

age. If we could but get them, we ourselves would employ 23 additional nurses. For six weeks we advertised in the principal daily newspapers in three of the Eastern States, but we are still something like 26 short in this State. But I am not going to try to push the training of nurses to an extent that would lower the standard of the nurse that is fully trained. Whatever hospital is recognised as a training school, it must be able to turn out the nurses trained just as efficiently as they are trained in recognised schools to-day.

Mr. SAMPSON: I should be glad if the Minister would advise me as to the hours the probationary nurses work and the payment they receive.

The Minister for Health: There is no trouble about getting trainees, none whatever.

Mr. SAMPSON: Perhaps the Minister will explain why they do not become qualified nurses.

The Minister for Health: Because we have not sufficient schools.

Mr. SAMPSON: Is it not possible to train any more?

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. SAMPSON: Would it not be possible to train some nurses in private hospitals?

The Minister for Health: Not on your life!

The Minister for Employment: Why not put some of these questions on the Notice Paper?

Mr. SAMPSON: I should like the Minister to say whether there is not any private hospital where training could be undertaken. This shortage of nurses is very serious and, since nurses are continually leaving Western Australia, our position is likely to be worse rather than better. Is it possible for the Minister to give some information? In a number of comparatively large hospitals it should be possible for probationers to become qualified.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am not in a position to say whether there is any private hospital capable of being turned into a training school for nurses. I do not know the conditions. Personally I do not think that anything of the sort will ever happen.

Mr. Sampson: Something must be done.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The member for Swan began his remarks by inquiring as to the conditions and hours of

nurses. The pay and the hours are better in Western Australia than in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Marshall: And now what are they?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Nurses work 48 hours a week, and probationers, I believe, 52 hours, though I am not sure of the latter figure.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.53 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Tuesday, 2nd November, 1937.*

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The PRESIDENT 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, Main Road Act Amendment.
- 2, Main Road Act Amendment Act (1932) Amendment.
- 3, Jury Act Amendment (No. 1).

**FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL SELECT  
COMMITTEE.**

*Extension of Time.*

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [4.35]: 1 move—

That the time for bringing up the select committee's report be extended for one week. We have completed the taking of evidence, and the delay is due to the fact that the Chairman of the select committee, unfortunately, is not well enough to attend meetings.

Question put and passed.

**BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT  
AMENDMENT (No. 1).**

Read a third time, and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

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

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 28th October.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [4.41]: As the Minister in charge of the Bill has explained, the measure is short, but contains fairly far-reaching innovations, inasmuch as it proposes to make the Act a permanent statute and to extend the tenure of office of members of the Lotteries Commission from one year to three years. If hon. members will refresh their memories, they will recollect that on several occasions I have spoken against the Act as it now stands, and have contended that Parliament should always retain control of the Act so long as the body that raises funds is empowered to spend them. I opposed the present Act on the ground that the whole of the proceeds derived from lotteries should be definitely earmarked for the specific purpose of maintenance and conduct of hospitals, as I understand is the case in Queensland. I have been given to understand by one or two Queenslanders that the hospital system of their State is unparalleled in Australia, and that it could not have reached the level it has attained unless a definite and, so to speak, permanent source of revenue was at its command—namely, the proceeds of the Golden Casket lotteries which have been conducted for years in Queensland. I

understand also that whilst the man in charge of the Queensland Golden Casket lotteries, like the corresponding official in New South Wales, is responsible for the conduct of the lotteries, he is not responsible for the disbursements of the funds. I have repeatedly said here that I know of nothing more deplorable in connection with lotteries control than the publicity members of Parliament seek whenever they secure some consideration out of the profits of the Lotteries Commission.

**Hon. E. H. H. Hall**: Some members of Parliament.

**Hon. J. CORNELL**: Quite a few members. One reads in the Press that the member for So-and-so, or the hon. Mr. So-and-so, as the result of representations to the Lotteries Commission has succeeded in getting so much for such-and-such. That is something which should not occur. Even if members of Parliament have to approach the Lotteries Commission and are successful in getting their viewpoint adopted, they ought to let the matter rest. Sufficient publicity would be promulgated without their going to the daily Press to secure it. There is no gainsaying the fact that the appointments to the Lotteries Commission, ever since the inception of that body, have practically been political appointments. The chairmen of the Commission have been very strong party men.

The Honorary Minister: Is that a disadvantage?

**Hon. J. CORNELL**: It is not for the chairmen.

**Hon. J. J. Holmes**: Nor the party.

**Hon. J. CORNELL**: It is a good advantage to the chairmen. I am not going to say that any chairman has abused his trust.

The Chief Secretary: Why raise the question?

**Hon. J. CORNELL**: Probably the reason for the chairmen having acted as they have done is that they are subject to re-appointment every year. That is one reason, and the Bill proposes to do away with that reason. The position is loaded with serious possibilities. Where one body raises the money, disburses the money, and the question of politics enters into it, the situation is fraught with danger unless there is some safeguard, irrespective of which party makes the appointment. There is another phase of the question: Hon. members will recollect that when the Lotteries Act was first introduced, I made a long speech

against it. So did the ex-Premier, Mr. Collier. I ventured the opinion then that with the advent of the Lotteries Commission into the field of charity, the spontaneous giving which had been characteristic of the people through the years would largely dry up; and it has. If the whole of the proceeds were devoted for the specific object of assisting hospitals, I venture to say that some of that spontaneous giving would return.

The Honorary Minister: It is a very difficult task to finance charitable organisations by spontaneous giving.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is a difficult task. But in my wildest moments I never thought that institutions which to-day receive very large sums of money from the Commission ever came within the purview of charitable organisations. Some of them are purely business organisations—business organisations to the extent that they are looking far ahead, and at some time in the future they hope to have established the organisations as profitable concerns. That being so I consider that an analysis could well be made of the headings under which money has been voted by the Lotteries Commission to many institutions. The one Act on the statute-book of which I know containing a provision for preference to soldiers as far as employment is concerned—and I presume the distribution of the work to be done for the Lotteries Commission comes under that heading—is the Lotteries Control Act. Almost since the inception of the Act a firm of returned soldiers in this State has done the great bulk of the printing for the Commission and has given eminent satisfaction. That firm had the contract under Mr. Clydesdale and under Mr. O'Mahony but lost it under Mr. Kenneally and it went to "The Worker." That gives one food for thought because it is logical to assume that that firm, owned and controlled by returned soldiers—

The Honorary Minister: There are returned soldiers in the other concern.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The price quoted by that firm for five years appeared to be eminently satisfactory to two chairmen, both of whom were business men, but shortly after the present chairman assumed office, that firm lost the contract. The contract went to a firm of printers or to an organisation which is practically part and parcel of the Labour movement of this State. On that ground alone I would not vote to make this Act permanent.

The Honorary Minister: Do you think you have fairly stated the case? Tenders were called.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Imperial Print had the contract under two chairmen for roughly three or four years. It is a firm composed of returned soldiers. The firm prints the returned soldiers' paper of this State, "The Listening Post," which is the official organ of the R.S.L. But shortly after the present chairman assumed office, tenders were called and the firm of returned soldiers lost the contract, the successful contractor being "The Worker" which is part and parcel of the Labour organisation.

The Honorary Minister: And does very up-to-date printing.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If anyone knows anything of "The Worker," it is the present chairman of the Commission. He knows more about it than does the Honorary Minister. I would not say that "The Worker" tender was not lower than the other, but I will say—

The Honorary Minister: It was a matter of business.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, it was a matter of business, and a matter of "The Worker" being able to get information from where another firm could not get it.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: "The Worker" would not scab on other people.

Hon. J. CORNELL: For that reason alone I hope members will vote to keep the Bill an annual measure so that the doings of the Commission may be ventilated from year to year. Just before the House rose at the last sitting I had given to me an opinion of some of the women's organisations of this State. It is very rarely—that might be my misfortune—that representatives of women's organisations approach me. They invariably approach the representatives of the metropolitan area; but on this occasion it was a case of the women and I thinking alike. I am authorised to say that representatives of the Women's Service Guilds of W.A. Inc., the National Council of Women of W.A., the Women's Christian Temperance Union of W.A., and the Young Women's Christian Association of W.A. met to voice a protest against the Lotteries Control Act, 1932, being made a permanent measure, it being considered that if the Bill is carried the control of lotteries will pass out of the hands of Parliament and the people. I have already said that is the

opinion I have had. On such a question as lotteries control, the views of the women count for something. If they do not accomplish much, they cannot be accused of not having endeavoured to do something. I do not know that there is anything further I desire to say than that I will vote for the second reading of the Bill and in Committee I hope that the two clauses of the Bill to which I take exception will be eliminated and a continuance clause inserted to make the Act operate for another year only.

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [4.57]: First of all, I wish to explain that my name will not be included amongst those of members of Parliament who get money from the Commission and then obtain publicity for their efforts. I have never been inside the door of the Lotteries Commission office. On one occasion I did have a letter relating to a grant which I passed on to the Lotteries Commission without comment. Furthermore, if everybody patronised the Lotteries Commission to the extent I do, there would be no Lotteries Commission existing, because I have never yet bought a ticket. If I were looking for a reason or reasons to argue against the necessity for the Bill, I should read the speech of the hon. member who introduced the Bill. In most glowing terms he told us of the manner in which the business was being conducted, and the results. Without labouring that aspect, I am inclined to ask myself this question, and to ask hon. members the same question: "Why not leave well alone?" If the House is well advised, it will follow that course, and leave well alone. I think that to remove the provision which compels the Government to bring the Bill up before this House every year would be fatal. If we had no control of lotteries, which would be the case in those circumstances, it would be a very dangerous weapon in the hands of whichever party happened to be in power—for it seems to me all are tarred with the same brush—it would be dangerous either with a Labour Party Government, a Country Party Government or a National Party Government.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Not with our party.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: To give uncontrolled authority to any party would be fraught with danger. Let us cast our

minds back for the last week or so when there were two great parties before the electors of Australia proclaiming their rights to govern the Commonwealth. They were both promising the heavens above, the earth beneath and even the waters under the earth. They were outdoing one another in promises in order to secure return to office. Coming down the scale to the smaller position of affairs here, I am loth to give any party permanent control of such a large amount of money without being called upon by Parliament every year to give an account of their stewardship. I say this without any disrespect to the members of the Lotteries Commission. I know only the chairman of the Commission; I met him when he was a Minister of the Crown. The other members of the Commission I do not know. I believe that three including the Chairman have been nominated by the Labour Party and that the other member was selected as a representative of the Returned Soldiers' League.

The Chief Secretary: You know that is not correct.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I understand that three of the Commissioners are members of the Labour Party and that Mr. Hunt is the nominee of the Returned Soldiers' League. The Mayor of Fremantle was a member of the Commission when the present Government took office and was doing good work, and I have never yet heard an explanation as to why he was dropped and some other person put in his place. He was dropped about 1934. When the present Chief Secretary was Honorary Minister, he then complimented the Commission on the good work they had done. From then to the present time, however, I have not discovered why the Mayor of Fremantle, a most able man for the position, was dropped and someone else put in his place. There was a proposal in 1934 to make this legislation permanent and to appoint a Commission for five years at a remuneration of £1,750. That amount was to be allotted in this way—£1,000 a year to the chairman, and £750 to be split up amongst the other three members. At one stage there was a proposal to reduce the number of Commissioners from four to three, but that did not meet with my approval. However, we had to be unanimous, because I feared that if one man was dropped by reducing

the Commission from four to three, the one to be dropped would be he who was not a member of the Labour Party. We had a long discussion on that measure and ultimately it went to a conference consisting of three managers for the Assembly and three for the Council. After the conference had given consideration to all the questions involved, it was decided that the Act should be extended for one year only and that a sum of £1,000, not £1,750, should be split up amongst the members of the Commission. Of the £1,000, the chairman was to have £500 and the other £500 was to be divided amongst the remaining members of the Commission. The report was unanimous. That was a very wise decision, and I think the House should consider the position very calmly before altering that matured opinion. To my mind we should not extend the Act for a period of more than one year until we have re-modelled this legislation and put the lotteries on a different basis. The idea of appointing a Lotteries Commission, as I understood it, was to curtail gambling, to put down this pernicious evil of gambling, so that the money devoted to gambling would be used in the homes and circulated in proper business channels.

