

was that for the privilege of showing the first solicitor that he had overcharged £14 1s. 1d., the client had to pay another £2 in costs, in addition, pay a solicitor his fees to represent him at the taxation, and further, to the solicitor who overcharged him, he had to pay £1 1s. for his attendance at the taxation of the costs. Therefore I think the time has come when something should be done. I am not going to take up too much time now because most members have heard this discussion several times. It was discussed when the last Government were in power, and during the regime of the present Government. I hope on this occasion it will be more successful than previously. It is a lot better than the Bill that was brought forward last year and I can recommend it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.47 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 26th August, 1937.

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

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

The Hon. E. H. Angelo took and subscribed the oath of allegiance to His Majesty King George VI.

QUESTION—ABORIGINES, MEDICAL SERVICES.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary,—What sums have the Government expended on medical services in connection with natives (irrespective of moneys expended on leprosy) for the periods covering—(a) 1933-34; (b) 1934-35; (c) 1935-36; (d) 1936-37?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: It would be very costly and take a very long time to prepare and supply the information required by the honourable member, but the figures shown hereunder give the information so far as the Department of Native Affairs is concerned—(a) £2,382; (b) £2,351; (c) £4,323; (d) £5,661. These figures are incomplete in certain particulars, as the information cannot be readily ascertained with any degree of accuracy in regard to—(i) Proportion of salaries of outstation officers; (ii) Services rendered to natives by subsidised doctors and hospitals; (iii) Medical costs at native stations which are included in the figures of "relief to natives." Considerable expenditure has been incurred by the medical and other departments, which cannot be readily estimated.

QUESTION—EDUCATION, DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, In what years were District High Schools established at Northam, Bunbury, Albany and Geraldton? 2, When were High Schools, in separate buildings, opened at Northam, Bunbury and Albany? 3, What was the number of pupils attending higher classes in each case in the year prior to the opening of the High School? 4, How many pupils attended higher classes at Geraldton in the years 1933 to 1937, inclusive? 5, Is it intended to erect a High School at Geraldton, and, if so, when?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Northam, 1917; Bunbury, 1918; Albany, 1918; Geraldton, 1917. 2, Northam, 1921; Bunbury, 1923; Albany, 1925. 3, Northam, 128; Bunbury, 134; Albany, 118. 4, 1933, 125; 1934, 136; 1935, 165; 1936, 147; 1937, 166. 5, It is recognised that a High School is warranted at Geraldton, but no such schools have been erected since the depression. When funds are available the claims of Geraldton will be considered.

QUESTION—GRASSHOPPERS, ERADICATION.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Did the Government adopt a policy of fallowing to destroy the laying and hatching of the eggs of grasshoppers? 2, Did the Government approach the chartered banks to act similarly on properties under their control? 3, What area of land has been fallowed—(a) by the Government; (b) by the banks?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, (a) 68,065 acres by contract, and 117,442 acres by arrangement with settlers a lot; (b) not available, but it is understood that banks have taken steps to ensure the fallowing of those portions of properties occupied by their clients which are infested with grasshoppers.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. T. Franklin, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. L. B. Bolton (Metropolitan) on the ground of urgent private business.

MOTION—NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT.

To Disallow Regulations.

Debate resumed from the 19th August on the following motion by Hon. G. W. Miles:—

That the Regulations (Nos. 1 to 9 inclusive) relating to the Natives' Medical Fund made under the Natives Administration Act, 1905-1936, as published in the "Government Gazette" on 2nd July, 1937, and laid on the Table of the House on 10th August, 1937, be and are hereby disallowed.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.39]: I desire to say that the pastoralists are not hostile to the new Aborigines Act nor to certain of the regulations under that Act. But for a misunderstanding the department might have got into touch with the Pastoralists' Association and as a result a different set of regulations might have been evolved. Only the other day I mentioned to the Chief Secretary that the Pastoralists' Association consists of a reasonable body of men, as has been admitted by successive Governments. Unfortunately, when these regulations were being considered, the executive officer of the Pastoralists' Association was away in the Eastern States, and so when somebody from

