

from the retrospective aspect of the Bill. The money was spent before they entered office last year.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How much? Do you know the amount?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was £13,575. Although the Bill covers that situation, unfortunately we derive no benefit from the revenue referred to. The export of sandalwood in 1931-32 was 1,450 tons, and in 1932-33 it was 3,800 tons. The revenue last year was £13,575, and the revenue for this year is estimated to be £19,000. The money already spent in the re-growth of sandalwood has not been attended with the results anticipated. It has been found possible to grow plants successfully, but when they reach a certain early stage they are destroyed by rabbits. This new factor, the Conservator of Forests says, cannot be economically controlled on uncleared land; on which sandalwood must be sown, as it is a root parasite and nuts must be sown in proximity to host plants. No more work is being done in the direction of carrying on these sandalwood plantations, although a little money is being expended on supervision. There is a balance of £2,827 in the fund at the present time. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

House adjourned at 9.52 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 11th November, 1933.

	PAGE
Assent to Bills	1841
Question: Public Works, procuration orders	1841
Bills: Augusta Allotments, 38.	1841
Land Tax and Income Tax, 38.	1841
Purchasers' Protection, 28., referred to Select Committee	1842, 1851
Geraldton Sailors and Soldiers' Memorial Institute Lands Vesting, returned	1852
Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment, Council's message	1852
Constitution Acts Amendment, Standing Orders	
Suspension, all stages	1852
State Transport Co-ordination, Message, 28.	1858
Annual Estimates: Vote discussed	1874
Child Welfare and Out-door Relief	1874

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

- 1, Police Act Amendment.
- 2, Feeding Stuffs Act Amendment.
- 3, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.
- 4, Fruit Cases Act Amendment.
- 5, Tenants, Purchasers, and Mortgagors' Relief Act Amendment.
- 6, Entertainments Tax Act Amendment.

QUESTION—PUBLIC WORKS, PROCURATION ORDERS.

Mr. SAMPSON (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that a notice is displayed at various works advising that procuration orders may be used by workers to provide for the withholding by the Government pay clerk of an amount of 2s 6d monthly, such amount to be retained and paid to the union for the required ticket? 2, If so, has the Minister given his approval to this?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, for the Minister for Works, replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Augusta Allotments.
 - 2, Land Tax and Income Tax.
- Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—PURCHASERS' PROTECTION.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [4.37]: I support the second reading of the Bill. In my opinion, this legislation is necessary to deal with the case of the sale of subdivided lands. The experience which has brought about the Bill has arisen out of the operations of a certain company; and nobody acquainted with those operations will, I think, doubt that some legislation is necessary to protect the members of the public. The company in question, as has been stated before, adopted means of salesmanship which were new in Western Australia. They proceeded on an intensive campaign, supported by a great deal of advertising and by a large army of salesmen. They also adopted a determined attitude towards all those who had transactions with them. I remember that at the time of the sitting of the Royal Commission the company had already issued some 400 summonses against purchasers. There is a further aspect of the matter, and that is that companies of this kind, which sell land at many times its original cost, must inflict a great deal of dislocation in land values, and also a considerable amount of hardship on those who purchase the lands. In this particular case the land was sold at eight, nine, or ten times the original cost of the blocks. Against this fact it has been urged that the company, before selling, incurred certain expenditure in its campaign to sell, and also certain expenditure for roads and surveys and other outlays. It has also to be borne in mind that the prices at which they sold included five years free of interest. Nevertheless the fact remains that they sold the land at several times the original cost, and the consequent inflation of values is a bad thing for the community. The House, I think, has to be guarded in approaching legislation of this kind. In the history of the real estate business in Western Australia, this is the first time there has been any serious public feeling about the sale of land of any kind, except in the case of the Kendenup estate, which occurred some years ago. Kendenup may be regarded as ancient history, and the land there, thanks to the activities of the settlers and to help received from the Agricultural Bank, is to-day selling at prices

which approximate the prices placed on the blocks by the vendor company. That is due to a variety of circumstances, including the fact that the land itself is valuable and has good prospects. However, I wish to make the point that, apart from the Kendenup episode, in all the years of real estate dealings in Western Australia there has been no serious public feeling aroused. The estate agents have proceeded upon reasonably ethical principles. Therefore, because one case coming along has recently attracted public attention, the House has to guard itself against being led to pass legislation which may possibly operate to restrict the activities of those who carry on business in a perfectly proper way. The learned Commissioner in his report, after hearing the evidence brought before him, was unable to find it as proved that there had been a fraud within the meaning of the ordinary law. He considered that there were no grounds which would justify a court in relieving the purchasers from the obligations which they had incurred under their contracts. But the Commissioner, after hearing the evidence of various witnesses—and I think over a hundred purchasers were called before him—felt that he was justified in recommending that some legislation should be passed to protect the public with regard to sales of subdivided lands. In this recommendation he was supported by the circumstance that other countries have found occasion to pass legislation of a somewhat similar nature. In Victoria and South Australia—to refer to two cases with which I happen to be familiar—Parliament has passed fairly extensive legislation dealing with the sale of subdivided land. The Acts of those two States are much longer and much more detailed, and altogether more ample, than the Bill which has been brought down by the Minister for Employment. So we find that legislation here is not by any means an isolated circumstance. We find that other States have been compelled even before we have, to bring in legislation to protect the public in matters of this kind. Victoria and South Australia have gone beyond our Bill in the way of licensing salesmen. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) referred to the 387 salesmen who went out into the field in order to push the sales of the company referred to. Victoria and South Australian legislation makes provision for the registration of salesmen—not merely for the registra-

tration of estate agents, but also for the registration of salesmen whom they may employ. A salesman, before he can operate, is compelled to go to some authority such as a clerk of petty sessions, or a court of petty sessions, and make an application supported by evidence of his character; and if his application is approved, he receives a certificate entitling him to carry on in that vocation. And the legislation also provides that if at any time he is guilty of any misconduct in the selling of land his registration certificate can be recalled. This Bill does not go so far as that. Other legislation in Victoria and South Australia contains provision in some cases for witnesses of contracts of sale. Under the Transfer of Land Act in this State an instrument has to be signed before a prescribed witness, a justice of the peace, a postmaster, or a member of the police force, and this provides a safeguard against purchasers signing contracts without understanding what they are really doing. The Eastern States legislation makes a similar provision in regard to contracts of sale. Again, we have not undertaken that. I do not intend to traverse the Bill in any great detail, because the most important part of its consideration will be in the Committee stage. When in that stage, it will be necessary to scrutinise very carefully the various terms of the Bill. It is not that a number of the terms are not entirely desirable and should not meet with support, but I think their effect upon the business of the sale of land requires to be carefully scrutinised to make certain that they do not unfairly restrict the legitimate rights of the public to buy, when they wish to buy, and at the same time, do not inflict a hardship on those who are carrying on in proper fashion the sale of land. The Bill provides for the burden of proof regarding misrepresentation in certain cases to be shifted from the purchaser to the vendor. That is a matter which requires very careful consideration in every case. I agree that it is very dangerous to cast on the defendant the onus of proving his innocence, or even the onus of proving that he has not been guilty of what we know as a civil wrong. But I am not so certain that in these cases a provision of that kind might not be justified, providing it is kept within reasonable limits. Both the Parliaments of South Australia and of Victoria have adopted similar provisions; not quite in the

same form, but with similar intention. Provisions of that kind are generally objectionable, but they are adopted in certain cases, particularly under the Customs law, and are, I think, justified in cases where the defendant is peculiarly able to know the facts and peculiarly responsible for insuring that the facts are correct. With some scrutiny of this clause and similar clauses, I am prepared to support the Bill; for this provision relates only to subdivisational land, and it is not too much to require that if people cut up and sell subdivisational land to the general public, who have neither the time nor the opportunity to make inquiries, the vendors should be quite certain that everything they say is perfectly correct.

Mr. Moloney: Will you support the Bill?

Mr. McDONALD: To the extent of placing some additional burden on the vendor to find out that the facts he is telling people are correct. In Victoria and South Australia the Parliaments have thought that some similar clause was necessary for the protection of the general public.

Mr. Moloney: You realise that from experience?

Mr. McDONALD: I think it is fair, because it applies only to particular kinds of sale, and some provision of that sort can easily be justified.

Mr. Raphael: You have never bought a block of land by any chance?

Mr. Lambert: It would be a good thing to buy a block 6 ft. by 2 ft. for some people.

Mr. McDONALD: There are in the Bill other provisions by which the buyer is to be given an opportunity to inspect the land. Something of that kind can do no harm, and may do good, but I am afraid it will not do very much good; because a great many subdivisational blocks are sold in the country to people who, even if this clause be passed, will not have much opportunity to come down to the city and inspect the blocks?

Mr. Latham: But there is the city man also to be considered.

Mr. McDONALD: I agree that some of these blocks are some distance away from the city, and I think this clause can very well be agreed to. In regard to city people, no great hardship will be found in their having to go a few miles out from the city to inspect the blocks, and this clause will protect those who have not had opportunity to do so. No such clause is to be found in the

Eastern States legislation, which also does not contain a provision similar to that in the Bill prescribing that a purchaser may require certain particulars of title, and if he does not get satisfactory assurances, he can disclaim the purchase. The provisions in the Bill regarding contracts by married women and young people under age are also new, for there are no similar provisions in the Eastern States legislation. But those two clauses will demand serious attention in Committee. The existing law regarding infants contains a very real measure of protection, and it is open to doubt whether we need go beyond that provision; because any person under age who buys land is able to repudiate the contract at any time before he attains 21 years of age, and after he is 21 years of age until he has done something to confirm the contract by keeping up his instalments or paying his taxes, showing that after attaining 21 years of age he has elected to confirm the contract he made before reaching his majority. No doubt the reason why the learned Commissioner suggested for the consideration of this House a special condition regarding sales to infants, is because the proceedings before him showed that in a number of cases young people had bought land.

Mr. Latham: But the company could not take any action against them.

Mr. McDONALD: No, but they had paid certain moneys on their contracts, and had succumbed to the propaganda brought to bear upon them. Still, the House may well feel that the present law for the protection of infants is a sufficient safeguard. Then there is a provision under which a purchaser may be relieved of his contract where it would be a hardship on him to discharge it. That also is new in this State, and the same thing can be said of the provision under which the home of the purchaser and the household furniture contained in that home, can be protected against any action taken by the seller for the recovery of purchase money for subdivisinal land. The company whose operations we are considering gave an undertaking to the late Attorney General that in no case would it proceed against the home or the furniture of the buyer and, in justice to that company, I may say I believe it has loyally observed that undertaking.

Mr. Moloney: That was after the Royal Commission?

Mr. McDONALD: Yes, the company agreed that the home and furniture of any buyer would be protected against any action by the company. The Bill also contains a provision that a salesman shall not undertake to buy back the land from the buyer or to resell it at a profit. Inducements of that kind are popular with a certain class of salesman, and the Victorian Parliament has put a similar provision in its legislation. Also provision is made in the Bill to prohibit salesmen from going from house to house endeavouring to sell subdivisinal land. I regard that provision as the most valuable in the Bill. The greatest danger to people of being induced to buy land which they do not want and cannot afford, lies in the fact that salesmen at present may go from house to house and persuade people on the spur of the moment to buy blocks of land, the purchase of which is regretted immediately after. This provision in the Bill extends, not only to subdivisinal land, but also to shares and chattels, unless the chattels are there on exhibition at the time the salesman goes from house to house. The prohibition of sales of shares from house to house is taken from the English Companies Act. That, again, is a most wise provision; the British Parliament from a similar experience have decided to prohibit any house to house canvassing for shares. The Bill applies that prohibition to subdivisinal land and to shares and to chattels. As to the land and the shares it is a very proper provision, but as to the chattels I am not so sure.

Mr. Latham: Would not "chattels" cover the butcher calling for an order for meat? Under the interpretation, I think it would.

Mr. McDONALD: From the point of view of that application, it will be seen that the Committee stage is going to be the most important stage of this Bill; but as to house to house canvassing for land and shares, the prohibition is, I think, very sensible, and as I have said, it seems to me that clause is the most important in the Bill.

Mr. Latham: There will be no more machinery travellers after that.

Mr. McDONALD: That clause alone will go a long way towards preventing a repetition of the difficulty which has occurred in the past. The Act refers to subdivisinal land as meaning land which has been subdivided into lots for sale in lots. The scope of the Act in that respect will need revision. The

Acts in the Eastern States are careful to restrict the provision to vacant land, while some Acts specify the kind of vacant land, and eliminate land which is cut up for agricultural or viticultural or horticultural purposes. The legislation in the Eastern States is restricted to vacant land which is subdivided for the purpose of sale for dwelling houses or for the purpose of sale for retail businesses. It certainly appears to be necessary that we should revise that provision and limit the application of the Act to those whom it is meant to protect, namely, buyers of land to build houses on and possibly to those who buy small blocks of land for the purpose of retail businesses. The general purpose of the Act is justified and, as I said, I propose to support the second reading.

MR. LATHAM (York) [5.2]: I support the second reading. As the member for West Perth has said, the Bill needs some review in the Committee stage, unless the Minister intends to refer it to a select committee. If he does, of course that will get over the difficulty. I would make one suggestion. I cannot understand why we cannot have standard agreements. We could have standard agreements for the disposal of land subdivided in the way the Bill suggests; we could have standard hire purchase agreements respecting chattels—in fact, we could have many other standard agreements, which could be registered at the Supreme Court. People would know then what agreements they were signing, and those agreements would be recognised by law. Difficulties are confined not only to the sale of subdivisional land. The Minister no doubt has considered that point, because he does not restrict the Bill to land only, he deals with chattels. There is no question that if a system of standard agreements were adopted, the people would have some knowledge of what they were signing. At present people do not know what they are signing in many cases, because frequently the agreements are printed in type so small that it is extremely difficult to read them. A year or two ago the House passed a Bill, which was amended in another place, setting out the size of the type which should be used, because vendors so frequently had their agreements printed in such small type that the purchasers could not read them. I hope provision will be made in the Bill that in

the event of a person selling a block of land, and receiving a deposit, and the purchaser being subsequently unable to complete the purchase, it shall be sufficient compensation to the vendor to cancel the agreement for sale and take the block of land back in settlement. I do not think the vendor should have recourse against other property of the purchaser. If the vendor sold the land at a reasonable price and received a deposit, then he ought to be permitted only to take back that which he sold.

The Minister for Agriculture: But the vendor cannot get that value for the land from anyone else.

MR. LATHAM: That would no doubt retard the business of these people considerably.

The Premier: But even when a fair amount of the purchase money has been paid upon a block of land, the vendor will not take the land back.

MR. LATHAM: I am aware of that. I know of property not far away which was sold for £250 to four different persons, each of whom paid £100 deposit. It has been taken back by the vendor, so that he has been very handsomely paid for it. However, if purchasers are unable to fulfil their contracts it should be sufficient recompense to the vendor to take the land back, without suing the man, obtaining judgment and distraining on his other possessions. I hope, when the Bill is in Committee, consideration will be given to that matter. There is necessity to stop the activities of "go-getters" in Western Australia.

The Premier: They could be stopped in Fremantle.

MR. LATHAM: Then we would have the expense of keeping them.

The Premier: They cannot do much harm there.

MR. LATHAM: No. They ought to be punished heavily for indulging in the practices they do. These men are, however, so clever at that kind of thing that it is difficult to legislate against it.

The Premier: I know of a case where a minor was caught.

MR. LATHAM: I do not see how they could sue a minor.

The Premier: The minor confirmed the contract after he was 21 years old. He paid a few shillings after he became of age.

MR. LATHAM: A minor could ratify a contract in that way. I would point out

that Western Australia does not contain all the fools either. A gentleman from New Zealand came to the State a little while ago looking for land. I was able to point out to him where the land he desired to purchase was situated. He bought it at an extraordinarily high price. I afterwards telephoned the local governing body to ascertain the value of the land for rating purposes and I found it was about £10. He paid £150 for it. Again, the "go-getters" can travel outside Western Australia. I suppose the people in the Eastern States look upon Western Australia as a land flowing with milk and honey and containing much gold, and so they can be induced to purchase land here. I am not offering any objection to the Bill, because I think there is necessity for it. Whether it goes far enough and will meet the case, I am not in a position to say; but if it is going to be referred to a select committee, there is no doubt the committee will be able to knock it into shape. I do suggest to the Minister that consideration should be given to the matter of providing for standard agreements, so that people will know what they are signing. As I say, such agreements could be lodged in the Supreme Court and be regarded as valid.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [5.8]: In common with other members, I support the Bill, the general object of which is to protect purchasers of land from the wiles and the clever trading of certain speculators in land. The Bill as drafted, however, would undoubtedly be most embarrassing to attempt to administer. The Leader of the Opposition suggests that it should be referred to a select committee, in which case most of what I would like to say would be unnecessary. I would point out to the House that the way in which the Bill has been drafted would undoubtedly lead to some most extraordinary results. For instance, it deals with subdivisinal land alone. Every parcel of land in Perth, with very few exceptions, is subdivisinal land. There is not a member in the House who possesses a home which is not erected on subdivisinal land; and of course there is not the slightest intention to impose on the sale of such land the conditions of the Bill. The Bill is meant to deal with a large block of land acquired by a person who subdivides it into smaller blocks for re-sale.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It would scarcely be possible to buy a block of land which is not a subdivision of some larger piece of land. That matter will have to be corrected. At another point which it might be advisable for a select committee to inquire into is whether it would not be wise to apply the Bill to sales of subdivisinal land by auction. Obviously, some of the very evils which the Bill is designed to remedy can occur in the auction room. There can be just the same representations made of the character of the mislead, although in law they are not sufficient to vitiate the contract.

The Minister for Agriculture: But a person goes to an auction sale for the purpose of buying land, and knows what he is doing.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is not sufficient. We have to protect the fool who does not know enough to take precautions himself. That is a matter I suggest might well be inquired into. In my view, the sale of subdivisinal land would be such a sale as that indicated by the member for West Perth: the sale of vacant blocks of land by a vendor who has subdivided a large parcel of land into a number of blocks for the purpose of re-sale. A definition of that kind might meet all the requirements of the case and would, of course, as I have suggested, obviate the impossible position of every private owner having to sell his land in that manner and subject to the conditions set out in the Bill. Clause 4 provides that any representation which is untrue and which has been made for the purpose of inducing a person to buy land is made material. Although I hold no brief at all for the class of person who is described as a "go-getter," nevertheless he should not be penalised unless the representation is made by himself by his salesman or his agent. If some other person wholly irresponsible chooses to make some such representation, it would be grossly unjust to penalise the "go-getter." Moreover I am rather inclined to get away from the words of the clause. I would say that in any case where a representation that is untrue has been made, and in consequence of that representation some person swears that he made a purchase, it should be deemed material because it is untrue and therefore it should be sufficient to vitiate the contract if, in fact, the court found that the statement was made. That can only be a question of fact, if, as I suggest, it is made by the vendor or by some other person who can

properly bind the vendor. The next clause gives the right of inspection. As has been pointed out by the member for West Perth, that will be practically of benefit only to those who live in the metropolitan area or close to it. Those who live in the country are scarcely ever likely to come to Perth for the express purpose of inspecting land which they have agreed to purchase. If the provision is confined to the metropolitan area, then it seems to me that the number of days allowed is far too long. Why should there be a period of 14 days in which to make an inspection and another period of seven days after that for the purchaser to make up his mind?

Mr. Latham: It would probably take seven days to get to Perth and seven days to get back.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is far beyond the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Justice: In the winter time, a block might be situated in the middle of a bog.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Only a colossal fool would buy land that was situated in a bog. After that he is allowed seven days in which to make up his mind. In ordinary circumstances, the time given is far too long to enable the purchaser to make up his mind one way or the other. The vendor cannot pull out. He is bound by the contract. I think the purchaser, within two or three days after inspection, should say whether he will or will not take the block. We want to impose conditions as severe as possible to ensure fair dealing, but we do not want to impose conditions that will produce the very opposite result. The vendor is given 21 days in which to make a title. That is far too long a term. He is prepared to sell his land at once, and ought to have the title ready. If the market moves in his favour he can neglect to make good any error in the title, and thus get out of the contract.

The Minister for Employment: That time is given in which to correct the title.

Hon. N. KEENAN: In the case of an error found by the purchaser. If the vendor knows that the correction will involve the completion of the sale, and if things have moved in the right direction, he may not have the necessary correction made. I would give a limited time in which to make good the title. The title should be forthcoming at the time the land is offered for sale. The provisions with regard to married women and infants are strange. An infant is not

bound by a contract. He will not even be bound when he comes of age unless he ratifies the contract then. He has the advantage of the law to-day. He can repudiate a contract at any time before he comes of age, and again on coming of age, unless he elects to ratify the contract. Is it necessary to go any further? It is a dangerous practice to legislate for individual cases like this. Ever since 1870 a married woman has had the same rights over her property as a man. She can enter into contracts and bind herself in respect to her separate assets, just as a man can do. It was to take her away from the thralldom of being a married woman that the Act was passed. If this particular clause is carried, it will put her in an extraordinary position. Although a married woman may be anxious to buy, she may not have disclosed the fact that she is cohabiting with her husband. At any time, therefore, if this clause is passed—it might be a term of five years that the contract would last—she may repudiate the purchase on the ground that her husband was not aware of the contract for sale, and had not ratified it. Prior to 1870 a married woman had not the same rights as a man, and such a contract as this would have had to be ratified by the husband before it was valid. Before a married woman is placed in this exceptional position, the clause will require very careful scrutiny.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Would not the husband be responsible?

