

*In Committee.*

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

**BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT**  
(No. 1).

*Message.*

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

*House adjourned at 11.40 p.m.*

# Legislative Council

Wednesday, 29th October, 1952.

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**QUESTIONS.****RAILWAYS.**

*As to Provision for Goldfields Christmas Traffic.*

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Minister for Railways:

Will the Railway Department be in a position to supply engine power to run the usual holiday traffic on the Eastern Goldfields line during the coming Christmas holidays?

The MINISTER replied:

The normal holiday service will hardly be practicable, but it is planned to run additional passenger trains over all sections during the Christmas holidays.

**HEALTH.**

*As to Mobile Dental and Chest Clinics.*

Hon. A. R. JONES asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What number of mobile dental clinics are used in attending schools in the country?

(2) What schools in the country are served by clinics set up in large country towns?

(3) Has the Government given consideration to mobile chest clinics to serve country areas?

(4) Has the Government considered setting up mobile rail clinics incorporating both dental and chest x-ray facilities?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Nine full-time and four part-time.

(2) No permanent clinics are established in country towns but mobile units travel and serve in turn practically all schools in the State.

(3) Yes. A survey of Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Coolgardie, Norseman and Southern Cross has just been completed. This survey was compulsory under the Health Act and some 14,000 people were x-rayed. It is anticipated that all country areas will be covered in succession. Albany and Geraldton are next on the list.

(4) The establishment of mobile rail dental and chest x-ray clinics has been investigated but discarded as such clinics were not considered to be sufficiently mobile.

**ASSENT TO BILLS.**

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act Amendment.
2. Supply (No. 2), £10,000,000.

**BILL—BUILDING OPERATIONS AND BUILDING MATERIALS CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT AND CONTINUANCE.**

Read a third time and *passed*.

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

# **BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

Report of Committee adopted.

## **BILL—STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland—in reply) [4.41]: When applying for the adjournment of the debate on the Bill, I had in mind the idea of obtaining some interesting figures from the Housing Commission in order to reply to some of the points raised by members. Unfortunately, I was unable to get them today, but as the comments by various members concerned the operations of the Housing Commission itself rather than any indication of disagreement with the principle of the Bill, which is to raise the building limit by £500, I am prepared to allow that information to be supplied to individual members later on.

In the course of his speech, Mr. Barker made some interesting references to the number of weeks wages that were represented in the cost of building a house some years ago as compared with the position today. I am not altogether satisfied that the figures he gave were correct. I can remember that back in about 1902 the standard wage for working men was somewhere in the vicinity of £2 per week. To build a brick house in those days cost about £400. Therefore, a man's wages represented in the building of a brick house in those times would amount to approximately £200.

Hon. G. Fraser: It is a long time since the basic wage was £2 per week.

**The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** I mentioned that it was back in 1902. On the basis of the weekly wage today, which is approximately £12 per week, I do not think it would be found that the same number of weeks wages would be represented in the cost of a house. When the State Housing Act was passed in 1946, as Mr. Fraser pointed out, the maximum amount allowed for the cost of a house was £1,200 and the basic wage at that time was £8 6s. 6d. In October, 1952, the limit to which it will be raised is £3,000 as against a basic wage of approximately £12 per week.

Hon. G. Fraser: £3,000?

**The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** I am referring to the actual increase. The limit allowed was £2,500 and the Bill proposes to raise it to £3,000.

Hon. G. Fraser: No, from £2,000 to £2,500.

**The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** That is correct. The point I am making is that the actual increase would be 25

per cent. on the cost of the house, whereas the difference in the basic wage rates would be nearer 45 per cent., so the extra cost has no relation to the increase in the basic wage and, directly or indirectly, the total cost of the house must bear some relation to the basic wage and the cost of materials required to build it. So I think that is an answer, in some measure, to critics who claim that the cost of a house, particularly of one built by the Housing Commission, has been increased to any great extent by the increments to the basic wage. However, as I have said, members have agreed substantially to the actual increase, so I will content myself with that explanation.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

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

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. J. G. HISLOP** (Metropolitan) [4.47]: In speaking to the Bill I make the appeal that when legislation is being constantly amended, a limit should be set on the number of amendments that can be made to the principal Act before a consolidation takes place. This legislation was originated in 1943, amended in 1944, 1946, 1948, 1951 and now here is a further amendment. In order to make sense of the Bill now before us, the necessary study of the legislation involved hours of work to link together all the various amendments made to the principal Act. I am quite convinced that it would take many hours for a lay member of this House, not associated with nursing, to ever piece it together. It is only because of my knowledge of the nursing world that I was able to piece the principal Act and the amendments together in order to read it as a whole.

I also enter a protest that a measure such as this can be introduced into this Chamber in the cursory manner it was, seeing that it completely revolutionises one of the standard organisations that means so much to our way of life. Again, I am quite certain that if I had not been in this House, there would have been very few members indeed who would have had any knowledge of the subject matter of the Bill. Unavoidably, I was absent from the House when the Minister introduced the measure but he granted me the privilege of perusing his notes. To ask a Minister to explain such an important Bill as this with such scanty notes is almost being contemptuous of Parliament.

I think we, as a House, deserve better treatment than that, because this is a very important measure. It will revolutionise entirely nursing methods and the administration of nursing matters within the State. The Bill aims primarily to introduce here a new form of nurse in the person of nursing aides, who will be registered and enrolled. The qualifications required of the nursing aide do not appear in the Bill nor do any of the implications that are bound to follow the introduction of such a service, appear clearly in the Bill for the information of Parliament. Let me go back to recall some of the changes that have taken place in nursing services, so that the effect of the introduction of nursing aides as a feature of the nursing services of the State can be made clear to members.

In the past nursing has been regarded as an occupation in which nurses are expected to learn, both by lectures and by actual practical work, the requirements of the services rendered by the staff of a hospital. In past years the nurses were expected to attend lectures outside their working hours and, in addition, to spend hours of study, then to pass examinations at the end of stated periods and eventually to pass the qualifying examination for registration at the conclusion of the assigned period of their services.

Changes have taken place so that now, in the main, nurses are allowed to attend lectures as part of their hospital work. They are still expected to spend long hours after their ordinary work has ceased, so that they may learn the theory of the work they have actually been carrying out. That is quite a difficulty. In so many of the professional services and occupations, learning, both theoretical and practical, is carried out not as part of the work of the institution but as a separate course of training. Other lines of essential difficulties surround the occupation of nursing today.

The result of all this is that throughout the world there have been attempts to set up a new system of nursing training, with the idea of inviting into the nursing fold a number of young women who, it is felt, would be of tremendous service to the sick and to the State, were they to participate in that work. There has been, however, reluctance on the part of young women to take up nursing as a profession when it is looked at in comparison with other vocations that exist for them today. Those of us who have made a study of nursing feel that the ultimate objective to achieve is to set up nursing training on a student basis. In order to do that, certain changes have been experimented with in various parts of the world. The present system of training nurses actually within the hospital, making the nurses responsible to the hospital and the hospital responsible for the training of those nurses—which

means having all the practical work carried on within the institution and all the lectures regarded as part of the hospital organisation—has become known as intra-mural training—in other words, “within the walls”.

In some parts of the world, by contrast with that system and with the idea of altering it, a total intra-mural training method has taken its place by those who contemplate that the nurse is virtually a university student just as are medical students, bio-chemistry students and those working in any other branch of science. That method has its difficulties and its opponents, mainly because of the fact that the nurse does not, in all probability, come into contact with her patients until towards the end of her actual training. Another system, now known as partial intra-mural training, has found considerable support throughout the nursing services in many parts of the world.

In this State we carry out partial intra-mural training to a very small degree in that we have now set up a preliminary training course and the time that is set apart for a nurse to enter that school varies according to the training required and to the hospital itself. It started off with a course extending over a week or two and then it expanded to a period of six weeks and has now grown to 13 weeks or three months. During that time the nurse is instructed quite outside the hospital wards and is taken into the wards only for demonstration purposes. Only when the nurse has passed her preliminary examination, does she enter the ward of a hospital for the purposes of practical work.

That in itself is a species of intra-mural training, but it does not get over what is regarded by so many as a difficulty in asking student nurses, after working their 40-hour week, to spend considerable time studying the theory of nursing and making themselves ready for examinations at set periods. The true partial intra-mural training, which is finding favour so much, does lay down that the actual theoretical training of the nurse shall take place as separate and apart from the practical work she undertakes within the hospital. In some cases that partial intra-mural training lays down that one part of the year shall be spent at a university or college of nursing, and during that time the nurse is practically taught as much theory as she would acquire in the whole of her present years of training, so that she goes into the ward as a trained nurse.

Much has been said of the psychological difficulty confronting a young woman when, at 17 or 18 years of age, without adequate psychological training or a true psychological approach to the vocation of nursing, she is asked to enter the wards of a public hospital. It has been

to some extent because of that and also because of the desire to regard them as students that this type of partial intra-mural training has been brought into vogue in so many parts of the world. The nursing aide then comes into the story, but I am not at all certain that the introduction of the trained nursing aides, as the Bill envisages, has been proposed with a full realisation of what it actually means. I have made extensive inquiries around the hospitals as to the views held concerning this innovation, and I find that opinions vary both as to the type of work these girls will undertake and as to the value of these new assistants and their future when qualified.

It does appear as if this suggestion has been brought before the House before any really fixed plan for the use of these nursing aides has been established within the nursing service of this State. One must work out in what way these girls are going to be employed when they have undergone their period of training. When I came back from America, I supplied to the Public Health Department a comprehensive survey of the modern changes in nursing training procedure, and one of the interesting aspects was that they were encouraging within certain States of America a still higher qualification for nursing staff, asking certain of them to do a five-year course instead of the three-year course—and two years of those five were being spent in a university.

Nurses were becoming very expert people who were required to assist the medical profession in the tremendous complications that are taking place in medical and surgical treatment and in handling all the complicated technical devices that are so necessary today. It was interesting to note that that five-year course was appealing very considerably to young women who had already undertaken two years of scientific training at a university and had gone on to do nursing afterwards. A lot of problems were being ironed out in some of those States by encouraging this higher degree of nursing. In some States, these nursing assistants or nursing aides had been tried out and some of the difficulties that were being encountered were related in that report. I will bring them in, as I carry on, to show what effect these nursing aides are likely to have on the nursing service in this State.

