not all, by a long way. The board will have to find £750 for every man who leaves the industry with silicosis early and who may eventually contract silicosis advanced.

The Minister for Mines: There are not many of those.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Minister will find that there are quite a number who are suffering from silicosis early to-day and who unfortunately in 12 months time will have silicosis advanced.

The Minister for Mines: We can prevent that if they go out of the industry.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The board will have to find £750 for the man who leaves the industry unless he develops silicosis advanced or T.B. within 12 months. If it is after 12 months the board will have to find an extra £750. The board will also have to find money for all the prospectors that will be admitted under the measure. Provision is made for admitting prospectors under the same conditions as if they were being accepted under the Mining Act as prospectors who were suffering from silicosis early. The board would then be liable for £750 over and above the amount prescribed by regulation. I am quite safe in saying that in every case it would be £500 more than there would have to be found under the regulations as they are to-day. Under those conditions, in my opinion, it is not possible for the board to finance their operations. Then there is another point that I shall bring under the notice of the Minister. I have read the provisions in the Bill under which prospectors will be able to come within the scope of the legislation. I will state the phase at what I believe to be its minimum. Throughout the goldfields there are at least 3,000 people who could and would be classified as prospectors, and I honestly believe that out of that number, 1,500 could comply with the conditions laid down in the measure.

The Minister for Mines: And if that is so, why shouldn't they?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am not saying that they should not, but am merely pointing out that at least 1,500 would be able to comply with the conditions. The first and main condition is that they shall have worked for at least ten years in the industry prior to making application to be brought within the scope of the legislation. Taking it at the number I estimate, the board will find themselves at a disadvantage in that they will lose one-third of the contributions they get from other mine workers, but will have to pay the same benefits. I do not contend that those benefits should not be available to prospectors. The point I am making is that the members of the board will be supposed to finance the prospectors' claims and pay compensation to them, but at the same time they will have to work on two-thirds of the total contribution compared with that paid by other mine workers. I do not think the board will be able to carry

that responsibility. Of course, the one-third contribution that the board will be deprived of arises from the fact that there are no employers of prospectors. The prospectors will contribute the same amount as ordinary mine workers and the Government will contribute their proportion, but the remaining third, which is contributed by the employer of an ordinary miner, will not be available when prospectors' claims are dealt with. In such circumstances, we must regard those 1,500 prospectors as increasing the obligations of the board by at least £500 per head, and the board will have one-third less by way of contributions with which to finance such claims. After giving the Bill every consideration, I do not think it is possible for the board to finance their operations under such conditions. I am not sure with regard to another liability; it will all depend upon the interpretation that will be placed upon it by the regulations that will be framed. The silicotic miner is, under the provisions of the Mines Regulation Act Amendment Act, allowed to re-enter the industry, and the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board will have to accept responsibility for men of that type as well. I have mentioned four distinct instances in which the board will be liable for payments from the relief fund to the extent of £250, and the board will certainly be liable for another £500 to each of those men who become entitled to the full amount of compensation, but the board will have less to draw upon from the standpoint of contributions with which to finance those extra payments. From my experience of the existing Mine Workers' Relief Fund, I know that, during the time of the Collier Government, the fund was almost entirely depleted, and we had to finance it to the extent of at least 50 per cent. of the contributions to enable the fund to be continued.

The Minister for Mines: In view of the functioning of the fund, you surely recognise the position has improved.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, so far as tuberculosis is concerned; I shall have something to say on that phase later on. There is another aspect, but I do not know that I should not classify it among the benefits rather than among the disadvantages. It will be a benefit to the men if it operates as suggested, and will coincide with my views, but it will certainly not be in accordance with the policy of the Govern-

ment. The whole of the benefits outlined in the Bill depend absolutely on one contingency. They cannot be paid by the Government or by the board under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, or by the board out of the relief fund unless the State Insurance Office continues operations. There is no doubt about that point.

The Minister for Mines: You either want the Bill or you do not want it. Are you introducing something to be knocked down?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No.

The Minister for Mines: Then why introduce that phase?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Perhaps the Minister thinks I should not have raised the point. If men working in the mining industry accept the Bill in its present form, or in the best form we can conceive, they should not be deluded into the belief that, irrespective of what the Legislative Council may do regarding the State Insurance Office, they will secure those benefits. As a matter of fact, there can be none of the benefits unless the State Insurance Office remains in existence. I hope that will be the position. The reason, of course, that the benefits will not be available unless the State Insurance Office continues to operate is that no private company will accept insurance risks under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, as the State Insurance Office is doing.

The Minister for Mines: And is it not still getting that insurance?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, the State Insurance Office continues to get that type of insurance.

The Minister for Mines: Then why set up a bogey?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am not.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, you are.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I maintain I am not. I certainly hope the Legislative Council will pass the Bill embodying the benefits provided in the measure. If they do that, they cannot object at some future date to legalising the operations of the State Insurance Office.

The Minister for Mines: You are giving them the tip to throw this out.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No, I want the Council to pass the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: You are making that a condition for acceptance or rejection.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I will not allow the Minister to make that an issue. I believe that 90 per cent. of the male electors in my constituency are mine workers, and I would be lacking in my duty to them if I did not explain fully what the Bill represents. That is what I am doing.

The Minister for Mines: No, you are going further than that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Not at all. If the Minister has anything in his mind suggesting that it would be possible to provide these benefits if the State Insurance Office went out of existence, he should give us some indication of the position.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think it has any bearing on the position, and that is why I did not make any reference to that phase.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It has a reference to the mine workers.

The Minister for Mines: It is a bogey.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: If the State Insurance Office went out of existence, none of these benefits would be paid.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think that is right.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Bill will certainly save revenue to the Government, to which I have no objection.

The Premier: It is not a proper charge against the Treasury.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I will deal with that point. I want to make it clear that I have no objection to the Bill, because legislation of this description should have been passed years ago. The Minister and the Government are doing right in not using money that is already being paid by the mining industry but is not utilised for the purpose for which it is being paid. I have no objection to the Bill from that standpoint. I admit that for a few years at any rate the Government will be saved very little. When the Miners' Phthisis Act was first proclaimed, the payments under that legislation amounted to £28,000 a year. The Premier assured us the other night, and the Minister mentioned the matter too, when he was speaking, that the payments have increased appreciably, and to-day the payments represent about £60,000 a year. All that money has to come from Consolidated Revenue at a time when the mining industry has been paying huge sums for compensation under the Third Schedule of the

Workers' Compensation Act, and the Government have not been able to get the benefit of it. I admit the Government will have to continue those payments to miners who are suffering from tuberculosis and have been withdrawn from the industry, and that they will have to contribute the money out of Consolidated Revenue if the Bill becomes law. On the other hand, each year those payments will represent a decreasing, instead of an increasing, amount.

The Premier: The industry ought to have provided for those payments all along.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Of course, but it has not done so, with the result that a legacy has been left to the Government for this year, of approximately £60,000 that has to be found from Consolidated Revenue. A little while ago I asked the Premier some questions regarding payments of premiums under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. I asked the Premier what amount had been paid by the mining industry in premiums under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act from the inception, and also what amount had been paid by the insurance companies from that fund. The reply I received was that the total amount paid as premiums by the mining companies to the 30th June, 1932, was £213,391 5s. 11d., and that the total amount paid by the Government against those premiums was £25,146 10s. 9d., leaving a balance of £188,244, representing the excess amount received in premiums compared with what had been paid away in the form of compensation. In his reply the Premier said that £20,000 had previously been appropriated to the Mines Department to assist the Treasury to pay amounts claimed under the Third Schedule, and that a further £20,000 would be appropriated for the same purpose. Thus a total of £40,000 had been appropriated out of the fund, which still left £148,244 in the fund. In his reply to my question the Premier answered something that I did not ask. He gave me the total amount that had been paid under the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act to the 30th June, 1932. He informed us that £278,187 had been paid from Consolidated Revenue as against the premiums received amounting to £213,391. I am using these figures for the purpose of pointing out that if the compensation had been paid out as it is now proposed, Consolidated Revenue would still have had to

find £64,769, the difference between the two last-mentioned figures I have quoted.

The Premier: That represents accumulated trouble over a period of years.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I had quoted figures to show that if the total premiums under the Third Schedule had been utilised to pay compensation under the Miners' Phthisis Act, there would have been a deficit to the Treasury of £64,796. I take it the figures given by the Premier were the total payments under the Miners' Phthisis Act. Of course it would not be fair to debit the whole of the payments to the Third Schedule premiums, inasmuch as a considerable amount of expenditure has not been made by way of compensation but has been incurred as wages for actual work done. A fair number of men in the metropolitan area were being paid the basic rate for work done, and in a fair number of instances it was useful work, too. If that work had not been done by those men and paid for under the Miners' Phthisis Act, it must have been paid for by the State Gardens Board, the King's Park Board, or other institution receiving the benefit of the work of those men. Consequently, it would not be fair to debit the whole of that expenditure to the fund. I admit that the graph displayed on the wall of the Chamber shows a considerable reduction in the number of T.B. men. If I understand it aright, it also shows a fair reduction in the number of men contracting silicosis: that is, of the men who have been admitted to the mines after examination at the laboratory. I am not in a position to say how many men were in the industry previous to the examination taking place, or how many were admitted to the industry after examination. The graph is satisfactory from the viewpoint from which it has been compiled, but the statement tabled by the Minister is very enlightening. I hope the Minister will see that the gentleman responsible gets an opportunity to continue the good work of collating those figures, and that the figures will be put on a standard basis as early as possible. The results of the examinations in 1931, and as far as they have proceeded this year, are not as satisfactory as we might wish. At the 1931 examinations 252 men were certified to be suffering from silicosis early, while 94 men who had previously been certified as normal

had moved to the stage of silicosis early, making the total thus affected still working in the mines 346. In the 1932 examinations, which are not yet complete—only the Kalgoolie and Boulder districts have been completed while the outback districts remain to be done—299 men were certified to be suffering from silicosis early and 23 had advanced from normal to the early stage of silicosis, a total of 322. The 1931 examinations revealed 53 men suffering from miners' phthisis advanced, and of that number five had moved from the early to the advanced stage. In 1932, 28 men were found to be suffering from the advanced stage and three of them had moved from the early to the advanced stage. Thus, some of the miners are still moving from the early to the advanced stage, but the number is not as great as it was a few years ago. Taking the 53 men suffering from miners' phthisis advanced, if all those men had received compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act, the total payments would have been £39,750. Deducting that sum from the total still in hand at the Treasury from premiums paid under the Third Schedule, there remains a balance in the fund of £148,494. If this Bill is to become law, and the Minister has no other suggestion to make, the board must have some of that £148,494 allocated to them year by year to enable them to meet their obligations.