the Department of Native Affairs did call at the Pastoralists' Association office, unfortunately he saw only a junior, and by the time the senior officer got back the regulations had gone through. There are one or two amendments to those regulations required by the pastoralists. Unfortunately the rules of the House do not permit of the making of those amendments on the floor of the House, but this afternoon I am going to try to convince the Chief Secretary of the desirability of withdrawing the regulations, and making in them two or three alterations, after which I am certain they would be approved of by all parties concerned. I think if two or three people with an understanding of the natives' problems were to get together with the Commissioner, the way would be opened for a reasonable set of regulations. Before getting on to the two or three amendments which I think necessary, I should like to say how pleased I am with the altered conditions in the hospitals for white people in the North, and also the altered conditions in the hospitals for the natives in the North. Really the old conditions have been revolutionised. I know I am making a rod for my own back in saying this, because it will be brought up against me later as an admission of what the Labour Party have done. However, this is a non-party House, and we should be prepared to give credit where credit is due. There was a time when, if a doctor were wanted for the North and a derelict doctor was available, he was sent North. But all that has now gone, and we have up there today a set of doctors, young men, who appear to be fully competent. In the past the mistake was made of sending medical men up there and leaving them there until they got into a groove, but now I understand they will not be allowed to remain there for longer than two years. There is of course an increase in revenue for the Treasury. When people were sick or dangerously ill and were not satisfied with the treatment they were likely to receive, they were brought south at considerable pain, inconvenience and expense to themselves to be treated down here. Now we have doctors on the spot who can attend to them. The Treasury is thus getting the money. These doctors are on a fixed salary and the Treasury is getting the revenue the Perth doctors used to get.

Hon. G. Fraser: But not so much.

The Chief Secretary: You are not suggesting this is a payable proposition.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I got a bottle of medicine at Port Hedland for a few shillings and with medical attention thrown in I only had to pay 15s.

Hon. G. Fraser: It would cost more than that in the Terrace.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Owing to the aerial service it is now safe for a man to take his wife and children into the backblocks. In the case of an accident or illness a plane can go out at once and bring the patient to hospital where proper treatment is administered. The lock hospital at Port Hedland where natives are treated by Dr. Vickers for different loathsome diseases is a credit to all concerned. The natives go there now of their own accord without having to be chased. They know the beneficial effects of the treatment they receive. The leprosarium established at Derby houses most of the lepers that have been discovered. There are still a few about the country, but they are some distance away. I understand it costs about £70 to bring one man into Derby. There are two or three known lepers still to come in, but how many unknown lepers there are I am unable to say. A separate native hospital has been established at Wyndham three miles from the town. That is a relief to the white patients in the Wyndham hospital. A separate hospital has been established for natives outside the town boundary at Broome. When I tell the House of the condition of affairs that existed 12 months ago they will see that at last the health authorities are moving. I spent eight days at Broome last year, and prepared a report for the Broome Road Board in connection with leprosy. I am not an expert on leprosy, but when one officer sidetracks a thing to another, and that officer passes it on to a third, and that sort of thing has been going on for years, I can get down to bedrock and establish the facts, which is what I did. The facts contained in the report were so appalling it was practically unanimously agreed that it had better not be published, but that someone ought to get busy. If the facts had been known there might have been a stampede out of the North. Even now I do not think the Medical Department treats leprosy seriously enough. The principal medical officer says the situation has been grossly exaggerated. He states it takes perhaps 20 years for leprosy to develop. If that is so, it is all the more serious. It is a nice thing for people living there to think that 20 years hence their children may

develop the disease. That view is in conflict with the opinion of two medical officers attached to the Beagle Bay Mission. These two doctors, husband and wife, have had experience in East Africa, and they say that the disease can be transmitted through an insect alighting on a sore place on a leper and then coming into contact with a sore on another person. I do know that the matron of the hospital at Broome when transferred south developed leprosy, and subsequently died. I could relate other circumstances, but am just touching on the fringe of what happened. I am told that the nurse who went into quarantine with the matron is now suffering from the disease, though I cannot vouch for that statement. I would like to refer to the condition of affairs in the Broome hospital 12 months ago. I give every credit to the department for what has been done in the last 12 months, but do not ask for any for myself for the stirring up I gave the department. It was my duty to do that, as it is also my duty to tell what has happened since. Twelve months ago the principal medical officer said that the hospital grounds at Broome were the right place for natives suffering from all diseases. Natives, therefore, were camped in the hospital grounds quite close to where white people were treated. Natives will not sleep in beds but prefer the sand. In the grounds is a shed with a granolithic floor. The fence of the hospital ground was down, and the natives wandered in and out of the town as they thought fit. When I raised the question an officer of the department wanted to know what the orderly was doing. One orderly is of no avail. A 40-hour week may be the policy of the Labour Party, but if the orderly worked 24 hours every day for seven days a week he could not control the natives. If he went to the front fence they would go out at the back, and vice versa. The nursing staff was expected to treat the natives, and then go into the hospital and take on perhaps a confinement case. That sort of thing would not be tolerated in the south for a minute. At last we have these things rectified in the North, and I would like to give credit to those who have brought about the change. As I pointed out, the pastoralists are not hostile to any reasonable conditions imposed by the regulations. The amending Act, however, gives arbitrary power. That is perhaps necessary when dealing with unreasonable employers. Those concerned should exercise discretionary power, but not

