

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Does not the hon. member?

Mr. Leslie: No.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Then I have not much respect for the hon. member's judgment.

Mr. Leslie: He has good knowledge; admittedly.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There will be further opportunity to deal with some other matters I have listed for discussion. I have no desire to detain the Chamber any further at this stage, but as a final shot, I must say that I shall be anxiously waiting for the introduction of a vermin Bill, if it is proposed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 5.36 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 2nd December, 1947.

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### ABSENCE OF PRESIDENT.

#### *Election of Deputy President.*

The CLERK: It is my duty to announce that the President, Hon. H. Seddon, is absent, and that it is therefore necessary for members to elect one of their number, now present, to fill the office, perform the duties and exercise the authority of the President during such absence.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I move—

That the Deputy President be elected by ballot.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken.

The CLERK. The ballot has resulted in the election of Hon. J. A. Dimmitt as Deputy President.

*[The Deputy President took the Chair.]*

### QUESTION.

#### ALBANY HARBOUR.

##### *As to Development Plans.*

Hon. H. L. ROCHE (for Hon. A. Thomson) (on notice) asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister lay on the Table of the House a copy of the plan submitted by the late Government, prior to the general elections, for the development of the port of Albany?

The MINISTER replied:

The plan is in use at present by the Consulting Engineer, but could be sighted by the hon. member if he so wishes.

#### RAILWAY OMNIBUSES PURCHASE AND DELIVERY SELECT COMMITTEE.

##### *Report Presented.*

Hon. H. L. ROCHE brought up the report of the Select Committee.

Ordered: That the report be received and read.

On motion by Hon. H. L. Roche, ordered: That the report, together with the evidence, be printed.

**BILL—CO-OPERATIVE AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES ACT  
AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

**BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.**

**1, Industry (Advances).**

Returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

**2, War Service Land Settlement Agreement (Land Act Application) Act Amendment.**

Transmitted to the Assembly.

**BILL—IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

**HON. C. G. LATHAM** (East) [5.10]: This Bill gives a great deal of power to the Minister for Industrial Development inasmuch as to a certain extent it takes powers that are today vested in the Minister for Mines and passes them over to the other Minister. It also gives a great deal of power to the Minister for Industrial Development in the way of providing the very necessary cash that it may be thought fit to give for the development of the steel and iron industry in this State. The measure ratifies an agreement that has been signed on behalf of H. A. Brassert & Co. Ltd. and the State Government. I propose to say a few words about the Bill itself, because I think the House should realise what powers are being transferred to the Minister for Industrial Development. The Bill first gives that Minister power to contract or arrange for the development and mining of any iron-ore, coal or limestone resources of the State. That power was previously vested in the Minister for Mines. I do not know whether it is intended that that power should be taken from the Minister for Mines. Evidently, if the Bill becomes law, it will supersede the powers now vested in the Minister for Mines.

The Minister for Mines: Read the words "to contract or arrange for."

**HON. C. G. LATHAM**: The Minister contracts with the firm and he cannot contract unless he has power to do so.

The Minister for Mines: But a lease has first to be obtained from the Mines Department.

**HON. C. G. LATHAM**: I do not think the Minister gave the House much information in his second reading speech, although in his concluding remarks he said he would be prepared to give further information. That is one reason why I am raising the point now. I doubt whether it is wise to give the proposed powers to any Minister without the consent of Parliament. The Minister in question is to be given power to promote or assist in the promotion of any company having as its objects, or as part of its objects, the development or mining of any of the iron-ore, coal, or limestone resources of the State. There is no objection to that, but the Bill goes on to say he shall have power—

(c) to subscribe and pay for, acquire and hold shares in any such company.

That is a very doubtful power to hand to any Minister. There is no instance of that sort in Western Australia that I know of. I recall no industry in this State where the State Government in the past has taken this power to provide capital to a company and become a shareholder in it. True the Commonwealth Government has taken that power in some instances, whether it was wise or not for it to do so. The conditions of the agreement are that money shall be subscribed at any time "provided that such holdings shall not at any one time exceed 52 per centum of the total issued capital of the company." If the State is going to find that money it should hold at least 51 per centum of the share capital as is the case with the Commonwealth Government in regard to the Commonwealth Oil Refineries. If the Minister holds only 40 per centum of the share capital it will be easy for the company to push the Government out. The Bill also gives power—

(d) To direct or control or assist in the direction of control of any such company, and to nominate or appoint any representative of the Government to the directorate of such company.

Paragraph (e) gives power—

To make any advance to, or guarantee any advance made to any such company, upon such terms and conditions that the Minister, with the approval of the Treasurer, shall think fit. The other evening we had a Bill before us which gave that power to the Treasurer,

but now it is to be handed to the Minister for Industrial Development in conjunction with the Treasurer. This shows how necessary it was to have carried the amendment that was passed by the Committee of this House. The Bill goes on to say—

(f) In furtherance of any of the objects or purposes of this Act, to make any contract, either alone or jointly with any such company or other person, for or in relation to—

(i) the provision of capital for any such company from within or from outside the State;

I draw attention to the words "from within or without the State." The Minister might explain their meaning. Do they mean that in the case of a company operating outside the State, money shall be found by the Treasurer? Will the Government guarantee any moneys raised in any other country, such as the United Kingdom or the United States of America? There is a reference to a business concern in America in the terms of the agreement that has been signed on behalf of the State by the Minister for Industrial Development. He can also arrange for the employment or services of staff, technicians or advisers. But this is the power that interests me: The clause states that the Minister acting for and on behalf of the Government may exercise the following powers and authorities—

(f) In furtherance of any of the objects or purposes of this Act, to make any contract, either alone or jointly with any such company or other person, for or in relation to—

(iii) Buildings, railways, tramways, sidings, wharves, piers, roads, ways, conveniences, patents, processes, licences or other activities for or for the assistance of any such company.

Does that mean that a railway can be built without the authority of Parliament? That is something quite new and supersedes the Government Railways Act, because so far it has not been possible for railways to be built without authority of Parliament. But evidently we are proposing to give that power to the Minister without any reference to Parliament. Then there is the usual drag-net provision—

(g) generally to do or execute any act or matter incidental or convenient to the due administration of this Act.

That means that they can do anything they like provided the Minister agrees; and in order that there shall be no violation of the State Trading Concerns Act which pro-

vides that no State trading concern can be started in this State without the authority of Parliament this subclause has been included—

(2) No concern maintained or carried on under the authority of this Act shall be a State trading concern within the meaning of the State Trading Concerns Act, 1916, and the provisions of that Act shall not apply thereto.

Members should give a good deal of consideration to this Bill, which proposes to hand over great powers. I am not concerned about Ministers; that is not the point at all. I have explicit faith in the present Minister; but there might in the future be somebody who wanted to try all sorts of ventures without Parliamentary sanction, and he would be able to utilise this legislation for that purpose.

Every member of this House is anxious to see an iron and steel industry developed. That is not an easy proposition. It is something that will take years to develop. Anyone who reads the discussion on the subject that occurred in 1938 in another place and in this Chamber will realise that Western Australia is very fortunate inasmuch as in Koolan Island we have one of the richest iron-ore deposits in Australia and probably in the world. Iron Knob is another similarly fortunate place. Those two centres are the richest iron deposits in the world and Koolan Island is fortunately situated inasmuch as boats can pull up alongside the deposits and the iron-ore can be loaded direct into the hulks. While I want to see these deposits worked, I also want the iron and steel industry to be developed in this State. I do not want to happen something that very nearly occurred some years ago when we were encouraging a Japanese firm to take the iron-ore to Japan. I am pleased to say that I was never in favour of that. I hope the Minister will explain whether I have interpreted correctly the various clauses of the Bill.

I want now to refer to one or two portions of the agreement, which actually has nothing to do with the Bill itself. It is a private agreement entered into between Brasserts of London and the Government of this State. Brasserts have held these leases at Koolan Island since 1935, and I presume that after the war broke out extensions were given. Between 1935 and 1938, the company more or less worked the leases, but never at any time did it comply with

the labour conditions and from time to time applications were made to the court for a cancellation of the leases. It is well-known that Brasserts was only a holding company for a Japanese firm known as the Nippon Mining Coy., and all the capital, so far as I know, was found by Japan. From time to time there were promises of machinery being brought here. First it was to be brought from England. I think that Sir Hal Colebatch was in England at that time and that he subsequently advised the Government the machinery was not coming from Great Britain. Then it was to come from America and subsequently from Japan.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: They did not know where it was coming from.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. They did not know where they were going to get it, though they advised the Government that it was coming. Sir Hal was alert enough to inform the Government that they did not know where it was coming from. Brasserts were known as constructional engineers in London; and at the time the inquiry was being held, the company was putting up buildings for Stewart & Lloyds, the pipe company. Unless Brasserts have increased their activities, I believe they are still constructional engineers and not what might be termed manufacturing or smelting engineers. It seems to me that Brasserts are anxious to rehire the leases in order to get the necessary capital to exploit the iron-ore and in all probability shift it away from Australia for smelting. There are one or two things in the agreement about which I would like an explanation. Clause 4 reads—

Subject to the provisions of this agreement and any necessary approval of the Commonwealth Government the company shall be at liberty to export any or all iron-ore won from the said leases to any part of the British Commonwealth or the United States of America for processing and use in manufactures established in such countries and the Government will raise no objection to the Commonwealth consenting to such export aforesaid for the purposes aforesaid.

Why that has been included I do not know. If the Commonwealth Government says it would agree to the export, evidently it has already given power to the company to do the necessary exporting. As a matter of fact, under the agreement there has to be consent for a parcel of iron-ore to be consigned to America for testing out some system in operation there for smelting. I can-

not see the reason for including the words "the Government will raise no objection to the Commonwealth consenting to such export." If the Government wants the ore exported and the Commonwealth raises no objection, there is no need to include that in the agreement. Clause 7 of the agreement reads—

The Government shall grant to the company complete exemption from work and labour conditions on the said leases for an initial period of four years from the date of this Agreement and the Government shall have the right forthwith at the end of the said period of four years to forfeit the said leases if it is not satisfied with the progress achieved by the company and if in the opinion of the Government further extension is unlikely to achieve the production of iron-ore in substantial quantities within what shall be considered by the Government to be a reasonable period.

