

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 12th December, 1944.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

MOTION—OBITUARY.

The Late Captain H. S. Raphael, M.L.A.

THE PREMIER [4.32]: In connection with the lamented death of our late colleague, the member for Victoria Park, I move—

That this House desires to place upon its records its profound sense of the loss sustained in the passing of the late Captain Howard Stirling Raphael, a member of this House, and that an expression of the sincerest sympathy of members be conveyed to his widow and family by Mr. Speaker.

The late Captain Raphael represented the constituency of Victoria Park for 14 years and during that time he not only worked industriously for it but also took a broad view of the problems of Western Australia as a whole and tirelessly represented a viewpoint with which I think members generally in this House have been in accord. We can truthfully say that he earned the goodwill, respect and esteem of all members of this Parliament. It was impossible not to like the late member. His good humour, pleasing manner and disarming candour tempered any sting in the criticisms he levelled when he felt that way, and that was something which we all admired. He had one excellent quality in his make-up: If he made any mistakes he unhesitatingly

admitted the fact and was not averse from criticising his own past actions. Not many men have the faculty of being able to admit themselves to be in the wrong without being howled out, but whenever the late Mr. Raphael thought his past actions merited criticism he was the first one to make that criticism.

He rendered service to his fellow-men apart from that connected with his Parliamentary duties. At an early age he was elected to the Perth City Council and served on that body for 20 years in civic administration in the area which he ultimately represented in Parliament. At the age of 16 he enlisted in the original A.I.F., but his age was discovered and, as he was ineligible to occupy a position in the Forces, he had to withdraw. When this war began he was anxious to get into active service and he volunteered. Before that, however, he had allied himself with A.R.P. activities and became President of the A.R.P. in Victoria Park. He was also President of the combined bodies when they met to discuss matters of mutual interest. He was very anxious to proceed on active service after the war with Japan commenced, and I know from personal experience that he made every effort in that direction. His health was not sufficiently good for him to undertake duties in operational areas, but he let that go by the board and continued his efforts to get away. I think he was on his way overseas at the time of his death. He wanted very sincerely to get into an operational theatre so that he could do good to those to whom he was able to render assistance by reason of his technical knowledge of dentistry. I am sure we deeply regret the untimely passing of one we thought had years of life and service ahead of him.

We will miss his cheery presence in this Chamber and his unfailing candour. We will miss his active criticism and his personality, because he was not an ordinary man by any means. He had qualities which others of us do not possess. He was always actuated by sincerity in his representation of his district, both in the Perth City Council and in Parliament, and sought to do the utmost good for that district and for his fellow-men in general. He was also very anxious to do whatever he could in every possible way to assist the progress of the State. In those circumstances we

cannot but regret his passing, which means that he will no more be a member of this House. Out of respect to the memory of our late colleague I hope the House will agree, when the motion has been passed, to the sitting being suspended till 7.30 p.m.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): The seconding of this motion is a duty which I very much regret having to accept, because of the circumstances. That the late member for Victoria Park has been cut off in his prime at, I think, the age of 44 must cast a gloom over all members of this Assembly and must be very deeply regretted. As the Premier has said, the hon. gentleman had some characteristics which distinguished him from the rest of us, characteristics which we all noticed from time to time and were able to appreciate when we got to know him better. I think, too, that those he has left behind—his widow and orphan son—are deserving, particularly in the circumstances, of our greatest sympathy because he died far away from them at a time when they had every reason to look forward to a reunion in a few months, if not earlier. All of us must feel somewhat sad that a colleague has gone from our midst. It may be the lot of any of us, at any time, as we know, but that does not remove the unhappiness we feel in circumstances of this nature. I second the motion with a very sincere measure of regret, and hope that you, Sir, will extend the greatest sympathy to the widow and orphan son who have been left behind.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): On behalf of myself and the members of the House who sit on the cross benches, I desire to associate myself with the motion submitted to the House by the Premier and with the matter that he has submitted in support of that motion. When Death takes anyone away, it is an attribute of human nature to recognise the value of the person who has been taken. So it is in the case of the member for Victoria Park. He had human failings, but he had also great gifts of a human kind. He had the virtue of recognising his own failings, as the Premier has told the House. On behalf of members sitting here, I join with the Premier in his motion and the reasons he has advanced.

Question put and passed; members standing.

Sitting suspended from 3.12 to 7.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS (9).

SURF LIFE-SAVING ASSOCIATION.

As to Financing.

Mr. NORTH asked the Premier:

(1) Does he recall advising a deputation from the Surf Life Saving Association that he would favourably consider an increased annual grant to that body if a case were put up setting out specifically its actual needs?

(2) Since the Association lacks a State Headquarters, which would enable winter training as practised in the Eastern States, and provide room to house valuable surf gear, does he favour State assistance to enable the renting of premises for this purpose?

(3) Alternatively, does he favour an approach to the Lotteries Commission, or permission to be sought for a Friday street collection?

(4) Will he consider the advantage of a Headquarters from the point of view of protecting surf gear from vandalism?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) to (4) If the Association submits a concrete proposal, it will receive consideration.

SALT RIVER HALL.

As to Mortgage.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Does he hold a mortgage over the Salt River Hall (near Borden)?

(2) If so, what amount is owing on the mortgage?

(3) What was the amount of the original debt, and for what purpose was it incurred?

(4) What security other than the mortgage (if any) is held?

(5) If interest is payable, how is it paid?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The land is reserved for a school site (Reserve 19187).

(2) Answered by No. (1), but £250 was advanced by the Government in 1925 towards erection of hall to also be used as State School.

(3) Answered by No. (2).

(4) The Crown holds the land, which includes structures thereon.

(5) No interest is payable, nor is principal repayable until the premises cease to be required for school purposes. The advance is thenceforward to be deemed a loan repayable to the department.

WHEATGROWING.

As to Superphosphate for Unlicensed Farmers.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Have any arrangements been made for a superphosphate quota for persons who were not farming in the years 1939-40, or prior years, but are now farming on properties that have no quota?

(2) If so, what provision has been made?

(3) If not, will he make representations to enable the issue of a superphosphate ration in bona fide cases of this nature, particularly in respect of young men who were not old enough to have a farming property prior to the war but have recently acquired land for farming purposes?

(4) If not, does he consider that no provision should be made in such cases, and if so, what are the reasons which influence this decision?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) Superphosphate is not available for sowing of non-priority crops upon newly cleared land, but provision is made where abandoned properties, which previously received superphosphate, have been taken over during the rationing period. The quantity of superphosphate allotted to such properties is based upon all available information.

(3) and (4) Allocation of superphosphate is based upon the need to maintain established farms in as high a degree of operation as possible. This is attained where the reduced quantities of superphosphate are used on land which has been built up by previous applications. It must be realised that all new allocations of superphosphate reduce the amount available for established farms.

GAS-PRODUCER VEHICLES.

(A) As to Safety Precautions.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he aware that, under existing regulations governing gas producer pro-

pelled vehicles when the gas producer is home-made, no competent authority is required to approve of the use of such gas producer?

(2) Is he aware that as a result of this, vehicles are being used which constitute a grave danger to all property owners?

(3) Will he take action to amend the regulations so that before any gas producer propelled vehicle is licensed by the local authority its safety must be testified to by a certified engineer?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) It is the responsibility of the Licensing Authority to ensure that all gas-producers are in accordance with regulations made under the Traffic Act. (b) The following provision was embodied in the original regulations:—

No producer gas equipment shall be fitted to or used on any vehicle unless the materials and workmanship comply with the Standards Association Code for Gas-producers for motor vehicles,

but was disallowed by Parliament.

(2) Cases have been known where fire has been caused by faulty units.

(3) See paragraph (b) of Answer No. (1).

(B) As to Competence of Women Appointees.

Mr. SEWARD (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: In view of the fact that in several instances women have been appointed to the position of secretary to a road board since Parliament disallowed Traffic Regulation 44, subparagraph (ii), and as Parliament disallowed that regulation only because it could not amend it, will he draw up and gazette a regulation providing that before a traffic license can be issued for a gas-producer-propelled vehicle it must be certified as safe by a competent person?

The MINISTER replied:

Regulation 33 (3) now in force provides that the written approval of the local authority must be obtained to the fitting of a gas-producer unit. Any such authority could refuse to grant approval until a certificate of safety was supplied by a person regarded as competent by the local authority.

BUNBURY HARBOUR.*As to Fish Landing Jetty.*

Mr. WITHERS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Has the Public Works Department given consideration to the erection of a fish landing jetty at Bunbury?

(2) If so, what is the cost, and prospect of same being erected at an early date?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The estimated cost in 1941, of a jetty to meet the requirements set out by the Chairman, South Bunbury Progress Association, was £2,500.

The estimated cost, in 1941, of a jetty for dinghies was £755.

The prospect of proceeding with this work under existing war conditions is not good.

BUNBURY HIGH SCHOOL.*As to Proposed Hostel.*

Mr. WITHERS asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has a site been selected for the proposed erection of a High School Hostel at Bunbury?

(2) Have the Government definitely decided to erect such hostel?

(3) If so when is it contemplated same may be built?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A site has been suggested and is under consideration.

(2) With a view to the establishment of a hostel in an existing building negotiations were carried out with the Country Women's Association but as no suitable building is available, the proposal has had to be reconsidered and finality has not been reached.

(3) Answered by No. (2).

BARBALIN WATER SCHEME.*As to Cost, Area Reticulated, etc.*

Mr. LESLIE asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What is the capital expenditure to the 30th June, 1944, on the No. 1, or Barbalin, water scheme?

(2) What is the charge on this scheme for (a) interest; (b) sinking funds?

(3) What is the area reticulated under this scheme?

(4) What was the cost of maintenance and operation for the year ended the 30th June, 1944?

(5) What is the total collectable water rate levied on the above area for the year ended the 30th June, 1944?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) £301,475.

(2) The Barbalin District Water Supply is not a "separate undertaking" within the meaning of section 10 of the Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act, 1912, and the Treasury Department therefore does not require provision to be made in the departmental accounts for interest or sinking fund charges. The annual interest charged at 5 per cent. per annum on capital expenditure would amount to £15,074 and sinking fund at 1 per cent. per annum would amount to £3,015.

(3) The area commanded by reticulation is approximately 500,000 acres; of these 314,000 are now rated as being within the prescribed distance from the water mains. Abandoned farms mortgaged to the Agricultural Bank are temporarily exempted from rating.

(4) Maintenance and operating expenses, £4,148; bad debts written off during the year, £1,598; total, £5,746.