Hon. L. Craig: It was intended to absorb the money that was used for gambling and prevent its being sent out of the State.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: And to stop street collections.

Hon. L. Craig: Partly so.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It was intended to control gambling.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It was intended to control gambling and put it down, because gambling was considered to be an evil that was growing in our midst. Mr. Craig was not a member of the House at that time; I know what happened. This evil was growing in our midst and we were actuated by a desire to do our best to put it down. What has been done? Every effort has been made to extend it. To that end all manner of means have been adopted. The Commission spend any amount of money in advertising in the newspapers and in other ways. I saw quite recently a statement that some of the Commissioners had travelled through the country.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Who pays for that?

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: The charities.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Commissioners travelled through the country presumably

to ascertain what could be done to extend the sale of tickets. The greater the amount of money that is put into lotteries, the less is the amount available for families and other legitimate purposes. Not only do the Commission advertise the lotteries; the agents themselves advertise. Anyone who picks up a newspaper will find all sorts of catchy advertisements designed to induce people to buy lottery tickets, such as "Whitty for Winners." Every mortal thing that can be done is done to increase the sale of tickets. Thus gambling is being encouraged instead of minimised. The agents, I understand, are supplied with the tickets free of cost; they are printed at the expense of the Commission. All that the agents do is to get a chair and table in a shop and collect a commission of 10 per cent. on the tickets sold.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is too high.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is ten per cent. of the money that should be going to charities. For Lottery No. 56 conducted in August, the commission paid to agents—"Whitty for Winners" and others—was £1,700. For Lottery No. 57 conducted in September, £1,600 was paid by way of commission to those gentlemen who neither toil nor spin. That £1,600 has to be contributed by the housewife. It goes into the coffers of the agents instead of being devoted to the legitimate purposes for which it was earned and should have been used. The only way to retain control is to limit the law from year to year in the hope that, in the immediate future, the present or some other Government will present a Bill to meet the needs. There are several matters that ought to be adjusted. The remuneration of agents is surely a matter needing adjustment. If the members of the Commission do not consider it their duty, someone else should undertake it.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Parliament fixed a margin of 25 per cent. to cover all expenses.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If Parliament made a mistake it should be rectified. That is why I contend that the Act should be extended from year to year until we reach a satisfactory basis. The system of management and control of lotteries must be altered. I suggest that the practice of having people selling tickets all over the country and collecting commission on the sale should be abolished in favour of having offices of

the Lotteries Commission in the principal towns say, Perth, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: And Katanning.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I mentioned the principal towns. If people in the country wished to buy lottery tickets, they could go to the office of the Commission to buy them. Then no commission would have to be paid to agents. Why should the people who started out to control gambling provide opportunities at every turn for people to rush into the shop next door with their last half-crown and at the last half-minute in order to participate in the plunder they might get? I would have shops established by the Commission in the principal towns. As regards other towns, Government officers could be found who could undertake the work. We can find Government officers at present to do this, that and the other thing, and there would be no additional cost. It would keep those Government officers stationed in lonely places occupied. They could sell the tickets and we could save on the 12 lotteries a year about £18,000 now paid in commission. That amount would then be going to charities instead of into the pockets of "Whitty for Winners" and a few others. There is need for an overhaul in that direction. Another matter that should be investigated before we extend the life of the Commission beyond yearly periods is what the four Commissioners do and what the staff do. I understand that a permanent staff are employed who presumably do all the work. The four Commissioners, so far as I can judge, superintend the lotteries and arrange for the distribution of the money. Surely another £1,000 is being paid out there that should be going to charities. So there we have another matter we should look into before we extend the life of the Act. Some time ago there was a question raised about the auditing of the lottery accounts, and that was rectified. Why was it rectified? Because Parliament had the opportunity of drawing attention to it and insisting that the existing system of auditing should be altered. But with a pecuniary business like this anything may develop at any time, and Parliament therefore should be on the doorstep at least once a year to rectify any wrong that may be done. The whole policy of the commission has been wrong, and that is to extend and not to curtail the lotteries. The House would be acting wisely if it agreed to curtail the opera-

tions of the Lotteries Commission and keep the members of the Commission themselves in check from year to year until such time as we get the Act put on a proper basis. If we release our hold upon this legislation it may be that the Act may become a real danger in our midst. I repeat that every word the Minister uttered when introducing the Bill was in favour of the limitations of the Act, as we have limited it in the past. I have not criticised the Commission.

The Chief Secretary: You have said quite enough.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The members of the commission are working under an Act which, in my opinion, is wrong, and it should be amended. The only member of the commission I know is Mr. Kenneally, and I know him to be a gentleman of very high honour. I do not know the other members of the Commission, but with regard to Mr. Kenneally I find that with my limited experience of him he has a complete sense of what is right and what is wrong. But Mr. Kenneally is only one of four. Looking at the position as an outsider I should say that 75 per cent. of the commission could walk out and one commissioner could then carry on quite easily and put up the notice "Business as usual."

Hon. C. R. Williams: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We should limit the life of the Bill to one year, as we have done in the past, and as it will be remembered, six managers three years ago unanimously agreed that the Act should operate only from year to year. If we depart from that procedure we are putting a dangerous weapon in the hands of one or other section of the community. I shall be compelled to vote for the second reading so that the Bill can get into Committee, but when in Committee I shall do my best to limit the life of the measure to one year.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.20]: In 1934 when the Act was first passed I supported it, not for the reason of having it on the statute-book, but for the definite reason of trying to control the evil of gambling which then existed in our midst, and which was growing at such a rapid rate as to become a scandal by reason of the number of people who were being given permission to conduct lotteries, guessing competitions and other forms of cheap gambling. All that

was a disgrace to the community, and therefore I supported the Lotteries Control Act for the purpose of endeavouring to control gambling and also with the definite object of minimising that evil rather than encouraging it in our midst. We have been fairly successful in doing that, but I can see a trend on the part of the Commission towards endeavouring to popularise the consultations so as to make them grow and to encourage people to go in for gambling to a greater extent than has existed in the past. We see that by the fact of the very big consultation which was closed the other day and which was drawn this morning. That in my opinion was a step forward in the wrong direction. We have also read that the members of the Commission have made a tour of the country for the purpose, I take it, of trying to strengthen the agencies.

Members: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: I may be wrong, but that is my belief. I see no occasion for members of the Commission to go around the country, and the only construction I can place on that action is to popularise the consultations. I think also that that is the view of other people. Generally speaking the operations of the Lotteries Commission require close scrutiny by Parliament, and I will support any amendment that is moved to limit the operation of the Act to one year. We learn that the cost of conducting the consultation amounts to about 14 per cent., but we also know that 10 per cent. is paid as commission to those agents who sell the tickets. I consider that Parliament will be justified in seeking to reduce that maximum commission. I hope that the House will continue the life of the Act as it has been continued in the past, namely, from year to year, and not extend it and make it permanent as the Minister desires. If it is made permanent the Lotteries Commission will have practically a free hand to popularise the consultations to the fullest possible extent, and then we may see, instead of one big lottery, perhaps a series of them. I am totally opposed to that kind of thing. I will support the second reading, and when the Bill reaches the Committee stage I will vote in favour of limiting the operations of the Act as from year to year.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [5.23]: I was one of those who supported the extension of the Lotteries Control Act for a period of three years, but I am of the opinion now that perhaps it might be just as well for Parliament to have the legislation before it each year. We have heard a number of statements in the House to-night, but one must be fair to the members of the Commission who control the organisation. It has been stated that the members of the Commission have travelled round the country in the hope of encouraging and increasing the sale of tickets. I am one of those members of Parliament who have called upon the Lotteries Commission on behalf of country hospitals and other charitable institutions in the province I represent, the centres of which are far distant from the metropolitan area. I have been fairly successful in my requests, but I did not get all that I wanted. If I had got all I wanted—

Hon. C. B. Williams: You would have got the lot.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I would. When it comes to charitable works and improvements to hospitals in the country, I assure members that I am only too pleased at all times to submit the particulars of the requirements before the members of the Lotteries Commission. Mention has been made of the members of the Commission having toured the country. I know of one tour which those members undertook some months ago, and I can tell the House the class of work they did. They inspected the work that is being carried on at the Pingelly hospital, and from there went to the Wickepin Hospital where, after the inquiries they made, they agreed to supply a refrigerator, and also to assist in the completion of the building of that hospital. After that they proceeded to Kondinin, a locality that might be described as one of the hottest places during the summer months in the province I represent. At Kondinin the hospital is a fine institution and possesses a magnificent operating theatre. The theatre would not have been available but for the money that was granted by the Lotteries Commission.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Did not the people subscribe to that?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Yes, and they are still subscribing freely towards the maintenance of the hospital. We are all aware how the people of the country have suffered

on account of the depression since 1931, and they have not been able to give as they were accustomed to give before. Consequently the money that was given by the Lotteries Commission proved most helpful. Apart from the visit paid to the province I represent I know that the members of the Commission have visited hospitals in other parts of the State for the purpose of noting what their requirements were. Is that not their duty?

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: No.

Hon. H. V. PIESE: I consider that it is, because they are responsible for the distribution of the lottery funds, and it is their duty to see that the money is properly spent. The members of the Commission are not carrying out their duty if they do not inspect the improvements that are made with lottery funds. With regard to commission paid to agents perhaps the amount of 10 per cent. is a little high. Mr. Holmes suggested that Government offices should be the places at which the tickets could be purchased throughout the country.

Hon. C. B. Williams: He is advocating another form of State trading.

Hon. H. V. PIESE: Yes. When the State lotteries were introduced, the idea was to prevent a good deal of money filtering out of Western Australia to the other States for investment in lotteries there. The commissions that are paid to agents may be a little too high, but that is a matter for the Lotteries Commission to adjust.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is in their hands now.

Hon. H. V. PIESE: Very well, they can consider it.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Insurance canvassers get little more.

Hon. H. V. PIESE: Yes, and they are a boon to humanity. We have also heard a good deal about the advertising methods that have been adopted by the Commission, for the purpose of increasing the sale of tickets. I do not altogether agree that there should be so much advertising. If the public want to gamble, they have the opportunity because they know where tickets can be procured. The employment of agents should be quite sufficient without advertising on picture slides and in other ways, as is done at the present time. We heard also about the big lottery that was drawn to-day, and unlike Mr. Holmes, I had a ticket in it because I considered that I

could do with the first prize if I were lucky enough to win it. I think most people took a chance shot at the lottery in the hope of drawing the first prize of £15,000. At any rate, they had an opportunity to do so. The lottery was run by the Commission, I understand, in order to endeavour to avoid the flow of money from this State at this period of the year for investment in consultations elsewhere.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And to encourage money to be sent from there to this State.

Hon. H. V. PIESE: Personally, I cannot see the force of the Lotteries Commission promoting such a lottery, although I supported the Commission from a practical standpoint. That matter should receive due consideration, and I am convinced that we should not increase the amount of prize money beyond that applicable to the smaller lotteries. The question has been raised as to what work the members of the Lotteries Commission do. I cannot say, but I do know that they are responsible for the administration of the Act and the distribution of the money raised during the year. Surely a Commission consisting of four members must be more acceptable for such work than one man and the office staff. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, but I will not agree to the proposed extension of the life of the Commission beyond one year.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan [5.31]): Like previous speakers, I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, but only with a view to limiting the life of the Commission to an annual basis. I am definitely opposed to the clause in the Bill that seeks to extend the Commissioners' term of office. I consider Parliament should have the right, which we have now, to review the operations under the Act every 12 months. I subscribe to the views of Mr. Holmes in that until the whole business is reorganised and placed on a more satisfactory basis, I shall continue to oppose any extension of the life of the Commission beyond 12 months. I was one of those who originally supported the establishment of the Lotteries Commission, but I definitely state that I did so—my remarks are so reported in "Hansard"—from the standpoint of maintaining and



supporting our charitable institutions, principally our hospitals and such like deserving charities. As one who has experienced the difficulties attached to financing a public hospital over a number of years on the very small subsidy that was then received from the Government; who appreciated the great difficulty of raising money by means of direct giving, and who had had the unfortunate experience over a period of years of trying to force those who were unable to pay to meet the expense of their treatment at various institutions, I can claim that few members of this House welcomed more than I did the creation of the Lotteries Commission. I welcomed it definitely on the understanding that the funds so raised would be utilised in the maintenance of hospitals and other charitable institutions. On the other hand, to-day we find that there is no limitation placed upon the distribution of funds raised by the Lotteries Commission. While I have no desire to criticise the members of the Commission, I feel that unemployment relief at least should not have been one direction in which help should have been provided by the Commission.