The Minister for Mines: That obligation under the Workers' Compensation Act would be spread over a period and would not be paid at the moment.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I admit that a good deal of the £39,750 would be spread over a period of perhaps $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, but I am dealing with the matter from the standpoint of the whole of those men claiming full compensation and being paid it. Then they would not draw anything from the Mine Workers' Relief Fund for $4\frac{1}{2}$ years. I am aware of that. They would still have to contribute their 9d. per week to the fund throughout the $4\frac{1}{2}$ years in order to be eligible to draw from the fund later on. The extra responsibility to be imposed upon the board cannot be met unless they are entitled to receive some of the balance in hand. I think provision should be made for the board in that way. If something of the kind be not done, I am afraid that what the member for Murchison anticipated will happen, namely

that the board will not be able to pay the amounts specified in this Bill, and the contributions will have to be increased. I believe the Minister is firmly of opinion that the present contributions should continue. I wish to impress upon him that I do not think there is much chance of the board increasing the contributions, no matter what the financial circumstances may be. On the board there will be two representatives of the employees and two representatives of the employers, all of whom will naturally object to any increase in the contributions. If those two parties agreed to an increase, the Government would have to increase their one-third share proportionately. I do not want to see that happen, but I am afraid that if some of the balance in the Treasury is not made available to the board, they will be unable to finance the scheme.

The Minister for Mines: I doubt extremely whether that position will arise.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am pleased to hear that. The Minister, in moving the second reading of the Bill, made what I think was a slip, because his statement was not in conformity with the existing Act. If the interpretation he gave were correct, I would oppose the second reading of the Bill, and would do all I could to defeat it.

The Minister for Mines: What was the statement?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: When dealing with the interpretation of "underground," the Minister said—

Therefore, to define persons entitled to receive the benefits, we include all those workers as workers underground. It is merely the interpretation necessary to define the nature of underground work entitling the employees to the benefits under the measure.

That is not so. In the Bill the definition of the person entitled to receive the benefit appears under "mine worker" and not under "underground." "Mine worker" defines the men entitled to receive the benefits, and includes all workers in, on or about a mine. Consequently, the statement of the Minister was not quite in accordance with the Act.

Hon. P. Collier: I thought that was a slip.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I think so, too. I want to tell the Minister that when discussing this matter with the executive of the A.W.U., they picked out the Minister's statement and said, "We won't have this Bill."

The Minister for Mines: The interjection to which the hon. member refers is the one dealing with the workers who re-entered the industry.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: No. As a matter of fact, that is really what it does mean, but that is not what the Minister said. On reference to page 211 it will be seen that the member for Murchison interjected, and immediately afterwards will be found the statement that I have read. That definition is in the Bill for a specific purpose. It is there to define certain places as underground which are really on the surface, for the purpose of prohibiting the man who is slightly dusted from getting employment in any of those positions. The Minister, however, said it was there for the purpose of defining those who are entitled to the benefits under the Bill. That is not right. I honestly believe that was a slip on the Minister's part. I will vote for the second reading of the Bill, but I hope the Minister will agree to some amendments, at least. I have outlined one or two that I would like to make. I would like to repeat some of them. First, I desire that £3 10s. shall be provided as the maximum for a worker with children, the minimum to be increased to that amount in accordance with the number of his children. If that is done, of course it will decrease the period during which the worker will draw the £750 compensation. Although it is a sorrowful thing to say, if we take the figures as they have been presented to us since the first examinations of mine workers were made, we find the average life of a worker withdrawn from the mine and suffering from silicosis, plus T.B., is not quite four years. Let me emphasise this point: a man suffering from miner's phthisis, plus tuberculosis, towards the end of his days costs considerably more to keep, because he must be provided with oils, and with specially selected and prepared foods. I think he ought to get the extra money, and if that provision were made, it would save much hardship in many cases. I also desire the amounts to be fixed by the board by regulation to be increased, although I am not going to suggest what the increases should be. Another small matter to which I do not think the Minister will object—I think it is a fair and reasonable amendment—is that a paid official of a trade union directly connected with the mining industry, if he has been withdrawn from the industry to fill that position, should be put in the same position

as a mines inspector. Take the present organiser for the Kalgoorlie and Boulder district. He is a man who has worked for 28 years underground in the mining industry of this State. He was selected and elected by his fellow workers to the position of organiser of the union connected with the industry and he has held the position for more than two years.

The Minister for Mines: Industrial organiser, not political organiser.

Hon. P. Collier: He is purely an industrial organiser.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. If he lost his position to-morrow, there would be no possible hope under the Bill, as it stands, for him to get back into the industry or to get any compensation. I do not think that is a fair proposition.

Hon. P. Collier: I hope the Minister will see that. There is nothing political about the position.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: There is nothing political about the position of the secretary-organiser. There is a case on the fields now of a man who never worked a day underground, but followed the occupation that was followed by the Minister, that of an engine-driver. That man is suffering from silicosis advanced. He must go up for examination the same as any other person affected. He has been four years in the Engine Drivers' Union on the fields, that is, the Engine Drivers' Union connected with the mining industry. The secretary of the Engine Drivers' Union is a man who was employed in the mining industry as an engine-driver. He was appointed to the position of secretary of the Engine Drivers' Union, and he should not lose his benefits under the Bill by reason of his having accepted that position.

Hon. P. Collier: If he loses his present job, he should have the right to go back into the industry.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That is not asking very much.

The Minister for Mines: He would be treated as a new applicant when it came to the question of a certificate.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. He should come under the Bill. In conclusion, I think the Bill confers many advantages, particularly in the direction of granting benefits to workers who, under existing circumstances, have no chance of getting any. On the other hand, the Bill does take away some of the advantages that would accrue to those who

will be withdrawn under the Miners' Phthisis Act as it stands to-day. We cannot have it both ways, but I ask the Minister to be reasonable, and to let us have a fair discussion on the Bill in Committee in order to see whether we cannot get some amendments that will suit all parties concerned. If he does that, I am satisfied he will have done something in the interests of his fellow beings in Western Australia and particularly in the interests of those engaged in the mining industry.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [7.52]: The Bill deals with diseases in the mining industry, the history of which in Western Australia makes a long and sorrowful story. Prior to the establishment of the laboratory at Kalgoorlie, many hundreds of workers in the mining industry succumbed to the industrial diseases with which the Bill deals. Four Royal Commissioners had been appointed to make inquiries and each one of them drew attention to the dust existing and to the necessity for improved conditions and better ventilation. The last of these commissions was held in 1925, when Mr. Kingsley Thomas was appointed a Royal Commissioner. On that occasion he stated, notwithstanding the findings of previous Royal Commissions, the mines were the dustiest he had ever been in. The examinations made since the laboratory was established give rise to some degree of satisfaction. An improvement is certainly shown, but I think it is largely due to the fact that the first examination resulted in withdrawing from the mines many men who had worked in them for 25 to 30 years and who consequently were very badly affected with silicosis and T.B. Each successive examination showed an improvement up to 1929. We are told that the increase in that year was due to improved plants and improved radiographic technique. The Minister has stated that he does not think there will be many T.B. cases in the future. I do not know why he thinks that, because we find that in spite of the improved plants and radiographic technique the 1929 examination disclosed amongst the 2,120 who were classed as normal that year there was no sign of T.B. In subsequent examinations, however, still as the result of improved plants and radiographic technique 50 simple cases of T.B. were discovered in 1930, and 25

in 1931, notwithstanding that the examiners had had the advantage in 1929 of the improved plant and radiographic technique.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say there would not be any more T.B. cases.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH: You said there were not likely to be many of them.

The Minister for Mines: I did not.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH: There were 50 in 1930 and 25 in 1931.

Hon. P. Collier: T.B. with silicosis?

MR. F. C. L. SMITH: Tuberculosis only. That is what I am speaking about. Those cases will go on to the board in future under this Bill. This report, which appeared in the "West Australian" in 1930 states—

The result of the repeated examinations shows that the annual incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis in mine workers in Western Australia, while not great, is quite definite, as .7, .5 and .3 per cent. of previously normal examinees were eliminated in successive years on account of this infection.