(5) £9,310. This figure includes rates on townsite properties as well as country lands and includes holding fees.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.*As to Prices to Producers and Consumers.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Does he agree that there are undue differences between the prices received by producers for fruit and vegetables sold at the Metropolitan Markets and prices charged to the consumers in respect thereof?

(2) Is he of opinion that retail prices for fruit and vegetables at the present time can be justified?

(3) In the interests of producers and consumers alike will he take immediate action for a full enquiry into—(a) Prices realised at the markets; (b) Methods of disposal and sale; (c) Any other aspect of the matter that might be shown to be desirable?

(4) If not, does it indicate that present methods are in his opinion quite satisfactory?

The MINISTER replied :

(1) and (2) The matter is one under the jurisdiction and control of the Commonwealth Prices Branch, but there do appear to be wide disparities in many commodities.

(3) Yes.

(4) See answer to No. (3).

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

- 1, Companies Act Amendment.
- 2, Pawnbrokers' Ordinance Amendment.
- 3, Nurses Registration Act Amendment.
- 4, Builders' Registration Act Amendment.
- 5, Supply (No. 2) £1,400,000.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Financial Agreement (Amendment).
- 2, Reserves.
Without amendment.

BILL—GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (PROMOTIONS APPEAL BOARD).

In Committee.

Resumed from the 7th December. Mr. Marshall in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 16—Powers and duties of board:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on this clause to which the member for Perth had moved an amendment "That Subclause (2) be struck out."

Mr. NEEDHAM: I had moved to delete Subclause (2) with a view to inserting a new subclause to provide that all appeals shall be heard in public except when by the unanimous decision of the board it shall be held in private. There is, generally speaking, no real objection to appeals being heard in public, but there may be instances in which it would be wise in the public interest to hold them in private because information of a confidential nature might be divulged. It might be in the interests of the appellant himself that an appeal should be held in private.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I move an amendment—

That a new subclause be inserted as follows:—“(2) The board shall hear all appeals in public except when by its unanimous decision it directs that any appeal shall be held in private.”

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I move an amendment—

That Subclause (3) be struck out and a new subclause inserted as follows:—“(3) In the hearing and determination of every appeal the board shall act according to equity, good conscience, and the substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities or legal forms.”

Hon. N. KEENAN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman! I have a somewhat similar amendment to Clause 16.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is distinctly out of order in interrupting another member while he is speaking. I shall give the member for Nedlands an opportunity to mention the matter later.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The object of the amendment is to ensure that the board shall not be trammelled by any legal technicality. The board to be constituted should be on lines somewhat similar to the set-up of the Arbitration Court, and if it is trammelled by legal forms and technicalities its work will be impeded rather than assisted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I support the amendment for the deletion of the subclause.

Hon. N. KEENAN: This is an exact reproduction of the section in the Industrial Arbitration Act. There it is a question of inquiry into industrial matters, and of course the widest possible inquiry is allowed, even if it is only in the nature of gossip. But the proceedings of the board will be quasi-judicial. It would be improper to allow that wide range of evidence here which can be safely permitted in an industrial inquiry. The amendment which I have placed on the notice paper reads—

(3) The board shall in all matters arising out of appeals coming before it resolve such matters according to the rules of good conscience and equity and without restraint as to the class of evidence receivable other than that such evidence shall be such as the board adjudges reliable.

Whilst giving the widest possible range of evidence, my amendment proposes that mere gossip shall be shut out, as it might be of great damage to an appellant. Will you instruct me how to proceed, Mr. Chairman? As a matter of fact, my amendment was on the notice paper days before this other amendment. I submit with con-

vidence that the amendment I put on the notice paper, whilst opening the door to any desirable class of evidence, shuts out the undesirable. The board must be satisfied that the evidence is reliable, and that is the only line that is drawn.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has gone a long way towards placing his amendment before the Committee. He has the option of recommending the Committee to defeat the amendment proposed by the member for Perth, and to accept his own. The Committee will have the option of accepting either the amendment of the member for Perth or that of the member for Nedlands.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Both amendments, of course, cannot be submitted together. I do not wish my amendment to be shut out. I am in your hands, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DONEY: It has struck me that the needs of both members could be met if we agreed to delete from the amendment of the member for Perth the words, "and substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities or legal forms," with the object of inserting the second half of the amendment of the member for Nedlands, "and without restraint as to the class of evidence receivable other than that such evidence shall be such as the board adjudges reliable." I therefore move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the words "and the substantial merits of the case without regard to technicalities or legal forms."

Amendment on amendment put and negatived.

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

Clause 17—Decision of board:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause (1), after the word "appellant," the words "all appellants" be inserted.

It is possible, although the Interpretation Act does rule the plural with the singular, that this might not apply here. There might be a number of appellants, and one party recommended.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I support the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: A further alteration becomes necessary in consequence of

a previous amendment made by the Committee. I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause (1) the following words be added:—"The board shall together with its decision supply to the recommending authority and the appointing authority copies of the proceedings and notes of evidence taken at the hearing of the appeal."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment has my support.

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

Clauses 18 and 19, Schedule—agreed to. New Clause:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—

"19. (1) Section six of the Public Service Appeal Board Act, 1920-1943, is hereby amended as follows:—In Subsection (1), add a new paragraph to stand as paragraph (da) as follows:—"(da) where a vacancy in or a new office created in a department is filled by the promotion (whether with or without transfer) of an employee of that or another department who has been recommended for such vacancy or new office by the recommending authority concerned, to hear and determine any appeal by any employee who applied for appointment to or employment in such vacancy or new office and has not been recommended therefor and who considers himself more entitled to the promotion than the employee who has been promoted provided that no appeal shall be under this paragraph unless the office is one which entitles the holder thereof to salary or wages at a rate higher than seven hundred and fifty pounds per annum."

"(2) It shall be lawful for the Governor to exempt from the operation of Subsection (1) of this section any office for any special reasons and in such case the Governor may make such appointment as he deems fit to such office. The special reasons above set out shall be laid upon the Table of both Houses of Parliament within seven days of the making of such appointment if Parliament is then sitting and within seven days of the opening of the new session if Parliament is not sitting."

Section 6 of the Public Service Appeal Board Act defines the authority of the Court of Appeal constituted under the Act. Unfortunately, when that statute was passed, no power was given to the court constituted under it to hear appeals in the matter of promotions or in regard to appointments to new offices. Consequently, the board has declined to deal with any such matters. This new clause completes the full range of authority of the new appeal board. Up to £750, cases can be dealt with by the Appeal Board constituted under the Bill. Cases over £750

will be dealt with by the Appeal Board constituted by this clause. I recognise that, as was said by the Premier last week, it is essential that the Government should have power to make certain appointments without reference to any appeal board, and it must take responsibility for the making of such appointments. In my second reading speech I conceded that point.

There are certain offices which will arise from time to time in respect of which the Government of the day must be in a position to say: "We alone will make the appointment without asking the opinion of any other authority, and we will accept responsibility." In such cases there should be no question that that is done only for special reasons. It would not be done merely as a matter of chance or of passing choice but for grave reasons. Consequently, in order to protect the rights of public servants, I propose that those reasons shall be given. While the power remains vested in the Government, the Government must place reasons, justifying its conduct, on the Table of the House within seven days if Parliament is sitting, or within seven days of the House re-assembling, if Parliament is in recess. Without this, there is a gap in respect of all officers exceeding the £750 range of salary, with the exception of district allowances and variations in the basic wage, which would not apply in the great majority of cases.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I oppose the new clause. We have before us a Bill that proposes to permit of appeals against promotions and to establish a tribunal to hear such appeals. The amendment will legally establish a new section of appellants and will give to them the legal right of appeal through a different tribunal altogether. That alone is sufficient to warrant the Committee's defeating the amendment. It is highly undesirable that we should have one tribunal dealing with all appeals against promotion up to a maximum wage or salary of £750 and an entirely different appeal board for a wage or salary above that range. Members will not find it difficult to believe that uniformity, which would be highly desirable in a matter of this kind, might be destroyed by having one section of Government employees going before one tribunal and another section on a higher range going before an entirely different tribunal. In essence this amendment does not do very

much more than the Bill itself will do, except in regard to setting up a second tribunal.

The Bill, as amended in Committee, allows without question appeals by Government employees whose rate of wage or salary does not exceed £750 and allows to an employee on a wage or salary rate of £750 the benefit of basic wage adjustments and living and other allowances. The Bill further provides that where the Governor-in-Council considers there are special grounds for allowing an appeal, it shall be permissible in any case where a Government employee receives a wage or salary in excess of £750. That means that a Government employee receiving a wage or salary at the rate of £1,250 a year may be permitted the right of appeal to the tribunal, provided the Governor-in-Council considers there are reasonable grounds for allowing such an appeal. I suggest, therefore, that the objective at which the hon. member is aiming is fairly well covered, and I ask members of the Committee to reject the proposed new clause mainly, if not almost entirely, on the ground I first mentioned: That the acceptance of the amendment would establish a second tribunal.

MR. WATTS: An effort was made by the member for Williams-Narrogin to place all public servants in a position to appeal to the board being set up under the Bill, with the proviso that certain high appointments should be subject to approval by Parliament, and therefore be exempt. At that stage the Minister objected to the tribunal being created under the Bill dealing with those classes and wished to confine those who could appeal to persons whose remuneration did not exceed £750, plus certain allowances. The amendment of the hon. member was defeated. The member for Nedlands has now produced to some extent an alternative seeking to give those persons whose remuneration exceeds £750 the right of appeal to the same tribunal that at present deals with Public Servants' classifications. I still think it desirable that all Public Servants, with very few exceptions, should have the right of appeal to the tribunal that is mentioned in this Bill, if they consider they ought to have been promoted rather than the recommended applicant and they can prove that their equal efficiency, plus seniority, entitles them to that consideration.

Although the amendment of the member for Williams-Narrogin was defeated I think the Committee could well support the present proposal and not deprive any section of the Public Service of the right of appeal, with the one proviso that has been indicated by the member for Nedlands. As the Premier and the Minister have pointed out, there are certain high offices which should be filled by the Government without any right of appeal from or to a tribunal of the kind we are discussing. The member for Nedlands has made provision for that. If there is such a vacancy the Government can declare it exempt from the provisions of the Act. If the Government decides, when a vacancy requires to be filled, that it should not be subject to any appeal to any tribunal, all it will have to do is to declare that particular position exempt and later on table its reasons for the exemption. The Government would, therefore, be in a position to make the appointment without reference to any tribunal when it considers the situation requires that such an appointment should be made.