Hon. N. KEENAN: Why should he be responsible? In the case of contracts for necessities in the home he would be liable, but if a man's wife chooses to buy some land, or a parcel of shares, or effect some other purchase, not being a necessity for the house, the husband is not bound. With regard to the powers of the court to enforce a contract, such provisions are novel in this class of legislation. It may be, as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, that land which has been sold has been disposed of at a colossal over-value, and that the handing back of the land to the vendor at the sacrifice of the deposit would scarcely represent what the vendor desired, although it might be what he deserved. The clause gives peculiar powers to the court under certain conditions, these being that the contract has complied with the conditions laid down in the Bill, that it must have been inspected and that the purchaser had been able to put his own value upon it and come to the con-

clusion that the purchase was a good one. The same remarks apply to the provision which enables the court to restrict the right of a judgment creditor for moneys due on a contract. The contract must comply with all the provisions of the law. The clause does not give the court the right, but unless the court takes action it automatically follows that the purchaser has the right in respect to the protection of part of his assets against the judgment for the balance of the purchase money. This may be a good provision to introduce into our general laws, that in the case of a judgment, power should be given to the court to protect certain assets of the defendants from a realisation of that judgment. There is no reason to make it specially in the case of a sale of land assuming that the sale complied with all the provisions set out in this measure. If there is any objection to it, by all means make the provision on the assumption that the sale complies with all the provisions of the Bill. I cannot see any logical reason for preventing judgment for the balance of the money due being realised against the assets of the defendant in the case of a sale of land which would not be equally logical in the case of moneys due of any other kind. The other provisions have been dealt with by the member for West Perth and the Leader of the Opposition. The latter suggested that in some measure the objects of the Bill could be arrived at by drafting a standard agreement to cover the purchase of land. I do not think that would achieve the desired result in any respect. It is not a question of the terms of the agreement, but how people are induced to enter into such contracts. I understand that the agreements, so far as they express the conditions of sale, were not those to which any exception could be taken. What the Minister very properly proposes to deal with is the manner in which people are induced to enter into these contracts. No standard agreement would achieve the protection desired. Then there is a clause which deals with a vendor, by himself or by his agent, going from house to house and offering for sale land or shares. We shall have to be very careful to define what it is we desire to prevent. This is a provision through which a man could walk by missing a house or two, and not therefore passing from house to house. He could start at the

top of the street and miss all the houses until he arrived at the next crossing, or he might come along the next day and take the houses he had missed the previous day. What we want to prevent is a vendor going around offering for sale land or shares or chattels. It does not matter whether he goes from house to house or not. We want to stop the sort of business that has been done in the past, to prevent which in the future this House is desirous of legislating. The clause will require to be carefully drafted to arrive at the intention of the House, and from being too wide in its application. Chattels include everything which is not real estate. This is defined in the Bill as including an agreement for hire purchase. A house is also defined in the Bill to include a farm. It might be very good for farmers that machinery agents should be allowed to go round with books illustrative of the type of machinery they are offering for sale, or for which they are soliciting an order.

The Minister for Employment: And fair amount of harm also.

Hon. N. KEENAN: There are few things which do not accomplish both good and harm. I doubt whether it would be wise to prevent farmers from being provided with this only means of acquiring knowledge of new, better and more advanced machinery. They could only get this knowledge from the books which agents take around with them on their travels, and produce to the farmers. It might even be that the production of such books would fail to induce the farmer to effect a purchase. To prevent that sort of thing would cut out from the farmer all chances of being educated concerning improved machinery, and this is likely to happen if we leave the clause as it is now drafted. It would not apply to butchers, at all events to butchers who carry round meat in their carts.

Mr. Latham: Some butchers only go round for orders.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Some of them have cutting carts. It would apply to the butcher who had not the goods available in his cart for inspection. Whilst I think that practically every member is in favour of the purpose this Bill is designed to achieve, many will agree it is drafted in a manner that will give results other than those we wish to reach. As there is a suggestion that the measure should go to a select committee,

I will have no more to say about it at this juncture. We are all in favour of the main objects this Bill desires to effect.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [5.28]: I should be lacking in my duty to my electors if I did not make some comment upon the Bill. It would perhaps have been better if some special legislation had been brought down to upset the contracts made a few years ago by Land and Homes, Limited, and other concerns of the kind. My predecessor for the Canning seat put up a strong case for the appointment of a Royal Commission, and I think it is largely due to the inquiries of that commission that the Bill is now before us. In the Canning electorate, a good deal of property changed hands through the activities of Land and Homes, Limited. There are St. James's Park, Hurlingham Estate, South Perth Park and Bella Vista Estate, close to Canning River. I am positive that as a result of the contracts made and the misrepresentation indulged in, land has been unloaded on to unsophisticated buyers at extraordinary prices with the result that the company has successfully tied up some of the land for all time. The company has retarded progress, and that will continue for a number of years in the localities I have mentioned. I have before me clear evidence of an instance where a "go-getter" succeeded in inducing a married woman to sign a contract, a copy of which I have. It is a remarkable document; it is not even witnessed. It will be remembered that the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Justice Dwyer, drew attention to some of the conditions of the contracts entered into with Land and Homes, Limited, and in his report he said that the contracts were normal except for three clauses (1) relieving the company of any liability for misrepresentation; (2) releasing from liability for payment in case of the buyer's death; and (3) suspension of payments during unemployment. I have with me a substantial sheaf of correspondence received by one unfortunate victim relating to transactions entered into by his wife with Land and Homes, Limited. Ten weeks after the contract had been entered into, the man lost his work and has been unemployed ever since. His wife has been in the Perth Hospital for the greater part of the time. He has received a large number of dunning letters. It is

evident that this man made genuine efforts to meet the commitments under the contract that had been made. His home has been sold up, bit by bit, and I have receipts for the blood money that he paid to the company. I have an idea that the people who control Land and Homes, Limited, are identical with men who were hunted out of South Australia because of similar activities in that State; I am not sure on the point. Their activities were similar to what has happened in this State. I propose to read some of the correspondence to give members an idea of the necessity for action being taken so that justice may be meted out to people who have been taken down. The first letter makes it clear that a contract had been entered into for the purchase of a block of land in another of the estates held by Land and Homes, Limited, because the letter dated the 5th June, 1930, reads as follows—

Dear Madam,—At your request, we have this day cancelled your contract for the purchase of an allotment on St. James's Park Estate, and all moneys paid thereon, namely £10, have been transferred to contract for the purchase of allotments on Westminster Garden City.

On the 10th October, 1930, a further letter was written to the woman by Land and Homes, Limited, as follows:—

Re Westminster Garden City. Further to our interview with you regarding the rates assessed on the above estate, we have now to advise that we have been in touch with the road board office and were informed that you should write them direct appealing against your assessment. We suggest, therefore, that you do this as we understand they have advised several of our clients that this is the only thing that can be done.

The blocks in the second estate were sold to the buyer on the understanding that all the rates had been paid. The buyer had been told that that was the position, and she was quite satisfied. It was not long before she received correspondence regarding overdue rates. On the 24th October, 1930, the lady received the following letter from the company—

Re Westminster Garden City. Your letter of the 20th inst. to hand; contents noted. We have to advise that we are, without prejudice, prepared to hold instalments for one month when we trust you will be in a position to let us have a cheque for the amount which will then be due and owing.

The husband was out of work by that time. On the 4th December, 1930, the husband received the following letter—

Re Westminster Garden City. Your letter of the 1st inst. to hand; contents noted. As previously intimated, we cannot cancel the contract entered into between us, but are, without prejudice, prepared to hold your instalments for a further month, when we trust you will again write us reporting your position, and, if possible, let us have something on account of the amount then due and owing.

On the 15th January, the woman received another letter demanding payment. All this time the husband had been out of work and by then his wife was in hospital. On the 6th March, 1931, the husband received the following letter from the company—

Your letter of the 20th ultimo to hand; contents noted. We have to advise that we cannot grant you any further extension for payment, but are, without prejudice, prepared to make you the following offer, namely, that you pay £1 per month on account of current instalments. With regard to the road board appeal, we have to advise that this has been adjourned to early this month, and when the decision has been given, we will advise you.

It will be remembered that it had been represented to the buyer that the rates had been paid. On the 27th March, 1931, there was the following letter:—

Your letter of the 23rd inst. to hand; contents noted. As previously intimated, we cannot cancel the contract entered into between us, and all instalments must be paid in accordance with such contract. However, as you are at present unemployed, we are, without prejudice, prepared to hold such payments, provided you communicate with this office or keep in touch with us every two weeks, reporting on your position.

On the 3rd July the company sent in a bill for £12 on account of instalments due, with an intimation that no further extension could be granted and a request to "please remit portion." On the 16th July, 1931, the company evidently decided to shake the purchaser up again, because they wrote the following to the husband:—

Your letter of the 6th inst. to hand; contents noted. We have to advise that the arrangements made were that instalments would be reduced to £1 per month to meet your position at that time. The account forwarded to you for £12 is for the total amount of arrears due to date in accordance with your contract. We note that you are at present out of work and as previously intimated are prepared, without prejudice, to hold your instalments provided you keep in touch with this office, reporting on your position at least once every two weeks.

Incidentally, the arrangements referred to were not agreed to, but were fixed by Land and Homes Ltd. alone. There are quite a number of other communications like that, but I shall not read every one. There is a letter from the City of Perth indicating that the rates had remained unpaid from the time the block had been owned by a former individual, and there is a final rate notice from the City Council demanding payment of the rates. Then followed two receipts, showing that the purchaser paid the rates on the two blocks of land. In the meantime, a further rate notice had been discovered showing that rates prior to that had not been paid and the purchaser paid them, the receipt for which I have with me. On the 27th November, 1931, the firm sent to the husband and his wife jointly the following letter:—

We have to draw your attention to the fact that you are not reporting your position regularly to this office as requested. Please reply with such request, otherwise we will expect payment on account instalments due. Awaiting your early reply.

Mr. Hegney: Was the man still out of work at that time?

Mr. CROSS: Yes, and his wife was in hospital. At the same time, their home was being sold bit by bit. On the 7th April, 1932, Land and Homes Ltd. sent the following letter to the husband and his wife:—

We have to draw your attention to the fact that the directors of this company have decided that they cannot allow the above mentioned account to remain inactive any longer, and advise that some payment must be made regularly, no matter how small the amount is. We would therefore suggest that you arrange to pay, say, about 3s. per week, until such time as you are in a position to pay the full instalment again. Thanking you in anticipation of an early reply, within the next seven days.

That was the letter sent to a man who was still out of work and to his wife who was still in hospital. These communications from the firm were replied to in due course and on the 12th October, 1932, the company wrote the husband and wife as follows:—

We have to draw your attention to the fact that you are not reporting your position regularly to this office each month as requested. Please comply with such request, otherwise we will expect payment from you on account of the above mentioned purchase. Trusting you will give this matter your early attention. Awaiting your reply.

The man was still out of work and his wife still in hospital. By this time, they had lost

practically the whole of what had been their home. I cannot regard these as other than cruel letters to people in such a position.

Mr. Hegney: What rate of relief was the man being paid?

Mr. CROSS: He was receiving 21s. a week; he had one child. On the 16th May, 1933, the company sent a further letter. I would draw members' attention to the fact that one of the first clauses in the contract of sale set out that the purchase money would be due without any interest being charged for the first five years. The letter of the 16th May of this year contained the following items:—Instalments due, £43 10s.; rates, 15s.; interest, £3 8s. 4d. In their letter the company concluded with the following remarks:—

We trust you will see your way clear of making some satisfactory arrangements for regular payments on account amount overdue. If there is any proposition you would like to suggest we will be pleased to give same our consideration. Interest continues at the rate of six per cent. Please give this matter your immediate attention and let us have a reply by return of post.

Yet the contract specifically stated that no interest would be due for the first five years.

Mr. Latham: But that interest is in respect of overdue instalments.

Mr. CROSS: But the contract says that no interest will be charged at all.

Mr. Latham: That is, if the instalments are paid up.

Mr. CROSS: I have shown the position. This man has been mercilessly dunned and worried by Land and Homes Ltd. In his position, he could not possibly pay the account at all. Yet he paid off a considerable amount. The truth of the matter is that within 100 yards of the properties referred to in these letters one can buy 20 or 30 blocks at the present time for less than £6 each. In fact, they can be bought at £5 a block. I know that a similar position arises in connection with St. James's Park. Hundreds of people have bought blocks there at prices ranging from £100 to £175 and yet, even right on Albany-road, it is possible today to buy blocks at from £5 to £10 each.

Mr. Latham: On Albany-road?

Mr. CROSS: Practically on Albany-road. Inside the last three months I entered into arrangements with a man who desired to build his own home and we bought two quarter-acre blocks for £5. That is quite

true. Those people were forced to carry out contracts entered into as the result of misrepresentation, and there is no doubt about it, they were defrauded. While it may be necessary in the Bill to make an alteration so as to protect the genuine people who sell land, I am of the opinion that something should be done to stop the practices of the go-getters who are a menace because of the tactics they adopt. I intend to support the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT

(Hon. J. J. Kenneally—East Perth—in reply) [5.47]: In view of the fact that it is my intention to move that the Bill be referred to a select committee, no good purpose will be served at this stage by answering the criticisms that have been levelled against the measure. In the drafting of it careful consideration was given to the report submitted by the Royal Commissioner; it was framed with the desire to give full effect to the recommendations that were made. It was the Government's wish that the Bill should be as nearly as possible in accordance with the provisions of the Royal Commissioner's report, and it was desired that when it left this House it should not represent merely the views of one section of the Chamber. To avoid that it is proposed to refer the Bill to a select committee, and the select committee will be asked to report as early as possible so that we may have the opportunity of putting on the Statute Book a measure that will give the protection which it is necessary the people of the State should have.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Referred to Select Committee.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT

(Hon. J. J. Kenneally—East Perth): I move—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and a committee appointed consisting of Messrs. McDonald, Moloney, Seward, Wise, and the mover, with power to take evidence, call for persons and papers, sit on days over which the House stands adjourned and report on the 21st November.

BILL—GERALDTON SAILORS AND SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL INSTITUTE LANDS VESTING.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following message from the Legislative Council—

With reference to Message No. 39 from the Legislative Assembly forwarding a Bill for an Act to amend the Lotteries (Control) Act, 1932, that objections having been taken to the Bill on the ground that paragraph (b) of Clause 3 of the Bill proposes to make a change in the Constitution of the Legislative Council and/or the Legislative Assembly, and does not bear a certificate that its second and third readings have been passed with the concurrence of an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of the Legislative Assembly; also that the aforesaid paragraph is foreign to the Title of the Bill. These objections having been upheld, the Legislative Council informs the Legislative Assembly that it is unable to proceed further with the Bill.

Before any action is taken on this message, I desire to say a few words. The first portion of the message I do not propose to deal with; but as regards the second portion, which states that the paragraph in question is foreign to the Title of the Bill, I feel it incumbent upon me to express an opinion. The Standing Orders of the Legislative Council upon which presumably the President has given his opinion are Nos. 174 and 177. Standing Order 174 reads—

The Title of a Bill when presented shall coincide with the order of leave, and no clause shall appear in any such Bill foreign to its Title.

Standing Order 177 provides—

Every Bill not prepared pursuant to the order of leave, or according to the Standing Orders of the Council, shall be withdrawn, and, when withdrawn, a new Bill may forthwith be presented in lieu thereof under the same order of leave.

These two Standing Orders appear under the chapter heading "Public Bills. Definition, initiation, form of, etc." In my opinion, they apply only to Bills initiated in the Legislative Council. If they applied to

Bills initiated in the Legislative Assembly, they would appear in that portion of the Standing Orders dealing with Bills originating in the Legislative Assembly. I make these observations because I realise the difficulties which lie upon members and Ministers in this House when introducing Bills. Under the ruling now given by the President, it seems to me that on all occasions it will be necessary to ascertain whether the Title of a Bill originating here will satisfy members of the Legislative Council. I leave the matter at that, trusting members of this Chamber will realise how impossible such a position would be to the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [6.3]: In view of the Legislative Council's message I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to permit the introduction and passing through all its stages at this sitting of a Bill for an Act to amend Section 6 of the Constitution Act, 1889, and Sections 32, 34, 37, 38 and 39 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899.'

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House, and I am satisfied that there is an absolute majority of members present, and that there is no opposition to the motion. I declare the motion carried by an absolute majority.

Question thus passed.

First Reading.

Bill introduced by the Minister for Police, and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [6.5] in moving the second reading said: Hon. members are aware that this House has already passed a Bill making an amendment of the Constitution and also continuing the Lotteries (Control) Act. In view of the message which has been received from another place, and in view of the fact that the former Bill passed this House without a division—though objection has been taken to it in another place—I now propose to

divide the original measure into two Bills. Later I shall give notice in respect of a Bill to continue the Lotteries (Control) Act. The present Bill deals only with the constitutional aspect. We have no option but to accept the ruling of another place in respect of the matter. One could discuss fine points of order and of constitutional law; but, in any event, having regard to the situation of this Chamber we have to accept the inevitable. Clause 2 of the present Bill deals with the constitutional aspect, insofar as it validates appointments made to the Lotteries Commission for the current term. Since those appointments expire at the end of this year, the validation has been made for that period. There will now be a clear issue, without any attempt to lead members to vote for a clause they do not like in order to support one of which they approve. Clause 2 of the Bill validates what has been done, and protects the member in question up to the end of the present year. As that aspect was fully debated when the original Bill was before this Chamber, I shall not offer anything further in justification of it. I believe the overwhelming majority of members agree that the action of the Government in this respect was a responsibility of the late Government and not of the person appointed, and also that the previous Parliament, which passed the Lotteries (Control) Act was under the impression that such an appointment would be valid and within the Constitution. However, that view having been challenged, the Government naturally propose to place the situation beyond doubt. Clause 2 deals with that aspect. But the Bill goes further and Clause 3 sets out that the acceptance of a seat on the Lotteries Commission shall not be deemed a violation of the relevant sections of the Constitution Acts. That is a different question from the first. Clause 2 deals with the past. Clause 3 with the future. I am anxious that the Bill should pass in its present form. In Committee there will be opportunity for expressions of opinion with regard to both clauses. Further with regard to Clause 2 I may say that at times a question is raised whether as a matter of principle, members of this Chamber should hold lucrative positions outside Parliament. Sometimes the practice is condemned, sometimes it is condoned, at other times it is ignored, and occasionally it is approved; so that in

many cases the standing of a member of Parliament is determined not by his position inside the House but by his position outside it, either as a member of the business community or as a member of a profession. There is a measure of inconsistency in regard to the disapproval of the practice. I have found that those who are comfortably placed are liable to criticise, not consistently but spasmodically, the practice in question. Whether others disapprove of the practice is debatable. There will be an opportunity of determining the matter on Clause 3 of the present Bill. The Government have not attempted to make one clause carry the other. There is a straight-out proposal so that Parliament may give a decision in respect of validating what has been done and protecting a member who accepted the position in all good faith. I fully believe that that clause will be carried. Clause 3, I repeat, deals with the future. The object is to discover the opinion of both Houses of Parliament in a straightforward manner. I believe that is what this Chamber desires. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. LATHAM (York) [6.13]: I have previously stated that it would be almost impossible for me not to support a Bill legalising the position of a member of another place on the Lotteries Commission, because the previous Government must accept some responsibility in offering a member of Parliament such a position. I draw attention to the fact that in 1894 an Act was passed by the Parliament of Western Australia based, to all intents and purposes, on the same principle as this Bill. A certain gentleman who was a member of Parliament occupied also a position on a board, and in this respect he was being paid by the Government of the day. In the present instance, of course, the member of Parliament is not being paid by the Government.

The Premier: It is not Government money at all.

Mr. LATHAM: There is significance in the words "an office of profit under the Crown."

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. LATHAM: I have very little more to say, except to point out that this is an unusual piece of legislation. As I said before,

there is a precedent for it, but I think the House should endeavour to guard against the introduction of this class of legislation. The principle of the Bill we are now discussing is practically identical with that of the Bill we passed recently. However, I will support the second reading.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [7.31]: When speaking to the second reading of the Bill which, owing to the ruling in another place, has now been dropped, I said I did not think Clause 3 of that measure would achieve the object it had in view, namely, the validation of an allegedly invalid act. There was only one question to be determined, namely, whether or not the holding of a seat on the Lotteries Commission constituted the holding of an office of profit under the Crown. If it were not an office of profit under the Crown there was no need for that clause while if, on the other hand, it was an office of profit, the clause was not the way to validate the position, to do which the Constitution Act would have to be amended. That opinion has prevailed in another place and in consequence we have this measure before us now, having for its object the validation of a certain position. But the Bill goes farther than a merely validating measure, for it amends the Constitution not only to render legal the position of any member of Parliament at present holding a seat on the Commission, but also to provide similarly for the future; under the Bill in future any member of Parliament who holds a seat on that commission will be safe in any action that might be taken against him, and his position on the commission will not be at variance with his position as a member of Parliament. Because of that dual purpose in the Bill before us, I am opposed to it. In that attitude I am consistent with my previous actions, and consistent also with the pledges I made to my constituents during the recent election campaign. I have no objection to any member of Parliament merely because he is a member of Parliament being a member of the Lotteries Commission or of any other similar body. I have had the honour of being a member of a standing committee of the Federal Parliament whilst being at the same time a member of that Parliament. But the stand I took during the elections was that, in these times of economic distress, positions such as those on the Lotteries Commission should be made to go round as far as possible; for I realised there were

amongst the unemployed in our midst men quite capable of carrying out the work of a commissioner and consequently I thought they ought to have preference of membership as against members of Parliament or others filling remunerative posts. That position has not been altered. There are to-day practically just many capable men amongst the unemployed who could well fill a seat on the commission and I would be false to the pledges I gave to my electors if I were to support the Bill. The amending of the Constitution is a very important step to take and it is only when some serious crisis arises in the administration of the country that the Constitution ought to be amended. I do not think the position under consideration is of such importance that we should exercise the machinery of Parliament to amend the Constitution merely to validate that position. It is true that if Parliament did unwittingly place any of its members in a false position it is the duty of Parliament to try to save that man or men and get them out of the false position in which they have been placed. Had this amending legislation stopped there I would have supported it, but since, instead of stopping there it goes farther to validate the position for all time, then in view of the pledges I gave to my constituents I cannot support it.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [7.37]: I will oppose the second reading. When the Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment Bill was before us I opposed it because I thought that since we have it laid down in the Constitution that a member of Parliament cannot occupy an office of profit under the Crown, we should uphold the Constitution. On this occasion it is proposed to amend the Constitution, but I think that is much too serious a course to take; that we should rush down this Bill and pass it through all stages at one sitting to amend the Constitution, is out of keeping with the importance of the position that has given rise to it. The Constitution was adopted many years ago and so far has proved acceptable in the working of our Parliamentary affairs, and therefore I do not think it should be amended simply to meet the position that has arisen. As for the member of Parliament most concerned in this position, I have not even met him and so I can oppose the Bill impersonally. Everything I have heard about the

gentleman has pointed to his peculiar fitness for the position he holds; and certainly the operations of the Commission point to very efficient working indeed. But that is not the question; the question is, should Parliament have power to create remunerative positions and then place members of Parliament in those positions? I say we should not do anything of the sort if we wish to maintain the prestige of Parliament. For the reasons I have given, I am entirely opposed to the Bill. As to any financial liability upon the gentleman concerned, if he should be put to any expense as indicated, I will certainly be in favour of granting him assistance in the meeting of that expense, for he was placed in a false position by the last Parliament. That would be a far better proceeding than altering our Constitution to make it possible for members of Parliament to hold these dual positions in future. I will vote against the second reading and, if necessary, I will divide the House upon it.

