me. If the member for Guildford-Midland would indicate exactly what he intends to do, I would better understand my own position.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The paragraph requires close examination. I do not like it, because I do not think it will protect the people whom the Bill is supposed to protect. I appeal to the Minister to report progress.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not prepared to report progress at this stage. I propose to move to strike out all the words after the word "who" in the first line of the paragraph in question.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister has the floor at present and I propose to wait and see what it is that he desires. After he has indicated his intention I will decide what I will do.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When I have moved my amendment, I think the member for Guildford-Midland will achieve his objective by voting against the words which I propose to insert. As it stands, the paragraph does not do what I think should be done. I apologise to members for not having placed my amendment on the notice paper. I propose to move to strike out all the words after the word "who" in line one and to insert in lieu the words "being the owner or occupier of a milk store used exclusively for the treatment, sale or distribution of ice-cream all milk purchased or acquired by him." The purpose of my amendment is to exclude an ice-cream manufacturer from the provisions of the Bill. He is to get exemption from the board if he shows that the milk he purchases is used exclusively for the manufacture of ice-cream. If the member for Guildford-Midland is against that principle, then he will achieve his object by having the amendment defeated. I move an amendment—

That in the definition of "milk vendor," the words "owns or occupies a milk store which is used exclusively for the treatment, sale or distribution to consumers of ice-cream, or of milk or cream in concentrated form or solidified by freezing" be struck out, with a view to inserting other words.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Guildford-Midland gave way to the Minister in order to give him an opportunity to enlighten the Committee as to what his amendment was. If the member for Guildford-Midland is willing, I will put the Minister's amendment. If not, I will give him the right to let the Committee know what he wants to do first.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The matter requires more consideration than I feel capable of giving it now. I ask that progress be reported.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.59 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 28th August, 1946.

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

QUESTIONS.

AGRICULTURE.

As to Price of Feed Oats.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

1, (a) What was the guaranteed price for feed oats last season?

(b) What will be the guaranteed price for feed oats for this season?

2, (a) What was the maximum price fixed by the Prices Commissioner for feed oats for last season?

(b) What will be the above for this season?

3, Is he aware that firm offers have recently been made by overseas buyers for Australian oats at 8s. per bushel f.o.b. Australian ports, but that the Commonwealth Government refuses the necessary export licenses for exportation of oats?

4, In view of the above, what steps does he contemplate taking to improve the treatment of oat producers?

The MINISTER replied:

1, (a) 3s. per bushel at grower's siding for feed oats.

(b) 1946-47 season—3s. per bushel at grower's siding for feed oats.

2,(a) 3s. per bushel at grower's siding for feed oats.

(b) This price has not been announced yet.

3, The Commonwealth Government has placed an embargo on the export of oats from Australia, which is reviewed from time to time.

I have not received official confirmation that firm offers of 8s. per bushel f.o.b. have been received for Australian feed oats.

4, The position regarding producers of feed oats in comparison with wheat growers, which reacts unfavourably against oat growers has been referred to the Commonwealth Government.

Special representations enabled a permit to be granted for the export of 200 tons since the embargo.

FISHERIES.

As to Fish Foods in Rivers and Estuaries.

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for the North-West:

1, Has the C.S. & I.R. experimented with the use of fertilisers in any Western Australian rivers or estuaries, with the object of stimulating the growth of fish foods?

2, If so, what fertilisers have been used and in what quantities?

3, What has been the recorded result—

(a) in the growth of fish foods;

(b) in the size of fish?

4, If the experiment of increasing the growth of fish foods by the use of fertilisers has not already been tried, is this possibility under consideration?

The MINISTER replied:

1, I am informed this Commonwealth instrumentality has not yet carried out experiments in relation to artificial fertilisation of our rivers and estuaries.

2, Answered by No. 1.

3, Answered by No. 1.

4, Discussions have taken place between officers of the Fisheries Department and the Biology Department of the University of Western Australia concerning this matter, and it is hoped to make a start at an early date.

COMPREHENSIVE WATER SCHEME.

As to Investigation by Commonwealth.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

In view of the fact that the Government's comprehensive water scheme is not included in the "A," "B," or "C" priority works as agreed to by the National Works Council at Canberra last week, and that the scheme has to be examined by a Commonwealth committee before the Commonwealth Government can determine what, if any, financial assistance it will give the work, can he indicate—

(a) what, if any, progress has been made on any part of the work to date;

(b) in view of the urgent need for increased water supplies to towns along the Great Southern, cannot that part of the undertaking be proceeded with at once, leaving the larger part of the work to be proceeded with as soon as the Commonwealth Government's decision is known?