On the other hand the very desirable right of appeal for every Civil Servant whose position does not warrant such an exemption will be maintained. As an alternative to the more desirable proposal put forward on Thursday night and defeated I find no sufficient reason why the Committee should oppose the present amendment. It recognises the right of the Public Servant who has ground for dissatisfaction in these circumstances to make application to a tribunal of good standing. I hope the Committee will see fit to carry the amendment as a reasonable compromise between two conflicting views on the subject.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The Minister's only objection is that if the amendment is accepted it will lead to the creation of a second tribunal dealing with the Public Service.

Mr. Doney: There are two such tribunals already.

The Minister for Works: But not dealing with appeals against promotion.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Yes, dealing with everything but that. When the Bill was passed in 1920 it was thought that it would cover appeals of this kind. I understood that one of the points made by the Premier was that a police magistrate should not be called upon to deal with matters of

greater importance than were already submitted to him, that it would be incongruous to ask him to deal with a position the salary of which was £1,500 a year. I have no objection to altering the type of tribunal to that of a board as constituted under this Bill, if the Minister will then accept the proposal. I agree that when important offices are in question one cannot have a tribunal of sufficient importance under the chairmanship of a police court magistrate.

My object is to have these higher appointments open to review. The Minister says the Governor-in-Council can declare them open to review. I say they should be open to review by the Appeal Board unless a very good reason is shown for their being shut out. The Minister says they should not be open unless the Governor-in-Council suggests that they should be. A very important principle is involved. With one exception there should be no office in the Public Service in respect of which, if an appointment is made and there is any doubt in the mind of anyone in the Service that he should have the appointment and not the person recommended, there should not be a right of appeal in order that the doubt may be resolved. The one exception is the occasion when the Government says "The appointment is so important we will not allow any Appeal Board to deal with it."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is true that the proposal to give the Governor-in-Council the right to grant an appeal on special grounds differs vastly from the proposal to give the Governor-in-Council the right to prevent an appeal. Although there is considerable difference between the two propositions the responsibility upon the Governor-in-Council in either case is equal. The decision to be made either way is of equal importance and would cast upon the Governor-in-Council an equal responsibility. The Bill provides an unquestioned right of appeal to the tribunal set up under it to all wages employees and approximately 97 per cent. of salaried employees. It goes practically the whole distance. The only Government employees who are not given unquestioned right of appeal are those above a certain rate of salary. In regard to them the Governor-in-Council will have the right to grant an appeal to any such employee where it is considered

the circumstances justify such action. We are doing a reasonable thing by all concerned.

New clause put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes 13

Noes 15

Majority against .. 2

AYES.

Mr. Berry
Mr. Hill
Mr. Keenan
Mr. Leslie
Mr. Mann
Mr. McLarty
Mr. North

Mr. Owen
Mr. Perkins
Mr. Seward
Mr. Watts
Mr. Willmott
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Coverley
Mr. Cross
Mr. Fox
Mr. Graham
Mr. Hawke
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Hoar

Mr. Holman
Mr. Millington
Mr. Needham
Mr. Pantou
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Withers
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Thorn

NOES.
Mr. Collier
Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Tonkin

New clause thus negatived.

New clause:

Mr. LESLIE: I move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—

“19. This Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation: Provided that this Act shall not be proclaimed until at least six months after Australia ceases to be engaged in hostilities in the present war: Provided further that for the purposes of this section, Australia shall be deemed to cease to be engaged in hostilities on the day on which, by reason of a general armistice or other arrangement, all war-like operations against Germany, Italy and Japan in the present war shall have ceased.”

A position is created under the Bill that has caused grievous concern among returned soldiers and amongst men still serving who have become aware of the provisions of the measure. If the Bill is passed in its present form, it will definitely preclude men serving with the Forces and not in constant touch with the various departments from participating in the benefits under the measure. The Bill provides that only applicants for a position or for promotion may become appellants. Provision is certainly made for announcing a vacancy and allowing reasonable time for those interested to become aware of it. Such a provision, however, is totally inadequate, because it is impossible to arrange for men serving in

the forward areas to have a knowledge of the situation. Consequently, they would be excluded from participating in the benefits under the Bill. I understand that about 800 members of the State Public Service are with the Forces.

The Minister for Works: Their rights will be protected under the Bill.

Mr. LESLIE: I hope the Minister will explain how their rights will be protected. I have not found any provision in the measure to protect the rights of such men, and whatever the practice in the service might be, it will not be sufficient to protect their rights. Delay for the period proposed is not likely to impose hardship on any great number of employees.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has overlooked the fact that regulations will be made under the measure. This morning I discussed with the Solicitor General the question which the member for Mt. Marshall has rightly brought before us, and he gave me to understand that it will be quite a simple matter to provide in the regulations the system under which the Public Service Commissioner has been operating during the war. That system is acceptable to the R.S.L. Every step will be taken to ensure that every soldier, sailor, airman or nurse on war duty will receive consideration in respect to any claim he or she may have in relation to any vacancy or promotion. I go further and say that any member may have a consultation with the Solicitor General tomorrow, and if he is not then satisfied, he may draft an amendment to the Bill itself to provide for the safeguard proposed to be incorporated in the regulations, and I will have the amendment moved by the Chief Secretary in the Legislative Council. I cannot be fairer than that. Therefore I suggest that the hon. member should withdraw his proposed new clause.

Mr. WATTS: The second part of the Minister's suggestion certainly appeals to me. When he mentioned regulations as being sufficient to deal with the matter, I did not feel convinced, because such a regulation might be considered to be inconsistent with the Act.

The Minister for Works: I have never known the Solicitor General to be more certain about anything than he was about this.

Mr. WATTS: If he is firmly convinced, I shall feel more satisfied. If such a regulation would be inconsistent with and ultra vires the Act, the other proposition appears to be one that ought to be accepted.

Mr. DONEY: The Minister has adopted a very reasonable attitude. The most amazing thing is that what should have formed an important provision of the Bill should have been forgotten. I understand that the member for Mt. Marshall speaks with the authority of the R.S.L. committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This matter was not forgotten. The Solicitor General advised the Government that it could and would be fully covered by the regulations. To make the matter doubly sure, I discussed the point with him again.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Is the Minister's suggestion that the Solicitor General should fix a date when the Bill shall come into operation by regulation? That seems to me to be a very dangerous thing to do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. That is not the point.

Mr. LESLIE: I thank the Minister for his remarks. I accept his assurance that he will consult with the Solicitor General with a view to having the necessary amendments included in the Bill. On that promise, I ask leave to withdraw the new clause.

New clause, by leave, withdrawn.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST [8.49] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has already been passed by another place and is now brought in for the consideration of members of this Chamber. It is the usual short Bill to extend the life of the Lotteries Commission, and it replaces a Bill which was passed by this House recently and which proposed to confer permanency on the Lotteries Commission. That measure was defeated in another place, where this one-clause Bill was introduced. It merely differs from similar

previous measures in that it proposes to extend the life of the Lotteries Commission for three years instead of one year. The only clause that will need consideration by members is Clause 2.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister must not mention clauses on the second reading of a Bill.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: That was an error on my part, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to assure members, however, that only one principle was involved, the question of extending the life of the Lotteries Commission for three years instead of the usual 12 months. The previous Lotteries Bill introduced in this Chamber received much consideration, and therefore I do not propose to take up the time of members in stating reasons why this measure should be passed. Members have already discussed the matter and will have made up their minds. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): It is not my intention to oppose the second reading of this Bill. I was glad that another place declined to make the Commission permanent. As members are aware, the measure introduced in this Chamber proposed to make the Commission permanent, and an amendment moved to limit the life of the Commission to two years was rendered futile by the application of "Mr. May" to the subject-matter of the Bill. I understand that another place found itself in much the same position as this side of the House was in and felt obliged to reject the measure. It has now produced the Bill which is before us. I feel that to extend the term for two years would be quite long enough; the shorter the period for which we renew the existence of the Lotteries Commission from time to time—within limits, of course—the better. I do not extract any great satisfaction from lotteries, either State-controlled or privately controlled. It is simply a question of degree as far as I am concerned. I frankly admitted in this House previously that the position before the Lotteries (Control) Act was passed was particularly bad.

All kinds of schemes were being foisted upon an unsuspecting public for private gain; when I say "private gain" I mean the gain of certain commercial institutions

which succeeded in increasing the circulation of their papers and hence the advertising value of such papers by crossword puzzles. These became the subject of sale at street corners by small children and led, in my opinion, to a state of social disgrace. That was put an end to by the Government of 1932 when it brought in the Lotteries (Control) Act. To that extent, I have no hesitation in commending the originators of this legislation. When it comes to a question, however, of whether or no lotteries—State-controlled or otherwise—are desirable, I say they are less undesirable by a very long way than those which preceded them or which might exist were the statute not in operation.

State lotteries, or lotteries which are conducted under statute, are the responsibility of a Minister of the Crown, and that is a reason why I have no hesitation in supporting the second reading of this Bill. We find that not very much of the half-crown which is paid by the subscriber for a ticket finds its way to charities; in fact, not as much as, in my view, should find its way to charities. The member for Albany, when addressing himself to the other Bill, stated that approximately 10d. of every half-crown found its way to some charity. At least 3d. was paid in commission on the sale of the ticket, that is to say, 10 per cent. of every subscription is absorbed in commission which the sellers do very little to earn. The administration costs of the Commission are not excessively high, although quite high enough. The net result is that a person who may think he is giving 2s. 6d. to a charity when he buys a lottery ticket is actually only giving 10d. That is a circumstance which ought to be kept in mind.

Member: Not many think that.

Mr. WATTS: No. Is not that the weakness of the whole business? There are not lacking many people who will give for giving's sake. I can quote instances before the war where many thousands of pounds were raised by voluntary effort and where the administration expenses were less than two per cent. That money was subscribed for such purposes as hospitals. I can quote an instance in my own electorate where not less than £2,400 was raised in two years in a small community, the administration costs not being two per cent. The whole of the money found its way to the charities con-

cerned. During the war we have had some startling examples of what can be done by voluntary effort in aid of what we call patriotic funds, but which fall into the same category as the charitable institutions to which the Lotteries Commission makes grants.

If the good fellowship and public spiritedness of the people were relied upon, we could raise just as much money in the long run for the purposes which the Lotteries Commission supports, and by methods other than those adopted by the Commission. The position is, however, as I said, that we now have something which is a little more desirable than the position which existed before this legislation was passed. The Commission is under obligation at present to do certain things, and therefore it would be unwise—perhaps indecent would be the better word—to put an immediate end to its life, even if one felt for any other reasons predisposed to do so. While I am supporting the second reading of the Bill, I propose to have a shot at making the Minister's term of three years two years.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Marshall in the Chair; the Minister for the North-West in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 21:

Mr. HILL: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 the words "forty-seven" be struck out and the words "forty-six" inserted in lieu.