MR. WISE (Gascoyne) [7.40]: I will support the second reading for the reason that the Bill is simply to correct a mistake which was made with the best possible intentions. On perusing the "Hansard" report of the proceedings in this Chamber on the 20th December of last year, I find that the member for Nedlands (Mr. Keenan) said—

Will the Minister explain the necessity for including paragraph (j) which provides that no person shall suffer any disqualification under Section 32 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899, by reason of being a member of the commission.

It was on the advice of that hon. member that the clause was deleted which would have supplied the very provision which the Bill now before us seeks to provide, and which has become necessary in consequence of the action of another place and its interpretation of the Bill that was before us last week, namely that the Constitution Act should be amended to overcome the difficulty we are now considering. The Minister for Railways replied to the member for Nedlands in these words—

I believe there would be no disqualification if any member of Parliament acted as a member of the commission, but I suggested the paragraph might be inserted in order to have a definite understanding that if a member of Parliament be selected, he can act without disqualification under the Constitution Act.

Following on that, the member for Nedlands said—

I do not know that disqualification would arise if a member were appointed to the commission, but the paragraph would appear to contain an invitation to challenge the right of a member to sit. There is no reason to suppose that a member by sitting on the commission would commit a breach of Section 32 of the Constitution Act. Still why not mention butchers, tailors and others?

So I presume the deletion of the clause from the original Bill has created the existing situation.

Mr. Patrick: That clause might have been ruled out, as this one was to-day.

Mr. WISE: Possibly, but what would have happened in another place when the Bill was submitted, it is not in our province to say.

Mr. Patrick: It went up to another place, where it was deleted.

Mr. WISE: It was ruled out here on the motion of the member for Fremantle. That being so, I have no option but to support the correction of the mistake made.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [7.44]: As the Minister has pointed out, it is probably unnecessary to debate the whole matter, but the member for Gascoyne has quoted the "Hansard" report of the debate when the original Lotteries (Control) Bill was before the House. Of course, "Hansard" is but a record of what happens on the floor of the House; it by no means attempts to be a record of anything else. The position then is this: the late Attorney General had informed me that he had come to the legal conclusion that the holding of the position of a member of the commission would not be the holding of an office of profit under the Crown; or rather from the Crown, because there is an important distinction in our Constitution Act. It is not illegal to hold an office of profit under the Crown, but only illegal to hold an office of profit from the Crown. The late Mr. Davy formed the conclusion—and there were many reasons to support it—that owing to the difference in the wording "from the Crown" and "under the Crown," unless the profit came from the Crown, it was not within the scope of the prohibition. Being aware of that, I asked Mr. Scaddan the object of inserting this particular clause in the Bill, in view of the fact that the Crown Law officers considered it wholly unnecessary. Mr. Scaddan's reply has been

quoted. I then suggested that it was only put there as an invitation to members of Parliament. I do not think that was an unnatural deduction to draw. That, as the hon. member can see, is the reason for the short interlude which took place between myself and the then Minister in charge of the Bill. But now, unquestionably, doubts have arisen, as the Bill recites; and it is the duty of the House and the duty of whatever Government is in power to resolve that doubt and so release any person who acted bona fide on the advice of the Crown Law Department, as it then existed, from liability arising from that advice. I should not have taken part in this debate, as I considered it unnecessary to do so; my sole object was to explain the matter referred to by the member for Gascoyne.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [7.47]: I certainly think the House is justified in righting any possible wrong that may have been done by the previous Government. There is certainly a doubt, and it should be removed. Personally, while I do not hold myself up as an authority, my opinion is that there is not much doubt at all as to the position. I do not think the court would hold otherwise.

Mr. Latham: It looks very definite in the Constitution Act.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is the duty of the House to protect the member in question.

Hon. N. Keenan: After all, you are only a junior.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not even a junior, I am just going through my articles and therefore cannot speak with authority. The House is right in rectifying any mistake that may have been made. Members will recollect that when the debate occurred last year this point was raised, although it does not appear in "Hansard." Mr. Scaddan, the then Minister, stated it was his intention to appoint to the commission those gentlemen who had carried on the work for some time in an honorary capacity. He considered he was only doing right in appointing them to the commission. On that occasion I fought against the appointment of members of Parliament to the commission, and it was on a motion moved by me that the clause was struck out of the Bill. There was, however, no intention to infringe the Constitution Act. I do not think the last portion of the Bill is warranted. We have created a pre-

cedent, and we will certainly create another precedent if that portion of the Bill is carried. Later on, another Government may desire to bring in a measure to allow members of Parliament to hold positions of profit under the Crown. I therefore do not favour the last portion of the Bill, but I certainly think we should as quickly as possible put matters right so that no member will be penalised for something he did unintentionally.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [7.49]: It is not my intention to take up much of the time of the House. I have already expressed my views on this question when the Lotteries Bill was before the House. I then intended to move a proviso to Clause 3 of the Bill, but unfortunately the proviso was ruled out of order and I had to withdraw it. The proviso was to the effect that no member of the Legislative Council or of the Legislative Assembly should be appointed to the commission or the term of appointment extended after the termination of the appointment of the present occupants. That meant I did not approve of the alteration of the Constitution which made it permissible to appoint a member of Parliament to an office of profit. I am not casting any reflection upon the integrity of members when I say that, because I know members of this House and members of another place are above suspicion. There is, however, a very important principle at stake. For 33 or 34 years the provision in the Constitution Act imposing the penalty of disqualification upon a member holding an office of profit under the Crown has been strictly observed by Parliament. It seems strange that we should now, after all those years, seek to amend the Constitution simply to put right something which was wrongly done by the Government last session. I do not want to be misunderstood in regard to that portion of the Bill now before the House or in regard to the Lotteries Act which aims at affording protection to the member of another place who has been appointed to the commission and who has discharged his duties as chairman of that commission with great credit to himself and with profit to the State, particularly insofar as charities are concerned. I have no desire to alter that position, but it is a different thing, members must admit, when we are asked to amend that portion of the Constitution Act which provides that no member of Parliament shall accept an office of profit under the Crown.

More evidence should be placed before members and the question should be fully discussed outside the House before we attempt to pass such an important amendment. A similar provision for disqualification applies to local government. I refer to the Roads Act, which contains a provision that a member of a road board shall not be allowed to hold office if he be the holder of any office of profit under the board or has any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any agreement with the board, otherwise than as a member of an incorporated company consisting of at least 20 members. I want to make sure that I have the support of the majority of my constituents before I vote for the second portion of the Bill. I am in accord with the Government and with other members who are ready to support the validating of the appointment made last session, and in those circumstances I am prepared to support the second reading of the Bill, but I do not feel disposed to vote for Clause 3.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn—in reply) [7.51]: There are three matters to which I wish to refer. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) suggested that the member in question could be indemnified, and said that in his opinion it is just that he should be. That cannot be done. The penalty is disqualification. If it be proved that this is an office of profit under the Crown, then automatically the member would have to resign, and he would be disqualified from again contesting the seat. Therefore, the question of indemnification is raised too late. I want members to be clear on that. Then the hon. member suggested that the Bill was being rushed through. It is not. The whole question has been well debated and the Bill, if carried, will put us exactly where we were a fortnight ago. Had it not been for the ruling in another place, the Bill would now be in that House under discussion. There can be, therefore, no question of burking discussion. It is not a case of unduly rushing the Bill through, but merely a case of putting ourselves where we were a fortnight ago. Another point I omitted to mention when moving the second reading was this: In view of the ruling I have mentioned, this now becomes an amendment of the Constitution; it affects Parliament, and therefore requires an absolute majority of the members of each House. Those are the three points I wish to make clear.

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

Ayes	33
Noes	5

Majority for 28

AYES.	
Mr. Brockman	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Clothier	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Collier	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Cross	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Doney	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. J. H. Smith
Miss Holman	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Troy
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Warner
Mr. Latham	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Wise
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Munsie	

(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Needham	Mr. Welsh
Mr. Patrick	Mr. Seward
Mr. Thorn	

(Teller.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House, and declare the question carried by an absolute majority of members of the House.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair: the Minister for Police in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3:

Mr. SAMPSON: I supported the previous clause which validates an act endorsed by the last Parliament. In that case the office of Lotteries' commissioner was accepted in good faith, and we were assured that everything was in order. In my opinion it would be wrong to perpetuate appointments such as these.

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

Ayes	26
Noes	12

Majority for 14

AYES.	
Mr. Brockman	Mr. Millington
Mr. Clothier	Mr. Moloney
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cross	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Doney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wise
Mr. Latham	Mr. Withers
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

Mr. Hawke	Noss.	Mr. Seward
Mr. McDonald		Mr. Thorn
Mr. Needham		Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Patrick		Mr. Warner
Mr. Piessie		Mr. Welsh
Mr. Sampson		Mr. Raphael

(Teller.)

Clause thus passed.

Preamble:

Mr. LATHAM: The preamble says "whereas doubts have arisen as to members of the Parliament of Western Australia" etc. Surely this ought to be "a member"—

The Minister for Police: When the appointments were made they provided for two members of Parliament.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [8.10]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House and declare the question carried by an absolute majority of members.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [8.12] in moving the second reading said: This legislation is entirely new to Western Australia, although to some extent we have had control over motor buses and motor transport per medium of the Traffic Act. For the purposes of co-ordinating and controlling the whole system of transport in Western Australia, this is the first time a measure of this description has been before Parliament. It will be agreed that transport plays a very important part in the economic and social life of the people. Any measure

that has for its object the control of transport may have very serious results, one way or the other, upon the progress of the State. The proposals contained in the Bill will need to be carefully studied, so that the House may be assured after passing it, that it will improve the existing conditions for the general welfare of the people, and that there will be no retrogression following upon its enactment. Transport is like most things in these times. Many and extensive improvements have been made. The evolution of the internal combustion engine has brought with it great convenience and great mobility, besides playing a useful part in the development of the country. No reasonable person would endeavour to stop the progress of or deny the advantage of motor transport. Undoubtedly there is a sphere of usefulness for trams and trains, as well as for motor transport, and even transport by means of horses. So long as each of these respective spheres keeps to what it can do best in the interests of the community, no harm will be done, but much good will accrue to the State. Each system of transport should be encouraged so long as it is used in the best way to supply the needs of the people. Throughout the world there is no problem or any phase of public activity which has given to Governments more concern than the problem of transport. When looking through the literature on the subject we find that numerous commissions of inquiry have been held, royal commissions have been appointed, and reports have been furnished by experts from every possible source, and all available information has been gathered for the advice of the Parliaments in the various countries where this problem has been tackled. I do not know whether members are aware that the Victorian Parliament constituted a transport committee, the members of which made very exhaustive inquiries and issued a comprehensive report on the transport problems of that State. The problems in Victoria are somewhat similar to those that exist in Western Australia. I commend members who desire a full knowledge of the position, particularly as it affects Australia, to look through that report and the recommendations because, when attempting to deal with the transport problems here, I embraced the opportunity to study reports from almost every part of the world, and I found that one of the most comprehensive of them—I must have studied more than a dozen reports

—was that which had been issued by the Transport Commissioners of Victoria.

Hon. N. Keenan: Did they issue two reports?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.

Hon. N. Keenan: To which report do you refer?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: To the second report.

Mr. Sampson: Was that report an independent one, quite apart from the railways?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It was an independent report furnished by commissioners appointed by Parliament to report to Parliament in order to provide all the information necessary to enable members there properly to go into the question and arrive at important decisions regarding the problems of transport. I was not able to get many copies of the report, but I have one that I will lay on the Table of the House so that members may have a brief glance through it before the Bill is dealt with at the Committee stage. The constantly changing forms of transport to supply the needs, and to cater for the requirements, of the public show that each should be allowed its respective sphere of usefulness, with the least harm to other vital and necessary forms of transport. Wherever possible, it has been the object of legislation to co-ordinate and control transport so that there will be no overlapping or detrimental opposition or competition between forms of transport that would be harmful to those sections and, incidentally, harmful to the State in its effect. There are two divergent schools of thought based, I think, mainly on self-interest. One goes almost to the extent of desiring to prohibit the introduction of motor transport, while, on the other hand, another school of thought desires to have absolute and unlimited license to do as its adherents wish, irrespective of the effect on the economic life of the community. Obviously, those views are based almost entirely on considerations of self-interest. In Victoria the motor transport committee, for instance, issued a reply to points raised by the Transport Commissioners regarding motor transport. When that form of transport was condemned, those people bolstered up the case for it, but when the railways or other forms of transport were condemned, the motor people were silent. Certainly they seemed to be dominated by self-interest. Similarly with respect to the railways, there is a consensus of opinion

amongst those who have spent their lives in connection with railways, indicating perhaps a somewhat narrow outlook, for some claim that there is no necessity for any new form of transport. They urge that we should adopt a strong attitude and absolutely prohibit it. Between these two lines of thought there is, I think, a happy medium, and it is the duty of those desirous of introducing legislation to attach to each form of transport, its respective sphere of usefulness and to encourage it to the greatest extent possible in the interests of the people as a whole. No one would deny that we need the most economical means of transport to overcome distances between ports, markets and consumers. Until recent years, our transport in Western Australia was almost exclusively confined to the railways, which have played a very important part in the development of the State, particularly in the development of the goldfields and agricultural areas. Between 1894 and 1910, 1,100 miles of railways were built to assist the mining industry, and from 1910 until the present time, 2,200 additional miles of railway were constructed to assist agriculture. It seemed that whenever pioneers went into the back country, whether to engage in mining, pastoral, grazing, timber-cutting, agriculture, or even the fruit-growing industry, so soon as they established themselves, they commenced agitating for railway communication. Even to-day there are in many districts people who are agitating continuously for railway communication in order to assure the district the stability they think is needed to enable it to progress satisfactorily, and to enable a policy of development to be carried out. It must always be remembered that the railways represent a State asset in which the people have invested £25,000,000.

Mr. Latham: The trouble is that the authorities have obsolete regulations and will not budge from them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We may have a controlling authority that will go into these obsolete regulations and make recommendations in the interests of the community at large, regarding what they consider obsolete, what they may consider oppressive, and what they consider should be done in the interests of the community. Parliament will then be able to take the matter in hand. At the same time, I am not aware of much that may be regarded in the light

of obsolete regulations in connection with the Railway Department.

Mr. Latham: The railways make no attempt to compete with road transport.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They do. I might reply to the Leader of the Opposition by saying that road transport makes no attempt to compete on a fair basis with the railways.

Mr. Latham: That is the trouble regarding motor transport.

The Premier: They operate on Saturdays and Sundays and every other day.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: They do not attempt to compete with the railways. They go in for a certain class of traffic only, and do not attempt to touch the other sections at all. The important point we must never allow out of our minds, when we consider the transport problem, is that the railway system has cost Western Australia £25,000,000, involving an annual interest burden of £1,000,000. That interest bill has to be met, and, to a community of a little over 400,000, that represents an extremely important phase. So important is it that any Government that failed to regard seriously any action that tended to impair the efficiency of the railways, or to destroy the value of the asset, would be guilty of a gross dereliction of duty. We cannot allow an asset in which one-third of the total loan indebtedness of the State is involved, to deteriorate in value because of unfair competition, without taking a definite stand. At the same time, that does not imply anything in the nature of prohibition, but merely the achieving of co-ordination and some control. A perusal of the Bill will show that an honest attempt has been made to co-ordinate and control the different methods of transport in the best interests of all concerned. On looking over the files, I found that the Mitchell Government were also seized with the importance of introducing legislation dealing with transport matters. A sub-committee of Cabinet was formed and the members of that subsidiary body had arrived at the stage of preparing a draft of a Bill, not entirely on lines similar to that before the House, but embracing many of its characteristics. I do not know why steps were not taken to consult Parliament. I know that the Government in those days dealt largely with emergency legislation, and had to tackle the problems that arose as a re-

sult of the depression. Probably owing to that fact, insufficient time was available to enable that Government to introduce the Bill that had been prepared. So far as I can glean—the Leader of the Opposition will be aware of the facts—the Mitchell Government had knowledge of what was necessary in the interests of the State and of the importance of introducing legislation to control the different forms of transport. It would be easy to do nothing regarding such matters and to adopt a policy of letting things slide. It may be said that we should not interfere with established rights or vested interests, but, on the other hand, it can also be contended that the Government should take the earliest opportunity to deal with the position so that people, who may contemplate engaging in any form of transport, may know the decision of Parliament and make their arrangements in the light of legislation passed to deal with the whole question. It would not be fair to say that the interests of the railways alone are considered in the Bill because the Government are not in the position of the person who has money invested in motor transport, for instance. We do not say that we will prohibit any form of opposition to the railway system, but we say that each form of transport has its sphere of usefulness and where that is established, it should be allowed to continue and be encouraged in the best interests of the State. The Government's one desire has been to conserve the interests of the State as a whole, not of the railway service or the railway employees alone. We have not taken up the attitude that some people who live near the railways can benefit from them, and that people living at a distance from a railway who could make use of motor transport, shall be denied that privilege. The Government have not gone as far as in New South Wales where, if the Government did not actually prohibit motor transport, they imposed an almost impossible burden in the form of taxation, making it extremely difficult for motor transport to operate. In New South Wales, anyone desirous of securing a license to move goods into the country areas outside a radius of a few miles of Sydney, has to pay the extraordinarily heavy charge of 3d. per ton per mile, and there is an almost equally heavy tax with regard to passenger traffic. The effect of that taxation has been almost to pro-

hibit motor transport in New South Wales. It is rather a peculiar phase that the original Transport Bill in that State was introduced by the Lang Government, who met with obloquy and adverse criticism for introducing it. When the change of Government was effected, I heard it stated that the incoming Premier said, "If there is one good thing that Lang did, it is the Transport Bill, and we will not make any attempt to alter the incidence of that legislation with regard to its prohibition."

Mr. Latham: I think we could say the same thing with regard to the Government's actions here.

Mr. Patrick: Yes, with regard to the lotteries control legislation.

Mr. Latham: Yes, I could accuse the present Government of doing a little bit of that.

The Minister for Lands: They said something about the tariff, too.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are not discussing that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not think we can discuss Customs duties now.

Mr. Sampson: We will, when we deal with motor transport.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It has to be said that motor transport has carried out economical and effective work for the State. I will show what the railways have done. For the year ended 30th June the railways carried 11¾ million passengers and nearly 3,000,000 tons of goods and livestock. The return for haulage of goods and livestock worked out at 1.49d. per ton per mile, a very low figure. That figure however was responsible for a loss on last year's working of £175,000. The last year in which a profit was made was the year 1928. In that year goods and livestock tonnage amounted to 3,697,648 on which the average earning was 1.76d. In 1924, 1925 and 1927 a profit was made; the average rate per ton mile earned was over 1.76d. It follows therefore that the average rate of 1¾d. per ton mile is a payable average. Whenever the railways earn that amount, a profit ensues. Whenever the earnings drop below that figure, a loss in working is disclosed. In 1928, 51 per cent. of tonnage was hauled at less than an average

payable rate and even then a profit was made. In 1933, however, 74 per cent. of tonnage was hauled at less than the average rate, and so a loss was made. Had the average of 1928 been earned last year, the railways would have shown a profit of £200,000 instead of a loss of £175,000. Therefore last year we would have been better off with the same average earnings per ton mile to the extent of £375,000. The reason why we did not earn so much was because the traffic to some extent had fallen off on account of the depression. It was also due to the reduced earning capacity and the reduced spending capacity of the people. Farmers are not making profits and so they are not going on with their improvements. Anything that can be done without is being done without. The people simply have not much capital to spend, and to a great extent that has affected the railways and reduced them to the position in which we find them to-day. The inroads made by competition and motor transport have also been responsible for some of the losses. As to efficiency—and this is what everyone can be proud of—no paying passenger has been killed in the 53 years of the operation of the railways, although more than 500 million persons have been conveyed over the system. That is a great record.

Mr. Patrick: That is a better record than motors can boast of.

M. Latham: There have been no fatalities in the carrying of passengers in buses.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I can recall that four or five children were killed at Toodyay while being conveyed to school in a motor vehicle.

Mr. Latham: I think the railways had something to do with that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; I have a knowledge of the facts. Since the inauguration of the railway system there have been paid working expenses and interest to the extent of £20,500,000. The development of the State has been made possible by the inauguration of a comprehensive railway system. The principal factor in the losses has been the drifting away of traffic to road motor vehicles, and both passenger and goods business have been seriously affected. To meet the competition from buses, railway fares on suburban lines were recently reduced, additional services brought into operation and running times

speeded up. When it comes to goods an entirely different system is in vogue, the system resulting from the ability of the commodity to stand the freight, or what is termed in railway parlance, the amount the traffic will bear. Owing to that system it is necessary to make up the deficiency by transporting certain commodities at two or three times the actual cost to the department. Over 55 per cent. of payable goods traffic—exclusive of wool—has been taken away by motor transport, giving a severe setback to railway revenue.

Mr. Latham: Exclusive of wool?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The wool position is entirely unsatisfactory.

Hon. N. Keenan: Did you say 55 per cent. of the total traffic?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.

Hon. N. Keenan: That is partly due to the depression.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have said so. It shows there is a very serious leakage in regard to this traffic. One cannot deny that that is so because any member who travels by motor car along some of our country roads will come across motor lorries laden with high-class traffic, lorries that are going out of and coming to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Sampson: Would it not be possible to review the rates?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, and the farmers would go right out of existence. But I will deal with that aspect a little later on. In 1928, the year in which the railways made a profit, the remunerative traffic carried represented 470 tons per thousand of the population. In 1933, the tonnage was only 182. I agree with the member for Nedlands that much of the reduction per thousand of the population has been brought about by the depression, but a considerable proportion has been brought about by the unfair competition that the railways have had to put up with.

Mr. Rodoreda: What was the average tonnage during the last few years of payable traffic?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The average payable traffic was 25 per cent. There has been a fall in the tonnage of wool carried, although there has been an increase in production. The railways have reduced the rate 30 per cent. As a matter of fact, the rates on wool are down to the pre-war figure, and yet the result has not been as

satisfactory as the remedial measures which we took led us to expect.

Mr. Patrick: Did you get additional wool to carry?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, but not to the extent expected, or as was deserved by an agency which is doing so much towards the development of the country. It is recognised that some commodities will not stand a high freight charge, and to assist trade and commerce and the people in outback districts, the railways imposed low and unremunerative rates. Even in those countries where the State has no financial interest or benefit in railway transport, those controlling the system have to submit to the needs of the community. In Great Britain, for instance, the railway system is built up with private capital, whilst in America hardly any Government money at all is invested in the railways. So it is also in France, Germany and other European countries where railways are privately owned, but where at the same time the Legislature has taken steps to control charges in the interests of production.

Mr. Lambert: Only so far as dividends are concerned.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No, in respect to freights. In England as far back as 1921 the Government forced amalgamation on to some of the railway companies to prevent duplication of transport.