the arbitrary power provided in the Act. The law now provides that no native of aboriginal birth under 16 years of age can be employed on a pearling boat or about pearling sheds, or in any work connected with the industry. It provides that a married native cannot be sent away from his wife. These boys are employed, paid and kept by their employers. If this provision is enforced a young native will have to go back into the care of the department instead of earning wages. This will also apply to married natives. It will mean that both parties are thrown upon the department. The custom, I understand, has been, in connection with the women of the natives, to make an advance when the divers go out for several weeks. When a married native is employed an arrangement is made whereby the wife is cared for until he returns. That is a very desirable state of affairs. We do not want these people to become indigent and thrown back upon the State. One of the objections to the regulations is the charge sought to be imposed. There is to be a flat rate of £1 per native per annum. I raised the question when the Bill was before the House. The measure contained no fixed amount as a charge, but I think the Chief Secretary said that the amount would be based on what was charged in the Northern Territory. I understand the Northern Territory charges were recommended by the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Moseley. Those charges are as follows: Where there are not more than two aborigines, 16s. per annum; where more than two but less than six, £1 12s.; where more than five but less than 11, £2 8s.; where more than 10 and less than 21, £4; where more than 20 and less than 41, £8; and over 40, £16 per annum. It is desirable that our charges should be brought into line with those of the Northern Territory. When a tax was put on for the destruction of dogs it was found to be about twice as much as the tax in the Northern Territory. Nearly all the Northern Territory skins were brought into the Kimberleys and were paid for by the road boards in that area. There are stations which overlap the imaginary line, part of a station being in the Kimberleys and part in the Northern Territory. I am inclined to think that perhaps payments that ought to be made to Western Australia would be made to the Northern Territory and vice versa. If the

charges were imposed on the same scale as the Northern Territory charges, that should not occur. I do not think this is the proper time to impose any restrictions upon industries of the North.

The Chief Secretary: We would not mind if you did not have a medical fund.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am pretty certain that if no medical fund were provided, some means would have to be arranged to deal with the greater percentage of the natives, who would not be allowed to remain on the stations. I say that because if the station owner has to accept the responsibility for all the natives, only the best and most fit will be employed. What, then, will become of the others? I have told the pastoralists that if they are forced into that position, they should notify the department of the men they are employing and ask the Inspector of Police to send an officer to take the other natives away, and to keep them off the stations. We do not want to reach that stage. What we want are fair and reasonable regulations. The present is the wrong time to impose charges upon the pastoralists in particular. Very few people have any conception of what has happened in the North. To appreciate the position, it is necessary to go and see for oneself. If it were found that the Northern Territory scale of charges was not sufficient in a year or two, should the pastoralists find they were in a position to pay more, they would do so. I will give only two instances of what has happened. Last year on one station 55,000 sheep went through the shearing sheds; this year 5,000 sheep have been shorn. On another station there were 7,000 head of cattle and 24,000 sheep last year; this year there are 300 head of cattle and 4,000 sheep. Later on, should good seasons be experienced, the pastoralists, who have never objected to anything that is reasonable, will be prepared to pay more if it be found necessary, but at present they claim that every penny they possess has to be considered, and they should be placed on the same basis as the pastoralists in the Northern Territory with regard to these charges.

The Chief Secretary: But the medical fund would mean a considerable saving to many of the pastoralists.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not think the Minister is quite right in that statement.

The Chief Secretary: That is what I have been informed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If I read the regulations properly, medicine will have to be found by the pastoralists, not by the department, for all the natives who are not actually employed on the stations. It must be remembered that the charge of £1 per head is not all that has to be paid. The employer will have to pay for his permit to employ one native, and an additional sum if he desires to employ more than one. The other night the Minister quoted the charges levied by the friendly societies. I do not say it offensively, but I can only class that comparison as ridiculous and absurd.

The Chief Secretary: I think so too; I agree with the honourable member.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The treatment accorded white people by the friendly societies here and elsewhere cannot possibly be compared with the treatment and attention given to natives in the North, even under existing conditions. There can be no such comparison. If a native were to be placed between white sheets in a hospital and given other attention such as white people would expect, he would certainly go bush. All the natives require is shelter somewhere near the hospital. What they desire is some sand to lie on. They would not stay in bed, unless they were really ill and could not help themselves. I have seen natives in their normal environment in the bush on a cold night. They form a big circle with a log fire all round, and they get into the centre and huddle together like so many pigs.

