

be reduced, and, particularly in times of depression, incentive to enter the profession diminished. It has been found that the owner-operator gives better service to the public than a business opened solely for the purpose of investment.

It is also proposed by the Bill that where any person is engaged to take charge of a pharmacy for more than three days on which the pharmacy is open, the Pharmaceutical Council shall be so advised. This provision is in accordance with the council's responsibility for policing the Act and regulations. The person in charge of a pharmacy is responsible legally for the custody and proper handling of dangerous drugs, and narcotics, and it is essential therefore, that the council shall be aware as to who is in charge of each pharmacy.

The final amendment, which appears in Clause 5, is to rectify an error in the Act. The words "in the Fifth and Ninth Schedules" should read "in either the Fifth or Ninth Schedule", as the schedules serve different purposes, thus making it unsuitable for some articles to be placed on both schedules. I trust the Bill will receive the favourable attention of members. As I have intimated, it has been requested by the Pharmaceutical Society and its main provisions are to implement the recommendations of the Australian body of the profession. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. G. Hislop, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 14th October, 1952.

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

QUESTIONS.

COLLIE COAL.

(a) *As to Price and Calorific Values.*

Mr. MAY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Will he inform the House—

(1) The average price of open-cut coal supplied to Government instrumentalities for the financial year ended June, 1952, and the average calorific value and ash content?

(2) The average price of deep mine coal supplied to the Government by the Griffin Coal Company for the financial year ended June, 1952, and the average calorific value and ash content?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING replied:

(1) Collie Burn is the only mine producing open-cut coal for which separate prices, calorific values and ash contents are available. Particulars are as follows:—

Price—£2 4s. 11d. per ton, which is tentative and subject to adjustment.

Calorific value—9,136 B.Th.U. per pound.

Ash content—5.53 per cent.

Coal from other open-cuts is mixed in the screening with deep mine coal and the prices, calorific values and ash contents are of the mixture.

(2) £2 8s. 1d. per ton.

Calorific value (B.Th.U. per lb.)—Centaur, 9,744; Wyvern, 10,082; Griffin, 10,084.

Ash content—Centaur, 3.13 per cent.; Wyvern, 5.2 per cent.; Griffin, 4.98 per cent.

Only a small quantity of Phoenix coal is used by Government departments and particulars of its calorific value and ash content are not readily available.

(b) *As to Hold-up of S.S. "Bungaree's" Sailing.*

Mr. MAY (without notice) asked the Minister for Supply and Shipping:

On the 24th September last I asked questions regarding coal supplied to the s.s. "Bungaree." The Minister replied that the matter was not one for her department, but would be referred to the appropriate Minister. Will she state to which Minister the matter was referred and why no reply has been forthcoming?

The MINISTER replied:

I must apologise for not having seen the reply. I will look into the matter, which will receive prompt attention, and I shall be able to reply to the question on Thursday.

POTATOES.

As to Port of Shipment.

Mr. GUTHRIE asked the Minister for Supply and Shipping:

(1) Is she aware that the potato crop usually exported is at present being dug?

(2) Has consideration been given to the export of this commodity through the port of Bunbury?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) I am assured that as in the past the ship owners will consider each loading on its merits, dependent on the circumstances obtaining at the particular time.

HOSPITALS.

As to Pinjarra Staff, Beds, etc.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Were applications called recently for one mechanical fitter and three boiler attendants for the Pinjarra Hospital?

(2) If so, are these four appointments to be of a permanent nature?

(3) What will be the total number of staff employed at the Pinjarra Hospital after the 20th October next, as follows—

- (a) male domestics;
- (b) female domestics;
- (c) trained nurses;
- (d) nursing assistants;
- (e) other?

(4) Is the Pinjarra hospital a departmental or committee controlled hospital?

(5) What was the daily bed average of this hospital for the year ended the 30th June, 1952?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes. These are an obligation under the Machinery Act.

(3) When beds in the new hospital are full, the standard staff will be—

- (a) two;
- (b) ten;
- (c) thirteen;
- (d) six;
- (e) four.

(4) Board of Management.

(5) 17.1. The number of patients has been limited by the number of beds available.

The average is expected to rise to 35 in the future.

HOUSING.

As to Austrian Pre-fab. Files.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Will he immediately table in the House the following pages which were not on file 5831/50 as tabled: pp. 99, 100, 101, 102, 105, 112, 114, 115, 120, 121, 125, 133, 134 and 135?

(2) From what file were the pages numbered 201, 202, 203 and 204 on file 5831/50 obtained? Will he table this file?

(3) On what file were the pages 140, 141 and 142 of 1160/51, previously filed? Will he table this file?

(4) Will he table files 1149/51, 2428/52 which were not included in the papers tabled?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The pages which were not on file 5831/50 are to be found on the pages and files set down hereunder and the files on which these pages appear have already been laid on the Table of the House.

Pages 99, 100, 101, 102 are now pages 69, 71, 72 and 73 respectively, of 3916/49, volume 1.

Page 105 is now page 11 of 6819/50, volume 1.

Pages 112 and 114 are now pages 21 and 22, respectively, of 2777/50, volume 2.

Page 115 is now page 70 of 3916/49, volume 1.

Page 120 has been returned to the press cutting file which was not tabled and is a copy of a press article from "The Sunday Times" of 19th November, 1950, a copy of which is furnished herewith.

Pages 121, 125, 133, 134 and 135 are now pages 74, 75, 77, 78 and 79, respectively, of 3916/49, volume 1.

As the volume of correspondence increased on each subject relative to the imported houses, it became necessary to break down this correspondence into other files for ease of handling.

(2) Pages 201, 202, 203 and 204 on file 5831/50 were extracted from volume 2 of 2777/50, which has already been tabled.

(3) Pages 140, 141 and 142 originally were portion of a temporary volume of 1160/51 created while the main file was at the Crown Law Department. Upon the return of the file from the Crown Law Department the two files were amalgamated and the amalgamated file has already been tabled.

(4) File No. 1149/51 is amalgamated with file No. 9417/49. Both of these files deal with visits to the Eastern States by the Minister for Housing and the Chairman and Secretary of the State Housing Commission and have little bearing on the files already tabled. This file, however, will be made available for perusal by the member for Melville at the office of the Minister for Housing.

File No. 2428/52, which deals with the siren wasp, has already been made available for perusal at the office of the Crown Solicitor by an arrangement made with the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Melville. It is understood that the arrangement to peruse the file at the office of the Crown Solicitor has already been availed of by the hon. member for Melville.

EDUCATION.

As to I.Q. of Children.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is she correctly reported in "The Sunday Times" on the 5th October as stating that there are 1,000 to 1,100 children in Western Australia with an I.Q. of between 50-75?

(2) If so, from what source did she obtain such information?

(3) Do the figures apply to all children under school age, or to children under, and of, school age?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) It was an estimate made by applying to Western Australia the results of a survey made in England.

(3) School age of six to 14 years.

RAILWAYS.

As to Sunday Suburban Services.

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

In view of the great cost and inconvenience caused to residents in the eastern suburbs by the use of road buses in transporting their families to metropolitan beaches on Saturdays and Sundays, and to those people wishing to visit Karakatta and Royal Perth Hospital on those days, will he make efforts to bring about the early re-introduction of suburban rail services at the week-ends?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: replied:

All possible angles were considered when deciding to make week-end cuts in running of trains. The light patronage, coupled with heavier running costs at penalty rates, render this service hopelessly uneconomical. The Government will examine the possibilities of suitable road services to provide facilities referred to.

WATER SUPPLIES.

As to Extensions and Priority.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Water Supply:

Although the Government desires to supply water to both the Narrogin and south of Merredin areas as soon as possible, have the pipelines from Wellington dam to Narrogin and south from Merredin to Kondinin and Corrigin equal priority?

The MINISTER replied:

It has been stated on a number of occasions that it is the Government's policy to complete, as soon as possible, the comprehensive scheme as approved.

The order of development of the scheme, as set out in Part 1 of the detailed scheme issued by the Minister for Water Supply in October, 1947, provided for construction of the Wellington-Narrogin main during the first three years, and the main to Narembeen and Kondinin in approximately the first 3½ years.

Unfortunately, for reasons beyond the control of the Government, the time factor originally envisaged has been seriously delayed.

Some replacement, and also some duplication of sections of the G. W. S. main are necessary before water could be provided for further reticulation south of Merredin. The most important sections are in the vicinity of Mundaring-Sawyers Valley and just eastward of Cunderdin.

TRAFFIC.

As to Formation of Courtesy League.

Mr. STYANTS (without notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

(1) On Friday, the 18th September, I asked four questions in connection with the proposal to form a courtesy league in Western Australia and the Minister in reply stated—

The National Safety Council of W.A., Inc., over which the State Government has no control, except that it is represented on the council has, I understood, considered the question of the formation of a courtesy league. Further inquiries regarding the matter raised by the hon. member will be directed to the council and he will be advised of the outcome.

(2) Was the substance of my questions directed to the National Safety Council and has any report been received in reply?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) and (2) I noticed a memorandum on my table today in connection with the hon. member's questions, but did not have time to peruse it. As soon as I can do so, I will bring the matter up again.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS.

As to Additional Time for Discussion.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the comparatively small amount of Government business and the large volume of private members' business before the House, will he give consideration to granting additional time for the consideration of private members' business?

The PREMIER replied:

As the hon. member knows, the Loan Estimates have yet to be brought down and I expect to introduce the Budget on Thursday week next. I am anxious that members shall have full scope this year in the discussion of the Estimates, both Revenue and Loan. On the notice paper at present are 12 items dealing with private members' business and, with the four of which notice has been given this afternoon, the total now is 16.

There will be more Government legislation introduced, and I think it is much more important that time should be given

to the full discussion of the Estimates than it would be for me to give an undertaking at this stage that time will be made available for consideration of private members' business, particularly that which has been introduced at this stage. However, as far as possible, we will try to deal with all matters that have been placed on the notice paper, and I hope we shall be able to do that.

BILL—BROKEN HILL PROPRIETARY STEEL INDUSTRY AGREEMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Industrial Development and read a first time.

BILLS (4)—THIRD READING.

1. Education Act Amendment.
2. Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment and Continuance.
3. Coogee-Kwinana Railway.
4. Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act Amendment.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £10,000,000.

Message.

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

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, resolved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [4.49]: I move—

That there be granted to Her Majesty on account of the services of the State for the year ending the 30th June, 1953, a sum not exceeding £10,000,000.

A sum of £13,000,000 has already been granted for the financial year, and it was made as follows:—

For Consolidated Revenue	£9,000,000
For General Loan Fund	£3,000,000
For Advance to Treasurer	£1,000,000

For the three months to the end of September, the expenditure has been—

From Consolidated Revenue	£9,018,205
From General Loan Fund	£4,401,626

The revenue collected during those three months was £7,529,444, leaving a deficit in the Consolidated Revenue Fund of £1,448,761. It is significant that the excess of expenditure over revenue in connection with the railways during the first three months of this financial year has been £1,118,444, showing the effect of the metal trades strike on this undertaking. The further Supply of £10,000,000 which is now sought is required for—

Consolidated Revenue	£6,000,000
General Loan Fund	£4,000,000

The estimates showing full details of revenue and expenditure in connection with the Consolidated Revenue Fund are now almost complete, and I hope to submit my Budget to the House on Thursday week. The Estimates of Expenditure from the General Loan Fund will be submitted soon after the Budget.