Hon. J. Cornell: We did not get any help in that direction on the fields.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: That is another reason why it should not have been available for that purpose on the coast.

The Honorary Minister: And there was not too much of it available here.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: One unfortunate effect of the creation of the Lotteries Commission has relation to the practice of direct giving. As one having had considerable experience in the collection of money for various institutions, I can state definitely that to-day it is more difficult to raise one shilling by direct giving than it was some years ago to secure donations of £10, £15 or even £20. When approached these days, the average business man will give the same answer as I do. When I am appealed to for funds in support of an institution, I reply, "What are the members of the Lotteries Commission doing? This is their work. The Commission was created for that purpose and if the Commissioners do not see fit to support your institution, you cannot expect the public to do so." That is the attitude I take up.

The Honorary Minister: All business people do not adopt that attitude.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Most of them do when asked to contribute to the support of a public hospital. I give the Lotteries Commission every credit for their work in financing the public hospitals, but I know it is very difficult nowadays to induce business men to contribute directly to the funds of a public hospital in the face of existing conditions. Not only are they taxed in every direction, but I would cite the position under the Workers' Compensation Act. In the old days we were at least able to get first treatment in respect of an accident in a factory. To-day we cannot obtain that assistance. Nevertheless, we are forced to pay much higher premiums and, as I mentioned when speaking on another Bill recently, we get nothing in return from the hospitals for that expenditure.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The first duty of any Government is to look after the indigent sick.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes, if they are paid for it, and they are paid for it in several directions. That is my complaint. Without desiring to criticise the members of the Lotteries Commission, I feel that there are some worthy institutions that have ground for complaint. I speak feelingly on this subject. I was associated with a movement for the betterment of the youth of this State, and set off with one or two other prominent citizens to raise money with which to start the scheme. We did not experience great difficulty in raising £2,000 to enable us to proceed with the project. By means of direct giving, we were able to secure funds to carry on the institution for some time. Then, as Mr. Piesse and others did, we appealed to the Lotteries Commission for assistance, and we did receive help for a while. But the moment we secured funds from that source, we immediately lost from the standpoint of direct giving, the benefits of which we had enjoyed previously. The result was that the movement, not being favoured by the Lotteries Commissioners, had to go out of existence. Without being in any way unfair to the Lotteries Commissioners, I feel that many institutions are getting not hundreds but thousands of pounds, while other equally deserving movements are pushed out of existence because they can get no assistance whatever from the Commission. There is another reason why I oppose the suggestion embodied by the Government in the Bill. I go so far as

to say there is no telling where it would end if we were to give the Government the power they seek. My remarks at this stage are not necessarily directed against any Minister or Cabinet as a whole, but when the Government of the State have to take directions from Beaufort-street, there is no telling where it will all end if we give the Government the free hand they desire. Every day we notice that Ministers recommend certain action and then the Trades Hall steps in and directs the Government to do this or that. The Government have to do what they are told. It is too dangerous to give the Government the power proposed. I do not trust them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I have not said that.

The Chief Secretary: You did not emphasise it so much.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The hon. member means he does not trust Trades Hall.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: There is another reason why I cannot approve of the Government's proposal. When this legislation was first before Parliament, mention was made of the fact that the creation of the Lotteries Commission would eliminate the continual street collections and the hawking of tickets from door to door.

The Chief Secretary: Nothing was said about that.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I appeal to members to say whether I am not correct when I state that every week-end there is some collection for this or that objective.

The Honorary Minister: Yes; about 26 week-ends.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Then there are 26 week-ends too many, when we are pestered at street corners with appeals to support this or that.

The Chief Secretary: There are not so many now as previously.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: But why should there be any?

The Chief Secretary: They are limited.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: We were given to understand that the practice would be entirely eliminated.

The Chief Secretary: You were never told that.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes, we were, most definitely; and that was why I supported this legislation. Approval is given by the Lotteries Commission for this to be done to every Tom, Dick or Harry.

The Honorary Minister: That is not so.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: It was definitely understood, in my opinion, that street collections were to be entirely eliminated.

The Honorary Minister: You were mistaken.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: If street collections have been permitted on 26 week-ends, then that shows that there are 26 such collections too many that have been permitted. Regarding the salaries drawn by the Commissioners and the amount of commission allowed on the sale of tickets, I consider definitely that in each instance the remuneration given is too high. I would like to accept the risk of controlling the work of the Lotteries Commission at a salary much less than that paid to the chairman and the three other members of that body.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But the man in the street might not trust you.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: That is so, but I think he would be just as safe then as he is under existing conditions. I consider that the whole matter should be taken in hand properly by the Government, and improvements effected in the directions I have indicated. For these reasons I am definitely opposed to granting the extended term of office for the members of the Lotteries Commission and I consider that each year their work should be reviewed by Parliament.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.43]: I was a member of another place when the principal Act was passed. Its object was to limit gambling as far as humanly possible, or at least to minimise the practice. As I have pointed out previously, rather than minimise it, the tendency has been to encourage more gambling. We see that encouragement in the form of advertisements screened at the picture shows and in other directions. In New South Wales if an individual wishes to buy a ticket in a State lottery, he has to procure it at the office of the Commission. Arrangements are made so that if a person desires to buy a single ticket he goes to one window, but if he wants to buy a large number of tickets he goes to another portion of the building.

The Honorary Minister: Commission is not paid there, but it is drawn in another way.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I believe that those people who run the Lotteries Commission in New South Wales are honest. They

get their salaries, but I do not believe they get any commission. The whole thing, including the sale of tickets, is run by the Commission at the Commission's own office. I presume that when you go into the Commission's office here to buy a ticket, there is no commission paid on that ticket, because of course the officer who supplies it to you across the counter is a salaried officer. But we do not require a Commission of three or four persons to run a lottery. The secretary, who has been running sweeps for many years, is quite capable of running these lotteries with the aid of his staff, and certainly he knows all about it. All that the Commission is required for is the distribution of the money. That should be the only purpose of the Commission. I do not care who may be the persons forming that Commission, they will never satisfy everybody in regard to the distribution of the money, but we would get far more satisfaction and far more money for charities if we had an honorary commission or board, such as existed prior to the passing of the Lotteries Act. For many years certain gentlemen conducted lotteries, running them and distributing the money, all in an honorary capacity, and there was never any complaint; but when it came to a paid position, it certainly looked to me as if it was a question of their giving to our friends some of the plums of office, and to that I strongly object. I feel sure that if we had an honorary commission of responsible persons, who would not be appointed by any Government as in their individual capacities but by virtue of their office, such as the Lord Mayor of Perth and the Mayor of Fremantle, and a third party—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We had the Mayor of Fremantle on the Commission, but he was put off.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That is so. Regardless of the interruptions of the Honorary Minister, who is very keen that the Bill should pass in its present form—all of which makes me rather suspicious—I say that if we had on the Commission the Mayor of Perth and the Mayor of Fremantle and, say, a lady elected by the women's section of the community, they could act in an entirely honorary capacity, except that they should be paid a small fee for each meeting.

Hon. L. Craig: Say £50 a year each.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, £50 a year each, or £150 a year in the aggregate. But their duty would be principally the distribu-

tion of the money and the general supervision of the secretary. The secretary, if a good secretary, as he should be, would be the chairman in control of lotteries.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: What about our country charities?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Surely they would be looked after by country members. Why should not a country member of Parliament approach the Commission in the ordinary way? Surely we are not going to set up this Commission in such a way that no one shall be allowed to look at them. We should all be entitled to approach them.

Hon. J. Cornell: Yes, but you should not skite about it afterwards.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The chairman of the Commission has a decided political bias. What would be the position if some member of Parliament, who is not of the same political views, criticised the Commission? Would that member be likely to secure very much out of the Commission for the charities in his electorate?

Hon. C. B. Williams: He put the boot into me, and I am not opposed to his politics.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I feel very keenly on this, when I see that the chairman of the Lotteries Commission has gone away up country to open a hospital. People said, "Of course he has given them a hospital." Nothing of the sort. I do not know who paid the expenses of that trip—a very pleasant trip, probably—but why should the chairman go up there?

The Honorary Minister: He went up to see that the money was well spent.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It was spent before he went there.

The Honorary Minister: He goes up to encourage people to put more money into the lotteries.

The PRESIDENT: I wish the hon. member would ignore these interjections.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I rather welcome them.

The PRESIDENT: But the hon. member must not provoke them.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It is suggested that the members of the Commission go out into the country to see these hospitals, see what is required in the way of refrigerators and extensions of buildings, and to see that they are deserved. That seems to me a most extraordinary thing, because I have here a copy of the "West Australian" of the 30th June, 1937, in which is published a letter by "Typo" stating that the Government Tender

Board had called for tenders for the printing requirements of the Lotteries Commission, and that inquiries made as to who were the successful tenderers elicited the information that the decisions were to be made by the members of the Lotteries Commission. Attached to this letter was a footnote, as follows:—

Upon this letter being brought under the notice of the chairman of the Lotteries Commission yesterday, he stated that tenders had been called for the printing through the Government Tender Board. A number of tenders were received, and as the members of the Commission had little or no knowledge of printing matters, they decided to ask a board consisting of representative men in the printing industry to deal with them. The composition of the board was: one representative of the Master Printers' Association, one of the Printing Industry Employees' Union, and a nominee of the Government Printer. The board met and, after giving careful consideration to the tenders, submitted a majority report to the Commission. "To-day," said Mr. Kenneally, "the Lotteries Commission adopted the report and decided to finalise the tenders in accordance therewith."

If the members of the Lotteries Commission did not know anything about printing, what do they know about the building of hospitals, or about the installation of X-ray plants? I should imagine that the printing would be an extremely simple matter, because it had been going on for years, carried out by the one firm. There is not the slightest doubt that it was decided that it should be given to the People's Printing and Publishing Co. The position was that tenders were called through the Tender Board, but the Tender Board did not finalise the matter; on the contrary, the chairman of the Lotteries Commission explained that three other individuals had been asked to consider the tenders and report thereon. In a letter addressed to the secretary of the Master Printers' Association, dated the 22nd June, 1937, Mr. Kenneally, the chairman of the Lotteries Commission, wrote as follows:—

The Commission has decided to ask a board consisting of a representative of the Master Printers' Association, a representative of the Printing Industry Employees' Union, and a representative of the Government Printing Office to consider the matter, examine the tenders, and to recommend any tender to the Commission for acceptance, having regard to—

1. Reliability of the firm to comply with conditions of contract as regards quality of materials, workmanship and the continuity of supplies, and

2. Facilities of firm to ensure confidential and efficient handling of the business.

I should have thought that Clause 2 would have almost debarred the People's Printing and Publishing Co. I am not suggesting that they are not reliable, but one would hardly expect to get confidential and efficient handling of the business.

The Honorary Minister interjected.

The PRESIDENT: The Honorary Minister will have ample opportunity later.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I do not suggest that the firm's handling of the business would not be confidential, but if the Commission were not in a position to judge of the reliability of the firm that had previously done the printing for them, how is it that the Commission are in a position to travel around the country and see what various hospitals are in need of? It all seems to imply in the Commissioners an absence of business acumen, and therefore it cannot be said that they have advanced the interests of the charities by drawing something like £1,000 per annum in salaries. We should have an honorary commission, the members of which would be paid only a small fee for each sitting. We would then have a far better commission than we have to-day. I should like to see the elimination of those shops where the public buy tickets, and I should like to see all tickets sold through the Commission's own office. If a city like Sydney with a population of 2,000,000 can do that, why cannot it be done in a smaller city like ours? Is it seriously suggested that the Commission should go around the country inspecting hospital extensions and other works? Would it not be far better for them to send around experts to deal with such questions? Alternatively, they could ask prominent local people for their opinions, not only as to work done but also as to the merits of applications for donations. I will support an extension of time of one year, but no longer.