In my opinion, that shows clearly that the infection is due to the incidence of the industry, to the conditions which are inseparable from it and under which the men have to work, and to the breathing of compressed air that comes through dirty drilling machines and dirty compressors. All these things tend to bring about T.B. infection of the simple kind.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The greasy nature of the air carries the silica.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH: Probably it does. However, I think that clearly indicates that we may expect in the future just as many T.B. cases as we have had in the past. It has been pointed out that there is no inducement for men to leave the industry. I realise that. In the past, the worker has had to remain in the industry until he contracted T.B. or until he dropped out as a totally and permanently incapacitated case, suffering from advanced silicosis. There are, however, other reasons why a miner working in the industry does not care about leaving it. One of the reasons is that he can command a job in the mining industry because of his experience. He can command an adequate remuneration for the experience and knowledge that he has of mining work, a remuneration which he could not command in any other industry. A further point in that connec-

tion is this: it has been found that when a dusted miner does take up other manual work he brings into action new muscles and consequently the disease is often irritated and its advancement assisted. Consequently he works on in the mining industry. In South Africa where the disease has been most aggressively studied and attacked, it is divided into various stages. There is the anti-primary silicosis stage, the primary silicosis stage, the T.B. with silicosis, and the simple T.B. They did not attempt to avoid their responsibilities to the man who had contracted early silicosis in the industry as this Bill attempts to avoid them. Insurance is confined to the white employees. It is costing some of the mines as much as 10s. per shift for the insurance of these men. Notwithstanding all they have done there, the heavy cost that falls upon the industry, and the attempts which have been made to improve ventilation and general conditions with a view to reducing the cost of the incidence of the disease, in South Africa they have since 1919 had over 200 cases per annum of anti-primary silicosis. A great deal of what one would have said on this Bill has already been said, but there are certain aspects of it with which I would like to deal. The measure contains good features, but also some objectionable ones. A good feature is one which allows an advanced silicotic to retire on compensation. At present he has to hang on until he drops or contracts T.B. Another good feature is that which allows early silicotics to retire and register, and remain eligible for compensation if they become advanced or T.B. Another good feature allows the board to grant relief to those whose earning power is materially prejudiced by disease or is attributable to the nature of their employment on the mines. The board are already dealing with cases of the kind. There are other features in the Bill that the board will deal with that are already being covered. With regard to those who are early silicotics and are to be allowed to return to the industry, that is a questionable feature. I recognise that early silicotics who are discovered while working in the industry should be allowed to register and should be entitled to compensation later on. Early silicosis is defined in the Bill as follows:—

If it is found by the medical officer or practitioner appointed under this measure or by

the laboratory that definite and specific physical signs of silicosis are or have been present, and that the capacity for work is or has been impaired by that disease, although not seriously and permanently.

The man may return to the industry. The question of interpreting what early silicosis is and the necessity for an interpretation, has been dealt with by Dr. Nelson in a report he presented to this House on an investigation of the pulmonary conditions of mining employees in Western Australia. Dr. Nelson said that for legal purposes it was desirable to have a clear cut issue. He had previously been speaking about the early fibrosis stage which he said was difficult to determine. He continued—

As the next stage of miners' phthisis is but a slight advance from this early fibrotic stage and so unmistakably definable, it is thought advisable to make early silicosis the stage for the notification to miners concerned that it was advisable for them to leave the mining industry.

I wonder what the definition of early silicosis is going to be under the Bill. Is it going to be similar to that of Dr. Nelson's? The Minister proposes to allow those men to return at a stage when Dr. Nelson considers it is advisable they should leave the industry. In the report published in the "West Australian" in 1930 it was stated—

The outlook for men remaining in the industry after having been diagnosed as suffering from silicosis is more grave. The percentage in this class eliminated on account of T.B. infection at subsequent examinations was 7.2, 4.2, and 5.7 per cent. for early cases and 46.2, 12.2 and 25.0 per cent. for advanced cases.

This shows how rapidly early silicotic cases in many instances passed from the early silicotic to the complicated T.B. stage. I agree with what the report says further—

As tragic and heroic as it may appear, many men knowing they are affected remain in the industry until they reach the advanced stage when they may become eligible for compensation in order that their families will not starve. The possibility and the advisability of giving assistance in the early stages when the disease is detected is a debatable issue involving serious financial consideration. The humane aspect, however, invites only one answer, to give the assistance as soon as a man is dusted. It is a matter requiring serious consideration.

Under the Bill that responsibility either on the part of the Government or the mining industry is going to be avoided. Whoever

should carry that responsibility is open to question. The Government are not taking much risk with regard to early silicotics who are allowed to return to the industry. When they pass to the advanced silicosis and T.B. stage the liability will be on the board, which will be financed by workers' and mine owners' subscriptions, and this will be part and parcel of the enormous liability the board will have to carry, one that they cannot carry with the present contributions. Provided the early silicotic stage is a very early one, there may be some justification for allowing men to return to the industry, but not if the interpretation is placed upon it that Dr. Nelson has placed upon it, namely that early silicosis is the stage a man reaches when he is advised that in his own best interests he should leave the industry. The Government had a wonderful opportunity under this Bill to give added advantages to the mine workers while retaining its general principles. They could have brought down a measure to use the vast amount of money which has accumulated under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, without throwing the liability of T.B. cases on the workers' and mine owners' subscriptions. If the Government want the third schedule payments to bear their share of the payments for simple T.B. and T.B. with silicosis cases, why not continue the Miners' Phthisis Act and the benefits for those cases, and have simple T.B. cases and T.B. with advanced silicosis cases declared totally and permanently incapacitated under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, and appropriate the payments due to those cases?

The Minister for Mines: That is an idea.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: It is wrong to throw all the simple T.B. cases on to the subscriptions to the fund. The Miners' Phthisis Act should have been continued. I do not know why that was not done.

The Minister for Mines: It is being continued.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: It has been discontinued as it affects new cases. There was no necessity for that. The Government could have appropriated the payments, and declared these men totally and permanently incapacitated under the Workers' Compensation Act. The payments due to them under that Act could have been appropriated for the purpose of the Miners' Phthisis Board, which is now being administered under the Miners' Phthisis Act.

The Minister for Mines: Tuberculosis is not incapacity in that case.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Nor is advanced silicosis.

The Minister for Mines: That arises out of the nature of the industry.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: So does T.B.

The Minister for Mines: You can get that anywhere.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Where did all these T.B. cases come from?

The Minister for Mines: Where did hundreds of others come from?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Where did the 50 simple T.B. cases come from in 1930 except out of the 2,120 normals who were examined in 1929? They went up for examination to see whether or not they were affected by T.B.

The Minister for Mines: Where did the T.B. cases in the Woorooloo Sanatorium, those who had never been in a mine, come from?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: They had never been tested, but these men were tested by the improved plant and radiographic technique. In the following year out of that number of normals 500 had become T.B. cases.

The Minister for Mines: They did not go into the industry in 1929.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Of course they did.

The Minister for Mines: Nothing of the sort; they were already in it.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: But they were normal then: that is the point. Where did they contract T.B. except in the industry? Is there any comparison between these T.B. cases, and those who are walking about the streets and have been connected with other industries? There is no comparison. For these men the Bill proposes to limit the compensation to £750, plus what the board will allow, and the weekly payment is to be reduced from £3 18s. to £3 10s. Under the Miners' Phthisis Act, the widow of an uncomplicated T.B. man gets £2 a week for life, or until remarriage, but under the Bill she will get only the miserable pittance from the board, which is not as much as is allowed to the widow of an advanced silicotic man, for she will cut out the difference between what he was being paid and the £600 that she will be entitled to under the Act. And why is the T.B. man who cannot prove two years in the industry to have no consideration whatever? Why should he have to go

on the miserable pittance of the board, about 25s. per week?

The Minister for Mines: I think you are struggling hard to show that I am trying to improve the position.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: You are improving the position for silicotic cases at the expense of widows of T.B. men.

The Minister for Mines: Nonsense!

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: The benefits under the Bill demonstrate that. It is the most stupid Bill I have ever met with. Under it the board will have plenty to do. Here are some of their liabilities: All existing liabilities without further contributions. Will the Minister say the board has sufficient funds to meet its own obligations at date? Because under the Bill it is not going to get any more contributions towards meeting those liabilities?

The Minister for Mines: That is news to me.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Well, ask Mr. Bennett, the Government Statistician: he will tell you something.

