

might have to pay State taxation in that State as well as here. The Minister has been emphatic about preserving uniformity, and perhaps will agree to have the words deleted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Any profit made in Western Australia should bear taxation here.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: That would be dual taxation on the same amount.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is an understanding between the States that taxation will be collected in one State only. I shall inquire why the words mentioned have been introduced into the clause.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: If arrangements could be made that taxation on profits made in Western Australia would be treated as a deduction, say, in Victoria, well and good.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The clause could not have the effect of creating dual taxation, but to satisfy the hon. member, I move—

That the further consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion (postponement) put and passed.

Clause 141—Where insured person is a resident:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I suggest that as we have made good headway and the hour is late, the Minister might agree to report progress at this stage.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I understand that a large number of the remaining clauses will be accepted without discussion, and I am anxious to make the greatest possible progress to-night. Clauses to which amendments are proposed will be postponed and considered at a subsequent sitting.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 142 to 166—agreed to.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, consideration of Clauses 167 to 174 postponed.

Clauses 175 to 213—agreed to.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, consideration of Clauses 214 and 215 postponed.

Clauses 216 to 228—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 21th November, 1937.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAY DIESEL CARS.

Additional Coaches.

Mr. WILSON asked the Premier: Will the Government give the House an assurance that no more coaches of the Diesel type will be made or imported for use on the Government railways?

The PREMIER replied: No.

Position of Employees, Running Costs, etc.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Regarding the routes allotted to the six new Diesel electric coaches, announced by the Commissioner of Railways—Perth to Merredin, via Kellerberrin; Perth to Merredin, via Dowerin and Wyalkatchem; Perth to Merredin, via York, Quairading and Bruce Rock; Perth to Katanning; Bunbury to Pemberton and Northcliffe, and Bunbury to Busselton; Geraldton to Mullewa, and Geraldton to Yuna—are these the total services to be provided? 2, What is the estimated number of railway employees who will be displaced by this innovation? 3, What will be the approximate cost of the foreign oil used for each journey? 4, What would be the approximate cost of native coal for each journey? 5, Is it the intention of the department to carry goods on these journeys? 6, If not, why not? 7, Is it the in-

tention of the department to use in future Diesel traction for the carriage of wheat, timber, coal, etc.? 8, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, For the present—yes. 2, Nil. 3, One penny per mile. 4, 2½d. per mile. 5, No. 6, The vehicles are intended for coaching services only. 7, No. 8, The present steam traction suits requirements.

QUESTION—POLICE.

Traffic Branch Revenue, etc.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister for Police: 1, What was the total amount of revenue received from all sources by the Traffic Branch of the Police Department for the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1937? 2, What was the total cost of operating the branch for the same period?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (representing the Minister for Police) replied: 1, Revenue, being commission on collections, £19,133; motor drivers' licenses throughout State, £19,329. 2, Expenditure, including salaries, telephones, postages, operation and maintenance of motor vehicles and insurance, £12,150. Cost not allowed for printing and stationery. In regard to costs of collection no account can be given of the percentage of cost for the time of members of the force throughout the State in attending to the ramifications of the collection and issue of licenses.

QUESTION—SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Water Supplies: 1, Is the main sewage treatment plant functioning satisfactorily? 2, Will he investigate any complaints from residents of Graylands, Claremont, as to offensive odours emanating from the plant?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, Yes. 2, The department will investigate any complaints submitted.

INVESTMENT COMPANY SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report Presented.

Mr. Tonkin brought up the report of the select committee.

Report received and read.

On motion by Mr. Tonkin, ordered: That the report and evidence be printed and con-

sideration made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House.

RURAL RELIEF FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Mr. McDonald, the time for bringing up the report was extended to the 1st December.

BILL—LOAN, £1,227,000.

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

MOTION—MINES DEPARTMENT, UNDER SECRETARY.

To Inquire as to Directorships.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.44]: I move—

That, in the opinion of this House, and in view of the statement made in the "West Australian" of the 21st September and the "West Australian Mining and Commercial Review" (October issue) that Mr. M. J. Calanchini, who recently went on leave prior to his retirement from his office as Under Secretary for Mines, had accepted a seat on the local board of several of the companies controlled by the de Bernales group of mines, thus contravening Section 8 of the Mining Act, 1904, the Government should instruct the Criminal Investigation Branch to institute inquiries as to the truth of these statements and, if found correct, to institute legal proceedings against the said Mr. M. J. Calanchini under the provisions of the section mentioned.

I sincerely hope hon. members will not misinterpret either my intentions or my utterances. Probably I would have been able to avoid moving the motion if the answers to questions which I asked some time ago had indicated that everything possible had been done, and done by an impartial tribunal, to ascertain the actual true position. I know Mr. Calanchini particularly well. No fault whatever was found with his work as a State officer and an administrator. That, however, does not blind me to the fact that it is only human to err, and that Mr. Calanchini can err like any other individual, that he too may be a victim to temptation like any other individual might happen to be. I frankly state that all the ramifications of this matter are at least suspicious. I shall endeavour to show what has led me to entertain suspicions. When I asked my first

question, the Minister replied in such a way as to imply that it did not matter whether Mr. Calanchini had violated the law or not, because, as he had virtually relinquished office, no action was to be taken. That raises a point entirely apart from Mr. Calanchini's alleged acceptance of certain directorships. It reveals another position, which leads me to the more important aspect. On the 14th October I asked the Minister for Mines—

1, Has his attention been drawn to the fact that Mr. Calanchini, Under Secretary for Mines, within three days of going on leave, accepted positions on several boards controlling various mining companies in Western Australia? 2, If so, will he assure the House that official recognition will be taken of the position and action taken under Section 8 of the Mining Act?

The replies of the Minister for Mines to those questions were—

1, Not officially—only by a newspaper paragraph. 2, If the position is as stated, in view of the fact that Mr. Calanchini has virtually given up his office and is on leave prior to retirement, no such assurance can be given.

The Minister was emphatic. Mr. Calanchini, I wish hon. members to understand, is still Under Secretary for Mines in the service of the State of Western Australia. Members should bear that fact well in mind.

Mr. Under Secretary on final leave.

Mr. MARSHALL: On leave. It need not necessarily be final leave. The State can retain the services of officers until they reach the age of 65 years. I want hon. members to understand that Mr. Calanchini is still Under Secretary for Mines. Then they will better appreciate the position. The Minister said he would not give an assurance. Why not? Can it be that a person of influence who breaks the law is to be immune on that account? Is there to be one law for the humble and lowly, and no law for the person of affluence and high standing? The Minister has failed to observe his oath to administer the law impartially and justly. His reply is to the effect that because Mr. Calanchini is virtually on leave prior to retirement—the Minister admits that Mr. Calanchini has not gone—he will not give the House an assurance that action will be taken. It appears to me that if one can muster sufficient influence, or if one has held a high position, the law is not effective against one. On the other hand, if one is in lowly circumstances, there will be no hesitation in bring-

ing one to book and inflicting a penalty proportionate to the offence committed. I want the Minister, when speaking on the motion, to state why he did not take any action and was not at all concerned about the matter. In his reply to my first question he implied that he knew from a newspaper paragraph that Mr. Calanchini had accepted positions on various boards. In that case, why did not the Minister take action immediately? It was his job to do so. Would he allow any other departmental officer to break a law which he, the Minister, has to administer? The Minister never even investigated the matter. Mr. Calanchini never denied the assertion. So far as I know, he has not denied it up to date. I wish to tell the Minister that so far as I am personally concerned, I consider that Mr. Calanchini has rendered loyal service to Western Australia, but I want to remind the Minister that when he eulogises services rendered to the State, it is necessary to know what those services have cost the State in order that we may be able to appreciate correctly the exact value attaching to them. I hear much, Mr. Speaker, and so do you, especially of recent date, about the wonderfully loyal services that individuals have rendered to the State or to the Commonwealth; but we are never told what those services have cost. We have no guide, therefore, as to whether the services were so wonderfully valuable, seeing that we do not know how much they have cost. I would like to know exactly what the loyal services rendered in this instance have cost Western Australia. I do not understand why the Minister takes up such an attitude in this matter. He appears to believe that because an officer of the Mines Department has made a search, that is all that is necessary—an officer of the department of which the man concerned is supreme head. Mr. Calanchini is to-day Under Secretary for Mines, and as Under Secretary for Mines he is supreme head of the Mines Department. Yet the Minister is quite satisfied with an inquiry by a subordinate officer, and considers the result of the inquiry is sufficient if the officer reports, as he has reported, that all is well. I am not so easily convinced as the Minister is. I would like an investigation by an impartial authority, by someone entirely outside the Mines Department. I do not think it fair to require a subordinate officer to make inquiries as to the behaviour of a superior officer. Such an investigation

would not satisfy me. Now I wish to draw an analogy which reveals the Minister's inconsistency. In the present case he proposes to take no action. He will have no inquiry other than the inquiry which has been held, and with which he is satisfied. Irrespective of what members may think, that is the only investigation he intends to have. He does not propose to take any cognisance whatever of the facts. He implies that a person to whom he is favourably disposed should not be subject to any law. Now, what is the Minister's attitude on another matter? Just by way of comparison, let me mention that some years ago a few unfortunate recipients of the dole or sustenance workers struggled into the little town of Reedy. They put up some improvised humpies, and brought their wives and children along and squatted there, while endeavouring to secure work. Under those conditions they existed and laboured for some time. After town blocks had been surveyed at Reedy, those people were required to buy blocks. When the Minister first came into the picture, exorbitant upset prices had been placed on the blocks. This aspect concerns the Minister for Lands as well as the Minister for Mines. I asked those Ministers not to press prosecutions for illegal squatting against those poor unfortunate wretches, who were listed to appear before the court in Cue. The blocks were then to be offered at a reduced price which would enable those people to purchase. What attitude did the Minister for Mines take on that occasion? He minuted on the file, "I do not propose to interfere." Those poor people who were to be brought before the court 72 miles away on a charge of illegal squatting represented an entirely different case. However, when it comes to an Under Secretary for Mines, there is no law for him. The law is only for the poor and humble. It will be made effective in their case. I desire to point out that the first intimation the public received in regard to Mr. Calanchini's appointments was by virtue of publication in the "West Australian" of the 21st September last of the fact that Mr. Calanchini had accepted positions on various boards of directors controlling certain mining groups in Western Australia. It was on that paragraph I based my first question, which was asked on the 14th October, two weeks after the paragraph had appeared. Mr. Calanchini is a man of high intellect and presumably of some sense of responsibility. Yet, although that para-

graph appeared on the 21st September, he had never attempted to reply to it up to the 14th October. After three weeks not a contradiction had appeared. In confirmation of that statement I find that in the "Western Australian Mining and Commercial Review's" October issue, which I assume appeared early in October, the following appears under the heading "Personal":—

Mr. M. J. Calanchini, who recently retired from the position of Under Secretary for Mines, has accepted a seat on the local board of several companies controlled by the de Bernales group of mines.

"Has accepted" are the words used. That was in October.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Is that a Western Australian journal?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, it is printed and issued by London House, Murray-street. Thus we have two different publications containing a statement that has not been denied. If Mr. Calanchini had not accepted any of those positions, he knew by virtue of his position as Under Secretary for Mines, and a mining warden, that there would be expected of him a flat denial of the statements made. He would be aware of the fact that he was infringing Section 8 of the Mining Act if the statement were true, but he never took any action to deny the statement that he had accepted those positions. What are the facts? On the 18th September he vacated office. That was a Saturday. The 19th was a Sunday, and I am assuming that the office of this particular group of mines would be closed. Monday was the 20th, and the publication in the "West Australian" of the statement that Mr. Calanchini had accepted the position appeared on the morning of the 21st, leaving only one day, the Monday, in which to make all the necessary arrangements for him to vacate office as Under Secretary for Mines and join the different boards of directors. A mere 24 hours, and it is all done! It appears most suspicious to me. Why was he singled out? Why was he specially selected, and why were his services so urgently required on those boards? He is not a practical miner. He is versed in mining law. Theoretically he may have a fair knowledge, but as a practical miner I am doubtful whether he would know anything at all. I cannot see that his presence on any board of directors would be of such importance, and that so much urgency attached to it as to rush him out of his office on Saturday afternoon

and appoint him to the boards by Tuesday morning. It appears as though arrangements had already been made. If they were, then Mr. Calanchini certainly has broken and is still breaking Section 8 of the Mining Act, one of the laws of this State. It seems a remarkable thing that one particular person, who is the head of most of these groups of mines upon the boards of which Mr. Calanchini is said to have accepted a position, has been able for years past practically to ignore all the covenants in the Mining Act, and has seemed to be immune, being able practically to do almost anything he desired within or without that law for many years on end, all through his ability to influence the Mines Department. Let me give one case in point. Several years ago there was a great deal of trouble in getting the Wiluna mines working or thrown open for others to work. Considerable negotiations took place. This property was in liquidation, and the particular head to whom I have referred was the company, and was appointed by himself as liquidator. He held extensive areas all over the State. Eventually the people of Wiluna mustered sufficient money, came to Perth, and got permission from a Supreme Court judge to apply for the forfeiture of one of those mines at Wiluna. That procedure was necessary and costly. Permission was obtained from the judge, and they returned to Wiluna and applied for the forfeiture of one of the leases. The warden said he was tired of the area of land this particular individual seemed to be able to hold from anyone else, and would not work himself, and he recommended the forfeiture; but when it got to the Mines Department, the recommendation was upset, and a fine of £50 or £100—I am not sure which, but I think it was £50—was imposed. At that time there was no less a sum than £400 owing in rent for different blocks of land held. So far as I know, none of the covenants of the Mining Act had been complied with. Mostly they were being violated. Yet in spite of the recommendation for forfeiture, and with so much money owing in rent, this man was able to influence the department into imposing a fine and leaving the lease intact. The position became positively rampant. I am sorry that members representing the outer goldfields are not here. They would bear me out, and the Minister for Mines knows all about it, too. This man could do almost anything and get away with

it. Time and again applications for forfeiture and recommendations for forfeiture, were sent to the Minister and overturned. I do not know whether the fine was ever paid. I know that the individual who was entitled to one-half of the fine never got his share. I think he died before payment was made. I want to know how it comes about that Mr. Calanchini is so specially favoured, why his services are required on those boards? The Minister says he holds no interest. If he holds no interest, is this a reward for past services? This man who is chairman of directors of most of these groups has held sway in this country for years. He could do things that no other individual could ever get away with, simply by virtue of being able to influence the administration in the Mines Department. I want to know why Mr. Calanchini is so favoured. Why were his services so urgently required? They could not even wait until he vacated office to place him on the boards of directors. The Minister can have his own opinion, but I want an investigation, and an investigation by an independent tribunal, one capable of making an investigation. Knowing what I know about the chairman of directors and his influence with the Mines Department over many years, I want a thorough investigation into the whole of the ramifications of this matter. It is all very well for the Minister to say that Mr. Calanchini gave this country loyal service. That may be so, but now I want to know what it has cost the State and we will then be better able to judge whether that service was loyal. After all, if Mr. Calanchini has done no wrong, why fear an investigation? If Mr. Calanchini's actions are above board and will stand investigation, why hesitate? Why should the Minister hesitate? Why should anyone hesitate? Is there any doubt in the Minister's mind?

The Minister for Mines: None whatever.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then why not have an investigation? Why hesitate?

The Minister for Mines: I am not hesitating at all.