I regret that submission of the Revenue and Loan Estimates has been delayed to a later date than is usual, but it has been difficult to obtain a firm estimate of the railway revenue, and I did not wish to place figures before the House which were only very approximate. In regard to the Loan Estimates, it has been necessary to seek deferment of payment in connection with some commitments and, until the result of our request is known, it is not possible to prepare a statement showing how it is proposed to spend the Loan funds. That is all I need say at this stage, because members will have a full opportunity, which I am anxious they should have, to discuss the whole of the Estimates when they are brought down. I repeat that I hope to introduce those Estimates on Thursday week.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [4.54]: As pointed out by the Premier, members of the Committee will shortly have an opportunity to discuss the Budget and the Revenue Estimates, and shortly after that again an opportunity to discuss the annual Loan Estimates. In view of that, it is not necessary at this stage to debate at any length the Bill now before us. However, I want to take this opportunity to say a few words concerning the situation in the Railway Department, particularly from the point of view of railway employees generally, most of whom are now being denied the benefit which is contained in the railway awards and which assures the men concerned a guaranteed full working week. I do not want to touch upon the legal angles of this situation, because they are at present under consideration in the Arbitration Court, where the Conciliation Commissioner, Mr. Schnaars, has heard arguments for and against whether the Railways Commission is now acting legally in continuing to deny to large numbers of railway men a guaranteed working week.

The Premier: Are you referring to all railway men, or to a section?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: All those who are not at present being granted a 40-hour week, but who, on the other hand, are being worked for a lesser period and are consequently being paid less than a full week's wages. To some extent I can appreciate the point of view of the members of the Railways Commission. The aftermath of the metal trades strike has left the Commission without the number of trafficable engines which is required to enable the railway service to function normally. Nevertheless, I would like the Premier to have this matter checked carefully from week to week to ensure that the guaranteed week will be restored as quickly as possible to all the department's employees.

I have had some information made available to me to the effect that a much greater time is now being taken in regard to maintenance work given to each engine which comes in for maintenance service. I understand that a much longer period is now taken on this work than was the case prior to the commencement of the metal trades strike. It has been suggested to me that this procedure is being followed, partly at any rate, with the object of justifying a large claim by the State to the Commonwealth in connection with the effects upon the State's revenue of the metal trades strike.

The Premier: I do not think that is so.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I also doubt whether it is so.

The Premier: I am sure it is not.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: However, I pass the information on to the Premier for what it is worth, and I think it should be investigated for the purpose of clearing up the suggestion once and for all. If such a procedure has been followed, and is still being followed, it is most unfortunate from the point of view of men whose employment in the railways is being lessened because engines are being kept out of running for maintenance purposes much longer than is normally the case. I quite agree that when engines go into the shops for maintenance they should receive adequate maintenance and should be put into a condition that will enable them, when returned to traffic, to remain there for a considerable period and to give trouble-free and efficient running during that time.

I do not want to raise the question of passenger trains in the metropolitan area, except in a brief way, because there are members in this Committee representing the metropolitan area who know much more about that matter than I do. Nevertheless, I was interested to receive from the Premier, a week or so ago, a reply to a question of mine to the effect that the Government had overridden the policy of the Railways Commission in connection with the restoration of passenger

train services in the metropolitan area. It may be that the Government had good reason for overriding the Commission in that matter. Possibly the Government wanted more engines to be available for other purposes, but no adequate or satisfactory explanation of its action has yet been given to this House or to the public generally. I think one can safely say that the longer adequate railway passenger services are denied to those wishing to use them in the metropolitan area, the more of such people who formerly were passengers of the Railway Department will change over to the bus services and develop the habit of travelling by bus.

The result will be that the Railway Department, when it is in a position fully to restore its passenger services in the metropolitan area, will be faced with the position that the rail passenger services will not receive public patronage to the extent that would have been the case had adequate services been restored more quickly. Those are the two principal items that I wished to bring to the notice of the Premier and I trust he will have both of them investigated for the purpose, first of all, of answering the question about the maintenance of locomotives and, secondly, for the purpose of giving an assurance that the railway passenger service in the metropolitan area will be progressively restored—at a fairly rapid rate—until the full normal service is again in operation.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.3]: In my opinion the Government seems to have any amount of money available, and I do not know why it should require this Supply when it can spend huge sums with foreign companies while neglecting our own workers. I refer to the contract that has been let to a Dutch firm, involving about £3,000,000, when the work could have been done with local men and equipment. It will be remembered that only a few weeks ago I asked questions about the men who were being dismissed at Fremantle, Albany and Bunbury, yet today we have the spectacle of the dredge, "Sir James Mitchell", being tied up at Albany idle, while men who were dismissed at Fremantle, Albany and Bunbury, are still walking the streets looking for work. The Minister for Works promised me that these men would be re-employed as soon as possible. They could have been given a start on this job and I think it is wrong that money should be spent outside the State when it could be used to give employment to our own workers.

Of course, it is the policy of this Government to patronise private enterprise and overseas interests in preference to our own workers. I have been assured, by men who know, that the "Sir James Mitchell" is capable of doing the work, and

the Government knows that many of our workers are still unemployed. If something is not done in the very near future we will be faced with a severe unemployment problem, yet in spite of that this Government, wherever possible, patronises private enterprise and people outside the country in preference to our own. I will not move that the Vote be reduced by £1,500,000, or anything like that, but I think the Premier should tell us why the contract was let outside the State.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray—in reply) [5.5]: With regard to the questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition, I shall certainly have inquiries made along the lines he suggested, but I feel sure that no attempt is being made to retard progress in getting locomotives back into traffic because of an appeal that may be made to the Grants Commission for consideration on the ground that we have not our locomotives in action. I can assure members that the Government is most anxious that every engine possible should be put back into commission at the earliest possible moment, and the Railways Commissioners are aware of that fact. I am certain that the Commissioners themselves are anxious to get their engines back into service with the least possible delay.

The Leader of the Opposition said it was taking longer to get the engines back into commission now than was the case prior to the metal trades strike, and I think that is understandable. They were run to a standstill during the strike and naturally a great deal of extra repair work would be necessary as the result of that. As the hon. member said, it is not advisable to put a locomotive back to work unless it has been efficiently overhauled.

The explanation of the position regarding metropolitan passenger traffic is that, with comparatively few locomotives available, there was a tremendous call on their services in rural areas and people in those districts suffered to a considerable extent as a result of the strike. There was a great deal of concern, for instance, about the bringing of pyrites to the metropolitan area for the manufacture of super, and coal had to be transported from Collie, as well as a lot of other heavy freight much more suitable for rail than for road transport.

No-one can deny the great damage being done to the roads of the State generally by heavy traffic. It is the desire of the Government to get the railway services generally back to normal as quickly as possible, but I understand—from the latest reports I have—that it will be at least February before the railways are back again in full working order.

Mr. Hoar: You will have to do something better than get them back to normal.

The PREMIER: Steps are being taken in that direction. New locomotives and rollingstock are coming forward and the tracks are being attended to. Every possible effort is being made to improve the position. The member for Fremantle asked why the tender of a Dutch firm had been accepted for the dredging at Fremantle in connection with the establishment of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co's. refinery in that district. The answer is that these people are experts in this particular class of work.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is an insult to our workers.

The PREMIER: I repeat that they are experts in this class of work, and the tender received from the firm in question was considerably lower than any other. I think the member for Fremantle will agree that the Government has done the right thing in accepting this tender, and thus saving money which can be spent in other directions to provide employment for the men about whom he is so concerned.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The "Sir James Mitchell" is tied up, idle, and is quite capable of doing the work.

The PREMIER: There is considerable doubt about that.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Ask your engineers.

The PREMIER: There is some doubt as to whether the "Sir James Mitchell" could do the work and as to how long it would take that dredge to do it. The Government desires to have the job completed as quickly as possible.

The Minister for Works: The member for Fremantle talks about unemployment.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Why are you muttering in your whiskers?

The PREMIER: That is the reply to the hon. member. We are anxious to see the work completed as soon and as cheaply as possible with a view to saving money that can be spent in providing work in other directions.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

The PREMIER: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th of June, 1953, a sum not exceeding £6,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and £4,000,000 from the General Loan Fund.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Bill Introduced.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [5.12]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [5.14] I have been somewhat appalled in the last few weeks to hear statements made in this House and to read similar statements in the Press with reference to the total amount of the State's Loan indebtedness which is being pushed off until next financial year or some other financial year. It rather appears, on the surface at any rate, as if the Government is going to carry on during the next few months upon the basis of I.O.U's. It seems that wherever the Government has been able to postpone the payment of a liability already incurred, that payment has been avoided and postponed. Most of the payments appear to be postponed until beyond the 30th June next year.

I have some appreciation of the difficulties of the Government in this matter, due to the fact that Loan funds available to it are restricted, and due also to the fact that it ordered well ahead of delivery date large quantities of machinery and the like which, as they now come to hand, would have to be paid for in the ordinary course of events and which, if paid for, would presumably leave the Government in the position of not being able to finance its essential loan activities.

At the same time it is necessary for the Government to display some degree of financial responsibility in connection with this vitally important matter. Nothing could be easier, in the practical sense, than for the Government to keep on issuing I.O.U's, as it were, to firms and thereby push the actual payment of the amounts due into the next financial year. However, if that were to be done on any large scale, and especially if it were to be done simply for the purpose of making loan financing operations free and easy this financial year, it would be delivering a severe blow to the stability of the State's finances, taking a reasonably long-range view of the situation. I would like to know from the Premier whether he is in a position to tell us offhand the total amount of loan indebtedness which has already been pushed off by the Government into the next financial year. If I remember rightly, I saw a figure the other day which was in the vicinity of £6,000,000.

The Premier: Deferments?

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE: Yes. If the total figure at present is £6,000,000, or anywhere near that sum, it would be far

too high, particularly when we realise that the figure is likely to grow during the next seven or eight months. It is essential that we should have accurate information in connection with this matter, and accurate information not only in relation to the present position but also progressive and accurate information at the end of each succeeding month. If information is not made available to us in the way I suggest, then members of this Chamber will be very much in the dark as to what the actual financial position is from the Loan point of view and this matter is so important that they should have made available to them, at frequent intervals, the utmost information that the Premier can supply. I should think that people in this community, apart from members of Parliament, would be interested in this matter too, and would be anxious to be fully informed about it at least once every month. So I ask the Premier whether he is able to give us accurate information as to the present position. I would also like an assurance from him that he will make available to us a progressive statement at the end of each month.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray—in reply) [5.21]: The Leader of the Opposition is correct when he says that certain deferments have been made. This was necessary because of the shortage of loan funds, and had we not been able to make arrangements for these deferments the financial position in this State would have been extremely difficult, although it is difficult enough now.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It will be difficult for the Leader of the Opposition when he takes over as Premier next year.

The Minister for Works: He is not going to take over.

The PREMIER: Other States have had to do the same thing as this Government—that is to seek deferments of certain commitments. In the main our commitments are all oversea and, if I remember rightly, the total oversea commitments at the moment amount to £6,000,000.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Those are the postponed payments?

The PREMIER: Yes, they have been deferred for 12 months.

Mr. Brady: Have the goods been received?

The PREMIER: Not all, but the goods continue to come to hand while the payments are deferred. The largest proportion of the goods is for the Railway Department; there are some for the State Electricity Commission, and the rest for other public works.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Has there been any increase in the total of deferred payments since the 17th September of this

year? I ask that because on the 18th September the Premier, in reply to a question asked by the member for Melville, gave a total of deferred payments, as at the day before, of £6,000,000.

