

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 8th September, 1965

CONTENTS

	Page
ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE :	
SPECIAL	733
BILLS—	
Albany Harbour Board Act Amendment Bill—3r.	714
Architects Act Amendment Bill— Receipt ; 1r.	717
Bread Act Amendment Bill— Receipt ; 1r.	717
Bunbury Harbour Board Act Amendment Bill—3r.	714
Bush Fires Act Amendment Bill—3r.	714
Coal Mine Workers (Pensions) Act Amendment Bill—Returned	717
Education Act Amendment Bill— Com.	732
Report	733
Hairdressers Registration Act Amendment Bill—2r.	721
Health Act Amendment Bill—Returned	717
Land Act Amendment Bill—2r.	716
Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment Bill— 2r.	717
Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act Amendment Bill—Returned	717
Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill— Returned	717
Petroleum Products Subsidy Bill—2r.	718
Police Act Amendment Bill—2r.	722
Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act Amendment Bill—2r.	714
Sale of Human Blood Act Amendment Bill— 2r.	731
Com. ; Report	732
Spear-guns Control Act Amendment Bill— 3r.	714
State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment Bill— 2r.	723
Com. ; Report	731
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—	
Burning Accidents—	
Cause	713
Fatalities	713
Number	713
Cape Tulip : Perth-Williams Road Area— Eradication : Results	718
Handicapped Children—Teachers : Specialised Training	714
Housing : Purchase and Rental Homes in Fremantle and Medina-Kwinana Areas— Applications : Number Current	712
Erections in Current Year	712
Workers' Compensation—	
Statutory Limit—	
Industries Affected	713
Medical and Hospital Benefits	713
Number Exceeding	713
"To-and-from" Claims	712

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION (6): ON NOTICE

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

"To-and-from" Claims

1. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

Further to my question on Wednesday, the 25th August, 1965, relating to workers' compensation claims arising from travel to and from work, how many claims have been lodged for workers' compensation from the State Government Insurance Office due to accidents arising in travelling to and from work since this type of legislation became effective on the 14th December, 1964, in—

- (a) Metropolitan;
- (b) Country; and
- (c) Goldfields areas?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (a) Metropolitan 25
- (b) Country 5
- (c) Goldfields 1

These figures are not specifically recorded and may not be completely accurate, but actual figures would not vary greatly.

PURCHASE AND RENTAL HOMES: FREMANTLE AND MEDINA-KWINANA AREAS

Applications: Number Current

2. The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many current applications for State Housing Commission assistance are there in—

- (a) the Fremantle area; and
- (b) the Medina-Kwinana area:

for—

- (i) Purchase; and
- (ii) Rental homes?

Erections in Current Year

- (2) How many homes will be erected in each of these areas in the current financial year?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Applications—

	Fre- mantle	Kwin- ana
Purchase only	261	9
Rental only	282	32
To either purchase or rent	73	—

Totals without wastage 616 41

(2) The 1965-66 programme for accommodating these applicants is—

(a) Vacancies in existing housing stock—estimated	120	100
(b) New construction:		
(i) Under construction	288	13
(ii) Contracts to be let	17	27
Estimated total for allocation	425	140

CAPE TULIP: PERTH-WILLIAMS ROAD AREA

Eradication: Results

3. The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) How successful were the trials carried out by the Department of Agriculture into the eradication of Cape tulip in the Perth to Williams road area?
- (2) What were the—
 - (a) results of control points;
 - (b) results in the larger areas; and
 - (c) costs per acre?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Trials over a period of years in the Perth to Williams road area have given a high degree of control of Cape tulip. Substantial reduction from the application of 2 lb. acid equivalent 2,4-D ester per acre has been obtained in the first year, but, due mainly to the presence of dormant corms, control measures must be continued for several years.
- (2) (a) As for (1).
- (b) Following thorough treatment, results comparable with those of the trials have been obtained on larger areas.
- (c) The cost of the chemical is 13s. per acre.

BURNING ACCIDENTS

Number

4. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many persons in Western Australia have—
 - (a) suffered from—
 - (i) first;
 - (ii) second; or
 - (iii) third degree burns; or

Fatalities

(b) died from the effects of burning accidents in each of the previous five years?

Cause

(2) Is there any information available to indicate the cause of burning, either directly or indirectly, such as ignition of clothing?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) (a) This information is not obtainable.
- (b) 1960 — 19
1961 — 17
1962 — 17
1963 — 16
1964 — 16
- (2) There is no information readily available, and it would require a detailed search of the relevant records to elicit the information.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION: STATUTORY LIMIT

Number Exceeding

5. The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS asked the Minister for Mines:

Further to my question on Thursday the 26th August, 1965, relating to excess payments under the Workers' Compensation Act—

(a) How many persons who are covered by the State Government Insurance Office exceeded the statutory limits allowable for hospital and medical benefits as provided in the Workers' Compensation Act for the years 1959 to 1964?

Medical and Hospital Benefits

(b) In each case, will the Minister show the hospital and medical benefits applicable at the time, and the amounts exceeded in each or either case?

Industries Affected

(c) From what employment or industry did each sustain his injury?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(a)

	Hospital	Medical	Total
1959-60	10	75	85
1961	7	43	50
1962	4	92	96
1963	7	41	48
1964	5	26	31

This represents an average of 3 per 1,000 claims lodged.

(b)

	Hospital		Medical	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
1959-60	169	10 6	113	0 3
1961	169	12 6	118	3 2
1962	250	0 0	150	0 0
1963	250	0 0	150	0 0
1964	325	0 0	200	0 0

Bill read in the House of Representatives
 The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS
 Local Government
 Perth
 1965

Information showing the extent each claim exceeded the limits is not readily available without considerable research in files and microfilm records.

- (c) This information would require similar research to obtain.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Teachers: Specialised Training

6. The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON asked the Minister for Mines:
- (1) Does the Government regard it as important that specialised teachers for handicapped children should be available in this State?
 - (2) What facilities exist here for specialised training of such teachers?
 - (3) Would it not be a very sound investment for the Education Department to facilitate the special training of a suitable person who has been awarded a Nuffield Foundation special study grant?
 - (4) Is it not a very shortsighted policy to put obstacles in the way of a dedicated teacher who has been awarded a Nuffield grant and is most anxious to equip herself to train others to become efficient teachers of spastic, autistic, aphasic, and deaf children with special problems?
 - (5) Will he endeavour to have further consideration given to a request for study leave which is currently before the Education Department?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) As there are so many forms of handicap it would be difficult to give descriptions of the training given, but if the honourable member has one particular field in view such information will be given.
- (3) Yes; and the department has granted assistance in the case mentioned up to the maximum given to members of the permanent staff in similar cases. This assistance has never before been given to a member of the temporary staff.
- (4) It would be if the department had placed obstacles in the way; but on the contrary, in the case in mind, it has given three months' leave on full pay.

: THIRD READING

* Amendment Bill.

1 time, on motion by
Logan (Minister for
) , and passed.

2. Bunbury Harbour Board Act Amendment Bill.

3. Albany Harbour Board Act Amendment Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health), and passed.

4. Spear-guns Control Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th September, on the following motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan) [4.46 p.m.]: This Bill deals with three particular occurrences that could happen in the life of a person: to be born, to be married, and ultimately to die. Our society demands that in each instance there shall be registration of such events. In turn, this produces legislation of the nature that we are contemplating today, together with the setting up of a department—essentially a Government department—to record and control the sequence of these happenings.

Because of the general trend of our society the present Bill seeks to improve the efficiency of such recording and to give to the people concerned—the citizens of the State—the simplest of approaches to this problem of registration. The Bill also envisages by research and a series of investigations the possibility of improving the birthrate of the nation, and, in this case, the birthrate of Western Australia.

The measure before us is divided into four major parts. There is a new interpretation for the birth of a child, together with a new system of processing the records of births, deaths, and marriages. There is also a widening of the powers of the Registrar-General to cover all registrations of births, deaths, and marriages, in order to ensure that the records of such registrations are not made available to the wrong people. I find that a very important point in my reading of the Bill.

There is also the removal of certain restrictions whereby the registration of a death is facilitated somewhat, in that it is now made the province of the Registrar-General and, ultimately, of a judge, over varying periods of time, so that authority may be given to this matter of registration.

The definitions of birth as introduced by the Minister and subsequently dealt with by Dr. Hislop last evening are, I am sure,

quite comprehensive for all of us in this Chamber, and for me in particular. I would not endeavour to go further than the remarks made by the Minister and by Dr. Hislop. I notice, however, that paragraph (b) of clause 3 of the Bill seeks to amend the interpretation of "minister" in the Act.

The definition of the word "minister" is obtained basically from the Commonwealth Marriage Act of 1961. There is substitution intended here whereby the new clause will provide that "minister" shall mean "an officer or person, not being a district registrar" etc., so the Bill, when it becomes law, will give power to appoint some person who is not a district registrar. Bear this in mind: We have the definition of "minister" and other people appointed through churches who have this right; and I regard with some degree of seriousness the point that if a series of persons are to be empowered with this quite considerable entitlement to offer the principle of marriage to people, there should be some notification in the Bill as to just what this type of person is.

I have not been able to see in the introductory speech of the Minister any reference whatever to this subsection; and it has, in my opinion, a very important and very real place in our society. It could be there is a reason that could be simply and easily explained. I hope so; but I think where we deal with a principle which has emanated from the Commonwealth Government and it moves down to us as a definition within our own laws, and we make an amendment to add a paragraph (b), both the paragraphs (a) and (b) should have equal preferment in any discussion before this Chamber. I will be interested to hear the Minister's remarks on this issue when he replies to the debate.