One must realise that the whole field of medicine and nursing has made such tremendous progress that there is a growing need within the nursing service for people who are more highly trained than has been the case in the past; and there has been, therefore, a growing opportunity for nurses to take up sidelines—as it were, specialists within the nursing service—on completion of their training. It is for that reason organisations such as the Florence Nightingale Memorial Committee

have started post-graduate services and sent trained nurses from this and other States overseas in order that they might come back as tutor sisters with the idea of improving the standard of nursing within the State.

My concern is whether the introduction of nursing aides will raise or lower the standard of work within the State. It certainly presents difficulties, which I think we are making by not realising the real need for progress in regard to nursing training. We will insist on maintaining our almost total intra-mural training for nurses, and we are failing to attract into the nursing service the number of girls we want. There is, however, on the opposite side to that, the feeling that there are not sufficient numbers of young women with the necessary educational qualifications to take up the higher grades of nursing that are becoming necessary today.

It becomes essential, therefore, if we are going to adhere to this intra-mural training—which I personally think we should discard—that we must have someone who is going to do the work of the institutions. Every institution that I have contacted in the last week, knowing that this Bill was coming before the House, has said that it has insufficient nursing staff. For that reason we see this Bill before us today. The nursing aide is going to be trained within one year. I make that statement so that it can be put alongside the suggestion I made some years ago with regard to altering nursing training in this State in a way which I think would do more towards raising the standard of nursing and might quite well appeal to the young women and so provide us with necessary staff.

I have suggested that we should take into the nursing service for a start young women of six months younger age than those we take at present, and that we give them six months extra-mural training, quite outside the hospital, having them taught either at a college of nursing, or at the university; and that we then, by a concentrated form of theoretical training, give them as much theoretical knowledge as they would now normally obtain and then send them to hospitals for a matter of two years so that they would be qualified one year earlier than now. The great complaint in connection with the shortage of nurses is that so many marry within the first year, and possibly the second year, after qualification. If we could give these girls a position of responsibility one year earlier than now, we might overcome a lot of the difficulties that face us.

Hon. L. C. Diver: They would get married a year earlier.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not think so. The marriage age is more or less fixed all over Australia. The nursing aide is to be trained within a period of one year.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Is there an examination at the end of that year?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There is no examination. Let me read to the House the curriculum laid down for these nursing aides so that each member will see for himself the type of work that is to be undertaken. Here are the details:

**Training:** One year. Practical experience received shall include 18 weeks general, medical and surgical; four weeks children; 18 weeks chronic and convalescent.

The word "nursing" does not appear because it is not actually nursing that is to be done.

**Examinations:** Take the form of a test of practical efficiency. The work will be judged by the senior sister tutor. The student will present a practice schedule at the examination and this, together with reports on her progress throughout training, will be taken into consideration.

The Minister for Agriculture: Then there is an examination!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: If it can be called such, yes.

**Curriculum:** All students to be admitted to a preliminary training school the duration of which shall not be less than one month. Subsequent lectures to be given. Revision towards the end of the year.

**Syllabus:** All subjects to be taught in a simple and essentially practical manner.

**Ethics**—Care of property and equipment.

**Elementary knowledge of:**—  
The structure of the human body.  
The functions of the body applied to the normal.

**Nutrition:** Purpose of food, types of food and accessory food factors. Preparation and serving of food. Principles and methods of simple cookery.

**Hygiene:** The laws of healthy living as these affect the individual and the community and are applied to the home. The maintenance of health. The importance of promoting good health. The factors which cause deterioration in health, and how these may be dealt with by the individual, in the family and the community.

**General Nursing:** Routine nursing procedures. Care of patients. Handling of equipment.

Then there is a section devoted to routine nursing procedures. I do not propose to go through all of this curriculum, but with regard to routine nursing procedures, here is what will be involved—

Preparation and making of beds and cots. Positions used in nursing. Admission of patients. Immersion baths and fully sponging. Care of mouth, skin, hair, nails, hands and feet. The treatment of verminous patients. The giving and removing of sanitary utensils. Care of helpless and incontinent patients. Prevention of bedsores. Taking temperatures, pulse and respiration rate. Serving meals and feeding helpless patients. Care of ambulant patients. Transfer and discharge of patients. Instruction in care of the dying and last offices (not required to perform). Care of patients' property and clothing. Care and custody of medicines. Safe custody of poisons, i.e., disinfectants, preparations of lotions in common use. Observations and disposal of urine, faeces, sputum and vomit.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: What is going to be left for trained nurses?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: These nurses will do practically what a first-year nurse will do. If there is a consciousness in the minds of those administering this scheme that these trainee nurses we have now can be used in a different way and taught in a different way and that these people can do this sort of work, we may elevate the nursing service. But we are running a risk. I took care to go into the question of what method of payment would be used in regard to these services. I find that the nurse who is in training for a higher certificate of nursing is to receive considerably less than the untrained aides are receiving at present.

The proposal is introduced because at the moment hospitals all round the place, particularly smaller private hospitals and, to a lesser extent, some of the bigger general hospitals—and, I understand, the country hospitals—are already employing, at a considerable sum per week, absolutely untrained assistants. They are calling them "assistant nurses." Any girl over 14 years of age can go into a hospital and put on a sort of uniform and she will be paid in her first year, if she is under 19 years of age, £4 3s. 1d. per week.

Hon. L. Craig: And keep?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Plus keep. The total would be £6 3s. 5d. if she were living out; but very few do. In her second year she receives £4 18s. 2d. or a total, overall, of £7 8s. 6d.; and in her third year in which she would be over 19 years of age, £5 13s. 3d., or £8 3s. 6d. overall. Actually the girl of 15 years of age will be receiving £4 3s. 1d., plus board, and she would be totally untrained and inexperienced, so short of staff are they.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: There are not many of them at that age.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: There are quite a few, I understand under the age of 19.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Yes, but not 14 or 15.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: This is fixed by the union.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: They would be under 19, but they would not be 14 or 15.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have been assured by responsible authority that there are some.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I have not seen any in my district.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: They are wanted for all sorts of jobs. The nursing assistant, over 19 years of age, receives £5 15s. 8d., plus board for the first year, £6 0s. 8d., plus board for the second year and £6 5s. 8d., plus board for the third year. So that if a girl was 22 years of age she would be receiving £6 5s. 8d. per week plus board. I will now quote the relative figures for trainee nurses who are doing similar work and studying for examinations at the same time ultimately, of course, with the idea of achieving success as trained nurses. As against the £4 3s. 1d. received by the under-19 girls, the trainee nurse receives £3 12s. 6d. plus board for the first year; for the second year she receives £4 5s. 4d. as against £4 18s. 2d. and for the third year £4 18s. 2d. as against £5 13s. 3d.

It has been suggested that in order to attract these girls into the service so that they are known as trained nursing aides, the salaries should be increased beyond those I have mentioned. I cannot get the full details because they are not known, but I understand that at recent meetings which took place within the last few days among the nursing authorities, a sum of up to £8 for a trained nursing aide, after she has finished her one year of training and provided she is over 19 years of age, has been suggested. Whether that figure is plus board or not, I do not know, but I think it must be because the figure for that class at present, with board, is £9 11s. a week. So I think we can assume that the £8 would be plus board. That would bring the nursing aide, who has been trained for only about a year, into a grade with a salary in excess of that paid to a B Class sister—that is, the recently graduated trained nurse—who receives £7 10s. 8d. per week plus board.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: She is the one that is being wronged.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The suggestion made to me was that the salary of the B Class sister should be raised, but if that is done then the salaries of all nursing staffs in hospitals will have to be increased. I think that in the Royal Perth Hospital alone there 100, or more, trained nurses and possibly in the metropolitan area

something like 200 to 250 trained nurses, all of whose salaries would have to be raised with the introduction of these nursing aides.

It does not seem to me that there is any real point in offering a further increase in salary if we are going to take a person into a service and train her and there are occupations after training that are available only to the nurses. It does not appear as if these nursing aides can be of much use to the nursing service in private homes because, on inquiring from one person in authority, I was assured that nursing aides would be able to work only under the supervision of a trained nurse. So that brings them down to what could be termed hospital employees or hospital staff. However, I have also been assured that there would be plenty of work for these girls, when qualified, in the general hospitals and particularly in governmental hospitals throughout the State.

I am also concerned about the difficulties and the jealousies that are likely to arise when someone who is untrained is receiving, within a few pence or a few shillings per week, the same salary that is being paid to the trained person. I inquired about this when I was in the United States and ascertained that there they had found it a real difficulty. If a person who can take no further responsibility than that which I read out, receives only a little less than a trained nurse who has spent three years in training and possibly two or three years in becoming a charge sister, there will be difficulties arising between the two groups.

The Minister for Transport: Do you not think that would adjust itself?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It has not adjusted itself in any of the institutions with which I have come into contact. They have had to discard the system.

The Minister for Transport: But have they not recognised these nursing aides and are they not taking steps to enrol them?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: We will deal with that aspect later. The employment of these girls afterwards is an important question, and there must be some organisation that will care for them. Consequently it is essential that they be enrolled. But so far as I can gather at the moment, none of the authorities planning this scheme has any idea of how these trained aides and the probationary nurses will fit into the nursing service within the hospitals. The nurse who is training has set tasks to do and she will have to do them alongside a relatively untrained person who has gained her experience by possibly doing the same things over a longer period of time. Unless the line of demarcation between those two groups is very definite, we will find difficulties.

I can see considerable merit in the scheme if it is going to assist the staffing of hospitals but I would like to be satisfied that the persons in charge of the scheme know where it is heading and what these nursing aides are going to do. It seems to me that there is no set plan yet as to what the work of these aides will be within the various institutions. I would make one final plea on this matter and it is this: Provided those in authority seize the opportunity to raise the standard of the trained nurse, well and good. There can be this opportunity because today—and I dealt with this in the scheme I propounded previously—it would be quite simple to do what is requisite, seeing that there is every opportunity for nurses to specialise within the various fields.

Tremendous changes have taken place in the medical profession, but I am certain that the nurses could be adequately trained for general work within two years. If, as I am told, a nursing aide can be trained within one year to do all that is necessary for the bedside handling of patients, surely within another year a nurse can be trained to do basic work. Once her basic training has been completed, the nurse can specialise in such fields as ward control, out-patient clinic control, taking care of special clinics, theatre work and so on.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Your scheme is that they would be registered after two years?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think, with partial intra-mural training, we could register them after two years. This is a question that needs very careful handling and it will need all the tact in the world to get this scheme to dovetail in. We should lift our heads from the sands and realise that the time when a nurse must be a student is fast approaching. If we did that, we would make progress much more rapidly. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I intend to move that the words "trained nursing aide" be struck out and the words "State-enrolled nursing aide" be inserted in lieu.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Why not "hospital aides"?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I do not mind what it is because that is where they will be doing their work. My idea was to make the term definite because though the distinction between a trained nurse and a trained nursing aide is quite well known to those in the nursing and medical professions, it would be most confusing to the public to have a trained nurse and a trained nursing aide. I know that people come to my consulting rooms and ask me what I practise and when I tell them that I am a physician, they say, "What do you do?" Everybody seems to know what a surgeon does but few seem to know what a physician does. Consequently, the various branches of medi-

cine are sometimes closed books and it is very difficult because the profession has so many avenues of service.