The Chief Secretary: Do they do that at the Port Hedland hospital?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am talking about the natives in the bush, not of sick natives at all. Those people do not require feather beds and so forth that are essential for white people under the provisions regarding friendly societies, or anything else. When the natives are huddled together in the bush on a cold night, in the circumstances I have indicated, those in the outer ring get their warmth from the fire, while those inside get their warmth from one another. So the comparison with reference to friendly societies and the natives is ridiculous and absurd. Whatever happens, there is bound to be trouble unless a maximum fee is provided that will enable the pastoralists to employ as many natives as he desires. A maximum fee is charged in the Northern Territory Schedule. In the North there are communi-

ties of natives who are too old to work. Their offspring work, and yet the old people are kept by the station owners. The natives require food and at present it may be one old native's job to go to the station house one night to water the garden and bring back with him the necessary food supplies. The next night another native will look after that job, and so it goes on. If the interests of those people are not to be considered, and the station owners are to shoulder the responsibility, the Minister will see where all this will lead to. Someone will be kept busy keeping the older natives away from the station. As to the conditions under which the aborigines are living now, members would be pleased to see the happy colonies up North. The station houses are 50 miles or more apart and each has its separate community. All are happy and contented and looking well. It would be nothing short of a public scandal to push those colonies off the stations. They would not stay away even if they were sent off. The treatment accorded the natives was an agreeable surprise to me. I will give one instance to indicate what I mean. The station owners pay visits to each other from time to time, and when I was up North I was taken from one station to another. One Sunday morning I was picked up and travelled in a utility truck. Those trucks have comfortable seating for two or three in the front and room for a number of people in the back. Half-a-dozen of the natives were told that they could go along on a visit to the neighbouring station for the day. Then there was a squabble amongst them as to who would go, for some had been there the previous week. Ultimately four or five natives went. They were stately aged women who stood up like princesses. I remember that "Snowdrop," "Water Lily" and "Cissy" were the names of three who went; I forget the names of the others. They spent a happy day on the neighbouring station and in due course were taken back to the home station. These are the happy families that are to be broken up under this Act, and under the regulations as framed.

The Chief Secretary: You have a very vivid imagination this afternoon.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not think my intellect was ever clearer than it is to-day. I do not like saying anything on the floor of this House or elsewhere unless I am sure of my facts. I may not be saying things that please the Minister; that is not

my job. I think I have presented a fair outline of the facts regarding the hospitals and have indicated the reforms that have been instituted. It was merely due to those concerned that I should make that statement, and I have made it. I want to avoid further trouble in the administration of this Act by people who do not know the whole of the facts associated with the native problem. The first objection I raised to the regulations has reference to the scale of charges, and I have pointed out that if, later on, it is found that the Northern Territory scale will not provide sufficient revenue, the pastoralists themselves will be the last to complain should the necessity arise for increased charges. Neither does the Act, nor the regulations, define what is "employment." Who is to be the deciding factor? Is it to be the policeman? He may be treated well on one station and, if he is to be the deciding factor, he may decide in favour of that station owner. If he has a grudge against the station owner adjacent, his verdict will probably go against that station owner. A definition of "employment" should be embodied in the Act or the regulations. The other that I object to relates to the medical fund and in that respect the regulation has this effect—

The medical fund is to be used for the benefit of natives, and the Aborigines Department will be thereby relieved from expenditure in respect of hospital and medical attention for the unemployed and indigent natives, which hitherto it has been called upon to bear.

The Chief Secretary: Who said that?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is a statement by a man of more than ordinary intelligence—I do not come into this—and indicates the construction he puts on the regulation. We will probably hear later on as to whether or not it is correct. To continue:—

The onus is placed on the employer to decide whether or not the condition of the native who is ill or injured is sufficiently serious to warrant his removal to the nearest accessible hospital, but where the station-owner exercises judgment and removes the native, the Commissioner may determine that such removal was unnecessary and require the employer to pay the medical and hospital expenses incurred.

I may be told that this is another instance of vivid imagination, but let me give an example to show what might take place. Away out in the back-blocks of Kimberley, muster-

ing of cattle may extend over hundreds of miles. The native is as cunning as it is possible to be. He may be told to go out in a certain direction, and to go on with the mustering for a month. He does not like that locality, but knows a locality 50 miles in another direction that he would like to go to, so he immediately becomes ill. In those circumstances, it rests with the station-owner to say whether or not the native is ill. What a responsibility to put on to any unqualified man! In those circumstances, it is the responsibility of the station-owner to decide whether or not the man should be taken for treatment by a doctor at a hospital. If the station-owner takes the native to the hospital, and the native has then got over his shamming fit by the time he arrives at the hospital, and is examined, the station-owner, in addition to having incurred the expense of taking the native perhaps hundreds of miles to the hospital, is then to be asked to pay the doctor's fees. What is going to happen next time a native complains he has a pain in his side? The station-owner will say, "I have had enough of this," and then he will proceed to give the native a couple of packets of salts, and send him back to his camp. But then it might be an acute attack of appendicitis, and if it proved to be so, the station-owner would be at fault. If the opportunity were given to have this matter talked over, I am sure regulations would be evolved that would be satisfactory to all parties. My informant asks whether it is reasonable to assume that an employer will incur the cost of transporting a native to the doctor or the hospital unless he genuinely believes the condition of the native serious enough to warrant such a course of action. Quite possibly he may be mistaken in the diagnosis of the native's illness, because he is not a medical man, any more than the Commissioner of Native Affairs is a medical man. Therefore in the interests of natives it is undesirable that he should take a risk in such matters, when his own intelligence leads him to believe that medical attention should be sought. Furthermore, the native's admission to a hospital can only be gained with the approval of the person in charge. Consequently it is difficult to see how hospital expenses could be incurred unnecessarily. At the worst it would appear that where the employer is mistaken regarding the seriousness of the native's illness, the only expense likely to be incurred would be the doctor's examination fee. It is considered, therefore,