Mr. MARSHALL: On two occasions the Minister has denied me the right to an impartial investigation. If he thinks that authorising a subordinate officer, or an officer with whom Mr. Calanchini has probably worked for many years, to make an investigation is sufficient, then an investigation has been granted: but I do not think that

is an investigation at all. I suggest that that is a whitewashing process. I cannot understand why there should be any hesitation whatever, if there is no fear of any guilt being proved. Obviously this man has no right on the boards. He is a warden until his vacation is finished. He can hold no interest nor do anything in regard to any mining proposition until his services to this State have definitely terminated, and I submit that the two publications I have quoted definitely establish the fact that he has accepted the positions. Therefore he has broken the law of the State, and consequently an impartial investigation should be made. I shall not be satisfied until it is made. I am not going to agree that because a person has held high office the law should not apply to him, that he should be able to flout the law at will, while others are dragged in to meet the penalty imposed according to the crime committed. It might be asked why I should mention the Criminal Investigation Branch. I do not know of any other authority that would be competent to make an investigation into a matter of this sort. The evidence is that this man has broken the law, and that being so there is only one authority to make an investigation, and that is the Criminal Investigation Branch. It may appear that this is a very drastic procedure to suggest, but the motion is open to amendment if anyone can suggest any better form of inquiry, but certainly not a departmental officer from the Mines Department. I will never agree to that. Apart from the Mines Department the motion is open to amendment. Knowing what I do know about the chairman of directors and his activities spread over many years I may remark that it was commonly said on the goldfields years ago that this man was the Mines Department, because he could do things that no other person could do and get away with. That man, the subject of this motion, was then Under Secretary for Mines. If I held the opinion held by the Minister for Mines I would grant the investigation and make it fully and freely open. But the Minister seems to prefer a special form of inquiry by an officer of his department. So much was given in the answer the Minister returned to my question on the 9th November, when I asked were we to have an inquiry. The Minister replied as follows:—

A search of the share register and share certificate books of the whole of the de Ber-

nales group of mining companies has been made by a departmental officer, and has shown that Mr. M. J. Calanchini does not hold, nor has he ever held, any interest whatsoever in such companies. Mr. Calanchini has therefore not contravened the provisions of Section 8 of the Mining Act, 1904, and no action will be taken.

Mr. Calanchini may not hold an interest, or alternatively he may. But why is it that that gentleman should be so favoured? I think there is here a case that should be investigated, and I can see no better authority to which to entrust the investigation than the C.I.D.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, debate adjourned.

BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 22nd September.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.20]: Before the second reading goes to a vote I should like to make a few remarks upon the Bill. There is a great calm in the House at present, but whether it presages peace perfect peace or a willy-willy, I cannot tell. However, while things are so very quiet I should like to take the opportunity to try to make a few points, quite in a selfish, personal-interest way, that is to say, to use the Bill for a purpose other than that for which it was intended. There are in the Bill only two points, one being to reduce the cost of the lotteries, and the second being to enable the Commission to be relieved of a number of duties that they now undertake but which are burdensome to them. I should like to analyse what was in the mind of the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) when that lady brought the Bill forward. I think she was determined to air her disgust at the whole question of gambling. We are all of us disgusted with the gambling habit so firmly entrenched in the community. But the

habit is something much deeper than merely betting on a horse. It is a very deep sense in us that comes down from the past. When we condemn those who follow gambling, we are apt to forget that the state or condition in which we live these days is entirely artificial, as compared to the struggle for existence from which we have emerged. That was a far greater gamble for our progenitors than anything we know to-day. Since we have become more civilised and have adopted certain social services, we have reached a stage where really the whole thing is entirely artificial, and if we analyse the thousands of persons who are gambling to-day in the city, we find that after all they are doing very little in the way of risk taking as compared with what their predecessors did. The putting of a few shillings on a horse, or having a half-crown ticket in the lotteries, is a very poor substitute for the seamy life of our predecessors. Professor Murdoch was right when he said we ought to import a few lions and tigers and turn them loose, so that our lives might be made the brighter and more exciting. I would urge the member for Subiaco to treat gambling as a symptom of a great need for that excitement which is represented by the law of the jungle. I have not tried it myself. The law of the jungle has passed and gone, at all events for us, and therefore a half-a-crown bet is only a slight attempt to import some little excitement into our lives. I would urge the member for Subiaco to accept a humble suggestion that might invite a few members to support the measure. There are in all to be made three suggestions, each part of a tripartite plan, or the killing of three birds with one stone. The first bird is to get on to those members of Parliament who, under the Bill, must not go to the Lotteries Commission in an effort to secure money for their electorates.

Mr. Styants: Why not send the Bill to a select committee?

Mr. NORTH: No, let us give "Hansard" a rest. It would be better if we could agree that the Lotteries Commission should provide a certain proportion of its funds for division amongst the 50 Assembly seats, so much for each seat. That would be something to work upon, and if it could be agreed to we might then bring forward a law that no member of Parliament should ever pay out of his parliamentary allowance

another penny in his electorate. That would stop the alleged bribery and corruption, or blackmail, whichever it really is. That is the second part of the proposed agreement. The third idea would be that the money which is now being paid out by members in their attempts to hold their seats and gain popularity could be collected and put into a fund from which we should have pensions for politicians. If we could get so much out of the Bill we would be achieving a very laudable object, because we could then tell the public that party hacks were entirely of the past, and that every politician was provided for.

Mr. Hegney: Is this Utopia?

Mr. NORTH: Therefore, if the Bill were remodelled, and we could thus have money from the Lotteries Commission, I would support it. Then it seems to me a lot of money could be saved without harming those who have to sell the tickets. Of course we must make their job interesting in order to make it worth while for them. But it would be possible for the Government to make available to the ticket-selling agents many of the Government's present advertising resources, such as railways, tramways and harbours. There are many functions that the Government undertakes which could be made available to those agents who sell the tickets. That would reduce the overhead a good deal and leave a lot more money to be distributed amongst the hospitals and amongst the funds for the districts of members of Parliament, and in that way we could use our public utilities without cost to ourselves and so reduce the cost of selling the lottery tickets. If members will support those suggestions, then I in turn will support the second reading.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco—in reply) [5.28]: The member for Claremont brings in Utopia every time he speaks. I shall not take up much time with my reply, for I realise that the debate has been so long delayed that many members have forgotten what it is all about. I wish to thank the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) for his very able and considered speech on the Bill. It was suggested by a member opposite that the member for West Perth had supported the Bill in a spirit of gallantry.

Member: No, chivalry.

The Minister for Employment: He has a very gallant temperament.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am sufficiently old-fashioned to appreciate the compliment, and I am glad that there is one member opposite who believes that the spirit of chivalry or of gallantry, whichever it may be termed, is not dead. However, I am also conscious of the fact that the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) supported the Bill because, if it were enacted, it would be in the best interests of the people. I also thank the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) for his support. These two members belong to the legal profession, and they have minds trained to think clearly and to logical definitions. I feel that their support is particularly valuable. I also wish to thank those members who opposed the Bill, but did so in a fair spirit of criticism. My reply, however, will be directed mainly to those members who exploited the Bill—used the Bill—to indulge in a vitriolic attack upon the person of the member for Subiaco. I am sure there are many hon. members who were saddened at the spectacle of the speedy reversion to type that took place amongst a few of the members whilst debating the Bill a few weeks ago. I am also sure that they were horrified to listen to the unbridled speeches and questionable remarks that were made under the protection of parliamentary privilege. We are aware that under parliamentary privilege we have an almost total elimination of control in our speeches. We have been elected to this House because we are supposed to have reached the standard of evolution under which control by an outside force is no longer necessary.

Mr. Styants: What force are you talking about?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: There is an outside force, which controls the speech of the general public. We are supposed, however, to have reached that standard of evolution when such control is no longer necessary. Therefore, under parliamentary privileges we get to know our fellow-members as they really are.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am not going to listen to any interjections. I do not think you need worry, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not worrying; I am only carrying out the Standing Orders.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I also thank the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) for his efforts to secure the closure. He probably knew the type of de-

bate that was about to take place, and wished, in his niceness of character, to spare the feelings of the member for Subiaco. But, Sir, it is more than probable that he wished to save his party from the disgrace, the odium, and the contempt that usually attach themselves to unsportsmanlike and unwarranted attacks of that kind.

Mr. Styants: Tell us something about the Bill.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The member for Guildford-Midland has had great parliamentary experience. He knows, from his political life, as the member for Subiaco knows from her experience of life, that 95 per cent. of the public—the Public—are fair, and like a boomerang any odium and hatred that may accrue from the attack made upon the member for Subiaco will some day return to the feet of those who cast it. It is the taking of such license under parliamentary privilege that will eventually destroy free speech in Parliament. I agree with Mr. Menzies, who, in effect, said that members who make questionable remarks in the House should be forced to repeat them outside so that they can be dealt with as ordinary citizens. I thank the member for Maylands (Mr. Shearn) for his support. I do not agree with his contention that it would be necessary for a member of Parliament to leave the board of any organisation which wished to approach the Lotteries Commission for funds. There are members in this House who have never approached the Commission for funds and are quite content with the manner in which their particular electorates are dealt with by the Commission. In reply to the member for Nelson (Mr. Doust) it was not apparent that he had either studied the Bill or the Act itself. He said there was nothing to be gained by passing the measure. If £12,000 a year means nothing to him I have no arguments to use against his remarks. That is the amount which would have been saved this year if this Bill had been in operation. That amount would have gone to the support of hospitals that are so badly in need of assistance and elementary equipment. He did not grasp the fact that the Lotteries Commission would have exactly the same amount to spend for administrative purposes as it now spends, that is, if the amount of commission paid to agents for the sale of tickets was reduced. The hon. member did not think that a 5 per cent. commission for this pur-

pose was sufficient. This is a business, Mr. Speaker, without capital, without any risk, and it is a business with very little if any personal exertion. It cannot, therefore, be dealt with as an ordinary business. I would ask the hon. member how many of the farmers in his district get 1 per cent. without having to spend any capital or engage in any personal exertion. There is not one in the State. I should like to ask the hon. member if he would care to accept a business returning 5 per cent. without any capital expenditure or personal risk. He would jump at it. The member for Mt. Marshall (Mr. Warner) opposed the Bill with some heat. I have no quarrel with any member who opposed it. My quarrel is with those members who exploited the Bill to express sentiments concerning the member for Subiaco which they would not otherwise have dared to express. The member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) allowed his imagination to run riot. He said I had cast aspersions upon the integrity of members of the House and on the Lotteries Commission. That is not true. I will read what I actually said, namely, that by granting to the member for Victoria Park all that he wanted the Commission had wittingly or unwittingly caused him to change his mind in regard to lotteries. My purpose there was to show that personal motives might wittingly or unwittingly induce members permanently to incorporate lotteries in the life of the nation. Further on I said I did not infer that there was any bribery or corruption. I said that the Commission might be composed of the most honest and politically unbiassed men, and that members who approached the Commission for grants might be imbued by the most honest and genuine motives. Never throughout the course of my speech did I cast aspersions on any member of the House or of the Commission. The truth is that some members were not concerned about the Bill or any of its provisions. They were intoxicated with a spirit of revenge, inspired by three motives. They were actuated by these motives, firstly because I had attacked S.P. betting. I had made it clear to the public that either the Government did not want to control S.P. betting or that it dared not control it. The second motive arose from the fact that I had dared to contest, almost successfully, the Fremantle seat some years ago. There was a determination on the part of various members of the House

to prevent me from participating in the recent contest in the interests of the President of the National Party. In the third place, their desire for revenge was caused from the fact that I had dared to tell the Government that the children were underfed and that the condition of sustenance men had become hopeless, and that the relief system was rotten. It is easy enough for members to laugh whilst many are starving. Members have laughed every time I have spoken in the House on these subjects. Members based their charges against the Bill upon imaginary insults, and fought the member for Subiaco with an orgy of abuse, but gave very little if any consideration to the Bill itself. I have the greatest sympathy for country members who imagine they have got more for their electors by personal solicitation of the Lotteries Commission. If looked at calmly can we say that this is so? If it is true is it not a greater indictment than anything I have said? If it is true, are not members charging themselves with the very things they are now protesting against?

Member: That shows the mind you have.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It is at least an intelligent one. Did not the Minister for Lands tell us on one occasion that a farmer received £9,000 more from the Agricultural Bank as a result of the solicitation of members? Did not the Minister for Justice tell us, when discussing a licensing measure, that applicants to the board endeavoured to charm the board? Did not the member for Murchison endeavour to change the personnel of the board to that of a magistrate, because he did not believe in the way in which applicants charmed the board? Members should be consistent. If it is not right in one case to make applications to boards it is not right in another case. Too much protestation is not good. Members know the old French proverb, "He who excuses himself accuses himself." The Lotteries Commission is paid to administer the lotteries fund. If there is any mal-distribution or mal-administration of these funds the matter should be fought out on the floor of this House. The Minister for Agriculture spoke of a flying doctor, and insinuated that the Commission had given the money to enable a flying doctor to be established in the North-West. It is the job of the Government to see that there are doctors in the North-West, and flying doctors if they are neces-

sary. By the Act the Minister for Health controls a sum of £250 per lottery draw, which he can give to merely fairly charitable organisations outside of the charitable grants. He is the liaison officer between this House and the Commission, if any money of that description is required. We seem to have a unique brand of politicians in this House. I know of no other State in Australia or of any other country in the world where politicians are so whole-heartedly merely relief workers as they are in this State. I know of no other State or country where they are so subjected to abuse as in this State and where they are subjected to such ridicule. That is due to the fact that our politicians make hacks of themselves in going from department to department seeking for special conditions for this or that person, or for this or that organisation. The result is that they have no time in which to attend to their appropriate legislative duties, or to cure by legislation the very ills that they seek to alleviate in the individual. That is why so many of our Acts require amendment before even the printer's ink is dry. The member for Avon in endeavouring to support the morality of lotteries made a quotation from the Bible, a most unfortunate quotation—"They cast lots for His raiment." Who cast lots for His raiment? Mr. Speaker, it was the pagan Roman soldiers who were crucifying Christ, not because He was the man Jesus, but because of His ethical teaching, because of His moral laws and because of Christian ideals as we know them to-day. Has the passage of 2,000 years after Christ's teaching meant so little to us that hon. members in this supposedly Christian Parliament can vie with one another in attempting to politically crucify any man or woman who stands for what he or she believes to be right? Will hon. members dare throw out a Bill the object of which is to promote the welfare of the people? Will they dare to defeat a measure the object of which is to help towards eliminating evils that are eating into the hearts of the community—a community in which some of you are fathers, but all of you are sons? Members have had the protection of Christian homes and have lived under the protection of a Christian flag and have been elected to protect the people of the State. I say shame on any hon. member who dares to quote the circumstances surrounding the crucifixion of Christ to de-

fend legislation that he knows to be not in the best interests of the people. Members can laugh, but I say that their laughter rings of the paganism that has gone down the ages. However much members may imagine that my Bill has hurt their pride, they know in their hearts that it is honest in its purposes and that its underlying motive is to prevent lotteries increasing their hold upon the life of the nation and so impregnating society that it will be impossible to eradicate them or deal with the evils that accrue from them. During the course of the debate, members continually asserted that Australians will gamble. This Bill does not attempt to prevent them gambling, but the present system has resulted in increasing the number of agents for the sale of lottery tickets until we now have almost 900 agents throughout the State, so that they are ten which has resulted in increasing the now in every small town and village throughout the country. The present system has resulted in increasing the advertising of lotteries until we have reached the present stage of deluding youths into the belief that they can secure, through investment in a ticket, sufficient to enable them to live without doing any work—deluding poor people into the belief that they can escape from poverty by purchasing a lottery ticket. The present system of allowing 10 per cent. to the sellers of tickets which serves to create a vested interest in the sale of those tickets, and the effect of which has been to double the subscriptions within a short period of a few years, is all absolutely wrong. I grant that the lotteries commissioners are paid to do the best they can in their job and that they are expected to make the lotteries pay. On the other hand, we in this House are paid to so control legislation that the morality of the nation is not sapped.