The PREMIER: No. I may not be correct here, but these deferments were arranged by the Director of Works, Mr. Dumas, while he was in England, and Hon. W. H. Kitson, the Agent-General. I do not think that anything further has been done in this regard since Mr. Dumas left England.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: No additional deferred payments within the Commonwealth since then?

The PREMIER: We have been trying to get some deferments in the Commonwealth as well, but what the amount is I am unable to say. However, the information will be supplied to the Leader of the Opposition when I deliver the Budget. I realise the difficulties that these deferments cause. They will have to be met in the future, and I am hoping that the loan position will ease to such an extent that money will be easier and we will be able to meet those commitments. It may be possible that further deferments will have to be asked for and I think we would have a reasonable prospect of receiving them. Of course, we have to pay interest on these deferred payments, but that is only reasonable. We cannot expect these firms to have large sums of money outstanding after they have delivered the goods unless they receive interest on the money that they have already expended.

Hon. E. Nulsen: What would be the rate of interest?

The PREMIER: Perhaps I should not answer that question until I make sure of it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The figure was five per cent.

The PREMIER: I was going to say that I thought it was five per cent.

Mr. Brady: You said five per cent. in the paper.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Would that be five per cent. in sterling in regard to overseas commitments?

The PREMIER: Yes, I think so. The information which the Leader of the Opposition has asked for will be obtained and given to him when I deliver the Budget speech on Thursday week.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Sums available for purposes voted by the Legislative Assembly:

Mr. BRADY: I feel that I should bring before the Premier certain information that has come to my knowledge in regard to machinery that has been purchased for the Railway Department. I understand that thousands of pounds worth of machinery is at present in the Midland Junction workshops and is not being used. Also, machines worth up to £8,000 and £10,000 are doing jobs that are normally done by machines worth only a few hundred pounds. I understand, too, that as many as 30 new machines, worth many thousands of pounds, are being put into certain sections of the workshops, and they cannot all be used, while there is a big demand for other classes of machines and they are not being made available.

I do not know to what extent this expenditure is tied up with Loan moneys but I am assured that in some sections only about 20 per cent. of the men are actually in full employment. There is a considerable amount of time wasted in the shops, and in some cases men are being brought back on Saturday mornings to do work that could normally be done during the week days. The position is so alarming that the employees themselves are concerned about it and it seems strange that while the workshops are virtually lying idle, in regard to employment for the men, outside private firms are getting hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of Government contracts.

There is something wrong somewhere and as this matter has been brought to my notice I thought I should pass it on to the Premier for what it is worth. I am told that a No. 10 Ward 18 inch chuck machine is cutting blanks for nuts; a No. 13 combination turret machine, worth about £8,000 is not being used; a No. 10 Ward combination turret lathe is not being used and I believe that is typical of what is happening in the workshops. I am also told that at one time if a man wanted a tool cutting implement made in the shop he could approach his foreman and the job would be done in a few hours. Now, however, before these jobs can be done the matter has to be referred to the planning office and there is considerable delay. Under the present setup thousands of pounds worth of tool steel that can be used in the shops is being thrown on to the scrap heap. If that is true some inquiry should be made.

Mr. Yates: Have you inspected these machines?

Mr. BRADY: No, but the men who work there have given me this information; they are alarmed because they are virtually out of work in spite of the fact that too many of these machines which could do the necessary work are lying idle. I do not know whether it is because certain people do not know how to work the

machines. I have been told, however, that a new Australian desired to show the foreman how a particular machine should work and he was moved to another section.

The Minister for Lands: Are not those the machines that were declared black?

Mr. BRADY: These machines were not declared black at all and the Minister for Lands should not be facetious about it. Thousands of pounds worth of machinery is being imported into the State and payment is being deferred over a number of years.

The Premier: Not over a number of years; for 12 months.

Mr. BRADY: Well, for 12 months and interest at five per cent. is accumulating on that. I pass this information on to the Premier for what it is worth, because I do not think these men would bring a matter like this to my notice merely for the sake of starting a controversy. The men are concerned about their employment and that the work which should be going through the workshops is going to private employers. The work can be done in the workshops if the machines which are at present lying idle are put on the job.

The PREMIER: I will have to refer to the Minister for Railways the matters brought forward by the hon. member with a view to obtaining some information upon them. I would remind him, however, that a number of employees from the Midland workshops have visited Britain over the last few years.

Mr. Brady: There are some in England now.

The PREMIER: That is so. They are supposed to be men well qualified to see the locomotives being manufactured and to see other equipment as well. When I was in Britain I met some of them in some of the great manufacturing concerns there. They were seeing all the latest machinery that was being used with a view to bringing back information as to what improvements could be made at the Midland Junction Workshops. One of the Commissioners, Mr. Clarke, is an expert on the engineering side, and he has the advice of men who have worked in the Midland Junction Workshops for many years and who have practical experience.

The Government can only be advised by men who are experts in that particular direction. If what the hon. member said is true I would be alarmed. He mentioned that great sums of money have been spent in the Midland Junction Workshops on equipment which is not being used and furthermore, he stated that there was no necessity for some of this particular machinery. I can hardly believe that the Commissioners of Railways would order machinery costing all this money unless they felt it was absolutely necessary. I will, however, bring the re-

marks of the hon. member under the notice of the appropriate authorities and the Minister for Railways will make inquiries in regard to it.

Mr. RODOREDA: I would like to bring to the notice of the Premier the rapidly deteriorating position of shipping facilities in the North-West. I have complained about this matter year after year and month after month, and the Premier seems to take it very lightly indeed. All he does with the complaints apparently is to forward them to the manager of the State Shipping Service who sends us a stereotyped reply, which could well have been reneod, saying that everything will be right next month. That has been the tenor of his replies for the last few years. The Premier knows he is receiving complaints from the road boards. When I complained about the "Dulverton" leaving the coast I was informed by the Premier that the "Kabbarli" would more than make up for the loss of the "Dulverton".

When I complained recently about the inadequacy of the shipping I was told that the "Dulverton" would be back even though I had been previously told that the "Kabbarli" could take the place of the "Dulverton". I will tell the Premier now that unless the "Dulverton" does come back it will be difficult for the ships to cope with the rapidly increasing cargo from the North-West ports. The difficulty a few years ago was to get cargoes to the North-West, but now the difficulty is to get cargoes away from there because of the rapid increase in mineral wealth and wool which is putting a severe strain on State ships. We assume that bales of wool will increase from year to year as the flocks build up again. I have a complaint here from Roebourne which states—

You will see that the position is growing steadily worse and with all this cargo piling up the congestion at Samson is growing acute. Apart from the cargo mentioned there are hundreds of empty drums accumulating which the oil companies inform us are urgently needed back south for refilling.

Wittenoom production is steadily increasing now and quite a lot of copper and white asbestos is coming in and when the boats either by-pass us or take only small cargoes, it becomes quite a problem stacking the stuff at Samson with the very limited amount of labour there is available here for this work.

There is another complaint from Port Hedland which reads as follows:—

At a recent meeting of this board it was decided to place before your notice the inadequate shipping facilities afforded residents, pastoralists and business people in the North-West.

This is a copy of a letter which the road board sent to the Premier. It continues—

Letters of protest have been received by the board from various pastoralists, stock firms and business people in this area requesting the board to endeavour to have shipping facilities greatly improved.

Firstly the shipping of livestock from this port appears to be an extremely exhausting procedure, wherein dates are constantly changed.

That is a fact. It is impossible to get a firm booking from the State ships.

The present shipment of wool is also a tedious affair and it is considered that with the present hold-up, causing bales to be stacked in the open for long periods, consequent damaged bales are found and further it is feared more pastoralists will in future consider sending their wool to London, thus Western Australia will lose quite a lot of trade.

The shipping of drums at present is getting out of hand and with their present value of £3 each it is affecting business houses financially plus giving the town a very untidy appearance.

I might state that the petrol companies recently increased the price of their drums to £3 each and any person who buys a drum of petrol has to pay £3 on it, and this is refunded when the drum is returned. These have to be sent to Perth before credit can be obtained. Thousands of these drums have been used for various purposes and have been destroyed, thus necessitating the use of more steel for the manufacture of additional drums. The letter continues—

The board has on several occasions made representations regarding the water scheme and it has now been advised by the Under Secretary for Water Supply that shipping will produce another hold-up. If this is the case would you give earnest consideration to having the pipes forwarded by private shipping companies to enable an early completion?

The Premier: I replied to that.

Mr. RODOREDA: The Premier replied to some questions I asked and said there would be no hold-up in the ships. I asked whether in the event of hold-ups, he would get the private companies to do the job. The Premier said there would be no hold-up and yet the Under Secretary for Water Supply has advised the Port Hedland Road Board that there will be hold-ups.

The Premier: What is the date of that letter?

Mr. RODOREDA: The 20th September I think; anyway, it is very recent. The Minister for Works says there will be a

hold-up in the shipping and the Premier says there will not be. I wonder who is right? I should say the Minister for Works is right; there definitely will be a hold-up; there is no doubt about that. I would ask the Premier to give more than a passing interest to this problem of shipping for the North-West. The cargoes will continue to increase with greater mineral production; more people will come into the country necessitating more supplies being taken up, and there will be greater output from those ports. So I hope the Premier will not accept the assurance of the manager of the State Shipping Service that he can cope with the problem, because it has been proved in the past few years that he cannot cope with it in spite of his promises. If the State ships cannot cope with this work, arrangements should be made for private companies to give the people in the North-West a decent sort of service.

The PREMIER: When I was in Canberra a week or two ago I saw the Minister for Shipping and urged upon him the need to return the "Dulverton" to our northern coast. He assured me that would be done. The "Dulverton" is expected back very shortly. She will first go to Darwin at the request of the Australian Shipping Board. There is also an urgent need of certain supplies there. She will bring urgent requirements for Western Australia and will take up a quantity of the goods to which the hon. member has referred. I know there is a considerable quantity of freight waiting at North-West ports including the 44-gallon petrol drums to which the hon. member referred. It is intended to take up as much stuff as possible and to bring that freight south.

I have also had repeated requests made to me to take the "Kybra" off the North-West coast and return her where she was on the south coast. Owing to the acute shipping position in the North-West, we have kept the "Kybra" there and are bringing the "Dulverton" back.

Hon. E. Nulsen: That is not fair to the south coast.

The PREMIER: The member for Eyre has a grouse there. The "Kybra" would be of value on the south coast, but, taking the broader view, she is rendering a much more valuable and needed service on the North-West coast.

The member for Pilbara seems to think there is a lack of interest in the matter of providing shipping for the North. I assure him that that impression is not correct. I have already told him of the efforts I made to get the "Dulverton" returned to us as soon as possible. Apart from that, we are giving pretty favourable consideration to the people in the North. I have an appreciation of the difficulties that confront those people occupying a huge and sparsely populated

area, and I realise that we cannot expect them to pay freights that will be remunerative to the State Shipping Service.

Last year, however, we subsidised the State ships to the extent of £426,000. That was the loss on the State ships borne by the Treasury and, as the hon. member knows, we did something in the matter of air freights. I think the total provided by the Treasury and the Transport Board in respect to air freights was in the vicinity of £20,000. This was necessary because perishables must be transported by air. Thus the subsidy to the State Shipping Service and on air freights has been about £450,000.