I consider the lotteries an unnecessary evil.

Mr. North: A necessary evil.

Mr. HILL: The proposed extension of the life of the Lotteries Commission for three years is much better than the original suggestion that the Act should be made permanent, but I think it would be even better if the work of the Commission had to be reviewed by Parliament every second year.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. When I moved the second reading of the earlier Bill, the object of which was to put the Commission on a permanent basis, I referred to the inconvenience and expense that attached to the Commission's having a tenure of office

of only 12 months. This evening the Leader of the Opposition referred to the high expense ratio. I previously informed members that costs were gradually being reduced. I am unable to agree with the argument advanced by the Leader of the Opposition regarding what could be done by voluntary efforts. It is true that in a small area where a committee is formed to raise money for some local charity, the work being done mostly on a voluntary basis, expenses are reduced to a minimum, but that hardly applies to a State-wide effort like that carried out by the Lotteries Commission. I do not think any individual is deluded into the belief that when he invests 2s. 6d. in a ticket in the lotteries, the whole of that money is devoted to charitable purposes. A person who would think so would be very innocent indeed. The majority of people take a ticket in the hope of winning £2,000. Western Australia is a large State and, in dealing with lotteries, heavy postal expenditure is involved. Country people who take tickets are entitled to participate in each draw, and that costs a lot in postages. If it is expected that the Lotteries Commission shall reduce costs and so provide more money for charitable purposes, the longer the tenure of office the greater will that chance be.

Mr. HILL: I do not agree with the Minister's contention. I repeat that the lotteries constitute an evil, and it is Parliament's duty to discourage them. To wipe them out would be going to extremes, but we should control and at the same time discourage the lotteries.

Mr. BERRY: On each occasion Bills have been dealt with affecting the Lotteries Commission, references have been made to the lotteries constituting an evil. Sometimes the statement is qualified to the extent that they are said to be necessary evils. The member for Albany says that this evil should not continue for three years but for two years. If the lotteries are evil, then they are evil for two years, just as they are evil for three years. We, as reasonable thinking people, have decided that the lotteries are of actual economic value to the State, and therefore there should be no question about how long they should last. I am opposed to the idea that, although we think this is an evil, we should allow it to go on all through the years by

extending its life one year at a time. It is ridiculous. The Minister has pointed out that if an extended life of three years is agreed to, costs can be reduced and, in the circumstances, I trust that more money will be available for the good work the Commission is doing. I do not regard the lotteries as a great evil. An individual invests 2s. 6d. in a ticket knowing that part of the money will be devoted to charitable purposes. If we are to regard that as an evil and suggest stopping it, we will bring the subject into the same category as drinking in hotels, starting-price betting, two-up shops—for these, too, are evils. What I like about the State lotteries is the fact that portion of the money is put to such good use. I support the clause.

Mr. CROSS: I oppose the amendment. I do not know why the member for Albany regards lotteries as an unnecessary evil. The lotteries do not constitute an evil any more than do lucky dips and raffles run by churches. The other night I was at a church, the adherents of which do not believe in gambling. I left the poorer by 30s. invested in lucky dips—and I got nothing! I was surprised, because I had received letters from this church asking me not to support the lotteries. Evidently the adherents of that church have broadened their views, because they have been running raffles. The member for Albany should be consistent. Many requests for assistance have been received by the Lotteries Commission from his constituency. In every part of the State can be seen evidence of the good work of the Commission. Country hospitals have x-rays and other appliances that have been provided by the Commission. I certainly think any move to put an end to the Lotteries Commission would be most unpopular. The member for Albany did not oppose the lotteries altogether. He merely pretends to do so when he moves to give the lotteries an extension of two years at a time. I would be prepared to grant a much longer tenure of office.

Mr. GRAHAM: I agree substantially with the remarks of the member for Canning. All this shadow sparring about a measure such as this should be terminated. I use the words "shadow sparring" advisedly because those who regard the lotteries as an evil have not the courage to vote for their abolition, which is the alternative. For

12 years the decision has been arrived at annually to extend the life of the Lotteries Commission for twelve months at a time. I am unaware of any action taken by its opponents that has materially affected that procedure. Admittedly there have been long discussions on the Commission and its responsibilities. I remember that 12 months ago members paid high tribute to the valuable and efficient work of the Lotteries Commission. As there have been these repeated extensions of time for the Lotteries Commission, what is the difference between that and placing the legislation permanently on the statute-book? The annual extensions for 12 months represent a farce. If those who parade their views regarding the evils associated with the lotteries acted in accordance with their opinions, they should take the necessary steps to abolish betting on or off the race-courses and on the Stock Exchange as well. When it comes to giving effect to the moral issue, these people are not so courageous. In my view, the legislation should be permanent. I hope the amendment will be defeated and I am firmly convinced that the member for Albany knows that it will be. It has become fashionable to speak about the evils associated with lotteries, betting, drinking and so on, but this Parliament has its responsibilities and should agree to the longest term possible.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1944-45.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 5th December; Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

Vote—Medical, £42,985.

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH [9.15]:

The question of health has been and is receiving a good deal of attention throughout Western Australia. It is receiving much publicity, which naturally is all to the good. The greater the tendency towards hospitalisation, the more desirable it is, as showing that people are becoming more hospital

minded. The question of district or regional hospitals has received a good deal of attention from the committee which has been set up and has discussed the various matters at issue. The more one travels about Western Australia, the more one gives attention to the health of the community, particularly from the aspect of hospitalisation, and the more one is struck with the need for regional or district hospitals. On more than one occasion I have stated that in Western Australia as the country developed doctors were found and hospitals were erected, and that as the population grew the hospitals also grew by adding a piece here and a piece there, until we got as high a number of hospitals as 90, without attention being paid to the long view as to where they would finish. One can with very little difficulty pick out the places where there should be a district hospital.

Taking the Goldfields for a start, the first place naturally is Kalgoorlie. Knowing the Goldfields as I do, Kalgoorlie is about the only place where I would consider placing a regional hospital which could take care of the interests of Menzies right up to Laverton, wherefrom places could be served by aeroplane for major cases. I do not for a moment suggest that the existing hospitals in those places should be closed down, for hospitals are essential in many mining centres, particularly for accident cases. Kalgoorlie is easily picked for a district hospital. When one goes round the ports, Bunbury is the natural choice. And so it is with Geraldton, where a district hospital could be erected to take in major cases and accidents right through the Murchison to Wiluna. After the war, transport in those regions will be by aeroplane. In the wheat-belt, or the Great Southern district, omitting Albany for the moment, if one looks at Wagin, Narrogin and Katanning there is some difficulty in choosing whether to place a district hospital at Katanning or Wagin or even Narrogin. The committee, with which I am associated, has some difficulty in regard to that part of the inquiry. No doubt the difficulty will be ironed out by the people of the district themselves.

The same thing applies in the South-West. I was at Manjimup a fortnight ago last Saturday; and Manjimup to all appearances and from what one can learn is going to be a very important district. One would natur-

ally think Manjimup was the place for a fairly big hospital, whereas Collie seems to be a place that stands by itself. It is growing fast and the necessity will arise for a much larger hospital than the one there now. It is an easy matter to pick sites for district hospitals. The policy of the Government would be to try to institute regional hospitals. There is going to be a big debate as to where these hospitals are to be located, and no doubt much heart-burning will be caused. Many people write from various districts to say that their hospital should be the district hospital. I am quite convinced that if we are going to do anything in regard to hospitals in this State, we have to start out on the original scheme with subsidiary hospitals in or about the localities where we have them now for the purpose of doing big jobs, because a district hospital has all the facilities necessary to a properly equipped hospital. Under those conditions the people will derive much greater benefit from hospitals than they do at present.

There has been much discussion as to what the Commonwealth Government proposes to do. I freely admit that a few months ago I was optimistic enough to believe that the Commonwealth Government was coming in, and that we were going to get a good deal as the result of the investigation in regard to the health of the community. I am, however, beginning to get pessimistic about the whole business, because there seems to be some great difficulty between the Pharmaceutical Society and the authorities and between the British Medical Association and the same authorities. In the first place, legislation has been passed for the issue of free medicine. There is something wrong with the system, because free medicine has not yet been proclaimed. It has been proclaimed that the Commonwealth Government proposes to subsidise hospitals at the rate of 6s. per occupied bed throughout Australia. Two years ago, when this was first proposed, the average collections throughout the State were about 5s. 2d. per head, so that at 6s. per day the whole State should show a profit of 10d. per bed. At the end of June last, however, there came a considerable jump in the average collection. Whereas Perth Hospital two years ago collected 4s. 9d. per occupied bed, this year its contribution was 5s. 2d. In Western Aus-

tralia the average was 5s. 2d. two years ago, and today it is 7s. 2d. So what looked like an assistance of 6s. per bed now represents a loss to the State of 1s. 2d. per bed.

At the conference of Ministers for Health held at Canberra last June, it was decided, in view of the probable increased cost of hospitals and the more than probable rise in collections, that the whole situation would have to be reviewed. That is how the matter stands at the moment. Finally it was agreed that the 6s. per day was to be given for occupied beds, irrespective of whether they were in public or in private hospitals. It needs to be emphasised that the 6s. per day was not intended to assist any State or any hospital, but to assist the individual who was unfortunately ill in the payment of hospital expenses. The 6s. per bed in public hospitals would only be granted if the means test were abolished. In the Perth Public Hospital severe interrogations are administered in relation to the means test. Those interrogations I would be very pleased to see swept away. Unfortunately, however, the social system under which we live provides for that, irrespective of what part of Australia one goes to. It is brought about, of course, by the fact of the Perth Hospital being a big institution of about 375 beds; when the hospital is completed, we expect to have about 530 beds.

The fact that the Perth Hospital is conducted by an honorary staff, other than the superintendent and a number of junior residents, makes for the means test. The medical fraternity, who act in an honorary capacity at the hospital, are not going to act in that capacity for the benefit of people able to pay for their treatment. I again pay tribute to the medical men who have over the years acted in an honorary capacity, particularly at the Perth Public Hospital, where they have done a wonderful job, in some cases as many as 500 operations being done per year in an honorary capacity. But with the abolition of the means test we shall be faced with another big problem. One can imagine that when the remaining portion of the hospital is completed, averaging 500 beds, and there is no longer a means test, the medical fraternity will wonder what is going to happen. The honorary staff will not work in an honorary capacity when the means test is no longer applied; and that means a salaried staff for a hospital of 500 beds. We have not yet got down to facts sufficiently

for me to tell the Committee the exact amount, but £50,000 or £52,000 a year would be needed to pay, reasonably, medical men.