I hope some other members have seen fit to look into the Bill as I have done over the past three days and have seen the point as seriously as I have. In fact, I would like to know just what is intended by way of this amendment.

The new processing system is something which deserves to be applauded. The machinery of the Bill is such that the registrar will be given the right to appoint—according to the term—registration officers; and subsequent amendments to the Act to give this power to him are clearly indicated. I believe that the basis of the processing involved is that we will consolidate records in one central position; namely, in the Registrar-General's office in Perth, and that all processing will be done in that office and all registration certificates will emanate from there directly to the applicants, even though the applications, in the first instance, may have been made in localities as far away as Wyndham or Esperance.

I feel the basis of this Bill is to combine with the Commonwealth to such an extent that the Commonwealth is providing for the machines for this work and intends to see to their maintenance. In doing this, I believe we are setting up a system whereby the district registrar almost completely becomes a nonentity in this particular situation of recording. I think the whole basis of the Bill is to bring forward clearly that the Registrar-General—I took particular note last evening that Dr. Hislop was of this opinion—will be the man to give decisions on these things in the future. With that in mind I find some criticisms of this measure which I feel should be put before this Chamber now and subsequently in Committee.

On page 5 of the Bill we find a series of amendments to section 10 of the Act which, in my view, are contrary to this principle; because, having sent the information to the Registrar-General, having had him appoint his people under the clauses in the previous part of the Bill, having given him the machinery of automatic data, and so forth, we turn around and say the district registrar shall keep a duplicate. This means that having processed it to a given point, by the necessity of his having to keep a record of what he has done, we turn around and say that at 26 focal points throughout Western Australia we intend to ask the district registrars to keep a separate set of records.

In clause 9 of the Bill we go further and set up a principle whereby—if my reading of the Bill be correct—if anything is lost, mislaid, or defaced in one of the district registrar's offices, he has the right to send back to the central office and get a replacement of the duplicate. In my opinion, that is a complete waste of time and is completely opposite to the principle of the Bill.

I have struck two cases in the last 10 days where I have been helping people to trace their record of birth. They were both born in other States of Australia. How silly it would be for a man who was born 65 years ago in the township of Wyndham, who was registered there, but who is living in Perth today and who lost his birth certificate, to have to write to Wyndham for a birth certificate when, under this Bill, it will be processed in the heart of the City of Perth. If he were in Wyndham he would go to the registrar of that town and give all possible information he had, which would be funded down here for the return of the certificate to him direct. At most, it could only go through the local office. So, with that in mind, I intend to bring forward amendments to endeavour to take from the Bill this whole process of duplication and to leave in that particular part of the measure the principle that we will have automatic processing.

We will have the right of people to directly approach the Registrar-General. That becomes an important point because of this reason: Through the Bill we find the right of refusal to allow a person to seek information with regard to a birth, death, or marriage; and there is an extension of these three rights under this Bill as never before. The registrar is already empowered to refuse a search or a certified copy of an entry in a register if such would reveal illegitimacy, adoption, or legitimation. This power of refusal will now apply to all registrations.

If we perpetuate what is in this Bill and allow the 26 regional people to have a set of records prepared by the central authority to be held indefinitely, we will have 26 regional people giving a first decision on whether or not it is right for (a) a person to inquire; or (b) a person to see what is in the records.

If there is a dispute at this point the matter is referred to the Registrar-General, and that is completely wrong in concept. The Registrar-General is the man who should have the right to say whether or not he will make the information available. There is a further provision in the Bill to say that a person can go still further and apply to the Minister. In no circumstance could I envisage allowing 26 persons, each with his own interpretation of the situation, to be in a position to make a decision. What would be the position when there is no appeal after some of those 26 people have given a decision which would be contrary to the interests of the Registrar-General and, subsequently, the Minister?

So, I say that this Bill is completely opposite to what was intended, and I will endeavour to frame amendments to make the position clear so that the Registrar-General, and he alone—subsequently by way of reference to the Minister—is the one to have the right to issue a certificate containing information which he considers should be made available or not be made available. I think there should be no need whatsoever to have a series of copies being held indefinitely where they will rarely be called upon. I cannot imagine how big the files would have to be, but not too many people request a copy of a birth, death, or marriage registration. It is usually only genuine people who have lost the original who require this information. The only other cases would be in a doubtful category as to whether the information should be or not be given, and therefore it should go to the absolute top of the department, to the person completely in charge of all records. During the course of years, that person would set a basis—a level of discrimination—on which he would make information available to people who were seeking it.

The contract of marriage and the birth of a child are private matters; and, if, in the course of time, there be an intervention as to legitimation, that information should not go beyond the highest officials the State might have.

Basically, that is my approach to the Bill. I cannot see why a district registrar should have any more power whatever. I think the reference should be deleted from the Bill and he should have no say other than as a mere agent who transmits information to a central position. I think it is uneconomic to have a set of records in a central position, and then fund them over 26 areas; and later on it will number 52 areas. A new man in an area is always likely to make a mistake and he might create a situation which would not have arisen if the case had been handled at a higher level.

The conclusions I have reached are that there would not be anything more to this Bill than what I have said if it could simply be dealt with by means of the amendment I have on the notice paper. However, when I looked into the question I found that so much hinges on the two principles I have in mind that many more amendments would be necessary. So, rather than put them on the notice paper haphazardly, and as I want to have further discussions with people of authority, I would ask the Minister if he would leave the Committee stage of the Bill until the next sitting of the House.

I support the Bill in its principle. It is endeavouring to bring matters into line with the rest of Australia. We will have a consistent means of treating records at a central point where duplicates can be obtained. I would like to see the Bill go a little further so that the central point will be the only place where such duplicates can be obtained.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government).

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West—Minister for Local Government) [5.7 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

A lessee of conditional purchase land is entitled, under section 47, subsection (5) of the Land Act, at the expiration of the lease or at any time after five years from its commencement, to a Crown grant for the subject land. This is conditional on the terms having been complied with, the fencing and improvements maintained, and the price of the land fully paid.

No holding under part V of the Act may be transferred or sublet until after the expiration of two years from the commencement of the lease unless the holder has expended on the land in prescribed improvements the full amount required to be expended during such period; that is, two years. This is contained in section 143, subsection (3) of the Act and applies to all holdings, except in special cases approved by the Minister for Lands. A sale can be negotiated after two years from commencement of the lease if the value of the improvements is two-fifths of the total purchase price of the land.

There have been instances lately with the unprecedented demand for Crown land for agricultural development where conditional purchase lessees have requested approval to transfer the leases, the consideration being in excess of the value of the improvements effected.

The Minister for Lands has a duty to approve of a transfer if the improvements and rent are current and the transferee is eligible to hold the land. Consent cannot be withheld simply because the purchase price is considered by the Minister to be excessive.

It has been submitted, in view of the foregoing, that action should be taken now to strengthen section 143, subsection (3) of the Act. It is thought that by increasing the period from two years to five years, improvements and development of a reasonable standard would be established and should overcome the tendency of the lessee to transfer merely for profit.

The five-year period has been included in the Bill to coincide with requirements under section 47, subsection (5), previously referred to. The amendment will ensure that the original lessee will be required to develop the land in accordance with lease conditions and expend an amount at least equivalent to the full purchase price of the land.

It is emphasised that under existing conditions a lessee may expend only two-fifths of the full purchase price of the land within the first two years when the Minister would be obliged, subject to other conditions being fulfilled, to approve of the transfer.

The purpose of this Bill is to stabilise the position, for again it is emphasised that, at the expiration of five years, subject to certain conditions, a Crown grant can issue, and therefore the land becomes freehold and the owner has the rights under freehold conditions.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. J. S. Wise (Leader of the Opposition).

BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Architects Act Amendment Bill.
Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), read a first time.
2. Bread Act Amendment Bill.
Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health), read a first time.

BILLS (4): RETURNED

1. Coal Mine Workers (Pensions) Act Amendment Bill.
Bill returned from the Assembly with an amendment.
2. Health Act Amendment Bill.
3. Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill.
4. Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act Amendment Bill.
Bills returned from the Assembly without amendment.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. R. JONES (West) [5.14 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The intention of this Bill is to enable the marketing board in this State to collect levies. The Marketing of Eggs Act was consolidated in 1945 by a Bill for an Act to Consolidate and Amend the Law Relating to the Marketing, Sale and Disposal of Eggs. So the Act deals with eggs specifically as distinct from hens; this, apart from the setting up of the Western Australian Egg Marketing Board under part II of the parent Act.

Section 18 of the Act gives the board general powers in respect of contracting for the purchase of eggs and their disposal with a view to orderly marketing. Some producers here and in other States have been circumventing the State laws through the protection offered under section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

The practice has been evident to a greater degree in the Eastern States than here, and large quantities of eggs have been sold interstate, and there are no means of preventing this practice, which is quite detrimental to the State orderly marketing schemes. Additionally, these contracts are made outside the scope of contributory stabilisation schemes aimed at equalising losses on eggs sold on diminishing, and increasingly competitive, markets overseas.

The Council of Egg Marketing Authorities, comprising the total membership of each State Egg Marketing Board, and with a strong majority of direct producer representation, has been engaged since its inception in January, 1962, in the preparation of an acceptable national stabilisation scheme for the egg marketing industry. The main purpose of such a scheme was to overcome the difficulties arising from the protection afforded by section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The poor old chooks don't know anything about that, either, do they?