In that clause we are exempting the company from work and labour conditions for four years. If the company is exempt how can it do any work there? It does not seem to be reasonable or to make sense to me to say that the Government shall forthwith have the right to cancel the leases. It may be that what is meant is that unless the company is able to obtain the necessary capital in that period there shall be a cancellation. The clause actually means that the Government is permitting the company to hold leases for four years to enable it to get together the necessary money. All that it has to do, if the agreement is given effect to, is to find 48 per cent. of the money and in all probability the Government will find the other 52 per cent. I hope that if the Government does that, it will be for the purpose of establishing an iron and steel industry within Western Australia and not outside it.

The provisions in the Bill convey to me that we are giving the Government power to find money for this company or any other company to send iron-ore away for the development of an industry somewhere else. Those are points to which I would like the Minister to reply. I have not had an opportunity to read his speech when moving the second reading, but I listened fairly attentively to him the other night. I would have liked to have "Hansard" before me in order that I might be more clear on the matter. I have no objection whatever to our iron-ore being used here, but I do not think we should throw it

away. It is an asset, but it is like gold. Immediately you take an ounce of gold from the earth it means there is one ounce less in the ground; and if we send away one million tons of iron-ore, there will be that much less for our people. I want to see this asset worked so that it will provide employment and build up industry which is the only way to populate this country. It is from that angle that I take these things seriously. We cannot have population without industry and we cannot have industry without money.

The Minister may tell me that the Government more or less endorses that opinion by proposing to give authority to the Minister for Industrial Development to find the necessary money to help this industry. I admit the locality is not a very attractive one. The climate is very trying and there are not the amenities at Koolan Island that exist down here. It would require some effort and some great attraction to induce people to go there if they can find employment further south. I do not object to the passing of the Bill, but I think we need to be careful about putting legislation on our statute-book which may be used for a purpose with which we may not agree in the future. We are certainly giving power to Ministers in the future to do a great many things for which authority does not exist today.

**HON. SIR HAL COLEBATCH** (Metropolitan) [5.29]: The only question I would like to ask the Minister is this: Has this agreement been entered into because the Government is satisfied with the capacity and the intention of Brasserts to raise the necessary capital and develop this industry, or has it been entered into because of some idea that the State is under an obligation to Brasserts in connection with what has happened in the past? If the former, all well and good; I would support the Bill. If the latter, I should say it is entirely without foundation, just as it is entirely without foundation that in estimating the cost of producing such ore there should be excluded depreciation and interest on capital including the original cost, not exceeding £35,000, of the leases to be surrendered.

I think the first man in London to take a serious interest in the development of

Yampi Sound was Tilden Smith, an extraordinarily enterprising and very fine man. He abandoned the project because he said—I had many conferences with him—that the cost was prohibitive. I do not know exactly when Brasserts came into the picture, but I think it was probably some time in 1935. I do know that conferences were held between a representative of Brasserts, Sir James Connolly and the Minister for Mines, who was then in London. I knew nothing whatever of those conferences, and did not even know that they had taken place. The first knowledge I had of the matter was in November, 1935—I cannot be sure now of the exact date—when I received a cable from the Government. The correspondence has already been laid on the Table of another place, so I cannot be accused of any breach of confidence in reminding members of it.

**Hon. C. G. Latham**: That is where I got my information.

**Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH**: This cable contained statements given in evidence before the Warden's Court at Broome. I was requested to check the accuracy of those statements, and was advised that the warden had recommended that if the statements were true the exemption asked for should be granted, and that if they were untrue the exemption should be refused. That was the first knowledge I had that Brasserts were in any way connected with the matter. I saw the London chairman of Brasserts Ltd., a Mr. Miles, and found him to be quite open and candid about everything. He made no attempt to disguise the position at all. I was rather appalled when he declared emphatically that the statements contained in the evidence given before the warden at Broome were entirely false from beginning to end.

So far as I can remember the first of those statements was that Brasserts had already manufactured a considerable quantity of the machinery and were progressing steadily towards its completion. Brasserts told me that not only was that untrue, but that they had never manufactured a bit of machinery at any time, and had no intention of doing anything of the kind. Mr. Miles further informed me that no decision had been arrived at as to whether the machinery should be manufactured in England, in America, or in Japan. He was also perfectly candid in telling me that Brasserts were acting as

agents for the Nippon Mining Company of Japan, and that that company was putting up the money. If Brasserts are to be allowed this £35,000 mentioned in the Bill, they are to be allowed something that had already been given them by the Nippon Mining Company, and to which at the present time I do not think they have the faintest claim. I thought the matter over, and slept on it, and before sending my cable in reply the following morning, I had a further conference with Brasserts, and again I found them absolutely candid and straightforward about everything.

I then sent a cable saying that the statements made in evidence in the Warden's Court at Broome were entirely unfounded and absolutely false. The matter then hung fire for some time, and the next I had to do with it was when Mr. Salt, a representative of Brasserts, asked me to send out certain cables. For some reason—perhaps wrongly—I felt rather a prejudice against Mr. Salt and told him straight out that I would send anything that Brasserts wished me to send, and would send it in their name, but would send no cable from him until it was confirmed by Brasserts. All this is shown in the correspondence that was laid on the Table in another place. The result was that Brasserts would not confirm the cable that Mr. Salt wished me to send. Finally, there was a sort of demand from the Government here that Brasserts should put up a certain sum of money to show that they were genuine.

The next thing I received was a statement from Brasserts that they had sent £33,000 to Western Australia to purchase the interest of Mr. Buckley in these leases, and, also that they had sent £10,000 to be deposited in a bank here, as a guarantee that they would commence developmental work at Yampi Sound and send a certain number of men up there within a given time. They also said they had paid Sir James Connolly £35,000 for his interest in the leases. I might add that Sir James called upon me afterwards and told me that that was quite incorrect, and that they had paid him only £20,000, though that has very little to do with the matter. I do not think there is room for a shadow of a doubt that the whole of the money was provided by the Nippon Mining Company, and in my letters to the Government I pointed out that it was entirely stupid to suppose that anyone

would put up that sum of money, and the further amounts that were then contemplated, without some very good reason.

Members will recall that at that time—I am speaking now of about February, 1936—there was a serious threat of war between Russia and Japan. I have not the slightest doubt that all the money was put up by the Nippon Mining Company in the interests of the Government of Japan. I well recall that in one of my letters—no doubt members who have read the correspondence will remember it—I remarked that I did not know whether the money was put up with a view to securing the iron-ore at Yampi Sound, or with a view to establishing a grievance against the Australian Government should that Government at any time refuse the right of Japan to that interest in the north of Western Australia. Then there were certain conditions imposed in relation to the whole of the holding capital being British money. I think the holding capital was supposed to be £100,000.

Brasserts again quite candidly, as in everything—the members of the company that I met, both the English and American members, impressed me as being thoroughly straightforward and earnest people—said that Japan was the only customer, and they wanted an assurance. They said, "If we give an assurance that the whole of the capital will be British money, will the Government have any objection to that British company borrowing money from the Nippon Mining Company?" I told them I could give no assurance of that kind and could express no opinion on it. The general tenor of my letters was that our Government should avoid having any association whatever except with the British company, and also that it should act in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government in everything it did. I have no doubt that that advice was followed.

Coming to the question of whether the Government is entirely satisfied that Brasserts are the right people to develop this industry, I mention again, without prejudice to Brasserts, as I found them absolutely straightforward and honest in everything—they were honest in saying Japan was their only customer, that the capital had been put up by the Nippon Mining Company, and that the statements

made before the court at Broome were entirely unfounded—that I felt it my duty to make some inquiries into the standing of Brasserts, with this result—again it is contained in the correspondence that was laid on the Table in another place—that I was advised that Brasserts Ltd. was an entirely competent and well regarded firm of engineers, but that was all. I would not be absolutely certain, but I think I am safe in saying that the capital of Brasserts was £2,000. That was an ample capital for a firm of consulting engineers that had no need of credit and no intention of raising money or anything of that sort.

My advisers were most emphatic in saying that Brasserts Ltd. was a firm of high repute. I was given details of some considerable concerns in the United States, for which Brasserts had acted as consulting engineers, and those concerns had not a bad word to say of Brasserts, but they made it quite clear that, as a company commanding large capital and capable of carrying out big enterprises, Brasserts simply did not exist. There is a suggestion that Brasserts should have four years' exemption, and that nothing should be done for four years, and that they should be allowed the £35,000 that I am sure was Japanese money, and not their money at all, in the capital. If I had an assurance from the Government that Brasserts' agent had satisfied it that the company was capable and likely to develop this industry, all well and good, but if this agreement is entered into because of the idea that this State is under some obligation to Brasserts Ltd., then it is an entirely false idea and would not be sustained for one moment by Brasserts themselves.

I had several conferences with the head of the firm—Mr. Brassert is an American—and also with the head of the London office, Mr. Miles. They are both very estimable gentlemen and were sincere and straightforward in everything they told me. I have no reason to suspect a single statement of theirs, but they said nothing to suggest that they were going to put up money or do this or that. Just as Tilden Smith had told me, years before, that the sole obstacle to developing the industry was the cost, so they told me, with equal candour and certainty, that the only customers at that time were the Japanese,

and that the Japanese were furnishing the money.

It was for that reason that I made it my business to impress upon the Government that it should keep in mind the fact that war was threatening between Japan and Russia, and that we must not get mixed up in it or place ourselves under any obligation to the Japanese Government, but must make sure that whatever we did was done with the British Government and the British company, so that if any trouble arose afterwards the Japanese would have to fight it out with the British company. That was the position. If the Minister can assure me that the Government is satisfied that Brasserts are able to honour their part of the agreement, I have no objection to the Bill, but if the agreement is based on the conception that we are under an obligation to Brasserts, to my mind it is entirely wrong that we should give them a four years' exemption or regard the £35,000 that they paid as part of the capital that they are supposed to have put up.