that the overriding power given to the Commissioner of Native Affairs in this matter is both unnecessary and unjustified. We are not antagonistic in any way; we are prepared to adopt, for the time being, the Northern Territory schedule.

The Chief Secretary: You have been anxious to get rid of your liability under the Workers' Compensation Act, and now you want the Government to carry that liability for you.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Nothing of the kind. We say that the schedule adopted for the Northern Territory is fair and reasonable, and we ask the Government to give that schedule of charges a fair run, especially in these times of stress and trouble.

The Chief Secretary: You want to fix your own charges.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Nothing of the sort. We say that what we were led to believe was that the scale of charges would be the same as it is in the Northern Territory. The Royal Commissioner recommended that scale, and now the Minister says we want to fix our own charges. It is no use getting at loggerheads; I have tried to be fair and reasonable.

The Chief Secretary: I think you have been most unfair in your remarks this afternoon.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: All I can say is that if I have been unfair, it takes a lot to please the Minister. I went out of my way to be fair and to explain what has been done for the natives. Is there anything unfair about that? If there is, I will withdraw it. I have tried to explain, from a reasonable point of view, what is likely to happen under these regulations. That is my viewpoint, supported by those who know and have had experience. Of course, if the Chief Secretary takes up the other attitude, that his officers are the only people who know anything about natives and know what regulations will suit, then he can take the consequences. In all seriousness I urge the Minister to withdraw the regulations. I am quite certain that two or three people can evolve a few amendments that will overcome the difficulty, and then everyone will be satisfied. I support the motion.

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

MOTION—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT.

To Disallow Amendment to Regulations.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.23]: The hon. member in moving for the disallowance of these regulations suggested that after I had explained the position, he might be prepared to withdraw the motion. I do hope that after the explanation has been given, he will carry out that intention. In the first place, I suggest that since I have been a member of this House I have never heard such a poor case advanced for the disallowance of regulations. The hon. member quoted from certain forms which have to be filled in when application is made for a license, and he gave to this House what he considered a fair interpretation of those clauses. Then he went on to say that he found, on close analysis, that the regulations seemed to give great authority to the board and to make the position more difficult for those who came under its jurisdiction. I suggest to the hon. member that the alterations to those regulations have been drafted with the object of making the position easier and not harder. The hon. member will agree with me when I say that it is far preferable for an applicant for a license to be given a decision within a day or two of making that application rather than having to wait until considerable correspondence has taken place between him and the Transport Board. The only alteration made, generally speaking, is that the applicant should give to the Board the information necessary for that body to come to a decision with as little delay as possible. During the debate on the Address-in-reply, more than one member expressed himself as being very pleased with the way in which Transport Board matters, and particularly applications for licenses, had been dealt with since the appointment of the present chairman, and those members suggested that the chairman had brought a lot of commonsense to bear when dealing with matters of this kind. I agree with those members, and I feel that the alterations which have been made to the regulations have been made mainly at the instigation of the present chairman of the board, who is desirous of bringing that commonsense to bear in deal-

ing with applications, to facilitate the handling of the applications more expeditiously. In the past the Transport Board have found that persons applying for licenses failed to give correct information to enable the board to arrive at a decision. With the new form, with which the hon. member finds fault, applicants are given an indication of the nature of the information required, and if this is supplied, a good deal of correspondence is avoided, and the application is finalised without unnecessary delay. Referring to Form No. 1, the hon. member indicated that the applicant must not deviate half-a-mile from one side or the other of the route. If it is desired by an operator to make a deviation, it is a simple matter for him to set that out in his application, but the board cannot make a decision on matters which are not submitted for consideration. It should be a very simple matter for an applicant to set out what is required in his application.

Hon. H. Tuekey: The board must define some boundary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course, and a decision cannot be arrived at unless it is submitted for consideration. How long is it going to take a person who is making an application for a particular route to set out that he desires the right to deviate half-a-mile or so in a particular direction. I suggest that is a very simple question, and one that is capable of being answered quite easily. Within recent months the board have made many favourable decisions when application has been received for a deviation of this kind. Regarding Form No. 4, Question 6 reads:—

For what purpose would the goods carried by you be used? (State also whether they are intended for sale by yourself or any other person).