Mr. Hegney: Your political party introduced the legislation in the first place.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Our present system—

Mr. Hegney: Your party started the business.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is too much conversation going on.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Our duty is to control the business and not to extend it. It is not for us to do anything that will extend the gambling evil nor is it

for us to subsidise institutions for which the Government are responsible, by means of games of chance. Now I come to the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall).

Mr. Hegney: Why pick him?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: That hon. member's ungenerous insinuations against a brother citizen were beneath contempt. The dining room of this House is a common meeting place for members and their friends and if it is to be used for cheap electioneering propaganda, and the names of friends are to be bandied about for political purposes, then the sooner visitors are banned from this House altogether, the better. The contemptible advantage taken with the object of discrediting the President of the National Party during his election campaign was so vulgar that no words of mine can express my abhorrence of such methods. As for the interjector who said that I got my nomination through giving luncheons to the President of the National Party, I say that member has the soul of a linnet and the courage of a cockroach. He would not dare to make that statement outside. I notice there is no mention of it in "Hansard" and that is the reason I am repeating it now. I am determined that future Parliaments will know to what depths of degradation some members have sunk in order to achieve what they think may be a little political advantage.

Mr. Withers: You do not imagine the Bill will reach the Committee stage?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I do not mind two hoots about that. I know that members have already decided, and so they will get all I want to say at this stage.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: As for the Minister for Agriculture there are no excuses. We could expect the back benchers to make irresponsible statements, but a Minister must always be en garde.

Mr. Hegney: Are you a back bencher?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The Minister should be above petty meannesses. There is an old saying that "handsome is as handsome does."

Mr. Lambert: Speak for yourself.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It still holds good to-day. The Minister spoke of my want of generosity, but his speech was indicative of the fact that his education has not taught him the meaning of the word "generosity." I would like to remind him

that education does not necessarily mean culture, and what we are suffering from in our civic and public life is the lack of that innate quality. He endeavoured to illustrate his argument and to impress his confreres with what he believed to be a clever speech by quoting from "A Woman of No Importance" by an author whom he described as "the great Oscar Wilde." Had the Minister for Agriculture prefaced his remarks by telling the House that Oscar Wilde was the greatest sex pervert of his day; had he told the House that the channel boats from England to France carried away scores of young men escaping from the consequences of the English law—young men who had been contaminated by the Oscar Wilde school, I do not think the Minister would then have dared to insult any member of this House by quoting from Oscar Wilde's play "A Woman of No Importance." The whole world knew that to Oscar Wilde no woman was of any importance. I wonder that those hon. gentlemen who are so sensitive of their integrity and are so jealous of their reputations did not rise in indignation at the insult hurled at them by the Minister for Agriculture. The name of Oscar Wilde was not mentioned for years in England after his trial, and is only spoken of now with the greatest reserve. We do not put his books before our children to read, no matter what their literary quality, because of the fear that the young people will ask what manner of man was the author. I am astonished that the mind of a Minister of the Crown and a Minister for Education has travelled so slowly—or should it be "slow"—that he has not caught up with those authors who believe that all women of the world are of importance because they are mothers of the race. The Minister also took his revenge upon me for my outspokenness, which he classed as want of generosity, but I would remind him that revenge is the abject pleasure of an abject mind. It is the inheritance of weak souls. The Minister said that I had not commented upon paragraph (i) of the Bill. That is true and I apologise to the House. My confreres know that it was intended to delete paragraph (i) when we reached the Committee stage. That paragraph was included by the framer of the Bill and when I rang him up about it he said it could be deleted when the Bill was being dealt with in Committee. That was the

reason why I did not mention it when moving the second reading. But even if that were to be left in the Bill, it would make but little difference. The only difference would be to take away the right of the Minister to give £250 per lottery to boy scouts, sea scouts or any other scouts he liked to nominate for charitable purposes.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It has never been used in that way.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Money has been given to the boy scouts and the Minister has the right to permit or not to permit.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: No.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Yes. He has that right. A little while ago some sewerage work that rightly belonged to the Public Works Department was undertaken by the Lotteries Commission. The Minister can permit or need not permit. He has the sole power. The Minister sneeringly commented upon some figures I quoted, but his were as wrong as those of his best author. He said that the sellers of share tickets in Queensland received a commission of 13 per cent. When I delivered my second reading speech, I said that the Queensland Government gave five per cent., which is correct. The Minister's inference was that the sellers would make up the extra amount of commission by selling tickets on the share basis. That is perfectly true. What the Minister did not tell members was that in Queensland it is permissible to sell share tickets. A 5s. 6d. ticket may be sold in six shares, but there are conditions attached to the sale of those tickets. The seller of a share ticket is not allowed to sell shares for more or less than 1s. for each one-sixth share, but a reduction in the price may be allowed where the purchaser desires to secure a number of shares at one time. In the book issued to agents it is shown that the Government does give five per cent., but the agent is allowed to charge up to what would represent 13 per cent., but to secure that he must act according to the conditions set out, shoulder the cost of printing the share tickets, which are to be in accordance with the form prescribed and set out in the book of conditions. There are other provisions regarding the numbers of the tickets and provision is made that if there should be sold tickets bearing the same number, then the sellers of the tickets bearing the winning numbers shown on the result slips must be responsible for the payment

of the amounts won by those tickets. In other words, they must stand by any mistake and pay out. There are various other conditions that are imposed upon the agents in Queensland, but the fact remains that they do not receive anything like 13 per cent. as the Minister intimated they did. After the Minister had sneeringly remarked about my figures I wired to the Director of Lotteries in Queensland and I received from him the following telegram:—

Percentages of expenses for year ended 30th June, 1937, commission 5.26, wages 1.65, working expenses 1.26.

That makes a total of 8.17. Therefore every thing I said about the expenses in connection with lotteries in Queensland was correct to within a few points. The Minister also insinuated that I was sponsoring a Bill that would perpetuate gambling, although I had protested against it. That is another school-boy howler. As a matter of fact, the Lotteries (Control) Act has to be reviewed annually, and if my amending Bill were passed it would be incorporated in the Act and would be before the Government annually. In that case, the responsibility would still rest with the Government. Although my Bill has had such a hostile reception from many members, I wish to inform the House that it has the support of a majority of the churches, and also the support of many women's organisations. The reason for that support is that those bodies realise that in some small measure the Bill, if it passes, will stifle the unwholesome growth of lotteries that are eating like a cancer into the heart of the State. Before I conclude, I should like to refer to what the Minister said in the course of his remarks when speaking earlier in the session. He told us that the morals of the House were no better for my presence. I can only remind them that evolution is terribly slow. I came to this House to serve the public and not throw bouquets at the Government. I came prepared to give and take in connection with all political subjects. I have always voted with the Government on any social welfare measure which I considered was in the interests of the people. But when it comes to personal attacks with the object of endeavouring to defeat Bills which, if enacted, would help the community, I am determined that I will show no quarter. I was informed when I entered this House that I was merely a member and must not expect the privileges of a woman. I never

asked for them, and do not want them, but I notice that when some members wish to defeat wholesome legislation, they endeavour to do so by attacking me as a woman. Therefore I shall defend the legislation which I bring forward as a woman. I recommend the Minister to read a few verses by Rudyard Kipling entitled, "The Female of the Species is More Deadly Than the Male." If he does not understand the interpretation of the author, may I suggest to him that the female of the species is more deadly because she is not only the mother but the defender of the race. I should like to tell the Minister also that if he desires to know where a great deal of our present legislation is leading the country, I recommend him to read a few more verses by the same author entitled, "The City of Brass." That is the story of a ruined civilisation, ruined by legislators who had not the wisdom to balance a spiritual education of the race with the material, social and economic advantages of that race. To-day it is obvious that civilisation is heading for a downfall. I have had much pleasure in submitting this Bill, and I now ask those members who may have decided to vote against it to reconsider their decision and vote for it, so that we may put the lotteries if they must continue, may be on a sounder footing financially, and save thousands of pounds a year to the country. I ask them to cast their votes for a Bill that in some small way seeks to protect the young, to safeguard the youth and also the family life of the State. By doing that, members will be fulfilling the trust that has been reposed in them by their electors.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	..	26

Majority against 7

AYES.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver
Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Hill
Mr. Hughes
Mr. Keenan
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Latham
Mr. Mann
Mr. McDonald
Mr. McLarty

Mr. North
Mr. Patrick
Mr. Sampson
Mr. Seward
Mr. Shearn
Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Thorn
Mr. Watts
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Boyle	Mr. Needham
Mr. Collier	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Cross	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Doust	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Fox	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hegne	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. Warner
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Munale	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived; the Bill defeated.

RETURN—TOTALISATOR OPERATIONS.

Debate resumed from the 29th September on the following motion by Mr. Raphael—

That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing—

(1) The number of totalisators registered in this State, or operated under registration, since the commencement of the racing year in 1927, and where they are each situated, separately set out, if more than one on any one course.

(2) The gross taking of each totalisator, set out for each year, since 1927 to date.

(3) The annual net taking of each totalisator remaining undistributed after the declarations of dividends.

(4) The total of dividends unpaid, for each year, for each totalisator.

(5) As every statement of such figures is statutorily declared by the secretary of a club or a member of committee, whether the statement of such figures has been annually checked and verified by the Auditor General.

(6) If not, why not, and whether such will be inaugurated immediately.

(7) Whether it is legal for totalisator tickets to be sold at less than five shillings each; if so, under what authority.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [6.9]: I have no objection to supplying the information. I have the return here, and it can be laid on the Table of the House.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—RAILWAY MANAGEMENT AND WORKING.

To inquire by Royal Commission.

Debate resumed from the 29th September on the following motion by Mr. Seward:—

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into and report on the management and workings of the Western Australian Government Railways, with particular reference to its relationship to modern transport facilities.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. F. C. L. Smith—Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [6.10]: The hon. member who submitted this motion has asked the House to express an opinion whether a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into and report on the management and working of the railways of the State, with particular reference to the relationship to modern transport facilities. The proposition, I submit, is rather a big order. After all, the question of the appointment of a Royal Commission for any purpose whatever is not one that should be treated lightly. A Royal Commission, particularly one to inquire into all the ramifications of the railway service, would involve, as the hon. member has suggested, the bringing to this State of an authority or expert from some other part of the world. As that would entail considerable expense, one would have expected the hon. member to attempt to justify his attitude. The hon. member did not put forward any argument to support the appointment of a Royal Commission, or to induce members to express an opinion that a Royal Commission should be appointed for the purpose he indicated, even if the Royal Commission were to cost nothing, as a result of its appointment and subsequent inquiry. But if he did bring forward arguments to justify the appointment of a Royal Commission, with its consequent cost to the State as the result of its appointment, and the time it would take to conduct the investigation, it could not be carried out without indicting the existing management of the railways in the State and reflecting upon the ability of the Commissioner and the officers of the Railway Department in respect to the administration of the various branches under their control. Personally I think that no case was made out and that there is no necessity for a Royal Commission, or any form of inquiry, into the management of the railways.

Mr. North: Was there any result from the previous commission of inquiry?

Mr. Styants: Too right there was. We got super-heated engines which were worth thousands of pounds to the State.

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**: We would have got those engines in any case. Generally speaking, the recommendations made were not such that the existing management and the experts in their respective branches were not aware of them. We all know that the railways in this State

in respect to the standards existing could be improved upon.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**: I do not contend that we have a particularly fine standard in our railway system. Because of that, our railways offer an inducement to the hypercritical to launch an offensive against them. We have built our railways for the purpose of developing the vast area under our control and so, if only from the point of view of mileage and the standards suitable to our economic development, it is easy for critics to take standards that prevail in a country like South Africa, where the capitalisation of the railways is seven times as great as it is here, though the mileage is less, or a country like Java in its stage of development and with its rich resources, or a highly industrialised country like Japan with its millions of population and its vast development. We must remember that we have a huge State comprising nearly a million square miles. We have constructed an extensive railway system, and we have a mile of railway to about every 100 people, a ratio that exists, I suppose, nowhere else in the world.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You must not let that be an excuse for any slackness.

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**: There is no question of slackness.

Mr. Marshall: Financial obligation.

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**: I do not think anyone would challenge the railway service in respect of its efficiency consistent with the rolling stock and the lines at the disposal of those in charge of them. The member for Pingelly, in moving the motion, said that certainly during the past few years this State had been passing through a depression and naturally one would expect the figures to show a decline, but even taking that into consideration, we were emerging from the period of depression and there was not the slightest question that during the depression a vast amount of produce was raised, and there was not that excuse for any great decline in the railway figures. I think that is a preposterous contention and one that lays the hon. member open to a charge of definite hostility to and prejudice against the railways generally. During the depression, as everybody knows, all classes of industry suffered.

Acreages declined, production enormously decreased, the national income was reduced, and there was unemployment on a scale never previously experienced in the State. Storekeepers, farmers and merchants everywhere were facing bankruptcy, business generally was stagnant and prices were so low as to make production unprofitable. The hon. member said that none of those developments arising out of the depression could be regarded as an excuse for the decline in railway figures. He went on to say that a considerable amount of the State's business was increasing, but that if we took the increase occurring in the volume of business being done by the railways and compared it with the natural increase in the producing and manufacturing sections of the State, we must realise that the railways were not only failing to keep pace with that increase, but were losing ground. Where, I ask, is this volume of business that is increasing? We hear people speak of our having turned the corner and of having recovered that prosperity we formerly enjoyed. What recovery has taken place has been in the prices of commodities that we have produced, and we are still waiting for a recovery in the volume of production to bring it up to the level we previously enjoyed. Here are round figures of the wheat production during recent years:—

		bushels.
1931	.. ..	53,000,000
1932	.. ..	41,000,000
1933	.. ..	41,000,000
1936	.. ..	23,000,000
1937	.. ..	21,000,000

There has also been a definite decrease in the wool clip, as the following figures show:

		lbs.
1932	.. ..	75,000,000
1933	.. ..	78,000,000
1934	.. ..	89,000,000
1936	.. ..	63,000,000

From the "Quarterly Statistical Abstract" I have taken the following figures showing the volume of exports in 1932-33 as compared with 1936-37:—

	1932-33.	1936-37.
	lbs.	lbs.
Butter	.. 2,297,431	1,652,308
	dozen.	dozen.
Eggs in shell	.. 1,537,035	1,239,647
	lbs.	lbs.
Beef	.. 14,406,036	11,226,986
	centals.	centals.
Wheat	.. 15,416,832	8,268,240

Exports of fruit slightly increased in 1936-37 as compared with 1932-33. Thus in all our principal export products there was a decline in the volume. In any year that we care to take during the past four or five years there will be observed a tendency for the volume of production to decline rather than to increase. Yet, notwithstanding that fact, railway revenue has increased, and instead of the railways losing ground and slipping into a retrograde position, the reverse has been the experience. The earnings of the railways during the last five years have been as follows:—

		£
1933	.. ..	2,932,140
1934	.. ..	2,990,315
1935	.. ..	3,311,839
1936	.. ..	3,446,161
1937	.. ..	3,462,037

Thus railway earnings have increased every year during the past five years, showing that new business has been secured.