On motion by Hon. A. L. Loton, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.43] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill, the purpose of which is the re-organisation of our railways. It includes numerous amendments, but its major feature is that it provides for a directorate instead of a Commissioner of Railways, and a directorate as set out in the Bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Recommended by the Royal Commission?

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** I anticipated being asked that question and, it may ease the minds of members if I mention why the Bill is being introduced at this stage instead of waiting for the report of the Royal Commission. When the present Minister for Railways took office he found the railways in very bad condition. One reason considered by the Government was that this was too big a proposition for one man to control and that there would need to be an alteration. It is undoubtedly

essential that an alteration be made. The Government, in order to be on the safe side—and correctly, I think—decided to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the running of the railways. It was realised that the report would not be available until the eve of the closing of Parliament and that the railways could not continue much longer under the present arrangement. Consequently, the Government decided to introduce this Bill to give effect to an alteration in the management, but, if the Royal Commission reports against it, then members may rest assured that the Act will not be proclaimed. This is a measure pending the implementation of the report of the Royal Commission, and we hope it will have some effect in the direction of improving the railways and in giving more assistance to the management. For many years we have asked far too much of the Commissioner of Railways.

Fon. A. L. Loton: We have not got very much.

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** The measure provides for placing the railways under the control of a body to be known as the Directorate of Western Australian Government Railways. This body will consist of five members to be referred to as follows:—two will be nominee members, one a qualified engineer, and the other a man with a knowledge of transport; of the other three referred to as representative members, one shall be a primary producers' representative, one an employees' representative and the other a representative of the commercial community. Members will agree that this is a correct and proper directorate, seeing that it will be representative of technical men, business men and the men employed in the railways, and between them, we hope, they will be able to rectify many of the anomalies that exist and make for the easier and better running of the railways.

Various machinery clauses are included, dealing with the powers of the directorate and providing for the procedure at meetings and the action to be taken in the event of a member resigning. Requisite amendments are also included to make the directorate a body corporate and to provide that the Commissioner of Railways shall cease to be a body corporate. Another important matter is that the Auditor General shall control the accounts of the department and

make a report to Parliament each year. Provision is made for the adoption of a correct accounting procedure which has not been followed in the past. The directorate will be empowered to call for tenders for the leasing of railway refreshment-rooms and for the leasing of restaurant-cars. The Government does not desire that they should be leased, but considers that power should be given in the event of leasing being considered desirable. Slight alterations will be made in the procedure for appeals by employees against decisions affecting them.

I do not wish to occupy time by giving a lot of detail. Members are well aware of the condition of the railways and, if they have followed the newspaper reports of the proceedings before the Royal Commission, it should not be necessary for me to enter into detail. At the same time, I do not want members to think that I have purposely refrained from giving necessary information. Doubtless there is much information that perhaps I ought to give, but, for the moment, I shall not give it unless so desired by members.

There is another matter of great moment in that the control of the tramways, ferries and trolley-buses will be taken from the Commissioner of Railways and will be vested in separate management. When the Government Railways Act was introduced, the ferries were a very small concern and the trams, I think, were under some other organisation. Since then the trams, ferries and buses have been tacked on to the Railway Department and Parliament, by doing this, has made the task of the Commissioner an extremely difficult one.

Since 1904 the railways have developed out of all knowledge. The capital account has increased from £8,141,000 to £26,979,000 and the gross earnings from £1,553,000 to £4,106,000, while working expenses have advanced from £1,247,000 to £4,016,000. Members can therefore appreciate how the railways have increased. They will also realise how the system has deteriorated for the figures show that in 1904 the profit, after paying interest, was £30,887, while in 1946 there was a deficit of £959,000.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What are you reading from?

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** From notes supplied to me.



Hon. C. F. Baxter: It seems to me you are reading from "Hansard."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member must have extraordinarily good eyesight. I was reading from "Hansard," as I desired to avoid overworking a typist. If members desire further information I refer them to "Hansard." I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

### **BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TRAMWAYS AND FERRIES.**

*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.56] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill to provide for a separate body to control the trams and ferries. There will be a commission consisting of three commissioners, and the measure sets out their duties. This Bill is largely a re-enactment of the Government Tramways Act, which will be repealed by this measure, and the new control will not be subject to the provisions of the State Trading Concerns Act. No new principle is embodied in the Bill, but obviously the measure is necessary in order to remove the control from the Commissioner of Railways and place it in the hands of the commission. This is really a corollary to the railway Bill with which I have just dealt. As I have not had the figures relating to the tramways re-typed, I cannot, under the Standing Orders, read them from "Hansard."

Hon. G. Fraser: You say there is nothing new in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Very little; the principles are the same. One important point is that in future the accounts will be audited by the Auditor General. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

### **BILL—LICENSING (PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATE).**

*Second Reading.*

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 27th November of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Hon. G. Fraser in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Extension of time with respect to provisional certificates:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This clause is the most important provision of the Bill. I am sorry that the measure applies to the Rottnest Board of Control. Rottnest Island is a holiday resort which should not be pestered by a great many people who desire to fill themselves with drink.

The Honorary Minister: It is taken there by the ton.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, but by small separate groups. We are to have an hotel at Rottnest at which people should be encouraged to stay; the fact remains, however, that Rottnest Island is outside the 20-mile radius and so people will be able to obtain drink at the hotel even on Sundays.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is not outside the 20-mile radius.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is 20 miles from the G.P.O. in a straight line.

The Minister for Mines: How far is it from Fremantle?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If the Minister does not know his Act, I do.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say anything about the Act.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Rottnest Island is 20 miles from the Post Office or from the Treasury building.

The Minister for Mines: Do you know the Act?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I know that.

The Honorary Minister: How do you know the distance from Perth to Rottnest Island?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Is the Honorary Minister so devoid of knowledge that he does not know I can measure the distance on a map?

The Honorary Minister: I am asking you.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is unnecessary for me to give the Honorary Minister that information. I am not going to be plagued by a fool. The Honorary Minister may be clever, but he will not be clever at my expense. The Rottnest Board of Control could erect a suitable building which would commend itself to people who wished to spend a holiday on the island. The board could prohibit the taking of alcoholic liquor to the island, if it so desired. It is a pity that the board should have found it necessary to apply for a license to sell liquor at a place which should be a wonderful holiday resort for women and children.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You would not call Cave House a beer shop?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, but Cave House is isolated and can accommodate but a limited number of guests, I think 50 at a time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Rottnest license was granted in 1937, ten years ago, and no protest has been made against it, I understand, until tonight.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The matter has not been before the House, so how could a protest be made before?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Through the newspapers, for instance. The suggestion that the erection of an hotel on Rottnest Island will deprive the place of its fascination as a holiday resort is, I am afraid, rather far-fetched. A boat goes every day to Rottnest loaded with liquor. There is an open bar at the end of the jetty, instead of on the shore.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Is it illegal?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Whether it is illegal or not, I am stating the fact. I understand it is illegal to take liquor on to the island; nevertheless, large quantities are taken there. Not one member of this Chamber who has been on Rottnest Island has left it without having a drink.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are guessing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am sure of it. If there were an hotel on the island, the sale of liquor could be controlled better than it is now. I point out that the Rottnest Island Board of Control has no public funds. The hon. member apparently is not interested.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the Minister should not invite interjections.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am answering the hon. member, but he does not seem to be interested in my reply. No public money is spent on Rottnest Island. The Board of Control gets its finance by means of rents and in other ways.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Will the hotel provide accommodation for travellers?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Under the law, it must do so.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Will the plans drawn up ten years ago be brought up to date?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the Board of Control so desires, it can build the hotel to the plans that have been passed, but it is open to the board to bring the plans up to date.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Will this hotel be a State hotel?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. It will be under the Board of Control. Actually, the board is under the control of the Minister for Lands.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am sorry that I did not have an opportunity to put an amendment on the notice paper. Now that the matter is before the Committee, we ought to have all the information that is available. We might even question the right of the board, or its secretary, to apply for a license.

The Minister for Mines: We might even go outside the Bill altogether.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I would not be surprised if the Minister did so.

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

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 and 6, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

*[The President took the Chair.]*

## ASSENT TO BILLS.

Messages from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1, Companies Act Amendment.

- 2, Land Alienation Restriction Act Amendment (Continuance).
- 3, Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment (Continuance).
- 4, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.
- 5, Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment.

## BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

**HON. W. J. MANN** (South-West) [7.23]: I cannot help thinking that this Bill has been brought down without a full recognition of the facts concerning milk producers. One portion of it proposes to increase the amount of compensation that may be paid to certain people engaged in the production of whole-milk, but it altogether loses sight of the fact that that section of the milk producers is in the great minority. As I read the amending Bill, it proposes to grant the increase to the dairymen who have herds comprised wholly of cattle that have been entered in the stud-book. I want to qualify that by saying I am assured by the Honorary Minister that it is proposed to bring down an amendment to shade that somewhat by providing that it shall apply to milk vendors whose herds comprise 75 per cent. of cattle entered in the stud-book. It is well known by all interested in dairying—in this country at any rate—that there are certain grade cattle which are, in the avenue of production, equally as valuable, and in many cases more so, than stud-book stock. The conviction has been forced upon me that if this Bill is to be fair and reasonable it should apply to all cattle owned by registered dairymen.

During the past few days I have had the opportunity of contacting quite a number of the State's most prominent milk producers. I speak now of those outside the metropolitan area. They had no hesitation in saying that their herds, while they comprise in some instances up to 10 per cent. stud-book stock, are more valuable to them, from the point of view of milk production, than if they were all of stud-book stock standard. The Bill, as I understand it, simply leaves the man who has high-grade stock in the same position as he has been in since the

measure was introduced. No matter what the value of one of his cows may be, if it reacts to a T.B. test and is destroyed, the most he can recover is £20. I am equally assured that at present it is impossible to purchase a decent grade cow for that sum. One cattleman told me that if I went along with £30 I would have no chance of purchasing a good grade cow. He went further and said, "While I have some stud-book stock, I have been for 15 years building up my grade herd until it is highly profitable. I would want at least £40 for any one of those cows." I am also assured that within a month from now, if a good grade cow in milk were offered for sale there would be no difficulty in securing £40 for her. My contention is that, whatever the objects of the Bill, it is not equitable as it stands.