The Minister for Mines: Mr. Bennett does not know anything about it.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: No, I bet he has not seen the Bill. The board will have to provide £750 at the rate of £3 10s. per week for a simple T.B. man who can prove two years' work in the mining industry, and an amount prescribed by regulation for the simple T.B. man who cannot prove two years' work in the industry. The board will have to provide £750 for the early silicotic case, moving to advanced silicosis, or silicosis with T.B., at a date more than one year after he ceases work. The board will have to provide £750 for a man re-admitted as prospector or mine worker in the early silicotic stage when he subsequently develops to advanced silicosis, or silicosis with T.B. The board will have to provide benefits as prescribed by regulation for mine workers to whom this measure will apply whose earning power is materially prejudiced by disease or malady which may be legitimately attributed to the nature of their employment. The board will have to provide benefits for the employee of a bankrupt employer, when such employee becomes entitled by silicosis advanced or silicosis with T.B. The board will have to meet the obligations of widows and dependants of T.B. and T.B. and silicotic and advanced silicotic cases after the £750 is cut out. The board will also have to meet the payment of its

secretary and necessary officials, and payment of members of the board; and in both instances the work will be increased. And the board will have to meet the cost of election of members of the board, and rent of premises and accommodation. Then the Bill provides that with all the money the board has left over it may endow and furnish hospitals, or do a hundred other things, all of which are prescribed. This is how it works out on the present contributions: The mine worker, the mine owner and the Government each pay 1s. 6d., or a total of 4s. 6d., per pay. There are 24 pays in each year, and so on behalf of each man the various contributions total £5 8s. per annum. At the sixth examination, 3,012 men were examined. Their contributions to the fund at £5 8s. per annum equal £16,254 16s. That amount would be available that year if the board had been in operation under the conditions that will obtain under the Bill. During that year there were 25 T.B. cases, the liability for which in that year would amount to £18,750. That, with all those other contingencies, the board will have to meet. What cannot be done in one year, cannot be done in ten years, for the liabilities of each year must be paid for out of the contributions of that year. It may be said that was an exceptional year, and that in future it is going to be on a broader basis. But take the whole six examinations, and we find an average of .6 per cent. of simple T.B. cases. That is to say, six cases for every 1,000 workers examined. On behalf of every 1,000 men there is contributed to the fund £5,400 per annum. Those six men in every thousand represent a liability on the board as the result of T.B. amounting to £4,500, leaving a balance of £900 per thousand to meet all the other contingencies provided for in the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: How do you arrive at that figure of £4,500?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Six men at £750 each. And there will be six men in the next year, and each year's contributions have to carry the year's liabilities. Simple T.B. cases are a liability on the board's funds. The thing is actuarially unsound. The board cannot possibly meet its liabilities. When I was 31 years of age I took out an insurance policy for £150, to be drawn either at 65 years of age or at death. If I live long enough, it gives me a 34 years run, and no man who works in the mining industry for 34 years will be unaffected. The premium I have to pay for an insurance of £150 is

£5 17s. per annum. Each of the men in the mining industry to-day is to be insured under the board if he contracts pure T.B. for £750, an enormous liability to carry on a premium of £5 8s. per annum. No insurance company in the world would dream of undertaking for anything like £5 8s. per annum the liabilities this board will have to carry. So I hope the Minister will reconsider the Bill and will submit the liabilities of the board to the Government Statistician, Mr. Bennett, and ask him what would be a fair premium to pay for the responsibilities that are thrust upon the board for £5 8s.

The Minister for Mines: The board will probably ask him that.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the use of leaving it to the board to ask him?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Recently in a little organisation to which I belong we found that a boy 16 years of age had to pay 10s. per annum to insure himself for £50 at death. If he had to insure for £750, it would cost him £7 10s. per annum. Yet the Bill proposes to insure these men against T.B. It cannot be done at the figure, and I trust that at least that aspect of the Bill will be further considered. I will oppose the Bill if it means that the workers are to be called upon to pay increased contributions—or the mine owners, either, for they are paying quite enough to-day at £4 10s. per cent. to meet the liabilities under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act.

The Minister for Mines: The mine owners are?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Yes; more than enough. I would not be surprised to know that the £4 10s. per cent. they are paying would be sufficient to cover the liability under both the Miners' Phthisis Act and the Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. P. Collier: I think that is the intention of the Minister.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Then he has gone about it in the wrong way.

The Minister for Mines: I think you are rather critical.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: No, I have nothing against you, either personally or politically.

The Minister for Mines: I am not worrying about the "personally," for I have any number of enemies, and one more will not matter.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Your enemies generally tell you the truth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will discuss the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: They are not very far away from it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: If it means increased payments by the workers and by the mine owners, I will oppose the second reading.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [8.30]: When introducing the Bill, the Minister said that one of the chief reasons that actuated the Government in bringing it forward was that he had been told by the Chamber of Mines, Kalgoorlie, that there was a likelihood of the mine owners discontinuing the payment of the rate agreed to with the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. The Minister also stated that it was costing the State in the vicinity of £60,000 annually to finance payments under the Miners' Phthisis Act, and that the payments under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act amounted to only a very small sum. Therefore, we can see that the Minister's object is to relieve the Treasury, and perhaps rightly, of an enormous amount of money that was being paid annually under the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act. Its object then was to provide means whereby these payments could be made to those miners who are suffering as a result of their occupation in the industry. It is well for us to realise the position. I have not been approached by the mine owners or by the workers to request the Minister to introduce a measure such as this. I know that the matter has been discussed not only by the mine owners but by the men who, after all, are the actual sufferers. The question has been discussed and it has been suggested that the Minister could very well have reached his objective in connection with the payments made under the Miners' Phthisis Act, and also the payments that should have been made under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, by merely a small amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act. That could easily have been done, and in connection with the statement made by the Chamber of Mines, who are anxious to be relieved of the payments they are making to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, which was agreed upon in the first place to be a voluntary contribution by the three parties concerned, it would have been a simple matter for the Minister to have submitted

a Bill to legalise the contributions to and payments by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. But what we are faced with is a most involved measure, one that is difficult to understand. One of the worst features of the Bill is that it is proposed that tuberculous men may continue to work in the industry. The Bill provides in the definition of tuberculosis that where the germ is found in the expectoration, or where the bacilli is closed, that it is not safe for the person to continue to work in the industry. But there is authority granted for the tuberculous worker to continue his work in the industry. It has been stated that where the bacilli is closed, which means that it is arrested, the person may continue to work in the industry. I have been informed by doctors that in the case of arrested disease it may at any time become active. Therefore the Minister must realise that he is giving authority under the Bill to permit tubercular miners to continue to work in the industry, and I do not think that is desired. I remember when the Miners' Phthisis Act was under consideration—and it was introduced by the present Minister—it was altogether for the purpose of saving the miner himself by excluding him from the industry, and the object also was to protect those with whom the worker might come into contact during his hours of labour in any part of the mine. The Bill we are now discussing deals with the individual. It means that it would be a danger to the worker's own health if he were permitted to continue to work in the industry, whereas it is a well-known fact that a person suffering from tuberculosis can infect a score of others working in any section of a mine. The medical fraternity tell us that, and as result of that advice, we asked previous Governments to introduce legislation to exclude tuberculous workers from employment underground. Now we find that the Minister intends to permit tuberculous miners to continue to work underground, provided the disease is closed. Then, again, we are advised that there is an advantage under the Bill in allowing an early silicotic to go back to the industry. Where is the advantage? As a result of his occupation a man is told that he has contracted silicosis, and he is advised to leave his employment. Later on he is to be given a special certificate to enable him to go back to the industry that

has injured his health and which industry he was advised to leave. I do not look upon that as an advantage. Again, the Minister proposes to allow prospectors, if suffering from early silicosis, to go back to the industry, or to become entitled to compensation or payment.

The Minister for Mines: They are already in the industry.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The proposal will also permit a prospector to go back to any part of a mine, if he so desires, as relief from prospecting for the time being. The Minister proposes to grant this as a concession to prospectors. But what are the conditions? The prospector must have worked in the mining industry in Western Australia for a period of not less than 10 years. At the same time there is no such provision covering the early silicosis man who has worked in the industry and who the Minister proposes to allow to return to it. I do not see that that is any great advantage to the prospector. The conditions are too severe; the period is too great. Again, the Minister proposes to make the maximum payment of £3 10s. per week. Under the Miners' Phthisis Act at present the maximum payment is the basic rate of wage operating in the district. So the Minister is decreasing the amount payable at present under the Miners' Phthisis Act and bringing it into line with the provisions of the Third Schedule where the maximum is £3 10s. a week. Thus there is a reduction. In addition, as has been pointed out, when the worker leaves this earth, under the Miners' Phthisis Act the widow is entitled to £2 a week and in addition 7s. for each child up to 16 years of age. Under the Bill we do not know what will happen, but the amount will not be less than the rate prescribed under the regulations operating under the Mine Workers' Board of Control. I see many disadvantages in the Bill. There may be some redeeming features, but I am inclined to think that sufficient time has not been taken in the drafting of it. I am of the opinion that the Minister could have obtained his objective by amending the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act and introducing legislation to legalise the amount payable by the Mine Workers' Board of Control. That would have been the better way. I am not favourable to the Bill. With other members on this side of the House, if the Bill passes

the second reading, I will do my best in Committee to effect some alterations in the interests of the people who, I think, are deserving of better consideration than it is proposed to give them.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [8.12]: The Bill is like the curate's egg, good in parts. I regret that the Bill was not brought down earlier in the session. It affects every section of the community and the employers and employees in the mining industry. The late stage of the session in which it is introduced precludes those who are intimately affected by the measure from giving it that consideration it is entitled to receive. I do not blame the Minister altogether for this, because I agree at once that the drafting of a Bill of this nature, which consolidates to an extent the Miners' Phthisis Act, the Mine Workers' Relief Fund and certain provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act, is not an easy task. Having regard to all the circumstances and difficulties involved, I think the Minister is to be excused for not being able to present the Bill to the House at an earlier stage. Still I emphasise the fact that it is scarcely fair to Parliament to face a Bill of this nature, which may have far-reaching consequences on the men employed in the industry without those men having a reasonable opportunity of discussing its provisions.

The Minister for Mines: We can leave it on the stocks if you like.

Hon. P. COLLIER: With other members representing goldfields constituencies, I made a special journey to Kalgoorlie during the week-end, and met many of the men concerned at a special meeting of the Miners' Union on Sunday. We found that very few of the men, although they had received copies of the Bill, had had time to study its provisions. They were really not in a position to say whether they approved or disapproved of many of the clauses of the Bill. I know the Minister was faced with a very difficult task in framing the Bill, but I regard it as a fifty-fifty measure. In some directions it does provide considerable benefits to mine workers, but on the other hand it takes away from those who are entitled to benefits under existing Acts, many of those beneficial provisions.