There are numbers of such things to be ironed out before the committee will even say that the proposition has been recommended by various authorities to the Commonwealth Government. There is one disease that I was particularly keen to cope with. I refer to tuberculosis. I was very hopeful that we were going to see the end of tuberculosis in 25 or 30 years. I have not been able to obtain confirmation or otherwise lately, but I understand that at that time the social and sick benefit legislation passed by the Commonwealth proposed to give a man 25s. per week, his wife £1 and the first child 5s. It was proposed at that conference that a tubercular case would obtain another 15s. per week on top of that, because of the necessity for a greater variety of food. It looked as though when a man went into the sanatorium, he would get £3 5s. plus free hospital treatment, plus free medical attention, because all our medical officers in the sanatorium are salaried officers. I got hold of the medical and unemployment Act only the other day and I found that that amount was for temporary sickness and unemployment, and I cannot say whether tuberculosis can be called a temporary illness. I do know that, in order to obtain the invalid pension, a man must prove that he is totally and permanently incapacitated; and tubercular cases obtain the pension. So it does not look as though tuberculosis is a temporary illness; and it looks as though the invalid pension is going to remain and that the £3 5s. will not be provided by the sickness fund.

Something will have to be decided finally as between the Commonwealth Government and those who are stricken with tuberculosis as to whether they shall receive the sickness and unemployment benefit or whether they shall continue to receive the invalid pension, which is a good deal less. I am pleased to say that, notwithstanding all of these apparent disabilities, we have continued with our farm occupational therapy scheme at Wooroloo where the committee is doing a great job under the guidance of the superintendent, Dr. Henzell. It is pleasing to note that we in Western Australia are a long way ahead, so far as that

scheme is concerned, of any other State in Australia. The estimated expenditure for public health for 1943-44 was £63,170, and the actual expenditure was £58,500, or a net decrease of £4,670. That was brought about by men going to the war and their places not being filled or else being filled by young women whose salaries were not so high. Provision is being made this year for the replacement of the visiting nurse who has retired and the appointment of an additional visiting nurse.

The work of visiting nurses, we consider, is an important part of the campaign against tuberculosis. The duty of these nurses is to visit homes where there are tubercular cases that have not gone into the sanatorium. The patient is persuaded to continue treatment and the nurse teaches other members of the household the necessity for hygiene, and the nurses follow up these cases which is considered by the medical profession one of the most important measures for the control of the disease. We are also providing for the replacement of school dentists at present on military duty and the appointment of an additional schools medical officer. At present we have only one medical officer in the country and one who does part-time duty in schools in the metropolitan area and part-time duty in the infant health centres. Although we are making provision for medical officers and dentists, we appreciate that it will be difficult to obtain further assistance for some time. Dealing with leprosy, we have now 200 lepers—all aborigines—in our leprosarium at Derby.

Mr. McLarty: Is the number increasing?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I do not know. We sent out two parties to the Warburton Ranges and gathered in all it was possible to gather. It is hard to say whether the disease is decreasing or increasing because it is difficult to catch these people. We send police out with the medical men and, as soon as the natives see a party of that description, they get away as fast as they can. We have had a superintendent and his wife, and now we have engaged an assistant manager and his wife, for whom provision is made on the Estimates. Dr. Park and the Assistant Under Secretary paid a visit to the leprosarium and pointed out a few improvements they thought could be made. One of our inspectors followed that up through-

out the North-West, paying particular attention to the leprosarium, and many matters were pointed out to the managers who are doing a lot of good work. All the patients in the leprosarium are aborigines and the cost this year will be £8,080. At this stage I would like to pay a tribute to the nurses of the leprosarium. All the nursing is done by nurses from St. John's.

I have paid two visits to Derby and the amount of work the sisters are doing, in a wonderfully efficient manner, is astonishing. They inoculate 200 patients twice a week. There are very few in the hospital—12, I think—and at the leprosarium they are growing their own vegetables and making their own bread, and doing various other things. I was agreeably surprised on my visit to the leprosarium about which I had heard many stories. Concerning the lepers, I had a somewhat jaundiced view. I found, however, that in going over the leprosarium, it was difficult to tell whether the inmates were lepers or not. The treatment being given to the patients by the staff and the work done by the managers is something of which we can be proud, irrespective of what is said about the treatment accorded to natives in Western Australia as a whole. Diphtheria is a question in which I feel the people of Western Australia should take a good deal more interest. Some have suggested to me that it is time we introduced legislation to force people to have their children immunised. It has always struck me as peculiar that people have to be compelled to do something in their own interests or in the interests of their own children. Children today can be immunised free of cost. The local governing bodies have all taken up the matter, and the necessary material is provided free by the Health Department. Every child, once it turns 12 months, should be immunised. Of the diphtheria cases reported, very few had been immunised, and in respect of those that had been so treated the attack was in a very modified form.

The North-West of this State has not had a visit from a dentist since the war began, and it is intended to send two dentists to that area after the holidays to deal not only with children at the various ports and outlying centres but also with adults desiring treatment. By the time they have finished their work, we hope the North-West will be dentally perfect. With regard to the pay-

ment of local health authorities in regard to infectious diseases, for a long time the amounts paid were on a fifty-fifty basis, but the regulations have been amended, and the local governing bodies now pay one-third and the Government pays two-thirds. On the Estimates is an amount of £7,553 for 1944-45. I think everybody is glad that the Infant Health centres are doing a very good job, and we are anxious to have them extended as finance permits and buildings can be erected. Lately I had a deputation asking me to take over the whole of the nurses of the infant health centres.

Mr. Watts: Is that a second one?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No, that is the first.

Mr. Watts: That was months ago!

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No, we have had one since then. It was introduced by the president of the association, Hon. E. H. Gray himself. That was a few weeks ago.

Mr. Mann: Another one?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The file concerning the one led by Mr. Gray is still on my table, and I am waiting for him to obtain necessary information from the local governing bodies. The proposition was that the Government should take over the whole of the nurses and be responsible for their payment and administration, and the local governing bodies would take over buildings and be responsible for the maintenance of the housing.

Mr. Mann: To whom do you refer when you speak of the local governing bodies?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The municipalities and road boards. Wherever there is a health centre, the local governing body pays £25 or more per year. The proposition was that, instead of their paying that, they should accept responsibility for the building and maintenance of infant health centres. They could work, of course, in conjunction with the committees. The argument of the committees has been that they have had to concentrate on collecting money instead of on the actual work, and there is something in that. Mr. Gray told me today that he had only two or three more communications to receive from various boards, and it is hoped that we will be able to go ahead with our proposition. It will remain with the Treasury as to whether we can get on with the job. The question of taking over the whole of the nurses has many advantages. Under the present system, it

is possible that a nurse may be in one centre—say, Beverley or Brookton—for a number of years. She has very little chance of keeping herself up to date, such as she would have if she were in the metropolitan area. Under a Government scheme, the nurses could be interchangeable and one nurse would not have to stay in the country all the time.

Mr. Doney: Do you find that many centres are so financially strong that they do not need to be taken over by the Government in the way you suggest?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: My opinion is they are doing a very good job at the moment and I would far sooner increase the subsidy. But I have to take the expert opinion of the council and those associated with it. I am only a layman and I am prepared to accept the advice of professionals. My own opinion is that there is ground for having considerable faith in the local committees, which in many respects have done fine work.

Mr. Mann: The idea was that the Government should find the nurses' salaries, and the local committees do the rest.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am pleased to say that the position with regard to venereal disease is very greatly improved. It is estimated that a saving of £1,136 will be shown on this item. That is due to the fact that it is anticipated that the stay in hospital of such cases will be shorter because of the new penicillin treatment, which is proving a great success. With regard to the Medical Estimates, I point out that provision has been made this year for the re-engagement of a medical officer at Wyndham, commencing in the new year, and for the employment of the District Medical Officer at Derby for a full year in 1944-45, whereas he was employed only part time in 1943-44. An amount of £782 has been provided on the Estimates for the payment of leave due on retirement to Dr. Atkinson, ex-Commissioner of Public Health. There is very little variation in the expenditure under the heading of "homes." We still occupy "Woodbridge House" as a women's home, but find it extremely overcrowded. Owing to this fact, during the winter months we transferred several of the women to smaller hospitals such as Beverley, Brookton and other places where they were made as comfortable as was possible.

It is the intention of the Lotteries Commission to build a home which will cost about £110,000 for the women pioneers, who will then come into their own.

Mr. Mann: Where will that be?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It will be on the Canning River, where there is a fine block of land.

Mr. Mann: Some of the old women are in country hospitals?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: We transferred some to the Beverley district, to Brookton, and other hospitals which had a low bed average and both beds and staffs to spare. We sent them away during the winter months so that they will be more comfortably housed than they would have been at Woodbridge where there was so much overcrowding. With regard to mental homes, the institutions for the mentally afflicted consist of those at Claremont, Greenplace, Whitby Falls, Lemnos and the Heathcote Reception Home. On the 30th June there were 1,424 patients in mental hospitals compared with 1,418 on the 30th June, 1943. At Heathcote there were 109 patients under treatment on the 30th June last, compared with 92 at that time last year. I am pleased to say that the treatment afforded at Heathcote has shown good results, particularly in the case of soldiers suffering from shell-shock, or nervous disorder as it is now called. It is pleasing to note that because of the early treatment given to the soldiers eight have been completely cured and have left, about 15 are being cured, and only one man has had to be transferred to Claremont as he is looked upon as incurable. A good job indeed is being done at Heathcote.

With regard to Claremont, as is the case with many other buildings that were put up some 35 years ago, there is a good deal of what can be said to be obsolete about the institution. The buildings at Claremont have been undergoing renovation and brightening up on the Government's plan of spending £40,000, at the rate of £6,500 a year over a period of six years. It has, however, been a difficult job to carry out the necessary work owing to the fact that labour has not been available. It has not been possible in the circumstances to do more than has been done. The plaster, of course, is being knocked about quite a lot and a good deal of painting is required on the walls. I am glad to say we have been

able to maintain a small staff at the institution. I hope in due course we shall be able to get all the work that is required to be done completed. At present we are renovating the nurses' quarters, improving the dining-room accommodation, etc. As we did at Heathcote, we put up a new treatment block, but no sooner was the building finished, with its provision for 60 beds, than it was taken over by the military authorities who, about five months ago, walked out again.