The hon. member stated that it was asking too much of the applicant to require information of that kind. I suggest that if licenses were granted indiscriminately to convey goods for storekeepers, hotelkeepers, garages, etc., the whole purpose of the Act would be defeated. It is therefore necessary to know the purpose for which the goods concerned are to be used. On the other hand, might I suggest to the hon. member that supposing a farmer wished to convey goods for his farm, goods not intended for sale, the board would give every consideration to his request if he made the statement

in his application. On many occasions the board have given favourable consideration to applications of that kind, consistent, of course, with the requirements of the Act. Question 7 on the same form dealing with an application for a license for a commercial goods vehicle, reads:—

For what purpose, if any, will the vehicle be used in addition to the foregoing?

The hon. member seemed to think that that was a question which should not be asked. The question is asked directly in the interests of the applicant, because very often it had been found that an applicant desired to operate his vehicle for some purpose in addition to that set out in the application. For his own protection, it is necessary that he give the board this information, and if the board are satisfied, they include those particulars in his license. With a view to assisting such an applicant and permitting him to do more than he has really applied for, that question has been included, and I have been assured by the chairman of the board that quite a number of licenses have been granted in such circumstances. An applicant has applied for a license for a certain purpose, and if the board had granted a license without asking for the additional information, the use of the truck would have been limited to that particular purpose, and the applicant would have been required to approach the board again if he desired to use the truck, as apparently he did, for the other purposes.

Hon. A. Thomson: He has to specify every possible use to which he might put the truck.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Act lays down the conditions, and when a man makes application for a license, he is asked to specify the purposes for which he proposes to use the truck. As I have just explained, the alterations to the regulation have been inserted to assist that man, so that instead of his having to make two or three applications, the one application is sufficient. I cannot see that there should be any objection to that particular question on the application form. Question 14 on the same form asks for information as to the transport facilities, road or rail, in the district proposed to be served by the applicant, including the distance from the road or area proposed to be served. Question 15 asks whether those other facilities are unable to cater adequately for the goods the

applicant wishes to carry, and if so, in what manner are they inadequate. Answers to those questions will provide information that the board are required by the Act to consider. If the applicant cannot supply answers, all that he need do is to reply that he cannot say. If the information is supplied, delay will be avoided in obtaining the particulars from other sources. Before the license could be issued, the board would have to ascertain the information, but generally the applicant could give it easily when making his application. The hon. member has not specified any objection to the certificate at the foot of the form. It must be assumed that applicants will not deliberately make false statements, and therefore will not object to signing the certificate as evidence of their good faith. If a person is not certain regarding any of the particulars given, he can say so on the form. There is no harm in his doing that. In this instance, as in the other instance to which I have referred, it should be quite easy and should entail no hardship whatever. All that the applicant has to do is to give the particulars requested. Referring to the question of permits or temporary licenses, in which it is required that the nature and quantity of the goods shall be specified, this is information necessary to enable the board to arrive at a decision. For instance, a carrier might apply for a permit to carry goods that could conveniently be conveyed by an existing service, but if the goods are perishable or fragile, or are required urgently, or are of such a quantity as to warrant special transit, then the board, having the full facts, can deal with the matter quickly. In that instance, also, the information is required with the object of assisting the applicant. We all know that the Transport Board have to take certain matters into consideration when dealing with requests of this kind, and surely it is better for the applicant to give the information available to him at the moment he approaches the board rather than leave it to the board to spend additional time in obtaining the information. I am sure that the whole object of these alterations is not to make it harder for applicants, but to make it easier and more expeditious, not only for applicants, but for the board.

Hon. A. Thomson: If that is so, it is the first time the board have ever given any evidence of considering an applicant.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I know that the honourable member holds very definite

views regarding the Act. I know that he does not believe in the Act on principle. He would prefer that there was no Act at all. But the Act is there, and the board, I believe, are doing very useful work indeed. I endorse the remarks of those members who have pointed out that the board, in their opinion, do bring commonsense to bear when dealing with matters of this kind. Consequently I suggest that when we have such evidence and when it can be shown, as I have shown, that the amendments have been framed to assist the applicant rather than make it more difficult for him to get a license, there can be no ground whatever for disallowing them as requested by the honourable member. I therefore hope that the House will not agree to the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. V. Piesse, debate adjourned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. T. FRANKLIN (Metropolitan) [5.41]: I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, and, in doing so, express my pleasure at the contents of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. I am pleased that the Government are taking action regarding certain recommendations made in the Speech. During last session several important Bills that called for much consideration reached this House at the last moment. This session, I understand, the Government intend to bring those Bills forward at the earliest opportunity. I congratulate the Government on that decision. Members will then have an opportunity thoroughly to consider all aspects of those measures. I do not intend to occupy the time of the House at great length. Other members have spoken mainly of matters appertaining to their own provinces, and I propose to say a few words regarding the metropolitan area. First let me deal with the town planning scheme. Possibly this is a matter that does not actually concern Parliament, but Parliament passed the necessary legislation governing town planning. I sincerely hope that wiser counsels will prevail in the direction of bringing the local bodies together to consider various questions affecting town planning. Several local authorities are taking an active part with the object of securing a more up-to-date and workable