Some provision should be made for decent compensation to be paid to the grade stockman, similar to what is to be made available for the stud-book stockowner, always providing, of course, that he is prepared to pay for the additional cover. It is a form of insurance, no more and no less. I am also assured that these growers would have no objection to paying on the same parity as the stud-book stockowner will have to pay. Nothing could be fairer than that. I do not think the Agricultural Department or the Government would want to penalise these men. I see no way out of the difficulty if the Bill is passed as it stands. I am also given to understand—and I think it is correct—that the percentage of dairymen, whether they be whole-milk or butterfat producers, who have herds wholly of stud-book stock, is very small, compared with the many hundreds who have herds producing milk in this State. I suggest to the Minister that the advice he has received, that by making provision that herds of 25 per cent. cattle of stud-book stock should be given the advantage of this amending legislation, does not help in the slightest degree. It seems to me that it is more likely to be 10 per cent. if we are to have anything like equity.

The Honorary Minister looks at me in an inquiring sort of way, but I would suggest to him, if he wants to find the real truth, that he ascertain how many pure-bred herds there are in the State, and how many pure-bred herds, or even herds comprising 75 per cent. of pure-bred stock, will be covered

by the measure. If he does that, he will get the shock of his life. We know, and so do stockmen, that they breed with the object of getting grade cattle. My experience bears out the contention that by doing so they get a more robust animal and one that is, in the ordinary course of events, less liable to disease. These men are not struggling and they could easily have pure-bred herds, but they do not. Many of them have only a pure-bred bull, and they are quite satisfied to cull from their grade stock the highest productive cows and mate them with the pure-bred bull. By that process they breed, over the years, very high-grade cattle. I am not a bit enamoured of the Bill. I realise the difficulty the Milk Board is finding in securing sufficient funds to pay compensation; but that can be overcome, and I am assured by the department that it would not be averse to that course.

Some of the farmers express themselves as very willing to pay an increased rate if they can receive higher compensation. That is just exactly what the whole position boils itself down to. I cannot understand how this amendment was ever brought down. I am loth to think that it was introduced in favour of a small coterie of people. That is what its effect will be. We have to remember, too, that whilst this amendment provides that the amount of compensation may be raised from £20 to £42, every animal is valued and paid for on a valuation arrived at by the board's officers and the owner in consultation. I am not aware what method is adopted, but I presume that that would be the system. It is the proper one, because even amongst grade cows there are good ones and better ones. I do not think that this House would feel disposed to forsake the man who says, "I am in dairying. I can go and buy as much stud stock as I wish, but I prefer to keep my grade cows because they are more prolific, more highly productive and give me a greater return."

That is the position as I see it, and I would ask the Minister if he would explore that avenue just a little further. From what I know of the Honorary Minister, he is the last man to put the man on the land at any disadvantage. That is the great weakness of this Bill; it does not provide adequate compensation for all classes, and to say that on the figures the £20 which has been the fixed figure for a number of years past is satisfactory is all wrong, seeing that today

one could not buy what one might call a decent grade cow for that amount. It just could not be done. Dairy stock is short in the State today and, in fact, shorter than it has ever been previously. It is likely to be shorter still. If this Bill is brought down to cover any specific area in the State, then it ought to be made to apply to that area.

I have been told—I cannot give the exact figures—that the percentage of reactors amongst the dairy herds in the metropolitan area is a great deal higher than the percentage in the country, and this can be easily understood. Stock are held and kept under very much better conditions in the rural districts than they can possibly be round the suburbs of Perth. I therefore suggest to the Minister that he inquire a little further into this matter and ascertain how far he can go in order to make provision for the great majority of dairymen who are likely to be disadvantaged. Even if there are two types of premium—one for the stock that are stud-book animals and one for those that are not entitled to go into the stud-book—that would not cover the position at all. The man with the higher valued animal should have a perfect right—and provision should be made for him—to receive fair and equitable compensation just the same as the man who, of his own wish, breeds probably for stud-book and sale purposes. Most stud stock are held by people who breed to sell, and not so much for the purpose of milk production only.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Your suggestion is that they be classed in different grades.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes, and the stud-book stock would be one class. Every dairyman is compelled to license his herd. There should be no difficulty in showing what is required, if there is to be any differentiation. It could be stated on the license, or in any other way that the Milk Board, which, I understand, is to police this matter, shall determine. I say emphatically, that the Bill, as introduced, does not by any means, fairly meet the position.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [7.51]: I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but I would have preferred it to be more comprehensive, so as to cover more than the present rate of compensation. The difficulty is that the £20 allowed now is insufficient to meet the requirements of those owning pedigreed stock,

and I understand that it is this section of the dairymen that has asked for the introduction of the legislation. Now that it has been placed before Parliament, a great many of those concerned are beginning to think that it is time they should get more than £20 for certain of their stock which may be condemned. I understand that when the present compensation fund was established it was fairly difficult to make payments to the extent of £20. The dairy farmers have to contribute to the fund and if the amount of compensation is to be raised considerably they will have to contribute a great deal more. Even if that is done, there will still be a considerable margin between pedigreed stock and the ordinary type of animal. We all know that unregistered stock will never bring the price that pedigreed stock will demand.

I know of one case myself where a man bought some registered dairy cattle and they were not as good as ordinary grade beasts. I bought from a farmer who was supposed to have some very good stud stock, but the animal I secured from him turned out to be a very ordinary one. That applies frequently. Because a cow is registered it does not mean she is of extra good quality. As Mr. Mann said, there are many dairies with grade cattle equally as good as registered cattle. The fact remains that people who go in for stud breeding do get greater prices for their stock. I do not know whether one Bill would cover the whole question. It may be necessary to have two Bills in any case. Perhaps the Minister would consider introducing another measure dealing with that type of dairy farmer.

The Honorary Minister: An amendment of the present Act would do that.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: That is so. It would require something along these lines. We all know that £20 is a small price for a good cow, particularly in these times when dairying is flourishing. I have a friend in the South-West who recently sold all his dairy cows numbering between 30 and 40 and because I purchased a bull from him he wrote and told me that I ought to be very pleased seeing that he had got over £30 for each cow, and that they were not registered stock. That means that if they had been condemned, he would have lost about £10 a head on those cattle. That

would indicate that the rate of £20 does not meet the situation and I believe the Farmers' Union or the Minister, if he receives sufficient inducement, will seek the introduction of a Bill to increase the present rate of compensation. Perhaps the present Bill is all right as far as it goes but, as I said before, there will still be a difference between the grade cattle and the pedigreed stock.

**HON. G. BENNETTS** (South) [7.56]: I would like to ask the Minister a question as to the registration of these herds. If they are classified in two or three groups, will there be a Government inspector to say which grades they come under if they are registered? Would the dairyman be in the position to say, "I am registering 25 head of grade stock." Then again, when a beast was condemned on a certain place, would an inspector go along and ascertain whether that class of beast which had been condemned was one of the best or whether they were ringing in a bad one of a cheaper class and getting a higher grade rate for that beast? How would it operate?

**HON. E. M. DAVIES** (West) [7.57]: I desire to support the views of members who have spoken on the Bill. While I confess I have not had experience in the dairying industry I know that considerable hardship has been inflicted upon those associated with it. Cattle that have been tested and condemned have still been left on the producers' properties. I feel that those producers are entitled to receive a fair margin of compensation for the stock that they will lose as a result of the test and which have been marked as condemned. As some members have said, I believe that the Honorary Minister will take the opportunity of going into this question. I should also like to ask him to give further consideration to the matter of increasing the compensation payable, apart from that provided for in the Bill.

In the province that I represent there are milk producers. In one case, one man has had 31 cows condemned and marked. Another one has had 28 cows condemned and two others, 10 each. Although the stock were condemned and marked in the early part of October, the producers concerned are still compelled to keep the beasts

on their properties and to provide feed for them. Also, there is no provision for isolating them from the other stock, and the men have not yet received any compensation. Some of them are not in a position to purchase new stock because they have not got the wherewithal to do it. Until such time as they receive compensation, they are not able to replenish their stock, and thus their production suffers. In addition to that, they have to feed the condemned stock on their properties and the animals cannot be moved until after the 22nd December or thereabouts. I feel that those milk producers are suffering great disabilities as a result of the condemnation of certain of their cattle and I think that they are justly entitled to receive more consideration than has been extended to them so far. I trust that the Honorary Minister will give earnest consideration to the request that has been made.

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** (Hon. G. B. Wood)—East—in reply [8.0]: Mr. Tuckey has hit the nail on the head. He has realised that there are two classes of cattle which can come under the scope of the Milk Act, one class consisting of registered cows and the other of those which are not registered.

Hon. W. J. Mann: We all recognise that.

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: Yes. Mr. Mann has given me a terrific problem to solve in saying that provision should be made for the grade cattle. I realise these difficulties, but how would it be possible to say there shall be double compensation for a stud cow and certain compensation for a grade cow and another amount of compensation for a cow which is not a grade cow? Where is the difference? Who is going to say what is a grade cow and what is an ordinary cow?

Hon. W. J. Mann: The owners register them as grade cows.

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: No grade cows are registered.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do you know what a grade cow is?

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: Yes.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What is it?

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: A grade cow may possibly be as good as a registered

cow, but it is not registered in the stud book.

Hon. W. J. Mann: That does not answer my question.

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: I am prepared to admit that a grade cow may be as good as a stud cow.

Hon. W. R. Hall: What has she got that the other cows haven't got?

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: As Mr. Tuckey says, the answer to the problem is to carry this Bill and to give consideration to an increase in the compensation of £20 which is at present embodied in the Act. That is what should be done and we should not play about with this measure. I cannot see how we are going to differentiate between the three classes of cows.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Are you prepared to introduce an amendment to the other Act to cover that?

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: I am not prepared to introduce any more amendments this session to anything. I have already received the cane for introducing too much and there is no possible time for more. I am wondering why representations have not been made to the Department of Agriculture for an increase in the compensation and the levy.

Hon. W. R. Hall: You are the Minister.