Instead of our having a female staff of 92, our average staff has been 75 or 76. At one stage the number dropped to 40, but we have been able to build up again. We are short of staff now. Unfortunately the new treatment building is locked up. The position is that we are overcrowded in some wards, while a first-class hospital of 60 beds is waiting for eight mentally-trained nurses and the requisite staff so that it can be re-opened. Unfortunately we have a few cases amongst both males and being cared for to the best of our ability. Plans have been drawn for a block of buildings for the housing of 36 T.B. patients, but that work, too, has been hung up for want of men and material. It is females of tuberculosis, and these are easy for people to criticise. When I receive letters from women's organisations and see the big headings in the "Daily News" that "Panton does not do this or that," I feel I should like those people to see what they can do themselves with the present shortage of men and materials. There is much that we would like to do that we cannot do because of the lack of those two important factors.

Last Monday I learned that we needed 65 people for our hospitals, which are spread all over the State. We require 32 trained nurses, ten nursing assistants, and 23 domestics, including 11 cooks, in order that our 90 hospitals might be staffed. It is extremely difficult to obtain nurses. It is also a difficult matter when nurses have to be transferred to such a far distant place as Wiluna, and such transfers also involve a good deal of expenditure. We are weathering the gale as best we can and doing all that is possible to make the situation as good as we can. We hope the time will soon arrive when the war will be over and when a number of nurses will be released from the Forces so that our hos-

pitals may then become fully staffed. When that time comes, although I do not say patients are suffering today, the sick will receive more attention than it has been possible to give them under present circumstances.

[*Mr. Marshall resumed the Chair.*]

MR. MANN (Beverley): I have listened with interest to the remarks of the Minister for Health. He referred to the fact that he had been subjected to criticism. He must expect to be criticised in a war period such as the present one.

The Minister for Health: I am aware of that.

Mr. MANN: And he may expect to get even more criticism.

The **CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member will address the Chair and pay no heed to interjections.

Mr. MANN: The vital factor in connection with our hospitals is that of staff. I say definitely that the Government must accept a definite responsibility for the present situation. I know that during war-time it is difficult to retain within the State nurses who may be called up to go with the Services. On the other hand, we know that in South Australia, for instance, not only has it been possible to build new hospitals, but to provide staffs for them. We understand that the Perth Hospital has been held back because it is stated that sufficient manpower and materials cannot be obtained so that the building may be completed and fully equipped. This State and the present Government have been all too willing to throw the whole of their weight behind the Commonwealth Government's war activities and to neglect our affairs. This is the only State in Australia that has acted in that manner. I know it is essential we should support the Commonwealth Government in its war activities to the fullest extent possible, but that principle should apply to the whole of Australia and not only to this State.

Our hospitals are in a deplorable condition owing to lack of staff. The King Edward Memorial Hospital is one of the most essential establishments in Western Australia. People are constantly crying out about the need for increasing our population, and that is a very important institution from that point of view. There is not

sufficient accommodation there for expectant mothers. Owing to the present situation private hospitals are overcrowded, and with the increase in the birthrate expectant mothers, finding themselves unable to go to private hospitals, are forced to go to the King Edward. In order to protect themselves the nurses have been forced to seek an award. The move that was made by Dr. Hislop in another place for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into our hospitals was a very wise one, and the Government should give effect to the resolution, if it has nothing to hide.

The Minister for Health: We have nothing to hide.

Mr. MANN: Because of the outcry with respect to health matters, wherein the whole State is affected, it is only right that the Government should appoint a Royal Commission of inquiry.

The Minister for Health: He is a politician.

Mr. MANN: We are all politicians in this Chamber. A slur has been cast upon the Medical Department, because of the resignation of Dr. Park. One wonders what was behind it. We do not know the position as does the Minister, nor are we able to ascertain it for ourselves. We do not know what is behind it all, and we are entitled to be told. The public feels the same way. Dr. Park is a man of extremely wide experience, and no doubt there will be many vacancies for him in other parts of Australia. It will not be easy to select a man who is capable of filling the position of Commissioner of Public Health. I regret Dr. Park's departure very much. Let me refer again to the King Edward Memorial Hospital. I know that the kitchen is 400 yards from the building.

The Minister for Health: You have only just found that out.

Mr. MANN: I am trying to give the Minister some constructive ideas. Our hospitals are laid out in a haphazard fashion.

The Minister for Health: Tommy rot!

Mr. MANN: The exception to that is the Perth Hospital.

The Minister for Health: What about the King Edward Memorial Hospital?

Mr. MANN: At any rate, here we have a large hospital building in Perth and we know very little about it. I consider T.B. patients should be sent to Wooroloo instead

of being kept in Perth. There is no doubt that we ought to plan our hospitals on the right lines. We have a fairly large number of T.B. patients in this State. Whether the milk supply or bovine tuberculosis is the cause of much of the trouble, I do not know, but certainly the health of Perth is dependent largely upon the conditions prevailing in the country districts that supply the milk. In our excellent climate we should not have such a large number of T.B. patients as we have. At Claremont, we find patients confined like a lot of animals, flies prevalent about the place, and seven or eight people washing in the same water.

The Minister for Health: Where did you hear that?

Mr. MANN: I was told it very definitely by people who have been there, people who made their visits on a day and a time that were not announced beforehand. It is information from people who have seen the conditions. Let me refer to the report of the Public Health Department which shows that the number of nurses admitted to the register of the General Nurses Registration Board in 1941 was 204; in 1942, 217; and in 1943, 137. The Minister must agree that unless vast improvements are made in the conditions to induce girls to become nurses, there will be a great dearth of nurses in the next four or five years.

The general nurse serves a training period of three years. Her parents have to provide her clothing; she has to work long hours, and the maximum she receives is 17s. a week. In spite of this paltry amount of pay, these girls are taxed because the value of their board is taken into consideration. Let us take a logical view of the position. Unless the Commonwealth makes some move to bring about an improvement in the profession, we shall be without nurses. The military authorities are adopting the attitude that when a girl enters the medical section she receives 21s. a week, plus her uniform, as a commencement. At the end of two years, she has a right to go to a Government hospital, qualify in one year, become registered, and return to the Army and draw a sister's pay, which is equivalent to that of an officer. I speak feelingly on this matter.

The Minister for Health: The war will not last for ever.

Mr. MANN: We do not expect it to. If any girl nowadays undertakes nursing, she must have a real love for it. I hope the

Minister will try to induce the Commonwealth to do something, or the time will not be far distant when we shall be without nurses. Quite a number of nurses have contracted T.B.

The Minister for Health: Not quite a number.

Mr. MANN: Yes, quite a number. They are liable to contract all the complaints that are going.

The Minister for Health: Do not exaggerate!

Mr. MANN: And, in spite of all these risks, they are expected to work for a paltry 17s. a week.

The Minister for Health: It is remarkable that you allowed your girl to train as a nurse!

Mr. MANN: She undertook the work because she has a love for it. During their period of training, the girls find the conditions very difficult because they have to depend upon their parents to equip them and keep them in pocket money. What chance have girls whose fathers are earning only the basic wage? Notwithstanding that we have girls who would train for nursing, we discourage them by the very low wages we pay. The whole of the nursing profession, even those in the other grades, is ill-paid.

The Minister for Health: I agree, but it would have been worse but for what I did for them.

Mr. MANN: The Minister did appear for them in support of an award, but it is the Minister's responsibility now to carry the matter still further.

Mr. Cross: Farm workers are badly paid, too, but I do not hear you saying much about them.

Mr. MANN: I do not intend to reply to irrelevant interjections. I am interested in infant health centres. The nurse at the York centre has to travel to Quairading by train, and this means spending long hours in the train. I hope that in such cases the Minister will see his way to provide travelling expenses. We are prepared to provide the requisite building and pay the nurse. In conclusion, I hope some attempt will be made to give the nurses better pay so that more girls will be induced to train for the profession.

referred to the fact that hospitals receive 6s. per day from the Commonwealth Government and perhaps more for every occupied bed. I want him to indicate what will be the future position of hospital boards. These boards are concerned with the collection of money, mainly from patients, but also funds raised by local efforts, which money goes to capital account and is subsidised by the Lotteries Commission and the Health Department. Each hospital employs a secretary, some of them a full-time and some a part-time official, and part of the duties of the secretary is to send out accounts and collect money. When we receive this free treatment and every patient—

The Minister for Health: That is for public wards in public hospitals.

Mr. McLARTY: The average person will go in as an ordinary patient. District hospitals have not accommodation to provide public wards. There are three district hospitals in my electorate, and they are so overcrowded that patients have to be accommodated on verandahs. The Minister said he had been able to send some elderly people to the Beverley hospital because accommodation was available there. None could be sent to either of the three hospitals in my district because they are overcrowded; in fact, one of those hospitals is the busiest country hospital in Western Australia. The other two have something like 12 to 14 beds, and lately have had an average of 18 beds occupied. That indicates how crowded those hospitals are.

I would like to know what will be the position of the hospital boards when the payments are made by the Commonwealth. It would be interesting to know, also, what the position will be in regard to the metropolitan hospital fund. We have a large number on the metropolitan fund, and, if treatment is to be free, will that fund be continued and what will be done with the money in the fund when the Commonwealth payments start? The Minister referred to regional hospitals and mentioned certain towns in which they would be established—Albany, Geraldton, Bunbury and Kalgoorlie. These are large towns and are the obvious places for them. As regards the Great Southern, I think I can see a big fight ahead of the Minister, because the member for each constituency down there will want a regional hospital in his dis-

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington): The Minister, in introducing his Estimates,

trict. The Minister spoke about district hospitals. I understand that eight regional hospitals are to be established.

The Minister for Health: I did not say necessarily eight.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If there is any more interjecting, I will take steps to prevent this constant breach of my call for order.

Mr. McLARTY: District hospitals, of course, would not be in the same category as regional hospitals. At this stage I think the Minister, through his advisers, could indicate in which towns district hospitals are to be established. Not long ago we had a visit from a Federal Hospital Committee. I think they call themselves the Medical Survey Committee. They visited many hospitals throughout the State, but I do not think that committee is in a position to decide where district hospitals should be built. I think the Minister, with the assistance of local professional and expert advice, is better suited to decide that point. If an early decision could be made in this respect it would be helpful all round. We have in various country towns enthusiastic hospital workers. In my own district large sums of money have been raised by voluntary workers. One sees them working at stock sales, holding bazaars and raising money in whatever way they can. If they were definitely told that a hospital was to be built in a particular town their enthusiasm would be maintained and the Government would be assisted financially. During the week-end the Minister made a visit to a country town with a view to inspecting a hospital and receiving a deputation.