town planning scheme. I trust that the Town Planning Commissioner and the various committees will meet and frame regulations that will operate to the benefit of all concerned. We know that the Town Planning Commissioner, Mr. Davidson, is a man of independent opinions holding distinct views. Undoubtedly he is endeavouring to do his best, but unfortunately there seems to be some obstacle between him and the local governing bodies in the matter of reaching an understanding. Wisdom dictates that they should get together and produce something that will be of benefit to the people. Although we have plenty of land suitable for the erection of homes, sites that would permit of plenty of yard room being made available for the women and children, it is regrettable that so many people in the city and suburbs are resorting to flat life. But unfortunately we find that a practice is coming into vogue of building flats instead of up-to-date houses or cottages. Those who build flats are flats themselves, in the fullest sense of the word. At no distant date the consequences will be realised. We are anxious that this glorious State of ours should not have slums, and flats represent the thin end of the wedge in regard to city slums. Under the law, no person can build a cottage on a piece of land that has not a superficial area of 5,200 ft. In fact, I understand the minimum allotment now is 6,000 superficial feet. But one can build four flats on a ground floor of 1,200 ft. That is not following out the principle applying to tenements or houses.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But one cannot get the necessary domestic help for houses in these days.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I do not know about the domestic side of the question. It is said that a man's home is his castle, but in congested flats there is no privacy. The morale of the people must necessarily suffer from this fact. Even cottages must have 1,200 superficial feet, and not more than 50 per cent. of that area is to be built on. Every room, apart from kitchen and bathroom, must have a capacity of 850 cubic feet, and the height of the ceiling must not be less than 10 ft. 6 in. That is not a large capacity. No one should object to the provision, but if hon. members went through some flats they would find that it is not being observed. In the case of cottages and tenements erected here in the past, there is more opportunity for children to play on their own premises

instead of going into the street and thereby incurring danger. With flats there is no possibility of keeping children off the street, because there will be no room for them to play on their own premises. I am glad indeed to know that the Government have brought in a new Municipal Corporations Act. Every member of this Chamber and of another place must realise it is high time for the introduction of a new measure. The existing Act is obsolete and unworkable. When the Bill comes before this Chamber, I shall give it all possible support, except that I shall in Committee vote against clauses with which I do not agree. In order to make the new Act one of which we shall be proud as benefiting the people of Western Australia, I suggest that the measure be referred to a select committee. As members of Parliament we should be able to discuss the various matters coming before us, but we should consult the experts working under the Municipal Corporations Act from day to day. Their advice might well be utilised. I shall support the reference of the Bill to a select committee, which would have power to hear evidence on oath or otherwise, and would be able to secure the benefit of the expert advice of mayors, town clerks, treasurers and so forth. The Government do not get many compliments as a rule, but I wish to compliment them on their determination to proceed with the completion of the Canning dam and water supply. That work should have been carried out by previous Governments years ago. Then it could have been built more economically than it can be at the present time, because material and labour were cheaper formerly. The completion of the scheme will mean that the metropolitan area will have an almost everlasting supply of water. I wish to take this occasion, as I have taken others, to impress upon the Government that they should give serious consideration to a scheme of establishing water supplies in the country districts. I said that I would not touch upon the provinces of other members, but I feel strongly with regard to this matter. I realise that if we adopt some policy of providing water supplies for farmers and others who urgently need them during summertime, such a policy will have the support of every member of Parliament and every citizen. It must never be forgotten that were it not for the people who have

the courage and stamina to go into the backblocks, the outlook for metropolitan residents would be a poor one, and they would have little chance of prosperity. I am not on the Treasury bench and do not know where the money is to come from, but I say in all honesty and sincerity that in my opinion the Government should evolve some scheme to draw from appropriations for other works not so urgent funds for proceeding with extension of water supplies in country districts. I do not know whether they could, may I say, fish money from the allocation to roads. Our main roads are now practically completed. Money might be diverted from road construction to installation of rural water supplies. Loan funds have been spent on purposes less conducive to primary production. The Government are applying themselves energetically to improvement of the foreshore of the Swan River. Possibly some rural residents might contend that the money ought not to be spent in the metropolitan area; but it must not be forgotten that we want a city beautiful in a country beautiful, a city and a country that we may be proud of. What the Government are doing in this respect tends to induce the metropolitan local governing bodies to undertake their share of improvements. In fact, the bodies in question have spent as much money as the Government. From the metropolis to the port, all the local governing bodies have the one object, to construct, if not at once then in the near future, a road on each side of the river from Perth to Fremantle. That would be a magnificent achievement. Again, the Government are carrying out, not a promise, but the obligation frequently urged on them by various members of Parliament, to construct bridges across the Swan River. We know that the Government at present have not too much money, and it is the more pleasing to know that they are erecting a bridge over the Canning River on the Perth-Fremantle road and are considering the construction of a bridge at Fremantle. On this I wish to tender my meed of praise, not to the Government, but to the Fremantle representatives who have worked so strenuously to induce the Government to proceed with it. Praise is due especially to the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman), who has brought the matter forward time and