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: No representations have been made. Mr. Tuckey knows that the only representations have been from the Royal Agricultural Society to increase and double up on the registered cattle and that is what I have done. No good purpose would be served if we did not pass this amending Bill. I am prepared to promise Mr. Mann and his friends that next session I will give further consideration to increasing the compensation beyond £20, and the levy. I do not think it is necessary to foist this on these people. There is another point we have to consider. The incidence of T.B. in the metropolitan area has been 43 per cent., which is very high indeed. As far as I can gather most people have been quite satisfied with their valuations. I have been out with our veterinary officers and I have told them to make the compensation as high as they can in conformity with the value of the animal.

These veterinary surgeons and their assistants are sent every week to Subiaco to ascertain the values.

Hon. W. J. Mann: But they have a ceiling beyond which they cannot go.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. I would like to point out that all cows are definitely not worth £20. A lot of people say that cows have been killed and there is a shortage and the prices have gone up. That is not so.

Hon. A. L. Loton: About what price would they be in March?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We do not know.

Hon. A. L. Loton: We have a fair idea.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We all have an idea. I was told three months ago that the price would be very high at this stage, but that has not happened. I am prepared to believe that the price of cattle will be higher in March but up to date prices have not increased very much. The incidence of T.B. is very high in the metropolitan area, but not in the country districts. A man at Pinjarra, Mr. Kruger, whom Mr. Tuckey knows, and I think Mr. Tuckey was with me when he spoke to me, asked me whether I would send an officer down to inspect his stock for T.B. I told him he was taking a big risk, because he did not come under the Milk Act and might lose half his cows and receive no compensation. He replied that he was prepared to do what was right.

Hon. W. J. Mann: So are they all.

The HONORARY MINISTER: They do not all do that. We know of some who do not.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You might know an odd one, but one swallow does not make a summer.

The HONORARY MINISTER: When Mr. Kruger's cattle were inspected there was not a single reactor. Only a very small percentage of cattle in the country areas are reactors. There was another case at Kendenup where there was only one reactor in 90 cows. I am not sure that even the stud men are doing themselves a good service by being saddled with this double levy for the rest of their existence, or until it is repealed. I believe that most

of the stud men will have very few reactors. That may apply to these grade cow herdsmen.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What about the complaint of Mr. Davies concerning keeping the cattle so long?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Give me a chance! I will reply to all these things if I have the time.

Hon. G. Fraser: You have all night.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think Mr. Tuckey gave the solution—to alter the basis of levy and valuation which now applies for the ordinary cow of £20 and pass this Bill. We are dealing definitely with registered cows and I do not see how we are going to differentiate between a grade cow and any other. With regard to the complaint referred to by Mr. Davies, I have heard about that before, and I must admit it is very unfortunate that there are a few people in Fremantle who, owing to the congestion in the abattoirs, have not been able to have their cattle slaughtered and to receive compensation. Probably the inspectors went ahead a little faster than the abattoirs could keep up with the carcasses. I do not blame them for that and Dr. Hislop will not blame them either, because there has been an urge from everywhere for them to get on with the job and clean up things as fast as possible.

I admit that I was surprised to hear that these people still had their cattle, and I promise Mr. Davies that I will see whether it is possible to grant them compensation before their animals are slaughtered. I think that everyone will agree that cattle which are reactors should be put to one side and not allowed to be milked. Mr. Bennetts referred to registered and unregistered herds. They would all be under inspectors who would know the position. The man with the 75 per cent. stud herd and the man who has not a 75 per cent. herd will have to pay double levy and will get double compensation for the whole herd.

Hon. W. J. Mann: That is the iniquity of it. He will be able to get increased compensation for his grade stock.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Twenty-five per cent.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Yes, but the other man will not be able to get any. That is the weakness.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is with the amendment I have on the notice paper. I gave this considerable thought when Mr. Craig first brought it up. I consulted a few people—herdsmen too—and we came to the conclusion that 25 per cent. would be the fairest thing we could do. If we went up to 50 per cent., or the other way round, as Mr. Mann said, we might just as well leave it alone. I think there is a lot in what Mr. Mann and other members have said regarding the compensation of £20 for the ordinary cow being increased and we will give every consideration to that. I intend to devote some time now to what Dr. Hislop said in regard to pasteurisation. He wanted to know what the Government had been doing in that regard. The Milk Board has done a lot. First of all it has laid down the following specifications to be complied with by the treatment depots before they can get a license:—

Buildings must be in accordance with plans submitted to and approved by the Board. They must be either of reinforced concrete or brick, and must contain not less than the following equipment:—

An efficient boiler of suitable capacity; a soaker bottle washer; a mechanical can washer; a mechanical bottling and capping machine; a batch pasteuriser and enclosed cooler with thermostatic control or completely enclosed plate pasteuriser and enclosed cooler with thermostatic control; refrigerating equipment capable of cooling milk and holding it at below 40°F.; a milk-testing room and equipment; proper amenities including showers and washing facilities for staff."

The Milk Board has gone to considerable trouble to see that this very desirable machinery was brought to Western Australia. The most popular pasteuriser was the A.P.V. and when it was found that there were not sufficient available the possibility of another pasteuriser being secured was explored and finally the Graham Knoek pasteuriser was decided upon which, according to advice received, is just as efficient as the other. I believe that the milk treatment depots in the metropolitan area will be cut down to six eventually. This is a most interesting point to Fremantle members. Quite a lot has been said about the aspiration of Western Australian Farmers to create a monopoly in Perth. The same has happened in Fremantle. Half a dozen of the small men have formed a combine. The people that have been howling about Western Australian Farmers are going to do the same

thing themselves! It is a very desirable move, too, because these very small and very undesirable treatment depots in Fremantle have combined and are putting in one of the most up-to-date plants to come to Western Australia. Mr. Gray will know that it is to be set up at Shepherd's place.

I intend to read a few extracts from the annual report of the Milk Board. I would like to commend that report to members. It will be tabled as soon as I have finished with it. If they read it they will see the marvellous progress that has been made in Western Australia since the implementation of the Act in the last five or six months. There are pictures of what has been occurring, which members will be able to see. Dr. Hislop wanted to know something about the inspection of dairies in the metropolitan area. In the report of the Milk Board appears the following:—

Inspectors of dairies and milk vendors' premises in the areas brought under the Board's jurisdiction under the new Act revealed the vital necessity of the control of such dairies and milk vendors' premises being vested in an independent authority. It was obvious that in a number of instances buildings, premises and equipment were far below a reasonable standard, and in many cases attention was not being paid to the rudimentary requirements of hygiene.

On dairies the major defects observed were the required milk cooler, strainers were not in milk and utensils, and the lack of separate copers for the provision of boiling water for sterilising purposes; in the majority of cases inspected one copper only was in evidence and this was also used for domestic purposes contrary to the requirements of health bylaws.

A number of dairies were not equipped with the required milk cooler, strainers were not in evidence, and where they were being used they were almost universally of cloth only.

Some milking sheds had only earthen floors. The conditions of some buildings and equipment could only be described as primitive, even where milk rooms had been provided a number of them were not fly-proof and were not sound structurally. In the appendices to this report will be found photographs indicating these conditions.

After the inspections and consideration of cross sections of the State, the board decided that immediate steps were necessary to raise the standard under which milk was being produced and handled in the areas previously outside the board's jurisdiction. A wide territory was involved in which variable conditions as to production and distribution exist.

It was decided that in the first instance hygienic requirements must be observed. Some dairymen had not previously been visited by inspectors of any authority, and had not been



given the benefit of any advice or assistance as to the conditions under which, and the manner by which milk should be produced and handled. This was the first disability to overcome.

Where buildings were of a reasonable nature licenses were issued by the board, and asbestos and flat iron milk rooms were approved with the proviso that when considered desirable brick, stone or concrete structures be provided. Instructions were given for the provision of sterilising facilities, coolers, and metal strainers with cotton wool wads and adequate water supplies where these facilities did not exist.

That is as to inspections. As to the samples taken, the report continues—

The percentage of samples showing low counts increased from the previous year, and approximately 40 per cent. of the samples revealed counts of 10,000 micro organisms per cubic centimetre by the direct count method, and 28.7 per cent. revealed counts of between 10,000 and 100,000 micro organisms per cubic centimetre. These results can be regarded as being very satisfactory.

Where the higher counts were revealed farmers were advised of the result and instructed in the methods to be adopted to avoid a repetition.

Regarding pasteurised milk the report states—

Inspections were made and samples taken of pasteurised milk at various stages of the process and of milk in bottles and of empty bottles at treatment plants.

These results were also used for the guidance of treatment plant proprietors.

In all 279 samples of pasteurised milk were taken. Of these 208 revealed counts up to 50,000 micro organisms per cubic centimetre according to the plate count method, and 71 samples revealed counts of over 50,000. Thirty-eight samples revealed positive coli in 1/10th millilitre. Seventy-seven pasteurised samples were subjected to the phosphatase test. Forty-seven were found to be satisfactory and 30 unsatisfactory. These results demonstrated the necessity for better equipment and greater care in the treatment plants for pasteurising milk.

That is the answer to the criticism regarding the elimination of the small plants. The report continues—

Throughout the year inspections were constantly made of dairies, milk depots, milk vendors' premises, vehicles and shops. The regulations in respect to hygienic requirements are under consideration in view of the additional powers conferred on the board under the new Milk Act. These will enable the board to prosecute offenders against hygiene.