(c) If not, what means does the Government intend to adopt in order to supply the Great Southern towns, Pingelly in particular, with water during the period intervening between now and when the comprehensive scheme is likely to be able to supply it?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) Work has been commenced on the raising of Mundaring Weir, and an additional three feet has been added to the height of Wellington Dam, thus providing sufficient additional water to meet the needs of the Great Southern district and towns.

(b) It is anticipated the Commonwealth Government's decision will be known before any steel pipes could be supplied.

(c) It is considered the proposed comprehensive scheme is the only economic and practicable method of making available an adequate and permanent supply of water to the towns and districts concerned.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Marketing of Barley (No. 2).

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

2, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. Perkins.

BILL—FEEDING STUFFS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 14th August.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Kanowna) [4.37]: By this Bill the Leader of the Opposition desires to amend Section 17 of the Electoral Act, which deals with the residential qualifications of persons seeking enrolment as electors for the Legislative Assembly. He wishes to alter those qualifications by changing the period of residence from one month to three months. There are other sections that must be considered in conjunction with Section 17. Under Section 46, claims that are lodged for enrolment cannot be granted until the expiration of a fortnight. So it really means that a period of six weeks must elapse from the time application is made before enrolment can be effected. Section 90 has reference to postal voting. If a person has good reason to believe he will be more than seven miles away from a polling place on election day, he may record his vote by post. Section 119 also makes provision that if a person is still on the roll for the district in which he resided prior to his removal to another district, and he is not qualified to vote in the district he moved to, he is still entitled to a vote up to a period of three months for the district from which he removed. I point that out because, if the Bill becomes an Act, then a person would be disfranchised unless he increased that three months to five months because there is the fortnight necessary for the purpose of maturation. Otherwise an elector would be disfranchised.

Mr. Watts: That is provided in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Leader of the Opposition mentioned——

Mr. Watts: Yes, I had some doubts as to the necessity for it.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There are plenty of provisions in the Act for a genuine elector to have his rights as a voter, and provision is made to deal with any person who wrongfully attempts to vote. A further section in the Act deals with nomads —persons who travel about doing work, such as shearers and others who follow itinerant occupations.

Mr. Watts: This Bill will not affect those people.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am mentioning these things to show that the Act, as it stands, contains provisions to deal with quite a number of matters that probably would have some relationship to this amendment. There is special provision for nomads so that if one makes application he can get a form and, by completing it, protect his enrolment. The Bill seeks to extend the residential qualification from one month to three months. From the time a person makes application to be enrolled he really must be in residence for six weeks because provision is made for a fortnight to elapse in case of any objections. I have gone into this matter pretty thoroughly and I find that Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Commonwealth all have the residential qualification of one month only.

If we want uniformity throughout the States I think it would not be advisable to alter the provisions of the Act contained in Section 17. The Government has given consideration to the amalgamation of the State and Commonwealth rolls. If that were

brought into being it would be of great convenience to the electors when claiming to be enrolled. As we have that in mind, and uniformity is necessary, I must oppose the Bill. I know that the Leader of the Opposition has good intentions and probably wants to protect the electors, but when we see that all the States, and the Commonwealth, have the one residential qualification then we will probably cause confusion if we alter ours to three months. On those grounds I oppose the amendment. I feel it would serve no useful purpose. The other States have found that the present qualification works quite well.