Some years ago I urged members of the Grants Commission to visit the northern areas in order to gain an idea of the difficulties confronting the people there. This was done, and I am glad to say that the Commission has taken a sympathetic view of the difficulties facing the State Shipping Service. For some time the Government has been considering just what line should be taken in relation to the North-West shipping service. We have in view the providing of a subsidy of between £400,000 and £500,000, and then for the manager of the State Shipping Service to consider what freights should be charged, taking into consideration the subsidy that would be provided by the Treasury. That is a loss which we know will have to be borne. I repeat that, on present figures, the amount of the subsidy would be between £400,000 and £500,000.

I am aware of the anxiety of the hon. member to have the Port Hedland water scheme completed. The manager of the State Shipping Service has given me an assurance that he will provide space for the conveyance of the pipes to Port Hedland. If the State ships cannot do so, I shall certainly offer no objection to vessels of the Blue Funnel line taking that freight. I am anxious that that water scheme should be completed as soon as possible. I shall advise the manager of the State Shipping Service of this.

Mr. RODORED: I am glad to have the assurance of the Premier that the freight will be given to a private shipping company if the State ships are unable to deal with it. That, however, is an entirely different statement from the reply to my question two or three weeks ago. The Premier spoke of subsidising the State ships, and I consider it unfair to bring in that aspect of the matter.

The Premier: What is unfair about it? I think it shows a very sympathetic outlook.

Mr. RODORED: That is entirely outside the province of the matter we are discussing now. The Premier knows full well that he obtains far more from the Grants Commission than the loss incurred. The

Chairman of the Grants Commission assured me when we were returning from the North-West tour that the eyes of members of the Commission had been opened, and that they were prepared without question to make a grant to the State for all the loss incurred on the State ships and the Wyndham freezing works, as they were quite convinced that those two instrumentalities were essential to the State and must be kept in operation. When a question regarding the lack of services is raised in respect to the railways, the Premier does not tell us what they are costing the country.

The Premier: I do.

Mr. RODORED: I have never heard the Premier mention it as an excuse for not providing a service, and that is what his reply today amounted to. To talk of subsidising the State ships is merely a matter of referring to it by another name because the Treasury now has to bear any loss. If the Premier provides a subsidy and still requires the manager of the State Shipping Service to run the boats at a profit, freights must inevitably be increased. Before anything is done along those lines, a commission of inquiry should be held into the operations of the State ships.

The Premier: We had an inquiry by an expert.

Mr. RODORED: What sort of an inquiry was it? I may be wrong, but I believe that he did not go further north than Geraldton and was accompanied by the manager of the State Shipping Service. What sort of inquiry was that? A thorough inquiry into the running of the State ships is long overdue. Personally, I believe that far greater use could have been made of the vessels available. Before the Premier introduces any new ideas for the financing of the State ships, an inquiry should be held into the whole of the ramifications of the service with a view to determining whether better use could not be made of the vessels.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FREMANTLE ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKING (PURCHASE MONIES) AGREEMENTS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th October.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.55]: It is not my intention to oppose the Bill because it is designed to approve, ratify and confirm two agreements made

between the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board, the City of Fremantle and the Municipality of East Fremantle. When a Bill is presented to Parliament, however, it should be correct and the same applies to an agreement, and we should not be asked to ratify an agreement by a measure that is differently worded. Paragraph (d) of Clause 2 of the agreement states—

If at any time money is available for loan to the City and the municipality as aforesaid and the City and the municipality each request a loan then, subject to Clause 2 (c) each shall be entitled to borrow six-sevenths and one-seventh respectively—

I ask members to note the concluding portion as printed. It reads—

or the municipality give requisite notice to the prevent the proportions being altered by agreement.

The actual agreement says—

Of the money so available, nothing herein shall prevent the proportions being altered by agreement.

I do not know what the alteration means; it does not read sensibly, and I think we should adhere to the wording of the agreement. In Committee I shall endeavour to make it conform to the agreement.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

First Schedule:

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

That in Clause 2 (d) of the agreement, the words "or the municipality give requisite notice to the prevent the proportions being altered by agreement" be struck out with a view to inserting the words "of the money so available, nothing herein shall prevent the proportions being altered by agreement."

The amendment would bring the agreement and the Bill into conformity. Some bright spark seems to have thought that the other words would read better, but they are definitely not in the agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the member for Fremantle cannot move in that direction. That Schedule is merely a copy of the agreement.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It is not a copy of the agreement. If you, Sir, rule that way, I will move that the whole Schedule be struck out. These words are not in the agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: I think it will be necessary, then, to move to delete the Schedule and put something else in because, as far as I know from the Chair,

this is a copy of the agreement, and Clause 2, which the Committee has already carried, ratifies the agreement. I must put the Schedule as it is. It is not possible to amend it.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am sure the member for Fremantle did not move to do anything in respect to Clause 2 because he was as anxious as we all would be to pass the Bill. If he had tried to do anything with Clause 2, it would have put the whole Bill out of order. Obviously, this paragraph, to which the member for Fremantle has drawn attention, is not correctly worded. If you, Sir, read the two lines which he moved to delete, you will find they do not make sense. There has obviously been some mistake in the drafting, and the Committee should not approve the Schedule which contains an obvious major error.

The Attorney General: I think it ought to be checked. We had better report progress for that purpose.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: That will suit the member for Fremantle and, I am sure, every other member of the Committee.

Progress reported.

BILL—FREMANTLE ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKING AGREEMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate from the 7th October.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [6.4]: I agree to the Bill most reluctantly, because I think we were butchered to please an L.C.L. Government. We have talked about how sacrosanct agreements are, and what a vile man Mossadeq is because he repudiated an agreement, but the Bill is simply a repudiation of an agreement which was signed, sealed and delivered without any mistakes. The agreement was to run for 25 years with an option to renew it for another 25 years. When the first 25-year period had elapsed, we renewed the agreement, and today it would have another 16 or 17 years to run. But the present Government, and its officials, said to the Fremantle Tramways and Electric Lighting Board, "You sell to us, or else!", and they had a Bill ready to bring down to implement the "or else!"

The Minister for Works: We were thinking of all the other consumers in the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That is what Mossadeq said, "You get out, or else!" We say he is a rogue, thief or vagabond, but what applies to him applies to the members of the Government. If we have an agreement, we should stick to it, whether it is a winning or losing agreement.

The Minister for Works: All parties agreed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: They did not. One party said it would not agree. The Minister and his engineers came along and said, "You sell, or else!"

The Minister for Works: I was never there.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I wish, Sir, you would keep the Minister quiet. We had to get out, with the result that today the people of Fremantle are paying a lot more than they used to for their electricity. Ask the member for Melville and others who live there how much their accounts have gone up since the Commission took over. If it had not been for the breaking of the agreement, we would have carried on as we were for a number of years.

The Minister for Works: Subsidised by the rest of the people in the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That is what Mossadeq told his people. He said, "Boys, we cannot go on like this any longer. That British crowd have to get out, or else we will push them out," and he pushed them out. We said, "Fancy breaking a solemn agreement like that!" This was just the same. It was a solemn agreement, but the Government did not have any scruples about breaking it.

The Minister for Works: All the parties agreed to this arrangement.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: When the depression was on, and the authorities in Fremantle were up against it, no-one came along and said, "You are having a pretty bad time; we will reduce this a bit for you." We had to stand by the agreement. We did not rush in during the first world war and say that we wanted to be part of the East Perth power scheme. The Government of the day said, "How about coming in with us?"

The Minister for Works: You knew you were on a good thing.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: We were on a good thing before that, because we were generating 50-cycle current, and everything was all right. The Government at that time said, "Here is an agreement. We will give you this for 50 years. Come in with us and we will all be happy." So the Fremantle authorities decided, in order to make it one big show, to come in and scrap their plant, and go back to 40 cycles.

The Minister for Works: Who made that agreement?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The first time a bit of a loss is shown, the Government says, "We do not care about agreements; we will break this, and if you do not come in, we will push you out or in; one of the two." I think the whole thing is disgraceful, but, as the agreement has been made, and the Fremantle people have

been pushed out, I will not ask them to break it, but I say we were butchered by this L.C.L. Government.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Where the Bill says that the board has agreed to sell and the Commission to purchase, it should be, "The board has agreed to sell under threat," or something like that, because people in years to come, will think, when they read the agreement, that it was satisfactorily arranged, without compulsion, between the parties.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4, Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Report.

Debate resumed from the 7th October on the following motion by Mr. Perkins:—

That the Committee's recommendations be adopted.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth) [7.31]: I think a number of us are a little confused as to the manner in which this matter has been treated. I am open to correction, but I understand that the motion we are debating is for the adoption of all the suggested amendments made by the Standing Orders Committee. If that be the case we are faced with the position of having to accept en bloc what is before us, and it is conceivable that certain propositions would receive the unanimous consent of the House whereas with others there could be considerable difference of opinion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will take them seriatim when the time comes to deal with the motion.

Mr. GRAHAM: That simplifies the position. The amendment to Standing Order No. 109 proposes that questions which at present can be placed on the notice paper up to noon on Friday shall be treated similarly to questions on other days when the closing time is thirty minutes after the House meets. I cannot agree to the proposition because even if only a few members avail themselves of that additional privilege it is nevertheless one that members are able to enjoy only when the question is something reasonably urgent because, after all, it is a long period from Thursday afternoon until the Wednesday of the following week.

If questions that are to be placed on the notice paper are not handed to the clerk by 5 o'clock on Thursday evening it would be impossible to have them on the notice paper prior to the following Wednesday. Surely it would cause no great inconvenience to the staff of this House or, for that matter, the Government Printing Office if that were done. I am unaware of when there has been any undue delay in the preparation and presentation of the Orders of the Day for Tuesday's sitting of Parliament. I am perturbed about any whittling down of the rights and privileges of private members because they are few enough now.

I am definitely opposed to the amendment proposed to be made to Standing Order No. 218. Perhaps to some extent I reflect on the Standing Orders Committee, but I am certain that its members did not give full and proper consideration to this matter. Mr. Speaker, you are probably aware, after many years of observation in this House, that a member who seeks to introduce Bills is at a great disadvantage compared to members who submit motions. It is possible for a Bill of mine to be the next item of private members' business on the notice paper and all it requires is for two or three members every Tuesday evening to give notice of their intention to move a motion and their motions have prior claim on the time of the House. As a result, so much time is occupied with the subject-matter that the Bill is never reached. It is thus possible for week after week to pass without the legislation which is being introduced by a private member ever receiving the consideration of the House.

I think the Standing Orders Committee might well have applied itself to allowing some sort of progress to be made with Bills rather than allowing what might be termed, more or less, expressions of opinion to occupy the time of the House on private members' day. I am aware that under the Standing Orders at present, although there is a time limit on motions, invariably the Premier moves that an extension of time be permitted. I only wish the Premier would pay more respect to what was obviously the intention of the Standing Order, namely, that there should be some limitation on motions for the purpose of enabling private members to proceed with their legislation.

I hope that members can follow the point I am seeking to establish because surely it is patently obvious to every one of us with our experience of this Chamber. It is grossly unfair because, to a great extent, there is a measure of urgency about private members' Bills. Motions are discussed under the one heading and either agreed to or rejected in this Chamber. However, when a Bill is introduced by a private member with-

out the aid of departmental officers, there are various stages of the Bill to be passed in this House and, if agreed to, it is necessary to transmit the measure to the Legislative Council.