HON. E. H. ANGELO (North) [5.58]: I do not wish to cast a silent vote on this question. I have been in Parliament for 20 years, yet I have never cast a vote in favour of legalised betting.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Did you back the winner of the Melbourne Cup to-day?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: No, I had no bet on the Cup. For years I have listened carefully to arguments used in favour of

the Bill, but have never been convinced that one can legalise an evil that good may come of it. Perhaps I was fortunate on the whole when I was a youth. When I went out to earn my living I was led into a gambling school. In one night I lost a large sum of money and it took me 12 months in which to repay it.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You did not have a second go.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I will never forget the misery of that 12 months, trying to make up for that one lapse. During the rest of my life I have been watching the effects of gambling in the households of the people. I know hundreds who have lost good positions and have gone down in the world through gambling. I have heard of hundreds who have ended their lives as a result of gambling. I have known of thousands of families who have been reduced to poverty and great distress through gambling. I have never been able to vote for any Bill that legalised gambling.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member stands four-square against gambling.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, and I always will. No doubt this Bill will pass the second reading, but I shall certainly do my utmost to minimise this evil as far as possible if we reach the Committee stage. I shall, in Committee, vote for the duration of this Act to be for one year only. That is the only way in which Parliament can watch the evil and see that it does not grow in its influence. Instead of minimising gambling, as it was said it would do, I am certain this legislation has led to an increase in gambling, and that there is a lot of distress due to the operations of the Act. I see it every day. I hear of hundreds of cases of women who cannot afford their half a crown for a ticket. By spending this money they are depriving their children of even the necessities of life. I would welcome a clause that would prevent anyone from buying more than one ticket. Unfortunately these people do not stop at one ticket, but buy dozens.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is that hearsay too, like the rest of it?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I know what I am talking about. When I get up to say something I probably know more about the subject I am discussing than the hon. member knows about many of the subjects he discusses; and I do not vilify anyone when I

am on my feet. This Act is doing a lot of harm. I go to the pictures and see numbers of children there. They and I see a slide come on the screen, being a message from the Commonwealth Bank that people should save their pennies. Almost the next slide is another one saying, "Invest your half-a-crown and make thousands." If the Bill gets into Committee I will do my best to see that the duration of the Act is for one year and not for five. I think a good deal could also be saved in the commissions that are now paid for the sale of tickets.

Hon. H. Seddon: Why not vote against the Bill?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am going to do so. I have never done anything else. If the Bill does get into Committee I will endeavour to minimise the evil as much as I can. It would perhaps tend to minimise the evil if we cut down the commissions, as fewer tickets would then be sold. I always thought that a payment of ten per cent. was liberal and was one of the reasons why so many tickets were sold. We have so many hundreds of people in the State pushing these tickets upon the public. I will vote against the second reading, and if the Bill reaches the Committee stage will vote against the clauses which have been referred to by previous speakers.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East) [6.5]: I was not in the House when this measure first passed through the Chamber. I was always under the impression that it was designed to control gambling, and prevent the indiscriminate crossword puzzle business that was going on at the time. We have heard a lot about legalised gambling. I do not think we can stop gambling any more than we can stop the liquor trade, or stop the sea from rolling in at Cottesloe. I am sure this legislation has done a lot to encourage gambling, particularly amongst young people. We here know whether we can afford to spend half a crown in buying tickets, but many young fellows do not appreciate the value of the little they have. They go into a shop and with 9d. can get a quarter ticket.

Members: That is stopped now.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: No doubt they put their heads together, and still induce somebody else to go in and buy the ticket for them. It is very undesirable that a member of Parliament should take advantage of

what he gets out of the Lotteries Commission. I hope Mr. Cornell was not referring to anyone in this House when he made the remarks he did. I know it has been said elsewhere, but perhaps not intentionally. I do know of one man who fought his election on what he obtained in a certain town out of the sale of lottery tickets. I am not in favour of appointing an honorary lotteries commission, for I do not think country people would get a fair deal from such a body. Members of an honorary commission would not always be available. It might not be possible to get the Mayor of Fremantle and the other Mayors together when a country member came to Perth to ask for something for his particular electorate. I am in favour of cutting down the personnel of the Commission, and having one paid chairman to whom all could apply. I see no necessity for three or four members to be appointed. There should be a paid chairman always on duty to interview people who call to see the Commission. I have not been fortunate enough to be approached by any body of ladies upon this particular measure. I can make up my own mind on it.

Hon. J. Cornell: There is hope for you yet.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: We have heard about the trips members of the Commission are supposed to have made. I was sorry to hear those remarks. I do not think Mr. Kenneally would make trips into the country in the form of joy rides, and I feel sure he would have made those journeys in pursuance of his duties. Members of Parliament visit country districts to see how the people are getting on. I think Mr. Kenneally goes around the country to see that the Lotteries Commission's money has been well spent, and to ascertain if the communities concerned are in need of any more assistance. I have heard Mr. Kenneally at the opening of a hospital jocularly remark, "Support your lotteries." I do not see any harm in that. One does see outlandish advertisements published with a view to informing people that if they will invest half-a-crown in a lottery ticket they can convert it into thousands. There is no doubt a number of people do endeavour to get rich quickly by this means. I intend to vote for the second reading, but will vote against the clause which prolongs the life of this measure beyond 12 months.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [6.10]: I shall vote against the second reading of this Bill to register my disapproval of the manner in which the lotteries in many directions have been conducted. I have always protested against the payment of a commission of ten per cent., and I am in accord with the rather strong remarks of some members as to the political taint in connection with appointments to the Commission. It is most unfortunate that any Government, whatever its complexion, should have done what the present Government did in connection with an appointment to the Lotteries Commission. I have seen a letter from the Committee of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Western Australia. I do not know whether all members subscribe to the principle of being a total abstainer, but there can be no difference of opinion regarding the fact that those women are actuated by one motive only, namely the betterment of the State.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is admitted but—

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Will the hon. member keep quiet for a moment? I did not interject while he was speaking, and I expect him to reciprocate.

The PRESIDENT: I hope hon. members will respect the wishes of Mr. Hall.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I personally kept quiet whilst Mr. Holmes was speaking. One of the sentences in this letter is a very important one for a body of women such as this particular union to write. The sentence is as follows:—

In our opinion justice and right do not control the distribution of the proceeds.

Can members of Parliament ignore such a statement as that? I feel sure that this union has some ground for it, but I do not know what means are at my disposal to prove it. I wonder what method the Lotteries Commission adopts in disposing of these large sums. An interjection was made this afternoon to the effect that it is the duty of the Government to look after the indigent sick. I quite agree. We have had it brought before Parliament for several years that the condition of the Perth Public Hospital is disgraceful, that it is at all events in a very unsatisfactory state. To do justice to the poor suffering humanity from all parts of the State, to those who have to seek admission to this institution, it is the manifest and bounden duty of the Government to see that the necessary faci-

ties are provided. Here we have an item on the statement dated the 24th September to the effect that £2,087 has been allotted to the Perth Hospital laundry as a progress payment. There are those who say that the funds raised by the Lotteries Commission are being used by the Government of the day to sidestep obligations which are purely Government obligations. That is not the only item that could be challenged. I should like the Minister to tell us what method is employed in arriving at the distribution of money. Some requests are granted and others are refused. We ought to know on what ground these distributions are made. To register my disapproval of the way in which things are being conducted I intend to vote against the second reading. I have no doubt the Commission will continue to operate, but I hope not in the form set out in this Bill. Those who feel with me that the ten per cent. commission is too high, and that too much money is spent on advertising, will, I hope, be able to take some action with me both to reduce the commission and the amount spent in advertising.

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

**HON. C. H. WITTENOOM** (South-East) [7.30]: I support the second reading of the Bill. The lotteries have now been before the public for a considerable time, and have passed through their probationary period. From the standpoint of raising funds for charities, I regard them as fairly satisfactory. Even their bitterest opponents cannot assert that lotteries were started before other forms had been tried and found wanting. However, throughout the State there was great opposition to lotteries before they were established. The question was raised year after year, although it was not introduced into Parliament until comparatively recently. When the lotteries were initiated here, we knew little about them except that they had apparently been successful in Tasmania and Queensland for the purpose of raising funds. In view of the small amount of information then available Parliament did what we must all admit was the correct thing to do in giving the Lotteries Commission a tenure of only one year. That gave us an opportunity of acquiring knowledge as to the means by which money was collected and the way in which the drawings were carried out. Personally I have not much objection

to granting the longer tenure; on the other hand, I do not see that it is going to be highly advantageous even to the Commission. There is a good deal more information to be obtained as time goes on. Several points raised during the debate will, if taken note of, result in improvements. The lotteries have been run very well indeed. The Commissioners have been allowed to do the work as well as they could on their own, without interference. Distributions of funds have been left to the Commission, and there have been no complaints as to the monthly drawings. One hon. member suggested to-day that all the profits from lotteries should go to hospitals. That would be to defeat the object of the Lotteries Commission when formed. It is generally recognised that the lotteries were to take the place of the objectionable street collections and crossword puzzles, which however are still with us, unfortunately. The hospital stamp tax was supposed to find sufficient money for these institutions, but it has not done so. I quite agree that the 10 per cent. selling commission to agents is too high, though it was right at first, when the scheme required advertising. Now that the greater proportion of our population purchase lottery tickets, so high a selling commission has become unnecessary. Probably I shall oppose the longer term proposed for the Commissioners.

**HON. L. CRAIG** (South-West) [7.35]: It was extraordinary to note the exalted sentiments expressed by various hon. members this afternoon, but no doubt these sentiments were caused by the presence of ladies. I did not know there was so much eloquence and piety in the House. The main point of the Bill is whether the Commissioners shall be appointed for three years instead of one year, and whether the Act is to become a permanent statute. In principle I agree with both proposals, but the Act should first be put in proper order. I hope that next session amendments will be made rendering the Act suitable for a permanent place on the statute-book. I hope also that the Commissioners, or the Commissioner, will then have a longer term. If the appointment is worth anything, it should be for a longer tenure than at present. In Mr. Kenneally we have a man well fitted for the position of Chairman of Commissioners. Had there been another Govern-

ment in power at the time and a Minister of that Government had lost his seat when there was a vacancy on the Lotteries Commission, I am quite convinced that that Minister would have been appointed to that position by that Government.

Hon. J. Cornell: An astounding statement to make.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not think there is anything wrong with it. A man who has served the State as Mr. Kenneally has done, has a right to a semi-public appointment of that kind, provided he is fitted to hold the position. I personally regard Mr. Kenneally as so fitted. Mr. Parker, I think it was, stated that in his opinion the rest of the Commissioners were not needed. I agree with that view entirely, and have had the same idea in my mind for some time. The lotteries should be run by one Commissioner, with the aid of the secretary. The distribution of funds could easily be made by people appointed for the purpose, who would be paid fees for meetings held. It is ridiculous to condemn the lotteries. To-day we have had the spectacle of every club, nearly every office, and even Parliament House itself being the scene of sweeps on the Melbourne Cup. To say that we must not control gambling is rather foolish. Gambling will go on, and in its present form of sweeps is quite harmless. I have always understood that lotteries were established here for the purpose of absorbing money that was bound to be spent on lotteries and which, up to the date of the appointment of the Commission, was going to other States. That money is now absorbed in Western Australia, or most of it is. Many thousands of pounds, moreover, have come into Western Australia for tickets in our lotteries. Whether that is desirable or not I do not know, but certainly it is better for our money to remain in the State than for it to be spent on lotteries elsewhere. Our lotteries are doing good work. Like other members, I disagree with the present system of advertising. I have dealt with that aspect on two Addresses-in-reply. Too much money is spent by the Commission itself on advertising. One cannot stop agents from advertising, but surely it is not a function of the Commission itself to spend money in that way. The Lotteries Commissioners are appointed to deal with the money available and absorb it in local lotteries, and not to induce people to purchase tickets. I support the

second reading, though I cannot at this juncture agree to the extension of the term of the Commissioners or the placing of the Act permanently on the statute-book.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

### BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Anniversary of the Birthday of the Reigning Sovereign.
- 2, Forests Act Amendment Continuance.
- 3, Road Transport Subsidy.

Received from the Assembly.

### BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 28th October.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [7.45]:

This is one of the taxation Bills which will be considered by the House this session, and the whole question of taxation will be covered in the discussion on the two Bills. One cannot have helped noticing for some time past the rapid increase in the revenue which is being raised in Western Australia from taxation. Last year the amount received from taxation was in the vicinity of £2,500,000. Hon. members will realise that in a young country like this, if we are going to take such enormous sums from the people, it is bound to have an effect on the general expenditure of the community. There is one vicious principle that has been adopted in our taxation measures, and has been perpetuated from year to year, and that is the idea of exempting a constantly increasing section of the people from any taxation whatever. That constitutes class legislation, and obviously has a very undesirable effect. It leads that section to think that they are escaping their responsibilities. Anyone who considers the amount of money being expended on social services for the benefit of the whole community will realise that there should be a moral obligation upon all citizens to bear their share of the expense of providing those services. There is another undesirable effect. Besides inducing one section of the public to think that they are escaping their responsibilities, the system induces in another section the thought that they are being unjustly treated, and there is resentment aroused amongst them which I



think is altogether undesirable. Some of the most serious disturbances in the history of nations in the past have arisen on account of injustices in connection with taxation. Unfortunately, the experience in many other countries has been the same as in this country. Gradually, the imposts of Governments have increased until they have become almost intolerable, and the result frequently is that the whole system of government is brought into disrepute, and reorganisations take place that frequently are very severe on the whole community. There is one disquieting feature about our financial progress in Western Australia. Although it is recognised that to a large extent we have emerged from the depression, there is no attempt being made in any way to take advantage of the advance to provide for the future. Yet we know that depressions come in cycles, and there is a constantly increasing demand for money for Government expenditure through periods of depression. We have been advised again and again by those who have studied depression and boom cycles that Governments should make provision in times of prosperity against the day of adversity: but, as far as we can see, all that has happened in this State has been that there has been a losing race between expenditure on the one hand and revenue on the other, although revenue has been continually increasing. I stress the fact that it is a great pity something cannot be done to prevent Governments incurring deficits. I had hoped that that would have been achieved as a result of the Financial Emergency Agreement by the imposition of a 4 per cent. sinking fund when Governments floated loans to fund their deficits, but by a legal quibble that has been evaded, and Governments are just as industrious in creating deficits to-day as ever they were. We cannot help thinking that the lessons of the depression, severe as they were, have not been learnt by the Government or the workers of this country, and unfortunately it seems as though they are approaching the next time of crisis with the same spirit of unconcern as they approached the last one. There is every indication that the cost of living is going to increase much more rapidly in the future than in the past. The effect, of course, is going to be that there will be demands for increased remuneration on behalf of all sections of the public. One begins to wonder sometimes whether we are not entering upon the second phase associated with infla-

tion, and whether or not the engine is more or less getting out of control. Unfortunately those in charge of our financial affairs do not appreciate to what extent that runaway is taking place. Hon. members have had their attention drawn to a circular issued by the National Bank early in October in which a note of warning was sounded by an eminent lecturer in statistics at the Cambridge University, who said—

To those who can read the signals, it is clear that Australia has already passed the stage where further loan expenditure would be beneficial.

In other words, further loan expenditure is not going to be beneficial. I am inclined to think that he is on the right track. For some time past there has been a feeling of uneasiness at the way in which the burden of loan expenditure has increased in this country. A good deal of agitation for migration is based on the supposition that by increasing the population we will decrease the burden of loan indebtedness per head. When we realise that according to Budget figures nearly £2,000,000 of loss was incurred by this State in the way of returns from loan assets, I say it is time we seriously considered our position. The taxation measures being brought forward—this and another one—are designed to increase the returns to the Government. Although there is a remodelling of the Income Tax Assessment Act, the net result will be an increased revenue received by the Government of this State. One often wonders just exactly how long this will continue before people begin to feel the effect of the taking of money out of production and devoting it to Government purposes. This Bill contains the old familiar amendment of replacing a definite figure as the minimum rate at which taxation should be imposed under the Financial Emergency Act by an indefinite minimum of the basic wage. I hope the House will adopt the stand it adopted last year, and insist on a definite figure instead of this very wide definition of the basic wage as the minimum point at which taxation shall be imposed. The principle upon which the emergency tax was introduced was that every section of the public, with the exception of those receiving very small amounts, should pay something towards the tax. It was an attempt to fill in the gaps which

have been created by constant amendments of the Income Tax Assessment Act. But unfortunately since that Bill went on the statute-book the Labour Party have been constantly whittling away from the lower end, until we have a basis pretty close to the minimum basis on which the income tax operates. There are further amendments in the Bill. One affects the employer as being responsible for the tax he does not collect from his employee. I will leave that to the employer to deal with. It looks to me as though it is imposing a penalty on the employer which might be unjust. There are cases where men are engaged casually, and if it were found that the casual workers were entitled to pay a higher rate of tax than what appeared on the surface when they were engaged, it looks as though an injustice would be created were the employer asked to pay the difference when he had been under the impression that he had been charging the correct rate. There are other amendments associated with the Bill which I take it the House will deal with in Committee, but I did wish to make these general remarks on the subject of taxation because the trend to-day is altogether undesirable and in the long run will act detrimentally against those people who think they are taking advantage of injustice to another section of the community. I intend to support the Bill with the idea of seeking amendments in Committee.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—WHALING.**

### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Taking or killing of certain kinds of whales prohibited:

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The clause opens by stating that a person shall not take or kill certain kinds of whales. Whom would "person" include? Some whaling fleets are owned in Norway, and are operated by managers and other persons here. The boats that take the whales are in charge of a harpooner who may not be the captain. Who would be responsible for the penalties pro-

vided, or who would be liable to imprisonment?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The word "person" is covered by the Interpretation Act. The company controlling the whaling could be sued.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: But who would be imprisoned if imprisonment were necessary?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That can be left to the Crown Law Department.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 to 24, Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

## **BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [S.4] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is substantially the same as the measure that was narrowly defeated in this Chamber last session. The Bill seeks to legalise the establishment of the State Government Insurance Office, to validate all its past transactions, and to authorise the office to engage in certain defined classes of insurance business. These include workers' compensation, employers' liability, and ordinary accident insurance business, together with fire, marine and miscellaneous risk. It proposes that the State Office shall be deemed to be an incorporated insurance office for the purposes of Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act, 1912-1934. Provision is made for the office to be under the control of a Minister, and, as regards its administration, certain sections of the State Trading Concerns Act dealing with these matters shall apply with the necessary changes. The sections I have mentioned deal with the keeping of banking accounts at the Treasury (Section 7, State Trading Concerns Act); contribution of interest and sinking fund (Section 8); interest on capital expenditure from revenue (Section 9); charges for the use of property and services (Section 10); withdrawal of money to credit (Section 11); temporary investment of moneys (Section 12); method of accounting (Section 13, 14 and 20); auditing of accounts (Sections 19 and 21); provision to meet deficiency of funds (Section 17, Sub-

section 2); Annual Estimates (Section 16), and the laying of accounts and reports before Parliament (Section 22). The State Insurance Office has been operating since 1926, and there is no need for me to repeat the reasons responsible for its establishment. Suffice it to say that, despite the criticism levelled at the Labour Government of the day for creating that office, no action was taken by another administration to terminate its existence.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That was during the depression.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The reason was that the Government of the day could not afford to lose the profit from the State Insurance Office.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: There was not any.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think most members will agree that the State Insurance Office should be legalised for the purpose of carrying out certain classes of insurance business, although they may be unwilling to empower the office to operate in every field. As members are aware, there is at present no insurance office approved by the Minister for the purposes of Section 10 of the Workers' Compensation Act, and, as a result, the compulsory provisions of that Act cannot legally be enforced.

Hon. H. Seddon: Why?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Unfortunately, many employers are taking advantage of that provision by failing to insure their workers against accident. That is one of the chief reasons why the State Insurance Office should be legalised. This condition obtains on the goldfields to a greater extent than elsewhere.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: There are many glaring instances.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In those districts cases have been known where workers injured in the course of their employment have been denied the compensation which Parliament has declared to be their right, because they have been uninsured and their employers have been without means.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How will this measure help them?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member will realise that before I have concluded my speech. However, there are other considerations in regard to the proposals relating to the transaction of workers' compensation business by the State Office.

It has been submitted that since this type of insurance is social in character, and is, furthermore, compulsory, the State has a duty to make the insurance available as cheaply and efficiently as possible to employers. That is to say, premiums should not be loaded with charges, such as Federal and State taxation, rates, rent, commission and fees to agents. In this connection, I point out that, while during the five years ended 30th June, 1936, the administration expenses of the State Office in respect of workers' compensation and employers' liability, varied from 1.5 to 2.6 per cent. of the premium income, the expense ratio of the private companies during the same period, inclusive of commission and agents' charges, ranged from 35.2 per cent. to 42.6 per cent.

Hon. L. Craig: The figures for the private companies include taxation.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: The Government Office paid no taxation.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I stress those figures.

Hon. L. Craig: They do not afford a fair comparison.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Furthermore, it has been shown that even if the administration expenses of the State Office are made comparable with those of the private companies by the inclusion of certain charges, such as taxation, rates, etc., the expense ratio of the former would not exceed 10 per cent. A survey of the operations of the State Office since its inception to the 30th June, 1936, discloses that premiums received covering industrial diseases totalled £523,454 17s.; premiums under general accident amount to £608,182 12s. 5d., and interest earned on investments £26,413 7s. 6d. Claims and medical expenses under all headings amounted to £798,621 4s. 1d. and administration expenses and bad debts written off £33,178 10s. 8d. I understand that as mining diseases are an uncertain quantity, it is necessary to build up substantial reserves to meet possible future losses. At present the classes of insurance business transacted by the State Office represent the less profitable types. In other parts of the world where State-owned offices operate, it has been recognised that those offices are entitled to transact other than the more risky classes of insurance. In Queensland, for example, the State Office operates five separate types of insurance business. There the

loss which has been suffered in recent years on ordinary and domestic workers' compensation insurance has been more than balanced in other departments. Thus, while during the two years ended the 30th June, 1936, there were losses of £115,633 and £6,147, in respect of workers' compensation and miners' phthisis, substantial profits were yielded by the fire, marine and miscellaneous accident departments. The respective profits for the two years mentioned were as follows:—

Fire Insurance Department ..	£151,033
Miscellaneous Accident Department ..	£22,519
Marine Department .. ..	£6,447

During the same period the Government insurance office of New South Wales earned profits amounting to £48,735 in its workers' compensation department. Premium income amounted to £261,800. On the other hand, in the Fire and Marine Department where premiums during the two years amounted to only £40,479, there was a profit of £55,492. In New Zealand, too, the State Office has successfully carried out fire insurance. The figures for 1935-36 are as follows:—

Premiums .. .. .	£199,898
Claims paid .. .. .	£53,151
Administration expenses .. ..	£53,779
Profit .. .. .	£59,731

The New Zealand State Office carries on its business in competition with more than 50 companies. Since 1923 it has operated a system of paying rebates to policy-holders, who have benefited thereby to the extent of £350,000 during the last fourteen years. However, in addition to this sum, it is certain that the insuring public of New Zealand have been able to effect considerable savings owing to a reduction in the private companies' premium rates consequential upon the competition provided by the State Office, whose main aim has been to provide insurance benefits at the lowest possible rates. In this connection, it is interesting to compare the activities of the State Office and the private companies in respect of fire and marine insurance in Western Australia. It has been disclosed that the State Office has been insuring State owned property against fire and marine risks at considerably lower rates than those charged by the majority of the private companies. In regard to the operations of the private companies, it has been shown that claims represent only 21.4 per cent. of the premium income from fire insur-

ance business, while, on the other hand, the corresponding ratio for commission, agents' charges, and other expenses was 50.5 per cent. With marine insurance, the claim ratio was even lower, being equivalent to only 8.1 per cent. of the premium income. In this case the expense ratio was 36.3 per cent. In view of these facts, it is considered that the insuring public should have the opportunity of obtaining fire and marine insurance cover for the State Office, whose expenses are considerably less than those charged into the premiums asked by the private companies. Undoubtedly the entry of the State Office into the field of general insurance would result in a substantial reduction of the cost of such insurance to the public of Western Australia. At present, with over 70 private insurance companies operating in this State, it is inevitable that considerable sums of money should be used by them in fighting each other for the comparatively small amount of business available, rather than for reducing premiums. This is a type of competition that does not benefit anybody. However, taking experience in other parts of the world as a criterion, it is certain that if this measure becomes law, we may look forward to a reduction of premium rates in the future. This view is supported by a scrutiny of the figures relating to the general insurance business transacted by the private companies in Western Australia (exclusive of employers' liability and workers' compensation). The average ratio of expenditure to premium income over the five-year period ended 30th June, 1936, was 76 per cent., comprising claims 29.7 per cent. and commission and other expenses 46.3 per cent. Over the same period the average ratio of commission and other expenses to premium income incurred by the private companies in its workers' compensation business was 38.6 per cent. As I have already indicated, the comparable ratio for the State Office would be at most about 10 per cent. It is obvious, therefore, that if the State Office is authorised to engage in general insurance business, the insuring public will benefit by way of reduced premium rates. There can be no doubt that the extra business which would be undertaken by the State Office with the enactment of this measure would prove profitable both to the taxpayer and the insuring public. To-day we are rapidly approaching the stage when insurance will be regarded as essential to social security as

the other services maintained for the welfare of the people. For that reason I submit that the State is legitimately entitled to enter the insurance field. I earnestly request all members to become acquainted with the report of the select committee of another place which investigated this question. They will find in that report a mass of figures and valuable information. If they read it carefully, and judge it impartially, I am sure they will give their support to the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

### **BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 26th October.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [S.23]: I desire to quote from a report written by Prof. Hytten. This has been referred to before in this Chamber and I am alluding to it again to satisfy the Minister that I do recognise the very serious problem with which we are confronted in connection with road services versus rail transport. The professor wrote this report first of all in 1933 and it was circulated by the Bank of New South Wales—

One of the greatest difficulties with the question of competition between road and rail transport is that few seem able to view the question dispassionately. That is certainly true of the protagonists in the battle, and it seems to hold also of the general public, which is prepared to take one side or the other and argue with the greatest conviction without the slightest knowledge of even the fundamentals of the question. It seems necessary, therefore, to set out as plainly as possible the facts.