In this State if a person wants to be enrolled a period of six weeks must elapse before his claim is considered. That time is made up of the residential qualification of one month and the maturation period of a fortnight. Therefore a person making application must do so a clear six weeks before the issue of the writ. If he does not make application before that time he cannot be enrolled. Then, as I have pointed out, there are sufficient provisions to protect the genuine elector as well as a right to prosecute a person who wrongfully attempts to get on the roll. As the Act stands at present I feel, after many years of close scrutiny of it and practice—because that Act has been brought into practice—we have no reason to change it. If we do we will cause confusion because we will be getting away from the uniform method adopted throughout Australia, including the Commonwealth. I am sorry, but on the ground of uniformity I oppose the Bill.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [4.48]: There is one aspect of the proposed amendment that the Minister might not have considered, but which makes the Bill important to me. In the short time that I have been closely connected with electoral rolls, because of my admission to this Chamber, I have found that there appears to be many electoral busybodies in the country districts who seem to take upon themselves—I do not know whether they are officially appointed—the task of notifying the Chief Electoral Officer, or the registrar for the district, of the departure of electors from the district. On checking through my roll—I have just received the new one—I found the names of people who are permanently resident in the district struck off. I find that this is the sort of thing that happens: A family who lived at Mukinbudin for 30-odd years for personal reasons moved to the city area. It was not their intention to leave their district, as they merely moved away to spend two months at the coast. Their name was omitted from the roll for the Mt. Marshall electoral distict, and they would not have been aware of that fact until an election took place and they went to vote.

What evidently happened was that after they had been gone from the district for a month somebody notified the electoral officer that they had left, and in all probability he sent a notice of objection to the address where they formerly lived, and either that was not re-directed to them or it was returned to the electoral officer. In any case, they did not receive notice that they were to be struck off the roll and the result is that they are now not on the roll for that district. As the Act stands at present, once a man has been outside his electoral district for one month anyone can notify the electoral officer, and the man's name is struck off the roll. If it is generally known that the law has been amended to make provision for a three-months' period, that will overcome the difficulty, because the busybodies concerned will have to wait three months before attempting to meddle with the roll.

Although one month is the standard period throughout the Commonwealth I see no reason why we should religiously follow what is done in other States. The Act provides a residential qualification of six months in Western Australia before persons are entitled to go on the roll. During that period a newcomer may have six different places of residence and he is entitled to place his name on the roll in each case, after he has resided in the district concerned for one month. We then have the position that in the event of an election that person can vote in any one of five places. It might even be possible for him to vote in each of a couple of electorates. That could be done and the discovery that he had so voted would not be made until the rolls were compared and checked a considerable time after the election. What purpose would there then be in fining that man for having committed an offence, when possibly one or more such

votes may have had serious consequences for candidates seeking election?

The law should not merely provide penalties for breaches. It should be so worded as to avoid the possibility of people offending either wittingly or unwittingly. People could then not make the excuse that they did not know what was going on. The busybody who causes names to be struck off the roll also causes the names of other people to be put on the roll, and as soon as people are resident one month in some districts they are approached and asked to sign a claim card in order that their names may go on the roll. Although those people are only temporarily resident in the district and have no personal interest in what is happening in the area, they often sign the claim card, being qualified to do so, and their names are put on that roll and struck off the roll for the district where they previously lived. Perhaps just before an election they are transferred away, or they may be there until the election and exercise their vote in that district. If they are transferred away they have no further interest in what happens in the district for which they are enrolled. Their real interest is in their place of permanent residence, or the place to which they have gone.

It is wrong that such people, because they sign a claim card and fulfil the requirements of the Act, can vote in a district, exercising with the rest of the electors an influence on the affairs of a community in which they are not interested. When they are away from the district they may wish to exercise their vote in the district in which they are personally interested, but are unable to do so because they have been removed from that roll. I know of a case where an individual is paid privately 1s. for each name that he gets on the roll. I was a temporary resident in that district and was approached to have my name put on the roll.

The Minister for Justice: That must be a good district to be in.

Mr. LESLIE: I cannot afford to pay anyone 1s. each for putting names on the roll for my district, and in any case they might put the wrong names on the roll. After I had been in that district for one month I was told that, according to the Act, I had to give notice of change of address. The person concerned told me that after I had lived in that place for one month I was compelled to apply for re-registration in the new electorate. I have since wondered how many people that man bluffed in the same way and caused to change their enrolment. If approached in that way people might do what was suggested, thinking they were complying with the provisions of the Act, and then not bother to change back to the roll for their permanent place of residence after leaving the district that they had visited.

The Minister for Justice: There is provision for that in the Act.

Mr. LESLIE: Very few people take advantage of it, or argue the point with the returning officer. Generally the elector is asked his name, and if he is not on the roll he says that his name was down for the last election, and the returning officer tells him it is not there now. The elector then leaves, moaning and cursing the Government.

The Minister for the North-West: I will bet that none of your supporters missed; you would see to that.