That is the answer to Dr. Hislop's query as to what has happened. Everything possible has been done. I have been amazed at the criticism of the Milk Board by

women's organisations that have stated that they do not think it fair that certain milk treatment depots were not given licenses. They should be the first people to stand behind the board and the Department of Agriculture in what those authorities are endeavouring to do. The people refused treatment licenses can still retail milk and are not deprived of their living, as the treatment side of the business is very small as compared with the retailing side. The absolute minimum cost of an efficient plant is from £10,000 to £20,000, and someone treating perhaps 200 gallons per day could not possibly afford such a plant.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: What is the capacity of a £10,000 plant?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That figure is a rough guess, as it depends on the building and so on, but the Milk Board in Sydney said that no plant should treat under 10,000 gallons daily. That would not apply here, but I think in this State a plant should treat at least 5,000 gallons per day. In Sydney two plants treat 220,00 gallons per day, and yet here we talk of an open go, and 40 treatment depots. I think five or six would be the best number, and I was pleased to hear of what is happening in Fremantle. I knew Dr. Hislop required certain information, and I thank you, Mr. President, for the latitude you have allowed me. I hope the Bill will pass and that we will be able to go into the question next session, to see what can be done about the ordinary owner of a couple of cows, in the matter of compensation. It was asked in another place last session why a man owning a diseased cow should get any compensation. I do not agree with that outlook, but realise that it will not be easy to get a measure providing for compensation passed by Parliament. Up to date the producers have been given a fair deal, and they have a right of appeal to the Minister if not satisfied with the valuations. The valuers try to balance the whole of a man's herd. In one case I saw a cow that I valued at £8, but the valuer gave the owner £14 for it, in order to balance with another animal.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What is the average compensation paid up to date?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Nearly £20, which bears out my contention that the

producers are being given a fair deal. There has not been any wholesale compensation paid outside the metropolitan area.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 60:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 the words "whose whole herd is" be struck out.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I think the amendment will create an anomaly, but in view of the promise of the Minister that early next session consideration will be given to legislation to improve the position, I support the amendment.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: If we simply strike out the word "whole" we will get a better effect. Many dairymen start with scrub cattle, gradually working over to grade cattle, and then to pedigreed stock. When purchasing pedigreed stock they may get hold of infected animals, and they should be entitled to compensation. I oppose the amendment. Later I should like to move an amendment to strike out the word "whole".

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment of the Honorary Minister must first be dealt with.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot accept the amendment indicated by Mr. Loton. A registered herd must be kept quite separate from anything else and the proviso allowing for 25 per cent. should meet all needs. The owner of a fine Holstein herd told me that he also had Jerseys. I asked him why, and he replied that he wanted a better quality of milk for certain customers. The 25 per cent. would cater for that man. If we bring in every person who owns one, two or three stud cows, we shall not know where we are.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN: In order to deal with Mr. Loton's proposed amendment, the Bill will have to be re-committed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no objection to re-committing the Bill in order that Mr. Loton's amendment may be dealt with.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 61:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That in line 7 the words "whose whole herd is" be struck out and the words "at least 75 per cent. of whose herd is" inserted in lieu.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: Will the Honorary Minister extend the same privilege on this clause?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

**BILL—JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
(REGULATION OF REPORTS).**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 26th November.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [8.38]: When Mr. Heenan moved the second reading of the Bill, I thought I could agree with him to some extent, though I did not like his censoring of the newspapers nor his interference with individual liberty, which was the effect I thought his Bill would have. I secured the adjournment of the debate in order to have an opportunity to make inquiries. I realise that the hon. member was actuated by good intentions, but on investigation I have found that the measure will not operate as I in the first place believed it would and as the sponsor of the Bill thinks it will. The more I have investigated the matter, the surer I have become that we would be very ill-advised to pass the Bill. I realise that the repercussions would be far-reaching and would defeat the object Mr. Heenan has in view.

As I have stated, the Bill requires close investigation. The measure has been based on the Victorian Act, but it differs considerably from that statute in several respects. The first legislation of this nature was passed in 1929 by the Victorian Parliament and it is mainly on that Act that the Bill has been framed. The next State to embark

upon similar legislation was South Australia, which seven years later, namely, in 1936, incorporated a provision of a like nature in its laws, but differing considerably in detail. Although such legislation has been in force in the one State for 18 years and in the other State for 11 years, the remaining four States of the Commonwealth have not found it necessary or advisable to pass a similar law. It is a significant fact that the two States that have passed such legislation are noted for their hypocrisy on matters of this sort. In those States, there has always been an outward show of piety which manifests itself in the embargo upon the running of trams on Sunday morning—no trams are run at that time to give facilities to the public—and also in other directions. They seem to act on the assumption that, if a thing is not permitted to be seen or known, it is as good as if it never existed. The British law courts have always resolutely set their faces against the hearing of charges in camera.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: There is an Act in England.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I will deal with England. Only in rare cases will the British courts, in common with our own courts, make an order prohibiting the publication of a full report of the proceedings. They act upon the principle that much more harm can be done by spreading a cloak of secrecy over criminal or immoral acts than that which results from the publication of reports of the cases. On the rare occasions on which judges have made orders prohibiting publication, the greatest reluctance has been shown.

The worst feature of the Bill, however, is that, instead of achieving a certain objective, it would create a much worse position than that which exists at present. It will not protect the innocent, as Mr. Heenan would have us believe, but it would give a special protection to a limited and select category of offenders against the moral code. Innocent parties do not fear publicity; it is the guilty parties who desire concealment to cover up their misdeeds. I wish to assure members that I have devoted considerable time to investigating the provisions of the measure, which is very important and far-reaching, and am convinced that to pass it would do much harm. I have had inquiries made about the position in England, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, and

only this morning did I obtain some of the information from the Eastern States. The measure will protect the most cowardly persons in the community—

Hon. W. R. Hall: How will it protect the most cowardly persons in the community?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: —and will not only allow but will also encourage the wife-beater, the home-smasher and the rouse, who will have their names and doings cloaked when they are eventually brought to book in court. Many of them curb their actions and do the decent thing because they fear publicity. If the Bill be passed, they will make all sorts of endeavours to avoid their responsibility and also blacken their victims, knowing that all the lies they tell and all the charges proved against them will be hushed up and covered with a few headlines. Why should this protection be given to the classes I have referred to, whilst on the other hand the unfortunate who makes an error of judgment in a traffic case, who falls an offender on a stealing or shoplifting case, who has a drink too much, or who commits other offences of a much lesser degree than those to which the Bill refers, risks the glare of publicity in the Press and nobody stands up for him? Is it reasonable to show so much solicitude for the more serious offender against the moral code? If the Bill is passed, it will encourage divorce, because there is a section of the community only too eager to shed its marriage responsibilities.

The Bill will give this class of person protection because they will not have to face the public exposure which will follow the publication of a case under the present system. If there are indecent newspaper reports, there are ample laws to deal with them. The Bill proposes to prevent the sale of any newspaper containing these details. Can this be done successfully? It is very problematical. The Bill is copied from the Victorian Act, and South Australia has a somewhat similar Act. Naturally, one looks for results. What do we find? Simply that in both of those States the news of the world from England and papers from other States give all the news that this Bill proposes to prevent.

It has been found impossible to police such a law as far as outside publications are concerned. These may be purchased

at any bookstall and surely the sponsor of the Bill does not expect them to be excluded here. The position would then be that this Bill, if passed, would give protection to those persons who offend against our moral codes. On the 17th August, 1947, Mr. Justice Bonney said in the Newcastle Divorce Court—

One of the most precious aspects of the law and procedure that this country inherited is that all courts are held in public.

The Minister for Mines: What are you reading from?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: From my notes. Would the Minister like to see them? I am not reading from "Hansard," I can assure him. I am not going to fall for that.

The Minister for Mines: I thought you were reading from some reliable publication.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It certainly is. If I say anything in the House it will be reliable. I have not been found out yet, anyhow. Mr. Justice Bonney made this comment after the noise from a drilling machine being used on the roadway near the courthouse had set a problem for him. He said the court had the power to put a stop to outside noises that made the administration of justice impossible, but he did not want to do this, as the work was of a public nature. Every citizen, said the judge, had the right to be in court and see how justice was administered. He continued:

Without that precaution there was always the danger of untold evils flowing from such important business as the administration of justice. One often heard it said that divorce cases ought not to be held in public and that people should not have to wash their "dirty linen" in public. However, such procedure had its value in cases such as the one before him, where evidence showed that a young woman had been frequently assaulted by her husband.

The judge said it was not only highly desirable that the great inheritance of public justice be adhered to, but that this was one of those cases which might put on their guard women who might intend to marry a man, who, on the evidence before the court, appeared to be a wife basher. Mr. Downing, Minister of Justice in New South Wales, pointed out in the Legislative Assembly in March, 1946, that the value of Press publicity in ensuring justice was conceded by the President of the Legislative Council in 1924, when he said—

Publicity gives a certain amount of guarantee as to witnesses speaking the truth. It supplies opportunity for persons who know the truth to know what is going on and for them to come and assist justice.

In the appeal case of *McPherson v. McPherson*—McPherson being a Minister of the Crown—Lord Blanesburgh said in the Privy Council—

So long as divorce is not permitted to be a matter of agreement between the parties the public at large—their Lordships are not now referring to the prurient minded among them who revel in the unsavory details of many such cases—but the public at large are directly interested in them, affecting as they do, not only the status of the two individuals concerned but the entire social structure and the preservation of wholesome family life.

#### *Point of Order.*

Hon. W. R. Hall: On a point of order, Mr. President, is it necessary for members to listen to a member reading his speech?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I am reading extracts, not a speech.

The President: A member is not supposed to read his speech, but he may read extracts.

#### *Debate Resumed.*

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is exactly what I am doing. Mr. Downing also said—

The publication of divorce evidence is a safety valve, a deterrent to those who regard divorce lightly, a vital matter of public policy," commented the late Sir George Bowen Simpson, a few days before he relinquished his seat as Judge in Divorce. This comment is particularly appropriate now when a suggestion is aired in political circles that legislative action should be taken to prevent the publication of divorce evidence. Sir George Simpson's successor, Mr. Justice Gordon, was equally emphatic that the publication of divorce details was in the interest of justice. A dozen times he referred to the great assistance that the divorce court had received from publication of details in securing material evidence which otherwise would have been unprocureable. Mr. Justice Gordon also believed that publication was a powerful deterrent to collusion and that, in the absence of publication, collusion and connivance would be rampant. Lawyers assert that wherever suppression of divorce evidence has been operative—and especially in England at the present time—immorality has received a big impetus simply because fear of publicity has been removed. They declare that when cases were heard in camera in New South Wales public men and others, clandestinely, at appointed times with judges, crept into the Divorce Court, secured their decrees, crept out again, and took

their places in society without the public being aware of the divorce proceedings. "That Star Chamber system was a disgrace to the administration of justice," says a prominent divorce lawyer.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member will make his quotations as brief as possible.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have finished them, Mr. President. It is necessary, in my opinion, to cite the opinions of those I have quoted, because, after all, judges are best fitted to analyse cases. We know from experience that they hesitate to order cases to be heard in camera. Only on rare occasions do they order the Press to withhold the publication of details of cases. Judges are experienced and know that publicity is the best course. Once we start to interfere with the publication of court proceedings, we leave ourselves open to gross abuses which would be much more serious than the evils which the sponsor of the Bill seeks to overcome. Surely, in this country we do not wish to restrict the rights of the people. The moment we censor the Press, we are on the road to trouble. We shall be following the Chifley Government; in fact, we shall be giving it encouragement.