If the term is not altered in the Bill, I am afraid the public will be misled with the closeness of the terms "trained nurse" and "trained nursing aide." The value of having the words "State-enrolled nursing aide" in the measure is that the Nurses Registration Board will be able to control them and they can be cared for by their various organisations. It will mean that these girls, who are to receive only one years training, will be enrolled; they will not be given licenses or diplomas but they will simply be enrolled by the State as aides in the nursing service, and I think that that term should cover all that is necessary.

But I would appeal to the department, and particularly the Nurses Registration Board, to be very certain of what this measure will mean to the nursing service of the State and how it will function. They must be certain that, before it is introduced, they iron out all anomalies that will occur in the relations between one nurse and another—such as trained nurses, probationary nurses, and nursing aides. I believe this to be the wrong approach to this question, and I am convinced that we must look at the nursing problem from the student point of view.

When one sees the number of young women, well educated too, who are prepared to go to the university and actually pay for the knowledge of the university—even though it is a free university, certain costs are involved—and then acquire the degree of Bachelor of Arts and never use that knowledge, I am convinced that if we made the nursing service as attractive as possible and took into account all the complexities of the medical profession, the work of a trained nurse could be made a highly skilled and technical occupation. If we could do that, then we would obtain the type of girl we require in the nursing service. If it were possible to leave patients in the care of girls who needed less training, it would go a long way towards solving the problem. But the risk is that this practice might lower the standard of the nursing service in this State.

One of the risks we run in introducing this type of employee into the service is that he or she can look upon the work from a different angle to that which is essential if success is to be achieved in either the medical or the nursing services. In some other States, one finds already, for instance, that these nursing aides, both male and female, receive extra money—risk money, it is called—for entering an infectious diseases ward which the trainee nurses take as part of their acclimatisation. They can also receive extra money, as they do, for week-end work. Week-end work means nothing to the medical service if the employees really love their jobs. This could be a very risky matter if there is

no vision, but if there is vision and a real desire to see the status of the nursing service rise higher and higher in the State, it could then be a success. I fear there is a tremendous responsibility resting upon those introducing the Bill.

On motion by Hon. R. J. Boylen, debate adjourned.

### **BILL—WAREHOUSEMEN'S LIENS.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

### **BILLS (3)—RETURNED.**

- 1, Railway (Mundaring - Mundaring Weir) Discontinuance.
  - 2, Marketing of Onions Act Amendment.
  - 3, Sheepskins (Draft Allowance Prohibition).
- Without amendment.

### **BILL—MARKETING OF BARLEY ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).**

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE** (Hon. Sir Charles Latham—Central) [5.35] in moving the second reading said: A similar Bill was introduced before the change of Government in 1946; it had a life of three years and another was subsequently introduced in 1949. On this occasion, we are asking for a continuation of the Act for a further three years. The present legislation will cease to operate on the 9th December, and I am anxious that we shall pass the Bill as quickly as possible because there will be quite a lot of barley coming in and it will be necessary to make arrangements for its marketing.

The production for the 1951-52 season was as follows:—144,891 bushels of 2-row barley, that is, barley used principally for malting purposes, for beer and suchlike commodities; 232,406 bushels of 6-row barley. This is down when compared with the previous year, which was 285,010 bushels of 2-row barley, and 271,259 bushels of 6-row barley. At present, there is a great demand for barley oversea. All the Asiatic countries are short of rice, which is their staple food, and by some secret process they are able to use barley as a substitute for rice.

Members will know that some time ago interest was shown in an endeavour to convert wheat into a substitute for rice. At the time, I could not see any possibility of it happening because of the high price of wheat when compared with that obtained for rice. Nevertheless, a great deal of interest was displayed in the matter, but when subsequently wheat went up in price it was found impracticable to carry on with the experiments. I do not know whether they were actually started in Australia, but a great deal of thought was given to the idea. Wheat goes 60 lb. to the bushel and barley only 50 lb. to the bushel, but nevertheless the

Japanese, a short time ago, were inquiring about supplies, and were offering us more per bushel for barley required for the purpose I have indicated.

I propose to give particulars of the increased prices of barley. In 1950-51 2-row barley was 10s. 3½d. a bushel less freight and 6-row barley was 13s. a bushel less freight. In 1951-52, the price of 2-row barley had increased to 14s. 3½d. a bushel, less freight and of 6-row barley to 17s. 6d. per bushel net at grower's siding. The increase in the price of the 6-row barley may, of course, have been influenced by the increased price of jute. Members may know that the price of jute has gone up and it is still very high as far as Australia is concerned. The barley of which I have just given the price is what is called manufacturing barley. The lower grade is known as feed grade. In 1950-51 the price of 2-row feed grade barley was 6s. 5d. per bushel less freight and the 6-row feed grade barley was 6s. 2d. a bushel, less freight. Last year the price of 6-row barley of that type was 11s. a bushel, less freight. There was not sufficient produced that year and, in consequence, the price went up.

Those details, I think will indicate to members that from the farmer's point of view barley is rather an attractive proposition. In the 1950-51 season 6-row barley was shipped through Albany for the first time, 86,865 bushels being handled through that port at considerable saving to southern growers. Railway freights have been increased on grains and the bringing of barley to Fremantle from such places as Katanning and Gnowangerup, where there is quite a lot grown, costs the growers a considerable amount of money. Last year some export of barley in bulk took place and it proved very successful.

Members will appreciate how successful it was when I say that 87,000 bushels of 6-row barley were handled in bulk. It is expected that during the coming season nearly all the export barley will be in bulk, and not in bags. I pointed out that the price of bags is very high, and this will mean a greater profit to the producer. There will not be any bulk facilities at Albany unless the bags are emptied into the holds of the ships as was the case with wheat in the early days. Fremantle and Geraldton, however, both permit of bulk handling of the barley but, as I pointed out, in the Great Southern most of it will be exported in sacks.

I would like members to know that barley has been a controlled commodity as regards price, but that control was lifted on the 17th October, and the commodity is now available on the open market. I have just returned from an extensive trip to the southern parts of the State and a short while ago I also went through the central areas. I must say that I am



amazed at the excellent growth of barley in those districts. I think some of the largest crops of barley ever grown in this State will be produced this season. Barley does not like a very wet season; it likes moderately wet conditions and for malting purposes it is essential that it should ripen slowly. It is for that reason that our barley is so much sought after for malting purposes. All the 2-row barley available in this State is used by the brewers but the State does not produce sufficient for their requirements. In consequence, supplies have had to be imported from South Australia to meet the needs of the breweries.

Personally, I always held the opinion, and I think many members were also of the same mind, that 6-row barley was a better yielder than the 2-row variety. Statistical returns, however, show that there is little difference, if any, but whatever is the difference it is in favour of 2-row barley. Members may think that the methods employed in marketing barley in this State deprive the people who want it from obtaining their requirements. No barley is exported from any port of Australia without an export licence. The Department of Commerce and Agriculture is very careful to see that Australia's requirements are satisfied before any export is permitted at all. At present we are applying for export licenses on behalf of people who are handling barley. This does not apply to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. alone; merchants, if they so desire, may purchase and export barley. I mention this because I do not wish members to be under the impression that there is any close preserve.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Is it a fact that there is a move to switch the management from the board to the Wheat Pool?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have not heard of it, but I should say that is a matter entirely for the board. I do not see how we could interfere without altering the Act. I should say it would not be a bad move. I have not heard any complaints about the management and, of course, there may be a move in that direction, but I have very little power in the matter. This legislation was introduced originally by the previous Government. Not long ago I was approached by the malting people because they felt that the bulk-handling of barley would not be satisfactory, but the bulk-handling authorities made a test at Burges Siding and it proved very successful. So far as I am aware, the malting people are satisfied with it.

It will be necessary, of course, for the malting people to install bulk facilities at the manufacturing centre, but I should think it would pay them to do so, just as it has proved profitable for the flour millers to install bulk facilities for wheat.

I do not know where Mr. Watson obtained his information; whether he was so informed or whether it is merely a rumour. So far as I know, everything is going satisfactorily. The Bill will merely extend the duration of the Act for three years. The uncertainty arising from a year-to-year extension is unsatisfactory in such a business. The Act will lapse on the 9th December, and I am anxious to get the Bill passed in order to enable merchants and others who propose to export, to make their arrangements. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. R. Hall, debate adjourned.

## BILL—EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.48]: I asked for the adjournment of the debate last evening in order to have an opportunity to study the measure. The original Act has been the subject of quite a few amendments and it takes time to peruse the various provisions and reach an understanding of the effect of the amendments proposed in this Bill. I consider that most of those amendments are satisfactory, but there is one about which I have some doubt. That is contained in Clause 9, which provides—

(1) It shall be the duty of a parent of a blind, deaf mute, cerebrally palsied or mentally defective child—

(a) to notify in writing the Minister of the name and whereabouts of the child within one month after he attains the age of three years in the case of a deaf or mute child and in the case of a blind, cerebrally palsied or mentally defective child within one month after he attains the age of four years.

Most parents consider that the education of a child begins at the age of six. That, of course, is the compulsory age for a child to start school. This being so, the amendment is likely to be misleading, and it will be difficult for any parent having a deficient child to be aware of the fact that it is necessary to notify the Minister in writing of that deficiency when the child reaches the age of three or four years. The Minister informed us that it was the intention of the department to send out notices through the school children to the parents. This might be satisfactory where parents have children who are attending school, but there will be instances of a first child or an only child. In that event, how would the parents be made aware of this amendment and of the need for notifying the Minister?

Seemingly that method of advising parents of their duty would be ineffective. Yet, if parents do not notify the Minister, they will be liable to be summoned before the court and, as members are aware, ignorance of the law is not accepted as a plea in any court. The Minister stated that the department would not be hard on parents who had not advised the department of a child's deficiency, but we may have another Minister in office later on and his conduct of the department might be entirely different. I would not say, either, that the attitude of the department might not be altered even while it is under the control of the present Minister. If an officer chose to be officious, he could enforce this amending legislation to the letter.