Mr. LESLIE: I will guarantee that none of the supporters of that side of the House were allowed to miss. I do not know what proportion of electors would stand and argue with the returning officer, but I have had sufficient experience as an observer at elections to know that the general practice of electors is not to argue at all. They accept the position and go away, expressing their regret. At the last election there was a family of five whose names had been struck off the roll in my electorate, though they did not know why. It was polling day and I told them to go to the polling booth and get their votes, but they said they would not bother about it. I lost five good votes that I would otherwise have obtained.

The Minister for the North-West: You are slipping.

Mr. LESLIE: I was not then as sophisticated as I am now. I do not think the Minister has given any real reason why the amendment should not be supported, but on the other hand I believe that if members think for themselves in view of the circumstances and the difficulties that exist—in my opinion the provisions are far too loose at present—I am satisfied that the arguments in favour of the amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition will find general

favour in the House. I intend to support the amendment, and I hope the House will also support it.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [5.0]: I desire briefly to intimate my opposition to the proposed amendment of the Electoral Act.

Mr. Mann: Quite naturally!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The existing provisions of the law in this respect have been in operation for a very long time.

Mr. Watts: You would not be here but for them!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: These early interjections serve to show what a weak case members have in support of the Bill. The present provisions require an elector to be in a district for one month before enrolling, and that method has stood the test for many years. In addition, the Commonwealth Electoral Act provides that a person must reside in a district for one month before being entitled to change his enrolment. Despite the arguments advanced by the sponsor of the Bill, supported by the member for Mt. Marshall, if the proposed amendment is agreed to, the effect will be to disfranchise thousands of people between now and the next general election.

Mr. Leslie: How?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: There are many men and women who are obliged to transfer from place to place by virtue of the vocations they follow. Every person living in Western Australia is not in the enjoyment of stability of occupation at one centre. There are thousands of men, and a great number of women, who are obliged to travel to various parts of the State because of the nature of their employment. Within the next 12 months or so it is hoped that a Commonwealth and State public works policy will be in operation and expanded, and a great many men will be employed in the South-West and the wheatbelt. They may not remain in one centre for three months but, in the course of eight or nine months, may be employed in nine or ten different electorates. If an election should be held during that period, those men would not be qualified for enrolment in any one of those electorates.

Mr. Seward: You are putting up a good case for the Bill.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Take the pastoral industry and other callings in connection with which men are obliged to travel from place to place in the course of their employment. They will be affected as I suggest. Furthermore, the population of this State, in common with that elsewhere in Australia, is by no means stabilised at present. The position, largely as a result of the war, is changing from time to time. Within the next 12 months, we may anticipate movements of the population from the city to agricultural and mining centres. If the Bill be agreed to, people now living in Perth but transferring to the Goldfields would have to be resident for three months on the fields before becoming entitled to change their enrolments.

I do not suggest that anything but sincerity characterises the action of the Leader of the Opposition in bringing down this amendment to the Act, but I have failed to note any strong or concrete argument that has been advanced to induce members to support it. On the contrary, the Minister for Justice has pointed out that in all the other States of the Commonwealth provision is made for an elector to change his enrolment after he has resided for a month in a particular electorate. I reiterate that, with provision for compulsory enrolment, if a person is resident in a district for one month, my sincere belief is that he should be entitled to fill in a claim card for enrolment in the district where he now resides, and for his name automatically to be struck off the roll for the electorate where he formerly resided. There will be no plurality of voting and we should certainly encourage people, irrespective of their political beliefs, to enrol. The amendment, if carried, will be the cause of disfranchising, between now and the next elections, thousands of people.

Mr. Seward: Tell us how it could have that effect?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Because people now resident in the metropolitan area will be transferring to the agricultural and mining areas. I hope the Bill will be defeated.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [5.5]: I support the Bill. Instead of disfranchising people, it will, in my opinion, have the

valuable effect of ensuring that they will remain enfranchised.

Mr. Watts: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONALD: One difficulty that is apparent almost from day to day is the ease with which people seem to lose their enrolments. Perhaps they are not as vigilant as they should be, but people who have lived for 21 years in one place, without ever having moved from their residences, have found that, for some extraordinary reason, their names have been removed from the rolls. After long residence in one place, quite naturally such people do not inspect the rolls, but assume that their names will be retained on them. The provision in the Bill will be a safeguard ensuring that people will retain their right to exercise the vote. There is nothing final about the period of one month. That term may have been adopted in the early days and may seem to have a fair amount of general acceptance. On the other hand, there is nothing arbitrary about it.