Let it be said at the outset that no country has as yet found a solution to the problem. Expedients of all kinds have been tried, and have achieved some success, but no scheme has been entirely successful. That should not stop us from trying again, and there are indeed in some of the experiments tried, the germs of ideas that may eventually point the way to success. . . .

In seeking a solution, the public interest must be considered to the exclusion of all other, keeping in mind the fact that although the railways in Australia are public property, the public interests may, nevertheless, be best served by the curtailment of their operations.

It cannot be denied that that is a very fair statement to make and if we approach it on

the lines laid down by the professor we should not then get away from the high standard he sets and we should not allow ourselves to become petty. We must realise that this is a big national question. We are aware of the millions of money invested in our railways and we know that if the railways were to close down to-morrow, as we have been reminded on many occasions, we should still have to find a big sum by way of interest that would have to be paid on the capital that has been expended on the railways. I realise the difficulties with which we are faced, not because I happen to be from the country, or because I belong to the Country Party, but because, in travelling up and down to attend the sittings of Parliament—and I daresay I do as much travelling as any other member in this House—the fact is brought home to me very forcibly that I frequently travel over a railway that is owned by a private company. I should be very happy if somebody in the course of the debate could enlighten me on something that I have just discovered. I have the parent Act before me and it would appear that when the State Transport Act was framed, the fact that we had a private railway in Western Australia was entirely forgotten. I quote from Section 11, Subsection 2, which says—

If in the opinion of the board the services of any railway or tramway as aforesaid are inadequate, and the requirements of the district are or can be better served by road and/or air transport, the board may recommend the close or partial suspension of service of the railway or tramway.

I turn now to the definition of "railway" and this is what I find—

"Railway" means any railway belonging to His Majesty in Western Australia which has been or may be declared open for traffic by notice in the "Government Gazette."

Any railway belonging to His Majesty! It certainly seems that when the parent Act was passed members representing our part of the State forgot about the existence of the Midland Railway Company because the definition of "railway" specifically sets out "any railway belonging to His Majesty." So it seems that the Transport Board would have no control over the Midland Railway Company. To me that is a very serious matter. I want to connect that up with a statement made by the Premier when speaking in another place on the 11th August last. I am entitled to refer to that be-

cause during the passage of the parent Act to which I have referred, a promise was made to us. It was realised that the Act was going to inflict a hardship or add a further financial burden on the farmers. And the promise was made that if the Bill was passed—and it was necessary that it should be passed to protect the railway finances—the Commissioner of Railways would reduce freights or consider the advisableness of reducing the freights. I am very pleased to say that the Commissioner kept that promise, at any rate, to some extent. This is what the Premier said—

In 1934-35 when we passed the State Transport Co-ordination Act and coincidentally promised to reduce railway freights, which was done, we estimated to rebate freights amounting to £105,000 annually.

The member for Irwin-Moore (Hon. P. D. Ferguson) interjected at that stage, "It was not done on the Midland line." The Premier continuing said—

Had those rebates not been made, calculating on the basis of the increased traffic carried last year, railway revenue would have been better off by nearly £200,000.

The benefits of those reductions have been enjoyed by people who are fortunate enough to be operating in parts served by Government railways, whereas, as the member for Irwin-Moore pointed out in the Legislative Assembly, not one penny of that reduction has been enjoyed by people served by the Midland Company's line. I believe that if the position were explained definitely, no member of either House would suggest that the treatment was equitable. For my part, I say it is distinctly inequitable. I know that the representatives of the Midland Railway Company were just as anxious as the Government railway officials to have the Transport Co-ordination Act passed. One night when returning home, one of the company's inspectors inquired anxiously if the Bill, when it was originally before Parliament, was likely to be agreed to and when it was likely to go through. I asked him if it would affect his company. He replied, "They are cutting into us all over the place." As a matter of fact, goods were being transported by truck as far north as Mingenew. As representatives of our respective provinces, we exercise our undoubted right when we criticise Govern-

ment facilities and services, and naturally I desire to be fair to the Midland Railway Company. I feel that the Minister was not quite fair in his reply to certain remarks that I made during the Address-in-reply debate. I have here a letter from the Geraldton Chamber of Commerce to me under date the 23rd October last in which it is stated—

I would like to bring under your notice the disabilities suffered by the fishing industry of this port in regard to marketing fish and crayfish, in particular the matter of freight charges by our railways. In this case due to the charges made by the Midland Railway Co., which are a very great handicap. As an example, I would cite to you that on Tuesday the 19th inst. I sent from Geraldton, on behalf of a client, a consignment of crayfish containing 200 dozen weighing 1 ton 6 cwt. 2 qrs., and paid thereon freight of £10, wharf haulage, wharf dues and berthage £1 1s. 2d., a total of £11 1s. 2d. This works out at 1s. 1½d. per dozen, which, in my opinion, and in the opinion of this Chamber, is an excessive charge. I might mention that it is not as if we receive any special facilities which one might easily expect for a perishable article of food, but the Railway Department gives us any old "V" van with louvres, irrespective of whether the van is quite suitable for the carriage of this commodity or otherwise.

He refers to the Railway Department because the Government Railways supply the vans, and I shall have something to say about that later. The letter continues—

There are, I understand, certain vans at this centre used for the transport of rabbits to markets, which would be more suitable for our requirements, but have been denied us though they have not been in use for rabbit haulage. In view of the many other handicaps imposed on the fishing industry of this port it would be appreciated if you would take such action as you think would bring about a reduction of freights as affecting the transport of fish.

I will connect that matter up with the Bill before the House by pointing out that the Chamber of Commerce has raised the question of excessive charges with the Transport Board, together with the want of proper facilities with reference to refrigeration vans, but all to no purpose. On the 13th April the secretary of the Transport Board wrote to the manager of the Geraldton Iceworks, who had brought this particular matter under the board's notice and applied for permission to despatch the fish by

road, and in the course of his letter he said—

In reply to your letters dated the 16th March and the 1st April last requesting permission to transport fish from Geraldton to Perth by road, I have to advise that my board has given very careful consideration to this matter and after taking account of all the circumstances of the case has directed me to inform you that a license as requested cannot be granted.

I was then approached and asked to put the matter before the Transport Board. I did so, and pointed out one or two other questions to which attention had not been drawn before. As a result I received the following reply from the secretary of the Transport Board—

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 23th ult. requesting reconsideration of the application submitted by the Geraldton Ice Works for a license to transport fish from Geraldton to Perth. This letter was placed before the last meeting of my board, when I was directed to inform you that it was only after very thorough inquiries had been made in regard to the matter that the board refused to grant the application. Bearing the result of those inquiries in mind, and the absence of any new information in support of the application, the board is unable to vary the decision already given.

I consider, seeing that Geraldton is connected with the metropolis by a private railway, the Transport Board under the Act as framed at present is powerless to do anything, and the Act should be amended so as to give the board power to insist on something like up-to-date service being provided by the Midland Railway Company, as is available on the Government Railways. I believe that the Transport Board has advised the closing of a railway in the southern part of the State.

Hon. L. Craig: Yes, the line to Nornalup.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Apparently the Midland Railway Company, which controls a private line, can do as it likes and the Transport Board has no authority to intervene. That is not as it should be. If that is not sufficient to convince hon. members of the situation, I ask their indulgence to enable me to again quote some figures that I placed before them on a previous occasion. It is not merely a question of the transport of fish to the metropolitan markets, because other commodities are affected as well. However, if it is desired to send a ton of fish to Perth, it costs £5. That fish must be packed in half-a-ton of

ice, which makes the consignment weigh in the aggregate 1½ tons. With a rate of £5 a ton, it means that £7 10s. has to be paid to send a ton of fish to Perth. That is not the way to encourage an industry, of which we have heard so much from members, including Mr. Angelo. People have invested their money in that particular branch of industry, and are endeavouring to supply fish to meet the demands of the consumers in the metropolitan area. I have shown how they are being hampered in their efforts. When I spoke about that matter before, Mr. Nicholson asked, by way of interjection, if we could not make use of the steamers travelling down the coast. There again we are up against it. The Singapore boats do not call at Geraldton on their way south and we are therefore confined to the State ships. Perhaps when the new State vessel arrives the position will be better, but at present the Koolinda arrives at Geraldton in the early hours of the morning, touches the wharf, lands one or two passengers and the mails, and is then off again. It is quite inconvenient to send fish down by that boat. However, I wish to repeat the figures that I gave previously regarding the charges that had been in force for years. These figures I maintain definitely prove that the settlers along the Midland Railway are not being dealt with equitably, because of the absence of competition. If a ton of sugar is sent from Perth to Mingenew over the Midland line, a distance of 227 miles, the cost is 91s. 2d., whereas if a ton of sugar were sent over any of the Government lines for a similar distance the cost would be 54s. 10d. Surely to goodness, there is no justice in a system that will permit of such differentiation. Then, if a small parcel of groceries weighing 3 cwt. were sent from Perth to Mingenew, the cost would be 22s. 3d., whereas a similar parcel sent a similar distance over any of the Government lines would cost 15s. A ton of wool sent from Mingenew to Perth would cost 82s. 8d., whereas a ton of wool sent a similar distance over any of the Government lines would cost 62s. 8d. That is the sort of thing that has been going on, and the Transport Board refuses to act.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It is all governed by an Act of Parliament.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: And when we have the chance, we should endeavour to amend the Act so that the position may be rectified.

It certainly does not appear that we have any power under the Act as it stands to enable this position to be altered. Mr. Drew was Minister in charge of the House when the Act was passed originally and he may be able to enlighten us as to whether the Act gives the Transport Board any power to deal with transport matters along the Midland line. In point of fact, they have been able to eliminate road transport along the line and, if that is so, then I should think they should be allowed to act with regard to the Midland railway freights with a view to effecting a reduction, particularly as we received promises to that end when the legislation was passed. I realise that my remarks have not much application to the Bill under discussion, but I thought it my duty to point out the disabilities from which a section of the people are suffering, with a view to ascertaining if something cannot be done to rectify the position. On broad lines I am with Mr. Thomson in the desire he has indicated, because we should do all that is possible to make the position easier for the men who are on the land. I recognise that railway revenue must be protected, but it has been laid down by authorities that unless we have up-to-date, railway management, everyone will suffer. I do not desire to discuss railway matters now but I could mention some phases that would indicate that our railway management is not as efficient as it should be, and while present-day conditions obtain, there is every reason for complaint. Before I resume my seat, I am reminded that I am in receipt of a letter complaining bitterly about the transport from Wiluna to one of the outside settlements named Red Hill. There complaints have been made to the local authority as to the attitude of the taxi drivers, and the secretary of the board states that they have not received the attention that they should have received when the complaints were forwarded to the Transport Board. However, one of the members of the Transport Board went to Wiluna and in consequence of his visit the taxi people gave a better service, according to their clients all the attention the local authority demanded. But immediately that member of the Transport Board left, the taxi drivers went back on it and the service is again causing a lot of discontent. The warden should be called upon to deal with that matter. It is one of those cases that could well be decided by a man of local

knowledge. The resident magistrates throughout the State are Government officials, and of course one would want a very good case to satisfy a magistrate in going against the Transport Board.