With some of the Bills I have on the notice paper at present I can visualise that it will probably be towards the closing hours of this Parliament before they are receiving consideration by the Legislative Council. That is grossly unfair to private members. I consider, therefore, that the Standing Orders Committee has given this matter no thought or consideration or else it has failed to appreciate the circumstances. I have quoted my own case and the fate of my own Bills, but of course this is equally applicable to any other private member who seeks to make some alteration to existing laws or to introduce new principles.

With regard to the further amendment to the Standing Orders as suggested by the Standing Orders Committee, my views coincide closely with those of my Leader. These proposed amendments are, of course, not party considerations in any respect, but I consider, as the Parliament of Western Australia has proceeded for so many years without a time limit on speeches, that there has been no good or sufficient reason shown why a restriction should be imposed. There have been times when members have spoken at undue length; nobody denies that.

The Deputy Premier: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRAHAM: From time to time a number of us have been offenders and I include myself amongst them. But let us be fair and equitable about this matter. The Government has the numbers otherwise it would not be the Government and therefore it has power at any time it desires to oppose what it wishes; to apply the guillotine; to jump from item to item; to adjourn Parliament; to alter sitting hours or anything else. The only weapon that private members have, on the other hand, is the power of speech, and if members of the Opposition, irrespective of party complexion, have been insulted from their point of view, or otherwise badly treated by the Government of the day, the only method by which they can make their protest is by speaking strongly and, on occasions, in the fashion of stonewalling with a view to impressing on the Government that they are really perturbed about the action it is taking.

That form of protest has been adopted by all political parties against Governments of all political complexions. I know it would be a far easier matter for the Government if these limitations were imposed; if there were additional checks placed on the liberties, few as they are, of individual private members. After all is said and done, many members on their feet have a great deal of their time occupied by members who interrupt.

I checked through "Hansard" only recently and found that when the member for Warren was moving for a Select Committee the Minister for Lands interjected no less than 62 times. That was 62 interjections recorded by "Hansard" and probably quite a number that were not caught by "Hansard"—

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Surely a record!

Mr. GRAHAM: —and this in a speech which overall, including interjections, occupied about an hour. Accordingly, if there is to be a rigid time limit, all that is required is a certain amount of interjection, heckling and the rest of it by members on the other side of the House and approximately 50 per cent. of the member's speaking time would be taken up. I do not know whether it is your intention, Sir, or that of succeeding Speakers, to see that there is to be complete silence in future so that if a member is allocated 45 minutes speaking time, every second of that period will be granted to him without interruption.

Hon. E. Nulsen: It will be pretty monotonous.

Mr. GRAHAM: We know perfectly well that apart from the time taken up by interjections and other interruptions, it is a simple matter for a member to be put off his balance and his train of thought disturbed. Accordingly, it might take a member a few minutes to get back to the point he was dealing with when he was interrupted. Conceivably quite a number of anomalies would be created with the adoption of this proposal. While it is true that on all occasions Ministers may feel that private members, whether they sit in Opposition or are Government supporters, are irksome in their attitude when they speak on the measures and so occupy the time of the House, if there is one thing that a Minister likes, it is to have Bills that he introduces passed without any delay or amendment. Nevertheless, I think private members have equal rights with anyone else in this Chamber and we should be permitted to express ourselves in the manner we think best, having regard to the proprieties of speech.

If we are honest with ourselves, we must agree that the occasions when speeches are deliberately prolonged and tedious are exceedingly rare. By and large, these occur only when members desire to make a demonstration or protest against certain actions contemplated or recently taken by a Government. Generally speaking, debates in this Chamber proceed without undue delay and without protracted speeches. Accordingly, I am somewhat reluctant to interfere with the privileges that are, and should be, ours, seeing that there is so little justification for that interference. These are my comments, from which it will be seen that of the four proposals covered by the report of the Standing Orders Committee, I agree

to the first only. I am not unduly perturbed about the second proposal, but I trust members will not agree to the third and fourth propositions.

MR. RODOREDA (Pilbara) [7.47]: As one member of the much maligned Standing Orders Committee, I think I should have something to say on this occasion. First of all, I would like to have some information regarding the procedure that will be adopted in dealing with the report. Will the House resolve itself into Committee so that each provision may be dealt with separately and amended if deemed desirable?

Mr. SPEAKER: Members will deal with the proposals seriatim.

Mr. RODOREDA: In Committee?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, each proposal will be put from the Chair.

Mr. RODOREDA: And will not be amended?

Mr. SPEAKER: A member may move an amendment, but members will be allowed to speak only once.

Mr. RODOREDA: The crux of the opposition, as outlined by previous speakers, particularly the member for East Perth, appears to be with regard to the limitation of speeches and the elimination altogether of the expiry time for the consideration of motions. The Standing Orders Committee could not see any reason for a time limit being imposed upon any member who moves a motion. Our experience in this House has been that the time limit on the consideration of motions has never been imposed and the Standing Order in that respect has been a dead letter. More often than not, Speakers have forgotten about it and have not drawn attention to the fact that the time limit has been reached. When a Speaker has done so, the House has always unanimously agreed to extend the time.

There may be something in what the member for East Perth suggested when he said that if there were no limit placed upon the time for considering a motion, it would preclude the possibility of private members' Bills being discussed. That particular point did not receive any consideration at all by the Standing Orders Committee, and possibly some attention could be given to that aspect when members deal with that item. It does not matter a great deal to me, personally or as a member of the Standing Orders Committee, whether or not the House accepts the report. A great deal of nonsense has been talked by previous speakers and also some misrepresentations have been indulged in. On the previous occasion when the matter was discussed, I think it was the member for Mt. Hawthorn who wanted to know why the Committee had adopted the Victorian Standing Order relating to the imposition of a time limit on speeches. The answer is very simple.

The Committee adopted the Victorian limitation because it was less harsh than those applying in other State Parliaments, in the Commonwealth Parliament or in the New Zealand legislature. We have heard a lot about the proposed Standing Order interfering with the rights of private members and how Parliament, if members agree to the Committee's proposals, will become a dead letter. We have examples before us of other Parliaments that have imposed a time limit on speeches for a considerable time past. In the New Zealand Parliament, the Commonwealth Parliament, and the Parliaments of the States of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, the time limit applies and I have not heard of any serious complaint being voiced by members of those Parliaments, apart from the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr. Hoar: Perhaps members are allowed the full time for their speeches in those Parliaments.

Mr. RODOREDA: That is a point. The hon. member's experience was referred to by the member for East Perth who remarked that much of the time the hon. member was speaking was interrupted by 62 interjections from the Minister for Lands. Under the Standing Order suggested in the report, the member for Warren could have spoken for ten hours on his motion, if he had desired to do so. No time limit at all is suggested respecting the speech by a member proposing a motion. In fact, if members would only read the suggested Standing Order, they would appreciate the position. As a matter of fact, the proposed limitation on speeches is so slight that it will apply only in a very few instances. Let me read it—

Provided also that this Standing Order shall not apply to a member moving the second reading of a Bill or a substantive and independent motion, or to the mover of a direct motion of want of confidence, or to the Leader of the Government, or to the Leader of the Opposition, or to any member deputed by either of such Leaders respectively to speak first for the Government or Opposition or any of such motions; but when the Leader of either side so deposes his right such Leader shall then be limited to the same extent as other members.

So it will be evident that the proposed limitations will apply in very few instances indeed. The members referred to in the Standing Order will have unlimited time and so the proposal resolves itself into one applying to secondary speeches on motions or Bills. It may be that its introduction will be the thin end of the wedge, but as it stands the limitation is so slight that I do not think members can reasonably take exception to it. Members

who are opposed to it have said that long speeches are such rare occurrences in this House as to be practically negligible. In those circumstances the limitation proposed will not do any harm whatever.

Mr. Graham: There are occasions when long speeches are very necessary.

The Attorney General: But of no value.

Mr. RODOREDA: I have heard members talk for two hours and what they had to say could have been better and more effectively stated in half an hour.

The Attorney General: Do not exaggerate! It could have been said in a quarter of an hour.

Mr. RODOREDA: I should say that if members were restricted in their remarks by the imposition of a time limit, we would give more thought to what we wanted to say, and our remarks could be more effectively stated. Today we ramble on and repeat ourselves ad nauseam, which I do not think is desirable. As I said earlier, it does not matter to me personally what decision the House arrives at. I do not take up much time of the House, but I think that I could condense my remarks considerably.

A provision such as that proposed has worked effectively in other Parliaments of Australia, except South Australia, and in the circumstances I do not think we will do any harm in at least giving it a trial. Should it prove a handicap to private members or detrimental to their opportunities to express their opinions, the whole matter could be resubmitted to the Standing Orders Committee for further consideration in the light of experience. I would also like to suggest that, should the Standing Orders Committee be called together in future to deal with such a matter, it should act similarly to a Select Committee and call for evidence from members of Parliament respecting the points to be considered.

Mr. Graham: That is a good idea.

Mr. RODOREDA: As members of the Standing Orders Committee, we have our own points of view and know the experience in other Parliaments. One or two points of view have been expressed during the debate, and those matters did not receive any consideration from the Standing Orders Committee. In future, in order to avoid prolonged debates on the question of the adoption of recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee, I think evidence should be taken from members who have opinions to express on questions to be considered.

THE DEPUTY PREMIER (Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling) [7.58]: To some degree I may say the mantle of Elijah has fallen on Elisha in this matter because I had not intended to say anything, but for the absence of the Premier who, I know, de-

sires, and has left with me some notes, a point of view to be put forward. At the outset, I might say that the speech just concluded by the member for Pilbara has removed a great deal of the necessity for my saying something I intended to observe because, as he very succinctly pointed out, a provision of this description, if agreed to, would not involve the drastic amendment of the Standing Orders as suggested by the member for East Perth, for example. I fear that hon. member did not give the careful study to this matter which he usually does when he proposes to engage in a debate on a substantive motion, even if one disagrees with his contentions.

I have noted with some interest the time limitation in operation in Queensland. I mention that State because it is governed, and has been governed for many years, by an Administration of the political ideology of that the member for East Perth follows. I think its term of office is now past 20 years and yet the restrictions that are imposed in the Parliament of that State, as the member for Pilbara pointed out, are a great deal more severe than those suggested in the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. Graham: Perhaps that is why it has continued in office so long.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: That is a possibility, but I hardly think that if it had been objectionable, it would have lasted all those years because, as there is no other House in Queensland than the Assembly, it would appear that every reasonable opportunity would be sought by both sides to discuss any matter of importance presented for consideration. In Queensland, the provision is—

No member shall speak for more than forty minutes at a time in any debate in the House except on a direct motion of want of confidence, when a member shall be at liberty to speak for one hour:

Provided that this rule shall not apply to a member moving the second reading of a Bill, or to the Leader of the Government, or to the Leader of the Opposition or any member deputed by them respectively to speak first in reply to such motion, who shall be at liberty to speak for one-hour-and-a-half:

Provided further that with the consent of the House, to be determined without debate, a member may be further heard for a period not exceeding thirty minutes.

In Committee of the House, except as hereinafter provided, no member, other than the member in charge of a Bill or motion, or Minister in charge of an Estimate, shall speak more than three times on any one question, nor

more than fifteen minutes on the first occasion, and five minutes on the second and third occasions:

Provided that a member may prolong his first or second speech, but not so as to exceed the full time permitted for speaking on any one question.