Hon. W. R. Hall: What has the Chifley Government to do with the Bill?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The hon. member would not know if I told him.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Wouldn't I?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The previous record of a person of low moral character is made known by publication in the Press. The average sinner is not afraid of sinning; but he is very much afraid of being found out. If there is no publicity—

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Will you—

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I tell Mr. Heenan that I listened very patiently to him when he introduced the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: We are listening patiently to you reading yours.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Heenan will have the opportunity to reply when the time comes.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: I am only trying to help you.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Interjections are disorderly.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: After all, in defended cases one has to look at the result. If the proceedings are covered up, how are people to know whether the guilty party is being protected, the stigma resting on the innocent party?

Hon. W. R. Hall: Why should people profit from other people's misfortunes?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is no such profiteering.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Yes. There is. There are two solicitors here, you know.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Will the hon. member allow me to proceed? Then we have the scandalmongers. These are likely to talk scandal of the unfortunate innocent party, the one who should be protected. Again, take the person who has transgressed and had a rotten run. Unless some of the evidence is exposed, how could a young girl whom he might be courting know what he is? How could the parents of the girl know? It may be said that it is a terrible thing for young children to read the papers. I think it is a terrible thing for them to learn of such things by other means.

Hon. L. A. Logan: It would be better for them to read the paper.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. The young people today are getting information from the wrong source.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Would you suggest that lads under 12 years of age selling newspapers should read this stuff?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I naturally inquire of people associated with this matter. A leading divorce lawyer said he had not seen the Bill, and I said, "Here is a copy; what is your opinion of it?" He said, "If the Bill is placed on the statute book it will double the number of divorces." I said, "Why?" He said, "For the simple reason that more than half my clients never go on with divorce proceedings because they cannot face the publicity." He went on to say, "If you remove publicity, we shall be overwhelmed with cases." Which ever way we look at the measure, it seems to defeat the objects which Mr. Heenan set out to achieve. To summarise the position, the intention of the Bill is the censorship of news, thus encroaching on individual rights.

The transgressor in many cases will be protected and the innocent condemned. It will not secure the sponsor's objective, but will have the directly opposite effect. It prevents publication of facts which impress those inclined to digress and are a warning to young minds as to what might blight and degrade their lives. It attempts to override the power already in the hands of judges. It will not permit newsprint from outside the State being distributed here. It will increase transgressions under the moral code. I have it on professional assurance that it will increase divorce twofold. I hope members will see just what the Bill means—that it will not do what the sponsor wishes, but will make the position worse. The only thing to do is to defeat the Bill on the second reading.

On motion by Hon. H. A. C. Daffen, debate adjourned.

### MOTION—RAILWAYS.

#### *As to Use of New Steel Coaches.*

Debate resumed from the 26th November on the following motion by Hon. G. Bennetts:—

That, in the opinion of this House, the newly constructed steel coaches about to be released from the Midland Junction Workshops should be placed on the ordinary Goldfields express and other long distance country trains.

**HON. W. R. HALL** (North-East) [9.4]: I rise to support the motion. The travelling public of the Goldfields are just as entitled to travel in these steel coaches as are those who come from the Eastern States and travel on the Westland express. The State receives only a small remuneration from Eastern States passengers.

The Honorary Minister: What is the difference in fares?

**Hon. W. R. HALL:** Those coming from the Eastern States pay about £1 per head to the Western Australian Government. It might be less.

**Hon. G. Bennetts:** It is 10s.

**Hon. W. R. HALL:** A person travelling first class from Kalgoorlie to Perth is called upon to pay £3 or £4. Hot and cold water is provided as an amenity for Eastern States travellers. There are two types of coaches of which I can speak. One is the AZ, a two-berth compartment, and the other

is the AG, a four-berth compartment. It is seldom that the AG carriages are used for Westland passengers coming from the Eastern States, but very often they are put on for people travelling from Perth to Kalgoorlie, and vice versa. The other evening, some members representing the South-West Province mentioned, by interjection, the arrangement provided by the railways for people travelling from the South-West to the metropolitan area. Mr. Loton and other members said that the steel coaches should be made available to their constituents. But there are subsidiary services—buses—in those areas.

This House has already passed a resolution in connection with the Landliner bus which operates between Perth and Kojonup. We have not got such a service to Kalgoorlie. As a matter of fact, the roads there would not permit it. There are enough corrugations between Southern Cross and Bullabulling to prevent such a service operating. Yet the members to whom I have referred say that their constituents should participate in the use of the steel coaches. Is it fair that the Goldfields people should suffer in their transport arrangements, whether it be at Christmas time or any other period? It is not right. The Kalgoorlie express is one of the best paying trains we have. No greater emphasis could be given to the debate tonight than that you, Mr. President, did not arrive in Perth until 6 or 7 p.m. That shows the state of the Kalgoorlie-Perth express. The last time I travelled on that train—a fortnight ago—it took 21 hours to do the journey from Perth to Kalgoorlie. We left here at 5 p.m. and arrived at Kalgoorlie at 2.15 p.m. the next day. It is an absolute disgrace. I was told by the engine-driver that the engine had been condemned many months ago. Without wishing to mention anything to jeopardise the transport arrangements of people coming from the Eastern States, I say that the good accommodation which applies to them should be made available to the Goldfields people. We have heard Mr. Bennetts say tonight that the State Government gets only 10s. for carrying the Eastern States travellers from Kalgoorlie to Perth.

Is it right that the residents of the Goldfields should be denied the facilities that are provided for those coming from the Eastern States? It is definitely wrong. In addi-

tion, the people who live at Leonora, Gwalia and Laverton have not a bus service or any sort of diesel coach arrangements. People living in the South-West have omnibuses provided and yet their members want the right for them to participate in the use of the steel coaches. We have no bus service of any description. I hope the motion will be carried. The people on the Goldfields are entitled to something better than they have had to put up with for the last 20 years.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [9.13]:** I would like to correct an impression made in this Chamber, that the amount received in respect of passengers from the Eastern States is only 10s. The actual figures as to the proportion of the through fare, Perth to Adelaide, including meals and sleeper, are these—

Hon. G. Bennetts: Now you are making it complicated.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** I will make it as simple as I can, and I trust the hon. member will be able to understand it. The amounts that the Western Australian Government Railways receive are as follow:—First class, £3 5s. 8d.; second class, £2 0s. 9d. The rail fare for the Kalgoorlie express is £3 2s. 4d. plus 15s. for a sleeper and 7s. for meals. The sleeper and meals are optional. One does not have to take them, but on the Trans. train they have to be paid for. The total local first class single fare from Perth to Kalgoorlie, including meals and sleeper is, £4 4s. 4d. Without sleeper or meals it is £3 2s. 4d., so if one takes a sleeper but no meals the fare would be £3 17s. 4d. as compared with £3 5s. 8d. which we collect on the first class return fare to Adelaide. The proportion we receive of each second class fare to Adelaide is £2 0s. 9d. The ordinary rail fare from Perth to Kalgoorlie, second class, is £1 19s. and a further optional charge for a sleeper of 6s., plus an optional charge for meals of 7s., a total of £2 12s. as against £2 0s. 9d. for two meals and a sleeper.

Hon. W. R. Hall: There have been some misleading statements somewhere.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** That has been caused by taking the fare from Perth to Adelaide and then deducting the

Trans. portion of the fare. Those are the figures supplied by the Railway Department.

Hon. G. Fraser: Even on those figures there is a difference of approximately 24s.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** There is always a difference in the fare for the longer portion of the journey. It was suggested that there was a lot of hostility since the new train was placed on the Bunbury line. I think Mr. Bennetts meant that there was hostility that could have been raised, because it was only placed on the run about two days before he spoke. However, the new train was put on and provides an excellent service too.

Hon. W. R. Hall: You did not put it on the Kalgoorlie run.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** It is no use putting it on that run because there are no sleepers.

Hon. W. R. Hall: We would not need sleepers fitted once it was put on the Kalgoorlie run.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The department has had some plans for a long while past to build new coaching stock to meet railway needs generally. Even within the last two years, two new suburban trains have been put on.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Who travels on them?

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The new train to Bunbury is now in service.

Hon. W. R. Hall: The constituents of the Metropolitan-Suburban Province travel on them.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** No, they do not.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I am sorry.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Construction has proceeded on six new sleeping coaches and these are now nearing completion. It is the department's intention to continue replacing the worn-out, obsolete stock, and the regeneration programme is now in progress.

Hon. A. L. Loton: I hope they put the present ones now in service in the Museum!

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** And I hope they put the hon. member with them!

Hon. A. L. Loton: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister!

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The improvements include new rollingstock and dining-cars. It is impossible to build all at once. It has to be done gradually and the department must be given some discretion as to how they will be used. The new steel coaches are to be put on the Westland for a very good reason. I for one, and every member in this Chamber—

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** It shows the Eastern States people what we can do when we try.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** I suppose every member has heard people criticising the shocking condition of the rail service from Kalgoorlie to Perth, and it is very distressing to hear it discussed in that way. It is only right to endeavour to create as good an impression as we can upon the people who come from overseas.

**Hon. G. Bennetts:** At the expense of the taxpayers of this State.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** From Sydney to Melbourne the train—

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** She is lovely!