Mr. Latham: Competition brought freights down in England. There is a great difference between the railways there and our railways. For instance, in England they send to your home for your luggage.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is big enough to carry his own luggage. Arrangements could be made in that regard if people were prepared to pay for them. The fares are more, I suppose—

Mr. Latham: Fares are cheaper in the Old Country.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member would not let me finish. Fares are more, I was about to say, in comparison with the amount of money paid to employees and everybody else concerned. As a trading concern, our railways are expected to pay their way. When I became Minister for Railways nine or ten years ago, the Commissioner asked me was he expected, as a matter of policy, to make the railways pay and run them on a commercial basis as far as possible. The people do not expect to pay extra taxation to make up a railway

deficit. They contend that efficient management, with the expenditure of sufficient capital, should enable the railways to recover from their customers what is needed to meet railway expenditure. However, the people also expect the Railway Department to carry enormous tonnages at unpayable rates by way of assisting industry. Every farmer expects super to be carried very cheaply indeed. Similarly, the freight on bricks is expected to be extremely low.

Mr. Latham: Anyhow, timber is not carried at low rates.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: In these times there is unfair competition by motor traffic, and the Railway Department cannot be charging unduly heavy rates on timber, since there has been no attempt by the motors to take that traffic from the department. We cannot conform to both standards. We cannot run the railways on a commercial basis and at the same time run them as an agency assisting towards the development of the country. The railways have framed a scale of charges under which the high-priced article is charged a higher rate than that imposed on a low-priced article. Before competition from road vehicles, the railways were able to carry enormous tonnage below the payable average, the leeway being made up by charges collected from high-priced goods. While the railways did that, they were not expected altogether to pay; the public generally were prepared to meet a slight loss, recognising that the work done in the interests of the development of the country was something towards which every individual of the community should contribute, even if only to a slight extent. In that way we were practically able to get round. Motor transport, however, sets itself to cater for traffic only, without any regard for the development of the country. If a commodity will stand a high freight, the motors will carry it; otherwise the motors, like Lord Nelson, turn their blind eye to it. A real competitor would be one prepared to do the same work for the current charge, or else for a lower charge. Where the motors do carry at low freights, it is by way of back loading. As regards motor buses in the metropolitan area, they do not worry our transport system to nearly the same extent as motors carrying goods. Figures show that of the suburban season tickets in force on the railways, over 70 per cent. are issued at concession rates, while

the buses are freed from any responsibility to carry a share of the hordes of school children, apprentices, junior workers and others whose scanty wage demands that they be transported at very cheap rates. The motors do nothing for those sections of the community. School children are not carried at low rates on the motor buses. If it is necessary to carry suburban children to the James-street school in order to obtain advanced tuition, the motors do the Lord Nelson act. There are cheap fares on the tramways for children, who are allowed to travel for a penny.

Mr. Latham: There are cheap fares for children on motor buses, too.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: But not for distances of four or five miles. Similarly, in country districts railways provide low fares at holiday periods, and all people who may be termed concessionaires travel on the railways—conference delegates of the hon. member's party, for instance.

Mr. Latham: We can say the same thing about your delegates.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: All people who want concessions travel on the railways. People who want to play football at a distance all travel on the railways, because they can do so at a cheap rate. The same remark applies to farmers and their wives, goldfields children, students, maternity cases, judges at agricultural shows, settlers, visitors to the Woorloo Sanatorium, and scores of others. All these people, because of necessity and in some cases because of convenience, travel on the railways, from which they can get concessions at the expense of the State. They never travel on the motor buses; they are all carried by the Railway Department.

Mr. Latham: I do not know positively, but I understand, that you can get a concession from a bus company if you charter the vehicle.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If there are 40 or 50 people banded together to travel by bus to one destination, naturally they can obtain a concession. Seventy per cent. of all the season ticket holders on the State railways are carried at concession rates. Probably motor transport says, "That is properly the business of the railways, and we do not propose to compete in it." Everybody who comes to the office of the Minister for Railways says, "Surely the Government can give us a concession." The Government have no more right to carry passengers at

unremunerative rates and expect others to bear the taxation necessary for making up the loss, than anybody else has. If the Government had only lines like the Midland Railway running through country wholly developed, there would be no railway problem. Unless given proper regulation, the railways can only meet the competition by a complete re-casting of their tariff. This would divest the railways of their role of agent of development, and invest them with the prerogatives of trading concerns. The Government do not wish such an event to come about. It would place additional burdens on the primary producers. However, we cannot allow unfair competition and costly overlapping of services. The public must realise their great responsibility in this regard. Something has to be done to ease the position as it has developed to-day. If we continue as we have been doing during the past three or four years, motor services will be springing up all over the State and more of the traffic of the Railway Department will be taken from it. In fact, the department will be left with only the unremunerative traffic. Let me give the Leader of the Opposition a rather typical instance of what is being done in connection with railway business. A pastoralist on the Murchison, by reason of drought conditions, got into a serious position. He had very little grass for agistment; so he went to the Railway Department and said, "What can you do to assist me by way of cheap freight? I am in trouble. I have a lot of sheep and not enough feed." The Railway Department, considering the man's awkward predicament and being anxious to help, said, "We will give you, for agistment purposes, 50 per cent. off the ordinary rate charged." Down came the sheep from the drought-stricken area in the Murchison to—I will not say, the Geraldton district, as from me that might sound parochial. I will say, to a district where the sheep could get grass. They got fat, and went back to the Murchison country. The pastoralist was duly thankful for the favour received. However, a few months afterwards along came shearers and shorn those sheep, and the wool, instead of being transported by the Railway Department, was carried by a motor. That was base ingratitude. People do not go to the motor services with similar proposals.

Mr. Latham: You tell me that story, but you should tell it to the pastoralist.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If ever that pastoralist is unfortunate enough again—I hope he will not be—to strike drought conditions, he is not likely to get a cordial welcome from the Railway Department when asking for concessions.

The Minister for Mines: Does he not get other things carried over the railways to his station?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A very small quantity. We are common carriers, and we cannot differentiate to the extent of picking up someone's goods at a certain rate and picking up someone else's at a different rate.

Mr. Latham: I think Victoria does.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, they make different contracts with different people, but we do not indulge in that practice here. Now take a typical instance of a farmer established in an outback district. He has, say 2,000 acres. He puts 600 acres under wheat, and 600 acres under fallow, and he has sufficient sheep to graze on the fallow and on the balance of the land; he has, say, 400 or 500 sheep. The 600 acres in wheat would give him, say about 200 tons, and he would want 25 tons of super. So he gets his 200 tons of wheat carried by the railways at a rate impracticable to motor transport.

Mr. Seward: What is the wheat rate?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A fraction over one penny per ton per mile. He has 200 tons of wheat and 25 tons of super, both carried on the railways at unremunerative rates. But when it comes to his wool from his sheep, amounting perhaps to two or three tons, and for which he would have to pay a reasonable rate on the railways, he sends it by motor transport.

Mr. Latham: Only a few of them do.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If the hon. member were to go to Narrogin by motor car to-night, he would meet perhaps 30 loaded motor lorries.

Mr. Latham: Well, that is perhaps because the farmer for the last three years has been selling his wool on the farm.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That has something to do with it, of course.

Mr. Latham: I saw some wool coming down from the Murchison the other day.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That belonged to the chap I told you about. But this other is a typical instance of what happens on an agricultural holding: The

wheat and the super can go by railway, but the wool, on which a higher rate has to be paid, is sent by motor transport.

Mr. Sampson: The farmer is bound to take the lowest rate offering.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If the farmers continue in that, the railways necessarily will have to increase their freight, and then perhaps, the farmers will not be able to stay on their holdings at all. Wiluna offers another typical instance. When, in 1923, Sir James Mitchell was Premier, Mr. Claude deBernales, who had control of a large area of mining country in that district, went to England to get capital to develop the great mine which has since been developed. Those to whom he was appealing for capital said that if he could persuade the Government of Western Australia to build a railway to Wiluna, they would find the capital he required. Mr. deBernales communicated with Sir James Mitchell, who said that if he could raise half a million of money—it subsequently became a million—the Government would build the railway. The Mitchell Government went out of office, and the Collier Government came in, and those people who were finding the capital for Mr. deBernales desired an assurance from Mr. Collier that he would build the railway if the capital were raised. The undertaking was again given. Had it not been given, the capital for the development of the Wiluna field would not have been forthcoming. The money was provided and the railway was built and so Wiluna was established. I happened to be Minister for Railways when the mine was established, and the company said that although established they were not in a very happy position, that unless they could get cheap railway carriage for their liquid fuel, the treatment of the ore would cost more than the value of the gold won. So the Premier agreed that the railway should carry the liquid fuel from Geraldton at unremunerative rates, so that the big mine should be put on a sound basis. In the first place, we found the money to build a railway, and then we charged unremunerative rates for the fuel required at the mine. Subsequently there were metallurgical difficulties in the treatment of the ore, so great was the arsenical content of the ore. The company said that if they could find a market for the chemical contents of the ore at commercial rates, they would be able to

carry on. Consequently we granted them unremunerative rates for the carriage of arsenic to Geraldton for export. Then the people at Wiluna began to cry out for fresh vegetables, which they wanted carried at a very low rate and by a fast service in order that they might arrive fresh at Wiluna. Again the request was granted. Because of these things the railways have done for the mine and for the Wiluna community, one would expect that the railways would receive favourable treatment from them. We have had that favourable treatment from the mine authorities, but the people of Wiluna, I am sorry to say, do all their business by road, getting up their commodities by motor trucks, which can bring back wool. Yet the member for Swan says that people are bound to make the cheapest transport arrangements possible. Had we not built the railway to Wiluna, the people at Wiluna could not have made any arrangements whatever.

Mr. Sampson: But you cannot blame the public for making the best arrangement.

The Premier: Those cheap rates would not have been available but for the railway.

Mr. Sampson: So long as there are varying rates the public are bound to choose the lower.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is not intended through the Bill to kill motor transport. In certain respects some motor transport is superior to the railways. But the motor transport agencies must be prepared to submit to control. Even in England and America and other places where the railways are run by private enterprise transport is under control, and there is no reason why it should not be controlled in this State. The passing of the Bill will restore to the railways some measure of former conditions, and in consequence will increase their earning power. If the Bill goes through and the railways recover a reasonable volume of traffic, a revision will be made of those rates which are proving burdensome: but if the Bill fail to pass, the Commissioner of Railways will be allowed to recast the railway tariff, increasing freights where there is no competition, and decreasing freights where competition exists. That will be the only thing to do. We can say to the Commissioner, that our average cost of haulage is 1½d. per ton per mile, and that he can make that a flat rate.

Mr. Seward: You will have to give a better service.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We shall be able to afford to do so then.

The Minister for Mines: No motor competition could afford to carry at 1¼d. per ton per mile.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If our fertiliser rates were to be increased by 100 per cent. they would still be below the average cost of transport, and if our wheat and coal rates were increased by 50 per cent. they would still be below the average cost. However, as I say, a revision of our rates with that object in view would render road competition negligible. But there is is always considerable opposition to any proposal to increase rates to the farmers. That has been in evidence ever since I have been in the House. I remember when wheat was 9s. a bushel, and when super was £6 per ton, both were carried by the railways at unremunerative rates.

Mr. Latham: Super is £3 7s. 6d. per ton.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am speaking of the good old days. It was well over £5 a ton. Even at that price we were asked for a cheap freight and the rate of halfpenny per ton per mile was instituted. Superphosphate was subsequently reduced 25s. per ton, but that made no difference to the clamour for cheap rates. When the price of superphosphate was reduced the railway freight should have been increased. We shall be unable to carry on if we are to be subjected to the present unfair competition. I am informed that our rate for super is the cheapest in the world.

Mr. Latham: New Zealand is carrying it free.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: But that is not freight; it is free.

Mr. Latham: Still, it is cheaper. New Zealand pays 8s. a ton bonus on it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is a deliberate policy.

Mr. Latham: That is so. It is to increase production per railway mile.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If the hon. member desires to take on a difficult task, I suggest to him that he should try to get some motor transport company to carry superphosphate free. Yet that is put up to the Railway Department with the utmost confidence; it is said to be in

the interests of the country; it should be done. Similar requests, however, are not made to motor transport companies; they are out to make private profit irrespective of whose interests they affect. The point is that irrespective of what form of transport is used, the bald fact remains outstandingly important in our economic life that £1,000,000 must be met annually by taxpayers for interest on the capital cost of the railway system. If we can pay it by increasing freights we must do so. The State cannot afford to allow unrestricted competition with the railways which results in practically all payable traffic being carried by motor transport, at a loss to the railways of from £400,000 to £500,000 annually, unless the taxpayers are prepared to pay that price for the apparent benefits of motor transport. We must either increase our rates or tax the people to make up the loss. Even now the private motor owner is paying practically 75 per cent. taxation on his petrol supplies for the purpose of making and maintaining roads which are used and worn out principally by commercial transport vehicles that take only remunerative traffic from what they are pleased to term the obsolete railway system. People talk about interference with the liberty of the subject. I do not know whether members have read John Stuart Mills' essay on Liberty. He says people are at liberty to do anything they please so long as they do not affect the liberty or interests of other people. A man is not even at liberty to take his own life. One would think a man's own life belonged to him, but the law says it does not.

Mr. Patrick: Motor transport was deliberately encouraged by the making of roads alongside railways.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know that it was deliberately encouraged.

Mr. Patrick: That is the effect.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. Comparatively large towns were joined together by 10, 15 or even 30 miles of bad roads. Good roads were provided to bring the towns into easier communication with each other. As the towns were built adjacent to the railways, naturally the roads to some extent followed a course parallel with the railway. That was not a deliberate policy; had it been, it would

have been suicidal. The Government are not threatening to raise freights, but there is no method of dealing with this unfair competition except by recasting the freights. We must have a review of the freights.

Mr. Latham: Our railways are probably the cheapest built railways in the world.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. The report of the New Zealand Railway Commissioners shows that their earnings are 2½d. a mile, whereas ours are 1½d. per mile. I know of no country in the world except Western Australia which has not made an attempt to co-ordinate motor transport. Because of the low capital cost of our railways, we have been able to delay taking action to co-ordinate motor transport in this State. New South Wales lost £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 on their railway service.

Mr. Latham: Queensland is losing a lot.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. Queensland made a profit of £165,000 this year, but that was because a munificent Government wrote off capital to the extent of £28,000,000.

Mr. Latham: It does not make much difference to the taxpayer.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Queensland Parliament deliberately, by legislation, wiped off capital to the extent of £28,000,000 from the railways of that State. Of course, that money has to be found from some other source; it is not wiped off altogether. We could say we are prepared to adopt a policy of drift; we could increase taxation to meet the loss, but we would have to get the money somewhere. However, we do not want to be forced into that position and we shall not be if we can possibly avoid it. Perhaps in some instances we will evacuate certain districts which can be better served by motor. I remember a deputation from the people of Claremont waiting upon the Minister for Works with a request to know if he would be prepared to scrap the tramway system to Claremont. It will be scrapped if the board so recommends. I think we could also gracefully retire from the railway traffic to Kalamunda, where the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) resides.

Mr. Sampson: I do not think many people would fret if you did.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Only the people who get concessions, such as school children and delegates.

Mr. Sampson: And in the interests of the children possibly you would subsidise the buses.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Subsidise the buses!

Mr. Sampson: What are you working up to?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The poor old Government have to come to light every time. Why do not the buses subsidise the people for a change?

Mr. Latham: You subsidise the Commonwealth Government for their postal service. You carry goods for them at 1s. 6d. for which they charge 2s.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We have an arrangement with the Postal Department. It is based on an annual charge.

Mr. Latham: There must be bigger margins than that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: As a matter of fact, the hon. member knows that if there is a big mail bag, containing, say, 200 parcels, and it is put into the mail van, it can be carried cheaper both from the clerical and the transport point of view than if the parcels were separate and had to be signed for.

Mr. Latham: They are put into a big crate. You have to do the same as is done in the Post Office, exactly the same.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It would be all right if we were delivering a large number of letters weighing only two ounces each.

Mr. Latham: I am not talking of letters, but parcels.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Postal Department make their profit out of delivering letters. I wish we could get 2d. for carrying two ounces of anything, even to the end of the railway system.

Mr. Sampson: In many instances the Railway Department charge more for a parcel of a certain weight than do the Postal Department.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: And in many instances they charge less. It depends on the distance.

Mr. Sampson: That is a matter that might be looked into.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Because the Postal Department have a monopoly, they are able to charge uniform rates throughout the whole State, irrespective of whether something has to be delivered to Wyndham or to Kalamunda. Obviously it

is impossible to carry a pair of boots by post to Wyndham at the same cost as it could be sent to Kalamunda.

Mr. Sampson: Very nearly.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Postal Department can carry that parcel for the same rate to Wyndham as to Kalamunda. Their rates are uniform and that is why they can carry some things cheaper than the Railway Department can; the Railway Department endeavour to fix their rates on a mileage basis.

Mr. Sampson: The Minister agrees that it would be worth while to look into these rates and see that we do not have to pay more when sending parcels by train than by post.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member can address the House when the Minister sits down.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: My remarks are somewhat lengthy, but I would point out to members that a great deal of literature has been published on this subject. The report of the Victorian Railways Department alone contains 50 pages of recommendations and information, which apparently that department could not condense into smaller compass. I hope members will bear with me if I take a little longer than perhaps I should take. So far as Kalamunda and Claremont are concerned we may be able to evacuate the present form of Government transport, notwithstanding that a good deal of State money is tied up in these particular concerns. Certain districts may be held to be better served by other than the railways, but the whole matter will first be inquired into and recommendations made by the Board. Generally speaking, the recommendations of the board would be given effect to, but after consideration by the Government. In some instances, legislation may be required in order that the recommendations may be carried out, if they mean the pulling up of railways. A great deal will depend upon the board.

Mr. Latham: What will the public say?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Those people who hold that the railways are obsolete will contend that they should be abolished.

Mr. Latham: They are not all obsolete.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The idea is to appoint a board to inquire into all these matters. I say quite frankly that the Government have not considered the personnel of that body. I have no idea myself

who will be appointed to it. We should not have much difficulty in forming a board consisting of men who will have a broad outlook upon the situation, and who will be dominated by their interests in the community as a whole.

Mr. Latham: No railway man should be appointed to it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: In other places railway men have been appointed to such boards with great advantage to all concerned.

Mr. Latham: They might be prejudiced.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know that that is so. Surely no one has given more studious thought and consideration to the study of transport necessities than the railway officials.

Mr. Latham: From their own point of view.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: From every point of view. The Government do not tie themselves down to giving the railways representation upon the board. All I can say at the moment is that two members of it will be Government officials, although they may not be railway men. Members will be selected because they are considered to have a broad outlook upon the position, and in the belief that they will make recommendations in the best interests of the community, irrespective of the extent to which Government finance may be jeopardised. All we ask of the board is that they shall make a thorough, exhaustive and comprehensive inquiry into every matter submitted to them, and draft their recommendations accordingly.

Mr. Sampson: Will the motor transport industry be given representation?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Leader of the Opposition thought the railways should not be represented on the board; why then should the motor transport industry be represented? The scheme is quite an open one. It is for the House to do with it as it pleases. This is a non-party measure, and every reasonable suggestion will receive consideration. We have gone to considerable trouble to draft a Bill that we think will best serve the interests of Western Australia. If members can devise means of improving it, we, as a Government, have no desire to adopt a stand-and-deliver attitude, but are prepared to accept amendments that will effect the necessary improvements. Neither have we

any desire to make revolutionary changes in the existing order of things. In the metropolitan area there are instances of duplication of means of transport, and places where there could well be a better co-ordination of existing facilities. In the case of Government means of transport, there are instances where too many facilities are provided. People who live near the West Leederville railway station have four parallel transport agencies within half-a-mile, and these are all run by the Government. I refer to the Hay-street tram, the train, the trolley bus and the Woolwich-street tram. All these facilities are provided, while other districts complain of an inadequate service. There is also a bus service which goes to City Beach and another bus service which runs near the Home of the Good Shepherd. That makes a total of six transport agencies for that particular district. Someone must be losing money over it. The public should not require a conveyance in every parallel street. They must recognise that they are not called upon to walk too far if they have to traverse a distance of 200 or 300 yards. Matters like that could possibly be inquired into. Some time ago the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) was one of a deputation which waited upon me asking for a railway station at Meltham, half way between Maylands and Bayswater. The hon. member said that a large number of residents would use the train service if a station were established there, and that it would give considerable impetus to building operations. Such a matter could be referred to the board, which would then say whether it was in the best interests of the district that it should be served by a railway station or whether the existing facilities were sufficient for it. If the recommendation was that a station should be built, and it was built, the board could then say to some organisation which wished to provide an additional service that for the time being at any rate that was unnecessary. The general scheme outlined in the Bill is that a board consisting of three members should be appointed, two being Government officials and one an outsider. The members would be appointed by the Governor-in-Council. They would have the licensing of all road transport vehicles, with the right to grant or refuse licenses. The board would give consideration to the necessity for this or that ser-

vice, the adequacy of existing forms of transport, and other economic factors. It would have power to prescribe the routes to be followed, and lay down other conditions, such as running times, distance, the conditions to be fulfilled by the licensee, and other details of that kind. Exemptions both statutory and specific would be granted by the board wherever that was thought fit. The labour conditions would be prescribed and the board would attend to the observance of arbitration awards by owners, and so forth. The board would also inquire into matters regarding the inadequacy of existing transport services. The scope of the Act will be limited to south of the 26th parallel of latitude. Generally speaking, the North-West would be outside the scope of this legislation.