I think the proposal is a poor way of achieving what is desired. I suggest that the Minister in charge of the Bill should discuss the matter with the Minister for Education, because I am satisfied there are other ways and means of advising parents of their responsibility. One way would be by having notices passed on to the doctors, the hospitals and the clinics, so that wider circulation of these requirements would make it possible for all but a very few people to know of their responsibility. It might be advisable to include in the circular a request to anyone knowing of such a child to pass it on to the parents. I do not like the wording of the clause. To members or to lawyers, the phraseology might be quite clear, but to an ordinary person the intention is not plainly expressed. In fact, it could be read in several ways and there seems to be endless repetition of the words covering the defectiveness of children.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are two different defects.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I agree with that, but the clause could have been framed in much simpler language. In Committee, I propose to move an amendment to make the clause read as follows:—

(1) It shall be the duty of a parent—

- (a) to notify the Minister in writing in the case of a deaf or mute child the name and whereabouts of the child within one month after he attains the age of three years;
- (b) to notify the Minister in writing in the case of a blind, cerebrally palsied or mentally deficient child within one month after he attains the age of four years;
- (c) to provide suitable education for such child. . . .

That would set out requirements in more simple language. I have discussed this suggestion with the Minister and he has informed me that, provided members

approve he is prepared to accept the amendment. In other respects, the Bill seems to be a good measure. I ask that careful consideration be given to what I have said. Members have often stated that clauses in Bills could be worded much more simply, and I think it is our duty to endeavour as far as possible to simplify the phraseology where a clause is likely to be confusing to the ordinary person who has to observe the obligations laid upon him by the legislation.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—PRICES CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT AND CONTINUANCE.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [5.58] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has three objects; firstly, to continue the operations of the principal Act for 12 months until the 31st December, 1953; secondly, to assist in carrying into effect the Dairying Industry Stabilisation Scheme by giving authority to the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture to fix the wholesale price of butterfat; and, thirdly, to repeal the Profiteering Prevention Act, 1939-41.

During the past year, conferences have been held approximately every three months between State Prices Ministers and Commissioners, and these conferences have led to a continuance of the principle that where goods are in full supply and marketed on a competitive basis, they should be decontrolled. The general view of Prices Ministers is that when these conditions apply, price-control is of no advantage. In fact, it is considered more often a detriment, as it causes additional cost to the merchant and often has the effect of stifling competition.

Discussions between the State authorities have been especially useful where commodities have a major bearing on the Australian economy. These are often seriously affected by the state of overseas markets and, in many cases, have been the subject of negotiations with the Commonwealth Government. It is unfortunate that price movements have continued to show a rise despite the fact that, in many cases, manufacturers' and distributors' margins have been reduced.

Over the past few years, as the result of a considerable increase in turnover and the higher cost of goods, wholesale and retail distributors were able to absorb increased overheads brought about principally by increases in wages. This meant that an increase in percentage margins was not necessary but, in fact, a reduction in percentage margins was possible. Indeed, in many industries, percentage margins were subsequently reduced because of these factors. During the 12

months under review, however, it has not been possible to maintain this downward movement of margins due to several factors, principally a levelling out of turnover, a smaller increase in the cost of goods and a substantial rise in overhead costs.

The same situation has applied to a lesser degree to manufacturers, the direct effect of wage increases having borne heavily on manufacturing concerns. During the past 12 months, increased wages have been responsible for considerable rises in overhead costs. Since the 1st July, 1951, therefore, the upward trend of prices has continued and, as in the past, the principal reasons have been the effect of—

- (a) basic wage increases which, during the 12 months to the 31st August, 1952, amounted to a total of £2 8s. 3d. per week for male workers in the Perth metropolitan area;
- (b) high oversea prices upon the home consumption price of many Australian export commodities; and
- (c) the impact upon both primary and secondary industries in Australia of the considerably increased landed cost of many imported commodities.

The rise in the cost of living in Western Australia during 1951-52 was approximately the same as that for 1950-51, that is, an increase of 1.6 per cent. The comparison of the percentage increases for the Perth metropolitan area with the average for the six capital cities was—food and groceries 32 per cent., or 18.4 per cent. below the average; clothing 23.3 per cent., or 3.4 per cent. above the average; miscellaneous 28.8 per cent., or 4.6 per cent. above the average and rent 13.8 per cent., or 10.4 per cent. higher than the average. The increase in all the items contained in the "C" series was 25.8 per cent. which was 2.6 per cent. below the Australian average.

In March last, textiles were decontrolled in Western Australia, the reason being that they were in plentiful supply. As a matter of fact, the industry was overstocked and competition was operating freely. Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland have since followed the example of this State. A careful check on price movements has been kept in this industry, but no uncalled-for price increases have been made. All the evidence points to the fact that decontrol resulted in free merchandising, decreased margins being taken on many lines used by the ordinary householder.

Turning to the routine work of the Prices Branch, the number of complaints dealt with during 1951-52 was 452, or an average of 36 per month. This was considerably more than the previous year's total of 277. The benefits of the special checking section which was instituted

during 1950-51 were felt during the past financial year. In that period 9,438 checks were made, a monthly average of 786. These checks included prices charged by manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers in both urban and rural districts.

A careful check is kept, not only over controlled items, but also over those decontrolled, in order to ensure the non-exploitation of consumers. During the year warnings were issued to 250 traders in regard to overcharges, and 121 prosecutions, covering 529 charges, were instituted. The gradual decontrol of many items had the effect of reducing the staff of the Prices Branch from 110 at the beginning of the financial year to 72 at the 30th June, 1952. Concisely, the object of price-control is to keep within reasonable limits the costs of goods and services to the general public, while allowing manufacturers and traders a reasonable margin of profit. When goods are in short supply, usually during periods of economic difficulty, naturally prices show an inclination to rise, sometimes to a very considerable extent. Price-control is then wise, as not only does it protect the general public, but it also places a curb on a tendency, which, if uncontrolled, could have serious repercussions upon the economy of the country.

Increases in costs of labour and materials are invariably followed by applications for higher prices by manufacturers and traders, but it is often found that by the adoption of more efficient methods of production, distribution, or administration, these increases can be absorbed to a certain degree by the industries concerned. In this manner the undesirable consequences of a wage-price spiral can to some extent be restrained. Price-control has been a potent factor in assisting to check inflationary tendencies. Immediately the supply position is such that healthy competition occurs, with its undoubted tendency to reduce prices, goods and services are then released from control.

Many factors, some entirely beyond the control of the State Government, have, and still are, exerting a strong upward pressure on the prices of many articles. As these influences are still being felt, the Government considers that in the interest of the general public it is necessary to continue to exercise control over prices for a further 12 months, and to continue the policy of decontrolling items the supply of which is sufficient to stimulate competition and thereby regulate prices. I trust that in the next 12 months pressures on the price level will ease. However, it is difficult, in these uncertain days, to forecast future events.

The second amendment seeks to implement an agreement reached between the Commonwealth and the States. This agreement is designed to ensure a minimum

return to primary producers for five years as from the 1st July, 1952. This return will be provided for partly by the payment by the Commonwealth of bounties on the production of butter and cheese, and partly by the maintenance of appropriate prices for butter and cheese sold in Australia.

The intention is that the maximum wholesale price which can be charged for the sale of butter and cheese by a person who is not the proprietor of a butter factory or a cheese factory, shall be based on the maximum price charged for butter and cheese sold for consumption in Australia, by the proprietor of a butter or cheese factory. The Bill, therefore, seeks to permit the Prices Commissioner, when fixing the maximum prices for butter and cheese, to base them on the prices determined by the Commonwealth Minister for Commerce and Agriculture for the sale of butter and cheese by a manufacturer. To carry out its part of the agreement the Commonwealth has prepared a Bill based on the various States amending their prices legislation to give effect to the agreement.

The last amendment proposes to repeal the Profiteering Prevention Act, which was passed as a war measure in 1939, and which was to remain in force during the continuance of the war in which His Majesty was engaged, at the commencement of the Act, and for a further period of six months thereafter. It so occurs that in some respects the provisions of this Act are in conflict with those of the Prices Control Act. It was anticipated that the Profiteering Prevention Act would automatically expire within a reasonable period owing to the termination of the war, but it has been found that it is unlikely that there will be a formal declaration of peace with Germany for perhaps some years. The Solicitor General has advised that, in his opinion, the Profiteering Prevention Act is still in operation and that neither he nor the Deputy Commonwealth Crown Solicitor can anticipate when it will expire. It now appears that what the local newspapers earlier this year described as a peace treaty with West Germany was possibly nothing more than a commercial agreement. Under these circumstances it has been deemed advisable to repeal this Act to avoid any possible confusion. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. L. Loton, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. C. H. Simpson-Midland) [6.10] in moving the second reading said: The proposal in this small Bill has been agreed to by all sections of the mining industry.

In 1948 the principal Act was amended to provide for the appointment of a Western Australian Coal Industry Tribunal. The tribunal consists of five members, a chairman, who since the inception has been Mr. W. J. Wallwork, S.M., two representatives of the employees and two of the employers. Under the Act the tribunal has power to consider and determine any industrial dispute or happening.

Although no award, order or determination made by the tribunal can be altered or challenged in any court, the President of the Arbitration Court may order a review by the court of any decision or settlement made by the tribunal. The court may then rehear and determine the matter in dispute. A substitute may be provided for any of the employers' or employees' representatives, so that a full tribunal is available should a member be unable to be present because of sickness or other unavoidable reason.

The most important union at Collie is the Coal Miners' Industrial Union of Workers whose members are men engaged in actual mining operations. It is from this union that the two employees' representatives on the tribunal are selected. There are, however, several other unions at Collie whose members are employed in the industry in technical and other capacities. These include the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Union, the Australian Society of Engineers, the Amalgamated Engineering Union of Workers, the Australian Collieries Staff Association and the Collie District Deputies' Union of Workers. These small bodies have proposed that when the tribunal is considering an industrial matter affecting one of their unions, the union directly concerned should have direct representation on the tribunal.

This is a sound suggestion as it would be difficult for representatives of one union to be sufficiently familiar with the problems and conditions of other unions. The Bill therefore provides that while the membership of the tribunal will remain at its present total of five, the employees' representatives will be members of whichever union is concerned in the matter before the tribunal. The term of office of the chairman and the employers' representatives will continue at two years as provided by the Act, but it will be necessary for the employees' representatives to be appointed only by the union affected whenever a case is to be heard by the tribunal. The Crown Law Department agrees that this is the most suitable manner in which to meet the changed circumstances, and all sections of the coalmining industry have agreed to the principle embodied in the amendment.