The Minister for Mines: Who would become entitled to them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. I am glad that the Bill is not made retrospective and that

it is not proposed to take away from beneficiaries under existing Acts those benefits that they enjoy to-day. It does deal with those who will come under its provisions when the Bill becomes law. It will enable in future many men to obtain benefits from its provisions, who are not in such a position to-day. I do not desire to deliver a long speech on the Bill, because I could not do so without traversing the ground already covered by previous speakers on the Opposition side of the House. I cannot add more to the case they have already presented, but I do consider one of the great advantages of the Bill is that which will permit men who have been certified as suffering from advanced silicosis to claim compensation, and secure the benefits of the provisions of the Bill as against the present position under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, under which a man has to carry on until he is certified as totally disabled. The Minister knows, and we know too, that men even in an advanced stage of silicosis are comparatively healthy. They are capable of carrying on their occupation for many years, but to the danger of others working on the mines. A man who may receive a certificate from a doctor that he is suffering from advanced silicosis, which is dust on the lungs, is not in a position to withdraw from his occupation because he has nothing to fall back upon. There is no compensation for him whatever. He can claim compensation under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act only when he is certified to be totally incapacitated.

The Minister for Mines: The wording of the Act is even worse than that. He must be certified as being totally disabled from earning full wages on work at which he was employed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. We know there is an interval between the time when a man is suffering from advanced silicosis and the time when he reaches the stage mentioned by the Minister, and that interval may represent many years. Despite that fact, a man in that position cannot withdraw from his employment because there is no provision for him. Force of circumstances compel him to continue working as long as he can until he reaches the stage at which he is totally disabled. Generally at that stage the man has contracted tuberculosis in addition to silicosis. The Bill will enable such a man on receiving a certificate from the

laboratory showing that he is suffering from advanced silicosis, to withdraw from the industry and claim compensation up to a maximum of £750, payable at £3 or £3 10s. a week. That is a distinct advantage. If that provision will not save the lives of many men, it will certainly prolong their lives. To the extent that it will prolong their lives, it will enable many men to escape contracting tuberculosis, which is the inevitable ultimate result from continuing work underground when suffering from advanced silicosis. That is a decided advantage that I am sorry has not been available to the men for many years past. As against that we have the point stressed by previous speakers regarding the reduction in the compensation payable to men withdrawn from the mines under the Miners' Phthisis Act. There is no doubt there is a great reduction under that heading. It has already been pointed out that under the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act a man certified as suffering from tuberculosis is withdrawn from the mines, and so long as he can do light work, he receives the basic wage for the time being in the district where he is working. If he cannot do that, he is paid compensation along the lines already indicated. It is generally understood that a man suffering from tuberculosis who is withdrawn from the mines under the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act lives, on an average, for about another four years. Such a man in those four years will just about cut out the compensation provided under the Bill, of £750. Under the Miners' Phthisis Act to-day, his widow would then continue to draw £2 a week for the remainder of her life, or until she married again, and she would also draw 8s. 6d. a week for each of her children under 16 years of age. Assuming that four years is the average life of a miner suffering from tuberculosis after he is withdrawn from a mine, and that he receives the maximum payment under the Bill of £750 at a rate of £3 10s. a week, he will, as I have pointed out, exhaust that amount at the end of that period. His widow and children under 16 years of age, instead of receiving the payments as provided to-day under the Miners' Phthisis Act, will have to fall back on the money provided under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, the payments from which are small indeed. Under that heading those who will be withdrawn from the industry in future will suffer a great reduction. I do not wish to stress any of the other points

that could be raised both for and against the Bill. The Minister, when moving the second reading of the Bill, mentioned that it was a non-party measure. He invited members of the Opposition to assist him to improve the Bill and he said he was not wedded entirely to its exact wording. Having regard to that suggestion of the Minister, I am prepared to vote for the second reading of the Bill, but I hope the Minister will listen reasonably to any amendments that may be moved.

The Minister for Mines: I can guarantee to always listen reasonably.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the Minister knows that to listen reasonably means that the man who makes the suggestion desires to have his suggestion adopted. If the Minister does not adopt the suggestion, then he does not listen reasonably.

The Minister for Mines: You know I would adopt the suggestion if it were reasonable.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That resolves itself into a question of what the Minister or I may consider reasonable. I hope we shall be able to move amendments that will be accepted by the Minister, and in any event I reserve the right to vote against the third reading of the Bill, if necessary.

On motion by Hon. M. F. Troy, debate adjourned.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT CONTINUANCE.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read, notifying that it had agreed to Nos. 1, 3 and 5 of the amendments made by the Assembly to the Bill, and had disagreed to Nos. 2 and 4 for reasons set out in the schedule annexed.

BILL—BULK HANDLING.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair: the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That a definition be inserted as follows:—“‘Minister’ means the Minister appointed to administer this Act.”

This was proposed by the select committee. It is desirable in all such measures to define the Minister to be charged with the administration of the measure.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Parliamentary Draftsman informs me that the definition is already provided in Section 4 of the Interpretation Act and that the amendment is unnecessary.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Will it matter if it is mentioned again?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have no objection to it.

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

Clause 3—Constitution and powers of trust:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 1 the following words be struck out:—“With a view to the securing of economies by the handling in bulk of wheat grown in Western Australia, and the provision of grain bins and other plant, machinery and equipment necessary to that end, and with a view to ensuring that the finance required for the purposes aforesaid shall be raised by loans on the most favourable terms.”

The words are superfluous. It is not customary to include such expressions in Acts of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I agree that there is no reason why the words should be included.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (a) be struck out with a view to inserting the following words:—“The trust shall consist of five persons, three of whom shall be bona fide wheat growers who are not associated with any wheat-buying partnership or organisation connected with the purchase of wheat, one member to be the nominee of the Commissioner of Railways, and a chairman to be appointed by the Government.”

If we are going to have bulk handling, let us put it in the hands of an independent trust constituted of the wheatgrowers of the

State. The Bill seeks to place control in the hands of a certain section of growers, and farmers who did not pool their wheat would have no voice in the appointment of the trust. The amendment would not prevent any of the trustees of the wheat pool being appointed by the whole of the wheatgrowers. I am not opposed to the farmers instituting bulk handling or managing their own affairs. My amendment will enable them to do so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The paragraph is very important. On Thursday evening last the House took two divisions. One dealt with the report of the select committee, which a majority of members opposed. Why, I do not yet know. I then moved for the recommittal of the original Bill and this is the Bill. I take it that members realise the question on which they are asked to vote. If the amendment be carried, the trustees of the Wheat Pool will not be in control of bulk handling.

Mr. Pantou: That may be the reason why members voted against the report of the select committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am merely warning members.

Mr. Patrick: It was one way to defeat the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the amendment be carried, other words will have to be inserted in lieu. The Government stand to the Bill, whatever its merits or demerits. There may be some danger in voting for the amendment. I ask members to consider the amendment seriously, because it is an important phase of the Bill.

Mr. DONEY: The Minister has mentioned the importance of the clause. As a matter of fact, this clause is the Bill. If the Committee accept the amendment, we might as well drop the Bill. The amendment looks innocent, fair and reasonable, but exactly what does it mean? It might mean anything. The hon. member could have been more specific. Does it mean that he wishes to set up a Government authority? If he does, it is my duty to tell him that a Government authority implies Government control, and members should know that Government control is absolutely anathema to 95 per cent. of the farmers.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Will not the Government be guaranteeing the loan?

Mr. DONEY: There are quite a number of objections, apart from that one.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That is provided for in the original Bill.

Mr. DONEY: The member for Perth is opposed to monopolies, but particularly is he opposed to a monopoly of this kind. If he accepts the amendment, the monopoly will continue, except that it will be transferred from the pool to whatever authority may be brought into being.

Mr. J. H. Smith: To the whole of the farmers.

Mr. DONEY: Bosh! I know exactly what is in the hon. member's mind. If he proposes a semi-governmental authority, it will be equally objectionable, and if he proposes a private authority, I do not know that I would have much good to say about that, either. He is simply seeking to substitute another authority for the authority mentioned in the Bill. He is seeking to take the power from a body of men who are recognised by the farmers and, I think, by the people generally as being fair, square and honourable men. They stand high in the estimation of the wheat-growing community.

Mr. Wansbrough: Has anybody questioned that?

Mr. DONEY: They are elected by the farmers, who are the people most concerned, and who should have the biggest voice in the selection of the men to deal with their wheat. I ask hon. members to ponder over this question before they pass an amendment that cannot improve the position. I am satisfied with the clause as it stands. I ask members to look at the matter from the point of view of the farmers, who, it must be admitted, have had many years' experience of the present trustees of the Wheat Pool. There are some 10,000 wheat farmers in this State who, at hundreds of meetings and through the medium of the Press, have demonstrated their faith in the trustees of the Wheat Pool. Why cannot the House for once let the farmer have his own way? He does not get it too often.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I oppose the amendment. If it is carried, the foundation of the Bill is gone. That foundation is finance, and the trustees of the Wheat Pool have been appointed for a stated period in order to establish the new system of bulk handling of wheat, and to supervise the change-over from the bag system. The period mentioned in the Bill I think is not long enough, but it can be amended in due course. It is essential that the work in connection with the change-over must be

carried out expeditiously in order that the farmers may be saved 3d. to 4½d. per bushel. To do that, the trustees must be authorised to raise the necessary capital, which is already assured, within a term of two years. If the amendment is carried, the term cannot be limited to two years and the negotiations for finance would then have to be undertaken by a new organisation. The trustees of the Wheat Pool have a certain amount of money in hand, as the result of accumulated fractions and interest thereon. That money, amounting to £70,000, it is intended shall be used as a guarantee that the first 12 months' interest on the borrowed money shall be assured, and not be merely dependent upon the 5½d. which it is proposed to impose as a toll upon the wheat delivered to the pool. The trustees have therefore a basis upon which to make representations to those from whom they are raising the capital.