Mr. Latham: Why?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There would be no competing forms of transport in that area. It is proposed to proclaim the Act as from the 1st July, 1934. Meanwhile the board can be appointed, and can carry out all the formal business of approving licenses, receiving applications, etc. Everything of this sort will be under the control of the board. Section 10 (a) of the Traffic Act will, however, require to be enacted for a period of six months. The Government may remove any member of the board for misbehaviour, incompetency, absence from three meetings, through being interested in contracts, and so on. The officers attached to the board will be appointed by the Government. A whole-time officer may be brought under the Public Service Act, but the board itself will not be under that Act. The board may employ civil servants with the consent of the Minister. It is not intended to set up a big department. All that is necessary is to have a staff sufficient to carry out the operations of the board. Inquiries will be made into transport conditions when the board is directed to do so by the Minister, and all interests will be studied. The board will have the powers of a royal commission. It may call for tenders, or invite applications for licenses, and will have the right to control all routes. The board may recommend the closing of railways or tram routes, although in such a case Parliament would have the ultimate say. The board will ascertain what transport facilities are available when requests are made for new facilities, and will

collaborate with the Government as to proposals for new railways. At present in regard to railways the Government depend upon the reports of the Advisory Board. The member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) recently asked how the Government arranged the order of priority in which railways were built. The Government consider all aspects of the various cases and the reports of the advisory board, and as to whether a line will be a commercial success after a comparatively short period. When considering such questions the board may call evidence and invite tenders, and may come to the conclusion that a situation could best be met by motor transport, as being more economical and more in the interests of the community. Should the board make recommendations on that subject, those recommendations will be taken into consideration with the report of the Advisory Board, before any decision is arrived at.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Is it intended to put up the bus routes for auction every 12 months?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. If it is found that one bus is necessary and four or five people want to operate over the route, it may be considered that it could be run profitably by one or two, and the others will not be licensed.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Will tenders be called every year for the transport over present routes?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If licenses are issued, certain fees will have to be paid. For instance, if we decided to close down on Kalamunda from a railway point of view, we would call for tenders to operate the service to that district. Having a monopoly, the successful tenderer would certainly have to pay something for it.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: How long would the license last?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The scheme of the legislation is that the license shall last for 12 months.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: And it would be submitted to auction again.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; it would operate just the same as under the Licensing Act with regard to hotels. It may be said that because the license for a hotel expires at a certain time, therefore it must be auctioned at the end of that period. Nothing of the sort happens. If there is not anything unsatisfactory in connection with

the management of a hotel, the license is renewed in the ordinary way. That system has been satisfactory in the past, and the same conditions will apply under the Bill.

Mr. Wansbrough: A license will not be renewed if the conditions are unsatisfactory.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; if a bus is not satisfactory from the standpoint of maintenance or accommodation, the license may not be renewed.

Mr. Sampson: Will the rights of existing services receive consideration?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I had intended to give the House some idea of how the board would operate and how the Act would be administered. Strange to say, when I had started to draft that part of my remarks, I received a copy of the report of the Transport Commissioners of New Zealand. I found that that board operates almost entirely on lines similar to those intended under our Bill. In New Zealand, the Government selected men who could be relied upon to give proper consideration to the adequate needs regarding transport.

Mr. Latham: I think they run all the passenger buses in New Zealand.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Some of them.

Mr. Latham: I think they run practically all of them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know that they do some of them. I will read the report, which is not a long one, with the object of demonstrating to members how men appointed to such a position accept their responsibilities, how they regard those responsibilities, and how they carry out their duties under the Act. The following, taken from the annual report of the Government Railways Board, deals with the co-ordination of rail and road transport:—

A number of appeals to the Transport Appeal Board were made from the decisions of the Licensing Authorities, some being lodged by road operators and others by the Railways Board. In very few cases did the Board press for the entire elimination of road services running parallel with the railway. The Board's desire with respect to the regulation and control of road transport is to be reasonable and broad in its representations, while at the same time contending firmly for the proper application of the principles of the Act; and its representatives before the Licensing Authorities have acted in accordance with such desire. The Board, as it conceives it to have been its duty, firmly opposed the running of road-service trips that were duplicating and therefore in wasteful competition with passenger and express trains or

with existing co-ordinated road and rail services and, in essentials, its attitude has been sustained by the Transport Appeal Board. In these appeals every phase of the public need was examined, including the requirements of intermediate passengers as well as of through passengers and those travelling by connecting services beyond the termini of the services being considered. Where road-service trips were eliminated it was shown beyond all question that the quantum of public convenience and necessity associated with those trips was small, while, on the other hand, a preponderating degree of service was being given by the trains or other road services which the disputed trips duplicated.

It is interesting to note that in giving its decision upon an appeal made by the Board against a decision of a Licensing Authority which authorised the running of certain road-service trips at times approximating those of fast passenger and express trains the Transport Appeal Board said:—

“It is unfortunate that there has been a tendency in this country to develop motor transport services along routes paralleling the railway routes, instead of along routes not served by the railways. In our opinion, there is room for commercial motor services, and we are satisfied that the purpose of the Legislature, as expressed in the Act, is to define their sphere, and so to bring about the elimination of wasteful, destructive and uneconomic competition. Broadly, the primary functions of motor services are to serve areas not served by a railway and to feed the railways; but they have a proper function also in supplementing (but not supplanting) a railway service that is not fully adequate, and in extreme cases, in duplicating an entirely inadequate and inefficient railway service, even if such duplication may amount to supplanting it.

“We think that the words ‘in the public interest’ are intended to mean, in the broadest sense, a balance of benefit in favour of the public. If a railway service is completely adequate for the reasonable needs of a particular district, the licensing of a motor passenger-service is obviously unnecessary. If the railway service is not adequate, the licensing authority must consider whether the reasonable necessity or desirability of a supplementary motor passenger service is established. In doing so it should weigh the needs of the districts to be served and the convenience of the travelling public against the probable loss in public revenue and a possible consequent reduction in the existing railway facilities. The considerations involved when a license for a motor passenger-service is applied for in respect of a route already served, or substantially served, by a railway do not differ very materially from the considerations involved when an application for a license for a second motor passenger-service is made in respect of a route on which an existing licensed motor passenger-service is operating: Does the existing service cope adequately and efficiently with the traffic?

Does it meet the reasonable requirements of the public? The principal difference is in respect of the weight to be given to the relative necessity of the railway service for the transport of peak loadings, and to the possible effect that road competition may have in reducing essential railway facilities not only in the particular district affected, but in adjoining districts. We have not referred, except in passing, to the provision that a Licensing Authority is to have regard to the needs of the district or districts as a whole in relation to passenger transport. We take that to mean that an area is to be considered as a whole, and that the effect of the granting of a passenger-service license, to meet the needs of one part of the area, on the other services of the area, must be carefully weighed.”

It will be seen from this report that in some instances the board gave decisions against the railways and in other instances against other forms of transport. The references to the decision of the Transport Appeal Board clearly indicate how men appointed to such a position view their duties and how they carry them out. The board even agreed to supplant a railway service when they thought it was inefficient. That shows how the members of such a board were imbued with a sense of their duty and were prepared to make recommendations even against the interests of the Government, when they considered that the existing railway or tramway facilities were not reasonably adequate to cater for the public requirements. In such instances they recommended that motor service should be carried on in the areas affected. Some people may be fearful that the board, when appointed, will be imbued with prohibitionary ideas and cut out motor transport. I do not think there is any such possibility. From every report I have read regarding transport boards, I learned that their reports indicated a due realisation of the importance of their duties and those bodies have rendered excellent service to the people and to every section of the community. Their decisions have always received due weight from those responsible. In South Australia the Transport Board has, practically speaking, given general satisfaction. In every instance those who have accepted the responsibilities attaching to such an important position, have realised those responsibilities, and have arrived at decisions that are reasonable and fair, giving satisfaction to all interests involved. I read in a Victorian report that the persons selected included some interested in the motor trade, some who were representative

of country road board associations, while others were independent.

Mr. Patrick: How many were appointed to the board there?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Speaking from memory, I think there are seven members. Although those individuals represented so many divergent interests, the fact remained that when they conferred together, they dealt with the general outlook and interests of those concerned. When they had gone into the questions brought before them and sifted the evidence submitted, they found they were able to submit a unanimous report. They were able to deal with the problems brought before them and to advise the Government as to how the problems should be tackled. There are a few other provisions of the Bill that I will deal with before concluding. The license fees payable in respect of buses or aircraft will be on a basis not exceeding 10 per cent. of the earnings and the regulations will provide the necessary machinery for assessment purposes. In the case of commercial goods vehicles, which are motor-driven, the fee will be fixed on the same basis as under the present Traffic Act. With regard to trailers, the assessment will be based on weight and in other cases the method of ascertaining the power load weight will be prescribed. No person will be allowed to make arrangements to convey goods or passengers by an unlicensed public vehicle and a clause is included in the Bill, with respect to servants and agents, setting out that lack of knowledge that the vehicle was unlicensed shall be a defence. The owner and driver of a vehicle must conform to the terms of the license, under penalty for departure from that course. Provision is also made to prevent goods vehicles being used to convey passengers. There are exceptions provided, such as for a servant on his master's business, a member of an owner's family or in respect of a vehicle for which a special license or permit have been secured. Provision is made for the transfer of a license to a suitable and eligible person. All buses will have to be licensed and the form of application for a license will embody all the essential features that are required if the board is to act on a proper basis of co-ordination. The form will include the details of the route, fares, vehicle, maximum passengers, service, fares and so on. The board will also carry out many of the functions

that the Routes Advisory Committee does at present. Practically, the same considerations operate with regard to vehicles carrying commodities. Of course there will be various conditions governing those licenses and the vehicles will have to be kept in good repair, insurance provisions will have to be observed, and industrial awards will have to be honoured as well. The board will have power to restrict areas and the number of passengers to be carried. I do not think I need deal with the conditions relative to road vehicles, because they are the same in principle. With regard to aircraft, I do not know that there is any great necessity to legislate regarding them at the moment, but as the Bill deals with transport matters, and in some instances aircraft may provide unnecessary competition, that phase of transport is mentioned.

Mr. Latham: Aircraft could hardly compete at the present time.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not think so.

Mr. Sampson: They may compete where long distance journeys have to be undertaken.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That may apply to a certain extent but, generally speaking, I do not think there is much necessity to deal with aircraft. Unfair competition or danger to the public is provided for by restricting the number of hours of continuous labour on goods vehicles. That phase is strongly stressed in the Victorian report. Almost every night when on my way home from Parliament House, I meet two or three people with motor lorries who are returning to their homes at 11 p.m. or midnight, and they have not been running the lorries since tea time only. They have probably worked unduly long hours. I know of people who set out on Friday afternoon and take fruit and vegetables as far as Merredin, and then return after having been on the road all day. That may appear to some people to be fair competition, but it is not in the interests of the carrying public, nor in the interests of the drivers of the vehicle. In fact, it is unfair. The whole matter should be under control. This provision is contained in the British Act, and also in similar Acts passed by other countries in various parts of the world. I shall read from the re-

commendations of the Victorian Transport Regulation Board (1933), page 32:—

We are satisfied that the working conditions in the industry are not satisfactory, judged by any reasonable standard. The matters involved are hours of work, periods of rest, and wages, and they require consideration in relation to both employed labour and the owner-driver. The conditions of labour in the case of employees are fixed in nearly every case by the Shops and Factories Act and a Wages Board Determination. Under the Act, they are entitled to work a minimum period of 60 hours per week, which can be increased by the Chief Inspector to a total of 70 hours for six periods during a year. The Wages Board Determination fixes the periods at 44 or 48 hours, and also fixes 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. as the hours between which normal wages apply. The Determination requires that, outside of those hours, overtime rates—time and a half—must be paid, and also under certain conditions an allowance for accommodation. Employers are required to keep proper records in a time book. The evidence received by us shows that there is an almost complete evasion of the law. The limit of hours is not observed, and, although night driving is the rule and Sunday work is common, overtime rates are not paid. In some cases the evasion is overt and direct, in others the device is adopted of getting the work done under a form of independent contract. Time books are not regularly kept. One of the most important road hauler witnesses admitted that most of the driving is done at night, and that "in some cases they drive all night." The same witness also agreed that part of the usefulness of road transport of goods consists essentially in freedom from labour conditions, and admitted that he paid no overtime for night work and said that, if he had to pay the men who travel at night overtime and observe an eight-hour shift, "it would mean that nine-tenths of the men would be thrown out on the dole." Statements regarding unsatisfactory working conditions were placed before us in statutory declarations by the employees concerned. In one such case the employee spent a continuous period of 55 hours as follows:—Loading and unloading 19½ hours, driving 27½ hours, sleep in truck on roadside eight hours in two periods of four hours each. The total payment for the period was £3. In another case, the average week's work totalled 80 hours, including frequent Sunday work without overtime. Wages 70s. per week and out of pocket expenses. In the third case, the weekly period of work varied between 90 and 110 hours spent in round trips of approximately 24 hours each, of which seven were occupied in loading and unloading and 17 in driving. Any rest was taken from the driving time when the employee "feeling too tired to continue" would pull to the side of the road and "have a sleep in the cabin."

Much of that kind of evidence was given before the Victorian Commissioners, who decided to recommend that conditions of labour should be set up by the board. There are two or three other provisions in the Bill. For instance, provision is made for regulations, but I think the general principles have been outlined and that I have given a reasonably fair interpretation of the Bill. There is no necessity to rush on with the debate; in fact, I promised the Chamber of Commerce I would receive a deputation when the Bill was introduced and that the House might agree to an adjournment for a week so that the people concerned would have an opportunity to study its provisions and form a correct idea of the whole scheme, and of how it might work out in practice. Of course, I am prepared to proceed with the debate to-morrow.

Mr. Latham: I think we ought to leave it until Tuesday. This is a rather long Bill.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is what I am offering. The Bill is so important and there are so many different interests involved that we should give all concerned reasonable time to study its provisions. I have no desire to hurry on with the Bill at this stage, but after a week's adjournment we should be able to debate it with reasonable expedition, so that in the four or five weeks which remain for Parliament to consider legislation we shall have an opportunity of dealing finally with it.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you propose to take all fees into Consolidated Revenue?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Some of the fees will be used for the purpose of paying the expenses of the board.

Mr. Sleeman: The local governing bodies will not participate in the fees?

Mr. Latham: They do not to-day.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The traffic fees will go to the Main Roads Board. It is not expected that the fees will cover much more than the cost of administration.

Member: The ordinary traffic fees will remain as they are to-day.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Vehicles will have to be licensed both under the Traffic Act and this Act. The fees under this measure are not expected to be

very high. Our object is not to make people pay fees, but to co-ordinate and control traffic. As I said previously, the Government do not intend to make this a party measure. We are prepared to submit to the will of the House and to accept any amendment which we consider reasonable and which will effect some improvement to the measure. There is one thing certain: the present unrestricted and unfair competition cannot be allowed to continue, with its serious effect on our economic condition and the finances of the State. We must have control and co-ordination. The Bill is an honest attempt to secure co-ordination and control and, if passed, will take us a big step on the road to providing better transport facilities for the people of the State. The Government are anxious that the Bill shall receive fair consideration by members, and I am of opinion that after its provisions have been properly studied, it will be found an eminently fair and reasonable solution of what we may term our transport problems. I have laid the report of the Victorian Transport Regulation Board and also a circular issued by the Bank of New South Wales and containing an article on "Road and Rail Transport," by Professor Hytten, on the Table of the House for the information of members. That is all I desire to say at this stage. I commend the Bill to the House and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1933-34.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 9th November; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of the Minister for Employment, Child Welfare, and Industrial Development (Hon. J. J. Kenneally, Minister).

Vote—Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, £134,996 (partly considered):

MR. LATHAM (York) [10.5]: I agree with the Minister that this probably is the most important item in the Estimates, as it deals with the care of our unemployed. I agree with him

also that it should not be made a party matter. It is too important for that. I listened very attentively to the long speech the Minister made the other night when introducing the Estimates and I want to clear up one or two points, because I think the Minister left the impression that many alterations had been effected by his department when, in reality, there had been no alteration for some considerable time. The Child Welfare and unemployment section of Government activity has been operating under one Minister ever since employment became a big problem. It was found necessary to co-ordinate these two sub-departments, otherwise we would have had one playing off against the other. I am pleased to note there is not going to be a great increase in the expenditure for Child Welfare. The people have a responsibility toward those who cannot care for themselves. I am afraid some parents expect the public to shoulder the responsibility of those who are abandoning their families. It is a serious thing that a man can bring into the world a family, abandon them, and then proceed to bring into the world another family, by another woman. Something ought to be done to prevent that sort of thing for there is too much of it going on to-day. I would suggest a surgical operation in the case of a man of that description.

Mr. Hegney: How many cases are there of that sort?

Mr. LATHAM: Many of them. Of course the man cannot keep both families. If he were forced back upon the first, the Government would have to keep the second. That is a problem which all Governments have to face.

The Premier: And very often the Government have to keep him as well as the two families.

Mr. LATHAM: The Government are no better off if they put him in gaol, for they then have to keep him as well as the two families. This problem is developing, although it is something quite new. Many men are shirking their responsibilities in this direction. The Minister referred to street trading by children. Western Australia is extremely fortunate in that respect. It is as well managed as in any other State of Australia, and, in all probability, the Commonwealth leads the world in that sort of thing. We have very little street trading done by children.

We are indeed exceedingly free from it. We probably have less street begging than is found elsewhere; there again we are deserving of congratulation. I certainly do not think it can be said that street trading by children has developed in the last year or two.

The Minister for Employment: I was thinking of the control of that sort of thing.

Mr. LATHAM: There has been no better control over it recently than there was in the past. The Minister declared that in September, 1931, there were 17,000 men on sustenance, and that the expenditure for that year was £652,031. In the following September he said the figures had dropped to 7,677 men on sustenance, and that the expenditure had been £357,721. The Minister went on to say that to-day there were 3,752 men on sustenance, and yet he is budgeting for an increased expenditure. On the evidence submitted I contend he is asking for too much. He tells us it is the policy of the Government to find employment for people who are out of work. All that work is provided for out of loan money. The Minister is asking the Committee to grant him £150,000 more than he is entitled to receive. If the number of men on sustenance has been reduced from 7,000 to 3,000 odd he is not entitled to ask for an increase over last year.

The Minister for Employment: I suppose you think money will be bulging out of the Minister's pockets after he has finished.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister is influenced by his officials. We have no right to give the Minister more than he requires, for the people cannot afford it.

Mr. Moloney: It is a worthy object.

Mr. LATHAM: It is a worthy object to get men off sustenance and on to work, and in that respect the Minister put up a good case. We are all prepared to assist him to that end, but he has no right to ask for an increased expenditure, when it is proved conclusively on the evidence that he does not require the money. The Committee should reduce the vote by £150,000, which would still leave the Minister with enough money with which to carry on. I cannot reconcile his figures. On the 7th September last, a member in another place asked the Chief Secretary how many married men were receiving sustenance and how many

single men, on the 2nd September, 1933. The reply given was that the Government had instituted a system of employment for married men on full time in accordance with their domestic responsibility. This was followed by an adjusting period on sustenance. The altered system made it difficult to give definite figures on the lines suggested, inasmuch as an ever changing number of men were now adjusting on sustenance, whereas previously they were compelled to adjust their earnings without any sustenance being provided. If the Chief Secretary could not supply another place with the correct information on the 2nd September, I do not see how the Minister for Employment can do it now.

The Minister for Employment: It is not right to make that statement. The correct information was supplied.

Mr. LATHAM: It was not correct.

The Minister for Employment: It could not be supplied along the lines asked for.

Mr. LATHAM: The question was a very simple one.

The Minister for Employment: And it was answered.

Mr. LATHAM: The only answer was that the number of single men employed on relief work was 2,719.

The Minister for Employment: The answers to the questions were given.

Mr. LATHAM: It seemed as though the Government were unable to give the information at the time.

The Minister for Employment: The number was given.

Mr. LATHAM: Only in the case of single men. No figures were given in regard to married men.

The Minister for Employment: The replies were given.

Mr. LATHAM: I could not follow them.

The Minister for Employment: Because of the institution of the new system.

Mr. LATHAM: The number of men out on relief work differs from day to day. The Government know how many men are out on sustenance.

The Minister for Employment: The Government give the men a period on full time, and then let them go on sustenance. We do not stand them down without sustenance.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister told us that the men were put on to the basic wage for six weeks, and then taken off for one week.

The Minister for Employment: Not always for six weeks. It depends upon the domestic responsibilities.

Mr. LATHAM: Then I do not see why it is not possible to obtain all the information that the Chamber desires. The Chamber is entitled to that information.

The Minister for Employment: I think the hon. member is the only member who would say that I did not supply full information.

Mr. LATHAM: I did not say that the Minister did not supply full information, but that in replying to questions he evaded giving information. The hon. gentleman is justified at present in telling the Chamber that he proposes to absorb the men in employment. There are considerably more Loan Funds for the purpose now. However, I am not too sure that if the Minister provides work on the lines mentioned recently—six weeks on the basic wage with one week off—he will have enough money to see him through next winter, even if the Treasurer is able to obtain more Loan Funds, as to which I have my doubts. Now, 10,167 men on relief work at the basic wage of £3 9s. 3d. per week would mean £1,837,000 for the year, and that in wages alone. Again, wages men cannot be employed without a fair amount of plant and material. The engineering branch of the Public Works Department estimated, when we were on the Treasury bench, that nearly 50 per cent. of the money was spent in material. On such lines the total expenditure would amount to fully £3,600,000 for the year.

The Premier: Your percentage for labour as against material last year was about 75.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, but this year the Government's policy is different. The Government are doing a considerable amount of building, painting and repair work. Our great trouble was to get sufficient money to pay wages. The additional amount available to the Premier enables him to purchase more material than we were able to purchase. At times the previous Government had grave difficulty in finding enough money for sustenance. I am wondering where the Premier is getting all this money from. When we were in control, we were permitted to draw our allocation only from month to month.

The Premier: The Commonwealth has confidence now.

Mr. LATHAM: The Commonwealth is able to deal more generously with the present Government than it did with us. When we

were granted £1,800,000 a year, we had to live within our rate from month to month. The Premier will soon exhaust his vote for the year, at the present rate of spending.

The Minister for Employment: The Leader of the Opposition, in making the computation of 10,167 men on the basic wage, is ignoring the fact that a good number, 3,300, are only on 30s.

Mr. LATHAM: But quite a number who are on sustenance will go on employment, and as they go off employment they will go on sustenance.

The Minister for Employment: The sustenance period is met out of revenue. The hon. member's calculations are astray.

Mr. LATHAM: The 3,300 men on 30s. will reduce the amount probably by a third.

The Minister for Employment: The main job is to get the people into work.

Mr. LATHAM: That is one of the most important jobs, but the main job is to pay them and to make sure that the money will last through the period when it is wanted most. The Minister is employing all the single men he can get hold of on Government work, and depriving farmers of harvest assistance. During the hay period men could not be got for stooking.

Mr. Cross: Were the farmers paying good wages?

Mr. LATHAM: They were paying all they could afford to pay. Here is a letter which has reached me from Shackleton—

We have the actual fact of seeing farmers running round the country trying to secure help for their hay carting, for which they are offering 25s. and keep, which you will readily realise is the utmost the industry can at present afford.

Mr. Cross: Are the farmers paying good wages?

Mr. LATHAM: The suggestion that farmers do not pay is absurd. Farmers are no more dishonest than any other section of the community. The letter proceeds—

But offers of work are contemptuously rejected, under the present Government system of paying basic wage to all and sundry for periods, and sustenance in between, for "work" etc. that should be suspended during harvest time.

Another farmer asked me to get hold of a man for him. I telephoned the request to

one of the departmental officers. My correspondent wrote—

I tried to get a man in town, but they are very scarce and value their services too high. I may have to pay a high rate for a couple of weeks for a man to cart the wheat, if I can procure one.