Mr. Styants: And there has been a reduction of freights, too.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. The increased earnings came from the increased carriage of goods of the higher classes, which the member for Pingelly suggested the railways were not carrying. The wheat tonnage hauled in 1933 was 1,041,011, whereas in 1937, because of the reduced harvest, the tonnage hauled was 485,906. The earnings for those two years were—1933, £2,932,140; 1937, £3,462,037. That definite increase has been obtained, as the member for Kalgoorlie pointed out, after reducing the freight on goods of the higher classes, those having been the goods that increased our business. The hon. member also spoke of certain stations having been reduced in status. I suppose it is quite possible to point to some station that has been so reduced, but I venture to say that if one knew the local conditions where such reduction has taken place a completely satisfactory explanation of it would be found. I remember on one occasion, when making a tour through the southern parts of the State, coming to a place called Cuballing. Cuballing had a fine hotel and a fine hall; there was a fine bank, together with other good buildings; and yet the place was like a deserted village. The district showed every sign of a former local prosperity; but due to developments which had occurred, probably as the result of farmers taking up bigger holdings or possibly as the result of motor traffic, the place had definitely declined. And so we

find in other places, by reason of certain local developments having nothing whatever to do with the Railway Department, a decline in the business offering for the railways. But, as a matter of fact, while in the past two years only one station, Salmon Gums, has reverted to the status of an unattended siding, three new stations have been opened at Big Bell, Tuckanarra and Laver-ton—the last two having previously been unattended sidings. The hon. member seemed to make much of the debt per head on account of the railways. He seemed to be under the impression that because the debt per head of population had increased, the debt per head in connection with the railways had increased also. I do not think there is much in that contention. On the 30th June, 1937, the capital account of the railways stood at £25,990,025. The railways themselves to-day represent an asset worth considerably more than that amount, because the whole of the system has been maintained as nearly as possible at 100 per cent. efficiency. I am aware that maintenance was neglected by the previous Government during the depression. The maintenance of our existing assets was definitely neglected then. However, the present Government advanced from loan funds for the purpose of overtaking the arrears of maintenance, and those arrears have been overtaken. The hon. member says there is great need for improvement in the railways, but the improvement of our railways must depend upon the amount of funds available for that purpose. From time to time improvements are affected so far as funds allow. In the various reports submitted to this House by the Commissioner of Railways those improvements have been indicated. As a result of them there is additional comfort for passengers. In his 1934-35 report the Commissioner points out that better and cheaper refreshments have been provided, that softer sleeping berths are available, that hot water bottles are obtainable in sleeping cars now. There has been improvement effected in the ladies' waiting room at Kalgoorlie, improvement in the parcels traffic service, improvement in the train service, including a new stock train from Midland Junction to Kalgoorlie. Again, vans for the carriage of perishable products have been introduced, dining cars have been renovated, second-class sleeping accommodation has been distinctly improved, and all the second-class sleeping

cars have been reduced from six-berth to four-berth, with more comfortable accommodation. The seating in all second-class corridor cars has been definitely improved. For the purpose of amplifying the service in country districts, the introduction of rail cars was foreshadowed by the Commissioner; and these will soon be in service. Anyone who has made a trip recently in a rail car will agree that those cars do offer a highly comfortable form of transport, and a transport unit that will greatly improve the service on the lines on which it will be run. In other places train services have been accelerated and additional services have been provided. The matter of parcels traffic, to which the mover referred, saying there was no central office where parcels could be left, was provided for some time ago by the establishment of such an office in Perth. Those who have criticised the Railway Department would do well to look up the Commissioner's various reports showing what improvements have been effected during the past two or three years. It is true that in the development of road transport facilities the railways were for a time challenged by the service which road transport was offering, but they were never challenged either from the mechanical or from the economic point of view. The railway are established, like every other well-conducted business, upon a broad basis, from which they endeavour to give the service required by every section of the community. No form of road transport has ever been able to challenge the service that the railways are able to give, consistently with the rates they are able to offer in respect of the various commodities produced in Western Australia. They were challenged, I think, in respect of rate structure. They were challenged by forms of motor transport which had no regard for industrial conditions, and the owners of which had very little regard indeed for business principles in capital expenditure, and for the necessary provision made in all well-conducted businesses for depreciation of the assets in which the capital is invested. So it was that when no protection existed for the railways such as the Transport Co-ordination Act now affords, and when motor vehicles were running day and night without regard to industrial conditions, road transport was able to pick out the high-class traffic, pick the eyes out of

the railway business. Road transport did challenge the Railway Department in those respects, but in those respects only. However, as a form of transport agency offering service to the community on a broad basis the railways have not been challenged. The mover and other hon. members had sought to draw a comparison between the standards existing here and those existing in South Africa. They have justified that comparison by stating that in both countries—Western Australia and South Africa—there is the narrow-gauge railway. But that is the only basis upon which the two countries can be compared. In fact, no reasonable basis is available for comparison of the two countries. Western Australia has a population of 452,000, an area of 1,000,000 square miles, and 4,357 miles of railway, or less than 100 people to the mile of railway. South Africa has a population of 8,000,000, an area of 500,000 square miles, 12,355 miles of 3ft. 6ins. gauge railway and 884 miles of 2ft. gauge railway, or 600 people to the mile.

Mr. Patrick: That is not the white population.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: All are counted over there. I hope the hon. member does not think that the natives in South Africa are not an intelligent race of people. They have been referred to as the "physical aristocrats of humanity."

Mr. Styants: They work for 15s. a week and their keep in the mines so they are not very intelligent.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The capital cost of the railways in South Africa was £151,234,778 against our capital cost of £26,000,000. Yet hon. members start to make comparisons between the two places.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: How do they pay the interest on that sum?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is provided out of the profits from the gold mines they own, probably. They have plenty of cheap labour there, as the member for Kalgoorlie has pointed out, to stone-ballast all the railways. They have a staff of 56,223 Europeans and 41,470 non-Europeans. I do not know whether we would like to have the same conditions existing here as they have in South Africa. The probability is that those coloured peoples are superior economic men inasmuch as they are prepared to work longer hours for less wages. It may be true that if we were will-

ing to agree to the introduction of a similar class of labour in this State—and I believe that a Royal Commission once recommended that we should be favourable to the introduction of Coolie labour—we might be able to increase our standards at the expense of those who would operate our railways. The price of steam coal per ton of 2,000 lbs. at the pit's mouth in South Africa is 5s. 6½d. In this State it is 13s.; and the calorific value of the South African coal is much higher than ours. Yet the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) says that what is possible in South Africa is possible here. I hope that the motion will be tested on that particular utterance, namely as to whether members think that what is possible in South Africa is possible here. The facts I have outlined in respect to the two countries show how misleading that statement is. The hon. member suggested that the personnel of the Commission he desires should be a business man, a railway man (preferably an engineer) from outside the State and a railway man from outside the State capable of dealing with the administrative side of the railways. The attitude of mind that leads to the assertion that we must have men from some other place in order to guide us with respect to the conduct of our railways, is the same attitude of mind that leads men to say that jam manufactured in Victoria is better than that which is manufactured here, or that other goods that are produced here are not as good as those that can be produced elsewhere. I have a greater respect for the people who are in charge of the railways in this State than to agree to a proposition of this kind. I have every confidence in the Commissioner. I think he is one of the best Commissioners of Railways this State has ever had the good fortune to have. While I know that those members of this House who have had railway experience in some department of the railways—either on the locomotive side or on the traffic side—probably have, as a result of that experience, a greater knowledge of the internal workings of the railways than I have I will not allow that they have a greater knowledge of the internal workings of the railways and the necessities of the service than those who have risen from the ranks to high positions in our railways and are now in charge of the respective branches of the Railway Department.

Mr. Styants: Has our Commissioner done that?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Commissioner is a man of very wide experience. While he was not always in the railway service in this State, he is a man of high intellectual attainments with a wide knowledge of engineering and a man who, as he has demonstrated since he has taken over the commissionership, has that very necessary qualification in such a man namely, administrative capacity. The member for Pingelly says that business methods should be employed on the railways. It seems strange to me that the hon. member knows so little of what is going on in the railways. Just what business methods does he visualise? The railways are conducted on a business-like basis. The Railway Department is not only business-like with regard to the services it gives but it is business-like, too, in trying to induce those who have transport business to offer to give it to the railways. There is employed a man whose duty it is to look out for new business and in that way increase the earnings generally of the department. We have had a parcels office in Wellington-street for the past three years, while all passengers desirous of using our railways for the purpose of going to the Eastern States or making a trip to Kalgoorlie or any other reasonable distance were able at all times to book at the Tourist Bureau when it was in Hay-street. It has now been removed to Forrest-place. People were able to book in Hay-street without being under the necessity of going to the central booking office; not that I regard that as a very great inconvenience, but the hon. member drew attention to it. I know that if one goes to a city like Melbourne where the booking office is in Spencer-street, it is a desirable thing to have a tourist bureau office such as there is in Swanston-street for the convenience of people who wish to book to Sydney or Adelaide or some country station. Our station, however, is more central than that in Melbourne. Notwithstanding that fact, the facility was extended to people whereby when the Tourist Bureau had an office in Hay-street folk could book their fares there if they desired to do so. The hon. member seemed to indicate that there was no publicity of any kind undertaken by the railway administration in this State, but there is a considerable amount of publicity undertaken and a considerable amount of advertising

done in respect to the facilities the railways offer, even to the extent of using the air, which the hon. member mentioned.

The Premier: Everybody knows the slogan "Springtime in the hills."

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. The hon. member took advantage of the motion to complain about the Lake Grace-Hyden railway and as to whether it should have been built from Wagin to Hyden or whether it should have been built from Kondinin to Hyden. He wants to hold a post-mortem on the building of a railway that was approved by a previous Government of the same political party as that to which he himself subscribes. The fact remains that it is too late to hold a post-mortem on the building of that railway. I do not know whether the railway was ever justified. There are some railways in this State the justification for the building of which must have been very difficult. Those who were interested and agitated for Parliament to give approval for the building of those railways, and ultimately secured that approval, must have been put to a great deal of effort to get the approval. Many of them have never justified their existence. Some people agitate for railways here, there and everywhere, some of which cannot be justified, and they have no sooner secured Parliamentary approval than their energies are let loose for the purpose of getting a first-class service on those lines, when actually the volume of business does not justify any better service than that being given. The hon. member complained of the service being given on the Lake Grace-Hyden railway. He knows that the stock train has been run there once a month and is being continued. The running of that train is carried out when it is required. The point is that in transport work the amount of transport facility that any undertaking is able to afford is determined by the volume of business that is available along the particular route over which the system operates. To support the proposition for the appointment of a Royal Commission the hon. member quoted an isolated case of someone who was charged 6s. freight on a commodity which cost 6s. 6d. If the hon. member is prepared to give me the particulars of this case, I will get him all the details in connection with it without any Royal Commission. He spoke, too, of the falling off in passenger traffic. I have no doubt there has been some falling off.

Mr. Marshall: Not much at race time.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Away back in 1914 there was comparatively little motor competition, but since then there has been a great increase in road transport.

Mr. Marshall: I should like to see private enterprise hauling passengers from Wiluna to the seaboard at £3 10s. return.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Every person who buys a motor car deprives some transport facility of some of its business. In 1929 there were 27,741 motor cars registered in this State. In 1936 the number was 32,329, or an increase of 5,000 in that period. The people who buy motor cars generally buy them with a view to using them, and naturally they are using them, and so are taking a certain amount of passenger traffic away from the railways. But the passenger journeys recorded in the report of the Commissioner of Railways is not the whole story in regard to the position of the passenger business offering and which is being served by the railways. The country passenger earnings in 1935 amounted to £421,675, and in 1936 the amount was £423,830, an increase of approximately £2,000 in two years. The suburban passenger traffic in 1935 amounted to £142,012, and in 1936 the amount was £140,535, or a slight reduction in the earnings of suburban passenger traffic. The average earnings from each passenger from the country in 1935 was 70.11d., and in 1936 it was 72.84d. In the same year the earnings from each suburban passenger was 2.98d. and in 1936 it was 3.06d. Nothing, or at any rate very little, that the railways can do could stop motor competition. I suppose every person, except those who have a fear of the many accidents that are happening on the roads to-day, is desirous of owning and using a motor car, and of course the use of motor cars is extending every year. But we are endeavouring, with the Diesel rail cars to which I have referred, to improve the country services, and we shall definitely improve them, and as a result of that I believe that we shall win back to the railways some of the passenger traffic that is now using motor cars from country districts to the city. The hon. member mentioned that there is better sleeping accommodation in Japan and in South Africa than is to be found on our railways. Personally I think there is very little to be desired in our service. I have not been to either of the countries mentioned for the

purpose of making a comparison, but the probability is that the member for Pingelly has. The sleeping accommodation in some of those trains that were referred to looks very well in a photograph, whereas ours looks very well in reality, and there is very little to complain about in the sleeping accommodation offered on the trains in this State. The cost is only 15s. first class, and it gives to two people the exclusive use of a compartment. The second class cost is 6s. and it gives to four persons the exclusive use of a compartment. The hon. member spoke of roads running parallel to our railways. Whilst I agree that good roads are essential, it is certainly a pity that our road policy in this State has been such that in many instances the roads do run parallel and close to the railways, and consequently facilitate to some extent the opposition that might come from motor transport engaged in the carriage of goods. But whilst we in this State were somewhat late in waking up to the situation, whilst we might have seized the position much earlier to the advantage of everybody generally, nevertheless the Transport Co-ordination Act has been very helpful to everybody. I think all members will agree that that Act, having the effect that it has of controlling industrial conditions, so far as the operations of commercial goods vehicles are concerned, and limiting them, too, in respect of their opportunity to pick out the eyes of the business of the railways while neglecting the transport of freight of lower value and consequently lesser rate commodities, has been of definite service to the economic life of the State. I cannot visualise a situation in which a State like this, depending so largely upon primary products, would have to depend on the transport of all its commodities by commercial goods vehicles, and at the best rate that such vehicles would be able to offer from an economic point of view. Everyone knows that motor transport cannot be economically operated on a freight under 5d. per ton per mile. Consequently, if this State had to depend entirely on motor transport for the transport of all its commodities of primary production, there would be very little primary production carried out in this State. Whilst on my feet, I should like to touch upon another matter mentioned by the member for Pingelly when he spoke about sheep being lost out of railway trucks through lack of sealing. That is an entirely erroneous

statement. No sheep are lost out of the trucks through lack of sealing. I appreciate the fact that the seal is an indication to those in charge of the train that the truck has not been tampered with. At the same time, attention is given to other factors, such as the carrying of an attendant, that give almost as good a service in respect of safeguarding sheep trains. Provision is made for the free travel of one person with the sheep train, and where they are ten bogeys two persons can travel on the train. The consignors are allowed two persons for every ten bogeys. As a matter of fact, there is but little loss sustained, and there has been but little complaint in respect of those losses. The loss is usually due to the fact that the sheep have been miscounted when put into the truck. I am told by those who handle the business that any complaints arise from miscounting when the sheep go in.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: If the truck were wired, the loss would be obviated.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know that. However, it is a minor matter in connection with a motion that is asking for a Royal Commission to inquire into the railways; it is a matter that has been brought forward as an excuse for the appointment of that Royal Commission. Because it is alleged that there have been some losses on sheep trains that have not been sealed, it is put forward as an argument for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the railways.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I wish you would seal them in future, to obviate the losses.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Personally I think our railways, consistent with the development of the State, are progressive and are efficiently controlled. We talk about the appointment of Royal Commissions, but it seems to me that railways, and probably mothers-in-law, are the two things most criticised in all this world. There is not only the Commissioner of Railways, but there are would-be commissioners of railways right through the State. Everybody who uses the railways entertains the idea that he could conduct them better than can those in charge of them. That is the position in every part of the world. I do not suppose that any other undertaking is criticised to the same extent as are the railways. All the suggestions that come from those critics, the capable and the incapable critics as well, are carefully weighed by the Railway Department, and every suggestion by anyone who

has a knowledge of railways is carefully weighed and considered, and a decision given by those who, as the result of their experience, are competent to make a decision. It is not fair that a member should make comparisons between our railway system, and the railway systems in South Africa, Java, Japan, England and other places, that are much more highly developed and whose railways have a much greater capital invested in them than is the case in this State. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Styants) talked about the necessity for better road beds and higher speed, and drew attention to the fact that it takes as long to go from Perth to Kalgoorlie to-day as it did 25 years ago.