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** That is a wonderful train.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Order! I must ask Mr. Hall to cease from interjecting.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** We know that from Adelaide to Melbourne they have a steel train which is an excellent one. It is right and proper for our railways to do their best—

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** For the visitors!

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Yes, and I would support any move to attract tourists.

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** Never mind what we suffer!

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** No, we should consider the tourists. We want revenue and we must see that the people visiting our State get the best that we can give them.

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** At a cost!

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The complaint of the hon. member was that all fourth-berth compartments were put on.

**Hon. G. Bennetts:** Mostly, yes.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** Every night except Friday, two-berth AZ coaches are put on. Occasionally I think the AZ

coach is put on the Albany run and personally I see no reason why they should not be treated as well as the Kalgoorlie people.

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** Seeing that they have got a subsidiary bus service, with roads constructed parallel to the railway.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Order! I must ask the Minister to resume his seat. I again ask Mr. Hall to cease interjecting. The Minister may proceed.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** These sleeping coaches will relieve the AZ coaches on the Trans. train, hence there will be more AZ coaches available. There are 11 AZ coaches and they have to go into dock now and again. When the new coaches are put on the Trans. train, the AZ coaches will be made available.

**Hon. G. Bennetts:** We will get the second-hand ones—the cast-offs.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** I am sorry to say that the Administration the hon. member supported did not do anything about it. Now we are endeavouring to do something by providing AZ coaches with the two-berths.

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** On every night?

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** On every night except Friday.

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** Is not that wonderful?

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** It is wonderful, when we consider the condition in which the previous Government left the railways. The complaints made by Mr. Bennetts are purely parochial.

**Hon. W. R. Hall:** Be careful! You are the Minister for Mines now.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** It is quite obvious that the only complaint made is purely parochial, and that is regarding the service between Kalgoorlie and Perth. That service must be the best possible.

**Hon. G. Bennetts:** We want it to be equal, not the best.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES:** The Goldfields people are getting more than equal service because the Albany district gets the coaches only occasionally and that applies also to the Bunbury train. The Albany train usually has the four-berth compartment and so has the midnight train



to Bunbury, but Kalgoorlie, on every night except Friday, has a coach with two-berth compartments and very often it is also supplied on a Friday. It is suggested because I am the Minister for Mines that Kalgoorlie should therefore have preference. I can assure the House that Kalgoorlie will have no more preference than is extended to other parts of the State.

Hon. W. R. Hall: They do not expect it from you.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: At any rate, that is all the people there will get. They will receive no more preference than is extended to those residing in Wiluna and other outlying parts of the State. The best that the Government can provide will always be made available. There is another difficulty with regard to Kalgoorlie because, owing to the competition from air services, the railway takings are falling off.

Hon. G. Bennetts: That is through the neglect of the Railway Department.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Yes, it is the railways' fault.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: During the regime of the previous Government the railway position was neglected.

Hon. W. R. Hall: It was, too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Those who were charged with administering the affairs of State previously are responsible for the present position. The coaches referred to in the motion are being constructed as quickly as possible. It is suggested that the berths in the four-berth coaches are not worth 6s. I would point out to Mr. Bennetts that it is not a question of the value of the berth but of the space available. If there are four people in a coach instead of six or eight, it means there is consequent loss of revenue. That is the reason for the increased cost of the berths.

Hon. W. R. Hall: And the ride, too?

Hon. G. Bennetts: Sometimes they put on AQ coaches as second class coaches and charge 6s. They know that they are not worth that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Look at the great advantage that is extended to the Kalgoorlie people! They get first class sleepers at second class rates. Nowhere else in Western Australia does that apply.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It is an admission that the berths are worth only 6s.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is a great advantage to the people. I trust that members will realise the Railway Department, with conditions as they exist at present, is doing its utmost to improve the service, and great improvements have been effected already. The first, with which I entirely agree, is that there shall be a show train—

Hon. W. R. Hall: Like the Australind!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: —on the interstate line. Mr. Loton suggested that a privately-owned railway was conducted infinitely better than the Government service. I entirely disagree with that. I think that the Government railway service is doing quite well. It is, however, a well known fact that no Government can manage a concern as well as can private individuals who may own one. Doubtless if our railways had been privately owned they would have been kept up-to-date.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I like that!

Hon. G. Bennetts: They would pull the lines up.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I feel that the motion should not be supported.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South) [9.28]: At present, on the Westland train, AZ coaches are supplied for first class passengers. They are quite satisfactory and compare favourably with the facilities available on the Trans. line. People residing on the Goldfields have an opportunity to see both trains and I do not think the Eastern States travellers will benefit to any great extent by the use of the steel coaches now being constructed at Midland Junction. On the Goldfields express and other country lines occasionally the AZ coaches are used, but unfortunately they are in a very dilapidated condition. The AQ coaches are in a worse condition. They contain four berth compartments but are without water supplies, hot water or basins, nor yet is iced water available. While I agree that it is essential to make amenities available for the Eastern States visitors, we are entitled to

provide all the comfort we can for those who travel by the Goldfields train. The slight differences that we notice in the steel coaches would not be comparable with what the people of this State would notice in the AZs and the AGs at present used on Goldfields and country trains. I support the motion.

**HON. G. BENNETTS** (South—in reply) [9.31]: I do not agree with the figures presented by the Minister. Those I have here are correct. With regard to the first class journey between Kalgoorlie and Perth the proportion of the fare this State gets is 10s.

The Minister for Mines: I gave what the department says it receives.

**Hon. G. BENNETTS**: I am saying what I know is correct. I had the figures presented to me some time ago through the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council from the Commissioner of Railways. Sleeping berths are £1 on the Westland and meals 7s., making the total for a first class passenger to this State £1 17s. In the second class the figures are 6s. 6d. with 8s. for a sleeper and 7s. for meals, making a total of £1 1s. 3d. The local fares quoted by the Minister are correct. There is a slight difference. On the Westland they charge 5s. extra for the sleeper over the 15s. ordinarily paid. We will not argue about that.

The gold mines are the wealth producers of this State. As has been said in this House on many occasions, if it were not for the mines and people living in outback places, this State would suffer considerably; and as a representative of the Goldfields, I am asking for a fair deal for those people. I do not want for them anything better than the Westland people are getting, but I want equal to that. The steel coach that was sent to Kalgoorlie is a credit to the State. Speaking as a railway man, I think it is equal to anything in Australia, but the Goldfields people were hostile when they learnt that they were not permitted to ride in it unless there was a vacancy, which very seldom occurs. If there is a vacancy, the Goldfields people can ride in the coach. That is very generous of the department, seeing that those folk are taxpayers of the State! They brought up the first class

portion and showed it to the people, who were pleased to see that progress was being made.

We must not forget that on the Westland train there is class distinction in connection with the food. There is a decent menu, and there has been a big improvement on the train, but the Westland people are getting chicken and ham. That is not good enough for the Goldfields residents. They are not good enough for poultry. They still pay 7s. but get roast beef and the ordinary menu. We would not growl if the Westland people received the same, but we do not want to see them receiving better. We want equal treatment. I do not know whether it is because of what has been said in this House, but today we had three first class AZ two-berth cars and the people looked quite pleased; but there were four-berth cars too.

The sitting-up passenger does not care whether it is a two-berth or a four-berth car. But at times we have these first class AQs on as second class cars. When they are short of second class sleepers they will put four-berth cars on and charge second class fares. The department knows they are only worth 6s. They are not very convenient. In a second class ordinary sleeper, luggage can be put under the seat, whereas in a first-class it cannot. When there are four people in such a car, suit cases have to be put in the passage. The other day the President was in a four-berth car. On four or five occasions when leaving here for Kalgoorlie he has not been successful in getting a two-berth compartment. It is a nice thing to see the President of this Chamber travelling in a car which at times is put on as a second class car!

**Hon. W. R. Hall**: What do you travel in?

**Hon. G. BENNETTS**: We travel in them too. We are not fussy. I would not care if I travelled in the guard's van, but I want to see people on the Goldfields receive treatment equal to that extended to those outside. The new steel train was built for the Westland and is to be used on that train, and that is all about it. The minds of the officials are made up and I do not suppose we will be able to shift them. On the Westland train there is an elaborate lounge car which is unoccupied for a good deal of the time. The train leaves Kalgoorlie at 2.15 p.m. and the lounge car will be used till 9

or 10 o'clock at night and that is the end of it. The Goldfields people have not a lounge car.

Hon. E. M. Davies: They do not lounge. They are workers.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: They are not what are called lounge lizards. The Goldfields workers would not like to be called such a name so the Railway Department has not given them a lounge car. We must not overlook the fact also that the Westland provides foot warmers for passengers. On the other hand, there are people travelling from Esperance to Coolgardie for a period of 21 hours. Then when they get to Coolgardie they spend another 17 hours on the Kalgoorlie to Perth train. Those passengers include women with little children who have to sit up in the cold, and there are no foot warmers for them; but the people on the Westland are provided with foot warmers. Are the people of our State not good enough to receive some consideration of that kind? Through the municipal council we have asked for these things on many occasions but have been told that they cannot be provided.

The reason I complained about the Bunbury train is that in that district there is good road transport. I do not blame the people who are living down there. I would say, "Get the best you can," because we want progress. But they have good road transport and a diesel coach, and now they have this elaborate train. There are seven girls in attendance and one waitress who runs around with ice cream, and in addition there is a ticket collector. The cost must be terrific. If a person wants to travel to Armadale, however, he has to go to Perth and then hook back on a steam train. I want to stress the point that I consider people on the Goldfields have an equal right with Westland passengers, to a steel coach, and it is only right that this House should see that the taxpayers of Western Australia receive the same treatment as outsiders. Having brought the matter before members, I would ask permission to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

*House adjourned at 9.41 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 2nd December, 1947.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### HOSPITALS.

*As to Dr. Hislop's U.S.A. Investigations.*

Mr. MANN (on notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Has Dr. Hislop submitted a report of his investigations in America?

(2) If so, will it be made available to members?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes, the report may be seen at the office of the Commissioner of Public Health.

#### STATE HOUSING ACT.

*As to Penalties for Offences.*

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

How many cases in respect of building breaches have been taken to court by the