again. At considerable expense to himself, that hon. member has visited the Eastern States with a view to ascertaining the most suitable type of bridge to be erected at Fremantle and the cost. He is firmly of opinion that a wooden bridge should not be built there. Yesterday one hon. member said we ought to practise what we preach and utilise local material; but if we erect an iron bridge at Fremantle, a certain quantity of local material will still be needed and we shall have a bridge that will last for practically all time. A wooden bridge after a certain number of years deteriorates so as to require considerable attention. In any case, I sincerely hope that the Government will speedily be able to make a commencement with the bridge. It is needed for traffic, and also for the safety of the public. Another matter I wish to touch upon refers to the North Province. I am indeed pleased to know that during the recess each of the members for that province left the city and went through his electorate with a view to ascertaining what progress has been made there and what can be done to assist in its further development. We know that Mr. Miles, and later Mr. Holmes and Mr. Angelo, went through the province. Those gentlemen hold pronounced views, and I admire them for the manner in which they have expressed those views. I am entirely in accord with the stand they take in demanding that every effort should be made to populate our far North, which will be the mainstay of Western Australia at some future time. I am pleased to know that progress is being made towards the development of Yampi Sound, that wonderful asset which Australia has at its very door, and which has been neglected for so many years. The development of that place means more population for the North and 1,000 people may be found residing there in the near future. I listened with a great deal of attention to the remarks of Mr. Hall, especially with regard to the Geraldton district. He said that something should be done in connection with the mines there. If members will obtain the report of that capable mining engineer, the late Mr. Montgomery, they will find that, according to him, there is every possibility of, and every facility for, opening up and developing the various mines in that district—the lead mines of which Mr. Hall and others spoke. I mention this matter because I am one of those who were concerned with the formation of a company to

develop a coal mine within 30 miles of Geraldton. In the boring operations I believe a strata of coal was touched, but there is necessity for further development. If coal were obtained within 30 miles of Geraldton, there would be no necessity to cart it from Collie and other places. I suppose it is only a matter of time when some company will be formed to develop the mines up there. I understand that the bore at the mine to which I refer went through indications of coal and also of opals. I believe opals can be obtained in that district. Not many, but a few have been secured. I assure Mr. Holmes and Mr. Drew that if any proposition is brought forward with regard to mining development up there, I will do my best to support it. I am rather pleased that we are progressing so well at the beginning of the session. Last session we were rushed in the closing days. The Legislative Council has been blamed for this, that and the other, and accused of not doing this, that and the other, and we have been warned of what will happen to us if we do not alter our ways. However, we are all old enough to look after ourselves now, and we are not likely to worry about that. We are prepared to assist the Government in any acceptable proposition for the advancement and progress of the State. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. Tuekey, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.4 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 26th August, 1937.

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

QUESTION—DAIRYING STATISTICS.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Are statistics available—(a) of the quantity of choice first-grade and second-grade cream respectively purchased by butter factories during the last two years; (b) of the quantities of choice and other grades of butter produced by such factories? 2, If available, what are the figures? 3, Can they be given for individual factories?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: 1, (a) Yes. (b) No statistics are available as to the quantity of choice butter, as this is included in the first grade. (See reply to question 2.) 2, Total butter manufactured 1935-36 and 1936-37:—Year ended 30th June, 1936: Total 10,770,699 lbs.; 10,339,570 lbs. choice and first-grade butter; 431,129 lbs. second-grade butter. Year ended 30th June, 1937: Total 10,908,502 lbs. butter manufactured; 10,562,232 lbs. choice and first-grade butter; 346,270 lbs. second-grade butter. Total cream received 1935-36 and 1936-37:—Year ended 30th June, 1936: Total 8,730,416 lbs.; 4,969,622 lbs. choice cream; 3,517,809 lbs. first-grade; 242,985 lbs. second-grade. Year ended 30th June, 1937: Total 8,921,315 lbs.; 5,036,719 lbs. choice cream; 3,678,587 lbs. first-grade; 206,009 lbs. second-grade. 3, No.

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES.

Mr. McLARTY asked the Premier: 1, What was the number of applicants for workers' homes for the last financial year?