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

The **MINISTER FOR MINES**: Before the suspension I was explaining the Bill to the House. Might I add that some months ago certain representatives of the smaller unions at Collie interviewed me at the Mines Department. They said they had no representation on the board in cases where the tribunal was dealing with technical questions that concerned their particular trades. After examining the position and consulting the owners and the other unions at Collie, all concerned were in accord with the amendment being made. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

#### **BILL—ALBANY PUBLIC CEMETERIES SUBSIDIES.**

*Second Reading.*

**HON. J. McI. THOMSON** (South) [7.35] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to enable the Albany Municipal Council and the Albany Road Board to pay over moneys—out of ordinary revenue or by way of special rates—to the trustees of the Albany Public Cemeteries Board so that it may proceed with the establishment, maintenance and management of a new cemetery at Albany. The present cemetery site, which is within the municipal boundaries was established in 1885. Prior to that date the cemetery site was that now occupied by the town hall. In another two or three months the present cemetery will be unable to accommodate any more graves and it is therefore necessary that something be done immediately to meet the position. The situation at present is such that portion of the Anglican cemetery has already been used to accommodate burials from other denominations.

The new cemetery site is on Reserve No. 23074 in the Albany Road Board district and the preparation of it is estimated to cost in the vicinity of £8,000, but by the deferring of certain works of a less urgent nature the cost has been reduced to £5,000. The work so far carried out has been financed by an overdraft on the Rural and Industries Bank. The Bill empowers the levying of a rate of up to ¼d. in the £ on the unimproved capital value or 2d. in the £ on the annual rental value. The rate of up to ¼d. in the £ will return something like £1,700 per year. The Bill also provides for the repayment of certain moneys borrowed by the cemeteries board and it has the approval of the Treasurer and the Lands

Department and is satisfactory to the Rural and Industries Bank. For the reasons I have given, I hope the House will support the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

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

#### **BILL—COOGEE-KWINANA RAILWAY.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland—in reply)

[7.40]: I have listened with interest to what members had to say about the Bill and I take it that the second reading will be agreed to. Since the contributions to the debate last evening, I have brought forward another map which sets out approximately where the proposed chord line leading from the eastern main and the south-western main lines would link up with the proposed railway from Coogee to Kwinana.

The map shows that it will connect with the main system at a point about three miles below the actual constructional starting point and thereafter will be a common point of entry to either Kwinana or the B.H.P. reservation and will serve the docks which it is proposed later on to construct to deal with commodities such as wheat, phosphate rock, oil and other bulk items of that kind. As members have had an opportunity of seeing those maps and the aerial maps that were provided I am hopeful that they will accept the Bill as submitted.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*To Refer to Select Committee.*

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [7.42]: I move—

That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

I will not add to what I said during the second reading debate, apart from remarking upon the amount of information that has been made available to members since it was known that there was some opposition to the measure as it stood. From the information we have gained in the last day or so it is apparently intended that the south-of-the-river line should go somewhere in the vicinity that I suggested might be its route—between Bibra Lake and Jandakot, branching down to Kwinana in that way.

If the line is to take that course, the Coogee-Kwinana line may not be necessary. We have had enough railways in this State that, after a few years of use, have been found to be no longer necessary and have had to be pulled up. The line from Coogee to Kwinana, a distance of about six miles, will serve only the oil refinery and we find that investigations have progressed almost sufficiently far to say what route will be taken by the south-of-the-river line to Kwinana. What is the necessity for having two lines?

Hon. L. Craig: Do not you think Fremantle and Kwinana should be connected?

Hon. G. FRASER: The Coogee-Kwinana line, as suggested in the Bill, would mean that Fremantle would become a bottleneck for all the traffic for Kwinana. That is one of the reasons why I made known my intention to move for a Select Committee to inquire whether it was possible for the proposed line to take some other route. Members know, without my telling them, of the number of bottlenecks that have been created by the construction of new lines in the past, and I hope to avoid a recurrence of that now. I understand it is an established fact that it is the intention of the Government to build the south-of-the-river line along a route which will eventually bring it to Fremantle and Kwinana. Therefore, that raises the question whether this railway line of six miles in length from Coogee to Kwinana should be built. The Minister has just told us that the proposed south-of-the-river line will serve the wharves as well as the oil refinery itself.

Hon. L. Craig: Do not you think that a line should be built to Kwinana irrespective of any other?

Hon. G. FRASER: The proposed line branching out from Armadale would be quite different from one going down the coast.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: A difference of seven miles, that is all!

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not think it would be seven miles. Apart from an extra two or three miles, it would have connection right through to the South-West and would be linked with all the other railway systems without coming out at Fremantle and Perth. That is a better proposition than having a line from Coogee to Kwinana which would create a bottleneck.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: But would you not have both?

Hon. G. FRASER: If a Select Committee is appointed, it might be found that there is no necessity for this suggested line. It is only because the Minister has told us that the other proposed line is to go in the direction he indicated that I have raised this point. Apart from that angle, the inquiry is justified to ensure that

everything relating to the new area will be undertaken in a proper manner. I am not satisfied that such will be the case. The Minister has told us that there is co-ordination between the various departments concerned. I have taken an active interest in the Kwinana proposition since it was first mooted.

I know what goes on behind the scenes more than the average member and there is not the co-ordination there should be between the departments. I did not discover this by going behind anybody's back, but I have discussed the question with the Ministers concerned. I know that progress has not been made to the extent that it should have been. In fact, I think the Minister will agree that the townsite area has been planned a little differently from that originally intended. Therefore, the appointment of a Select Committee would enable a report to be made to this House as to whether everything is in apple-pie order in that area. In moving for a Select Committee I have only one thing in mind. I want to know that everything connected with the establishment of this new area will progress along the right lines and that the efforts of the departments concerned will be completely co-ordinated. I know that a committee has already been handling certain phases of the question.

The Minister for Railways: That has nothing to do with the proposed railway line.

Hon. G. FRASER: Such an answer has been the basis of my complaint all along. Probably if I mentioned the pipeline to Kwinana, the Minister for Works would say that that had nothing to do with the railway line to Kwinana, and, in turn, the Ministers of other departments concerned would say the same thing as well. However, those details have everything to do with the planning of any area and unless complete co-ordination is achieved, mistakes will be made as in the past. If we accept the Minister's statement that there is complete co-ordination between the departments, I cannot see any reason for his objection to the appointment of a Select Committee.

The Minister for Railways: Only on the score of delay.

Hon. G. FRASER: It would mean a delay of only a few weeks.

The Minister for Railways: That is quite a lot.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the Minister's statement is correct, the whole position will be clarified by the appointment of a Select Committee. No member will be happier than I will be if the report shows that everything is in order. I would be the first to admit that my suspicions were unfounded. I have no motive in moving for the appointment of a Select Committee other than to see that the best is done for the State.

The Minister for Railways: Suppose you obtained an opinion as to the town-site, the power line or the water supply, would that have anything to do with the construction of the railway line?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, everything must dovetail, and some authority must be in a position to ensure that. The trouble is that in the past all departments have gone along in their own unhappy way.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: They have been happy.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but at the time the outcome has proved to be most unhappy for the State.

Hon. L. Craig: How would you transport from Fremantle to Kwinana the hundreds of thousands of tons of goods to be used for construction purposes?

Hon. G. FRASER: I would transport them on the line that is to be built.

Hon. L. Craig: Would you not construct the line along the shortest route? Hundreds of thousands of tons of goods will have to be conveyed to the construction works. How would you get them there?

Hon. G. FRASER: I would get them there by the best route possible. If the new line is to serve Kwinana alone, I agree with the Railway Department that this is the most economical line it could build. That is from the point of view of handling railway goods.

Hon. L. Craig: They must handle the goods.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so, but the mere transporting of goods to Kwinana is not the only point in question. I am only anxious to make sure that the line will be built on the best possible route. Another thing I cannot understand is why the line should finish at Kwinana. At Rockingham we have a settlement which, in the ordinary course of events, has no hope of being linked with Fremantle by a railway.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Do you think the people at Rockingham want it?

Hon. G. FRASER: I think it would be an advantage for a district such as Rockingham to have a railway connection.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: What for?

Hon. G. FRASER: For the same reason that any other district in this State desires a railway connection. This proposed line is to terminate at a point less than two miles from a district which, except for the establishment of the oil refinery, would never have had a railway connection. So I want to know why this proposed line is to finish at Kwinana when it could also serve Rockingham. The only objection to the appointment of a Select Committee is the delay that will result. As the Minister has told us that everything is progressing smoothly, I am of the opinion that the Select Committee

would complete its inquiry within a fortnight or three weeks at the most. Such a delay would not create much harm, but it might result in the saving of a great deal of expenditure and be advisable from every point of view. The appointment of a Select Committee to investigate all the features relating to this proposed line is well worthy of consideration by this Chamber.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Suburban) [7.55]: I do not think anyone knows better than Mr. Fraser that a Select Committee to inquire into the subject matter of the Bill cannot go beyond the provisions of the measure. He talks about inquiries being made into water supply, roadway, sewerage, power lines and relative matters. If a Select Committee is appointed, its inquiries will be confined to the subject matter of the Bill and nothing else. I think Mr. Fraser is drawing a red herring across the trail when he makes the suggestion of lack of co-ordination between the various departments concerned. I cannot see any value in appointing a Select Committee of five people who have no technical knowledge of the question.

Hon. E. M. Davies: That could be obtained from the officers of the departments.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I would like to know from whom evidence would be called. Perhaps Mr. Fraser might be able to give us that information when he replies to the debate. After the Select Committee reports to the House, what is the next move? I point out that the decision to select the route for the proposed line has not been made lightly. People do not merely draw a line on a map and say, "This is where the line will go, and this is the route it will follow." The route is decided upon by technical men after a good deal of investigation, a great deal of inquiry and eventually the decision is made for technical reasons as well as on the basis of transporting material to and from a given point.

Personally, I cannot claim to have any more knowledge of engineering activities and requirements than any other member of this House, but for a good many years I have rubbed shoulders with engineers. During the six years of my eldest son's studentship at the university—he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Civil Engineering—I made many contacts with civil engineers. I made acquaintance with the Chief Engineer in the Railway Department and also the Dean of the Faculty of Civil Engineering at the University of Western Australia. I was in constant touch with such men over a period of six years. My second son, when he studied for the Diploma of Civil Engineering, brought me in contact again with civil engineers and as a result of the experience gained with them and from the knowledge I obtained

in business, I have developed a great respect for them. I am quite sure that the civil engineers who investigated this line dealt with calculable facts and made their decision as a result of a full investigation into all the requirements necessary for the railway and therefore they would select what would be the best route to follow.