The Hon. A. R. JONES: The scheme which has been put forward provides in addition for all State Egg Marketing Boards to sell eggs overseas through one central authority. This State, of course, could benefit greatly from this, as it has suffered substantial sales losses on overseas markets which have been pioneered largely by the Western Australian board. These losses have been occasioned by competition from other States reducing prices to what are considered to be unnecessarily depressed levels. At present it is difficult to obtain any more than 6d. or 9d. a dozen overseas for our surplus eggs.

The Federal Parliament this year passed three accommodating Acts covering the poultry and egg industries. They were passed as a result of the efforts of the Council of Egg Marketing Authorities to devise this national stabilisation scheme for the egg industry. The titles of the Acts so passed are as follows:—

Poultry Industry Levy Act, 1965.

Poultry Industry Levy Collection Act, 1965.

Poultry Industry Assistance Act, 1965.

Under the new Federal legislation, the Commonwealth, through the agency of the State boards, will impose a levy on hens over six months old in excess of the number of 20 in a flock kept for commercial purposes. The rate in the initial stage is to be 7s. per hen per year payable fortnightly. This is to be collected by the egg marketing authority in each State.

The new hen levy is considered unlikely to exceed the total amount collected in the past as "pool contribution" as the equalisation burden will be shared more equitably and over a much larger number of producers and laying flocks than before. This will be to the advantage of both producers and local consumers.

The purpose of this Bill then is to insert into section 18 of the Western Australian Marketing of Eggs Act a new subsection (2) authorising and requiring the board to perform the functions and carry out the duties that are to be performed and carried out by it under any arrangement entered into between the Commonwealth and the State. These duties and obligations are defined as being pursuant

to section 5 of the Poultry Industry Levy Collection Act, 1965, of the Commonwealth Parliament, as amended from time to time; or, indeed, any such Act substituted for the Poultry Industry Levy Collection Act, 1965.

When the new scheme is put into operation, the State egg board will cease to apply a "pool contribution" on eggs produced to equalise export losses in deference to the imposition under the new Federal legislation of the hen levy to be collected through the agency of the State boards.

It is necessary to amend our own Act because it does not provide for the Western Australian Egg Marketing Board to act as an agent for the Commonwealth, and it is now desirable that the board should be empowered to act as agent for the purpose of collecting the levy on hens.

The passing of this measure will enable the local board to deal with hens under the stabilisation scheme and as authorised by the Commonwealth legislation; and, as earlier indicated, the local board expects the industry in this State to benefit greatly from the new scheme.

I trust the reading of these notes will supply all the information that is necessary for members to understand the Bill. However, if I have not made myself clear and there is any point on which an honourable member may wish to ask a question, I would be glad to find the answer for him.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan.

PETROLEUM PRODUCTS SUBSIDY BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.21 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Minister for National Development introduced into the Federal Parliament last May the States Grants (Petroleum Products) Bill, 1965. The purpose of this legislation was to provide for payment to be made to the States to meet the proposed subsidy on distribution of petroleum products in country areas.

The Federal Bill was introduced on the understanding that the various States would legislate in a complementary manner for the States, subject to a number of safeguards, to be able to pass these moneys to the distributors. An undertaking was given that such legislation would be introduced as soon as possible in order that the subsidy scheme might shortly come into effect. It was expected the scheme would operate by the 1st October.

In retrospect, the Prime Minister undertook in his 1963 policy speech to look into the burden being placed on rural costs by

the higher prices of petroleum products in more remote areas. His proposal was that the normal prices of these products should not in any State be more than 4d. per gallon above the level of the relevant capital city prices.

The Government was to put the proposal into effect by arrangement with the petroleum companies and with the States for the payment out of Commonwealth moneys made by grants of assistance to the States under section 96 of the Constitution. It was further decided that the subsidy would apply to motor spirit, power kerosene, automotive distillate, aviation gasoline, and aviation turbine fuel. It will accordingly be obvious to members that the purpose of the subsidy is the reduction of transport costs to country areas, so effecting a considerable saving to consumers.

The broad outline of the plan then is to reduce the price of the five products in the country by payments being made to the States to enable them to subsidise sales of the eligible products by oil companies and certain direct purchase agents. The sales to be subsidised are in general those made at country locations which, on the 30th June, 1964, were recognised distribution points at which the wholesale price, because of the addition of freight costs, was more than 4d. above the wholesale price in the relevant capital city. The rates of subsidy in respect of these locations will be based on the freight differentials above 4d. per gallon ruling there on the 31st December, 1964.

As may be expected, the amount of subsidy will vary considerably. I shall quote the instances already conveyed to members in another place. The subsidy for motor spirit, power kerosene, and automotive distillate at Baandee will be 1d., 2d. and 1½d. respectively, whereas for the same products at Deakin on the transcontinental line, the subsidy will be 19d., 20½d. and 19½d.

There are two aspects of the Commonwealth's operation which it is thought should be drawn to the attention of members as they directly concern our State. They are such that they may, at least initially, fall short of the Federal Government's intentions in that the full extent of the benefit will not be obtained.

The first point is the extent by which the subsidy covers outback pastoral properties. Some of these properties are covered by differentials established by the industry and those, of course, are fully covered by subsidy rates set out in the schedule. Others, however, were not so recognised and are not established distribution centres. As a result, these places, initially at least, will enjoy the benefit of subsidy, in effect, only to the nearest recognised distribution point.

Let us take the position then at a pastoral property where the figure of 3s. 8d. is the retail price for super-grade motor spirit, though there may have been some

variations in that price since these negotiations were put in hand. With Derby as an example, which is a considerable distance from the source of supply, the commencing point is the freight differential of 10d. to Derby. Under the Commonwealth plan, the costs will be subsidised over and above 4d., which means that the subsidy will amount to 6d. at the port of Derby. Taking this point further, a pastoral property 100 miles distant from Derby will be responsible for meeting the cost of the transport of the fuel from Derby to the point of consumption at the pastoral property. There is no provision for the concession to extend beyond Derby, because that is the last point of distribution.

It was submitted to the oil companies by the Federal Government that it was prepared to provide for these properties within the subsidy plan if the Government were satisfied that a company had made the property an agent by contractual agreement; that the agent had undertaken to supply products to the public when required; and that the company had also undertaken to invoice supplies to the agent at a delivered price. In other words, if the pastoral property outside of Derby was appointed an agent of the company, that would satisfy the Commonwealth Government.

The companies, however, for various reasons, are unable at present to meet these conditions. Nevertheless, the legislation provides for the inclusion of new centres of distribution in the schedule, and it will be open to any company to initiate arrangements with an outback property to have it admitted as such a centre. These comments apply to the case in point previously referred to.

The second aspect is that, because there is a variation in differentials in the markup—that is, the resellers' margin—in certain centres and because the Commonwealth scheme is based on wholesale prices plus freight costs, there will not, in every instance, be a simple price differential of 4d. at this retail level.

It may be recalled by members that it was considered that nowhere in Australia would the price of motor spirit—this being one of the fuels affected—exceed the capital city cost in any State by more than 6d. The resellers in the metropolitan area work on a margin of 6½d. over and above the wholesale price. In this respect we are considering the prices that were operating at the time when these negotiations were in course. The wholesale price was then 3s. 1½d. per gallon for super-grade motor spirit. By adding the resellers' margin of 6½d. per gallon, we obtain the retail price of 3s. 8d.

Adverting now to my previous remarks, it is pointed out that there are various parts of the State where the turnover in, say, a very remote centre would be so

small that the reseller would not be able to operate if he were unable to work on a higher resellers' margin or operate on a higher mark-up. Were he unable to do this, he would be put out of business and, consequently, not be in a position to supply the needs of the small community concerned. There are other circumstances where it is considered that possibly there should be some adjustments to bring about a variation over and above what is considered to be the uniform 6½d. margin.

Mention was earlier made of Derby, and at that centre the margin is the normal 6½d. Coming closer at hand, there is Carnarvon where we have the resellers' margin of 1s. 0¼d. per gallon. Taking the wholesale price of 3s. 1¼d., plus the freight cost to Carnarvon of 4½d. and adding the resellers' margin of 1s. 0¼d., we have a total of 4s. 6d. per gallon. As the subsidy will only apply to the halfpenny of the 4½d. freight cost, it means that the price of the super-grade petrol at Carnarvon would be reduced by a halfpenny to 4s. 5½d. So the making of it available at 4d. above the intended price is not being put into effect.

I am advised that the Automobile Chamber of Commerce has been most helpful in the matter; and, although it cannot direct its members in regard to the mark-up, it strongly appealed for uniformity and, as a result, several operators have agreed to the request.

The legislation, having been passed in another place, is now before this House. It provides for the payment by the State to persons who are registered distributors of amounts ascertained in accordance with the scheme.

There are provisions also relating to the appointment of the authorised officers, who will be officers of the Department of Customs and Excise, to examine and certify claims by registered distributors; the powers of authorised officers to inspect accounts of registered distributors; the protection of authorised officers in the performance of their duties; and the provision of penalties for false returns.

As already indicated, the purpose of the Bill initially is to complement the Federal legislation and, actually, to assist people in country areas.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [5.31 p.m.]: I listened carefully to the Minister when he introduced the Bill. As he said, it is designed to provide the machinery under which the States can act for the Commonwealth in distributing the subsidy under a scheme or formula devised by the Commonwealth. The States will act as the agents of the Commonwealth, and will pay the subsidy to the various points at which it applies.