As members will observe, that goes a good deal further than the limitations suggested by our Standing Orders Committee. It is quite clear to everybody that this is not a Government motion but is a recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee and, as in the past when similar matters have been discussed, every member is entitled without question to exercise his right or discretion in the matter. To me, it seems that on occasion there has been a good deal of waste of time in the discussions of some questions, and that we should encourage in all members—I am not making any exclusions from this point of view—the idea of endeavouring to pick out the salient points bearing on the question before the Chair, and bring them forward as concisely as is practicable. In many instances, that has not been our experience, and one reason for it, in my view, is that there has been no encouragement for members to adopt that course. On the contrary, they have been encouraged by Standing Orders to wander as far as they could from the subject matter, waiting only for the brake to be applied to them by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, and some have been extremely careless in the preparation of the matter they proposed to put before the House.

The result of that and other considerations that arise during the session, I think members will agree, has been that a great deal too much time has been spent on some subjects, leaving insufficient time for others, with unsatisfactory results, either from the point of view of other members whose style has been cramped, or from the point of view of the House generally. So I submit that members could very well approve of the proposals made by the Standing Orders Committee with a view to ensuring that there is no unnecessary waste of time.

I feel certain that, just as no member has had occasion in all the years I have been here, if he was the mover of a motion on private members' day, to fear the arrival of a quarter-to-eight, the hour at which the time for discussing motions expires, so no member will need to fear, if the House is of the opinion that he has something worthwhile still to say, that an extension of time will not be granted him under this proposal. So I think there will be no loss to private members of their reasonable right, though there may be some diminution of unreasonable opportunities for private members. That is a matter we do not wish to cover up, because we should ensure, as far as possible,

that the business of the House is dealt with as concisely and thoroughly as possible.

As to the proposal that the time limit for motions should be cut out, I must agree with the member for Pilbara—I understand this view is taken by the Standing Orders Committee—that this power has never been exercised in order to put a stop to the consideration of motions. When the Speaker has called attention to the fact that the time for considering motions has expired, an extension of time has always been granted and it has always been an unlimited extension. I cannot remember any motion ever having been moved that the time be extended to 8.30 p.m., or some other hour; the motion has been that the time be extended.

I do not agree with the member for East Perth that this will make much difference to private members' legislation. We have never had an application of the Standing Order providing that motions must cease at a quarter-to-eight, and a great many private members' Bills have been passed in this House. I sat on the Opposition side as a private member perhaps as long as the member for East Perth has done, and was responsible for the introduction of many, and the passage of a considerable number of, private members' Bills, and the hon. member himself has been responsible in more recent years for the introduction of a good number and the passage of some private members' Bills. I think, therefore, he must agree that, as the quarter-to-eight limitation has never been enforced, all the Bills he has presented have been reasonably debated. On one occasion there was too much delay in getting a measure to another place, but that is a rare happening.

I suggest that the other proposal of the Standing Orders Committee, namely, that relating to the limitation of speeches, might very easily solve even the last-mentioned problem by allowing more time ultimately for the discussion of such Bills.

Mr. Graham: I think you will agree it is not desirable to have a Bill introduced and then for five or six weeks to elapse before it is debated.

THE DEPUTY PREMIER: That is a matter involving the rights of private members and their business.

Mr. Graham: At present, precedence is given to later notices of motion.

THE DEPUTY PREMIER: No preference is given to notices of motion, except to the extent that they are allowed to be moved. They then drop to the bottom of the paper in the ordinary way and take no precedence whatever over legislation introduced the day before. I cannot, in those circumstances, see the point of view of the hon. member.

Mr. Graham: I will speak to you privately then.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: It seems to me that the proposition is one of which members might safely take a favourable view. I was a little interested in the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition on this proposal, because I thought I recollected something he had said on another occasion, which indicated that he would favour even something more stringent than the Standing Orders Committee has proposed. I find that on the 17th October, 1951, when speaking on a motion dealing with parliamentary business hours, he did have something to say on the subject. In the course of his remarks, the Premier interjected, "What about a time limit on speeches?" It was then reported, at page 84 of "Hansard" of 1951 that the Leader of the Opposition said—

Speaking for myself I have no objection to a limitation of speeches—

The Premier: Good. We will see what we can do about it.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: —because I think that anyone who has something worthwhile to say can say it in half an hour. I think I have already been speaking 25 minutes.

So the hon. member somewhat surprised me by his observations on this proposal. I am unable to judge whether he was jocular on the first or the second occasion.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I think you know.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: I will leave it at that. I support the proposition.

MR. NEEDHAM (North Perth) [8.12]: I rise to discuss this question with a certain amount of reluctance because it will not affect me one way or another, however the matter is decided since, when this session is finished, my parliamentary career will finish also. But as I am here as a member, I will have to vote in one direction or another when the question is put to the House, and I do not intend to give a silent vote.

I have carefully studied the recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee. The first three are not of very much moment and I have no comment to make on them except to say that I will support them. I intend also to support the proposed amendment of Standing Order No. 169A, because I have had experience in the Commonwealth Parliament of Standing Orders similar to our existing Standing Order and the proposed new one.

When I took my seat in the Commonwealth Parliament in 1907, there was no restriction on speeches, either on second readings or in the discussion of motions or in Committee. I will admit that on several occasions there was some waste of time in the discussion of many subjects. The matter reached a crisis when

on one occasion a member in the House of Representatives made a speech lasting 8½ hours and another, in the Senate, made one lasting 12½ hours. Then the Standing Orders Committee thought it was time to do something about the matter.

I will confess that when the Standing Orders Committee of the Senate brought in a recommendation for the restriction of time of speeches I opposed it just as sedulously as my Leader has opposed this proposal. I admit that under the new Standing Order, when the time was limited and the length of the speeches restricted, there was an improvement in the debates.

In some respects this proposed new Standing Order is similar to the amended Standing Order of the Senate and in one phase it is an improvement, so far as the Committee stage is concerned. At the Committee stage in the Senate a member may speak for a quarter of an hour; and after some other speaker has followed him, even if for only two or three minutes, he can speak for another quarter of an hour, and he can continue doing that ad lib for the whole time the Bill is in Committee. This proposal, however, is for a limitation to two speeches of 10 minutes each, which I consider is an improvement.

I do not say that what brought about the limitation of time in the Senate has occurred here—not by any stretch of the imagination. During the 20 years I have had the honour to be a member of this Parliament there have been very few attempts to prolong a debate. On the average, I think members have confined their speeches to reasonable limits. Notwithstanding that, I think it will be better for members if their time is limited. I consider their speeches will be more effective and, as has been suggested, more thought will be necessary.

There is the danger, which I think was referred to by some other member, that if we decide to limit the time of speeches in this Parliament, we may, later on, have the application of the gag or the guillotine, which has become operative in the Commonwealth Parliament. However, I do not think that will eventuate here. I certainly would not support the application of the gag or the guillotine with a view to ensuring that a Bill shall go through at a certain time or that certain issues shall be determined at a specified time. But I think that without in any way affecting the effectiveness of members' speeches, we can very well support this proposed new Standing Order.

The Leader of the Opposition was afraid that it might somewhat limit discussion. But I venture to say that that will not be the case. Although the Standing Orders limited speeches in the Senate I remember on several occasions, whilst I was there—and I was Leader of the Opposition there for some years—we man-

aged to have all-night sittings on some Bills that were before us. Notwithstanding the limitation of time, these long sittings occurred because the members resented, perhaps, the attitude adopted by the Government of the day, and men who did not usually address themselves to the Senate, spoke on the first reading, the second reading, and on nearly every clause in Committee.

Even if this proposed new Standing Order becomes effective, a vast amount of time will still be able to be occupied in the various stages through which a Bill passes. Having had experience of unlimited time for speeches in the Commonwealth and the State Parliaments, and of a time limit in the Commonwealth Parliament, I think it would be wise for this Assembly to adopt the new Standing Order and make it effective for all time.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—Mt. Lawley) [8.21]: The motion is one of considerable importance. It is not so important, in my view, to the House, although it is one to regulate our procedure, but rather as it affects the status of Parliament in the view of the public. There have been suggestions at times that members of Parliament do not gain from the public the respect they should as the people's elected representatives who are responsible for the laws of the country, for electing the executive and for being the highest court in the land. I am not speaking as one who has a right to talk from a long experience of this House, but as one who has had some experience, and who also regards himself as a member of the public.

I have witnessed scenes here that no member could respect. In my view they have certainly lowered the dignity of the House. I have seen men lolling about asleep and half awake, whilst they were, allegedly, conducting affairs of the highest importance. I have seen a member on his feet palpably filling in time to delay something to which he objects—not to inform the House or the public, or to impress anyone at all, but merely to delay, for political reasons only, some Bill or motion to which he objects. He does it on the ground that he is putting up a fight for his objective so that he can impress his supporters.

Mr. Graham: It often deters the Government from attempting to do certain things.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It does not deter the Government on an important issue at all. If the Government, no matter of what party, decides that some measure has to be passed, then delaying tactics will not cause any result other than delay and to make the public feel disrespect for the foolishness of members who sit up until 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning, and listen to nothing at all—

4 and 5-hour speeches of endless repetition, the reading of matter and the quoting of events of 100 years ago—merely to fill in time.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Members would not know anything about events of 100 years ago.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They might not, but they read matter referring to what took place 100 years ago. For our own self-respect we want to make that position impossible.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The only time the public takes an interest in us is when things lived up in the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Does the Leader of the Opposition call that livening up? I have heard him make many good speeches in half-an-hour or 45 minutes, and he has certainly livened up the House.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: He has livened up the Attorney General.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He has livened up the Attorney General, too—I frankly admit it. I have not, however, been livened up with 4 and 5-hour speeches; rather, I have gone to sleep or "as near as dammit" to it. We speak here not only to the House, but to the public.

Mr. Graham: The galleries are full.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They are not, but through the Press and the wireless we speak to the public. Very often it is hopeless to impress, shall I say, the member for East Perth. I know that if I tried to impress my views on him it would be hopeless, and vice versa. But he knows that when he addresses the House, what he says will be published—that is when he says anything of importance, and he can say things of importance in half an hour because he is an able debater. I am going to support the amendments, but only because I think the House will gain greater self-respect from them, and greater respect in the eyes of the public. We cannot afford to do anything that will lessen the public's opinion of Parliament. Every one of us should be ashamed of some of the scenes that we have witnessed here. Why do they occur? It is so that we can go to our supporters and say, "We fought this to the last ditch."

Mr. Styants: What about the end of last session when we sat up for two or three nights? Who was at fault then?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not saying who was at fault, and I am not blaming anyone. I am not speaking as a member of the Government now but as an individual member of Parliament. I am not going to say whether it was the Government's fault or the fault of the Opposition, but I do say that that sort of thing does not enhance the reputation of the House.

Mr. Styants: What do the public think of a 28½-hour session?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They do not like it.

Mr. Styants: Neither do we.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Had the speeches of members been limited, we would not have had a 28½-hour session.

Mr. Styants: I can show you a few of your own speeches where you have turned a volte face.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not turning a volte face.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: You are sitting on the fence.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not. I am surprised at the Leader of the Opposition because I feel that for the surrender of the privilege of talking ad lib—the right to talk as long as a member can stand on his feet—we are gaining in return the respect of the public. I support this proposition.