Under our Standing Orders, I know it is not possible for me to refer to a debate in another place, but I would point out that there was practically no discussion on this measure in another place. What happened was that the Deputy Premier introduced the Bill within a matter of ten minutes and it was supported in a three-minute speech by the member for Fremantle. There has been an upsurge of opposition to the Bill here, but for what reason I do not know. The member who is regarded as the Leader of the Opposition in this House and who has asked for a Select Committee represents the West Province. However, apart from the Minister who introduced the Bill in another place, the only member to speak there on the legislation was the member for Fremantle and he supported it, and there was no debate in the Committee stage.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Are they always right in another place?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I do not say they are, and I do not say that we are always right, either.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: You surely do not question Mr. Fraser's motives?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I do not impute any motives to him, but if it were the intention of Mr. Fraser to embarrass the Government and to delay the construction of the line, the course he is adopting would be the way to do it. I will go to this extent and say that should a Select Committee be appointed, it is likely to have the effect of causing the Government to breach its agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Why?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Because, under the agreement, the Government has to construct the line and hand it over by the 1st October, 1953. Already one month has expired of the 12 which it anticipated will be needed for the construction of the line.

Hon. G. Fraser: You do not surely think the agreement would be breached merely for the sake of a couple of weeks?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: The agreement is that the line shall be handed over by the 1st October, 1953. The work of the Select Committee would mean a delay of another month, reducing the available period within which to construct the line to a matter of 10 months—a physical impossibility for the Government.

Hon. G. Fraser: Who lost the first month?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Who will cause the loss of the second month? That is the important point.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: And we have to make up the first month.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: If I thought the appointment of a Select Committee would do any good, I would vote for its appointment. To my way of thinking, the only effect a Select Committee would have would be to delay the construction of the line to the embarrassment of the company and to cause the Government to breach its agreement with that organisation.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [8.21]: I support the motion moved by Mr. Fraser if only for the reason that some little difficulty has arisen in the House regarding the proposition, and, further, Mr. Fraser has said that no co-operation has been shown between the different departments concerned. I do not know anything about the line apart from what I have seen on the map. As there has been some dissension, I do not think the appointment of a Select Committee will do any harm. It might even decide that the route proposed is the most suitable. There must be something in the wind if the subject is brought up for consideration in this House.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Do you know what is in the wind?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: No.

The Minister for Agriculture: But you are prepared to help whatever is in the wind.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: As there has been some dissension, the point at issue should be investigated and the Select Committee could complete its inquiries and furnish a report within a fortnight. Mr. Dimmitt said that engineers do not make mistakes.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I did not say that at all. Mr. President, I ask that that statement be withdrawn, because I did not use any such words.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member will withdraw the statement.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I understood that was what Mr. Dimmitt said.

The PRESIDENT: Does the hon. member withdraw his remark?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Yes, if my statement was not correct, but that is what I took Mr. Dimmitt to say. I have seen many mistakes made by engineers.

The Minister for Agriculture: And I have seen many made by laymen.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I was employed on the construction of the Trans line, and from time to time three different engineers took over control. I have seen a siding shifted on three different occasions, due to mistakes by different engineers. I have seen culverts removed because an engineer



had calculated wrongly. Members who have travelled over the railways in this State will have noticed where lines have been shifted to shorten the distance or to reduce the grades. I do not know whether much earthworks will have to be dealt with in connection with the line to Kwinana. If it is to take 10 or 12 months to build this short length of line, there must be a lot of that type of work to be done. The Trans line was constructed at the rate of a mile a day.

The Minister for Agriculture: In that instance it was merely a case of throwing down the sleepers and putting the rails on top.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: But telegraph lines had to be erected and all sorts of heavy materials carted to the job. Some of the materials had to be hauled over a distance of 500 miles.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But what is your reason for supporting the appointment of a Select Committee?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I support that proposition because the people in the district might have some suggestions to make that would be beneficial to that locality. If the Select Committee takes evidence, it will give the people there an assurance that steps have been taken to ensure that the decision arrived at regarding the line is right.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [8.6]: I had not intended taking part in the debate until I heard Mr. Dimmitt speak in opposition to the motion. At the outset I want to make my position very clear. I do not want to do anything that will imperil this marvellous undertaking that will mean so much in the future development of the State. To my mind, Mr. Fraser has adopted the attitude of a very conscientious member. We all know him to be that, and he has lived for many years in the district where this line is to be constructed.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: So has Mr. Sleeman.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Fraser has made a special study of the situation.

Hon. G. Fraser: And the line is not even in Mr. Sleeman's district!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The Government has apparently 12 months within which to fulfil its contract with the company, and I can understand its anxiety not to lose any time at all respecting the construction of the line under discussion. If I thought the Select Committee's inquiries would run into some weeks, I would vote against the motion. I have in mind the railway systems throughout Australia, and I think it a great pity that someone did not hesitate for 12 weeks or for 12 months or more, get the engineers together and work out some system that would have been

better than those that operate today. Every human being makes mistakes, however qualified he may be.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Do you think Mr. Fraser is making one now?

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: We are told that solicitors make mistakes and that doctors bury theirs. Engineers are like other people, and certainly make mistakes. They have certainly made some in Australia. In most proposals, however, I am convinced that they are right nine times out of ten. The motives that have actuated Mr. Fraser in the action he has taken—here is where I object to the tenor of Mr. Dimmitt's speech—are good ones, for he thinks that all the available data should be placed before the Select Committee so that it could report on the matter.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: I did not suggest any improper motives. You are suggesting that.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You spoke about embarrassing the Government and the company!

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am afraid my idea of Mr. Dimmitt's remarks must have been warped, because I thought that is what he implied. To my mind, Mr. Fraser is on solid ground in his belief that the necessary evidence could be placed before the Select Committee inside a week or a fortnight and it could then report to this House on the soundness or otherwise of the proposition. I do not think the little time taken up in that respect would do any harm but might result in some good. For that reason, and without any thought of embarrassing the Government, I support the motion.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [8.11]: At the moment I am undecided how I shall vote on this question. Until I have heard the views of the Minister, I shall remain undecided. In bringing forward the proposal to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, I think Mr. Fraser is quite sincere in his attitude and in what he has said there is some merit. When one looks at the route proposed, one cannot help arriving at the conclusion that it represents the nearest line between two given points, entailing the least amount of money in construction costs and, in view of the level terrain it is to follow, the most economical route. Over this line a tremendous volume of heavy goods will have to be hauled to and from Fremantle.

While I believe we must adopt the shortest possible route between Fremantle and Kwinana because of the millions of tons of goods that will pass over the line, I would like the Minister to tell us that every precaution has been taken in determining the matter. I am not at all satisfied so far from what we have heard in that respect. I do not know whether the Main Roads Department and the Railway Department have co-operated, but I would

like the Minister to say that that phase will be attended to and that steps will be taken to see that the railway will not cross roads at more points than are necessary, if at all. I believe that the line from Jandakot to Kwinana would mean an extra length of two or three miles.

The Minister for Agriculture: More like six miles.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is only guesswork.

The Minister for Agriculture: I have the map with the distances marked on it.

H. A. R. JONES: Whatever the extra distance may be, if it is a matter of a hundred yards or more, the proposition is out, because we want the shortest route possible. I want the Minister to give us an assurance that whatever planning is necessary to achieve co-ordination and so on will be attended to immediately. I want an assurance that the necessary steps will be taken so that land resumption will not prove a costly affair. I want to know that a minimum of disturbance will take place with regard to those who have properties in the district concerned. It must be appreciated that many considerations are involved in this proposition. Until the Minister replies, I will not decide whether to support or oppose the motion. I feel that everything must be taken into consideration. It cannot be too many years before the railways in the suburban area will be electrified. Whether the Minister has anything to tell us with regard to extension to Rockingham with the electrification of the system, I do not know. I will reserve my decision on this matter until I hear what he has to say.

#### THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [8.16]:

I oppose the motion for a Select Committee. It is utterly unnecessary. Mr. Fraser said that not much information was forthcoming until it was intimated that there might be a move for a Select Committee. Actually, on the reception that the Bill received in another place and the apparent satisfaction of all people concerned with it, I thought it only reasonable to suppose it would receive a similar reception here. It is quite true that Mr. Sleeman is not the member for the particular district that will be traversed, though he is a member for one end of the terminal points of the line between Fremantle and Kwinana.

Hon. G. Fraser: About 300 yards of it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Lawrence, who would be the member for that area, was either perfectly satisfied or did not think it worth while to say anything.

Hon. G. Fraser: He was in Hollywood Hospital.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: If he had been interested, is it not reasonable to suppose that he would have got

his friend, Mr. Sleeman, to put his case before the House? He would most certainly have done so. Actually, what Mr. Sleeman said occupied one quarter of a page of "Hansard" and he was perfectly satisfied that the line was to be put down in the best place.

Hon. G. Fraser: I am not my brother's keeper.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: When I realised that members were seeking information, I went to the trouble of making all the information available that it was possible to obtain. I had aerial maps supplied and I made inquiries as to what had been done to ascertain the possibilities of the route. I questioned those concerned as to whether they had taken into account possible alternatives. I have brought another map showing further details which I think will satisfy anybody who is prepared to accept the word of highly qualified experts and men who have been in our Civil Service for 20 or 30 years, that they have given these matters consideration and that their recommendations are worthy of acceptance.

The Government has made an agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy., which is prepared to spend £40,000,000 on something which will be of immense benefit to this State and the whole of Australia. By reason of its coming here and the work that is being done to open up Cockburn Sound, still further possibilities are envisaged, and another company, which is prepared to spend at least £3,000,000 in that area, proposes to come here. There is also the possibility of other undertakings being established in the locality, besides the cement works, which will involve the expenditure of a considerable amount of money to assure supplies of a very much needed commodity to the State, and be the means of employing still further men. If we indicated, as we would do by accepting this motion for a Select Committee, that we were doubtful whether the agreement with the company should be honoured, or created a doubt in the mind of the company, I think its officials would be dubious whether this Government could claim that it had the support of the members of its parties in making an agreement in all good faith.

The line as proposed is definitely the shortest and cheapest available. If the Select Committee were to propose some alternative, it would mean a circuitous route for the railway between the two points, adding about five or six miles through fairly hilly country at a much greater cost and occupying a much longer time to construct. I am told the engineers considered alternatives when deciding on the best and shortest route. Actually, as the map clearly shows, there would only be three miles of line which would possibly be ruled out if we

followed the line that has been suggested in debate, by running along the Armadale route to a point where we anticipate the chord line, coming through, will join the proposed line leading to Kwinana.