The subsidy will apply to a large number of points throughout Western Australia; and it ranges from as low as ¼d. per gallon

at Carnarvon to as much as 22d. per gallon in places like Halls Creek. While this is a machinery Bill it is also a very important one, as it will be the means of affording some relief to the users of petroleum products.

It will be recalled that during the last Federal election campaign the Prime Minister (The Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Menzies) assured the Australian electors that his Government, if returned, would introduce legislation under which the normal price of petrol throughout Australia would be fixed at no more than 4d. per gallon above the price of petrol in the capital cities. If schoolteachers were to put the question to their classes as to what the Prime Minister meant by the normal price of petrol, I think they would all answer that the normal price was the retail price of petrol supplied through the bowser, which the public paid.

However, we find that a thimble and pea trick has been put over the people, because it will not be the bowser price which is paid by the public that is to be subsidised, but the wholesalers' price; that is, the price at which the wholesalers charge the resellers is to be subsidised. This proposal will reduce the cost of petroleum products, but in my opinion it is not in step with the promise made by the Prime Minister during the last election campaign. Therefore I say it is more or less a thimble and pea trick which has been put over the public.

At various times we find all sorts of tricks being put over by Governments, and they, with the exception of Labor Governments, have got away with it. That remark seems to bring some humour to members, but I would point out that these things are often referred to as baits, lures, and inducements. At times amazing promises are made on the eve of elections. One promise was the provision of a bounty on superphosphate. While I consider some farmers ought to have superphosphate for nothing, there are others who can well afford to pay for it, and who do not need the subsidy.

In the back country, petrol is the prime mover in industry and agriculture; although not much industry has yet been established in the subsidised areas of this State. However, a number of industries are being established in the north and they will derive some benefit from the petroleum products subsidy.

There is no doubt the Commonwealth Government has subsidised the wrong end of the cost of petroleum products. Some members in this House might recall that the New South Wales Government, a few years ago, refused to grant the oil companies the right to increase their prices. At the time the oil companies were in the midst of a heated dispute with the New South Wales Government; and that was during the term of office of Mr. Cahill, when Mr. Landa was the Minister controlling prices.

The request of the oil companies was for an increase of something like 1½d. per gallon. They spent an enormous amount of money on full-page advertisements in every daily and weekend newspaper throughout Australia. I remember one which appeared in *The Sunday Times* and to which I referred in this House. Not much writing appeared in it, but the contents of the full-page advertisement were very impressive. From memory, it said that the oil companies distributed their products throughout the Commonwealth; that they were pledged to distribute such products; and that they would abide by their pledge. Of course they did nothing of the kind.

In my opinion that was one of the reasons for this scheme being introduced by the Commonwealth Government, through pressure from the oil companies, which are the ones to derive the greatest benefit. They will not distribute petroleum products throughout Australia at the prices which they would have the public believe; that is, uniform prices throughout the Commonwealth. Under this proposal of the Commonwealth it is proposed to subsidise the oil companies directly, and thereby reduce their costs to within 4d. of the metropolitan area prices. That is what the scheme amounts to.

In the petroleum products schedule which was prepared by the Commonwealth Government for the purpose of this scheme, no subsidy will be required in such places as Darwin, because the cost of petrol there is slightly lower than it is in Perth. The schedule shows that no subsidy is required in Perth or Geraldton, because the oil industry absorbs the cost of transport. The wholesale price is the same for Perth, Darwin, and Geraldton.

However, when we take into account the centres in between Perth, Geraldton, and Darwin, where the companies deliver bulk petrol in tankers, there is a vast difference in the price. Let me refer to the position at Wyndham, which by sea is practically the same distance from Perth as it is from Darwin—some 2,000 miles. In Wyndham the wholesale price of petrol is 8d. per gallon above that applying in Darwin. In Carnarvon it is only ½d. above the Darwin price, but the resellers' margin is much higher. In Carnarvon the people will be paying 10d. per gallon above the metropolitan price, although now it is 1s. 1½d. or so above that price.

To get back to the delivery cost which the oil companies would have us believe they are pledged to bear, we find, in fact, that the taxpayers of Australia are to absorb a large proportion of it. From what I can gather some amount in the vicinity of £6,000,000 a year will have to be provided by the Commonwealth Government. Of course, this amount would

rise as the consumption of petrol rises. In my opinion, and I think in the opinion of the general public, the Commonwealth Government should subsidise the resellers' margin. That would cost more; but that was the promise which the electors understood the Prime Minister to make before the last elections.

While we all applaud this Bill, because it gives some relief, I must point out that there are all sorts of tricks, lures, and pitfalls into which the electors can fall during election time. In the Press recently one of the journalists analysed this proposal of the Commonwealth. He was reported as having expressed the opinion that if the Commonwealth Government were to extend its subsidy to the resellers' margin on petrol sold through the bowzers, the additional cost would be in the region of £600,000 for Western Australia. In these times this is chicken feed to the Commonwealth. It could collect this amount through the recent income tax rise from a few of the taxpayers in Australia.

Although the amounts will be made available by the Commonwealth Government gratuitously, in reality they are not as great as could be expected. Certainly many country people will reap the benefit of the subsidy, but many others will not. Take centres such as Fitzroy Crossing and Derby. In between there is a stretch of country of about 180 miles, where no petrol supplies are available.

As the Minister pointed out, the people running sheep and cattle stations between those two points will be required to bear the cost of road transport of petrol from the subsidised point which, in that case, will be Derby, because the price at Derby is something like 7d. or 8d. above the Perth price, while the price at Fitzroy Crossing works out at 1s. 2d. to 1s. 3d. per gallon above the Perth price. Therefore those in between will buy from Derby but will still have those freight costs to carry themselves, as will every farmer or pastoralist throughout the State.

The Bill is one against which no-one can raise any opposition, and I certainly do not. I simply voice my opinion on what I consider should have been done in conformity with a promise made which should have been honoured. The resellers' margin should have been subsidised rather than the wholesalers' margin.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. N. E. Baxter.

HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [5.47 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main object of the Hairdressers Registration Act is to protect the public from incompetent hairdressers, and the original Act provided for an area of operation within a radius of 25 miles of the General Post Office in Perth.

It is pretty well known that modern hairdressing techniques, especially as regards ladies hairdressing, involve a complexity of electrically operated equipment as well as chemicals used in both styling and colouring of hair. So a high degree of competency is required on the part of the operators. Adequate training, experience, and control are essential in the interests of the public. This Bill will assist the Hairdressers Registration Board to supervise more effectively the industry in general and to ensure the highest standards possible.

People in country districts are equally entitled to the same protection and to the same guarantee of skilled operatives as their city cousins, so the Bill makes provision for any area or areas of the State to be proclaimed, from time to time, as being subject to the Hairdressers Registration Act.

In many of the smaller country centres, it would be most difficult and, indeed, futile to attempt to apply the provisions of the Act. Many would have only one hairdressing establishment, but it is envisaged that the Act will be proclaimed progressively to extend to large country and seaport towns. There are provisions in this measure to safeguard the interests of those who are at present operating in any centres which, by proclamation, are brought within the scope of the Act.

There are several rather minor amendments in addition. These are designed to bring the Act up to date. The present definition of apprentice, for example, is not in accord with the definition contained in the appropriate award. The amendment here will ensure they be kept in accord. There is a provision enabling the board to cancel or suspend the registration of a person on the ground of unsatisfactory conduct or where the person is not of good character.

In this connection, it should be mentioned that there have been instances where, because of a conviction for a serious offence—e.g., relating to moral conduct—the board has been of the opinion that a hairdresser's registration should be cancelled or suspended. There is no power at present to do this, so it is to be introduced; but there will be adequate rights of appeal.

The Bill also provides that where there has been a cancellation, suspension, or voluntary relinquishment of a certificate of registration by an operative for a period beyond eight years, re-entry to the industry shall be by way of re-examination. This is considered necessary because of continually changing techniques.

Another amendment proposes making the determination of fees for both registration and examination the subject of regulations. At present they are provided for in the Act. Also, it is proposed to remove the statutory limitation of the total annual amount of fees which may be paid under the regulations to members of the registration board.

The registration board is composed of a Government representative as chairman, a member of the Master Ladies Hairdressers' Industrial Union of Employers, a member of the Master Gentlemen's Hairdressers' Association of W.A., and two members nominated by the Metropolitan Hairdressers Employees' Union of Workers; and the Bill now under consideration has the unanimous recommendation of the board.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee.

POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.52 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Under section 64A of the Police Act, the written consent of the Commissioner of Police is required to a prosecution in respect of the passing of a fraudulent cheque. When it is considered that an offender in this direction may be operating in quite a remote part of the State, this particular provision in the Act can constitute a serious obstacle to his apprehension. It is apparent that in such a large country as Western Australia, action to apprehend an offender could be seriously delayed through the necessity for obtaining the commissioner's written consent. To overcome this disability, it is proposed to permit the Commissioner of Police to delegate his authority to an inspector of police.

This section of the Act refers to the passing of fraudulent cheques within a period of 60 days from the opening date of a bank account. The penalty provided is a fine of £50 or imprisonment for six months, irrespective of the amount fraudulently obtained. It would seem that when these provisions were made, it was not envisaged that much larger sums would be involved in this type of offence. Quite recently a person, within a space of 60 days of opening an account, drew a cheque on it for the sum of £800, thereby fraudulently obtaining a motorcar. It is submitted £50 could be quite an inadequate penalty in respect of offences involving fraudulent dealings of such a nature. The proposed amendment would permit of a fine not exceeding £250, or imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding 12 months, in respect of an offence involving the passing of a valueless cheque in excess of £50.