HON. E. NULSEN (Eyre) [8.30]: I have been in this House since 1932 and believe that, generally speaking, it has conducted its affairs reasonably and has maintained its status on a level at least equal to that of any Parliament in Australia.

The Deputy Premier: And probably better.

Hon. E. NULSEN: That is so. Nevertheless, I believe that a number of the speeches made could be reduced considerably in length without sacrificing anything. I have been an offender, in that I have at times spoken for too long, because I knew that I could continue for as long as I desired. There has, at times, been a great deal of repetition, for some of which I must take portion of the blame. I do not altogether agree with the Attorney General who, I think, has reflected on the status of this House in comparison with that of others in the British Empire. From what I have read and learned this House has set an example for other Parliaments in the Empire.

We have probably been a little offensive at times and have failed to set the public the example that we should set it in view of the fact that, as was pointed out by the Attorney General, we are what might be called the high jury of the State. The recommendations of the Committee are reasonable and will give every member opportunity of expressing himself fully on any subject that might be before the House. I feel sure that if the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition had anything of interest to put before the House there would be no difficulty in securing an extension of time, should that be necessary, and I think the same would apply to any private member. I believe that the recommendations, if adopted, will tend to make

our debates more interesting and help us to set a better example to those we represent.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland) [8.34]: I do not wish to cast a silent vote on this question. I do not think there is any harm in the first three recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee, but I must oppose the last one. In reply to the Attorney General, with regard to the respect of the public for Parliament, I must say that I do not believe the people lose respect for Parliament because of what is said in the House or the way in which members conduct themselves, but rather because when Acts of Parliament are passed Ministers in charge of them sometimes do little to enforce those laws. The Attorney General is in charge of the price-fixing legislation in this State and I do not think the public are happy about the way it is being enforced. When the present Government came into office it promised to do certain things for the people and held forth that "Prices rise with Wise."

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is getting away from the question before the Chair.

Mr. BRADY: When a Government holds out that it will do certain things and then does not do them it brings Parliament into disrepute. After all, there are very few people in the public galleries—even during the longest speeches—to see how members conduct themselves. The people judge Parliament by what happens after legislation is passed.

The Attorney General: That is only a question of the Government, and not of Parliament. A Government may bring itself into disrepute in that way at times.

Mr. BRADY: If the fourth recommendation of the Committee is agreed to a member will have to limit his contribution to the debate on the Address-in-reply to one hour. In that debate recently I spoke for one and a half hours without any trouble, and could have spoken for much longer had it not been for the fact that I deliberately reduced the length of my speech. I do not think I should be under an obligation to keep on securing extensions of time when speaking to the debate on the Address-in-reply. During that debate I made the point that I thought my electorate was badly treated in many respects, and I still believe that. The only way in which a member can bring such things before the people is to refer to them again and again in this House, and I therefore believe that a member should have the right to speak for as long as he wishes.

When I first came into this House the Government had a bare majority and on any division the voting would be 23 to 22 or 24 to 23, but as the Government has increased its numbers it has become

smug and confident about its legislative programme and has now adopted a dictatorial attitude in putting its legislation through. Those tactics were not adopted four or five years ago when I first entered the House, but, as the Government has gained numbers, it has increased in smugness and confidence and now does not want Opposition members to speak at all.

The Minister for Lands: Tell us where our numbers are.

Mr. BRADY: The Government has the numbers when they are wanted, and that is the main thing. With its increased numbers and the support of the Independents it has gained in smugness until it does not want to hear the Opposition. It says to us "You are only wasting time. Our mind is made up and we want to get on with the job. We have a great many things we want to do and you people do not count." As an Opposition member I have often wondered whether we are doing any good for our electorates at all, because we get for them only what the Government likes to give them.

The Attorney General: You should have been here in the old days.

Mr. BRADY: So long as I am speaking in the interests of my electorate I want the right to speak for as long as I think necessary. I do not wish to knuckle down to the attitude of the Government, which savours too much of dictatorship and of an endeavour to brush us off. I am not going to be brushed off that easily. There is much to be said at times for speaking at length because, after all, when one does that it invariably gets into the Press.

The Minister for Lands: And it empties the House.

Mr. BRADY: There must be a quorum of 17 if the debate is to continue and if necessary someone always calls attention to the state of the House. Long speeches often wake the public up to something extraordinary that is going on, and result in members getting information and advice from people who are in a position to help. That is desirable. We do not represent only ourselves in this House, as some members would like to think. I am confident that there are members of the present Ministry who feel that they are the only ones in this House that count, while in fact we, collectively, are speaking for 500,000 people. If we can do anything to arrest the attention of the public and let them know that something is going on with regard to which we would like their advice, we should have the right to speak for as long as we think is necessary.

Recently, a contentious measure—the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill—was introduced into this House. I know that the Government would have liked it to be passed in one or two sittings, but the Opposition set itself out to prevent

that in order to emphasise to the public the unfairness of the Government's tactics. I think we did some good because many people had no idea of arbitration and how it affects our trade unions. Consequently those people were able to obtain information that they would otherwise not have been able to get. They were able to come to the House, in some cases, and hear the discussions that were taking place. That would not have been possible if the debate had not continued for some days. So I think the present Standing Order is a protection for the general public and it gives them an opportunity of knowing what is happening. As the Leader of the Opposition said, when speaking to this debate, "After all, this is Parliament."

Members in this House are expected to debate at length, if needs be, any matter that is brought before them. Invariably a debate brings out certain points of view that would not otherwise be discussed. In connection with any matter there are probably a dozen and one points of view and may be one speaker, in 30 or 35 minutes, will bring out two or three different aspects. But there are other points that should be discussed and they should all be brought up in this House in fairness to all sections of the community.

That cannot always be done in a speech of 45 minutes. One member of the Government said tonight that it should be possible to do it in a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes. That may be so if one has been in the House for 10 or 15 years and has all the arguments and short cuts at one's fingertips. In those circumstances one has certain confidences and can approach Ministers. But the back benchers have not that understanding with Ministers. Members of the Opposition who are ex-Ministers know certain short cuts and certain ways to approach Ministers; consequently they are able to get what they want for their electorates, but those on the back benches do not have those opportunities. We have to speak of our grievances and try to draw the attention of Ministers to the difficulties that confront us. I am definitely opposed to anything that will shorten speeches. Consequently I am against the fourth recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee and intend to vote against it for the reasons I have given.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan [8.43]): I propose to vote against the final recommendation made by the Standing Orders Committee. I think that when the Committee was considering amendments to the Standing Orders, it went through them with a microscope so that it could make recommendations to Parliament. The first amendment relates to Standing Order No. 80 which deals with moneys that are paid into a fund when

persons are imprisoned by order of the Assembly. I have been a member of this House for 22 years and cannot recall one instance where a person has been arrested in those circumstances, and I think it was a good many years before that when the Standing Order was used. Consequently, it was almost redundant and it could have remained in the Standing Orders and, if an arrest was made, we could have then dealt with it. But it seems as though the Committee had to do something to justify its existence and consequently it submitted these recommendations to the House.

Then there are one or two other amendments that are of a minor character. The last one, however, is the one that is important to all members of this House. We know that Parliament does not meet until the last Thursday in July and usually we do not sit for any longer than four months. We have three days a week during which we are engaged in debating and discussing legislation, but now it is proposed to limit those debates. From my experience in Parliament, I have known of only one or two instances where members have exceeded a reasonable time in discussing certain topics. We are not all gifted with the art of speech and many of us remain silent. Also, we are not anxious to get up and talk at length, although it is the purpose of Parliament to discuss the country's business. Consequently it is a retrograde step to try to stifle discussion.

The Attorney General made some reference to the bad old days when many members used to talk at great length. I can hark back for 25 years, and during that time I do not think any member of the Government or Opposition has talked at great length unless he had sufficient reason for doing so. There are times when there is a definite obligation upon members to expose what the Government is doing. I am not referring to this Government particularly, but there have been occasions in other States in the Commonwealth when a Government has had what could be called "dumb supporters" who were prepared to follow their Government at all costs. A Government, with supporters like that, can pass whatever legislation it desires, and if the Standing Orders restrict the length of the debates, such a Government can get away with it.

During the last few years our sessions have tended to become shorter and this lessens the discussion of the country's business. But I do not think there is any justification, at this stage, for limiting the time a member can speak on any particular subject, particularly as there are not that many members in this Parliament. The Commonwealth has been enlarged to 120 members and there each member is seeking the right to speak, particularly as the debates are broadcast over the air. In that case every member tries

to talk to his electors as well as to Parliament. In those circumstances there could be some justification for a limitation, but in our House, where we have only 50 members, and there has been no flagrant abuse of our Standing Orders in that regard, I think this recommendation is unwarranted.

I have heard it said that the member for Melville gets up and digs into certain files and talks at considerable length. He has the ability to express himself and is well primed in his subjects. He may take an hour and a half to submit his case and so some members say he takes too long. He should have that right if he is attacking the Government and has a good case to present. I agree with that. I can remember when the Deputy Premier was on this side of the House; he frequently criticised the Government of the day and talked at great length. It was his job to investigate and examine the workings of the Government, and he had the right to see that its policy was in line with the best interests of the country.

When I was sitting behind the Government of that day I listened to him on many occasions for periods longer than an hour—on many occasions for hours on end. I was interested in what he had to say; he had a good grip of his subjects and presented some interesting information. But I do not agree with this proposal that the Standing Orders Committee has put forward and I do not think we would be justified in voting for it. As a matter of fact, I think if we could get a little more silence in this House when a member is making a speech, it would be more to the point. There are times when various little meetings are being held within the precincts of this Chamber, and one cannot hear oneself speak. If a Standing Order were made to deal with that position, it would receive much more support than the proposals we are now considering.

Mr. Graham: And also increase the number for a quorum.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Yes. There are times when I am anxious to hear a Minister who is dealing with something of importance.

Mr. SPEAKER: Members are listening to the hon. member well now.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I know that, but that is because I have a pretty good voice. However, there are times, if the Minister for Health is on her feet, when I find it almost impossible to hear her because of other discussions that are going on in the House. The same remarks apply to the Attorney General. He has a soft voice and it is hard to hear what he is propounding until he is really brought into action. He sometimes thinks he is in the forum at the Supreme Court, where lawyers do not have to speak very loudly. Although they have restrictions on the time for a speech in other Parliaments

of Australia, I think it would be a retrograde step if we adopted the same principle in this Parliament. The time is not far distant when the Government may be on this side of the House and its members may want to speak on behalf of their electors on some important subject. They may require longer than an hour to do so, and will be seeking an extension of time but, if I am sitting on the other side of the House when that occurs, I will oppose such an extension.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [8.52]: I propose to support the recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee because, in my opinion, they are not excessively repressive. The only occasion when a member will be likely to be restricted in accordance with the proposals of the Standing Orders Committee will be on the Address-in-reply, when most members are anxious to speak for a period which would be in excess of the proposed specified time limit. However, if he is prevented from dealing with all the matters concerning his electorate during the Address-in-reply debate, a member has at least, on two other occasions, an opportunity to finish dealing with his subjects, namely, on the General Estimates and on the Loan Estimates, and then, as each departmental Estimates are dealt with, he is allowed further discussion.

Although I intend to support the recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee, the Attorney General almost convinced me that I was on the wrong track. He said that members of Parliament lowered their prestige in the eyes of the public by making long speeches. I wonder if that is so in the honourable profession the Attorney General follows, and for which he was educated. I wonder if he has heard of any cases where counsel has lost prestige, either with the court or the public, by making addresses on behalf of their clients in the courts for periods extending over two, three or four days, and not two, three or four hours.