A portion of the line is already built to a spot a little below Woodman's Point. The proposed junction with the chord line connection would be at a point three miles further down, therefore all that would happen, if some alternative were accepted, would be that we would avoid building that three miles of line. But we anticipate that there will not only be a tremendous volume of traffic over that line in the construction period so far as the oil company and B.H.P. are concerned, but when the cement works are developed just above Woodman's Point, it is relied upon to supply a considerable amount of cement to those two concerns. Obviously if that is to go by rail, the shortest way would be on the proposed line proceeding straight to that area. Proceeding by road, it would go to the junction of the Armadale and the Woodman's Point line across to Bibra Lake and follow a circuitous route through to the point of junction with the proposed line.

I went to that area last Sunday on a special trip and I found that it is very hilly. If members will look at the map, they will see the lines indicating hills. It would be very expensive to construct a line there. Actually, it is certain that that line will be constructed within the next five years. Earlier construction is not really necessary, because there is no point in building that line through until harbour facilities are developed. We cannot even start preparing our terminal points at Kwinana until the harbour is well developed. Loan moneys are not too plentiful and the line we suggest can be cheaply and quickly constructed. The other line would cost probably double.

The Minister for Agriculture: More than double.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Probably. I told members that £50,000 was the proposed construction cost. I find on referring to my notes that it is £100,000. In any case, it is an obligation we have accepted. It is part of the contract with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Suppose the other line cost £200,000 and would only avoid the construction of three miles of line. Its construction might rob us of money badly needed in the next year or two for essential development work in the country. Country members will realise, in view of the shortage of money, exactly what that means. I think that all members will realise, too, that in view of the heavy volume of traffic that must pass between those two points, to take it almost double the distance would greatly add to the cost.

Apart from the huge volume of material that will be required at Kwinana when that line is put through, it is anticipated that the output from the B.H.P. works—and perhaps to a smaller extent from the Anglo-Iranian plant—will flow naturally to Fremantle, because Fremantle and Perth—which would be the point beyond that—would obviously be big consuming centres for the products of the B.H.P. plant. It is hardly reasonable to expect the company to take that product by rail to the chord line, to Welshpool and onwards, a greater distance and by a more circuitous route, when it can be taken to Fremantle by a short route and then to Perth by the existing line. So, from all points of view, I suggest to members that a Select Committee could tell us nothing we do not already know. When it is said that the committee could inquire where the roads or water mains or electric power lines might go, I would point out that that does not come within the ambit of the Bill. I think we can trust the co-ordinating people to have those points well in mind. They took all these factors into account when they decided on the proposed route.

There has been some criticism about an implied lack of co-ordination. That is not true. When it was decided to appoint Mr. Dumas as co-ordinator and to couple with him Mr. Brisbane, the two to be a co-ordinating committee, there was a definite purpose in view. It was, in view of the need for immediate decisions, determined to focus the planning, decisions and recommendations into the smallest possible compass. At the same time, Mr. Dumas, through myself, had free access to the Railway Department and to the Fremantle Harbour Trust, so that all the co-ordination leads were there. Decisions had to be reached promptly and recommendations were made to Cabinet and accepted by it. These might have been delayed a considerable time had it been necessary first to get the consent of the three Railways Commissioners and perhaps of the Commissioners of the Fremantle Harbour Trust to consider and agree to recommendations that were very urgent, and which—on the date placed before us, which I was able to get quickly from both departments—were made promptly.

It is not true to say there was lack of co-ordination. It is true that Mr. Dumas has just returned from a six months' visit to England—where, by the way, he carried out a great amount of very valuable work—and when he was asked questions yesterday, having been away for a considerable time, he was not able at very short notice to give clear and considered replies to them such as he would have given had he had a little more time to know exactly what was wanted. Incidentally, Mr. Dumas is a very cautious man and is rather

unwilling to say that such-and-such a thing is going to happen, unless it has already been thoroughly investigated and decided on. The most he would say is, "It will probably follow such-and-such a course." That is exactly what he did say. With the information that has been placed before them and which I have tried to make available as fully as possible, I hope members will realise the need for this line being placed just where it is on the score of urgency, on the score of economy, and because it is the logical point of connection between two very important terminals.

#### THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. Sir Charles Latham—Central) [8.29]: I hope the House will not agree to this proposal. I am concerned entirely from the financial side. I have had a look at the plan and I know the country very well. The line proposed will be at least one-and-a-half times cheaper to build than the alternative one and will be as effective. The reason I object to the motion is that continually I am approaching the Treasurer for money for water supplies for country districts, and I would hate to think that I was going to be the means of an extra £40,000 being spent—and the alternative proposal will involve at least £140,000—on this line when I know that the people in Lake Grace, for instance, are waiting for us to supply them with water, which is an absolute necessity. Mr. Bennetts knows their disabilities, as well as I do. I know that if it were a matter of helping people at Norseman, Mr. Bennetts would do all he could. The question of water supplies is the one that is worrying me and the main problem is money. Very shortly the Commonwealth Government will be floating a loan for £20,000,000. Just think, a sum of £20,000,000 when they have been asking for £100,000,000! What will we get out of that? Only a very small sum.

For my part I am most disturbed about the position because I thought that when this proposal was finished we would have some money to spend in our country districts. All the people there are waiting for something to be done for them in the way of water supplies and the provision of other amenities. After all, I am expected to do all I can to help our farmers increase production so that we can meet the obligations we have to our own people and our oversea customers. Could the members of a Select Committee find out anything that the experts have not been able to ascertain? Have we no faith in our engineers? They have served us well; they are qualified men and they have no motives other than to serve the State. In the old days there was a certain amount of jerry-mandering in order to help certain people, but, as Mr. Fraser knows, there is nothing like that in this case. I should say that this line will go mostly through Common-

wealth territory and of the line that is already constructed, one mile of it is owned by the Commonwealth Government. That section will be used.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Will the Government have to pay for it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. Does it ever pay for anything from the Commonwealth Government? We are hoping to buy a piece of land in the South-West, upon reasonable terms, from the Commonwealth Government, but I will not say anything more on that aspect at the moment. After all, we have an obligation to the people in the country and I am prepared to do all I can to prevent any unnecessary expenditure. It would be a wicked waste if this line were not constructed in accordance with the plan submitted.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [8.34]: I am rather surprised at the trend of the debate. I understood that this proposal was introduced for the purpose of ascertaining whether the routes for the proposed railway and highway were in the most suitable areas. It is most unfair to suggest that this motion for a Select Committee has been put forward to embarrass the Government or the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. It has even been suggested that the motion has been moved in a way that will prevent the people of this State from getting the benefit of the establishment of these industries at Kwinana. That is quite wrong. We who are domiciled in that section of the State, and who represent that area in this House, believe that we are putting forward something that will be the means of ascertaining whether the proper foundation has been laid for the establishment of these great undertakings. Consequently I do not like these insinuations and innuendoes.

As a matter of fact, the Minister for Agriculture mentioned the financial aspect. I have yet to learn that the question of finance has previously entered the debate on this motion. All we are asking is that a Select Committee be set up to make inquiries into the proposition and then report to Parliament. Members who represent the Fremantle districts, both in another place and in this House, have supported the Bill, and also the measure which will permit the erection of the oil refinery at Kwinana. But as a result of past experience, when railways and roads were laid down without due consideration, we felt that a committee should be set up to ensure that the money was being spent in the right direction. I could not say what type of report the committee will bring down but it should be given an opportunity to hear evidence from those who are associated with these industries. Those people should have a chance to express opinions as to what

they think would be the best route for a railway or a main highway. That is the idea of the Select Committee.

I would be glad to hear an expression of opinion from these people and, as a resident of Fremantle, I am concerned as to what type of highways will be constructed and the area in which it is proposed to construct them. In my opinion Fremantle should be the focal point of all these undertakings and we must realise that a large town will be established in the Kwinana area. Many people will be resident in that locality. They will want an outlet and to my mind Fremantle is the ideal choice. I have no axe to grind but I want an opportunity to investigate this proposition. I do not claim to have any engineering experience or ability, and I think it is a matter for regret that the qualifications of engineers should have been brought into the debate. We all know that engineers are trained and competent persons who plan a road or railway to be constructed in an area already decided for them. I understand that this is the cheapest method of constructing the line at the moment, but whether that will be the position in the long run is another question.

If a line is taken from the Armadale section, it will not mean that any great length of railway will have to be used. I also appreciated the point made by the Minister for Agriculture in regard to finance. We all know that the lack of loan money has been responsible for the curtailment of many public works and it is only natural that we should want to conserve as much of our finance as possible. But my object in wanting a Select Committee to be appointed is so that a close examination can be made of the proposition and so that everybody, particularly those people in the areas concerned, will be able to have an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. That, to my mind, would be in the best interests of the State.

**HON. C. H. HENNING** (South-West) [8.40]: I would not normally have spoken on this motion, but I think I know the country as well as most members in this House because I walked and rode over a good deal of it for several months at the end of 1939 and the beginning of 1940. I have been extremely interested in the debate, particularly since Mr. Fraser mentioned that he intended to move for the appointment of a Select Committee to deal with the question. I appreciate all that he said and also his remarks on the need for planning. He should know all about that because he was a member of the Honorary Royal Commission which was held only this year to inquire into the Town Planning and Development Bill. I do not think the Government fully realises the necessity for overall planning and that

was brought home forcibly to me during the remarks of the Minister for Agriculture when he spoke to the Address-in-reply.

After hearing the Minister for Railways and Mr. Fraser, my decision goes to the Minister on points. Therefore, I do not intend to support the motion. In the first place, time is the essence of the contract. This railway will go along the seafront and that area will be developed for quite a distance on the Fremantle side of Kwinana—that is, leaving out for a moment the land to be set aside for B.H.P. To my mind if the railway is taken along the seafront that is the shortest possible route. I was also impressed by the Minister's remarks about the chord line which, in five years' time, will probably link up with Kwinana. However, meanwhile a terrific amount of heavy material will have to be moved to the Kwinana area and the shortest possible route is the one proposed in the Bill.

The need for saving mentioned by the Minister for Agriculture, is apparent, particularly in these times, in order to divert as much money as possible to agricultural needs—at least that is what I hope he meant. This will have to be so because we will have to support a lot more people in the future. The land around Jandakot and along Russell-rd. that runs through to Byford and down as far as Wellard is not all of the best quality, but a good deal of it is suitable for dairying while other portions are suitable for growing, produce such as vegetables and so on. If the railway were constructed through that area, I do not think it would be of any use to the farmers in that district. The type of produce that they are growing needs to be brought to the markets as quickly as possible because it must arrive in a fresh condition. That could not be done by the railways.