Members will appreciate that the passing of each valueless cheque constitutes a separate offence for which a cumulative penalty may be provided, so the awarding of suitable penalties in respect of the passing of a series of cheques for small amounts is well covered.

The next amendment which I shall explain deals with procedures which are necessary to bring to justice persons fraudulently using washers or lead tokens in slot machines. There have been numerous instances in recent years of metal washers being inserted in slot machines, such as drink dispensing machines and amusement parlours' slot machines.

The Government's legal advisers contend that action should not be taken under the Criminal Code or the Crimes Act for this type of offence. Prosecution under the Commonwealth Coinage Act is considered unwarranted as the offenders are generally juveniles.

The City of Perth Parking Facilities Act of 1956 provides, however, in section 12 the means for dealing with such offenders summarily, with penalties appropriately provided. As it is apparently not desirable to proceed under the other Acts previously mentioned, and as the Police Act itself contains no suitable provision, it is thought there should be inserted into the Police Act a new section similar to section 9 of the City of Perth Parking Facilities Act. This measure contains such a provision, and it is suggested it be inserted into the Police Act as a new section numbered 89B with a similar penalty of a fine not exceeding £20.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. J. S. Wise (Leader of the Opposition).

Sitting suspended from 5.56 to 7.30 p.m.

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 26th August, on the following motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North—Leader of the Opposition) [7.30 p.m.]: This is the sort of Bill about which one could enthusiastically make a long speech, and one could quite safely say that very few institutions have been before Parliament as frequently as has the State Government Insurance Office.

The history of the office, since its inauguration, is a story of very great achievement in the history of this State.

Following the acceptance by Parliament in 1924 of the responsibility towards injured people, and particularly to seriously ill miners, by the passing of the Workers' Compensation Act in that year, a very big responsibility rested on someone. Provision was made for payments and for certain levies to be made on the basis of taking a percentage from wages; and finally, when no insurer or company would accept the risk of the business, the Government of the day faced a very serious problem.

The business associated with miners' diseases coming within the then Workers' Compensation Act was offered to Lloyds of London on a monopoly basis—they could take the lot—at the rate of 4½ per cent. of wages paid, and that company refused the business absolutely and stated quite clearly—and it is on record—that it was not interested in such a risky proposition. Therefore the State insurance office was initially established without any statutory authority—it was established illegally—and it continued to accept the business. The then Government Actuary (Mr. Bennett), who was its first manager, with a very small staff, took this risky business which was not acceptable to the established companies, because the Government felt it had a moral obligation to see the business through. From that basis of risky business the sure foundations were laid for the great institution it has become today.

The Bill to establish the State Government Insurance Office was presented to Parliament on five occasions, and it was turned down in this House each time. On another occasion, after a Select Committee comprising all parties in the Legislative Assembly had been appointed—the late Sir Ross McLarty was one member of the committee—and had recommended the acceptance of the legislation, with certain modifications, a Bill was introduced, and it also was defeated. It was not until 1938 that the Parliament of Western Australia accepted the original Act; and what remarkable results have been achieved by the office from that time onwards.

Fortunately—and I think very fortunately—it has outgrown, I think completely, the political considerations that prevailed at the time of its institution. The office has had only three managers and it has been administered by nine Ministers—four Liberal Party Ministers, three Labor Party, and two Country Party. I think it is important to state that Governments of different political beliefs have introduced legislation from 1939, when the parent Act was proclaimed, to extend rather than restrict the operations of the office. It could be said, I think quite definitely, that a very great contribution has been rendered to the community of Western Australia by this institution.

One very notable addition to the initial insurance which was the responsibility of this office was that brought about by The Hon. A. F. Watts who was responsible for the establishment of the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust, and who had quite a lot to do with the local authority pool insurance, which has been of great benefit.

But to revert to my initial comment regarding the office having been established on business of such a risky nature that no insurer would accept it, the industrial disease insurance, of course, proved not to be so difficult as was anticipated. When the other companies declined to accept the silicotic risks, and the State Government Insurance Office set the rate at 4½ per cent., it was seen, in the months and years that followed, how desirable it was to show the accumulation of the funds, to establish special reserve funds with the profits, and to review the premium situation from time to time. I think it is interesting to observe that premium rates were reduced some years ago from 4½ per cent. to 4 per cent.; in 1953 they were reduced still further to 3 per cent., and there have been two reductions since in this very risky business.

Of course, in comparison with the risks of 40 years ago we have to take into account the improvements there have been in medical knowledge and the treatment of diseases, which have helped considerably to lessen the insurance risk in this class. However, in short, this office has built up a very diverse business and it has extended its benefits in many parts of Western Australia and in many avenues. Members who are interested in its background can find many records which trace its history more profusely than I have stated it tonight, but to show just how important its operations have become I merely instance the insurance of school children who are now accepted as a risk for 24 hours of the day.

The interests of the State Government Insurance Office are many and varied, from insurance for semi-governmental instrumentalities and such works as the Broome Freezing Works, to property in which the Crown has an interest through the R. & I. Bank agency section. It can do this because of the breadth of section 6 of the principal Act; and if members will look at that section in the parent Act—and it is a very short Act; not much longer than this Bill—they will see how clearly defined were the operations of the office up to that point, and how that Bill, when it became an Act, ratified all business prior to that date and all similar business subsequent to that period.

Now, quite apart from workers' compensation, the office covers rural fire risks, State electricity undertakings, in the field of fire insurance, State Housing Commission houses, and many other forms of

insurance; and this has proved of considerable benefit to the residents of the State and, at the same time, it has helped materially in the building up of substantial funds.

The Auditor-General's report of last year not only analyses the importance of the separate sections of the office but also shows quite clearly the sort of business engaged in, which today still represents a considerable risk. The greatest risk of all at the moment most certainly appears to me to be motorcar insurance. In spite of the decision by the office regarding premiums affecting people up to 24 years of age, there is a terrific risk in the cover necessary for motor vehicles, and in regard to this Bill I would like the Minister to let me know all those aspects which are likely further to increase premiums.

I notice he stated at one point that there was some doubt about continuing in the very near future to accept third-party insurance, and therefore we have the appropriate provision in clause 2 paragraph (c) of the Bill. I will refer to that a little later.

It is clear from a reading of the Bill that in the near future there is to be a variation in third-party risk insurance. I wonder whether the Minister can tell us a little more about that. I wonder whether he can tell us how close it is to the time when companies are to vacate that field, which will mean a very great personal responsibility and the need for a greater cover from somewhere.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think I said that the section was there because it was not intended that there never would be a third-party risk. I said the proviso is now considered unnecessary because it is inconceivable that at any time in the near future there will not be third-party insurance cover.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Can the Minister indicate how close that is?

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It does not do third-party now; it is all under the trust.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I know that. The motor vehicle trust as the authority, or any other insurer accepting part of the risk, must be faced with a very hazardous situation at the moment. It is hard to conceive what the limits are. We do not need a busload of people to involve hundreds of thousands of pounds. Hundreds of thousands of pounds can be involved in two carloads of people. So I take it that what this means is that there is no need at all for the reference to be applied to the State Government Insurance Office.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Because it is inconceivable that there will not be third-party insurance cover.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is how I interpret it. I wonder whether the Minister can tell us what the position will be

with regard to third-party cover, particularly as it relates to the present arrangement.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you mean, will it be abolished?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No; it says to the contrary.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I realise the value of words; but I am wondering why it was specially referred to in a very short speech, whereas it is in a very important paragraph of the text.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In view of the importance you are attaching to it, I think I had better make sure before I answer you.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I have given some applause for the great work of this office since its most difficult commencement or birth. This insurance office has, since its inception, paid very close to £2,000,000 into Consolidated Revenue. It has very sound investments involving some £7,000,000; it has special funds to meet emergency circumstances of special diseases, and it has had a very satisfactory history. I am very pleased to see that the Government has been agreeable to extend the principle of reinsurance.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: It is still risky.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Minister told us that reinsurance was costing companies overseas approximately £215,000.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I assume that reinsurance being possible in Australia, and local companies being agreeable—and they will have been tested before this Bill was introduced—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It will be safe to say that.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: —although this office may not save the complete £215,000, it does show the standing and acceptance of it by those who hated its very name not many years ago.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: To say the least they must think they can find a better market for reinsurance.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I think one important thing is that an office of this standing and size has been able to convince its competitors since it was statutorily accepted that it has a place in the community. I would like to see some of its activities extended. While I think it is a good thing that the Government is adding the principle it has included in this Bill, I feel pretty positive that this beautiful edifice in which we stand is not insured against fire—this edifice costing £1,500,000. I would venture to suggest that the Treasury building itself is not insured against fire.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did you not think it necessary to take out a risk when you were Premier?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We did not have the absence of risk in those days in regard to any financial matter; we were not privileged to have Budgets of £95,000,000. We were scratching for pence.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Values are relative.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: With the great responsibility of war and the aftermath of war, business as usual was expected overnight. We received no £7,000,000, £8,000,000 or £10,000,000 from the Grants Commission. It was almost necessary for us to ensure that the Under-Treasurer played golf with the secretary of the Grants Commission to see if we could get pre-knowledge of what we were to receive and whether we should budget for £1,000,000 or £1,500,000. We were as close to the wind as that.

I think that in addition to covering State instrumentalities such as the Electricity Commission and the enormous power stations, the Wyndham Meatworks, and things like that, some thought should be given to enhancing the standing of this office in order to make it even more solid through an acceptance by it of very much more insurance. That, however, is something that will have to be presented to Parliament, and I will not pursue it. To use a colloquialism it may not even hit the ground, because of the very great number of private and mutual companies now in the various fields.