The Minister himself must know the position, because the other day I told him that I had rung up his office on the subject. Moreover, this morning's paper gives the experience of a road board.

The Minister for Employment: I had a circular letter sent to farmers throughout the State asking them to communicate with the Labour Bureau regarding their requirements. In a fortnight I received 120 applications, and filled 110 positions right away. Last week there were 56 applications for farm labour, and we—

Mr. LATHAM: To-day every one of those positions should be filled as they become vacant. It will be a serious matter if the farmer is not assisted in obtaining the labour he requires. He is in a most uncertain frame of mind.

The Premier: Notwithstanding the large number of men on Government works, there is still a considerable number out of employment.

Mr. Hegney: There are plenty in the country.

Mr. LATHAM: I can assure the hon. member there were not too many in the country districts. I wish the Minister for Railways were here at the moment, because he knows what I say is correct. The growers were unable to get tomato pickers in Geraldton, although as much as £3 a week was offered.

Mr. Hegney: Where did they advertise those jobs?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know, but that was the position. Whatever the Minister does, he must realise that the requirements of the farmers must be supplied.

The Minister for Employment: I suppose that is why I had an application last week to place 20 tomato pickers who were out of work.

Mr. LATHAM: I presume that was because the season is over. It does not last for ever.

The Minister for Employment: They could not get work.

Mr. LATHAM: I say definitely that the services of tomato pickers could not be procured when they were required. When I was passing through York, I was told that there was not a man there idle. Three men were wanted for stooking, and there were none to be obtained. I realise that if the Government provide attractive work in the metropolitan area, men will flock here to get it.

Miss Holman: Do you expect people to hang about waiting for the farmers to give them a job?

The Premier: That is the trouble. The farmers expect to be able to go to the slip-rail and pick up men at an hour's notice.

Mr. LATHAM: In the old days, they were able to do so because men went round looking for work. Western Australia must get away from the idea that the State must find work for everyone. When there was trouble in the old days, the men went round and got work. Under the existing system, whereby men come and ask others to provide work for them, men are losing their independence. I could not imagine the Premier in his younger days going to a member of Parliament and asking him to provide a job.

The Minister for Employment: You cannot create independence by forcing men into poverty.

Mr. LATHAM: No, but a lot of the men would be better off if they looked for work rather than rely on others to find it for them.

The Minister for Employment: Many of them have had a lean time looking for work.

Mr. LATHAM: They may have had a pretty bad winter and they will have it in future again.

Mr. Hegney: Under our economic system, that must be so.

Mr. LATHAM: How will the hon. member cure it? Does he intend to deprive the farmers of the workers they require?

Miss Holman: But you cannot expect men to stand and wait about until the farmers require them.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course, I do not expect the hon. member to understand. She has not had the experience that men have had.

Miss Holman: I have had experience in connection with the men in my electorate.

Mr. LATHAM: Many of us have had a pretty bad experience, and it is only by experience that we can appreciate the position.

Miss Holman: Get back to the farmers.

Mr. LATHAM: I can take the hon. member back to 1893 and 1894 and remind her that the Government helped no one in those days. Nevertheless, no one starved by the roadside. Men went out and got work.

Miss Holman: Because other people were able to help them on the way.

Mr. LATHAM: And that will never be so when the Government accept the responsibility of looking after these men.

Miss Holman: The Government are not accepting the responsibility for all these men.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course, they are.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member will address the Chair we shall get on better.

Mr. LATHAM: I am trying to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is debating the matter with every member on the floor of the House.

Mr. Moloney: Are you suggesting—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LATHAM: I will touch on another aspect that stresses my point of view. It is interesting to the general public. I refer to the benefit that the Trades Hall will get from the Government's methods. On the number of men who will be employed during the whole year, I estimate that the revenue of the Trades Hall will be not less than £20,000 based on the 25s. that the Minister will collect through his officers, without cost to the Trades Hall. If that goes on for a considerable period, it will be extremely beneficial for the Trades Hall. Personally I think the first claim a man should have should be to provide something for himself. I do not think it is necessary to impose such a tremendous burden on the workers to the extent I have indicated. It is as well for the public to know that under this regime, not less than £20,000 will go to the Trades Hall treasury.

The Minister for Employment: That is, according to your statement.

Mr. LATHAM: That is based on the payment of 25s. from the men. Every man has to be a unionist or he must get out. I presume we shall have the non-unionists getting out into the country areas. Already they are in revolt.

The Minister for Employment: The trades unionists were out when you were in

power, and it is time they were in for a while.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know that they were. We did the best with the money available, and the position improved considerably at the time we went out of office because more money was available and the organisation that had to be created, had been built up.

The Minister for Employment: Some of the unionists had a very lean time.

Mr. LATHAM: Not only the unionists but everyone else. The commercial houses had a lean time too. I can quite appreciate that Trades Hall interests are looking up. I can understand how it is that the Trades Hall can broadcast their propaganda twice a week, seeing that the people themselves are paying for it.

Mr. Moloney: That is cheap.

Mr. LATHAM: It is pretty expensive for the people.

The Minister for Employment: The hon. member knows that the money does not go to the Trades Hall.

Mr. LATHAM: Where does it go?

The Minister for Employment: The hon. member made the statement; let him answer it himself.

Mr. LATHAM: Where does the 25s. per head go?

The Minister for Employment: Not to the Trades Hall.

Mr. LATHAM: That is the union fee that is deducted.

The Minister for Employment: You know where the money goes.

Mr. LATHAM: I believe that is where the money does go. Notices have been posted up to that effect. The member for Swan asked some questions this afternoon and the Minister answered in the affirmative and said that 2s. 6d. a month was deducted from the men's pay. It requires eight months only to make that up to £1. The Minister endeavoured to make out that everything in the garden was lovely. Naturally, as Opposition members, we get to hear of something regarding the overflow of the present conditions. In Mr. Speaker's electorate, there are men who have told us of the beastly conditions in which they live. Complaints have been received about a man, his wife and daughter having to live in one room, not having sufficient money to keep going properly. Thus, everything in the

garden does not appear to be by any means lovely yet. I do not want the Minister to get away with the idea that because there has been a change of Government, everything has become perfect. I am not too sure that the suggestion put forward by some that there should be shorter hours and a little more work would not be better. The Minister made a statement that the department had not been well treated by his predecessor in office because when he took office some works were being carried out, but were practically finished. That could not have been avoided. The Collie water scheme was just about started at that time.

The Minister for Employment: It was not.

Mr. LATHAM: The scheme was laid out.

The Minister for Employment: It was not.

Mr. LATHAM: They were working on it before we left office.

The Minister for Employment: Who were?

Mr. LATHAM: The engineering section. Then there was the Canning water supply scheme. That was started last summer. Those jobs were already in hand and were providing employment.

The Premier: How much was done last summer at Canning?

Mr. LATHAM: Some clearing was done. Of course there was not a great deal of work and it was impossible to keep men on the job all the time. I would not say the retiring Minister did not do his best to see that there was work provided.

The Minister for Employment: No, there was no need to have nearly 1,500 men ceasing work almost simultaneously.

Mr. LATHAM: Only 380 were cut off work.

The Minister for Employment: No, that is the number that had to go off. That was because the incoming Ministers were able to prevent a disaster that many thought was going to happen.

Mr. LATHAM: I was interested in the prices being fixed for work in the timber areas. The Minister told us an appeal board had been appointed and that he had approached me about it. He left the impression that I would not have this board appointed. Actually, I was agreeable to the appointment of the board, but I said that whatever prices the board decided upon, the men would have to abide by them. My advice to the men was to leave well alone,

because I knew our officer was giving them a better deal than they would get from any board. That was what I told the present Minister a few days before the elections.

The Minister for Employment: A month before the elections.

Mr. LATHAM: No, the election campaign was on when the Minister came to see me. Now a board has been appointed. When we were there, the price fixed was above what the work would be done for by efficient men at contract rates.

Miss Holman: What work are you talking about?

Mr. LATHAM: The price was higher and was left higher because the men were not able to do it, because they were unaccustomed to it. Had we appointed the board, probably the price would have been reduced. Now the Minister has a board, and he says the price has been increased. I do not know who is going to pay for it; if it is to be charged up against the land, we shall have the same old trouble we have had in those areas in the past. The Minister told us that he had closed Blackboy Camp and the Fremantle Immigrants' Home, and that he is now spending 30s. a week on those men in finding them some work. On his own figures, the cost of those men at Blackboy was 14s. or 15s. per week and of those at Fremantle 6s. per week. A lot of those at Blackboy were physically unfit for heavy work, and now the Minister tells us he has sent them out to do clearing work at Wooroloo. The men working at Wooroloo I presume are those that were clearing up the country cleared last year. But there is no saving of money in that, except that probably we are getting some work done for some of the money we are paying.

The Minister for Employment: It will be a payable proposition.

Mr. LATHAM: The work has been done before. Last year we cleared three areas at Wooroloo, and most of it was sown in clover. But to be paying 30s. a week to those men physically unfit means that the work is costing more than it did previously. I hope that before the Minister announces any further work on abandoned holdings in the South-West he will consult the Minister for Lands, who told us the other night that the last Government had certain work done on those abandoned properties, and that it had proved wholly unprofitable.

If the Minister for Employment is going to put men on to clear land which is abandoned because of the soil sickness the stock get there, it will be useless. There is no possibility of using that land under those conditions.

The Minister for Employment: What is being done is being done after close consultation with my colleague.

Mr. LATHAM: I can scarcely reconcile that with the statement made by the Minister for Lands the other night when he complained of our having put men on to clear those abandoned properties. However, the first thing is to satisfy ourselves whether it is possible to use that land at all. There is that danger about putting men on to clearing abandoned farms. Of course, if it is only a question of finding work for them, they might as well be working there as anywhere else.

The Minister for Employment: It is a question of improving the assets of the State.

Mr. LATHAM: And they will have to be written-down in the end. Probably it would be cheaper to let them go back.

The Minister for Employment: That is a policy of despair.

Mr. LATHAM: No, for it may be that those lands are better fitted for the growing of timber than of grass. The member for Albany knows that a lot of the country rung years ago is now growing wonderful karri saplings that will eventually be marketable timber; so it is not a policy of despair. The Minister had a pick at me because I disagreed with his appointment of the Economic Council. I have watched closely the work done by that council, and so far I have seen very little result from it. I do not know whether they were responsible for the building of the two houses the foundations of which were laid the other day. If so, those buildings are not a very satisfactory monument to the value of the work done: because if they can be sold at anything like their face value, I shall be pleased to hear of it. If it is a question of begging a certain amount of material from business firms, of course it is all right, but there will be very few workers able to live in such houses, for they will prove far too expensive. I contrast the present attitude of the Trades Hall with that exhibited when we were trying to

form an economic council just after we took office. The Trades Hall officials refused to associate themselves with us. Perhaps they are on a better plane to-day than they were then. I draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Minister is asking far too much money on the evidence he submitted to us the other night. He showed conclusively that there is a reduced number of men on sustenance, notwithstanding which he asks for an increased Vote. If Ministers cannot protect the finances of the State, this House will have to do it. I appeal to members to go carefully into that and see if it is not possible to relieve the taxpayers to the tune of about £150,000.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [10.50]: In the first place I wish to congratulate the Minister on the thorough grasp he has of the department, which is all the more significant when we remember that he has not had much previous experience. It has to be admitted also that in the few months during which he has presided over the department a distinct improvement has been made in the employment figures, and the purchasing power of the community has been increased, if ever so little. But no matter to what extent that purchasing power has been increased, I realise the stupendous difficulties confronting the Minister and the Government in their endeavour to grapple with this all-important question of unemployment, particularly when we realise the financial difficulties with which they are faced, and from which there are no immediate signs of relief. When the Minister replies to the debate, I should like an assurance from him that private employers are co-operating in the endeavour to decrease the large army of unemployed in our midst. I do not think the sole responsibility for solving this problem rests with the Government of the day; the general employing section of the community cannot escape responsibility in that regard and it is their duty to co-operate with the Government in every step made to reduce unemployment. Because every Government activity entered into, every pound spent by the Government on the employment scheme, serves to benefit the employers and business section of the community. I believe some good is resulting from the local industry campaign and I hope that even more good will result from that enterprise.

But it cannot be permanent unless the community itself helps that campaign in a practical manner. It is all very well to preach from the house tops the necessity for consuming local products and repeatedly point out the well known fact that we can save ourselves millions of money if only we will buy our own products. That cannot be successfully carried out unless each and every citizen makes up his or her mind to buy only local products. There are one or two comments I desire to make on the employment scheme initiated by the Government. By this scheme I can see that the physically fit men are gradually being absorbed and are getting a period of full-time employment. The Minister gave an indication of the number of such men who were being employed for periods commensurate with their domestic responsibility; but there are other men with big family responsibilities who are physically unfit to take part in the road construction work that is proceeding. So far, they have not had a chance to get a period of full-time employment. Christmas is coming, and I am wondering whether these men will be given a chance to secure full-time employment. Another section of unemployed who are suffering are the men who, although perhaps physically fit, cannot go away to country jobs owing to their domestic responsibilities. I hope the Minister will let us know when there is a likelihood of these men getting a chance to secure full-time employment. I realise it is impossible to provide work at the back door of each and every man out of work, but there may be some work in and about the metropolitan area which the Government contemplate putting in hand and upon which these men could be engaged. For instance, I believe the Minister did make a start on the Canning weir, but some hitch occurred there. There has been talk about extensions to the East Perth power house which would give employment to a large number of men, but we have no idea when that work will be started. Another feature of the unemployment scheme that I think has been mentioned to the Minister is that men are being asked to work for bare sustenance. I was present at a meeting to-day when a delegate of the unemployed stated that that was so. If it is, I do not think it is right. These men working for bare sustenance have to travel a fair distance to their place of employment and pay

their fares to and from work. They are in an unenviable position. The least that could be done for them is to see that they get their fares to and from work, so that they will receive their sustenance money intact. It was mentioned at the meeting to-day that men were sent to do some work for the Education Department. They were sent from Perth to the Marquis-street depot, and from there to work, and all they got in return was their bare sustenance. If that policy is being pursued by the Minister, I suggest it should be stopped. Not long ago the Minister was very emphatic in his denunciation of public bodies employing men at bare sustenance, because those bodies were getting a considerable amount of work done at a very cheap rate. The Minister insisted that the system should stop, and I agree with him. He was desirous that the men should be paid the proper wage standard as soon as possible. I ask the Minister this question in all sincerity: if it was wrong for the public bodies to get work done at bare sustenance rates, is it not also wrong on the part of the Government to get work done at bare sustenance rates? The principle is not a good one. A man who is sent to a job should get the basic rate of wages. If it should happen that men are infirm or aged, and cannot do a proper day's work, then at least something above their sustenance rates should be paid to them. There is another feature of the employment scheme of the Government to which reference was made by the Leader of the Opposition to-night. Representations have been made to the Minister with regard to piece work. He has pointed out that some relief work cannot be carried out on the day labour system. Serious efforts should be made to abolish piece work on all Government relief jobs. I have never been in favour of piece work, although for many years I had to work on such rates. The man who takes on piece work must be physically fit, well fed and well nourished.

Mr. Hawke: And mentally dull.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Unless he is well fed and well nourished he cannot do justice either to the job or to himself. There is a vast number of men on piece work who are not mentally dull, but who are compelled to do it or go without work. I do not like piece work anywhere. It is a vicious system, particularly in relation to Government relief work. I hope the Minister will see that it is abolished. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition upon his conversion, in view

of his remark that one way to get out of our economic depression was to institute shorter working hours.

Mr. Latham: Do not put words into my mouth.

Mr. NEEDHAM: For some time we have been advocating shorter hours to assist us in grappling with the situation, and it is gratifying to learn that the Leader of the Opposition publicly admits, though he is a sadder and a wiser man, that shorter hours provide one of the ways out of our difficulties. A deputation which recently waited on the Minister asked for supplies of firewood to be given to families on sustenance. He did not agree to the request. I hope he will reconsider the matter. During the winter the Government supply firewood to various homes so that the people may not be cold as well as hungry. Even during the summer, firewood is still required for domestic purposes. What little food people have, requires to be cooked, and their scanty wearing apparel requires to be washed. It is not right that they should have to pay for firewood out of the pittance they receive. A statement was recently made that an order had gone out from the Employment Department to the sons of men on sustenance, boys of 14 or 15, that they must report for employment on farms. I do not know whether that is so or not, but we should be very careful about doing that sort of thing. Farmers do require help in order to garner their harvest, but we know that many of them can afford to pay very little in the way of wages. If these boys are sent to farms, I am sure the Minister will see that they are not employed under sweating conditions, that a guarantee is given that they will receive a reasonable wage and will be properly fed. I am sure if this order has gone out, the Minister will see that the boys are properly looked after. I agree that the Economic Council is doing fairly good work, and that the business people of the city are assisting it. I should like the council to have power of decree instead of merely the power of suggestion. If that wider power were given, the council would be able to go further along the track than it can go now. At present its limitations are clearly marked. The member for West Perth referred to the tragedy of youth, the increasing numbers of boys and girls who are unable to procure any occupation whatsoever. It is a sad sight indeed to see hun-

dreds of boys and girls leaving our schools, after being well educated to fight the battle of life, trained very often as the result of the sacrifices of their parents, but none of them able to secure employment in any avenue at all. That is one of the greatest tragedies of our present economic system. But no matter what efforts the Government make, they are circumscribed in their operations. All State Governments are similarly circumscribed. In endeavouring to face this economic disturbance, they are leg-roped, well hobbled, with the Legislative Council and the Loan Council. Whatever we do within the area of our jurisdiction can be very little indeed. The hopes of the workers are in the Federal Parliament. There the monetary system under which we live can be altered; and until that system is altered, there is little prospect of getting out of the present economic morass. That, to my mind, is the way out; and the sooner we see in both Houses of the Federal Parliament a party that will bring about monetary reform, the better it will be for us, for all the State Governments, and for the army of unemployed workers.

Mr. PIESSE: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [11.12]: I was much interested in remarks made in respect of works carried out by local authorities for sustenance. It may fairly be said that the Government are under a debt of obligation to the local authorities for what was done in that matter.

Mr. Wansbrough: Who found the money?

Mr. SAMPSON: The money was found by the Government, and the work was found by the local authorities. In many instances the local authorities did what was necessary at the urgent request of the Government. I know that in various districts the men were most anxious not to be compelled to receive sustenance without being permitted to work for it. I was present at a meeting where that aspect was discussed, and the men unanimously agreed that they were not prepared to accept sustenance unless allowed to work for it.

Mr. Hegney: Tell us about the Karragullen meeting.

Mr. SAMPSON: I will leave that to the member for Forrest.

Miss Holman: I was not there; you were.

Mr. SAMPSON: What happened at the meeting I have in mind was symptomatic of many meetings. The feeling expressed is admirable, indicating a spirit of independence, the spirit of men who desire to retain their self-reliance, as it were, by insisting upon working. And they did work. I think that almost without exception the local authorities behaved conscientiously with regard to those men. I know it was a point of honour with many boards to continue to employ as many men as previously, and certainly to the extent of their financial powers. The member for Perth referred to the need of wood for the unemployed. When destitution or other difficulties enter the home, fuel is one of the great needs; but I hope that in providing firewood the Minister will not forget that there are many who make their living from cutting wood. The Government might well make an arrangement with those people for the supply of that wood. It is no use preventing the man who depends on wood cutting for a living from doing what is necessary in order to care for his wife and children. I listened carefully to the remarks of the member for Perth regarding boys on farms. I know it must be painful when exceedingly low wages are received, but the hon. member should visit some of the farming districts and note the conditions under which farmers are operating. They are living most anxious and worried lives, and it is extremely difficult for them to carry on at all. Their lives are beset with worry, and they suffer from insomnia, largely brought about by the fact that they must every now and then interview their bank manager in an endeavour to secure a little money to carry on. There is one matter of outstanding importance so far as our boys are concerned, and that is the number of apprentices at present learning trades. During the past several months owing to the small amount of business to be done in every walk of life, registration of apprentices has practically ceased. With the better times which we hope are coming, more tradesmen will be needed. In my opinion, every effort should be put forth in order that those given an opportunity of becoming tradesmen may be our own boys. If I may make the suggestion, it would be

worth while to give consideration to an overhaul of the Arbitration Act, whereby for a period it might be possible to approve an added quota of apprentices. In the immediate past the position has been that practically no apprentices have been registered. This means that unless some loosening of the apprenticeship regulations is brought about, we shall have to look overseas or to the East for our tradesmen of the future. In the interests of our own boys I hope that something will be done in the direction suggested. At present our lads are forced to walk about or to take up unskilled work. The subject is of the utmost importance, and one which might well receive consideration from the Minister and others concerned. I have noted with a good deal of satisfaction the development which has taken place in regard to local products. Most of those who are concerned in the manufacture of these secondary requirements are doing their work well, but not all. I trust that with the object of securing a good name for Western Australian products, the greatest possible encouragement will be given to our manufacturers, so that their products may compare with products imported from the East. That, I regret to say, is not always the case. Although it may be diplomatic to express appreciation and to make it appear that our products are always superior to those of any other country, in our heart of hearts we know it is not true. I hope the Minister, through the Economic Council, will exercise his influence to the utmost to see that there will be no diminution in effort regarding the quality of goods produced. With regard to the Child Welfare Department, I wish to pay a tribute to the humanitarian and commonsense attitude of the officers of that branch. It is not necessary for me to express too much admiration, because that department has a record of service, thoroughness, consideration and wise administration that is worthy of the utmost appreciation of the community. I hope that attitude may long continue. My experience of the department shows that when help is necessary, it is forthcoming in a sympathetic and considerate manner. On the other hand, if a proposition is advanced and it is not backed up with facts, assistance is refused.

Mr. Piesse drew attention to the state of the Committee.

Bells rung, and a quorum formed.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [11.24]: I had hoped that the Minister would report progress seeing that many of us have journeyed long distances and, having travelled during most of the previous night, it is not easy now for us to collect our thoughts.

The Premier: There has not been one late sitting this session.

Mr. PIESSE: I admit the Government have been considerate on the whole, but I think that on Tuesdays we should be able to get away from the House by 11 o'clock. I have no desire to delay the Committee longer than necessary, but I feel it incumbent upon me to say a few words with regard to the Child Welfare Department and the Employment Department. Those two sections of Governmental activities come more closely in touch with members than do many other departments, and I join with the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) in expressing my appreciation of the splendid work performed by the officers of the two departments. Both departments work well together and do much to relieve the position of men in receipt of sustenance and in need of employment. The work required has been exacting and has been carried out without demur.

Mr. Hegney: There were practically two men carrying on for the most part—Mr. Macartney and Mr. Brockman.

Mr. Hawke: You mean the others were not all there!