Mr. H. W. Mann: What authority have you to make that statement?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It has been made in sworn evidence before the select committee by those who control the money, and I may add that I was present at meetings when this matter was discussed. Another important point in regard to the raising of the money overseas is that a large percentage of the wheat of Western Australia is sold in London, and therefore the trustees will be in the happy position of saying to the lenders that there will be sufficient money available in London to pay them their interest there. I do not wish to convey that the trustees will use the proceeds of the wheat for the payment of interest, but there will be no need to transfer money to London. It will be raised in Australia and paid in London out of the proceeds of the wheat. It will be a purely bookkeeping arrangement, but it has this advantage, that it will enable the trustees to raise the necessary money at a low rate of interest. The pool is a co-operative pool: there are no vested interests. The trustees are purely servants of the farmers. They are elected by the farmers and paid a fee by the farmers. Their salary is reviewed regularly, just as their election is reviewed. They have been in office for the past 11 years, and have therefore become educated in the handling and marketing of wheat. It is no reflection on private

merchants to say that the leading authority on wheat handling and marketing in Western Australia is the Wheat Pool.

MR. H. W. MANN: Why?

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: Because they have handled up to 60 per cent. of the farmers' wheat. They are not purely agents with an office table and a few chairs, who send men into the country and employ shopkeepers and others in country districts to buy wheat for them.

MR. H. W. MANN: Is that how you describe a company like Dalgety's? Do you call them a butt-in company?

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: No. I do not want to insult anybody, but I am stating facts. The hon. member need not get excited. I know perfectly well there is room for excitement on his part, because I know he has been lobbied to-night. I have seen the company he has been in, and that is perfectly clear.

MR. H. W. MANN: That is quite out of place.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member need not become insulting. I know the reason for his excitement.

MR. H. W. MANN: I take exception to the statement that I have been lobbied, and I ask the hon. member to withdraw it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mann has asked that those remarks be withdrawn.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: It is a Parliamentary expression which is frequently used. We read of lobbying in the corridors of the National Parliament. We see it in our own Chamber. We have seen it to-night, but if the expression is objectionable—

THE CHAIRMAN: I rule it is.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: If the hon. member objects to it, I will withdraw the expression, but I do not say it is incorrect in any way.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask you to withdraw it.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I withdraw it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may proceed with his speech.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I want to be quite calm about this matter. I know a great deal of work has been done in regard to the amendment of this Bill. I question whether an organisation equal to the Wheat Pool could be found anywhere else in the world. It matters not what the political views of the trustees are. I do not share them, but I do not take politics into a co-operative movement. The organisation has

been studying bulk handling for many years and has devoted much time to it, more time than has any other organisation in this State. We want men in control of the movement whose reputation is such that we can go to the London market and get the necessary capital at the minimum rate of interest.

Member: Guaranteed by the Government.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: They can guarantee it, because of the 2d. toll that will be collected. Again, the trustees have had practical experience of bulk handling for 12 months. They are not controlled by any political party, and do not care anything about the political faith of individuals. All they do, is to see that the wheat passed through them by pool participants is disposed of to the best advantage. The organisation has demonstrated its abilities in this direction, and has shown that bulk handling can effect a saving to farmers of from 3d. to 4½d. per bushel, a most important factor in these times. Everything possible should be done to encourage wheatgrowers to remain on their holdings. If members support the amendment, they will be supporting something that is put up in the interest of private persons against the co-operative movement. By rejecting the amendment they will be cutting out the profit of the middleman and giving the work to an honest, capable and industrious organisation.

MR. BROWN: I am opposed to the amendment. If it is carried it will practically kill the bill, and that is its object. A trust such as has been suggested will mean that the wheatgrowers' representatives will be entirely dominated by the Government. The money required for bulk handling cannot possibly be raised in Australia, but it can be raised by the wheat trustees as proposed in the Bill. I am surprised that the amendment has been submitted. Only a little while ago the mover said he did not believe in bulk handling. He has now somersaulted. What is his opinion worth? He does not represent the wheatgrowing industry, only the timber and fruit industries and growers of a few "spuds." We know who has put him up to move this amendment, and what has been happening in the last hour or two.

MR. J. MacCallum Smith: It is your duty to tell the Committee.

MR. BROWN: The hon. member can do that. I would rather see the Bill defeated than this amendment carried.

Mr. PIESSE: I am surprised that the amendment should have been moved in this form. Bulk handling has engaged the attention of our growers for many months past. Most of them agree to control being given to the Wheat Pool. I have no desire to reflect upon the wheat merchants. We have every reason to be proud of their status, and know nothing they have done to injure the farming industry. Everything possible must, however, be done to bring down the cost of production.

Mr. Withers: Will this Bill bring it about?

Mr. PIESSE: The report of the select committee indicates that. We should be most grateful to the chairman and the members of that committee for the excellent report they put in and the time they devoted to the subject. Public meetings at Woodanilling and Broomehill have passed resolutions strongly in favour of the co-operative scheme of bulk handling proposed by the trustees of the wheat pool. Wheatgrowers in my electorate are almost unanimously in favour of bulk handling, and very largely in favour of the clause now before the Committee. I am opposed to the amendment, because it would provide for the appointment of inexperienced persons to control the proposed scheme. I regard it as a direct attack on the wheat pool. If we are to have bulk handling, we must retain this clause.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Bulk handling will be of immense benefit to the farmers, who all desire to reduce their cost of production. Throughout my electorate there is a unanimous cry for bulk handling.

Mr. Withers: That is not disputed in this clause.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The members of the trust are certain to be participants in the bulk handling scheme. The pool is to find £70,000 as a guarantee that interest on the loan will be paid. I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I cannot understand the opposition to the amendment, for it will give the farmers control of their own wheat and their own destinies. The trustees of the wheat pool are appointed, not by the whole of the wheatgrowers, but by a small section of the wheatgrowers. Because I want to place the whole business in the hands of the farmers themselves, the member for Williams-Narrogin indulges in abuse. But he and other members are getting their instructions from outside, and only this evening

have been told exactly what they are to do on the floor of the House. These men, supposed to represent the wheatgrowers, are not prepared to trust the wheatgrowers.

Mr. Piesse: On a point of order, I deny that instructions have been given to me, and I demand a withdrawal.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I withdraw.

Mr. Brown: I, too, demand a withdrawal.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is remarkable how the truth hurts.

Mr. Doney: On a point of order. That is not a withdrawal. I say that members of my party have not been approached this evening at all.

The CHAIRMAN: At all events, the hon. member has withdrawn.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Apparently the member for Williams-Narrogin is not prepared to trust the farmers. What I want is to give the farmers full control, and what these so-called farmers' representatives desire is to exclude the farmers from having anything at all to do with the disposal of their own wheat. Posing as representatives of the farmers, these members say they cannot trust their own people, that they are "duds" and will be influenced by those members of the board who are to be nominated by the Commissioner of Railways and the Government. It is remarkable that members of the Country Party should want an exclusively Government control. Then the member for Guildford-Midland comes along and pleads co-operation, co-operation, co-operation. Yet he denies that co-operation, for he does not want the farmers to have control. The member for Pingelly asks where do I get my instructions. Unlike those members around me, I have had no instructions whatever.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is wandering from the amendment.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Is it not a dreadful thing to do to place the control in the hands of a few. Have not Dalgelys and other firms continually helped the farmers by keeping them on the land? Have the trustees of the Pool ever made advances to the farmers? Never one advance of a penny piece, and yet members ridicule and endeavour to belittle the firms that have assisted the farmers to remain on their holdings during the trying years we have experienced and are still experiencing. What do the trustees of the Pool propose to do? They propose to borrow half a million to establish

bulk handling. But if members peruse the Bill, they will realise that if the Pool require more money they will be able to raise it and the Government will have to guarantee whatever is borrowed. There are many of us who would have been quite prepared to agree to the proposal the Minister for Works originally intended to submit. The Westralian Farmers, however, held meetings throughout the length and breadth of the State and saw to it that resolutions were carried unanimously approving of their scheme. My proposal will broaden the issue; it will give the farmers what they have been clamouring for and if we carry the amendment the farmers will control their own wheat.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Bill before the House now is the Bill that was introduced by the Minister for Works, and the hon. member had no right to suggest that members of the Country Party had received instructions from any direction.

Mr. Sleeman: But this is not the Minister for Works's Bill.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member can go on making wild statements. It is the Government's Bill introduced by the Minister for Works. I hope the Committee will not do anything as irresponsible as is suggested by the member for Nelson. I really do not think the hon. member knows what he means. Does he suggest that the Government should raise money and hand it over to an irresponsible trust?

Mr. J. H. Smith: Do you call the farmers irresponsible people?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If we are going to propose management on the lines suggested by the member for Nelson, then that management would be irresponsible? The hon. member said that the Chairman should not have a vote.