Mr. Withers: Did you say a country town?

Mr. McLARTY: A large country town. I have no doubt that improved hospital accommodation—very probably new hospital accommodation—is required in a number of country towns. Unquestionably, those who are prepared to make the most noise stand an excellent chance of getting improved accommodation perhaps before other deserving towns. The Minister shakes his head; he does not agree, and I am glad he does not. Here, again, the Minister with his expert advice should consider a priority for these hospitals and lists should be made up. In my own district—I do not think I need apologise for mentioning this—we have a hospital at Pinjarra which becomes busier each year, and the indications are that its

bed average will become even higher. The building is unfit for hospital work, notwithstanding that it serves an exceedingly large district. The Minister has inspected it; as a matter of fact, I think there are but few hospitals in the whole State that he has not inspected at some time or other.

When consideration is given to the construction of these new hospitals I hope he will remember his visit to the Pinjarra hospital and look up his files for comments made with respect to it. The maintenance cost of these old hospitals is very heavy and the expense is certainly not an economic one. I noticed in a leading Queensland paper today that the Minister for Health in that State had said that £157,000 would be made available this year for new hospital buildings in Queensland. I do not know where he is getting the money, but he gave a list of country towns in respect of which the money would be provided. It may be possible for the Minister to provide money for some of the hospitals so urgently needed in our country towns. I have in mind, too, the Yarloop hospital and its high bed average; considerable improvements could well be carried out to that hospital. Mention has been made of the difficulty in staffing hospitals. We all realise how those difficulties have arisen. They certainly are not easy to overcome, but, looking to the future, I suggest to the Minister that consideration should be given to selecting nursing sisters who the department thinks would be capable of managing a hospital, that is, becoming the matron of a hospital.

The present system, whereby hospital boards advertise for a matron, involves the acceptance of whichever person offers her services. As I said, very few applications are received; sometimes the boards are lucky, but at other times unlucky. The Medical Department, however, should have a knowledge of the capabilities of their nursing staffs throughout the State. If the department considers a nurse is qualified to act as a matron, she should be registered with the department as one capable of undertaking such duties. The Minister made reference to the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. He said there had been some hostile criticism of that institution during the past few months. I am not prepared, nor am I qualified, to offer my criticism of that hospital, because I have not inspected it and to make charges on hearsay evidence

would, of course, be dangerous, unless one could prove the statements. One aspect, however, struck me very forcibly.

Some time ago a young girl was prosecuted for not proceeding to work at the Claremont Mental Hospital, after being directed to do so by the manpower authorities. Let me say again that I appreciate the difficulties in regard to manpower. I know the Minister is up against it; nevertheless I cannot help saying that it is altogether undesirable for the manpower authorities to direct a girl to work in the Claremont Hospital for the Insane if she does not want to do so. I can quite appreciate the feelings of the girl who was directed to go there. I do not know whether the Minister would achieve any success by advertising throughout the Commonwealth for girls to work at the Claremont hospital, or whether the Minister could obtain girls who are at present doing war work, but I do hope it will be unnecessary in the future for the manpower authorities to direct girls to work at the Claremont Mental Hospital. I do not consider it is in the interests of the girls and it certainly is not in the interests of the patients.

I was glad to hear the Minister say that he was trying to increase the number of dental officers to examine children's teeth. That is a necessary procedure. It is generally agreed by professional men that adequate attention to children's teeth will keep them in good health in later years. I hope the Minister will be able to get these dental assistants to visit the schools. Under present conditions, certainly not enough of this work is being done. Could the Minister tell us whether this new drug, penicillin, is likely to be available? He referred to a certain disease for which it was used.

The Minister for Health: It is available. We are using it now.

Mr. McLARTY: I notice the drug is made from cheese mould. We make cheese in Western Australia and I was wondering whether the drug could not be manufactured here so as to avoid our having to import it.

The Minister for Health: It is made in Melbourne.

Mr. McLARTY: Could it not be manufactured in our own State?

The Minister for Health: It is a big job.

Mr. McLARTY: I commend the infant health centre committees for the good work which they are carrying out.

MR. CROSS (Canning): I desire to draw the Minister's attention to something which during the last few days has received some publicity. It is a matter upon which he is likely to be asked to make a decision. The subject has been raised from time to time in Victoria Park and South Perth. I refer to the City of Perth and South Perth sanitary sites. Some of the residents have informed me that they consider some of the statements made are exaggerated.

The Minister for Health: They are not.

Mr. CROSS: Whether they are exaggerated or not, I am of opinion that immediate action should be taken to overcome the present nuisance.

The Minister for Health: Have you just woke up?

Mr. CROSS: No. I woke up a long time ago.

The Minister for Health: Is that why you kicked up a row?

Mr. CROSS: I kicked up a row long before the Minister said anything about the matter. I realise that the position is hedged with considerable difficulty. Recently certain interested parties approached the Victoria Park R.S.L. and invited organisations to attend. I was invited, but could not attend as Parliament was sitting. The parties concerned arranged to take a deputation to the Public Health Commissioner last week and I was invited by telephone to attend. I did so, but our Town Planning Commissioner was there and he did not want me. I had a good idea why he did not want me, not that I did not want the site to go because I think it should have gone long ago. I will do what I can to have it removed. I do not, however, agree with the views expressed by the present "Clown" Planning Commissioner. I notice in a report in "The West Australian" some remarks which he made at the public meeting held in Victoria Park. The report reads—

Mr. D. L. Davidson, Town Planning Commissioner, who was present by invitation, addressed the meeting at considerable length. Having traversed the history of the agitation for the removal of the site, Mr. Davidson said that three months ago—

His memory must have slipped; it is longer ago than that.

—in company with Health Inspector Gray, he discovered a suitable area for a sanitary site for Perth on the confines of the Canning district, one chain outside the city boundaries; but nothing eventuated.

I notice that in a report in "The Sunday Times" mention was made of a deputation to which the Press was not admitted. I understand the Public Service Commissioner's typist or stenographer took some shorthand notes; Mr. Davidson wanted his stenographer to take them. In that report Mr. Davidson is stated to have said—

Mr. Davidson stressed the danger of disease and the nauseating experience which had become part of the daily life of adults and children, and pointed out that a suitable sanitary site could be located only a mile away.

Only a mile away from the present sanitary site! The Town Planning Commissioner was trying to point out that he could find a sanitary site within a mile of the present site. Where is it? The people in South Perth and Canning want to know. A mile in any direction would only take the site from one person's backyard to another person's backyard. If that is Mr. Davidson's opinion of where a sanitary site should be situated, he requires another test as to whether he should be the Town Planning Commissioner or not. Any town planning commissioner who could advocate a sanitary site within a potential residential area—well, we should look for another commissioner. I am satisfied that the people of neither the Canning nor the South Perth districts will approve of any such proposal. The solution of the problem is not to remove the sanitary site from its present location to somewhere else where it will be an immediate nuisance to other people. I have received a letter from the honorary secretary of the South Ward Progress Association, that gentleman being a resident of Birdwood-avenue. In the course of his letter he says—

It is with much concern that the members of this association learn that the removal of the Kent-street sanitary dump has again been brought forward to the authorities concerned by interested organisations and mention made of a nearby site which we presume to be the disputed area in the pine plantation.

I may mention that the pine plantation is a Class A reserve.

You are fully aware of how touchy are the residents of our district to any mention of the plantation site.

I should reckon they would be. He goes on to say—

The activities of our organisation have in recent years given way to the more pressing demands of the war, but in this matter I can assure you that the residents can be quickly

brought together with all the enthusiasm and determination shown at our last big public meeting.

I may mention that the last time a meeting was held to discuss this matter, all the people who attended could not find accommodation in the hall. I know that although Mr. Davidson would not tell me where the site he had chosen actually was, he let drop a certain remark which was sufficient to give me a guide as to where the site was. It is not in the pine plantation but below it and between the Fremantle-road and the Clontarf Orphanage—one of the best potential residential areas in the district.

Mr. North: Are you standing for that?

Mr. CROSS: No, I am not, neither will the people of Canning or South Perth stand for it. The people of South Perth will not have it at that site, because the depot will be within half-a-mile of residents of that locality. It will be within half-a-mile of residents of the Canning district and half-a-mile of the Clontarf Orphanage. It must be remembered that this will be the site for the whole of the City of Perth, which has in Victoria Park and Carlisle alone over 11,000 per week services. At present the Perth Municipality sanitary service is let to a private contractor who carries 2,000 pans a day past a school where the children are attending classes. I do not know what the present private contractor is doing, but I know that two or three years ago when the pan system was operating where I live, it was customary for the contractor to empty two or three pans into one and put the dirty pans back. That used to go on for weeks on end. I trust that when the matter is brought under their notice, the Minister and the Commissioner of Public Health will insist on sanitary pans being moved during the hours of darkness and the sanitary site being properly cleaned up. At present it is a disgrace.

That cannot be said about the conditions in the South Perth district because the local board has been very careful not to ruffle the feelings of the people. In fact, the sanitary service is hardly noticeable in that district. Less than 1,000 pans are removed there and, in fact, in South Perth more people, in proportion, have had their houses connected with the sewerage system than obtains in the Victoria Park dis-

trict. I agree that the present sanitary site should be removed, but the new site should not be chosen in a potential residential area. There are two proposed at present, the one suggested by Mr. Davidson and the other in the pine plantation—both within half-a-mile of existing dwellings, and on high ground suitable for residential purposes. If the present intention is maintained, I will have no difficulty in bringing crowds to Parliament House to protest. It is well known that the main agitator for the removal of the sanitary site is an interested party.

Mr. Leslie: Do not you think it should be removed?

Mr. CROSS: Yes, I certainly do. I know the problem is hedged with difficulties, and that would appeal to the member for Mt. Marshall, too, if he knew the provisions of the Act which set out that one local authority cannot convey pans or rubbish through the district of another local authority without the permission of the latter being first obtained. There is no likelihood of any such permission being forthcoming from the Canning Road Board or from the South Perth Road Board, both of which were written to asking if they would mind the sanitary site being established in their respective areas. Naturally one would not expect the boards to agree to anything of the sort.

Mr. Leslie: It looks as though the battle of the sanitary sites is on.