Mr. Styants: Longer.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There has been a lot of development along that line in the past 25 years. Many more people are settled along it. Places like Merredin and Kellerberrin have grown up in the last 25 years. There is a greater demand upon the services that the railways are able to give along that line. We call it the Kalgoorlie Express, but it has to do wayside traffic along the route.

Mr. Withers: That is the trouble.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is an economical way of working the railways.

Mr. Withers: They have lost a lot of trade all the same.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is the best way we could work the railways during the depression years. We have not been able to afford to go in for luxurious improvements. In the future we may be able to improve the service along that line. Possibly we shall be able to improve the time the express will take to go from Perth to Kalgoorlie in the near future. Next year there is a reasonable expectation of such an improvement. I understand that the Commonwealth Government, early next year, will have new engines on the Commonwealth railway lines. To assist in the general improvement that will take place in passenger transport between Perth and Adelaide, this State, too, will probably play its part, and make the Kalgoorlie to Perth train a real express, cutting out some of the time it now takes, because of the wayside traffic, to do the journey. Over the distance, including stops, the train averages about 22½ miles per hour. It is not such a slow train when all the time is taken into consideration that is occupied in the stops along the line. We

all desire to have high speed, but high speed means better road beds.

Mr. Rodoreda: It is dangerous, too.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, and it means heavier rails. We could have a train doing 45 to 50 miles an hour if we had the money with which to improve the road beds, put down 12 or 14 inches of ballast instead of about 6 inches, and use 100-lb. rails instead of 45 or 60-lb. rails. We could do all those things if we had the money. When we had the rails down and had the high speeds, we would also have a higher cost of maintenance. We would require more gangs to look after the railways, and more men in the gangs. Members should realise that this State is in the early stages of development. Notwithstanding that, we have over 4,000 miles of railway to assist in that development. We are a comparatively poor State compared with the vast area we have to administer. We have not reached the limousine level yet. We have to hasten slowly. We know that certain improvements could be effected. If we could spend a million pounds we could have a better railway service, but we cannot afford to spend the money.

Mr. North: You do not kill people, anyway.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We have a railway service that is consistent with the state of our development and, whilst we cannot boast of high speeds, we can boast that it renders good and suitable service to the community.

The Premier: And a safe service.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, and one that meets the needs of the people in respect to the existing stage of economic development. I appreciate the difficulty every time I rise to my feet of combating some suggestion for an inquiry. There seems to be a tendency in human nature that is driving it into a position where it is always wanting an inquiry into something.

Mr. Needham: What is wrong with that?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The easiest thing to do is to admonish other people, and to suggest inquiries into the work of some other person, without having any regard for the quality of the work we do ourselves.

Mr. Hughes: Is the result of an inquiry always wrong knowledge?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There are people who are employed to make

constant inquiries. They are charged with the administration and management of the railways, and are well fitted for that both by training and experience.

Mr. Needham: Is it an offence to make an inquiry?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am opposed to all these suggestions, particularly when I know that the railway service is being well and efficiently conducted consistent with the material on hand. The material on hand is also consistent with what we can afford in our present state of economic development. I hope the motion will not be carried, and that by opposing it members will give an expression of confidence in the Railway Commissioner. That gentleman is one of the best Railway Commissioners this State has ever had. Under him he has a very efficient staff of officers and men generally.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [8.40]: I do not think the motion has a great deal to do with the present management of the railway system. There are far bigger things than to find fault with the men who are in charge of that service. The railways within their limitations are as well managed as any others in the Commonwealth. I join issue with the Minister as to inquiries. Inquiries serve a very useful purpose. This session has established a record for inquiries.

The Premier: Both Houses have had the select committee bug.

Mr. BOYLE: Every select committee that has been appointed has justified itself so far.

Mr. Lambert: They have not run the risk of a no-confidence motion.

Mr. Fox: Not in the eyes of another place.

Mr. BOYLE: The debt position of the railways is £26,900,000. That is the debt position due to the development of the interior of the State. What I object to particularly is the fact that the agriculturist, the rural dweller, and the miner, have to bear the whole burden of the railway system, which unquestionably has developed this State. Every year in making up the rate book the officials of the Railway Department have to bear in mind that an interest bill of £1,060,000 has to be faced. By what process of just reasoning is the whole of that interest placed upon the shoulders

of the users of the railways? This State is roughly divided into two sections, the metropolitan area carrying 49 per cent. of the population which does not use the railways to any great extent, and the population outside the metropolitan area. Some 16,000 motor cars are registered in the metropolitan area, and these provide very adequately for the transport of the people resident within that area. A comparatively small proportion of the 3½ millions of revenue derived by the railways comes from the metropolitan area. The Royal Commission could be charged with the reduction of the capital cost of the railways as regards the users, namely, the rural population and the producing population.

Mr. Lambert: That would not get us anywhere.

Mr. BOYLE: It would. There is an intention amongst the heads of the Railways on account of the advent of bulk handling to impose another 9d. per ton on the charge for the carriage of wheat. They make no secret of the fact that this is to compensate for the loss of freight on cornsacks into the interior, this having now ceased. That is to be re-orientated and put back on the shoulders of the wheatgrowers to the extent of £37,500 a year. That would be the additional impost on the State's average production of 37,000,000 bushels of wheat.

The Premier: Is that the only reason?

Mr. BOYLE: No.

The Premier: It is a very small reason.

Mr. Patrick: It is not a good one.

The Premier: No, and it is not the main reason.

Mr. Patrick: It has been used by the railways.

Mr. BOYLE: I agree it is not an extraordinarily good reason. The railways say that the handling costs to the department have increased on account of bulk handling. They cannot prove that argument.

The Premier: They proved it to the Royal Commission.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The statement was made, but it was not proved.

Mr. BOYLE: The railways are charged to secure sufficient revenue to cover all working expenses and interest. That is their job. They have to face a capital cost of nearly £27,000,000 and the fact that the railways have not been valued, nor has any stocktaking taken place since the system was first

introduced. It is not based on the ordinary commonplace conception of a business. A firm naturally conducts a stocktaking and the value of its assets is written down if necessary. On the other hand, the producers and users of the railways are saddled with the whole of the interest burden of the State. It has been said that the history of deficits throughout Australia is the history of deficits of the railway systems of Australia. That has been regarded in Queensland as sufficient to bring about the writing down of the capital cost of the railways there while at the present time Victoria is going into the question.

Mr. Patrick: Victoria has written off some millions.

The Premier: And if we did that, we would have to tax the people to make up the difference.

Mr. BOYLE: I agree with the Premier that it would be necessary to impose taxation to make up the difference, but he should not tax a portion only of the people with that object in view. That is quite opposed to justice. The Premier is taxing people who are producing and who have pioneered the State. They are the people who make it possible for the metropolitan area to exist at all. It is only fair that the burden of taxation shall rest on the people as a whole and not on one section.

The Minister for Railways: What do you think about having free railways?

Mr. Thorn: It would be just as good as free education.

Mr. BOYLE: If the Minister can evolve a scheme under which we can have free railways he will have an advocate in me.

The Minister for Railways: That has been advocated by a professor in New Zealand.

Mr. BOYLE: I have also heard something of a system of land taxation, but that is slightly ahead of my argument.

Mr. Lambert: You could not have been invited to the Diesel engine run the other day.

Mr. BOYLE: I was, and I thoroughly enjoyed the trip. It is a tribute to the railway management that they are endeavouring to compete with road transport. I do not know if the fault is attributable to the Minister, but I am glad to say that the Merredin district is to have the benefit of three of the six Diesel coaches. As a result of that decision, I hope that the deficit

on that particular section of the railways will be correspondingly reduced.

Mr. Marshall: You and the member for Katanning seem to be able to get everything.

Mr. BOYLE: It is alleged that the decision was due to political influence, but I can scarcely agree with that. I think the Minister had in mind the greatest good for the greatest number. It must be recognised that the railway system is largely dependent on the carriage of wheat. For the six years from 1930 to 1936 the average paid by the growers for the carriage of wheat was £600,000 per annum, and the railway deficit over that period was £1,750,000, which has been placed on the shoulders of the general taxpayers throughout the State. In those circumstances, I would be prepared to submit to the Royal Commission that they should accept the principle of placing more on the shoulders of the general taxpayers, especially upon the metropolitan population. I recognise that would hardly appeal to the Government.

The Premier: Oh, yes!

Mr. BOYLE: Another matter that is causing a good deal of anxiety is the fact that to-day it is seriously proposed to abandon the working of certain lines. For instance, the extension of the Nornalup line from Denmark is to be abandoned. Then we are faced with the position regarding the Bullfinch line, which means that that area is practically going out of production. I attended a meeting recently in the Westonia district at which it was seriously contended that the whole district served by the existing railway was to revert to the Crown under the Mitchell scheme at a nominal figure. What would be the logical outcome of that? The losses on that section of our developmental railways would again be placed on the shoulders of the users of the railways. The Commissioner of Railways is charged with the duty of providing interest and sinking fund on the railway operations.

The Premier: But he does not always do it.

Mr. BOYLE: But he has done it. If the Commissioner were approached, he would say that he cannot reduce rates and he cannot meet any greater expenditure because he has in view his task to secure interest and working expenses from the operations of the railway system. I am sure the Pre-

mier would not look with any great pleasure on an ever-mounting railway deficit.

The Premier: We have decreased rates over successive years for a long time past.

Mr. BOYLE: But the Premier overlooks the fact that in 1919 wheat freights were increased by 1s. per ton and again in 1921 by a similar amount. To-day the average wheat freight rate is 14s. 10d. per ton, and no one can convince me that the railways carry that wheat at a loss.

The Premier: We have decreased rates successively for the past 13 or 14 years.

Mr. BOYLE: Not in respect of this main product.

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. BOYLE: There was a 15 per cent. reduction nearly two years ago, but that did not apply to wheat freights, which represent the main revenue source for the railways. I have pleasure in supporting the motion, and I do so not with the idea of finding fault with the management of the railways. Rather do I support the motion with a view to a general stocktaking of a concern that is responsible for 26 per cent. of the total debt of the State. I cannot understand why the Minister objects to such an inquiry, for it should be helpful to him. He stated that a previous Royal Commission had effected no good. I say that much good resulted from that inquiry.

The Minister for Railways: There is an answer for everything they put up.

Mr. BOYLE: It may be necessary to have periodical inquiries into this, the greatest revenue department of the State. It is responsible for 35 per cent. of our total revenue. It is our duty, as it is that of every member representing a country constituency, whether he be a Country Party member or a Labour Party member, to see that the increasing burden placed to-day upon the shoulders of the producers at least becomes the subject of inquiry.

MR. HILL (Albany) [8.53]: I have listened with great interest to other members, and particularly to the Minister, who have spoken to the motion. So far most of them have dealt with it purely from the point of view of the railways. I consider that a Royal Commission appointed to report simply on our railways would be of limited value, but a Royal Commission to report upon our railways with particular reference to their relationship to modern

transport facilities is very desirable. It is the practice of the Institute of Transport of Great Britain for the newly-elected president, when he assumes office, to give an address on some problem associated with transport. When Sir David J. Owen, General Manager of the Port of London Authority, assumed office as president in 1932, he concluded his address by stressing the fact that we must consider the problem of transport as a whole. He referred to the various means of transport, all of which had capabilities of performing some useful service for the benefit of the community. The golden age of railways, Sir David remarked, had passed, but railways under wise control had still a useful function to perform. The self-propelled road vehicles were capable of performing useful but not unlimited service, and the capabilities of aircraft had still to be explored. He considered that there should be more scope for coastal shipping. Unfortunately, the tendency was for the workers in the different activities to look upon their particular work as the end instead of the means to some other end. For instance, he continued, the railway mind seemed to imagine that ports existed for the purpose of acting as feeders to the railways. He visualised the time when the various means of transport would be regulated, and working in the sphere where they could best serve the interests of the community. Ports would then be seen in their true perspective, acting as efficient links between the various forms of land transport, on the one side, and sea transport on the other. I trust that the Government will appoint this proposed Royal Commission, and that the Commission will inquire how best to bring about a complete and national system of transport that will enable our producers to keep their costs down to a minimum so that we can compete in the markets of the world. The mover suggested that the Royal Commission should consist of one business man and two railway men. I suggest that it consist of one business man, one railway man and one port and shipping man. My twenty-seven years' experience as an exporting producer causes me to make this suggestion. A great number of people seem to consider that a producer's transport troubles are ended when the product reaches the port. If that were so, I would be fortunate. I had my own wharf attached to my fruit shed, and more produce, etc., used to go over that wharf each

year than went through some of the South Australian ports in 1936, but I have discarded water transport in favour of motor trucks, because my transport troubles only start when I get my fruit, etc., to the port. The study of our transport troubles has become my hobby. We have all seen the changes in land transport. I have also seen the changes in sea transport. As we look to our roads to feed our railways, so we must look to our railways to feed our ports. Very few countries have kept pace with the changes in transport. Each of our Australian States has an entirely different transport problem. Our State has many advantages over the others, but our conditions approximate to those of South Africa more closely than do those of the other Australian States. I have quite a lot of sympathy with our railways administration. Because rail-age is a direct charge, and is made on a mileage basis, there is the tendency to imagine that we must demand the minimum railway mileage. The result has been that every part of the State has had, or has today, some pet railway or port scheme, and we have railways and ports all over the place. Let us examine a few figures to see if reduced mileage necessarily means reduced costs:—

	Average mileage of grain hauled.	Cost per bushel. wheat. maize.
South Australia ..	78	4½d.
Victoria ..	150	4d.
Western Australia ..	153	4¾d.
South Africa ..	600	5½d.