Mr. Hegney: No, he should have a casting vote.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Well, we shall see what the "Hansard" reports says. By the hon. member's proposal, they are to have the right to say how this money is to be spent. It would not be possible for the House to agree to such a proposal. The Bill proposes to hand over control to a body of responsible persons who have been handling a big percentage of the farmers' wheat in this State for ten years, and the farmers have implicit confidence in that body. Hon. members who have had an

opportunity of looking at the installations at some of the sidings, will agree that those installations serve the purpose very well. The Westralian Farmers have £70,000 in cash and they are going to spend that money in setting up an equipment that will be worth another £400,000 or £500,000.

Mr. Corboy: Will they be more responsible than any other body?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They handle more money in connection with the removal of wheat than anyone else in Western Australia. It must be remembered that the whole of this money is to be spent on Government property, and in that case members must expect the Government to give some kind of guarantee. I want members to realise the parlous condition of the wheatgrowing industry. There is not one member in this House that is not willing to give whatever assistance it is possible to render. This is a truly co-operative basis of handling wheat and it will not prevent other people from dealing with it. We have a right to save every penny and put back into the industry everything that we can.

Mr. Withers: What does paragraph (c) say?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It does not give a monopoly of handling. We must reduce costs, because we cannot give the farmer any more for his wheat to-day. If there are three men at a siding drawing commission when there should be only one, we are justified in making the change. The industry generally is in a shocking condition and it behoves every member to assist those who are still carrying on.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No doubt members will be influenced by the provision for the Government guarantee. It is not intended that the guarantee shall take the form of the payment of any money, except in certain exceptional circumstances. The payment of 1½d. in British sterling, which means ¾d. in Australian currency, will be more than sufficient, on an average yield of 32,000,000 bushels, to pay back the capital invested during the 10-year period. The Minister is given power to regulate the payment of the ¾d. by increasing it or decreasing it according to necessity.

The Minister for Works: It is not ¾d. that is mentioned in the Bill, but 1½d.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so, but hon. members realise that what I say is the position. I want the member for Albany to understand that the Government guarantee is not for the purpose of assisting in the raising of money.

Mr. Corboy: Do you suggest it will not be of assistance?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Of course it will assist, and the fact that the guarantee is there will assist in getting the money at a lower rate of interest. The guarantee is distinctly provided at the request of the British investors, so that successive Governments will not be able to interfere with the basis upon which the money has been lent. For instance, we could put in bins for the bulk handling of wheat at sidings, and under the Bill we shall not pay more than a peppercorn rental for them. In five years' time, another Government might be in power, and they might seek to impose what was regarded as an adequate rental. That would mean that the foundations of the financial arrangements would be materially interfered with. Then again, the Government might impose taxation on the company.

Mr. Corboy: So you want to have a lever to say that future Governments must keep their hands off the scheme.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It would be decidedly dishonest to pass the Bill without giving an assurance to those who are lending the money that the terms agreed to by Parliament will not be interfered with by future Governments during the currency of the payments.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not the point.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, it is.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course it is not.

Mr. Wansbrough: It is a bogey.

(Mr. Richardson took the Chair.)

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is not a bogey at all; it is an actual fact. I have read the cables, and know exactly why that provision was made. It was to ensure that there would be no interference by Parliament with the basis upon which the bulk handling system was installed.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not the basis at all.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Leader of the Opposition can deny it if he likes. I ask him to accept my assurance on the

point, and my assurance is just as good as his. The provision was inserted on the direct representations of those who agreed to provide the money for the installation.

Hon. P. Collier: Not at all.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The provision is inserted so as to provide a guarantee against interference during the currency of the payments. There is a further provision by which the Minister shall have power to fix the toll each year in accordance with the requirements, so that the loan may be repaid within the time specified. That means that the State will not be called upon to make any loss at all. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie said that the Bill contained nothing to say that the trust would handle the wheat that was delivered.

Mr. Corboy: I said they could make it very inconvenient.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It would be impossible for the trustees to differentiate as between one wagon and another. The members of the trust are competent and have gained their knowledge as the result of years of experience. They have been tried and proved efficient, and they have been elected by the farmers of the State.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am surprised that the Minister will not accept the amendment, although it is not quite like the original proposal. On the other hand, it is closer to his desires than the Bill itself. The Minister for Works had no idea, when he placed his suggestions before the Government, of a scheme of bulk handling such as the Bill contains. His ideas were more in accordance with the amendment. I think his attitude, taken in conjunction with that of members of the Country Party, who said that if the amendment were carried they would sooner see the Bill defeated, serves as a clear indication that the statement made by Mr. Monger in the country was correct. He said that it should be his scheme or nothing. He advised the farmers to vote against the proposals of the Minister for Works.

Mr. Brown: Have you turned round now in favour of bulk handling?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The hon. member does not understand the position; he had better read what has already been said. The Minister for Lands in his remarks spoke about reducing the costs to the farmers. That is not involved in the amendment.

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Is there any suggestion that the trust proposed is the only one that can control bulk handling efficiently?

The Minister for Lands: No, but we believe the trustees can raise the money more cheaply than anyone else.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The reason I shall support the amendment is because of the rotten system of finance provided in the Bill. That is a feature to which I take strong exception. Almost any concern in this State could make better financial arrangements than those submitted to the House. That proposal involves a monopoly, no limit to the charge on farmers, an interest rate not fixed, and a Government guarantee that at the end of ten years the whole of the interest and capital charges shall be paid. Was ever such a financial proposition put before the people before? In his report to Cabinet, the Minister for Works said that he had definitely received offers of the supply of the necessary money at a cheaper rate of interest.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: With conditions

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He has not stated them.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But you read them.

Mr. Patrick: What was the Minister's scheme?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The alternative proposals have been discussed often enough in the House, and if the hon. member has not grasped them, I cannot assist him by repeating them.

Mr. Patrick: That scheme applied to a portion of the State only.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Money has been offered at a cheaper rate than that indicated in the Bill.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: With conditions.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: With no conditions.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They were distinctly stated, and you read them. You know the conditions.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The only condition was that they would accept payment in Government bonds.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And they were to instal the scheme.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Under the proposal embodied in the Bill, the Westralian Farmers Ltd. are to instal the scheme.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are not.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: And they are to get 10 per cent. for doing so. Was there ever such an outrageous suggestion made to Parliament before? Has any contractor ever asked for such an outrageous condition? There are no quotes, and the conditions are impossible.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There were quotes. What are you talking about?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I have never before heard of such a shocking proposal. The financial proposals are unsound, unfair and inequitable.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are honest.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not questioning anyone's honesty. It is a bad bargain. The Commonwealth Government could borrow money in London at half the rate proposed in the Bill. The Minister for Lands cannot argue that the money can be obtained at a cheaper rate, because the Premier has more than one offer of the necessary funds at cheaper rates.

The Minister for Lands: I say that the trust could raise the money more cheaply under the provisions of the Bill.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am going to vote for the amendment, and I shall vote later to substitute other words to set up a tribunal empowered to make their own financial arrangements. They will not be tied down by any such proposal. Everyone desires to reduce costs, but there is no monopoly over achieving that objective by one means only. The member for Katanning said that we should trust the pool because the trustees were experienced.

Mr. Piesse: You cannot gain that experience in a few days.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Bill has nothing to do with the marketing of wheat. Does he know that the trust to be set up here will not market wheat, that all that has to be done is to take the wheat from the siding to the port? We are to have handling the wheat under a monopoly, men who are interested in the marketing of wheat and in active competition with other merchants. Does the hon. member think such a scheme will make for smooth working?

Hon. N. Keenan: Would not any trust have a monopoly?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The question of monopoly will arise later, and I will deal with it then. The question now is, if we are to have bulk handling, under what system is it to be controlled? The Westralian Farmers are in open competition with the other

merchants and will have an advantage over all the others. They are to get a monopoly before they start, and they are to be paid.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Ten per cent., the ordinary price.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Builders and contractors are working for a margin much below 10 per cent., which was the accepted figure when trade was booming. Yet we are asked to hand over the control to a body that will require 10 per cent. If bulk handling is to be established, I will vote for a controlling authority the majority of whom will be wheatgrowers. It is nonsense to say the wheatgrowers elect the trust. I grow wheat, but I have never voted for a member of the trust.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is your own fault.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is not.

The Minister for Lands: You had your voting papers sent to you the other day.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That was under the new system, brought into operation this year for the first time. Previously the only chance a farmer had to vote for a member of the trust was to attend a meeting in Perth. What is the use of saying the trust are elected by the farmers, when we know they are not elected by the farmers?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Labour Party uses the same system.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Labour Party can look after itself. I will vote to have this clause struck out and the control vested in a body truly representative of the growers. To hand over a monopoly to people who have interests involved is going altogether too far. We want the control to lie with a disinterested body whose sole object will be to handle the wheat from the farmer's wagon to the port.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Charges of lobbying have been made against members on this side. The only time ever I have been lobbied on wheat was long ago, when I had to raise the question of damaged wheat on the Fremantle wharf. I was then lobbied by a member of the pool, who was brought into the House for the purpose of trying to placate me.

The Minister for Railways: Who brought him in? Someone who did not know you.