Mr. CROSS: There is no battle; the site will not go where it is proposed. It will have to be outside the South Perth road district. In these days of up-to-date transport, the site should be 10 or 12 miles away from the city, where it will be of inconvenience to no-one. If that were done then after the war there could be an intensive drive to make people connect their dwellings up with the sewerage system. Many of the houses should have been connected up long ago. I hope the Minister, when this matter is placed before him again, will take a definite stand and place the onus on the City Council of seeing that decent conditions are observed in connection with the obnoxious pan system, that the pans are not carted past schools in day-time and, further, that the sanitary site is kept clean. Another deputation will wait on the Commissioner of Public Health this week to ask him to enforce rigid conditions

upon the City Council to ensure that the sanitary business is placed on a proper footing.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall): I was mostly interested in the Minister's remarks dealing with regional and district hospitals. I ask the Minister before he pledges himself to a policy that he may later on regret, further to examine matters concerning the establishment of hospitals—naturally I am in favour of their establishment—and particularly to give consideration to the position of small hospitals that may be closed or have already had to be closed by force of circumstances, with a view to re-opening them if it is at all possible. The Minister shakes his head, but I would point out to him that those hospitals were closed through force of circumstances not necessarily due to the war but to the economic conditions of the time which brought about a reduction of population in many districts with the result that the number of patients available was not sufficient to maintain the hospitals up to standard.

I draw the Minister's attention to the reports of the National Health and Medical Research Council. No doubt he has seen them, but in the three that have been published the fact has been stressed that if we are to make any advance at all in Australia, the average number of children in a family must be increased beyond four. Due to the economic circumstances prevailing before the war, especially in country districts where the repercussions of the depression and financial stringency were felt first and most, the number of children in families was not increased and this resulted in country hospitals that served primarily maternity cases, finding that the number of patients was reduced compared with the experience of the past. If we are now to pursue a policy of populating the country through our own people, we must make certain that hospitals shall be available where adequate facilities will be forthcoming not only for the actual lying-in time for women but for pre-natal facilities and after-care. It is recognised that doctors will not take up practices unless hospital facilities are available.

I am concerned with the need for prospective mothers having the necessary pre-natal and after-care attention and that will

be impossible unless the services of doctors are available—and they will not be available unless hospitals are provided. I suggest to the Minister and to the Government that every effort should be made to keep the small country hospitals open, and I believe that more of them will have to be established. I do not disagree with the idea of providing reasonable district hospitals where more extensive treatment can be forthcoming. People in country districts are seriously concerned when they realise that they are 70 or 80 miles away from the nearest doctor and hospital, particularly when an hour's delay in treatment in the case of an accident may mean the difference between life and death.

In connection with the committee which the Minister states is investigating the question of district and regional hospitals, I point out that the committee's policy should be to base its inquiries not on the economic needs of a district, but on its actual needs from the aspect of health. It is entirely wrong to limit Governmental activities and facilities by the length of the purse strings or the depth of the purse. The Commonwealth hospitals scheme was mentioned by the Minister. I am greatly interested in that scheme. At one time I intimated in this House that the scheme was one with which I did not agree. The Minister's explanation has borne out what I thought throughout, namely, that it was a half-baked scheme which did not take into consideration hospitals as they stood then. This is not the first of the Commonwealth's half-baked schemes to come unstuck. In estimating the amount to be paid to hospitals, the Commonwealth took as its basic figure the hospital collections throughout Australia. If the Minister cares to analyse the returns that are made up by his department every year of the average cost per patient or per bed, he will find that he will require a good deal more than 6s. per day to meet those costs. Some of the costs run up to 19s. per day.

A free hospital system has been suggested, but there is not the slightest prospect of the people getting it. The scheme to be adopted will have to be very much better than that now proposed by the Commonwealth Government. The present Commonwealth scheme is quite inadequate to meet hospital requirements in Western Australia.

The Minister noted that in arriving at the cost per patient for the Perth Hospital or the country hospitals, nothing is allowed for medical services. It would mean pound per patient if it were ascertained. Let us be honest with each other and tell the people, "For what you are getting you are contributing to Commonwealth taxation and you will also be paying to the State which must undertake to do the work, at least three-fourths of the cost of hospitals." The Minister has mentioned the infant health scheme. I was rather disappointed to find that in this year's Estimates no provision at all was made for increasing governmental expenditure on the scheme. In view of the fact that representations by way of deputations were made to the Minister early in the year, and that I also waited on him regarding the operation of the infant health scheme in my district—that was prior to the preparation of the Estimates—we expected that at least there would be some increase this year on last year's amount.

The Minister mentioned the advice of his experts. Dr. E. M. Stang, in the 1943 report of the department's activities has stated that the infant health centres should not be a partial and precarious matter at present, but should be a permanent governmental responsibility. I agree with that statement, and I consider that the Government should have indicated, with some earnestness, this assumption of entire responsibility by making an additional amount available on this year's Estimates. As this increase has not eventuated, people interested in the infant health centres have expressed their disappointment. That feeling of disappointment can be and should be overcome. No reference to the Perth Hospital was made by the Minister, other than that the shortage of manpower had delayed the work. I am greatly interested in the finances of that hospital.

An analysis of the figures as I have found them by looking through the Auditor General's report, together with the reports of the Lotteries Commission, indicate that the Treasurer is going to be a very profitable money-lender for the Government, and will carry on a very paying game as regards the construction of the Perth Hospital. I should like to draw attention to the Minister's figures. The sinking fund and interest charges are fixed a

1 per cent. and 4 per cent. respectively for the Treasury loan. The Minister has given no authority whatever for those charges. No explanation was given as to where the money was coming from. The payment of those charges has been queried by the Auditor General in his report, where he states that he has seen no authority for them. The only record I can find of this undertaking being submitted to Parliament is a 50 word explanation by the Minister for Health in his speech on the Estimates in 1939. There he simply states that it is proposed to spend £425,000 and later on up to £800,000 on a new Perth Hospital. For an expenditure of that amount of money there should be some further explanation. I agree that this expenditure is purely an executive action which the Government is entitled to take, but Parliament should authorise such expenditure and what interest and sinking fund charges should be paid in respect of that money.

In the Auditor General's report I find this money mentioned as a grant. I understand that a grant is something given to you for nothing. But this grant is unique in that it carries interest and sinking fund charges. The figures of the Trust account disclose that the total expenditure over five years was approximately £340,000. Of that amount the Lotteries Commission had already made available £100,000 refund to the Treasury. On the total amount that the Treasury has made available over the five-year period, the Lotteries Commission has paid £44,099 by way of interest—and another £2,900 interest is due—plus £11,159 for sinking fund. Altogether a total sum of £191,244 has been received from the Lotteries Commission, plus £4,000 interest on the Hospital Trust Funds, with further accumulated interest of £241, or a total of approximately £195,000 has been paid to the Treasurer on his £340,000 "grant." There is a balance at the present time of £37,080 in the Trust Account. Up to date the Perth Hospital Trust building fund has paid 13 per cent. interest on the amount of £340,000 advanced to it. That would amount to 18.33 per cent. interest on the amount owing to the Treasury after allowing for the £100,000 which has been repaid by the Lotteries Commission. Actually, the hospital account owes at the present time an amount of £229,000.

If members care to analyse the figures, they will find that the "grants" will have

been paid back to the Treasurer in a short time. I do not know what interest the Treasurer is paying on money which he has borrowed and which he is making available to the hospital, and a full explanation of the financial relationship existing between the Perth Hospital Building Fund and the Lotteries Commission and the Treasurer should be given to the House. The only explanation is contained in the speech by the Minister for Health in 1939 and recorded in about 50 words in "Hansard" in which no reference is made to the financial arrangements. The £58,000 which has been paid in interest and sinking fund by the Lotteries Commission would be very handily spent on some of our country hospitals. I agree that the Lotteries Commission has treated country hospitals generously to the full extent of the resources it apparently has available; but, when it has an obligation to meet such as the Perth Hospital calls for, and the payment of such an enormous amount of interest, apart from the few hundred thousand pounds that it has to find in repayment of the loan or grant, it means that country hospitals will have to modify their hopes and expectations of benefit from the Lotteries Commission. It is all right to supply refrigerators and an amount of £100 or £200 for small items; but, when it comes to providing really big facilities, the Lotteries Commission must find that its other obligations are such that it cannot meet all the requests made to it. I hope that before the Estimates are passed the Minister will make an explanation in connection with the financing of the building of the Perth Hospital, and that he will make a satisfactory explanation to the people as to why he has not increased the infant health vote this year.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): I desire to make a few observations, but do not propose to make any criticism of the Health Department. One part of the Minister's speech on which I wish to comment is his undertaking to provide medical and dental attention at schools. To my knowledge, there is limited attention of this kind, so limited that I venture to say—although I have frequently visited schools—that I have never once been there when a dental officer was present. I do not know whether some schools are visited at all. If the proposal is to be carried out and is not merely

window-dressing, it is a matter of very worthy intent. I wish also to make an observation on the suggested abolition of the Sunset Home and the transfer of the inhabitants to a new home to be erected at Como, or somewhere.

The Minister for Health: That has not been suggested at the moment.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No, but it is a matter about which the inmates are disturbed.

The Premier: They need not worry.

The Minister for Health: You can tell them that from me.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I shall be glad to tell them that. If money is going to be made available by the Lotteries Commission for the erection of a new home, it would be better spent on improving the existing establishment, the site of which is perfect.

The Minister for Health: Hear hear!

Hon. N. KEENAN: If a little more care were paid to the buildings with a view to affording more comforts, it would be a very happy home. As it is, it is merely a rough kind of shelter. There is no single bedroom; there are not even rooms containing two or three beds; there are only wards. The bathrooms and sanitary arrangements are very primitive, and if money is to be made available—and apparently the newspapers think it is; I presume by inspiration from Mr. Kenneally—the inmates desire not to be removed to a more publicised site but to be left where they are. By the expenditure of about £20,000 or £30,000 a marvellous improvement could be effected. Before any grandiose plan is entertained, I hope a practical scheme for improving the present quarters will be examined.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Public Health, £58,500; Mental Hospitals and Inebriates, £143,100—agreed to.

Progress reported.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

On motion by the Premier, the Industrial Development (Resumption of Land) Bill was discharged from the notice paper.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.7 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 13th December, 1944.

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

QUESTIONS (3).

HEALTH AND HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION.

As to Appointment of Royal Commission.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP asked the Chief Secretary:

With reference to the resolution passed by this House on the 8th November, can the Chief Secretary answer, definitely, yes or no, as to whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the administration of the Health Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

This question is still under consideration.

DENTAL HOSPITAL AND COLLEGE.

As to Cost, Etc.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary:

(i) What was the State's contribution to the cost of operating the Perth Dental Hos-