The average haul of goods in South Africa is 206 miles, and the cost 17s. 3d. per ton. In this State, the figures are only 123 miles, and the cost per ton is 18s. 1d. The cost per ton mile in South Africa is 1d., and in Western Australia it is 1.76d. The South African railways for 1936 made a profit of £5,623,158, after allowing for depreciation, but not sinking fund. In this State, after charging sinking fund and exchange, but not depreciation, we made a loss for 1935-36 on our railways of £403,545. Without sinking fund and exchange, the loss was £166,610. The South African harbours for 1936 made a profit of £538,727; our harbours for 1937 made a loss of £28,372. I have not sufficient information to compare the port charges of South Africa and this State but the figures I have will be of interest. If the revenue collected for the port were made a direct and flat

charge on the cargo passing through the port, it would be as follows:—

		per ton.
		s. d.
Melbourne	.. ..	2 6
Sydney	.. ..	2 8
Adelaide	.. ..	3 8
Fremantle	.. ..	5 0

These figures do not include handling charges, and the Fremantle figures are obtained after deducting the amount of £104,403, which was the actual cost of handling cargo. For 1935-36 the South Australian ports reduced the loan liability by £37,856, and made a profit of £142,767. In this State we increased our loan liability by £332,112 and made a loss of £17,039. The total loan expenditure on the Melbourne Harbour, has been £8,971,867. The indebtedness of the Melbourne Harbour for 1936 was £4,377,310, the balance of nearly 4½ millions having been repaid. The loan expenditure at Fremantle up to 1936 was £3,287,869, and the loan liability was shown as £3,412,579. Further, although our State is the largest in Australia, Fremantle handles, on a value basis, nine times more trade than all the other ports combined, and although we are largely a primary producing State, 47 per cent. of our population is concentrated within a 12-mile radius of the G.P.O. These facts show that there is ample scope for an inquiry by a Royal Commission to report upon the workings of our railways, with particular reference to its relationship to modern transport facilities. Further comparisons with South Africa will be of interest—

	South Africa.	Western Australia.
Earnings per train mile	11s. 8d.	11s. 1d.
Expenses per train mile	7s. 7d.	8s. 4d.
Surplus per train mile	4s. 1d.	2s. 9d.
Average net load per train	213 tons	107 tons
Average length of haul	212 miles	123 miles
Average earnings per train	£123 13s.	£68 3s.
Average expenses per train	£80 7s.	£51 5s.
Average surplus per train	£43 6s.	£17 18s.
Labour employed—		
White	51,969	
Non-European	20,772	
	72,741	8,528
Average amount earned per employee	£403	£413
Average train miles per employee	707 miles	713 miles

It is obvious from these figures that the better financial results in South Africa are largely due to the fact that the average truck load and haul is approximately double that of ours. The last time an investigation was made into the workings of our railways, the Royal Commissioner was the late Mr. G. W. Stead. I became friendly with Mr Stead during the last years of his life and

had many interesting conversations with him about our railways. On one occasion he discussed the then Commissioner of Railways' statement that the haulage of wheat did not pay. Mr. Stead said that this was probably true in connection with haulage over short distances and light spur lines, but the haulage did pay on the heavy trunk lines and over long distances. This remark is particularly interesting when comparing our figures with those of South Africa. I will make further use of Mr. Stead's remarks later. The Minister for Works, when discussing the Federal Aid Roads Bill, eulogised Mr. S. M. Bruce for introducing the road construction policy. Mr. Bruce is one of the most outstanding figures that Australia has produced in recent years. He realised that our transport costs had to be reduced to the minimum. He not only gave us a sound road policy but he brought Sir George Buchanan to Australia to report, not upon the extensions at Fremantle, but upon transport in Australia, with special reference to port and harbour facilities. Had our Government studied that report and adopted its general recommendations, there would be no need for this motion, our transport would be considerably better and cheaper than it is to-day and, incidentally, I would now be enjoying the quiet life of a fruitgrower instead of being in the hurly-burly of party politics. Ports are rarely seen in their true perspective in Australia. I am afraid that our various political parties are more concerned with the votes of the ports than the provision of efficient transport services at the lowest possible costs. For instance, in Victoria one wheat terminal at Geelong would have been better for Victoria, but there are the votes of Melbourne to be considered. Then in Western Australia we have the State divided into port zones. The question as to whether our port zones are economically sound or in the best interests of the State has never been considered by the Government, Parliament or any other responsible body. To be fair to our present Premier, he had the best of intentions when he introduced port zones. He was like the elephant which sat on the chickens to protect them from the rain. The member for Geraldton took only one factor into consideration, namely, railway mileage. In Chapter III, Volume I, Sir George Buchanan refers to the many factors that must be considered besides railway mileage. We have proof of this when we compare our re-

sults with those of South Africa. He defines ports as the media or clearing houses between sea and land transport. "On the port," he says, "their efficiency and their proper location, the whole system of transport largely depends." He pointed out that all ports cannot be developed as overseas ports, and recommended a very few ports, that the most suitable ports be selected, that all political wire-pulling be cut out and that the most suitable ports be developed as modern ports. He made it very clear that in this State the ports of Geraldton, Fremantle or Albany should be developed as our overseas ports. The Government is adhering to his recommendation as far as Geraldton and Fremantle are concerned, but I am afraid that his remarks about our ports and railways in the southern portion of the State are largely responsible for his unpopularity with the members of the Collier Government. I doubt if there is any part of the world where nature has done so much to assist modern transport. But the various Governments, instead of working in with nature, have done the opposite, and it would be interesting to know how much of the losses on our ports and railways are due to the railway and port tragedy south of a line east and west of Beverley. The railway from Beverley to Albany was built by private enterprise. This railway is practically on the western edge of the wheat belt. Now study the map of the State. East of this railway, and running almost parallel to it may be traced by the continuous chain of salt lakes an old river bed. I will now go back to the late Mr. Stead. He told me that when the question of opening up the country east of the Great Southern Railway was under consideration, he and the other railway men of the day wanted this done by a loop line from Beverley to Mt. Barker, running north and south, with the natural lie of the country, and to the natural port of Albany. But the railway men were overruled by the politicians of the day and we must blame them and not the railway men of to-day, or of the past, for the unsatisfactory condition of our railways. Our Railway Commissioner to-day has hundreds of miles of railways more than are required, with the consequent unnecessary interest and maintenance charges, and instead of hauling wheat down easy grades to Albany, he must haul wheat over the Darling Range to Bunbury or Fremantle.

Mr. McLarty called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. HILL: Mr. Stead often told me that haulage over the Darling Range was not only costly because it took two engines to do the work of one, but the heavy pull was exerted around many curves and this caused heavy wear and tear with costly maintenance on both rolling stock and permanent way. This line has been regraded at great expense and while the carrying capacity of the trains has been increased, the interest charges have also been increased. Not only are the costs per mile greater than if the railways had been run north and south instead of east and west, but the average distance that wheat is hauled is greater than it would have been. For instance, the mover of the motion referred to the position of Hyden which is 259 miles by rail from its zone port of Bunbury. One has only to look at the railway map to see that Albany is the natural port of Hyden. Instead of the Lake Grace-Wagin line, we should have a line running south with that chain of salt lakes via Pingrup, Ongerup, and then to connect up with the Stead-Beverley-Mt. Barker loop through the Chester Pass and down hill to Albany—less mileage and easier grades. Between Beverley and Tambellup there are no fewer than nine railways running at right angles to the Great Southern line which serves the country for 15 miles on each side. This means 135 miles of railway in country already served by the Great Southern. Then there are the dead ends at Hyden, Newdegate, Pingrup and Ongerup. Further, it is interesting to note that while the railways between Merredin and Narrogin have grades of 1 in 60, and the Hyden-Lake Grace railway a grade of 1 in 80, the Brookton, Corrigin, Wagin, Newdegate, and Katanning-Nyabing railways—which run east and west—have grades of 1 in 40. West of the Great Southern we have the Narrogin-Dwarda, Wagin-Bowelling and Katanning-Donnybrook lines. These railways should never have been built. Here again the railways should have been north and south instead of east and west. The member for Kalgoorlie advocated heavier rails and engines. The relaying of our lines with 80-lb. rails and heavier engines would cost an enormous amount. The heavy rails and engines are necessary in South Africa because nature has been very unkind over there. In our State we should take advantage of

Nature's gifts, work in with her, and carry out the recommendations of transport experts. I suggest that the present port zone system be abolished and that we have zones based on a sound port policy and designed not with the object of running the State for the benefit of the ports, but designed so that producers shall have export facilities at the lowest possible cost and railage charged on a zone basis instead of on a mileage basis.

Mr. Withers: All going to the central port. Be careful!

Mr. HILL: No. I wonder what the General Manager of the Railways and Harbours Department in South Africa would think of the port zone system of the southern portion of the State where, to save an average of 35 miles in railage, wheat must be hauled over a range of hills to a silted up harbour instead of down easy grades to one of the best harbours in the world? There has been nothing spent on the regrading of the Great Southern railway, whereas about £80,000 has been spent on the railway between Collie and Brunswick. This heavy expenditure has only increased the engine load on 25 miles of railway. Had this amount been spent on cutting out the few pinches on the Great Southern railway between Narrogin and Albany, the load on 179 miles would have been increased. Further, we would facilitate railway working and effect other economies by concentrating the trade on its natural port. The following figures are of interest:—

From Narrogin—	Distance.	Mileage over which a F8 engine can draw over 600 tons of two-engine maximum load of 850 tons.	Mileage of sections on which are grades to be reduced to the lowest maximum load.
	miles.	miles.	miles.
To Bunbury	192	41	91
To Albany	179	110	69
From Wagin—			
To Bunbury	127	16	111
To Albany	148	102	46

Mr. Withers: How would you manage to get your coal from Collie to the Great Southern?

Mr. HILL: The line is there now. Greater speed is permitted on the Great Southern railway than on the railways to Bunbury, owing to the easier curves. The only Government-built railway within 90 miles of Albany is the Denmark-Nornalup. At the present time the Transport Board are considering its closure. In 1922 this House passed a Bill to construct a railway from Jardee to Denmark. This proposal was

turned down in another place and, as a compromise, the portions of the railway were constructed from Jaradanup to Northcliffe and from Denmark to Nornalup. Those railways were constructed with money advanced by the Imperial Government at a cheap rate of interest for ten years. The ten years are nearly up and as the railway has never been completed, and further settlement has received a check with the depression, the Railway Department is naturally not desirous of being saddled with the full interest bill. As far as I can gather, the only way under existing Acts to relieve the Railway Department of that interest bill is to close the railway. If this is done, the interest bill must still be paid by the taxpayer, and the only advantage will be that it will enable the Commissioner to show a little better balance. The interest on developmental railways should not be a charge against the Railway Department until the land is developed. When the Denmark-Nornalup railway was opened by the present Minister for Lands, just before the elections of 1927, he stated that heavy rails had been used as it was intended that the line should continue through and connect up with the South-West railways. If our railways were controlled by the Manager of the South African Railways and Harbours, I can safely say that this railway would be completed without much delay. Between Pemberton and Bunbury there are grades up to 1 in 40. Both ways to Albany the maximum grade would be 1 in 60. In South Africa £151,000,000 has been spent on railways and only £17,000,000 on ports. In this State £25,000,000 has been spent on railways and about £6,750,000 on ports. In proportion we have spent more than twice as much on our ports as has been spent on South African ports. In the near future the completion of the line will be justified firstly, to enable the railway to haul heavier loads of timber to the port; secondly, because it is a cheaper proposition to use the harbour that Nature gave us in preference to using other people's money to extend, at enormous cost, constructed harbours, and, thirdly, to enable the South-West and Great Southern to co-operate to get better shipping services. At present Albany is at a disadvantage from a railway standpoint, as there is very little back-loading from the port. When the question as to whether the super works should be built at Albany or

Bunbury was in the balance, our present Premier announced in the "West Australian" of the 25th April, 1929, that the Government had asked the company to erect works at Bunbury, to supply back loading for the wheat trucks. At the Fruitgrowers' Conference at Donnybrook in 1932, Mr. L. T. Hickey, of the Railway Department, stated that 80 per cent. of the trucks required for the South-West had to be hauled empty from the metropolitan area. To-day the Albany zone draws its supplies of super from Bunbury and that super is hauled at a very heavy loss to the Railway Department. The Bunbury zone north and east of Waterloo draws its supplies from the metropolitan area, and while farmers of the State suffer economic loss through delays in the deliveries of super owing to the shortage of trucks at Picton and Bassendean, we have trains of empty trucks leaving Albany. I feel quite safe in saying that the blunder of placing the works at Bunbury, instead of at Albany, cost the Railway Department £25,000 this year, or about £10,000 more than the full interest bill on the Denmark-Nornalup railway. When I asked the Minister for Works to reclaim a site for super works on the water front at Albany, he attempted to justify his refusal by saying that the boundary of the Albany zone was at Boyerine. He ignored the economic fact that it would be far more economical to haul from Albany to Wagin and Narrogin than from the metropolitan works as at present. He has said, "Why put works on the water front at Albany when they are not on the water front at any other port?" If the farmers in what I shall term Albany's natural zone were drawing their supplies from works on the water front at Albany, the saving by having the works so situated would be about £10,000 in the production of super. This would be because of a saving of 3s. 4d. on 60,000 tons, equal to £10,000. So this is not a wild guess. The placing of works at Bunbury results in a saving of only 2s. per ton on an average in railage. The demand for super is rapidly growing in the southern end of this State. The Government to-day has the chance not only of enabling the farmers to obtain their super at the minimum of cost, but of cutting out a considerable loss to the railways. The wharfage charges on phosphates and sulphur will more than pay the interest and sinking fund on the cost of a wharf and a

reclaimed site. Let the Government provide the site and works will rapidly follow, and the principal gainers will be our railways. I am not jealous of Bunbury or of any other port of the State. Sir George Buchanan's statement "if the port is to be maintained" is very suggestive. He referred to the fact that a feature of Australian port development had been that ports had been established in unsuitable localities, and fine natural harbours a few miles away had been neglected. He spoke of Rockhampton on the Fitzroy River in Queensland, and of the natural harbour of Gladstone a few miles away; he spoke of Newcastle and Port Stephens in New South Wales; and he definitely stated that it would be cheaper to build railways to Albany than to spend the money necessary to develop Bunbury. When in Sydney I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Debenham, the Chief Engineer of the Maritime Service Board of New South Wales, and chairman of the Newcastle Advisory Board. He has no alternative to-day but to carry on with the everlasting and continuous expense necessary to maintain Newcastle, because of the millions which private enterprise has spent at Newcastle, and while he is everlastingly fighting Nature at Newcastle, the natural harbour of Port Stephens a few miles away is lying idle. If any member would like to have further information about this tragedy, I would suggest that he discuss Newcastle and Port Stephens with our Town Planning Commissioner, Mr. Davidson. It would be extremely interesting to hear what Mr. Debenham would think of the Government's action in placing the terminal for the Wagin and Narrogin wheat at Bunbury instead of at Albany. Then there is the instance of Rockhampton and Gladstone in Queensland. A few weeks ago the Royal Commissioners on transport in Queensland submitted their report, and the position of those two ports was discussed. The Royal Commissioners did not say that Rockhampton should not be closed down in preference to Gladstone. It is a pity that that Royal Commission did not have a port or shipping man as one of its members. I do not want to see a tragedy passed on to posterity in this State similar to those tragedies in New South Wales and Queensland. There is a decided analogy between Newcastle, Rockhampton and Bunbury. Bunbury has all the disadvantages of Newcastle and Rockhampton, and has not

their advantages. Further, Albany is a far superior harbour than either Gladstone or Port Stephens. Sir George Buchanan reported on the question of Albany or Bunbury being developed as an overseas port—

The advantage would apparently lie with Albany. At the port a costly breakwater will be needed, and constantly recurring expense will be necessary.

Bunbury can be developed into a first-class port, but only at great expense for construction and maintenance. Whether it will be politic to incur this expense is a matter for consideration by Government.