In short, while commending this office for its very great work, and being pleased to see that there is to be a recognition of it, I support the Bill and hope that the future will see even greater progress in this very important field.

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [7.55 p.m.]: When I entered this House the State Government Insurance Office was in its infancy. It was then only a little over two and a half to three years since it was given sanction. All of us have seen this office grow, and along with Mr. Wise I congratulate the Government in allowing some expansion of its activities. I think it has had an unfortunate beginning, which has probably been lived down to a very large extent as being a risk organisation. It was certainly a risk when it started business.

The risk has not been borne out to be as great as one thought it would be in the field of silicosis, although at present with added legislation that has been passed over the last few years, the amount of reserve in the silicosis fund is less. I cannot remember the exact figure, but I believe it was published in the newspaper this morning as being about £986,000. It would not take long for this to be absorbed at the rate at which silicosis claims are striking this institution.

Why I mentioned the question of this being a risk organisation is that I believe many of the working people, and many of them who have State insurance after working in the mines, have regarded this organisation as being one that was governed by its risk. For that reason the worker in some cases feels that he has to fight this office for what he considers is due to him. There is probably very little reason for suspecting that, but I believe it is a psychological aspect which I hope we can overcome in the future.

I see quite a lot of people suffering from silicosis and I can sense in many of them a psychological aspect of having to put up a fight for compensation after they have acquired silicosis as a disease. I wonder whether the Government might not be wise to consider expanding the activities of the State Government Insurance Office, since it is apparently able to assure itself that reinsurance with other offices can be done on a cheaper basis than with those overseas. We should look upon it as a company with which the Government does its business, and appoint to this company a board of directors.

I think this would take away a good deal of the so-called feeling I have described as being in the minds of some people—may be a limited few—and it would give to the office a much wider outlook and a wider field, without its really moving into the general field of existing companies.

During the time I have watched legislation concerning this office over the past 24 years, I have seen an extension of its activities. I believe that the Government Insurance Office is growing to the extent where it requires more than a general manager. We have been very fortunate in the managers we have had in the past, because they have been able to cope with the initial stages of this organisation in a wonderful manner. But are we always going to find the ability in those whom we appoint to handle such an organisation as this?

I am not saying this in detriment to the Bill, because I am completely in favour of it. However, I am wondering whether we are not reaching the stage, after having put this office into risk business for so many years, where we can open out and give it greater ability to expand. I feel the time is ripe for such a change; and I would suggest to the Government I look at this, and not from any attitude of partisanship, to see whether there is any possibility of turning this office from a purely risk one, having to take insurance in many fields that other companies will not look at, into one where it can, by going into other fields, feel secure and can offer to those whose insurance it accepts a greater sense of security.

I think members will find that the big insurance companies which have very large sums of money have a more tolerant attitude to the claims of individuals; and, if there is any doubt, in the main, the companies pay. Sometimes in the silicotic field, if there is any doubt about a claim, the individual has to fight the State Insurance Office. This can occur in a case which, perhaps, I should not mention, because it will possibly be placed before the courts in a short time. That is something that could be easily overcome if the State Government Insurance Office could be converted into a company with a board of directors, with possibly expanded business. Under these circumstances it would take a more tolerant attitude.

I do not blame the State Government Insurance Office, because it is a risk organisation; but it does not quite fulfil all the requirements we would desire at times. When I suggest there be a board of directors, I might be told at once that this board could become a political board of directors. However, I would hope that would not occur. I think both sides of this House are agreed that this business is a necessity in this State and one that must be fostered.

I would say the board of directors should be chosen from men whose ability both in the financial and insurance fields would assure that this organisation could proceed to greater things. It might be that the Government of the day would rather see the Minister in charge of this organisation as the chairman of that board of directors, but I feel it would instil much greater confidence in the organisation if such a board were created.

I applaud this measure and congratulate the Government on having brought it down as it does expand the organisation to some extent. However, I would like to have some inquiry made by those responsible to see whether it should not be liberated from some of the chains that have bound it in the past. I support the measure.

THE HON. E. M. HEENAN (Lower North) [8.4 p.m.]: I am sure we have all been interested and impressed by the outline given to us by Mr. Wise when he covered the history of the State Government Insurance Office. I am sure we have also been interested in what was put up by Dr. Hislop, which, a few years ago, would have been regarded as a revolutionary proposition.

I was in Parliament in 1938 when this Act became the law of the country. We now just take it for granted. Mr. Wise has told the House how the office only came into being legally and the State Government Insurance Office Act only got on to our Statute book after a great struggle which ensued for years. The position was,

of course, that we had the goldmining industry and our unfortunate miners were contracting silicosis; were having to give up work; and were dying, and we could not get any coverage for them.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: No-one cared.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The Labor Government of the day realised the position was so serious and was so in need of urgent attention that it took the bull by the horns and set up an organisation to ensure these men were covered and received some degree of compensation. In other words, the Government of the day adopted the attitude that the end justified the means. The goldmining industry could never have carried on otherwise. Then we reached the point where attempts were made to legalise the office; and it sounds almost unbelievable now, but for years that proposition was turned down.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Yes; when the miners used to pay one shilling a week to it.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Eventually, in 1938, the Bill was passed and the office was legalised. In those days, insurance was not compulsory. I recall that during the goldmining boom days companies were floated in all directions, many of them with no capital or little capital backing. There were instances of men being killed or badly injured, and such companies did not have the men insured. Men tried to recover money from those companies, but they were not worth powder and shot. There were numerous instances where men were killed and others seriously injured, and no compensation was recovered.

From that bad state of affairs we eventually reached the stage where we passed the Bill making it compulsory for everyone who employed labour to insure his employees. So we have a Parliament in Western Australia that has done a number of wise humanitarian things; and all along the State Government Insurance Office and its managers have done an excellent job.

They have been good people to deal with. Of course, they have been subject to criticism, as Dr. Hislop pointed out, largely from workers. However, that is not the fault of the State Government Insurance Office. It is my view that the root cause of such criticism is our Workers' Compensation Act and our Mine Workers' Relief Act, and things like that, for which we are responsible. The State Government Insurance Office just has to carry out the law as laid down by our various pieces of legislation.

I have had many dealings over the years with the State Government Insurance Office and I cannot speak too highly of it. We learn from Dr. Hislop's rather revolutionary statement—for which I applaud him—that the State Government Insurance Office is circumscribed to cater only for—

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Bad risks.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: —the risky type of insurance. The fact that it has been able to manage so well speaks for itself. Over the years we have held the view that we should more or less give it an open go with insurance and let it compete on equal grounds with the other companies. It seems to be on excellent terms with the other companies. It combines with them to cover the risks involved under the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act. It is a combination of all the companies, and it covers the drivers and passengers of motor vehicles that are on the roads today.

So I was delighted to hear Dr. Hislop suggest that the time had now arrived when we could consider enlarging the scope of this office, which has played such a commendable part in the development of Western Australia—an office which in every respect is an ornament to State enterprise; and an office which, if given a larger ambit, could do far more for the people of this State in the future.

The Bill now before us has the effect of enlarging the scope of the State Insurance Office, not in a large way or in the fields we would like it to, but at the same time it does have the effect of expanding the jurisdiction of the office as now constituted.

I applaud it. I did not intend speaking, but my thoughts go back to 1938, which is now nearly 30 years ago. It does not seem nearly that long. I think the Leader of our House at that time was the late Hon. W. H. Kitson, and we had some very interesting debates. The members who opposed the attempts to legalise this office or to encourage it to grow and expand, did so because they thought it would mean the death knell of other insurance offices; but things did not work out that way. Another result of Dr. Hislop's thinking was when we adopted adult franchise.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It was revolutionary, all right.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It used to be argued that if we did so, the Labor Party would probably win all the seats; but the first time we went to the poll we lost three seats.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Would you please advise Mrs. Hutchison that adult franchise is not mentioned in this Bill?

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I realise that, and I think I have transgressed somewhat, but I am only taking the opportunity of congratulating Dr. Hislop, whose rather advanced thinking in some of these matters has been vindicated. I had better not say any more about him because I think he knows I hold him in high esteem.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (North-East Metropolitan) [8.16 p.m.]: I feel that I cannot allow this opportunity to go by without speaking on the Bill. It touches my early life; and I remember vividly the fights which the Labor Party had all

through the years to get better conditions for the safety of the workers and their families.

I can remember when the first fund came into existence. It stemmed from the miners' union, and the miners paid a shilling a week into the fund. It was a Labor Premier who, with that money, finally established the State Government Insurance Office. Some of the mines—not all of them—also paid a shilling per week towards the fund. The mines in Kalgoolie contributed, but not those in the Murchison—not for a long time.

The fund was commenced because of human necessity when the men who contracted this dreaded disease of silicosis were left to the mercy of their neighbours to be looked after. There was no compensation for them, and no pensions in those days. From the necessity of those people—of the working-class people—the pressure grew and the Government finally established the State Government Insurance Office. It was bitterly fought, and I have always wondered why it could go through legislative channels until it reached this House where it was always defeated. Any attempt to bring in this Bill was always defeated, until human necessity and right eventually brought it to pass that we became more educated and more liberal minded.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: A very good choice of words.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: The people got liberal minded in another sense than party-sense. The Labor Party is always in the vanguard of revolutionary ideas. It is the working people generally that force reforms on Governments. The reforms never come from the top. We owe a great debt to the State Government Insurance Office, which has spread out to fruition in the way it is today. As a matter of fact, when it was established it was contracted for something else and allowed to go through.