Mr. PIESSE: At any rate, the two departments are deserving of our appreciation and thanks. I was interested in the speech delivered by the Minister and I appreciate the earnestness and sincerity with which he has accepted the responsibilities of the office he now occupies. I am sure that he desires to improve the position of the unemployed. I would remind him that we have now had three years' experience of the position resulting from the depression, and it behoves Parliament to keep a watchful eye on expenditure. We must assist the Government to evolve some means of getting the people who are on sustenance or part-time work back to a more permanent form of employment on profitable and reproductive work. I have knowledge of a large undertaking for the relief of the unemployed, which was started by the former Government at Frankland River. That work is not looked upon by the present Government as immediately reproductive, but the scheme was started in the first instance in order

to find employment for single men. The object was to place them in work in which they would be controlled and, while having a settled abode and engaged on profitable work, improve their conditions, physically and mentally. The scheme has been a success from that standpoint, for many of them had never had any settled work or abode before and naturally, when placed on that area to carry out definite work, they were somewhat difficult to please. After some experience under two Governments, we find that the men are much more contented and happy than formerly. I would point out to the Minister that we do not want to make that a permanent settlement, as it were, for people who cannot find work in some other class of employment. Largely, the settlement has fulfilled what it was intended to do, namely to provide work and keep those single men in employment. A large number of the men were not accustomed to that sort of work, but they have now learned to do something which will enable them to obtain situations clearing land or at farm work. I suggest to the Minister that in view of the shortage of labour for farm work mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, he should have some record made of those men who would be prepared to undertake farm work, and leave the Frankland River settlement for that purpose. I suggest to the Government that it would be more profitable to induce farmers and others to embark upon further clearing and development work on their farms, and so give employment to those single men. This might be done by the Government loaning out to the farmers at a low rate of interest the money at present employed in keeping the men at the Frankland River. I know of many farmers who would be prepared to put in hand development work if the necessary money were made available to them. The sooner we can help them improve their properties and reach that stage where they can carry stock the better it will be for the farmers themselves, and for the State. Money loaned to them would be more profitably employed than it is in finding part-time work. I am not advocating that the Minister should cease operations altogether, for I do not believe there is any other work to which the Minister could transfer those men where they would be employed with

as much satisfaction as they are at the Frankland River. But many of the men would be glad to get into some other locality, for they do not wish to stay at the Frankland all their lives, and there is no more disheartening work than clearing big green timber in a heavy rainfall district. That brings me to the question of the price being paid for the work, and the board appointed by the Minister. For some time past the men in that locality were dissatisfied with the prices paid for the work. It is very difficult even for those directing that work to arrive at its true value. On the whole there is more satisfaction prevailing at that settlement. At the same time, I do not know that the Government were wise in adopting the new system in its entirety, because I understand many men were previously satisfied, and, seeing that the work was assessed by the foreman in charge, I do not think it would be possible to obtain the services of anyone better able to value that work than the foreman who lived with the men, saw them day by day, and knew what each man could do. I am pleased the Government were able to increase the earnings of the single men from 25s. to 30s. The Minister could not have done that if he had been limited to the same amount of money which the previous Government had at their disposal. It was owing to the increased loan moneys that the Minister was able to augment the earnings of those men. I am sure the men appreciate it and that the Government will get better results. I also express my appreciation of the work done by the police in different districts. That is a matter the House should take into consideration when dealing with the Police Estimates. Better accommodation should be provided for the police in the different centres. Their work has been greatly increased during the last two or three years, and they are deserving of credit for the splendid manner in which they have co-operated with the Unemployment Board, the local authorities, and the Child Welfare Department. I hope that before long the Minister controlling employment will be able to tell us that he has a more definite policy for finding work than clearing land, in respect of which I understand the Government are not decided as to future development. Subclover has been sown on it, certainly, but unless the work is followed up and the suckers kept down, the land will revert to

its natural state in the course of a few years. It seems to me that some of this work could be carried out as a preliminary to the employment of the younger people, on the lines of the Chandler Boys' Settlement or the other settlement at Wokalup. I think the assistance that could be rendered by the Minister in this direction would be very helpful. It would be a great incentive to young people to take up land already prepared. Some of these men could be employed upon preparing land for the settlement of natives in some portion of the Great Southern district. They could clear the land, so that the natives, when settled there, would be in a position to start at once to do something to assist in the upkeep of the settlement. I assure the Minister that my desire is to assist him, as I assisted his predecessor, in endeavouring to do everything I can to improve the conditions of those out of work, in trying to get them back to work as soon as possible, and generally to improve the conditions of those who, unfortunately, have to come under the Child Welfare Department.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [11.40]: The vote we are now considering is one of the most important to which Parliament can give its attention. Unemployment, as we all know, is worldwide and is due to our present economic system. The Labour Government which has come into power inherited these conditions. The Minister for Employment is doing his utmost to solve the problem and we know he is doing excellent work. Nevertheless, I am of opinion that unemployment will be with us for many years, until there is a better social order. During the election campaign it was frequently stated in the electorate I represent, and I was called upon many times to refute the statement, that if a Labour Government were returned to power it would be unable to raise funds to carry on the ordinary State activities. We know that has proved to be wrong. The Loan funds the Labour Government were able to obtain vastly exceeded the amount secured by the previous Government. I think the increase was £750,000. The Minister for Employment certainly has the most difficult portfolio in the Government. He has one of the most unpleasant tasks to perform, that is, to adjudicate fairly in respect of men out of work and to try to solve their problems with the limited funds at his dis-

posals. Up to the present he has devoted the whole of his attention to this task. He has tried to deal fairly with everyone. Sometimes representations are made to members that people are being unjustly treated, but when the facts are sifted, it is found that reasonable consideration is given to the merits of each case. The promise made by the Labour Party when on the hustings that, if returned, they would appoint a Minister to give his full time to this work has been amply carried out. It certainly is a definite improvement on the previous position, because the last Minister did not give his full time to this job. The previous Government appointed an unemployment board consisting of five gentlemen, only two of whom gave their full time to the job. Mr. Macartney was, no doubt, the board; on occasions, Mr. Brockman was called in as his consultant. The other members, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Bullen and Mr. Brownlie, rarely attended board meetings.

Mr. Latham: Brownlie was not on the board.

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes, he was.

Mr. Latham: No.

Mr. HEGNEY: He was associated with it. When I attended with deputations he was in the room and took part in the deliberations of the board.

The Minister for Employment: He was relieving Mr. Macartney during Wool Week.

Mr. HEGNEY: Mr. Brownlie was there on a number of occasions when I was. So far as the other board is concerned, only two members actually did the work of the board. Certainly, one Minister devoting his whole time to this work has immeasurably improved the position. It certainly is a full-time job for a Minister, because it is necessary that decisions should be given promptly. The Leader of the Opposition, in his observations on the speech of the Minister, contended that all the Government seemed to be doing was to find money for the Trades Hall, because they were compelling men to join unions. That is an old story we have heard for many years past. We know that some years ago an election was fought in the Commonwealth arena on the question of preference to unionists, and that the Labour Government were returned to power by an overwhelming majority.

Mr. Latham: What is your experience of men on sustenance

The CHAIRMAN: Federal elections have nothing to do with this vote.

Mr. HEGNEY: I am going to connect them up with the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. He said the men had to pay a certain fee to join a union. I say that any man who today would not join a Labour organisation has no concern for his own welfare. During the administration of the previous Government, if it had not been for the existence of one or two Labour organisations who fought for the maintenance of labour conditions for workers, those conditions today would be rotten. On many occasions representatives from these organisations attended with deputations on various Ministers and they certainly broke down in many respects what was the policy of the previous Government. At least the present Government stand for reasonable labour conditions, and to maintain those conditions the men must belong to a Labour organisation. In the United States there has been introduced what is called the Recovery Act. There is a struggle proceeding there as regards men joining organisations and provision has been made in that Act by which the workers can join their own organisations. It seems that the Leader of the Opposition would deny them that right here. It certainly saves members of Parliament a great deal of work, because they can now refer these men to their industrial organisations. The men have a definite channel through which any complaints they may make can be dealt with. I have had men come to me with the request that I should see they were compensated for injuries sustained whilst on relief work. It is not my job to battle for compensation for injured men. That is the work of the industrial organisations. Many men have been injured while on relief work throughout the country and on account of the fact that they were not members of an industrial organisation, they did not know how to set about getting compensation. That is one instance where industrial organisations have proved of benefit to the men.

Member: Cannot they get compensation under the Act?

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes, but they do not know how to set about getting it. The men now on relief work are getting 50 per cent. more in wages than they were receiving when the previous Government were in

power, that is, in comparison with those working at £1 a week above sustenance. Some say that is not so, but comparing the earnings of the men to-day with what they used to be, it is certain they are much better off. Then there is the question of holiday pay. In the case of men who are receiving the higher rates of sustenance, namely £2 9s., it is found that they get practically 11 months work out of the full 12 months.

Mr. Latham: That is an advance on what the Minister said.

Mr. HEGNEY: The policy of the previous Government was to break the time of the men a day before they had worked a full month, so that they could be deprived of holiday pay. As a result of representations made by the organisations the Minister has said that the men shall receive a full month's employment and get their holiday pay. If they are working for sustenance, they will receive a fraction of a day for the period during which they are working. Men on relief works are undoubtedly better off to-day than they were. The Minister has ruled that the men who are longest out of work shall be the first to receive employment. That is a sound principle to follow if the cards are properly dissected. I know of a man who has been out of work for two years and five months. Because, however, he was employed for a few weeks some time ago, he has been put further down on the list than he ought to be. Some men are getting jobs ahead of others who have a priority claim over them. The roster requires a slight alteration so that these anomalies may not occur. I know of one man who has been out of work for three years except for a period of three months when he was in employment. This man has 50 others ahead of him before he can get any work. The men who were at the camp at Blackboy asked me to induce the Minister to receive a deputation from them. The Minister received the men and visited the camp. They put up various proposals, to each of which he gave a frank answer. What the men particularly wanted was to get their share of the pick-ups. From then on he did pick up men for the jobs that were started. All these men have now been placed in employment. One individual wrote to the Press taking me to task because I promised to keep the camp going. What I did say was that if

the Labour Government were returned to power, it would be their duty to find work for the men, failing which they should receive succour and shelter. Most of these men desired work, and now they have got it I hope they will be able to keep it for some time to come. The Leader of the Opposition complained about the few men who were available for farm work. That may be fortunate or unfortunate. There are many good workers amongst the single men in the metropolitan area who are now living on sustenance. If reasonable wages and conditions prevailed, I am sure that all the labour necessary would be available for the garnering of the crops. The men referred to by the Leader of the Opposition already have jobs, but apparently the hon. member would like to take them away and put them on the farms. He contends a reservoir of labour should be available at a moment's notice. Everyone who has been associated with the industrial life of the community knows there are times when skilled workers are not available in sufficient numbers for one industry, though they may be for another. Evidently the same thing applies to farming.

Mr. Latham: You must know that the crops cannot wait until the labour is forthcoming.

Mr. HEGNEY: There are many men available who are quite suitable for farming work.

Mr. Latham: That is not so.

Mr. HEGNEY: It is said that the farmers pay good wages. There are two young men in Bayswater, one of whom is owed £60 for farm wages and the other is owed £40. I pointed this out to the manager of the Agricultural Bank, but he said he had no power to compel the farmers to pay the amounts due. The money in question had been frittered away, whereas it ought to have been given to these men. I could, if necessary, quote the names of these two young fellows.

Mr. Patrick: I could quote the names of other people who have not yet received their wages.

Mr. HEGNEY: Not too many of them.

Mr. Patrick: Yes, many.

Mr. HEGNEY: It is said not to happen, but it does happen. We know that hundreds of Jugo-Slavs working here two or three years ago were owed thousands of pounds in wages and did not get paid.

Mr. Latham: Why? The wages were to be paid after the harvest, and the harvest was utterly unpayable.

Mr. HEGNEY: The late Government tried to break down labour conditions in many respects. The present Government try to maintain them. The organisations are doing their utmost to protect the interests of labour in the various jobs. That is their definite task. The trade union movement, no matter what the Leader of the Opposition says, is absolutely part and parcel of the body politic. In every country of the world, whether in America or Europe or Asia, that is the case. No matter how the Opposition rail against men being compelled to join unions, I say that the man who at present does not join a union to protect his interests is a fool. It is only when difficulties arise that men recognise the advantage of belonging to a union. The organisation to which the Leader of the Opposition belongs formed a powerful union recently to protect their interests. To say that a good portion of the wages received by relief workers goes to the Trades Hall is all moonshine. Unions have administrative costs to meet, and if a worker gets injured and his case has to be fought in the law courts, as frequently happens, the union stand behind the man and find a solicitor to fight his case free of cost to him. Wheat carters from the country come to the unions to fight their cases. Asked whether he is a member of the union, the wheat carter replies in the negative and declares that the union organiser did not come near him. However, once he is in a difficulty, he wants the union to protect him. The Child Welfare Department is highly important, especially in the eyes of Labour members, because the department looks after the poorest members of the community. On the whole, the officers carry out their duties well; but the department's system of taking into consideration, when assessing a family income, a pensioner's income as part of the family income, and assessing the wife or child accordingly, should be altered. The pension should stand on its own, being made available on a Commonwealth basis for the pensioner himself. Possibly the Minister will direct his attention to that phase. The hon. gentleman has tackled his problem in a big way, and as regards the many representations I make to him, although I am not successful in all of

them, I get a reasonable deal. I consider the Minister is doing good work under adverse circumstances.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [12.4]: At this late hour I shall not say much, but in view of the importance of the vote under discussion I must offer a few remarks. In the first place I wish to congratulate the Minister on his work. I should imagine any new Minister has a difficult task but when a new Minister has to create a department, his task is doubly difficult.

Mr. Doney: The machinery was already there.

Mr. SEWARD: That at least is my opinion. At the same time, I shall not be entirely eulogistic of the Minister, because in the course of his speech he intimated that he had effected an alteration whereby it had become unnecessary to be on sustenance in order to obtain relief work. I interjected that that was news to me, and I repeat the statement now. Although the Minister was unkind enough to say that in the dim and distant past I had made some eulogistic references to his work, I must say that that also is news to me. I have never commented upon his work, because I did not know enough about it. However, I take this opportunity of congratulating him generally. Probably I shall soon go along to the department—although I have not been there for several weeks—because I have not been able to get information on the subject of sustenance and relief. I cannot help comparing the Minister's speech to that of a chairman of directors at a meeting of shareholders. The hon. gentleman gave a long and detailed account of his revenue, but not one single word did he utter about his expenditure. He told us how many men were employed on relief work, and how many were on sustenance, and how they alternated; but when the Leader of the Opposition wanted information as to the cost to the country, the hon. member had to delve into previous Budgets for the information. The information did not come from the Minister. The departmental Vote shown is £361,857, an increase of £4,136 over the previous year; but it appears that other measures of relief are not included in that figure; and therefore one can only guess what amount the department is costing this State. Congratulations have been voiced over the

fact that men have been transferred from sustenance to relief work. Generally speaking, that would be regarded as matter of congratulation, and in a sense it is now; but I cannot help thinking there is a greater test to be applied, and that is what work the men are engaged on. We might be paying them the basic wage for moving the sand on this hill into the street and then shovelling it back. That would be work, but work of little use to the State. If next year's survey should disclose merely newly-painted houses and newly-planted gardens, the country would demand a better return for an expenditure of £400,000. The unemployed will have to be put on much more remunerative work than that. As I indicated earlier in the proceedings, they might be put on work such as finding a harbour in the southern part of the State and thereby reducing the carriage of wheat and other products by more than 100 miles. Such a work would be truly payable, whereas many other works would not pay in anything like the same way. During his speech the Minister indicated that some men were being put on work to maintain properties of the Agricultural Bank in a proper condition, preventing the undergrowth from taking charge and so on. I was pleased to hear him state that, but money spent in that way would be better employed if placed to the credit of the Agricultural Bank in the form of new capital. I know of people who have been endeavouring to get assistance from the Agricultural Bank, but in many instances they were told that, as their application involved the expenditure of new capital, the bank could not comply with their request. As a result properties have been abandoned. In those instances it is clear that it is not always advisable to put men on to properties merely to keep them in a proper condition. A statement was made during the debate that it is not my intention to pass unchallenged. I was sorry to hear the statement made by the member for Perth (Mr. Needham). During his speech he said that workers who went to the country should be guaranteed proper wages and proper food. I think he was referring particularly to boys. His statement was unjustified and wrong. Men who go to the country receive the wages that the industry can pay. The inference to be drawn from the member's remarks

was that proper food was not provided for the workers. The food supplied to the men is what the farmer himself gets, and is probably better than the food to which the men have been accustomed. The wages paid on a farm can only be in accordance with the return the farmer gets for his products. The farmer has nobody to stipulate, on his behalf, that he shall be paid £3 or £5 a week, nor has he public funds upon which to draw.

Mr. Needham: That is no reason why the men should be paid a starvation wage.

Mr. SEWARD: I did not suggest that the hon. member made that statement. It is well-known that the farmer who, in 1929, may have been receiving an income of from £700 to £1,000 a year, is to-day drawing from the same property an income of from £200 to £250.

Mr. Hegney: It would be just the same if the farmer were receiving the higher income.

Mr. SEWARD: Of course, not being a farmer, the hon. member would know! In 1929, when the farmer's income was four times what it is to-day, the men were receiving from 30s. to £2 a week according to ability. As the Minister stated, if a farmer sends down for men, he expects to secure the services of reasonably efficient workers. It is useless sending for a man to drive a harvester, and getting a man who has never seen one driven at all. In that respect, the member for Perth contended that the workers should be classified, and said that there were some men in the city who would not be capable of work in the country. That is probably so. I agree that there should be a classification of the workers, so that men without family ties, particularly single men, should be made to go out into the country, and not be provided with work in the city. That is the basis of the trouble at present. Men will not go into the country areas when they can get good wages in the city. Unless pressure is brought to bear upon them they will not consider country jobs. There is plenty of work available in the country districts if labour could be obtained to do it. As to the Economic Council, the members of that body have probably done good work. It is a pity we do not get reports from that body. If the Economic Council have recommended works that are at present in progress, but

which are not reproductive, I do not know that they are doing such good work.

The Minister for Employment: Reports have appeared in the Press from time to time.

Mr. SEWARD: I do not take much notice of the Press; I refer to reports presented to Parliament. I do not suggest that the newspapers deliberately publish reports that are wrong, but we should deal with reports presented to us.

The Premier: It is not a statutory body, responsible to Parliament.

Mr. SEWARD: But we could receive reports from the Economic Council, if we did nothing else with them. As to the work of the Minister, we will have to await results before we can know what he has accomplished. I wish him well in his efforts, but at present I am not prepared to say that he has done excellent work until we appreciate what it will cost the State.

MR. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [12.17]: At the outset, I did not intend to have anything to say on this Vote, but as some important statements were made by members who, after eulogising the Minister, damned him with faint praise, I feel it necessary to speak. I was particularly impressed with the solicitous attitude of the Leader of the Opposition.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has already spoken on the Vote generally and he cannot continue.

Mr. Moloney: I am speaking regarding the Child Welfare Department.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has already spoken and he will resume his seat.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [12.18]: The Treasurer at different times has spoken of the drift in the finances, and if we view the Vote from that standpoint, the Minister made some most alarming statements. He told us that the number of sustenance workers had been reduced from 7,677 last year to 3,752 this year. He also said that 4,000 had been absorbed as a result of the campaign in favour of local industries. We know that 2,000 men are prospecting for gold, and are receiving sustenance; they do not come under the present Vote. Thus there are 2,000 men there who have been taken from the unemployment market.

Owing to the boom in gold mining, there must be many more men employed directly by the mining companies. The Minister scattered bouquets to different people and firms for the interest taken by them in the relief of unemployment. One section that has done considerable amount of work along those lines, and has saved the State much money, was not referred to by the Minister. I have in mind the Western Australian Wheat Pool, and the co-operative concerns who have endeavoured to reduce the cost of wheat handling. It may surprise members to know that this body have already spent £50,000 in wages preparing the plant for bulk handling, and have spent very large sums in timber and other material, thus employing a large number of men. In addition they have saved £120,000 to the community by not having to purchase jute. No doubt this £120,000, which would otherwise have been paid for jute, will indirectly employ a great deal of labour. To offset this we have to take the money lost to the lumpers in wages, which has been computed by the Wheat Pool at £18,000, which leaves a balance to the good of £152,000. Yet in spite of this the Government have placed every possible obstacle in the way of this development. The Minister seems pleased at the way in which his department is spending money. But it is not the actual spending of money that confers a benefit on the State, it is the manner in which the money is spent. The money being spent on unemployment today is not creating any additional employment, for once the work is finished, it is finished, and additional loan moneys will have to be found. It is of no use spending money on such work as painting and similar jobs.

The Minister for Lands: Was it any better when your Government were in power?

Mr. PATRICK: More money was then spent on reproductive works than is being spent in that way to-day.

The Minister for Lands: Where, down at the Margaret River?

Mr. PATRICK: I understand the present Government are spending more money at the Margaret River clearing up some of the clearing done previously.

The Minister for Lands: You are quite mistaken.

Mr. PATRICK: The Minister for Employment has spoken of increasing the pur-

chasing power of the wage earner. The only way in which purchasing power can be increased is to increase the purchasing power of the whole community. As a matter of fact the Minister has not increased the purchasing power of the community by so much as one farthing. He may have increased it in one direction, but that of course is offset in other directions. To a certain extent the purchasing power of the community is being increased by the increased prices of gold and wool, and also by the additional loan money. Those are the only directions in which the purchasing power of the community has been increased. And that has been offset to some extent by the enormous losses being incurred by the farmers to-day. We can get no real increase in the purchasing power of the community until we increase the purchasing power of the farming community. That is recognised in Europe and in the United States, where tremendous efforts are being made to raise the price of wheat. It is part of the accepted policy of the United States to increase the purchasing power of the farmers. We have had reference made to the mild boom which we are trying to create in the building industry. That is not going to get us anywhere. One can go down any street in Perth and find empty houses and empty shops. The very night the Minister made his speech, the member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) asked a question about the number of empty houses in Subiaco, and wanted to know if the Premier could not take possession of them. To get those houses and shops occupied by tenants would be much better than trying to work up a building boom. And it would be a good thing if the Government would carry out the policy they put in front of us at the elections, namely some scheme to rehabilitate the farming industry. So far they have made no move in this direction, although such a move would do more than anything else to restore the general prosperity of the State. As King O'Malley once said in the Federal Parliament, "Destroy your cities in a night and they will be rebuilt, but destroy the outside country and the cities will fade away." I commend that to the Minister in his endeavour to do something to rehabilitate the industries of the State and he will then find his problem regarding building more easily solved.