**HON. H. V. PIESSE** (South-East) [8.47]: I will support the Bill because I can see the advantages that there would be under it for the producers of those two geographically unfortunate districts, Kojonup and the Williams. There are other centres similarly situated, but I can talk with first-hand knowledge of those two centres. When the parent Act was introduced into the House, it was introduced with the idea of co-ordinating railway and motor transport. To say the least of it, for the Kojonup and Williams districts it has been robbery of transport. Most of us have heard members representing the South-West Division speak of those two centres, but I want to impress upon members the position of Williams and the distance it is from Perth by rail. Only last week, after listening to the introduction of this Bill by Mr. Thomson, I personally called at Williams and discussed the matter with two business men there. Both of those men are endeavouring to give service to the people of that town. They are not in a position to purchase very large quantities of groceries and store requirements and are therefore under a big disadvantage as compared with such towns as Collie and Narrogin. The distance from Williams to Perth is 190 miles by rail and 100 miles by road. Then we have another railway running to Dwarda, and it is only 115 miles from Perth to Crossman. But the Transport Board will not permit goods to be transported from the Crossman siding to Williams. Surely that would be co-ordination of transport if they would allow the goods going to Williams to be sent by rail to Crossman and then transported on into the town of Williams. The business men of Williams I spoke to said that the business men of Collie and Narrogin could easily under-sell them, because the freights to those two centres would be railed in truck loads and the people of Williams could not load their goods in wholesale quantities, or at the same rate. When Mr. Thomson was speaking, Mr. Williams interjected that the town of Williams had not made very great progress. When the Great Southern railway



was built, if the people in the south had had their way, that railway, instead of running through Beverley and York, would certainly have gone across from Brookton and so avoided that very heavy grade which is the most costly thing that our railways have to contend with to-day. The old town of Williams was the original stopping place between Perth and Albany. It is a very fertile district and a good wool-producing district also. Surely the Act could be amended to permit those dealers in wool who have their own trucks to cart their own wool. We are not asking that contractors should be permitted to cart wool, but only those producers who own their own trucks and have their own wool to cart to the market. Surely that concession should be given. It might interfere slightly with railway transport, but we have been told by the Minister that certain freights were reduced after the Bill was introduced. I quite agree that the Government's promise has been carried out in that regard, but in such centres as I have referred to the injustice is still in evidence, and one has to pay excessive mileage by rail. When Mr. Thomson was referring to the matter of appeal to a magistrate, Mr. Craig interjected that there was still the right of appeal. Certainly those people that held licenses when the Transport Act came into force have the right to appeal, particularly in the metropolitan area. But I remember that shortly after the Act became law, quite a number of motor transport workers in the country were persuaded to agree to run their trucks for a certain period, after which their licenses would be cancelled. That was brought about because a great majority of those men who were doing road transport had not paid for their trucks, and so they were in the position that after the Act came into force most of those trucks would have to be returned to the merchants who had sold them, because they were under hire purchase agreements. All the licenses except one were cancelled by the Transport Board. Then the railways suddenly came to the conclusion that they must remove the station-master from Williams. A meeting took place in the town, and it was decided to agree to the cancellation of the only license that remained in the district, so as to retain the services of the station-master. My colleague and I approached the Minister for Railways, with the result that

he supported his Commissioner, and so we could not get them to vary their decision about the removal of the station-master. But after the cancellation of the only remaining license; the station-master remained, and he is the only one in an area stretching 30 miles on the one side and 40 or 50 miles on the other side. I think the two simple amendments that Mr. Thomson seeks in this Bill are quite justifiable. The Minister, speaking on the 30-mile radius, said that people had opened up business places purposely to get a larger range of distance. Surely there could be an amendment made to defeat that. I was responsible for getting the radius out to the distance it is, and one has only to look at the Denmark-Albany transport to see that, so long as it co-operates with the railways, and the goods are transported and then sent on by railway, they can now be carted up to 25 miles. I definitely intend to support Mr. Thomson in that clause and I hope the House, if it cannot see its way to passing that clause, will let us have the right of appeal to a magistrate and also the right for a trader owning his own truck to cart his own wool.

Hon. E. H. Hall: Cannot he cart wool now?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: No, but he can cart wheat. I have seen it carted from Kulin and super carted back. That, of course, was in answer to the railway authorities who say that super cannot economically be carted by road. It has always been thrown up to the farmers and graziers that the railways are running on cheap freights on wheat and super, the only things they are giving away to the producer. When we have a failure of crops in Western Australia it is easy to see how the railway revenue recedes, but when we have a sound harvest the railway finances are much more satisfactory. Therefore it seems that, after all, reasonably payable freights are charged for the transport of wheat, and super also, by the railways. I have been twitted with supporting this Bill on the one hand and recommending the retention of the railway between Nornalup and Denmark on the other. I am consistent. In that instance, there is a splendid lot of timber country still available, and this could be thrown open. I have no doubt that if concessions were given to private companies to work that timber, there would be no need to worry about connecting up the Denmark-Nornalup railway through to Pemberton, and that private companies would soon use that

railway en route for Albany. Road transport could never compete in the carting of timber over many miles. I claim that I am consistent in my recommendation as to the retention of the railway, which is a very important adjunct to the settlement of the district. I give this Bill my wholehearted support, and will vote for the second reading.

**HON. G. B. WOOD** (East) [9.3]: I am not opposed to the Transport Act in general, but I do think it has acted harshly in some cases. I know of a man who would like to cart firewood to Perth on his own truck. He grows the wood on his own property, which is 50 or 60 miles from Perth by road. He is not allowed to cart the wood.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: For his own use?

**HON. G. B. WOOD**: The alternative is to cart the wood to York, a distance of ten miles, then send it 78 miles by train, and transfer it to a motor truck on arrival at Perth. That is a hardship in the case of this man. I went to the Transport Board on his behalf. He has now been allowed one truck a month, provided he does not sell the wood he brings to Perth. He, therefore, brings it to Perth and gives it to his friends. If this man brought one bag of wheat to Perth, he could fill up the rest of his truck with wood. The Chairman of the Board told me that. It is a peculiar thing.

Hon. L. Craig: Why does he not do it?

**HON. G. B. WOOD**: He is too honest. He grows no wheat for himself. If he wished, he could bring down one bag of wheat and two tons of wood. Such things should be cleared up and such hardships removed. We criticised the board last year. This time I am glad to say the board is amenable to reason. It is a very different proposition going to the present board. Mr. Piesse referred to the cartage of wool. I do not see why a farmer should not cart his own wool in his own truck. It is going too far to prevent a man from doing that. There are other places than Kojonup. There are the districts at the back of Dale, at the back of Williams, at the back of York, and the Darkan district. It is unfortunate that the people concerned cannot cart their own wool to Perth in their own trucks. As it is, they have to cart their wool 20 or 30 miles away from Perth to reach the railway. I fail to see why crude honey should not be included in the schedule. It is a primary

product. The Moora people received a concession from the Midland Railway when there was competition from the road people. When the road people were cut out by the Transport Board, the Midland Railway took away that concession. That matter too could be looked into. If it was good enough to make that concession to the Moora and Gingin people when there was transport on the road, surely they could do it now. They have taken advantage of the Transport Board to put up rates. Mr. Holmes talked about political railways. The Country Party has been blamed for the construction of many lines. The Kojonup and Williams railways were constructed before the Country Party was thought of. I hope people will not keep on blaming the Country Party for these things. Every railway had to secure the approval of Parliament. The railways were not put there for the benefit of farmers, but for the benefit of the whole State. What will become of the rest of the State if wheat and wool are not carted to the seaboard? That is often overlooked by city members. We know that farmers require railways, but only as much as the city people do. Let members not throw all the responsibility for railway construction upon the farmers. We admit the railways are not paying, but many other things do not pay. I support Mr. Piesse in his references to the Nornalup railway. Very careful consideration should be given before that line is torn up. We know it is not paying, but that is not to say it will not pay in the future. Mr. Craig said there was only one case where a man could cart super by truck. I could mention another, so that makes two such cases. One man definitely offered to cart my super to the farm from Midland Junction. It was back-loading. I support the Bill, but I am not opposed to the Transport Act, as it is a very desirable piece of legislation. It has, however, brought hardship upon some of our primary producers.

**HON. E. H. ANGELO** (North) [9.7]: I am loth to vote for any amendment to the Transport Act. I do not think we have had it on the statute-book long enough to obtain anything like a suitable return from it. Railways had to be protected, and some rather drastic laws had to be made. I join with Mr. Wood in saying that the present board is certainly much easier to get on with than the previous board was.

Recently I had occasion to visit the chairman about a certain concession required by the Gascoyne fruitgrowers. I found him not only willing to meet our request, but he even suggested something better. I would not like to have the Act interfered with, therefore. It is true, we are not allowed to bring down fruit by truck unless the circumstances are abnormal.

Hon. L. Craig: It would not pay you to bring bananas down by road.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, we have brought down some consignments, and it has paid, provided there has been back-loading. It has paid to bring the produce to Northampton, and rail it to Perth from there.

Hon. L. Craig: Has it arrived in good order?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Mostly good order. Mr. Thomson, ably backed by Mr. Piesse, has brought up a case of hardship for the Williams district. It is certainly an exceptional case when we consider that the distance by rail is 190 miles, and by road it is only 100. There should be a concession to meet a case like that.

Hon. L. Craig: Could that not be done through the Transport Board, instead of by amending the Act?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: It should be. Mr. Piesse stated his case clearly. Surely it is deserving of a concession. The business people of Williams should be allowed to use their own trucks to take their goods from Crossman's siding to Williams.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Another truck was allowed to run to Boorabbin, a difference of only 15 miles.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The debate might be adjourned, and the board asked if something could be done to meet the situation, thereby rendering an amendment of the Act unnecessary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The same board gave its decision in this case as it did in the other case.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The injustice is still there.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Against my better judgment, I feel inclined to support the Bill, although I do not want to see the Act amended. The case put up appears to be so deserving that unless we are informed that a little consideration will be given, I

shall be inclined to vote for the second reading.

On motion by Hon. L. B. Bolton, debate adjourned.

## BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

*In Committee.*

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Commencement:

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I suggest that the Chief Secretary report progress. Mr. Nicholson is ill, and will be unable to attend tonight. He has charge of a number of amendments.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The request is a strange one. I am anxious to make as much progress as possible. Surely the whole of the proceedings should not be hung up because one member is absent. If there is any particular amendment in which Mr. Nicholson is interested, I would not mind postponing the clause in question.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 6:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The term "Officer" includes constable. Is a constable recognised as a servant of the municipality in which he is stationed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The principal Act has no definition of "Officer," and so this opportunity is taken to make the position clear. Any person acting for a municipality is an officer within the meaning of the Act.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I understood that a constable was under the control of the Commissioner of Police. How can a municipality have control of a constable?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It does not necessarily follow that the constable will be a member of the police force.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It does not say "police constable."

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: This is a highly important clause with regard to ownership of land and voting powers.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Paragraph (b) is dependent on what is done with a subsequent clause. In the interests of all members it may be well to postpone the further

consideration of Clause 3 until Clause 48 has been dealt with. I move—

That further consideration of Clause 3 be postponed.

Motion put and passed; the clause postponed.

#### Clause 4—Amendment of Section 12:

Hon. H. SEDDON: In view of the fact that few members have the parent Act before them, it is desirable that the effect of amendments proposed should be stated. Section 12 deals with the powers of the Governor in regard to boundaries.