The State Government Insurance Office handled compensation, and it started history all over again when it entered the car insurance field. That is the worst kind of insurance that has come to the State Government Insurance Office. I would like to know why the Government which is in office at present never stuck to its own insurance office which it had. It was doing a good job for the public, and it was in competition with private enterprise. In spite of this, the State Government Insurance Office has prospered. However, millions of pounds have gone to other companies. Yet if the State Government Insurance Office can prosper and reach the standard which has been reached today on bad risks, it is about time something revolutionary was done. That office should be given a chance to take on some good risks. I cannot be more earnest about anything than this.

I hope that the Minister who is putting the Bill through this House will see the progress that is available; and I hope he will do something to widen the scope so that the working people will have more opportunity to do what should be done for them, and that they will have a chance to put their money into their own State Government Insurance Office. It would then come back to the people of the country. With much pleasure, I support the Bill, and commend the Government for bringing it forward. I think that Mr. Wise made a very able speech.

I have been associated with this House for a long time, and my age gives me the right to state my views here. I have seen this office grow from something which was frowned on; but it was fought for by the working people. I think we are now a leading State because of this office.

THE HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [8.22 p.m.]: Having listened to four good speeches for socialism—three of them, from an expected quarter, and one from an unexpected quarter—I can hardly allow this Bill to go through without stating my view. It is the same today as it always has been; and it is that it is not part of government to take part in ordinary business. Whether it be the business of an itinerant ice cream vendor like Mr. Whippy, or whether it be an insurance business conducted in the Terrace, it is no function of the Government to enter into business.

Having said that, and having no desire to disturb the harmony which so far exists, I will pass to a less controversial angle of this Bill. It is a point which affects not only the State Government Insurance Office, but all insurance offices. It has been emphasised by overseas events during the past month, and it is a point to which I think all insurance companies might devote some attention for the clarification and satisfaction of persons who insure with them. I refer to the precise conditions upon which fire insurance policies are issued.

When one insures against fire there is an express exclusion from the policy of any damage arising from riots, civil commotion, insurrection, civil war, and war. Those risks are expressly excluded from fire policies, but if one is so minded one can take out a separate policy covering himself against damage by fire from riots and civil commotion, but excluding war, civil war, and insurrection. My point is this: What is the line of demarcation between civil commotion and insurrection? One might say it is a question of intensity of degree. The question has been raised with respect to recent riots in Los Angeles where the local attorney—or governor—did say it was insurrection. Naturally, the insured persons said it was riot or civil commotion. The distinction is important because one is covered and the other is not.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Is that general, worldwide?

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes, it is an expression used in all policies throughout the world. As everyone knows, I have always said that where we have a Bill or document it should be clear so that we know where we stand. I do feel that inasmuch as one treats insurrection in the group of war, civil war, and so on, just how are we to distinguish it from civil commotion? To my way of thinking reference to the word "insurrection" should be omitted from policies so that we have a clearcut position. Local riots and civil commotions can be definitely covered. On the other hand war and civil war, which are of a different nature, are excluded anyhow.

I would suggest to the managers of all insurance companies that this matter be clarified and that it be not left to litigation to decide when a riot or civil commotion becomes insurrection. With those remarks I will resume my seat.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [8.27 p.m.]: I do not agree with Mr. Watson that the Government should not step into private business. I feel that where it is necessary for the welfare of the community as a whole, it is good for the Government to step into private business where that private business will not provide services which may be required. It has been said that in this Bill we widen the scope of the State Government Insurance Office; and to my mind that is a very pleasing feature. I feel that the scope could have been widened further when the Government had before it the report of the Royal Commission into boat safety.

The Government expressly asked the Royal Commissioner to comment on insurance of fishing vessels and vessels engaged in the fishing industry. The commissioner's report expresses the thought, or recommendation really, that in some instances—such as covering workers in the industry—insurance should be made compulsory. There are a large number of men employed in the industry who are not covered by insurance under any Act such as the Workers' Compensation Act. It is said that they work on a part-time basis; that they work on a percentage of the catch. That may be so, but when one thinks of all the shearers who work throughout Australia on contract at so much per 100, it must be realised that some are on award rates, some receive above the award rates, but none receive below the minimum award rate. Each of those men is covered by workers' compensation. Therefore, I consider that the Minister in charge of the State Government Insurance Office should

give some consideration to the recommendations of the Royal Commissioner in regard to covering workers in the fishing industry for workers' compensation.

After reading the Royal Commissioner's report I am also interested to learn that the State Government Insurance Office could provide some reasonable insurance cover for the ships engaged in the industry. The fishermen themselves and some private insurance companies have had some unfortunate experiences with the insurance of fishing vessels. I noticed, before the report of the Royal Commissioner was published, that the representative of one insurance company gave evidence that his losses were at the rate of 140 per cent.; that he collected something like £30,000 in premiums and paid out £50,000 in claims. Of course, he might have been one of the unlucky ones.

Also, from the fishermen's point of view, evidence was presented to the Royal Commissioner that some companies insured them for a year and after the termination of that policy refused to accept any further premiums to provide insurance cover. That is pretty tough on a fisherman who has a brand new boat. To make things worse a fisherman who borrows a large sum of money to finance a modern fishing boat for wet fishing operations is saddled with a tremendous handicap when he is required by those who are advancing him credit to insure his vessel to cover the full value of the boat. In such circumstances a private insurance company is in a position to demand a very high premium; but surely that is not what is expected of private enterprise!

I hope—it is never too late to hope, of course, because one never knows what the Government has in mind—the Government is preparing legislation along the lines that I have suggested, to cover, through the State Government Insurance Office, the people who are engaged in a high-risk industry. It is a fact that private insurance companies charge an extremely high premium on fishing craft in comparison to that charged by the State Government Insurance Office. Yesterday I asked the Minister for Fisheries whether his department insured its vessels and what the premiums were. The Minister replied that the State Government Insurance Office covered the departmental vessels and that the premiums ranged from £4 to £7 per £100, according to the age of the vessel. I consider any premium up to £7 per cent. is reasonable. I am informed, however, that private insurance companies demand a rate of anything from £10 to £15 per cent. and upwards.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The risks involved in insuring fishing vessels would not be comparable.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I cannot agree with the Minister in making that statement, because if the departmental officers are doing their jobs properly they are operating in the same water as the fishermen when they carry out their inspections.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They do not have to surf over a reef to pull their pots.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I cannot see any justification in that statement if the departmental officers are policing the Act efficiently. When one studies the recommendations made by the Royal Commissioner, one cannot but agree with the Minister and the Government that there is a large element of risk in this industry. If we are all agreed on this, surely that is the time for the State Government Insurance Office to step in and provide insurance accommodation for those engaged in the industry, especially when private companies are not prepared to take the insurance risk because of the large losses that may be incurred.

Private insurance companies will not incur a loss even for one year; but the position is entirely different with a Government institution, which could operate a fund over several years. This has been proved from experience gained from the silicosis cases. Initially there were losses incurred, but with the advances in medical science and improvement in working conditions the element of risk was reduced, and as a result there was a greater spread in that type of insurance.

Also, there was a heavy draw on the third party insurance fund at the beginning of the scheme and it was regarded as not being an economical proposition; but the fund is soundly based now. Private insurance companies have all the business that is available, and the people who are being penalised are the fishermen who have to raise capital to finance their boats or fishing projects; and the fishermen who look after their boats well and who do not take risks have to pay a high premium rate for the insurance of their vessels because of the few who do take risks. The same applies to third party insurance. The careful motorist is obliged to pay a higher premium because of those who drive recklessly.

To offset the high insurance premiums in the fishing industry the Royal Commissioner on boat safety recommended the provision of a no-claim bonus, which applies with premiums for comprehensive motor insurance. However, according to the commissioner's report, the private insurance companies have shown no desire to co-operate to that extent.

I hope, therefore, the Government will give serious consideration to the difficulties encountered by those engaged in the fishing industry when seeking to insure their vessels, because the industry is a large

dollar earner. It is the means of bringing millions into the country by way of dollars; and in no way can it be regarded as a small industry, because it provides employment for many men over a wide range, and their total earnings are quite considerable.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [8.39 p.m.]: The Bill contains three amendments. One seeks an extension of the scope of the insurance business conducted by the State Government Insurance Office; the second seeks the clarification of some of the provisions in the Act; and the third seeks to improve the wording of the Act as well as amendments to other legislation which is affected by the State Government Insurance Office Act. These three categories have offered wide scope for research and comment; but, with respect, the only member who kept to the Bill was Mr. Wise.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order! I take exception to the comments made by the Minister. If there were a point of order to be raised, it should have been raised at the proper time.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. President, I did not raise a point of order. I merely made the comment on the remarks I heard from those members who addressed themselves to the Bill. With respect, I was about to say that Mr. Wise commented upon the contents of the Bill, and it is in that respect that, first of all, I would like to make reference—

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Does this Bill refer to the insurance of fire?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes; it does.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: They were some of the remarks I made.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Some of the other remarks made by Mr. Watson had no reference to anything in the Bill. I have even gone to the trouble to find out what the word "insurrection" means in relation to the comments made by the honourable member.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: This Bill provides for reinsurance against civil commotion, and so on.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not objecting to that. I merely say that apparently the Bill has offered considerable scope for comment.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: You even accused us of not keeping to the Bill.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not make any such accusation at all.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: You said that only one member really spoke to the Bill.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I said that only one member really stuck to the contents of the Bill, and that was Mr. Wise.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I do not feel flattered, you know.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Wise asked me to comment on two points.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I misread your note. I have since read it again and have noted your remarks on that other point.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then it is not necessary for me to amplify my remarks other than to tidy up the record in respect of clause 2 on page 3. The other remark which I think deserves some comment is in reference to the provisions of the State Government Insurance Office Act which apply to silicotics. Members will recall that the Government dealt with this matter with great caution at the time, because the extent of the liability was not known and the reason the retrospectivity was limited to three years in the first place was the uncertain step that could be taken in regard to liability.