MR. HAWKE (Northam) [12.30]: All I can do in return for being called upon at such a late hour is to speak as long as possible. I sincerely hope I shall be able to cover some of the main points in connection with the outstanding problem of unemployment. First, I desire to congratulate the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) and the Leader of the Opposition on having escaped a severe verbal thrashing at the hands of the member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) who unfortunately was denied the opportunity of speaking twice on the general Estimates.

The Minister for Employment: Had he done so, they would have gone out.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes. If the member for Subiaco had spoken twice they would have gone right out. The general problem of unemployment is so difficult and so extensive as to make it impossible for a State Government to grapple successfully with it. I think the Premier and the Minister for Employment are both aware of that fact. The Premier, when conducting his election campaign, made it quite clear to the people that a drastic change in Australian policy would be necessary before the whole problem of unemployment could be successfully solved, and he undertook, if elected to the position of Premier, strenuously to advocate at Premiers' Conferences and Loan Council meetings a policy that would lead to a more comprehensive plan being evolved for the purpose of dealing more effectively with unemployment. The Premier's first attempt in that respect was very successful, particularly in so far as Western Australia is concerned. If he succeeds in equal degree at each of his subsequent visits to Premiers' Conferences and Loan Council meetings, then the future for the unemployed and partly employed of Western Australia will indeed be bright. The Minister made a statement that in his opinion the main difficulty with regard to unemployment in this State had been overcome. I cannot altogether agree with that, but I am sure the Minister's optimism, even if it will not prove that point, will at least do a great amount of good. It is better to take an optimistic view of the position than to take the opposite view. I do not know whether the unemployed are classified according to their previous occupations, but if not, something in that direction should be done. The point has been

mentioned in this debate and it is worthy of attention, as such a classification would place the Minister and the Government in a better position to know exactly what was required for different classes of relief work. They would know in a moment where they could book experienced men to do various classes of work. I am not suggesting that every unemployed man can be engaged in the trade he previously followed, but a great deal more discretion could be exercised, and I am pleased to say that already, under the new policy of the present Government, large numbers of tradesmen who were previously employed on unskilled work or who previously only received rations without working at all, are now being employed at their own trades. I am sure that policy can be further expanded with beneficial results to the State and with advantage to the men concerned.

Mr. Moloney: The tradesmen appreciate it, too.

Mr. HAWKE: Another point to which more detailed attention should be given is the present condition of the health of the unemployed. There is no doubt that large numbers of unemployed and partly employed men at present are in a state of health that makes it dangerous for them to be employed on heavy work. We know, and admit, that the Government of necessity undertake heavy work in the great majority of jobs which they provide, and we realise also that it is impossible for every man not 100 per cent. physically fit to be given light work of a nature that would enable him to carry on without danger to his health. However, I know of many instances where men physically unfit for the task have been compelled to accept heavy work, and in consequence have suffered severe strain of the spine or some other part of the body, with the result that the State Insurance Office has been called upon to pay out very large sums of money to meet compensation claims. I understand the present Minister has already improved that position, but I think a great deal would be gained to the State if a census of some kind were taken for the purpose of grading the men according to their condition of health. A great deal of physical suffering would be avoided so far as the men themselves are concerned, while a great deal of money would be saved to the State because of the absence of neces-

sity to meet heavy compensation claims that would arise if men unfit for the work were placed on the heavy jobs of which I have spoken. The various classes of relief work to be carried on constitute a difficulty the extent of which is not appreciated by everyone. On paper it seems a very easy thing to plan out. There are numerous works that can be carried on, works of a useful and re-productive character; but when one gets down to the details of commencing and carrying on such works, it is often found that the task is much more difficult than was at first anticipated. I was pleased to hear the Minister state during the course of his speech that attention was now being given to the question of endeavouring to absorb unemployed men on farms of various descriptions, with the object of bringing those farms from a state of neglect into a state when they can again become productive and thus provide avenues of permanent employment and also additional wealth for the State. The Minister and the Government will no doubt carefully watch that experiment and if they find it is succeeding, as they believe it will, then its extension throughout the State may provide a solution of the present difficulty of placing unemployed men into reproductive occupations. The closing of Blackboy Camp constitutes one of the very bright spots in the policy of the Government and my hearty congratulations are offered to the Minister and to the Government on that step. It is tragic to think that over £125,000 of the taxpayers' money was expended in maintaining that camp for such a long period. I am sure the Minister's and the Government's action has been heartily applauded throughout the length and breadth of the State. Not only have the Government done the State a good turn by this action, but they have done the men who were inmates of the camp at Blackboy a better turn than could possibly have been done by any other means.

Mr. Wise: You don't read about it in the Press.

Mr. HAWKE: Members of the Opposition who complain about preference to unionists would probably be more pleased to see the unemployed in a hopeless state of disorganisation. Had it not been for the A.W.U. and such-like industrial organisations, the unemployed workers of the State

would, during the three years of office of the previous Government, have found themselves in a worse position than they actually were in at the time. The unemployed have everything to gain and nothing to lose from linking up with an organisation that covers the work in which they are engaged. It provides a system of self-protection; it is a form of insurance payment, because it ensures that every man employed has an organisation watching and protecting his interests, co-operating with the Minister and the Government, and seeking, wherever possible, to improve the general lot of man. I congratulate the Minister and the Government upon what they have done thus far. The Government have only been in office for about eight months. If the weight of progress during that period is maintained for the remainder of the three years of the life of this Parliament, the unemployed can look forward with a greater degree of security and hope to the future than would have been possible in any other circumstances.

Mr. Hegney took the Chair.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [12.43]: I congratulate the Minister upon the excellent grip he has of the activities of his department. He has certainly laid himself out to understand his job and to play his part in the interests of the people of the State. In relieving unemployment he is obliged to cut his coat according to his cloth. The extent of that relief is limited by the amount of money available from Revenue and Loan funds. Although the Government scheme provides for those who are out of work and have no income, it makes no provision for two particular sections of the community. There are first of all those people who have lost their employment, and have sons and daughters who may be bringing in so many pounds a week in the aggregate. The father may have been out of work for four or five years, and, because the children are earning, he can get no Government employment. The outlook for such a man is hopeless. His trade is gone and he has no chance of being absorbed into the labour market. There is nothing left for him but gradual decay and a premature death. He knows he can get no work, and simply pines away. There are numerous instances of that sort. Something should be

done to help such men. Then there is the other case of the man who is working, but whose sons and daughters are out of employment. Because the father is earning the basic wage, his children, aged from 18 to 20, can get nothing to do. The outlook for them is almost hopeless. They look for work but cannot find it, and can get none from the Government. These young people are those we are looking to as the fathers and mothers of to-morrow. Because they are obliged to live upon their parents, they are dragging down the standard of their own families. They are becoming pauperised. If young men and young women in their early twenties are called upon to live upon their parents, upon a wage that is barely sufficient for the support of young children, they all suffer from gradual impoverishment. They are living upon their assets and are gradually going down. This tends to pauperise the nation as a whole. When the parents die, these young people are expected to take their place in the building up of the nation, but they have nothing left with which to make a start. The Government are hard put to it to provide work for those who are destitute, and if certain people have a small income, they are supposed to subsist upon it. It will be a bad look-out for the nation if this system of gradual impoverishment is allowed to continue. The great bulk of the nation will be so reduced that despite the opening up of the resources of the country, of mechanical appliances which science has given us, of an improved system of education, and our actual wealth as a country, we shall become poorer and poorer, paradoxical though that may seem to be. We have these means at our disposal—our natural resources, our mechanical skill, and our potential labour power; but we become steadily poorer each year while this system goes on of sons and daughters living upon their parents, and, on the other hand, of parents living upon their sons and daughters. We cannot keep on borrowing money to provide Government relief work. There must be a limit to that, especially when the State has not the full say in the amount of money to be expended. The ultimate outcome has to be considered by the whole nation. The member for Irwin-Moore said the other evening that he believed the employment position would improve, because there was not the slightest doubt that the wheat industry would

again be highly prosperous. By interjection I invited the hon. member to fix a date when that prosperity would come. He jocularly replied that it would probably coincide with the date of the next general election. He must have been speaking with his tongue in his cheek. If he stops to think about world conditions in that regard, he will change his opinion. The member for West Perth also believes in an impending prosperity, and speaks of the paramount obligation to provide vocational training until the tide of prosperity sets in again. I have not seen a tide of prosperity in my lifetime. I would like to know what are the symptoms of such a tide. The tremendous disparity between incomes is such that the tide of prosperity can never again flow until the disparity has been removed. The introduction of machinery and the development of joint stock companies has created too great a disparity. Because of that we have a new problem to face. Here are some recent figures. In Australia 94 per cent. of the inhabitants receive incomes of less than £400 per annum, and altogether receive less than three quarters of the total national income. That is to say, six per cent. of the inhabitants of Australia receive a quarter of the national income; and that is the trouble. In Australia—and the disparity is worse elsewhere—six per cent. of the people receive one-quarter of the national income, and the other three-quarters are left for the 94 per cent. Again, 99 per cent. of the population receive less than £1,000 a year, and the total of their incomes is only 85 per cent. of the total national income. Thus 15 per cent. of the national income goes to one per cent. of the people.

Mr. Sampson: You are saddening my young life with these figures!

Mr. TONKIN: When one knows that so much of the wealth goes into the pockets of the few, one realises that the great bulk of the national income cannot be used to purchase the goods manufactured, and thus there occurs a glutted market with consequent unemployment. Although this is a State Parliament, we have ways and means of dealing with the situation. I suggest to the Government that they tighten up the law so as to prevent evasion of death duties, those duties being one of the best methods of reducing disparity in incomes and of preventing wealth

from accumulating. It is well known that clever people can evade the death duties by disposing of their property shortly before death in such a manner as to relieve their estates of payment of those duties. The tightening up of the law as suggested would in some measure remove the existing disparity. There are other methods. We can, for example, divert excessive rents into Government revenue. We can also give attention to monopoly profits. Companies go in for the watering of stock, and pay what appear to be low rates of dividend but what, on the invested capital, are actually high rates. The excessive profits should go into the revenue for the benefit of the people. Unless such measures are adopted, the position of the people will become worse than it was a century ago. The member for Swan was on that ever-green subject of his, the providing of greater facilities for apprenticeship. He should read his book.

Mr. Sampson: Which one?

Mr. Hawke: The "Narembeen Argus."

Mr. TONKIN: The Education Department's report, dealing with technical education, states that in 1932, owing to the severe depression which had reacted adversely on apprenticeships, there were 175 fewer apprentices undergoing training than there were in 1931. The reason given in the report was the uncertainty of the future, and the fact that the great bulk of the then apprentices were employed on part-time, made the employers decide it was very unwise to take on new apprentices. In view of the position, and bearing in mind that 175 fewer apprentices were undergoing training, the suggestion of the member for Swan appears ludicrous in the extreme.

The Minister for Employment: Yes, when there are numerous vacancies to be filled without any amendment of the Act.

Mr. TONKIN: The hon. member has said this so often that it has become an obsession with him. He feels he is not doing his duty if he fails to mention that matter.

Mr. Sampson: It is a very desirable thing to say, and a duty to say it.

Mr. TONKIN: I again draw the Minister's attention to the two sections of the community who, owing to the shortage of funds, cannot benefit from the Government's unemployment scheme, and I ask the hon. gentleman to inquire whether steps cannot

be taken to prevent the nation from slumping into a condition of pauperisation, as at present seems almost inevitable.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT

(Hon. J. J. Kenneally—East Perth—in reply) [1 a.m.]: At this early hour, members will not expect me to go exhaustively into the various matters to which they have referred. The fact that so many members, particularly those sitting on the Opposition side of the House, have displayed such an interest in so many matters, naturally impels me to furnish them with some information. I wish to draw attention to one or two statements which, if unchallenged, may be taken as correct. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) dealt with the question of preference to unionists and his statement was linked up with remarks made later on by the Leader of the Opposition. I shall reply to the two statements at the one time. I want to make it clear, and the Government desire to make it clear too, that the age of collective bargaining is with us. In the reply I gave to the question asked by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) without notice, I made that clear, because the age of bargaining is with us and the Government will observe all that it means. Collective bargaining will be attended to between the Government on the one hand and the employers, wherever possible, and on the other hand with the organisations working through their respective bodies. If we are to have collective bargaining, which is postulated in our Industrial Arbitration Act, it is impossible to attain that objective unless we have due regard to the existing organisations and give preference to such of them as are prepared to abide by the law of the land. Therefore, we have preference to unionists and, so far as the Government of the day are concerned, the policy of preference to unionists will be made absolute. That principle will be dealt with in such a manner as to make for smoother working in the community. As the Minister in charge of the department who should be in a position to know something about the workings of it, I believe that that element is being made manifest in the relations that exist to-day. Now that we have established to a large extent the system of collective bargaining, I hope better feelings will prevail than were maintained in the past.

Mr. Sampson: There must be a fair deal between all sections and no preference to any particular section.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: There should be no preference to any particular section because people who work should be prepared to pay some portion of their wages to the organisation that maintains their working conditions, and Opposition members particularly should not be so prepared to encourage people who will not pay anything in assisting to preserve their working conditions.

Mr. Doney: So long as they have the money with which to pay, that is all right.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I will deal with what the Leader of the Opposition knows to be a fact, even though he made a statement to the contrary, when he said that 25s. per head was claimed from men in order that they might be members of an organisation, and that that money went to the Trades Hall. He made that statement knowing it to be incorrect.

Mr. Hawke: He has already apologised.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: But he knew it to be incorrect.

Mr. Latham: I did not; I believe it to be true now. You will probably put me right if I am wrong.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: If the Leader of the Opposition made the statement with all due sincerity, believing that the 25s. went to the Trades Hall, it seems to me to be a pity that it is necessary for anyone to put him right. As the Leader of the Opposition knows full well, that money does not go to the Trades Hall at all. The money largely goes to an organisation that is not in the Trades Hall.

Mr. Latham: Do you refer to the A.W.U.?

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: That is the position.

Mr. Latham: Then perhaps I made a mistake. I should have referred to Stirling-street not Beaufort-street.

THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The Leader of the Opposition knows full well that that money does not go to the Trades Hall, but he knew in making the statement, should it receive publicity, it would be accepted in the country areas. He is fully aware that in the city, where the people know the position, such a statement would cut no ice.

Mr. Latham: Well, then, the money goes to the A.W.U.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: It is useless making a statement that is knowingly incorrect merely for the purpose of gulling a section of the community.

Mr. Latham: But that organisation is a branch of the Trades Hall.

The Minister for Lands: People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. You have an organisation.

Mr. Latham: We do not compel people to do anything of this sort.

The Minister for Lands: When your people cannot pay the fees, you take an order on the butter factories.

Mr. Latham: Nothing of the sort.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Reference has been made to one phase of employment in the city and it has been suggested that people will not go to the country areas. As far as that can be done, it is being attended to, but even in normal times, quite apart from any period of depression, if men were out of work in Fremantle, and there was work offering in Kalgoorlie, they would not hesitate to go to Kalgoorlie. It cannot be possible for any Government to supply work in the metropolitan area to absorb all the people who are out of work in the city. It becomes necessary, in order to absorb them, to look around to determine where it is desirable that work shall be carried out. Having arrived at a decision in that respect, it becomes the duty of any Government to see what work is available for people who desire to get it, and who are a charge on the Government. It is the duty of the Government to see that they take that work, and if they do not take it, that they shall cease to be a charge on the Government. I make that statement with the proviso that the men must be physically fit to undertake the work. The Government, through the department over which I preside, is giving due attention to the question whether the men are able to perform the work and if so, to see that they take what is provided.

Mr. Doney: That policy has been followed ever since the depression.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Unfortunately that is not so. I did not desire to make that point, but as the hon. member raised the matter, he is entitled to an answer. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) referred to men working for sustenance only and pointed out that

if it was wrong to allow them to work for local governing bodies for sustenance alone, it was equally wrong to make work available for them as the Government have done. No man is compelled to work for sustenance only. On the other hand, representations have been made to me by the men themselves, and in many instances they asked whether they would be able to work for sustenance so as to get cash instead of an order, until the Government's scheme of work for them was complete. In many instances such as the renovations of school buildings, and attending to work that will improve the assets of the State, we have been able to find employment for those men working on sustenance. I see no harm in it. It has been accepted by a number of men and I think that in such cases it has been a stepping stone towards fitting a man to take other work offering in the district. Still I do not propose to make it compulsory. After a man has had four weeks work it is compulsory, but otherwise it is voluntarily that they work on sustenance. As to farming work, every effort is made by the department to see that the harvest is garnered. Already I am investigating the position at Dalwallinu as reported in to-day's paper. It would be better if members instead of coming here and complaining, expedited the provision of labour for the farmers by getting into direct touch with the State Labour Bureau which is doing excellent work in that regard. We have been able to supply a fair amount of labour to the farmers, which is mutually advantageous because the farmer wants the labour and the State desires that the men should be taken off the sustenance list. So the interests of the State are being protected. The State Labour Bureau has placed 400 or 500 men in that way. I pass over the statement made by the member for Swan in regard to apprentices by pointing out that whilst he is arguing that the Arbitration Act should be remodelled to permit of additional apprentices being taken—

Mr. Sampson: Temporarily.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Or permanently, it does not matter which. I wish to point out there are thousands of vacancies for apprentices now, without any alteration in the existing Arbitration Act. I am hopeful that as trade expands those vacancies will be filled. Employers

at present have not nearly the quota of apprentices which they are entitled to take.

Mr. Sampson: Trade is hard to get, but I hope the employers will put on as many apprentices as they can.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: An alteration of the Act to permit of additional apprentices going in when trade is hard to get must necessarily result in cheap labour. Apprentices mean cheap labour if they are taken on in numbers out of proportion to the number that can be absorbed when they complete their trade or calling.

Mr. Sampson: I do not think the employment of apprentices means cheap labour.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: In some cases it pans out that way, and it is in order to prevent it that certain protective legislation has been approved by all parties in this country.

Mr. Sampson: Unfortunately many of our tradesmen come from other countries.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: During the past few years we have not been able to absorb the tradesmen taught in this country. They have simply completed their apprenticeship years and have had to get out. It is of no use altering our arbitration legislation in order to employ more apprentices when we cannot find work for them after their apprenticeship is completed. The member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) suggested that pensions received by men should not be taken into consideration when computing the amount of allowance to be given them. He hoped the Minister would look into that and rectify it. I do not propose to do any such thing. Sustenance is given to men that they might not want food. A man getting three guineas a week pension, if he has a family it would ordinarily entitle him to £2 9s. sustenance. Are we going to provide that man with £5 12s.? We cannot do that.

Mr. Hegney: But I was merely alluding to the old age pension.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I misunderstood the hon. member. However, the reply would still be based on the same grounds, because when considering the amount of sustenance to be paid all income is taken into consideration. But that is not to say that the total income is then based on the 7s. unit, because that 17s. 6d. is not all taken into consideration when the allowance to be made to the family is computed. The member for Greenough (Mr. Patrick) said

it was of no use spending money on painting houses.

Mr. Sampson: Did he say that?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: No. The hon. member said it was no use spending money on painting buildings, as that work was not productive.

Mr. Sampson: Protective.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Had we not painted some of the buildings that are receiving attention at the present time, there would have been no buildings left to paint.

Mr. Patrick: Paint will not preserve them.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: What do we do it for? We have an illustration nearer home. Had we not attended to these buildings—

Mr. Latham: I wish you had postponed it for a few months. I would have been much better pleased.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The trouble is that if these buildings are neglected, the State is losing an asset.

The Premier: We would be meeting out on the green.

Mr. Sampson: Has the Minister noticed this—I think I am not exaggerating—that hundreds of trucks in a disabled state are lying useless at Midland Junction?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Yes, and the hon. member may recollect that I drew the attention of the House to the fact that there were hundreds of trucks lying at the siding at Robb's Jetty when the Ministry which he was supporting was in office. Not only did I draw attention to the fact that the trucks were lying there, but that the fittings and brass bearings were disappearing. When the hon. member draws attention to the fact that trucks are lying idle—

Mr. Sampson: Disabled.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Do not forget that in those days they were lying idle not only at Midland Junction but were filling sidings from Midland Junction up the line. At the present time the Government have had to put on men to repair those trucks so that they could do the work required of them.

Mr. Sampson: Still, they carried a record harvest.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Had the trucks been neglected any longer, they would have been unfit to carry any harvest. The period had arrived when some-

thing had to be done, and the amount of money set aside at the present time for repairs to rolling stock is not nearly adequate. Additional money will have to be made available for that purpose. The member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) asked whether any attempt had been made to classify the men out of employment. That matter is receiving attention. With the impetus that has been given to the building trade—although, according to members opposite, that does not matter—

Mr. Sampson: The members opposite are doing all they can to help in that way.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: That is so, especially with their criticism.

Mr. Patrick: We want a permanent solution, not a temporary expedient.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: It has been found that with the impetus given to the building trade, we cannot always get tradesmen when we require them.

Mr. Sampson: Hear, hear! More apprentices needed!

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: No. Let me tell my friend opposite of another method. There are many tradesmen in the State who at present are employed upon work other than their trade. The question therefore arises of organising the workers of the State so as to have tradesmen available for work at their own trade when required. I am therefore having a list made of the callings of the various men who are on relief work at the present time. In addition, whilst making those investigations, I shall be able to place farm labourers when they are required. As we take the tradesmen away from relief work and place them in their different callings in private industry, I am hoping that the 3,700 who are still unemployed will receive an opportunity of securing work without increasing loan expenditure to any great extent. That will help to solve the problem with which we are faced. I desire to thank members for the generous manner in which they have received the Estimates. No doubt there are many shortcomings in the department. It is a rather difficult combination: there is the Employment Department, the Child Welfare Department, and the two departments which deal with what one may term the poorer activities of the State. I know much is left to be desired, but of course we have our

financial limitations. I trust the Vote will be agreed to.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Unemployment Relief £361,857; State Labour Bureau £6,690; Council of Industrial Development £921—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 1.28 a.m. (Wednesday.)

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 15th November, 1933.

	PAGE
Bills: Land, Com.	1898
Forests Act Amendment, 2R., Com. report ...	1902
Constitution Acts Amendment, 2R. ...	1907
Augusta Allotments, 2R.	1912
Land Tax and Income Tax, 2R.	1913
Motion: State Forests, to revoke dedication ...	1913

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

BILL—LAND.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 41—Restriction of rights of resumption without compensation:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2, after the words "Crown grant" there be inserted the words "or lease."

My object is to extend the operation of the clause to C.P. or other leases, in addition to Crown grants.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot agree to the amendment. C.P. leases were deliberately excluded from this legislation. It is necessary to retain power over them.