It is quite a common practice in the law courts for counsel to speak for hours on end. I have yet to learn that they lose prestige in the eyes of the public, and they certainly do not lose it in the eyes of the learned gentlemen of the court, because those of them that do make long speeches very often get judgment in their favour. Therefore, apparently they do not lose any prestige as a result of the logic they propound. It is rather amusing for the Attorney General to chide members for adopting in the House an indolent attitude, or for being asleep or even half asleep. If the Attorney General was at the stage of being half asleep and he had a mirror in front of him, he would realise that he himself is a frequent offender.

Mr. Graham: He would not be able to see the mirror.

Mr. STYANTS: So I think it ill became the Attorney General to chide members for being indolent in the House.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Attorney General is sometimes in that condition while on his feet!

Mr. STYANTS: In reply to an interjection of mine, when I referred to the 2½-hour sitting, which was due to very bad management at the end of last session, he also stated that if I had restrained myself in my speech on that occasion the session would have been over much quicker. I do not remember making any long speech then, because I was too fatigued to do so. However, I have heard the Attorney General speak at length on at least one occasion when he was the leader in a debate on the age at which trainee nurses could start training in a tuberculosis hospital—he was on this side of the House at the time—and immediately he became a Minister he was the crusader to get the age altered back to the one he opposed. I do not believe that the recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee will be unduly oppressive, and for that reason I propose to support them.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that the recommendations of the Standing Orders Committee be adopted. I will put the motion in four sections.

Standing Order No. 80:

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 109:

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Standing Order No. 218:

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

Mr. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, is it possible to state any objection to this recommendation at this stage?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has an opportunity to amend it at this stage if he so desires.

Mr. GRAHAM: I desire to move that it be rejected.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member desires to have it deleted?

The Deputy Premier: The hon. member has told us his reasons already.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can only oppose it with a direct negative.

Mr. GRAHAM: All I can do is to vote against it, then.

Question put and passed; the recommendation agreed to.

New Standing Order No. 169A:

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is—

That the recommendation be agreed to.

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

Ayes	26
Noes	13
Majority for	13

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Brand	Mr. Owen
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Read
Mr. Griffith	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hill	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Manning	Mr. Totterdell
Mr. Naider	Mr. Watts
Mr. Needham	Mr. Wild
Mr. Nimmo	Mr. Yates
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Brady	Mr. Mann
Mr. Cornell	Mr. May
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Hoar	

(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the recommendation agreed to.

Mr. GRAHAM: Would it be in order for me to move that these amendments to the Standing Orders shall have force and effect as from the next Parliament?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no recommendation to that effect. If the hon. member wishes to move it he will have to give notice as usual.

Mr. GRAHAM: Is not the question still before us?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been resolved. If the hon. member has any further business I suggest he bring it up in the ordinary way.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Might I ask when it is proposed to put this Standing Order into effect?

Mr. SPEAKER: It will not be put into effect tonight; the amendments have to be approved by the Governor.

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th October.

HON. E. NULSEN (Eyre) [9.51]: This is a Bill for an Act to amend the Nurses Registration Act, 1921-1951. A trained nursing aide means a person entitled to be enrolled in the register as a trained

nursing aide. I agree with this provision but I would like to move one small amendment in Committee. This amendment to the Nurses Registration Act is a very commendable one. These women have been doing a most wonderful job and it is only fair that they should be recognised. I notice that for the purposes of the Bill they must be at least 17 years of age. In my opinion that, too, is quite right although it may appear a little on the young side. But if they are not taken into the hospital when they are reasonably young they drift into other work and consequently their services are lost to the hospital.

Provision is made that these people should have certain educational qualifications and that would be prescribed by regulation; the same thing applies to their health and their training, too, must be of a fair standard and they must go through certain schools as the board thinks fit. These people must also be judged to be efficient or else they will not be registered. Generally speaking, however, they are usually fairly efficient and as far as their integrity, their ability, diligence and application are concerned they are highly commendable. Accordingly I feel that this is a worthy Bill which gives recognition where it is due.

We know what the nurses have done in Western Australia; especially is that true of our nursing sisters. I say we know what these nurses have done, though I fear that a lot of people do not recognise the wonderful work that is carried out by them. This also applies to the assistant nurses and they are to be recognised under this Bill as well as trained nursing aide nurses. They must make application to the board six months after this measure comes into operation; if they do not then I take it they must be approved by the board before they are registered; they must certainly be competent before they do make application. These people pay a small fee to be registered and their names can be erased from the register if they do not carry out their work as it should be done, or if they offend against the regulations.

There is provision also made for the habiliments of these nurses—for such things as caps and clothing—but generally that would be prescribed by regulation. That is only fair because there have been quite a number of amendments. There must be some distinction between the various classes of nurses; the nurses and the sisters are fully qualified and have their uniform and these nursing aides will now have theirs. Nursing aides do more in a hospital than is recognised by the general public. As the Minister pointed out they are capable of doing two-thirds of the work that is now done by the sisters who are highly qualified.

So the nursing aides play an important part. The sisters who are highly qualified do one-third of the work and the aides work under the supervision of these sisters and are protected, because the work that is done by them is more or less the responsibility of the sister-in-charge. There is not much more I wish to say because I agree with the amendment proposed in the Bill. If there is a breach of the regulation, provision is made for a penalty of £20. If the offence continues from day to day I think they are still subject to the maximum of whatever they may be fined. They are also subject to £1 a day for each day the breach continues.

I have one fault to find with the Bill in that these nursing aides are members of the Hospital Employees' Union and no provision is made for their representation on the board. In Committee, I propose to move to give them a representative to be chosen by the union. This request is only reasonable and I hope the Minister will accede to it. I agree with the Bill 100 per cent. provided the nursing aides are given such representation. There might be 150 of these aides who will be qualified under the measure and, seeing that they are members of the Hospital Employees' Union, they should have representation on the board. The Minister should make this one small concession.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 17—agreed to.

Clause 18, Section 16 amended:

Mr. BRADY: Paragraph (iv) prescribes as the penalty for a breach of the regulations a sum not exceeding £20 and, in the case of a continuing breach, a sum not exceeding £20 and an additional sum not exceeding £1 for each day the breach continues after the board has served notice on the offender. Does that mean that these aides may be fined £20, then a second amount of £20?

The Minister for Health: Yes, if they commit a breach of the regulations.

Mr. BRADY: That seems to be unreasonable. An offender would be struck off the register and thrown out of work and then fined.

The Attorney General: That is the maximum amount.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The fine would be a deterrent if an aide were tempted to pose as a fully trained nurse or commit some other breach of the regulations knowing full well that she was doing so.

Mr. Yates: Is that the maximum penalty?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes.

Mr. GRAHAM: The point taken by the member for Guildford-Midland is sound. It seems extraordinary to provide for a penalty of £20 and then a further penalty of £20 and £1 per day for a continuing offence. The paragraph should be made to provide for an alternative penalty of £20 and £1 per day for a continuing offence. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (iv) the word "and" be struck out and the word "or" inserted in lieu.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member has misunderstood the meaning of the proposal. If an offence were committed, a maximum penalty of £20 could be imposed. The offence could be serious. We have heard of bogus doctors practising.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That should be dealt with by the court.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It would be dealt with by the court.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I think we were told that the penalty would be imposed by the Minister.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Minister would have no power to impose any penalty. If a mental nurse pretended to be a fully trained nurse and practised as such, it would be dangerous for the public and a penalty of £20 could be imposed. If, after receiving notice from the board to cease practising, she continued to do so, she could then be fined an amount of £1 for each day of the continuing offence, but she must have been served with notice by the board.

Mr. Graham: Will she have to pay a second £20?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No. It is £1 per day. If she commits a breach she can be fined £20. Then if the board serves notice on her to cease continuing to commit the offence and she continues to do so, she can be fined a sum not exceeding £1 per day.

Mr. May: Then why not cut out one of the references to £20?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No; because one offence is without the notice of the board, and the second is when she defies the board. Suppose, for instance, that she pretends to be a mental nurse when she is a midwifery nurse, and the board knows nothing about it. Then she can be fined £20. Say she continues to commit the offence, and the board sends notice that she must discontinue. Then, if she continues to offend, she can be fined £1 per day.

Mr. Graham: But she will be fined another £20.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not £20 per day.

Mr. Graham: No, another £20. She will be fined £20, then a further £20 and £1 per day.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

Mr. Graham: Read it out loud.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think it is reasonably clear. If she continues to commit the offence she can be fined after notice £20, plus £1 per day. The board could prosecute her as soon as it learned of the offence and she could be fined £20. But suppose it does not; say it serves notice that she is to cease the conduct with which she is charged.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: If she carried on for a further 10 days, what would the maximum penalty be?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: She could be fined £20, plus £1 for each day.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is £50 altogether.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If she carries on after notice she can be fined £20 plus £1 per day for each day.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The way you read it, she could be fined £50 if she committed the offence and then continued to do so for a further 10 days.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not agree with the hon. member's interpretation.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is the way you read it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Take that example.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Attorney General had better finish his explanation.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Would the Attorney General agree to report progress?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The paragraph prescribes a penalty for a breach of the regulations. It is to be a sum not exceeding £20. If she continues—

Mr. Graham: She is fined another £20.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Why should she not be? It is a question of somebody's life being at stake, perhaps. Why should we allow somebody to do something opposed to the regulations?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: There might be some ground for confusion here. I think the matter could be cleared up easily by the amendment suggested by the member for East Perth or by one which I might move if his amendment is defeated. I would move to delete all the words after "pounds" in line 3 of paragraph (iv) down to the word "pounds" in line 4. I would then move to add after the word "continues" in line 6 the words "in case of a continuing breach." The paragraph would then read—

(iv) prescribing as the penalty for a breach of the regulations a sum not exceeding twenty pounds and an additional sum not exceeding one pound for each day the breach continues in the case of a continuing breach.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am not particularly fussy as to how it is done, but I do suggest that if we delete "and" in line 3 and substitute the word "or", the desired end will be simply achieved and we will have exactly what we want. I do not think there is any disagreement on general principle. We do object to a double penalty and a daily recurring fine as well. My amendment will give effect to what the Leader of the Opposition seeks to do by a longer method.

The Minister for Health: I will agree to your amendment.

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

New clause:

Hon. E NULSEN: I move—

That a new clause be inserted as follows:—

3. Section two of the principle Act is amended by (a) Deleting the word "five" in subsection (2) and inserting in lieu the word "six", and (b) Deleting the word "and" in line 2 of subsection (4) and inserting after the word "nurses" in the same line the words "and a representative nominated by the Hospitals Employees' Union".

The trained nurses have a representative on the board, and so has the department, and the Commissioner of Public Health is the chairman. It is only fair that the nursing aides, who are members of the Hospital Employees' Union, should be represented, and their representative should be chosen by the union.

The CHAIRMAN: I must rule the proposed new clause out of order, as being outside the scope of the Bill. The only clause in the Bill, as at present drafted, dealing with the board, is Clause 3, but it makes no reference whatever to the composition of the board. The proposed new clause seeks to make changes in the constitution of the board itself. It is impossible for me to accept it as being within the scope of the Bill. If the hon. member wants to do this, he will have to introduce a separate measure.

New clause ruled out.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.