Mr. SLEEMAN: A member of the House brought him in, but he was not successful with me. Wheat was being wasted in large quantities, and to prove it I took the Minister for Works and a number of other mem-

bers down to Fremantle. They discovered that the wheat being damaged was pool wheat, and they declared I had under-estimated the losses rather than exaggerated them. Now we are charged with being lobbied to-night. When that member of the pool came to lobby me, he said that moisture was required in the wheat, and that arrangements had been made to shift next day the whole of the wheat being damaged. He remarked on the coincidence that I should have raised the point that afternoon. It was the pool who were neglecting their clients' wheat. If they could not look after it then, in the face of competition, how will they treat the wheat when they have a monopoly? It has been said we have only to pass the Bill and the finances will be available. If that be so, what is the need for the clause? It is about the most "heads-I-win, tails-you-lose" piece of business I have heard of. If it proves a success, they will have it lock, stock and barrel and take everything. If it proves a failure, the State will have to step in, take all responsibility and pay for the whole scheme. Such a proposition will never be passed with the aid of my vote. I support the amendment.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I support the deletion of the paragraph, but I do not approve of the controlling body suggested by the member for Nelson. It would not be a representative body. The pool represents a fair proportion of the wheat produced, and it would be unfair to exclude that body from representation. We are not here to do that sort of thing. I would as strongly object to the exclusion of the pool as I would object to the exclusion of other interests that have a right to be represented on such a trust. I am opposed to giving the pool trustees an absolute monopoly of the wheat. I have all along opposed it and my opposition continues. I have not heard any reasonable argument in support of the clause, and I am surprised at the Minister sticking to it, in view of the vote passed last Thursday night. The report of the select committee was largely in favour of the clause, and the House turned down the report by a substantial majority. The member for Pingelly said the pool trustees, and nobody else, could find the finance.

Hon. P. Collier: Anybody could, on a Government guarantee.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The pool trustees cannot find the finance, except with a Government guarantee. Evidence given before

the select committee mentioned the high reputation enjoyed by the pool. That being so, what need is there for the trustees to get a Government guarantee? The pool trustees are unable to get the finance without a Government guarantee; otherwise they could proceed with the work and be independent of Parliament. One of the directors of the pool has already been associated with schemes on which the Government have advanced money, the repayment of which was assured within reasonable time. The Auditor General's report contains a list of the moneys advanced by the Government to assist similar enterprises. The assistance given amounts to £452,000, and that money is still owing to the Government. Yet every penny of it was borrowed on a similar assurance to that given on this occasion. Take one enterprise of which a member of the Pool was a director; the W.A. Meat Export Company owes the State £148,000. Except that the State uses portion of the works for abattoirs and pays for a lease of the property, there is no income from it, and the buildings were constructed eight or ten years ago.

Hon. P. Collier: The works have never paid sinking fund or anything else.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They have never paid interest. The interest outstanding on the 30th June, 1932, amounted to £21,792. The huge sum of £148,000 was advanced by the State on a promise similar to that proposed in this Bill.

The Minister for Lands: The Government found the money for those works.

Hon. P. Collier: They did not find all of it.

The Minister for Lands: No, they found that amount.

Hon. P. Collier: They guaranteed a certain amount, just as they are asked for a guarantee now.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Auditor General's report makes very unsatisfactory reading. Not one of those private enterprises, on which £452,000 has been advanced, has returned one penny to the country, and 90 per cent. of them have paid no interest. The guarantee now proposed, we are told, is merely a matter of form, carrying no responsibility.

Hon. P. Collier: And the chairman of the Fremantle Meat Works is chairman of the Wheat Pool. The works were an utter failure.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am not going to vote to give certain people a monopoly and a Government guarantee. The member for Guildford spoke about the principles of the Labour movement. We have never stood for monopoly.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I can prove that you have.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Last year the Pool controlled at most 44 per cent. of the wheat. What about the growers who did not pool? We must have regard for the 60 per cent. who are not represented by the Pool. My objection is not directed against the Pool. I object to giving any one body a monopoly unless the people desire it, and they have never yet desired it. The Pool, in the period of greatest prosperity, never handled all the wheat, and will not handle it unless there is a compulsory pool. It is not in the interests of the people to allow one body of men to handle the whole of the product. I have the greatest respect for the members of the Pool, all of whom are honourable, decent men, but they do not comprise all the brains of the community.

The Minister for Lands: The Royal Commission on farmers' disabilities recommended that.

Hon. P. Collier: What does that matter? That is the only point you agree with.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am just as much impressed by that as I am by the report of the select committee on the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: The Government ignored the recommendations of that commission.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes. I think the pool ought to have representation on any board of control, because the pool represents a big percentage of the wheatgrowers of the State, although not a majority of them.

Hon. P. Collier: Not quite half.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The pool should have representation, and I will not be a party to cutting them out. In giving my vote, I insist that all interests must be represented, especially as the Government are to enter into a guarantee. I shall vote for the exclusion of the clause. The member for Guildford-Midland spoke about the principles of the Labour Party, but I do not propose to discuss them now. There is a time and place to do that. I will say that if the trustees of the pool are real co-operators, then they are in rather bad company. There are some persons associated with the

pool who are very strong individualists indeed.

Mr. DONEY: Before the question goes to a division, I would emphasise the fact that hon. members opposite who have spoken against the Bill and have expressed their intense dislike of monopolies and of the word "monopoly" now intend, through the amendment proposed by the member for Nelson, to perpetuate the very principle they condemn. This amendment will not destroy monopolies. It is merely a change from one trust to another. I point out to hon. members opposite that they will be strangely inconsistent if they vote for the amendment moved by my friend on the right.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not propose to detain the House very long, but I do not think the member for Nelson can claim to have authority from the wheatgrowers of the State. Personally, I represent one of the most important wheatgrowing areas of the State, and I am entirely opposed to the amendment, because I consider it is an attempt by a side-wind to defeat the Bill. So far as my constituency is concerned, it is not merely a question of the control of the scheme, but a question of the scheme itself. We have now before us a definite scheme which applies not only to the Fremantle zone but to the whole State. Personally, I would vote against any scheme of bulk handling that did not apply to all the wheatgrowing areas of the State. I do not think the member for South Fremantle is very consistent in his attitude towards the scheme. The other night he made a very long speech in which he sought to prove that bulk handling would result in distinct loss to the farmers of the State. Now he is prepared to approve of a different kind of board. If he were consistent, he would vote against the Bill altogether.

Hon. A. McCallum: I will. I told you that the other night.

Mr. PATRICK: That merely confirms my opinion that this is an attempt to defeat the Bill by a different method. It confirms me in my opinion that I am safe in voting against the amendment. Much has been said about monopolies, but there must be a monopoly in wheat handling. It would not be possible to have two schemes of bulk handling in operation at a siding. We are out to reduce the cost of handling wheat. Farmers who deliver wheat at various sidings will have certificates handed to them which

they can sell to any person, if they like. Merchants can purchase them. I oppose the amendment because I approve of the principle of bulk handling. The farmers in my electorate want this scheme, and are prepared to pay for it.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	24
Noes	..	..	..	..	20

Majority for 4

AYES.	
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Panton
Mr. Collier	Mr. Steeman
Mr. Corboy	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Coverley	Mr. J. H. Smith
Hon. J. Cunningham	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Wells
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wiltbers
Mr. Munsie	Mr. Nulsen

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Angelo	Mr. J. I. Mann
Mr. Brown	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Church	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Davy	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Piessie
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Scadda, 1
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Munnery	Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Raphael	Mr. Parker
Mr. Lamond	Mr. North

Amendment thus passed.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I move—

That the following be inserted in lieu of the words struck out:—"That the trust shall consist of five persons, three of whom shall be bona fide wheat growers who are not themselves associated with any wheat-buying partnership or organisation connected with the purchase of wheat, one member to be a nominee of the Commissioner of Railways, and a chairman to be appointed by the Government."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot accept the amendment. I have not even had an opportunity to look at it.

Hon. P. Collier: You had better recognise that as the defeat of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not recognise it as such.

Hon. P. Collier: You will before the session is over.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It deals only with the principle of control, not with the principle of bulk handling. The matter will have to be further considered.

Progress reported.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read, notifying that it did not insist on its amendment No. 8, but it insisted on its amendments Nos. 11 and 15, disagreed with the amendment made by the Assembly to Amendment No. 14 made by the Council for the reason set forth, and insisted on its amendment No. 14.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 30th November.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [11.9]: I have looked carefully through this Bill, and listened to the remarks of the Minister when introducing it. It deals with localities with which I am not acquainted. It is on the lines of the Bill which usually comes down each year for the closure of certain roads which are found not to be essential. So far as I can ascertain, and I am speaking without knowledge of the localities concerned, I see no objection to the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, ordered: That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to permit of the Bill to be passed through its remaining stages at this sitting.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—RESERVES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 30th November.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [11.14]: This is the usual Bill introduced each session with regard to reserves. I have looked through it and there is nothing to which I can take exception apart from Clause 3, which will enable the Rottnest Board of Control to grant leases of holdings for a certain period. As I understand the Minister is agreeable to the deletion of that clause. I shall take action in Committee with that object in view.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, ordered: That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to permit of the Bill to be passed through its remaining stages at this sitting.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Power of leasing conferred on Rottnest Board of Control:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I ask the Committee to reject the clause. The Minister has agreed not to press it.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 4 to 10—agreed to.

Schedules, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

DISCHARGE OF ORDERS.

On motion by the Premier, the following Orders of the Day were discharged from the Notice Paper:—

1. Land Act Consolidation Bill.

2. Transfer of Land Bill.

House adjourned at 11.20 p.m.