The Government is afraid to face this question for fear of losing the Bunbury vote, and so I suggest that the Royal Commission be instructed to report. Since the Collier Government took office the fight against Nature at Bunbury has cost £260,000, and one has only to make a periodical visit and view the harbour from the lighthouse to see that Nature is winning. Bunbury will never be used to any great extent as an overseas port for the South-West owing to its proximity to Fremantle. As a financial proposition it is a failure, the accrued unpaid interest on the 30th June having been £216,000. The Harbour Board did not pay any interest last year, and I note that the Government does not expect any revenue from the port this year. Bunbury is not only a drag on the taxpayer; it is a drag on the State. It cannot be made a first-class port and it prevents the development of Albany. The "West Australian" of the 4th November suggested that a Royal Commission should report on our harbour administration. This proposed Royal Commission must, if it is to report on the workings of our railways with their relation to modern transport facilities, also investigate our harbour administration, or perhaps it would be more correct to say our lack of harbour administration. If the present port zone system is maintained our port charges must increase. Out of a total debt of £90,000,000, our transport services are responsible for over £38,000,000. In addition there are the millions that have been spent on our roads, and the untold millions spent by the people generally on transport facilities. We need a Royal Commission thoroughly to investigate the whole problem, and the greatest publicity should be given to the evidence and findings as the problem is very little understood by the man in the street. After a comparison of information that I have been able to gather, I do not

blame our railway officials entirely for the unsatisfactory workings of our railways, and I know that if I were Commissioner of Railways I would welcome the proposed Royal Commission. The trouble to-day is this: Every little district considers its own little transport problem. We must look upon transport as a national problem, and our aim must be for a national and complete system of transport that will enable our producers to have transport facilities at the lowest possible cost and maximum efficiency. I trust that a Royal Commission will be appointed, and that it will be asked to investigate how this lowering of costs can be brought about.

Mr. WITHERS: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	23
Noes	..	..	..	..	16

Majority for 7

AYES.	
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cross	Mr. Redoreda
Mr. Doust	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Fox	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Mr. Heguey	Mr. Tonkin
Miss Houman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wise
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Munals	(Teller.)
NOES.	
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Hill	Mr. Seward
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Shearu
Mr. Mann	Mr. Thorn
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Warner
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Watts
Mr. North	Mr. Doney
	(Teller.)

Motion thus passed; the debate adjourned.

BILL—BETTING CONTROL.

Second Reading.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.34] in moving the second reading said: In view of the fact that the Bill has been before the Chamber on two previous occasions in the same form, and the subject having been fully dealt with on a motion moved by myself four years ago, I shall not delay hon. members by going fully into the pros and cons of the question. I would like to agree with those who really believe that drastic legislation, if enforced, could entirely eradicate betting.

Such an opinion is held by numerous people who will never be convinced that they are wrong, notwithstanding that all records and all discoverable evidence show conclusively that there is no possibility of making people highly virtuous by Act of Parliament. More particularly is it difficult to enforce legislation which in the general opinion is not just. I have heard hon. members state repeatedly that all we need do is to enforce the laws of Western Australia and betting will be eradicated. Nothing could be further from the fact, because such attempts have been made. Similar attempts have been made in South Australia and Victoria as well as other States. I shall not elaborate on South Australian preventive legislation. I desire merely to say that every possible attempt by legislation was made there, and failed miserably to fulfil the hopes of its supporters. All it did was to drive starting price bettors and illegal bettors into secluded spots. The deplorable position resulted that in South Australia betting took place in private homes, with telephones installed, and that children were sent into the street to be pimps watching for the police. Bookmakers employed 590-odd pimps, irrespective of the number employed by the police to pimp on the bookmakers in their turn. All sorts of shops, fruit and butcher shops, hotels and so forth, were taking bets. The anti-betting legislation proved absolutely valueless. The law was drastic, and imposed imprisonment. Thereupon a substitute appeared in the shop, the bookmaker himself never showing up there. Upon prosecution and conviction the substitute went to gaol, the bookmaker paying his wages. No one was considered a criminal because of having been in prison for running a starting-price shop. English, Irish and African records alike show that amended laws, passed as the result of inquiries by select committees, Royal Commissions and other bodies, were entirely without effect. I know that every member of the Chamber has already his or her mind made up. What I have to say as to the advisableness of legalising betting I had better leave to the Committee stage, if the Bill passes the second reading. The member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) an evening or two ago painted a deplorable picture of a youth having spent his money on betting. My ambition is to prevent that. I can tell the member for Subiaco she need have no fear. If by legislation she did attempt to abolish

starting-price shops, she would not abolish the anomaly of which she spoke an evening or two ago. The child would go elsewhere, where betting facilities were available, as is the case in Victoria to-day. There are people who assert that in Victoria there is no betting, but our "Hansard" has recorded letters to myself from the Victorian Commissioner of Police, the Victorian Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Victorian Labour Party candidly avowing that one can get a bet anywhere in Melbourne for from 5s. to £1,000. Suppression has been tried, and found utterly useless. All that remains is to control betting and get rid of the anomalies. I have never made a bet in my life, and never will make one. No law will ever induce me to make a bet. But if I wanted to bet, no law would stop me from doing so. It is not altogether a matter of encouraging youth to gamble. I quote a passage from the report of the South Australian Royal Commission on Betting, as follows:—

When the Church of England was invited to give evidence, the Lord Bishop of Adelaide replied that he did not desire to do so, but in an address to the Rotary Club on 9th March, 1933, on "The Ethics of Gambling," he expressed his views on this subject as follows. After dealing with the moral, social and economic evils of gambling, he said that legislation directed to its total suppression would do more harm than good, because it would not have the bulk of public opinion behind it; that State control of betting did not go to the root of the evil, and that the most urgent need was the creation of a right public opinion.

I have spoken on that aspect in this Chamber. I respectfully suggest that if we want our youth to be warned against these alleged evils we should give them instruction on the subject during the last year or two before leaving school. Then upon coming from school they will be equipped to resist temptation, and in that way we may make citizens of them. But it is absurd, after having left them in that environment, to try to prevent them from gambling. The Bill is precisely the same as I introduced on two previous occasions. In the main it is based upon South Australian legislation of the past three or four years. It provides for control of betting by a board, on which the metropolitan courses and country clubs and also the Government will have representation. The board will finance the clubs through fees obtained from the licensing of

shops and agents and bookmakers. The board will have to see that the charges are sufficient to cover all expenses. It will not be competent for any licensed bookmaker to bet with a person under the influence of liquor, or showing any signs of the influence of liquor, or with a minor. In other words, the measure will get rid of all those anomalies which appear now in connection with starting-price betting. The Bill is not all that is desired. However, I cannot introduce a measure imposing taxation, and therefore I cannot render the same justice to the clubs as is rendered to them in Tasmania and South Australia. I can only introduce a Bill in conformity with the Standing Orders, and I have done the best I can in this measure. It is short, and can be read and thoroughly understood in half an hour. As regards South Australia, from personal observation I can say that no fault can be found with the system there. I disagree with the opinion expressed by Mr. E. Lee Steere on his return from there. The only fault he could find with the legalisation of betting in South Australia was that you could see people going into a betting shop about 200 yards from your door. One can see people going into all sorts of shops—beer shops, drapers' shops, grocers' shops and other shops; but if it is a starting-price shop Mr. Lee Steere objects. His criticism shows exactly how beneficial the South Australian legislation has proved. As mentioned by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) an evening or two ago, it is unfair for the Government to sit idly by and allow men to be prosecuted week after week for making bets in Perth shops while one can go to Tattersall's Club and bet freely in the basement. No one is ever arrested there. One can bet there as much as one likes. But if one goes to somebody else's shop to make a bet, one is liable to be prosecuted. I have never yet heard of a bookmaker being taken from Tattersall's.

Members: One has been.

Mr. MARSHALL: Raids on Tattersall's are most rare. About ten men operate there. Anyway, I agree with the attitude of the member for East Perth, that if it is immoral and wrong to bet anywhere, it is equally wrong and immoral to bet on a racecourse. No Government should tolerate such an anomaly. Either no prosecutions whatever should be allowed, or the police should go out on the racecourse and bring in offenders

from there. The return laid on the Table to-night is a revelation. We can see from the figures that some of the proprietary racecourse clubs are getting as much as £1,000 a year from totalisator fractions.

Mr. Raphael: The trots get a sight more!

Mr. MARSHALL: Some of those clubs average £1,000 a year from fractions, while showing a profit otherwise. The poor unfortunate punter goes out to the racecourse and thinks he is doing wonderfully well by putting money on the totalisator. To him the figures in the return should be a revelation. They show the robbery that is taking place. I take strong exception to it. Having regard to the fact that I have traversed this matter already three or four times I shall not delay the House any longer. If the Bill goes into Committee I will reply to any objections that may be raised. I do not think any case can be presented that cannot be knocked over. I move—

That the Bill be read a second time.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOCAL COURTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.46] in moving the second reading said: I do not anticipate much opposition to this small Bill, because the principle of not causing any undue hardship in the places where distresses are made, was agreed to last session. The Local Courts Act was passed 34 years ago, and many changes have since taken place. The Bill proposes to protect furniture that is not protected under the 1904 Act. That lack of protection is right out of keeping with present-day sentiment. For the benefit of hon. members I will read the proviso to Section 126 of the parent Act to which I propose the addition of a few words. The proviso is as follows:—

Provided that the following goods shall be protected from seizure:—Wearing apparel of such person to the value of £5, and of his wife to the value of £5, and of his family to the value of £2 for each member thereof dependent on him.

The proviso in my Bill is exactly the same up to that point. The parent Act then goes on to protect bedding to the value of £5 and an additional sum of £1 for each member of the family dependent on the man,

implements of trade to the value of £5, and family photographs and portraits. The change which I propose shall be made is that after the word "bedding" the words "household furniture and appliances to the value of £25; implements of trade to the value of £25" shall be inserted. Under the parent Act it would be possible for bedding to be protected to the tune of £11 or £12 according to the members of the family, but under the original Act even the baby's cradle would not be protected, nor would any other furniture. The times during which the parent Act were passed were very different from those of to-day. The average wage paid in Perth was then 6s. per day, as against 14s. now, so that the change I am suggesting is only comparative with the changed values, and it is only a fair proposition that for the benefit of women and children a certain limited amount of furniture should be protected. In regard to tools of trade, under the parent Act these were protected only to the extent of £5. Take the case of a woman who earns her living with a sewing machine. It is not possible to buy a new sewing machine to-day for £5. Again, take the case of a man who might get his living with an old truck carting wood or blackboy. That truck becomes his tool of trade, and it is not much of a truck if it is worth only £5. Further, take the case of a carpenter with a kit of tools. The sum of £5 would not cover the value of a kit of tools to-day. It may have done so in 1904, but owing to the changed values it is only a modest carpenter's kit which does not cost more than £25 to-day. It is entirely out of touch with modern sentiment that furniture is not protected at all. The additional amount of protection I am asking is only reasonable. If a person obtains a judgment against another person for debt, and if after taking away the bedding of that person the individual concerned had no more than £10 or £12 worth of furniture at present-day values, it should not be distrained at all. I am hopeful that hon. members will support the provisions of the Bill. If one goes into a home where there are goods worth only £10 or £12 and there is a family of five or six children, and if one realises that the furniture includes electrical fittings, the baby's cradle and chair, linoleum and crockery, it will readily be seen that that family has not got very much. In South Australia the Local Courts Act, which was passed in

1907 protects the mangle and sewing machine. The Act also contains a special definition relating to the values of furniture, which our Act does not. Value is defined as meaning value at a forced sale. Hon. members will realise that there is a tremendous difference between the value of goods distressed, the real value, and the value at a forced sale. I attended a few distress sales a couple of years ago, and I can assure members it is a painful experience to see goods and chattels of people put up at an enforced sale. At such sales goods worth £20 or £30 are sold for £2 or £3. It is pretty miserable. We have no provision in that regard, and I decided it was a fair thing that if people had not got £25 worth of goods including bedding they should not be distrained on at all. New Zealand last year amended its Act, and under that Act (No. 13 of 1936), which came into operation on the 11th June, 1936, absolute protection from seizure was granted for goods to the value of £25. That was a very good example for us to follow. The Minister has informed me that he would like an adjournment, and I am going to appeal to hon. members to see by supporting this amending measure that in the cause of fairness there is no undue hardship placed on the women and children of this State. It does not mean very much, and I want to impress upon members that if in a home where there are four or five or even six children there are chattels worth only £25, the man pressing for his pound of flesh would be inhuman if he desired to touch what would be the minimum requirements of life. In the interests of humanity I appeal to members to give the Bill a kick along and amend the law of the State in a way that will protect the unfortunate people as they themselves would like to be protected in similar circumstances. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Minister for Justice, debate adjourned.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 8th September of the debate on the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Hegney in the Chair; Mr. Hughes in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Definitions:

Mr. HUGHES: I move an amendment—

That the definition of "representative votes" be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—"Representative vote" means a vote of the members of either the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council or of a joint sitting thereof whereat each member of the Legislative Assembly is allowed a number of votes equal to the number of persons enrolled for the electorate he represents at the date of the last preceding general election of members of the Legislative Assembly, and each member of the Legislative Council is allowed a number of votes equal to the whole number nearest to one-third of the whole number of persons enrolled for the province he represents at the date of the last preceding general election for members of the Legislative Council.

In the original Bill members of the Council were given the same voting strength as the Assembly members, whereas in fact there are three representatives of each province as against one representative for each Assembly electorate.

Mr. McDONALD: I must admit that with the multiplicity of other Bills and of select committees I have not been able to give this Bill the attention that should be given to a Bill proposing an alteration of the Constitution of the State. From a hurried examination of the Bill I do not favour the provision for representative voting. It seems to me that if the Bill is to amend the Constitution we should eliminate the artificial provision that deals with representative voting. Under it one member in a metropolitan constituency would have the voting power of perhaps four or five members in other parts of the State. That is not in accordance with the modern view. In New South Wales there is a provision to meet the case of a deadlock between the two Houses, but in that State there is not any provision for representative voting of the kind mentioned in this Bill. The system in New South Wales provides that if a Bill be passed by the Assembly and rejected by the Council in two consecutive sessions, the Government may call a joint meeting of both Houses. They have two other courses provided, one of which is that the Bill might be submitted to representatives of the people, the other being that the Governor might dissolve the Assembly. Then if the Bill were

passed again by the Assembly it could be presented to the Governor for the Royal assent. I suggest to the hon. member that he concur in a motion that progress be reported. We would then have opportunity for placing on the Notice Paper any amendments that members might desire.

Mr. HUGHES: I am afraid that if the Bill does not go through Committee tonight the chances of its becoming law will be very slight. I point out to the member for West Perth that this representative voting is only to be used in case of a final passing of legislation without the concurrence of the two Houses. It makes no alteration in the legislation that is passed by the Houses as constituted at present. It is for dealing with deadlocks that take place between the two Houses. Under the present system it is possible for measures—particularly in another place—to become law without those measures having the support of the majority. Also it is possible for members representing 25 per cent. of the aggregate electorates to carry a vote over the heads of members representing 75 per cent. of that aggregate. I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I did not clearly hear the amendment when it was read out, but I understand it is on similar lines to the provision in the Bill. If that be so, it is going to alter the Constitution in a way that would be prejudicial to the small electorates in this State. For instance, when a vote was being taken the member for East Perth might have the equivalent of 10,000 votes while the member for Pilbarra had the equivalent of only 400 or 500 votes. Are we going to pass such an amendment as that of the Constitution Act? I would be opposed to it, and the people I represent would be opposed to it also. Surely an electorate like Kimberley is entitled to the same vote as an electorate like East Perth or any other metropolitan electorate. Anything else would be disfranchising the people of the outback.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 3, 4, Title—put and negatived.