The CHAIRMAN: This clause merely proposes an addition to Section 12.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The clause speaks for itself. If it is necessary to describe the effect of every clause in the Bill, we shall be engaged on this measure for some time. Occasionally it is necessary to describe the boundaries of municipal districts after alterations have been made. In the case of the City of Perth the outlying land upon the foreshore has to be included in Perth city boundaries as the result of reclamation work which has taken place. Under the Act as it stands, there is no power to make the necessary alterations.

Clause put and passed.

#### Clause 5—Amendment of Section 25:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This follows on the previous amendment. It has been suggested by the Works Department in order to prescribe the procedure to be adopted when the alteration is made.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: It is a consequential amendment really.

Clause put and passed.

#### Clause 6—Amendment of Section 49:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I fail to see that an owner or occupier should not have a vote for each and every ward in which he has property. The clause should be struck out.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: During ten years' association with municipalities, never have I come across anybody who objected to plural voting for municipalities. The clause is entirely unjust. If a man has property of considerable value in various wards, and thus naturally and rightly pays more in rates than a person holding the minimum property in one ward, the former should have more voting power. Times arise when municipalities have to raise loans, and they must raise them on the rateable value of the

property in the town. Therefore a person paying high rates has a much heavier financial responsibility, and should be represented by councillors having much the same interests as he has. I oppose the clause.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This clause is consequential upon a later clause, No. 17.

The CHAIRMAN: I am prepared to allow on this clause a general discussion of the abolition of plural voting.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Wittenoom has suggested that the ratepayer who owns property in more than one ward is carrying a big responsibility, and should be entitled to a bigger say than the man owning only one property in the municipality, quite irrespective of the value of that particular property. If a municipality is subdivided into eight wards, one ratepayer may have eight separate properties, one in each of those eight wards, of the minimum value. Mr. Wittenoom would say that that man was entitled to eight votes. But if another ratepayer had a property in only one ward, worth perhaps £100 more than the other man's eight properties put together, Mr. Wittenoom would say that he was entitled to a greater voting power still.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Mr. Wittenoom would give that man two votes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: And the other man would have eight votes. Such a position is not logical. The time has long gone by for giving property owners so much more voting power than other ratepayers. Western Australia is one of the few States in the Commonwealth where that system is still tolerated. I do not subscribe to the dictum that because a man is possessed of property of a particular value he should be entitled to more voting power than any other ratepayer. The principle does not square with the modern outlook of things. It is time we became a little more up-to-date in matters of this kind.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I have often heard the argument used in the other House that because there is one vote one adult for the voting for representatives in Parliament, the same should apply to a municipality or a road board. I cannot see that for one moment. The person who votes for a member of Parliament is voting for representation in the House that makes laws by which everybody has to abide. But the municipality is a corporation or community of owners who get together to control their

affairs in the same way as a company, and the man with big interests should have more voting power than the man with a small interest. In a company the man with a hundred shares has a hundred times the voting power of the man with one share.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Not always.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: No, but in most cases. The present law has restricted that voting power as far as it can go. The utmost a ratepayer can have is two votes for the election of a councillor and four votes for the election of a mayor. Surely the man who owns properties which have to be represented by different people should have some voting power with regard to the persons to be elected in the different wards in which his property is situated.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I disagree with the remarks of the Chief Secretary. Take the man who owns a large factory in one ward, and who also may own in a city area large business premises and showrooms and may live in another ward still in the same municipality in which he has a residence that cost some thousands of pounds. Does the Minister argue that that man is entitled to the same voting power as the occupier of a small cottage in one of the wards? To my mind that is positively ridiculous. In these days municipalities have power to raise large sums of money and the larger the sum raised the greater the rate which has to be paid by the owners of property. The greater the rateable value the greater proportion the owner has to pay. Is it fair that he should have only the same voting power as is provided in the Bill? I am opposed to the abolition of the plural voting clause, both in regard to a ratepayer having a vote in one ward only and not having more than one vote if he owns sufficient property to entitle him to at least two.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Recently we had a Fair Rents Bill before us and it was pointed out that we wanted to encourage people to build houses. If people build houses in various wards they should have votes in those various wards. Unions have votes according to their membership. Various clubs and associations have voting power according to their membership. The shareholders of companies have voting power according to the number of shares they hold. Very often loans are raised in each particular ward of a municipality. Surely if a man has property in each of those wards

and has to pay the interest on the loans so raised he should have a vote in the particular ward in which he has property. Just because a man has property in several wards I cannot see that he should be made to select which ward he is going to vote in. So long as there are areas there should be votes in the respective wards in which property is held. We have recently had a striking example with regard to the Fremantle Tramways of the great value of property owners with plural votes showing their wisdom. The Fremantle municipality is not only in credit but has an enormous asset in the Fremantle Tramways. That is a striking example of how effective the present law has proved.

Hon. H. V. PLESSE: A man should take an intelligent interest in the various wards of a municipality, and one method by which he can be induced to take that intelligent interest is to have the right to vote for a representative in the wards in which he has property. If this clause were agreed to he would have to select the ward in which he intended to vote and would be disfranchised from the selection of any representative of the other wards in the municipality. I oppose the clause.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The Government regard the existing system as unfair and ask why bricks and mortar should have a vote. Bricks and mortar make a municipality and reflect the confidence of the individual. Such an individual has a right to say who should represent his interests in the ward where his property is situated. A householder renting a cottage has a vote and tenants in a large building can out-vote the landlord many times over. I oppose the clause.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Angelo said that the Government had to deal with important matters affecting taxation and the individual, but is it not a fact that a municipality has also to deal with matters of that kind? A local authority is responsible for the district's rating, and the question of rates is as important to a ratepayer as is the question of taxation to a taxpayer.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Or imprisonment or hanging?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why should the mere division of a municipality into wards affect an individual to the extent that he should be granted four times the voting power he would have if the municipality were not so divided?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Why divide it into wards?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because the people desire that form of local government. That, however, is no reason why one man should have four times the voting power he would enjoy if the municipality were not so divided.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: It is only to elect his representative to the municipal council.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It gives an individual additional power over ratepayers not possessed of property to the same extent.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Who is the man you encourage in municipalities?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Many such men would not care whether they had two votes or 20 votes. Tradition, however, dies hard. It is about time that members became a little more up to date. I believe that Western Australia is the only State that retains plural voting. Other parts of the world abolished it many years ago.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Can you reply to Mr. Parker regarding the value of the vote on the goldfields as compared with the city?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The two cases are not analogous. That has nothing to do with the value of property.

Hon. G. W. Miles: A goldfields resident has three times the voting power of a city elector for the Assembly.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The value of property should not be the test for municipal voting. One man might possess property of a value that entitles him to one vote, and another might possess property worth £1 more and be entitled to two votes, an extra vote for £1. Members who oppose the clause indicate that they have not progressed one iota in the last 20 or 30 years. The only thing that counts with them is the money or property a man possesses. Often such value has been obtained as a result of the efforts of others.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: That is nonsense.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Many cases could be quoted to prove the truth of my statement.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 7, 8, 9 consequentially negatived.

Clause 10—Amendment of Section 55:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This clause is consequential on the insertion of the proposed new Section 62A contained in Clause 13 relating to revision courts.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Provision does not appear to have been made for the revision of ratepayers' lists. At present the list is made up annually and cannot be revised. A town clerk might know that certain names should be added to or removed from the roll, but there is no provision for revising the list of ratepayers. Yet provision is made in the Electoral Act for constant amendment of the Assembly and Council rolls as claims or objections are lodged. The question was brought under my notice by the Town Clerk of Kalgoorlie, and if possible an amendment might be moved to permit of the revision of the electoral list for the municipality during the year. I move—

That further consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed; the clause postponed.

Clause 11—Amendment of Section 60:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will be necessary, in view of the deletion of the clause relating to plural voting, to strike out paragraphs (a) to (e) inclusive. I move an amendment—

That paragraphs (a) to (e) be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The further consideration of the clause might be deferred, and so I move—

That further consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed; the clause postponed.

Clause 12—Amendment of Section 62:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The clause gives power to the mayor to delegate his authority to an officer of the council to sign the certificate of revision.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The mayor is an honorary officer, and the question of the rate list is a long affair. There is no reason why an officer should not be delegated to sign the certificate.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 13—New section:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This has been requested by the local government association, its object being to obviate the holding of a revision court in the event of there being no claims.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14—Amendment of Section 66:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The principal Act provides that a supplementary list shall be prepared in December of each year. The amendment will have the effect of doing away with the preparation of the list in December, and will provide for a copy of the original list in September to be sent to the Electoral Department.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15—Amendment of Section 76:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The municipal elections under the existing Act are held on the fourth Wednesday in November each year. The idea is to change the day from Wednesday to Saturday, which is regarded as being a more convenient day for voting.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16—amendment of Section 80:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is a case where the principal Act provides that the mayor shall appoint the day on which an extraordinary election shall be held. The amendment will make it obligatory on the council as a whole to decide the question of the extraordinary election.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The present position seems to be quite satisfactory. If the date is to be fixed by the council, it will be necessary to convene a special meeting for that purpose.

The Chief Secretary: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The existing section in the Act is very elastic, and I cannot see any objection to it. If the mayor were to appoint a date, he would be limited to between 20 and 25 days. I cannot see any reason for tightening up the section.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Was this amendment submitted by the Municipal Association?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot say. The proposed amendment would mean that in the event of the municipal body not fixing a date, the election would have to take place on the 21st day after the occurrence of the vacancy. That would seem to provide for a contingency that might arise.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If the council did not meet, this proposal might involve some difficulty in getting out the ballot papers. It may result in inconvenience unless something definite is provided, and I cannot see why the section should be altered.

Hon. H. SEDDON: There is another provision that 14 days shall elapse between nomination day and election day. This particular amendment may affect that position.

The Chief Secretary: That would apply to ordinary elections.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 17—Amendment of Section 84:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This clause deals with plural voting and members have debated that phase.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 18—Amendment of Section 91:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Act provides that nomination day shall be the seventh day next preceding the day appointed for an election. The amendment would provide a longer period, which is necessary, particularly with regard to absentee voting.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 19—Amendment of Section 96:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is generally acknowledged that the numbering of ballot papers may provide avenues for abuse of the secrecy of the ballot. The amendment is designed to avoid that possibility.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 20—Amendment of Section 102:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Paragraph (a) deals with the hours of polling. At present the poll is taken between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. and the Bill proposes that in future polling shall take place between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. This will be of assistance to working men.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The paragraph will afford Seventh Day Adventists and Jews, who do not vote before sunset, an opportunity to exercise the franchise.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Paragraphs (b) and (c) would have been necessary had we agreed to the clause dealing with plural voting. In the circumstances, I move an amendment—

That paragraphs (b) and (c) be struck out.

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

Clause 21—Amendment of Section 103:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This clause, together with Clause 22, are consequential

on the clause relating to plural voting, which has been negatived.

(Clause put and negatived.

Clause 22—negatived.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 2nd November, 1937.*

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

### QUESTION—YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, ROYAL COMMISSION'S REPORT.

Mr. SHEARN asked the Minister for Employment: Is the report of the Royal Commission on Youth Employment completed and in the hands of the Minister?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT replied: No.

### BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Employment and read a first time.

### ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

1. Main Roads Act Amendment.
2. Main Roads Act Amendment Act, 1932, Amendment.
3. Jury Act Amendment. (No. 1.)

### MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [4.35]: I move—

That on Wednesday, the 3rd November, and each alternative Wednesday thereafter, Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays as on all other days.

It is customary, when the session is progressing towards its end, to move a motion somewhat similar to that which I have placed before the House, but instead of the usual proposal that private members' business shall give way to Government business at each sitting day, on this occasion we consider that if Government business is permitted to have precedence on alternate Wednesdays, that will provide members with an opportunity to have any business they desire to place before members dealt with satisfactorily. During this session we have had a considerable volume of private members' business and, contrary to custom, instead of adjourning early each Wednesday night we have sat on until 10 or 11 o'clock in order that that business may be given adequate consideration. There is no desire on the part of the Government, in common with other Governments from time to time, to shut down entirely upon the consideration of private members' business, and we think that with alternate Wednesdays set aside for the purpose, members will have sufficient time to enable them to deal with their business that is listed on the Notice Paper at present and also any additional business they may desire to bring forward. If necessary, I can give the usual assurance that members will be given ample opportunity to discuss their business, as in past sessions.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.37]: I do not desire to raise any objection to the motion, but I think the Premier might have informed the House as to how long it is pro-