**Hon. H. S. W. Parker:** The Select Committee cannot consider that.

**Hon. C. H. HENNING:** That type of produce must be taken almost straight from the farms to the markets. However, time being the essence of the contract, I do not think that a Select Committee will serve any useful purpose. It would take a planner a considerable time to go into the question and I do not think any ordinary town or regional planner could, within days or weeks, be in a position to report upon a proposition such as this. Consequently, I do not think that a Select Committee could possibly submit a recommendation that would be of any use to the Government. If members wanted to do that then I think they should have started on it months and months ago—as soon as the Kwinana Bill went through. Considering the necessity for the railway to get the heavy material out and to get Kwinana started, I am going to oppose the motion.

**HON. SIR FRANK GIBSON** (Suburban) [8.46]: In bringing this matter before the House, Mr. Fraser, I know, has been actuated by the highest motives possible in the interests of the province he has so ably represented for many years. My view is that we should have a line constructed in the shortest possible time and with the most direct route. I remember the jubilation there was when we realised that a contract had been signed between the State Government and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. Many of us drew remarkable pictures of what was going to happen in that area in years to come. I do not know whether our views were exaggerated at that time; that will be proved only in the next two decades. All the circumstances must be mentioned in this case. Even though they do not concern us immediately, they may do so the next year or the year following.

I can visualise the time in the not far distant future when that line will be duplicated because hundreds of tons of construction material will have to be taken from Fremantle and as the activities develop there will be hundreds of tons brought away. For many years we have been concerned about the south-of-the-river railway coming from Fremantle for the purpose of joining up with the lines running from Armadale, Collie, Bunbury and probably the Great Southern. I am quite sure the line must be built; in fact I think both lines are necessary. However, I feel that immediate attention should be given to the route suggested in the measure before the House. For that reason, I hope that Mr. Fraser will withdraw his motion with a view to having the matters referred to dealt with by a further committee at some future time.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Suburban) [8.48]: I do not propose to speak for long, but a lot of extraneous matters have been brought into this debate. The motion is that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The Bill concerns a railway from Coogee to Kwinana and that is all the proposed Select Committee could inquire into. The debate has taken a turn suggesting that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the construction of a railway from Fremantle to Kwinana. It is nothing of the sort. The Select Committee will only have the right to inquire into the Coogee-Kwinana railway. Mr. Fraser suggested that the committee might inquire whether the railway should continue to Rickingham, but it would have no right to do that because the Bill has nothing to do with Rockingham.

Who does the Committee propose to call as witnesses? I do not suppose that any member on the suggested Select Committee would regard himself as an expert. Obviously the only people who could be called to give evidence would be the officers

of the Government, the various engineers and so on. Perhaps the committee would call people who may be interested in the oil company or B.H.P. As the suggestions they would make have already been considered by the Government, Mr. Fraser's proposal, if agreed to, would result only in delaying the whole matter. One does not have to be an engineer to realise that the railway will go along the shortest route and will cause the least disturbance. I do not think any land has to be resumed.

**The Minister for Railways:** There is a minimum of disturbance proposed; a little at Naval Base, that is all.

**Hon. H. S. W. PARKER:** Generally speaking, there is no disturbance to the population. We do not need engineers or anyone else to give evidence on that. I would support a Select Committee for a general inquiry if that were necessary, but I cannot see that a Select Committee could help us on this Bill; it is so short and simple. I feel sure that Mr. Fraser has not quite appreciated the powers he will be given as chairman of the Select Committee. It might be possible for him to recommend some amendment; but what amendment could he recommend? The only suggestion that could be made is that the Bill be rejected, and I do not think the House will agree to that because it feels that the railway should be built. If the Select Committee could do so—which, of course, it could not—it might suggest that the railway branch off from the Armadale line. But then it would fall foul of the coal coming from Collie, which does not go to Fremantle at all. A lot of misleading statements have been made and I thought I would just clear the matter up as to what the Select Committee would be empowered to do; it could only deal with the Coogee-Kwinana railway proposition.

**HON. G. FRASER** (West—in reply) [8.52]: There is not a great deal to which I have to reply. One of the objections raised was that by Mr. Dimmitt when he said that I should pass this Bill because the member for Fremantle did not oppose it. Let me tell the hon. member that the member for Fremantle only has about 300 yards of this railway in his electorate.

**Hon. H. S. W. Parker:** He is not mentioned in the Bill.

**Hon. G. FRASER:** That did not matter to the Chairman of Committees when he mentioned it, and it does not matter to me, either. So, what the member for Fremantle might have said about it has no bearing on the matter at all; the line is not in that member's electorate. The member for South Fremantle was away in hospital when the Bill was brought before another place. I have therefore no apologies to make to anyone; neither to Mr. Sleeman nor to anyone else. Nor do I have to apologise to my own colleagues who repre-

sent the West Province. They are entitled to their ideas, and I am entitled to mine. What any one member might have said is of no concern of mine; I have a duty to perform not only to the people in my province, but to the public generally.

I have been disturbed right through the Kwinana affair and any move I am making is not with the intention of embarrassing the Government. When I intend to embarrass the Government I will not leave it in any doubt; I will let it know my intentions in no uncertain terms. The reason for my attitude is that I am not satisfied with the information placed before us in connection with the proposition. It is the first occasion on which we have had an opportunity of expressing our views about it. The Minister showed us on the map where the south-of-the-river line will eventually come. He also indicated where the present Coogee line ends and said it would amount only to a matter of three miles to connect up from the present Coogee line to where the south-of-the-river line will enter Kwinana. But the Minister did not tell us what Mr. Dumas did, that a lot of the present Fremantle line will have to be relaid.

The Minister for Railways: Half the embankments and cuttings are there.

Hon. G. FRASER: We were told that a distance of only three miles was in question, but a lot of the present line will have to be relaid too.

The Minister for Railways: You mean with 60 lb. rails instead of 45 lb. rails?

Hon. G. FRASER: Something like that. If the Minister knows the line, he will know that it has been out of use for many years.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: You said it had nothing to do with the member for Fremantle!

Hon. G. FRASER: The electorate of the member for Fremantle ends near High-st.: I am speaking of the Coogee-Fremantle line which goes out approximately five miles onwards—right out from South Fremantle. Much of that line would have to be relaid. Mr. Parker said that a Select Committee could not inquire into anything but the Coogee-Kwinana railway.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That is all.

Hon. G. FRASER: If that be so, then I would suggest we throw the Bill out at the third reading. If we are going to be confined in our inquiries to the letter of the Bill, it should be thrown out. Does the hon. member think the committee could not make inquiries into roads and other things to see how they are located with reference to this railway? Of course it could. It is in conformity with the construction of the line, and it could be done.

The Minister for Railways: So is dredging the harbour. Would you include that?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, I would not go as far as that. The main factors concerning the Coogee-Kwinana line could be investigated by this committee, so the point raised by Mr. Parker has little weight. I am surprised at the attitude of the Minister for Agriculture in this matter. He said "The Assembly has passed the Bill," as much as to say because the Assembly has passed it, we should pass it here.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Does that apply to the Constitution Acts Amendment Bill?

Hon. G. FRASER: I cannot help noticing the change in the rogue elephant, as he was when sitting in front of me! To mix my metaphors a bit, I think Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew" would be very applicable to him. Mr. Dimmitt also said that the line was going to be held up, and that we would only have ten months left for its construction. Evidently the Government has already held the matter up for a month. One might ask; What for? We have had no explanation of that. Because members of this Chamber are desirous of obtaining information so that they will be in a better position to judge how to deal with the Bill, the question of delay is raised. A month was not of much importance to the Government before the Bill reached this House; a month had already elapsed, but because we wish to make some investigation, we are told that we are holding up the measure and that this will prevent the Government from standing up to its agreement. What a ridiculous attitude for members to adopt!

One would think that the line was being designed only for the convenience of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. and other industries that might be established there. Should we not bear in mind that there will be a township with a population of about 20,000 in that area? Are not the interests of the future residents, as well as those of the industries, to be served. We are told that the line should be built upon the proposed route in order that the whole of the material may be shot down to Kwinana from Fremantle, but the material for the building of the thousand homes will come from the timber mills of the South-West.

There are other interests to be considered besides those of the industries. Much material will be sent from Fremantle, as well as from other parts of the State, and one of the main points I had in mind when moving to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was that inquiries should be made as to whether it would be more economical from a State point of view to run the line from the present Fremantle-Armadale railway or from Coogee south.

The Minister for Railways: The homes would not represent a fraction of the whole volume of tonnage required.

Hon. G. FRASER: It would represent a considerable tonnage.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The material for a brick house runs into 17 tons.

Hon. G. FRASER: I want a Select Committee, which I believe could make its inquiry in three weeks at the outside, to investigate the question and place information before the House, in order that members may be able to satisfy themselves that the action proposed to be taken is sound. Is there anything wrong with that? If there is, I cannot see it. How many members would have known anything about the roads or the railway but for the little opposition I have raised.

The Minister for Agriculture: Then you have served your purpose.

Hon. G. FRASER: To that extent.

The Minister for Railways: Do not you trust the Co-Ordinator of Works and his expert advisers?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes; I consider that they are very good men and that they would make very good witnesses before a Select Committee and would be able to give us valuable information.

The Minister for Agriculture: Telling us what we already know.

Hon. G. FRASER: We do not know it.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, we do.

Hon. G. FRASER: Well, I do not.

The Minister for Agriculture: You surely do not suggest that the Government has come to this decision without taking the advice of its expert officers.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know. The Government does not always follow the advice of its experts. I know of many instances where it has not done so.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Things have changed since then.

Hon. G. FRASER: I did not say which Government, but I suppose it applies to all Governments. The people to be satisfied about this proposal are the members of this House. I want to know, when the Bill is put to the vote, that I am voting for the construction of a line on a route that will be best from all points of view for the State generally, and not merely the cheapest line. If members do not want the information, I cannot help it. I shall have done my job and my conscience will be clear. If a majority of members agree with me, I believe that in three weeks' time they will feel much happier about the measure than they do tonight.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	14

Majority against .... 2

# Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. A. L. Lotoi
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. L. A. Logan

(Teller.)

# Noes.

Hon. L. Craig	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. C. H. Henning	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. C. W. D. Barker

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

## ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**  
(Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.11 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 29th October, 1952.

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