[*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

Bill reported with amendments.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that consideration of the Committee's report be

made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House.

Mr. Hughes called for a division.

Question put, and the House divided, all members voting in the affirmative.

Mr. SPEAKER: I declare there is no occasion for a division.

Question thus passed.

MOTION—AGRICULTURE, LIGHT LANDS.

To inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 9th September on the following motion by Hon. C. G. Latham:—

That in order to promote the maximum occupation of, and maximum production from, the light lands and poison-infested lands of this State, and in order to ensure a more equitable relationship between the present charged price of such lands (by the Government or by any company or persons disposing of such lands whether alienated or unalienated) and the present cost of profitably working such lands, a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the terms, conditions, prices, and methods of disposal of such lands, together with the question of what encouragement is given to promote their use, and, further, to make such recommendations as is thought proper for the purpose of achieving the object of this resolution.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [10.20]: I support the motion. We were considering the railway position a little while ago. It is very important for Western Australia from the railway point of view that these light lands should be developed to a greater extent than they are at present. They constitute a problem peculiar to Western Australia. In no other State are there to be found such extensive areas of light land as are to be found here. In other countries, where the population is great, such as Germany, areas of this type have been converted into first class land by the intensive cultivation of blue lupin, which does well in parts of Western Australia, and other methods of the kind. In Western Australia during the wheat boom, large areas of this class of country were developed to a considerable extent. It grew crops fairly well for a year or two, and was more or less satisfactory when wheat was at a high price. Unfortunately it has now gone right out of development. That was an entirely wrong way to tackle this class of land. First of all

it has to be built up or improved so that it will grow pastures and carry stock. To grow wheat upon it is only to take away its fertility, and in the course of a year or two it begins steadily to go back. In my experience the best way to deal with this land is to grow crops such as oats and lupin, and feed them off so that there is fertility being returned to the soil all the time. I understand the Government has no objection to the appointment of a select committee to inquire into this question. On behalf of the Leader of the Opposition I thank the Minister for Lands for the consideration he has given to the matter.

MR. NULSEN (Kanowna) [10.23]: I support the motion. There are great possibilities for our light lands, provided the price is not too high. There are extensive areas of such lands in my electorate, particularly in the Esperance district, where the rainfall is good. It has been proved there that this type of land will produce good crops and good fodder. Its possibilities are great. I do not think the opportunity should be missed of developing the light lands. I have no intention of going into details to-night. I listened to others speaking of the possibilities of light land in parts of the State other than in my district. The appointment of a select committee will give us an opportunity to investigate the possibilities of this type of country. I feel sure that considerable areas of our light lands will produce more wheat than a good deal of the heavier land. I have noticed that a good deal of this light land has no alkali upon it. In my electorate Dr. Teakle has investigated a considerable portion of it, and says it is free from alkali and has a good subsoil. The light lands in my electorate that have been properly worked, and where agricultural science has been applied, have proved quite prolific. I will content myself by expressing the hope that a select committee will be appointed to investigate the whole position.

MR. HILL (Albany) [10.25]: I support the motion. I can recall a remark by a former Governor of this State, Sir Harry Barron, who said on one occasion that people who took up land in Western Australia reminded him of the boy who sat down with a plum pudding and picked out all the plums. That has been the position of land settlement in this State. Only the plums

have been picked out. A few weeks ago I was present at a field day at Wongan Hills. Some of the land there seemed to consist of nothing but pure white sand, but it was marvellous to see crops growing upon soil of that nature. At the southern end of the State we have quite a different proposition. It may interest members to know that somewhere about 1826 the question of establishing the first townsite in Western Australia was considered in relation to the Kalgan River. Unfortunately there was not sufficient good land there to warrant the establishment of a townsite. Had that been done, the history of Western Australia would be very different from what it is to-day. I am convinced that with proper treatment our poor land down south will give good results, just as good as it does at Wongan Hills. No doubt the people of Wongan Hills would laugh at our attempt to grow wheat in our district as I smiled at their pasture. In my opinion, people have ploughed too deeply in ground of this kind, with the result that the sour land was turned up. I am confident that we are finding out how to work these poor lands and grow good pastures. I think the appointment of a select committee will do an immense amount of good. I support the motion.

Question put and passed.

Select Committee Appointed.

Ballot taken, and a committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Coverley, Ferguson, Nulsen, Patriek and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report on the 8th December.

BILL—GROWERS CHARGE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th September.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [10.35]: I should imagine that one would be in a very happy position if he could move for the introduction of Bills of this description, without any sense of responsibility. One would feel very happy in thinking he could confer great advantages on a section of the people by the passage of a measure of this kind. I approach this Bill quite impartially, particularly as it makes no attempt to undermine the

Agricultural Bank and destroy it. Having in mind the fact that the Bank has always been generous to its clients, that it is forced to accept clients that sometimes the Commissioners think should not be brought within the scope of the institution, and that the Bank has written down indebtedness to an extent that has even been appreciated by the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle), I think it my duty to support it when necessary. If the Agricultural Bank were a reactionary institution, I would have no sympathy with its administration. On the contrary, from long experience, I know its generosity, its helpfulness, its sympathetic administration, and the long-suffering patience of its administrators. Since its establishment was financed by the people, I always accept my responsibility with regard to the Bank. As to the Bill, the intention of the member for Avon, although he did state he did not do it with very good grace, is that the statutory rights of the Bank shall be protected, and so it would appear from that standpoint that I have no quarrel with the purpose of the Bill in respect to its effect on the operations of the Agricultural Bank. But in connection with all such legislation, the House must have regard to the manner in which the farmer may be affected, should legislation of this description become law. The intention of the Bill is to secure to the grower 4d. per bushel for every bushel harvested, or 3s. per acre for every acre not exceeding 500, and 1s. per acre in excess of that total. In other words, if the grower harvests 15 bushels to the acre, adopting the basis of 4d. per bushel, he will be entitled to 5s. per acre, after statutory charges have been met and also the cost of putting in and taking off the crop. Those liens and the charges for putting in and taking off the crop are the only ones that take priority to the grower's rights under the Bill. He may have other creditors with rights under a bill of sale but they are excluded until the grower receives his charge. There is a general sympathy felt for the grower because of the conditions through which this State has passed in the last six or seven years. It may appear that this gives the grower something that will not only make him more satisfied but will give him some hope in the future. What I am concerned about is how this is going to affect the grower's credit. The interest due to the Agricultural Bank has to be paid and the advances and refunds

made by the Bank are protected. But that does not apply with respect to the releases made by the Bank or any other institution to enable the farmer to purchase requirements for the forthcoming season. In other words, suppose the farmer owes the Bank £100 interest. The Bank has a right to collect that. That is not being interfered with in this legislation. But suppose the farmer wants a new implement or jutes or machinery oils or spare parts. He comes to the Bank and the Bank says, "We will release portion of our interest (say, £50), in order that you may make a deposit on the harvester you want or that you may purchase parts, oil or other things." In that case the Bank may lose the amount that is made by way of release. In such circumstances the Bank will not be encouraged to make releases. It will see that that is bad business, and this legislation will handicap the farmer in that way. The measure will be no good to the client of the Agricultural Bank—the hon. member admits that—because once the farmer pays his statutory claim of one year's interest, he can do what he likes with the rest of his proceeds.

Mr. Boyle: Up to a certain point.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But this will prevent the Bank from making releases when it is known that they are jeopardised by legislation of this kind. The hon. member stated that this measure was regarded with a lot of sympathy in the city. I do not know about that. I have had a letter from the Chamber of Commerce informing me that it is absolutely opposed to this legislation, and that if it is passed no one will be inclined to give the farmer credit. That letter has not influenced me in the slightest degree because, as I said during the discussion on another measure in this House, members must accept their responsibility in respect to legislation of this character. While the hon. member states that he has met people who regard this legislation with sympathy, the only information I have—information I have not sought—from people who should know and who are interested, is that they are opposed to it. I do not think many financial institutions will be disposed to make advances from year to year unless there is some possibility of their debts being paid. All the financial institutions standing behind their clients do not continue to finance them merely to get interest payments for one year, but because they hope at

some time to recover portion of the old debt. They provide that the squatter or the farmer is carried on in the hope that one year there will be a big return and, in addition to paying interest, the settler will also reduce the debt owing to the institution. I do not think those institutions will be satisfied with this legislation, although the hon. member assured the House that they would be. This legislation will also force financial institutions to take a bill of sale to protect themselves for the advances made, and the farmer must be put to great expense in that connection. It may appear to hon. members that the grower will be able to get what he regards as a reasonable return for his labour, and that he may utilise that return in any way he thinks fit. Members think that this will give the grower, say, £100. Of course it will not, though they say it will, and they think that the grower will do as he likes with that amount of money. But what will happen? The institution that is financing him in regard to the next year, will take cognisance of that £100 and limit his advances in consequence. When the farmer comes for £200 or £300 by way of advance, the institution will say, "You already have £100 from your crop." And whereas they would have advanced £300, they will only give him £200.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That will not do any harm.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That happened in respect of advances made by the Commonwealth Government under the various Acts which gave a bonus to settlers on an acreage basis when wheat was a low price. The financial institutions always took that grant into consideration. They asked the farmer what he needed to carry on for the following year, and when the farmer replied, "£500," they told him that he had £100 from the bonus and that therefore his advance would be limited by what he had already received. That may happen from this legislation. The financial institutions and the merchants will say, "You have £100 secured by this legislation and any advance we give you will be reduced by that amount." That is what I think will happen; it might not, but I know it has happened in hundreds of cases, so I put the matter forward for the consideration of the House. If that happens the whole object of the Bill will be defeated. If the Bill pass the second reading I think it ought to go to a select committee,

for the House should have the fullest information in regard to it. There are members of the House who would like to express their opinions about Bills of this character; but they do not like to take up an attitude of opinion because very likely their intention will be misconstrued. Also there are members on the Opposition side who have doubts about this legislation. All legislation of this description ought to be thoroughly well investigated by the taking of evidence before a select committee. I would have no objection to that course, and indeed I think it ought to be done. I have no strong objection to the proposals of the hon. member in this Bill. If it be passed I hope the farmers will not be encouraged to put in a large area crop under indifferent conditions. That would be very bad business, both for the State and for the farmer also. Some people may be encouraged to increase the acreage in the expectation of at least 3s. per acre from the proceeds. In consequence large areas might be put in under indifferent conditions. Nothing could be worse than encouraging settlers to put in large areas of land under indifferent conditions. Yet that temptation is here.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Three shillings an acre would not tempt them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have yet to learn that there are many farmers in the country who can properly farm more than 500 acres annually. It will be found that the average cropping by farmers in Western Australia who exceed 500 acres is not always of a high class. It is a good man who can fallow 500 acres and crop 500 acres, and he would not be able to do it with an ordinary horse team. In this Bill "crops" mean wheat, barley and oats, whether for hay or for grain, and all cereal crops. That is the definition. So under the Bill the farmer who grows oats for sheep will be entitled to 4d. a bushel and 3s. per acre. If he grows barley he will get 3s. per acre, and if he grows the crop for hay he will get 3s. per acre. So it might be argued, why should a farmer grow oats and feed stock with the oats and collect 3s. per acre, when he gets the return from his stock and wool? And the same reasoning applies to barley. There is one other matter I wish to discuss: The hon. member said this principle was taken from the New South Wales Act. But the New South Wales Act applies only to farmers under control, whereas this applies

to every farmer in the country. Where a farmer is under control and the whole of his income is received by a supervisor, as under the New South Wales Act, such legislation can easily be policed. In New South Wales all the farmers who are alleged to enjoy this principle are under the control of a supervisor. So in New South Wales this principle applies only in a very limited measure. Not all the farmers, but only a small section of them are affected by this legislation in New South Wales. The hon. member has made no provision in the Bill for policing the measure. Who is going to police it? Who is going to measure up all the acreage of these farmers when there is a dispute between the creditor and the farmer? And who is going to keep the records and make the necessary investigations? I want to know who is going to do all this work. The hon. member does provide in certain circumstances commission for somebody, I suppose for the person who is looking after the farmer's interests, but that commission will be a charge against the farmer, too. Who is going to police the whole of this work in Western Australia? Numerous inspectors may be required to do it. It appears to me that no one will police the measure at all. The Government will not appoint inspectors to do it. The Government will not put the Agricultural Bank in the invidious position of sending inspectors around inspecting and interrogating farmers with whom they are not concerned.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: They know the areas of every one of their clients, and you can trust the Associated Banks to know theirs.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But there are other institutions and the people who finance the farmers during the year. I say candidly that the Agricultural Bank will not regulate the measure. The member for Avon said there was a reign of terror throughout the wheat belt on account of the Agricultural Bank's operations. Of course that is nonsense. But even if it did exist, are we going to perpetuate the reign of terror and increase it by making Agricultural Bank inspectors the policemen in this business? That is not their work at all. The hon. member knows that the Bill cannot be administered under regulations, but I assure him that the Government will not go to the expense of appointing inspectors to

settle disputes that may arise. I prefer to see this legislation referred to a select committee. I am not opposed to the farmer or to any other man getting all that he can get legitimately. I am not opposed to giving all possible consideration to the people of this country, whether they be farmers, graziers or squatters, by means of legislation of this kind, but if the legislation is going to embarrass the farmers, it will be of no use coming to the Government, because we cannot finance them. It will not be possible for any farmer to contract himself out of this measure. I suppose the hon. member had a purpose in including that provision. In Victoria, however, thousands of farmers have contracted themselves out of the Act merely because they found themselves embarrassed with respect to finance. That is what I fear would happen here. As I said before, the measure would not affect any Government institution at all, but it would affect other interests and the House must share the responsibility. I am prepared to give every farmer all possible encouragement. If it can be done by means of this legislation, I have no opposition to offer to it, but I warn the House that I fear it may have the effect of embarrassing the farmer, and it is only right that the position should be made clear.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.5 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 25th November, 1937.

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

QUESTION—YOUTH EMPLOYMENT.

Vocational Training.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE (for Hon. A. Thomson) asked the Chief Secretary: In view of the fact that the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria have decided to contribute a similar amount to that provided by the Federal Government to assist unemployed youths to become efficient by way of vocational training so that they may be absorbed in profitable employment—1, What steps has the State Government taken to provide vocational training in this State for those youths who, owing to the depression, lost their opportunity of learning a trade or profession? 2, How does the Government propose to utilise the £16,000 allocated to it by the Federal Government for the purpose of providing opportunities for the lost legion in Western Australia to become useful citizens? 3, Is it the intention of the Government to supplement a minimum pound for pound from State funds so that the youth of Western Australia may be afforded a like opportunity to those of the Eastern States to learn a trade?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, By the extensions of the operations of the School of Mines and Technical School training for employment. In the year 1930, students enrolled totalled 4,159. This year the students numbered 6,040. Apprentices registered in 1930 numbered 356. Up to the present time this year the number was 450. 2, The conditions attached to the Commonwealth Grant of £14,000 for the training of youth for employment were that as far as possible the grant was to be used for capital expenditure associated with the purchase of land, the erection of buildings, the installation of machinery and equipment.