Last year, the Workers' Compensation Act was amended to widen the scope of its provisions; and we now find, as a result of this experience, that reference has been made to a considerable sum of money that has been paid out since then; and this, no doubt, will be a great drain on the funds of the State Government Insurance Office.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It will be a testing period, anyway.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The testing period is well under way in the light of less than 12 months' experience. I merely say that some hesitancy was shown before a step was taken in this unknown field, because of the feeling at the time that there was some uncertainty on the question of liability; and I repeat that only 12 months' experience has proved that this hesitancy was justified.

I cannot comment on the suggestion made by Dr. Hislop of the desirability of permitting this office to be conducted by a board. This is a Government instrumentality which is operated under ministerial control through a permanent head, and that has been the procedure since the inception of the State Insurance Office in 1938. The system of a permanent head controlled by the Government of the day has stood the test of time, and is generally applied to most Government departments.

We cannot place a great deal of importance on the comment that we could have good managers up to the present time, but bad ones in the future, because I feel sure that out of the ranks of the Civil Service will come good officers to replace those who are giving good service and who will retire.

I cannot comment on the point raised by Mr. Watson in connection with the responsibility for civil riots and insurrection. The word "insurrection" is defined—

The Hon. H. K. Watson: I have gone through the dictionaries.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —as a rising up against constituted government of lawful authority, or open and active resistance to the execution of some law. I suppose the gunpowder plot could well come under that category. I sometimes think the actions of Mrs. Hutchison could be classified in the same category also.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I do not mind.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is a matter which is interesting to me, and I shall pursue it at a later date for my personal edification. The question which was raised by Mr. Strickland of insurance on boats is not referred to in the Bill before us, and so I cannot make any comment on it; and neither is the extension of the franchise of the State Insurance Office contained in the Bill. So, Mr. President, I feel sure you will not permit me to comment on that aspect. I thank members for their support of the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

SALE OF HUMAN BLOOD ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 7th September, on the following motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [8.50 p.m.]: When this Bill was introduced last evening I was puzzled by the reasons given for the purchase of supplies of human placenta by a company in the U.S.A., acting through its agents in Western Australia. In the main the Minister expressed the view that the purpose was to obtain globulin fraction, which is commonly referred to as immune globulins. I cannot imagine that is the sole reason, but it can well be one of the reasons.

My doubt arises from these points: Immune globulins would have to come from a pool of globulin. As this type of globulin is bought, and as the immune bodies in the bloodstream attach themselves to the globulins, if one attempts immunisation by the use of immune globulins, it has to be specific for the disease which is to be treated in a pool

of globulin consisting of hundreds and thousands of human placentae—which is the quantity required by a large company—or one would not know what type of immune globulins were present in the fraction that was extracted; therefore one would only use this globulin on the basis of a certain degree of hit and miss.

Globulins have been used to a considerable extent in immunisation against German measles. In this treatment one would go for the blood of women who had suffered from German measles, so that one would know that within that fraction of globulin one would have available a type which would be immune to German measles. This method of classification will have to be adopted in respect of immune globulins which are to be used.

There appears to be another explanation for the measure before us. I have inquired into this aspect, and I understand these human placentae are used in quantity to obtain albumen, which is a vital requirement in the human body. It is virtually the muscle tissue builder of the individual, which circulates in the bloodstream. Until recently there was not very much scope for the use of albumen, but lately it has been used in large quantities under varying conditions. Let me refer to the disease of nephrosis, which has some relationship to the kidney, in the fact that the albumen in the body is passed out in large quantities through the urine. The kidney excretes that albumen.

The loss of that albumen to the body is very serious. Whilst other treatment is being conducted, the albumen is replaced by transfusion. The albumen is also used on patients after they have undergone lengthy operations which cause a certain amount of shock to them. More and more skilled, lengthy, and lasting operations are being undertaken in these days, and albumen has proved to be a necessity in many of these cases. It is also used in the treatment of shock, and it has proved to be very satisfactory.

There are other directions in which albumen can be used. It has to be fractionated, as the Minister said. I made inquiries as to the extent of the use of albumen in recent times. When I spoke to one of the authorities at the Royal Perth Hospital who uses a considerable amount of this, I asked how much albumen could be used in this State. He said as much as could be produced. Therefore this aspect of the Bill becomes clearer when one realises that this State will need all the albumen that it can possibly obtain in the future, whatever the means it is obtained through.

In recent times—I think it was at a meeting of biochemists in the Eastern States—two members of the Commonwealth Serum Laboratory prepared papers in relation to fractionation of proteins. I

understand that one paper, illustrated with the aid of slides, was presented by Dr. Guthrie, who is the officer of the Commonwealth Serum Laboratory in charge of this project, and in charge of this fractionation for the purpose of obtaining proteins. Very large quantities of human placentae are sent to the Commonwealth Serum Laboratory for that purpose. That makes it perfectly clear this Bill is an absolute necessity for the benefit of the people of this country, and we should conserve all the albumen that can be produced, for the treatment of the sick.

That is possibly a greater reason for the introduction of the Bill than the one given by the company seeking to purchase supplies of human placentae. I cannot therefore agree that immune globulins are what the company is looking for. Other extracts of greater importance than immune globulins can be obtained from human placentae. For instance, it is possible to obtain chorionic gonadotrophin. This is a substance which, to some extent, is being used in fertility tests where individuals have been successful in producing multiple births. Much of this work is being done through treatment of pituitary glands, rather than through the use of placentae. In the main we can say that the preservation of albumen obtained through human placentae is the real reason for us to vote for the measure, so as to prevent this human placentae from being sent away from the State, especially when these supplies are so urgently required in large quantities for own own use.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [9 p.m.]: I wish to thank Dr. Hislop for the additional evidence he brought forward to support the case for this Bill. It was a very interesting speech and I have no doubt that it confirmed the feeling of this House that the Bill should be read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair: The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 9A amended—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I undertook to make some inquiry in respect of the proposal put forward by Mr. Dolan in relation to the contribution that the Government

will make under this Bill to a group of schools which want to build a swimming pool. The honourable member suggested that in the Fremantle area some 10 schools might get together, and he thought that consideration should be given to making £10,000 available to these 10 schools, collectively, rather than £1,000 to each school.

I conveyed his thoughts to my colleague, the Minister for Education; and while I am not in a position to give the honourable member any direct undertaking at this time, the Minister has said he will have a look at the proposal. I also mentioned it to the Treasurer somewhat casually as the opportunity presented itself.

I think that Mr. Dolan might, on reflection, find that there are some difficulties attached to this. For instance, if 10 schools wanted £10,000, that £10,000 could only represent a maximum of 25 per cent. of the project. Therefore, to get the total benefit which might apply, the swimming pool would have to cost £40,000. If the pool cost £30,000, then, as the maximum benefit these 10 schools could get would be 25 per cent., they would receive only £7,500.

Additionally, I do not know how such an arrangement might pan out. It occurs to me it might be all right for the school which is lucky enough to have the pool built in its grounds. Then again there is the question of how far distant the schools would be one from the other; and, in relation to the pool, what the distance would be to each school.

However, I did undertake to make some inquiries about this, and having submitted the information to the honourable member I would ask him to think about it. In the meantime his remarks are being sent to the Minister for Education.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I thank the Minister for taking note of the points I raised. I also went a little further and I would like him to convey to the Minister that if the decision is made to build a big central pool in Fremantle those points I raised in connection with 10 schools might equally apply if the whole 50 could have a central pool; and in those circumstances some consideration could be given to making a considerable grant to the authorities responsible for it.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3: Sections 9B and 9C added—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Dolan raised another matter in connection with the tuition fees being paid to University students.

The Hon. J. Dolan: First degree.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. He queried the fact that there was no mention of that proposal in this Bill. No legislative action is necessary for this as it is being done now by the Treasurer.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They are being paid?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. They are being paid from the Treasury and there is no necessity for legislative action. The payments are being made from the date proposed.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I would thank the Minister for making that reference to the Committee also. As the amount involved is something like £40,000, I felt members were entitled to the information.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

**ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE:
SPECIAL**

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) (9.9 p.m.): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 14th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 8th September, 1965

CONTENTS

	Page
ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL	770
BILLS—	
Albany Harbour Board Act Amendment Bill—Returned	751
Architects Act Amendment Bill—3r.	741
Bread Act Amendment Bill—3r.	741
Builders' Registration Act Amendment Bill—	
Intro.; 1r.	741
Bunbury Harbour Board Act Amendment Bill—Returned	751
Bush Fires Act Amendment Bill—	
Returned	751
Coal Mine Workers (Pensions) Act Amendment Bill—3r.	741
Electoral Act Amendment Bill—2r.	741
Health Act Amendment Bill—3r.	741
Local Government Act Amendment Bill—	
2r.	751
Com.	759
Report	760
Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act Amendment Bill—3r.	741
Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill—3r.	741
Spear-guns Control Act Amendment Bill—	
Returned	751
Traffic Act Amendment Bill—2r.	769