My own feeling is that the vote should be regarded as of more importance and some satisfactory reason should exist before a person becomes entitled to vote in a particular district, while, at the same time, it should be made harder for his name to be taken off the roll for that district, even though he should be absent from it for a while. Intelligent voting is not merely a matter of the place one happens to be standing on at the moment. Intelligent voting is more a matter of an elector's knowledge of a district and its requirements, of the people residing there and of those who may be candidates for the parliamentary seat. That knowledge could not be acquired within four weeks, and certainly three months seems little enough for that purpose. No hardship will follow if the Bill is agreed to because, until a person who has migrated from one district to another has had time to ascertain the position in his new area, his right to vote is reserved for him in the district where he previously lived, the conditions in connection with which are familiar to him.

Mr. Watts: Exactly!

Mr. McDONALD: It is paradoxical that in a homogeneous country like Australia, where the States enjoy, broadly speaking, similar conditions, we make a man live here for six months before he can become enrolled, but a man can travel from Albany to Wyndham and have his name placed on the electoral roll after the expiry of one month. Conditions are less different between Perth and Adelaide.

The Minister for Justice: But the man could not record a vote until six weeks had expired.

Mr. McDONALD: That may be so. Whether it is six weeks or four weeks, I think three months would be the minimum period in which a man could acquire knowledge of the area where he had recently arrived and in which he should become entitled to enrolment. With the advantage of such a provision, the elector could then exercise an intelligent vote in the interests of the new area in which he resides. If we stipulate six months as the qualifying period respecting a man or woman who comes to Perth from Adelaide, we could well afford to say that three months should be the qualifying period before a man could transfer his enrolment from, say, Mandurah to Cue. There are sound reasons for the introduction of the Bill by the Leader of the Opposition, and I hope it will be passed.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [5.10]: I feel that the existing law requires some alteration. Just before the last election a man and his wife, who had lived in a certain house for 40 years, were disfranchised, but the peculiar fact is that while they had been struck off the Subiaco roll, when they went to the main office they were told their names were still on the roll. That, to my mind, is a most peculiar position. Another family, who were on the roll, had been out of the State for a long time and some of them were dead, but all of them were shown as having voted. I fully agree with the member for West Perth that it is advantageous for a person to become acquainted with the district to which he has moved and that he cannot do it in one month.

Mr. Fox: What difference would it make?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: There is something else that could also be done in a month. I would not say that any Government is wilfully dishonest, but it might encourage a Government—I do not mean any particular Government—to act dishonestly by trans-

ferring voters from one electorate to another. They might be sent to Wyndham for just one month and that would not be honest voting. The Public Works Department might send men to a certain district and, if they were there for only a month, the vote of those men would not be an honest vote. I do not approve of the period of three months, and was disappointed when I found that period mentioned. I think it should be six months. If we are going to have any honesty at all in public life, we must provide conditions to ensure that the voter not only knows something of the district but also has been residing in the district long enough to become acquainted with the qualities of the district.

HON. J. C. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.12]: I do not think that a majority of the people who exercise the vote at election time do so with any particular regard for a district. How they vote is determined by the broad aspect of policy.

Mr. Doney: Sometimes so, but sometimes not.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Some people might be more interested in a particular district than in the policy of the State, but I should say they would be very few in number. The whole trend of political thought and the party system leads people to vote for the candidate representing a certain political platform. The Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament is not appealing to the electors of Wide Bay, Darwin or any other district in particular.

The Minister for Works: Or Wyalkatchem.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: No, and not Mukinbudin. Mr. Menzies is expounding a policy for Australia and is making his appeal on that ground. My objection to the amendment proposed by the Bill is that it is desirable to have some uniformity in the electoral laws throughout Australia, particularly with the laws of the Commonwealth, and the amendment will not assist to that end.

Mr. Abbott: You have to change sometimes.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The position at the moment is that four of the States have uniform rolls with the Commonwealth, and the State laws have been made uniform with the Commonwealth laws. We introduced legislation to bring us into line with the Commonwealth laws so that we could have joint rolls with the Commonwealth, which would have been a tremendous convenience to the electors of the State and the Commonwealth, but unfortunately the Commonwealth could not see its way at that time to make its electoral boundaries coterminous with ours. I understand that a census will be taken in the next year or so and, on the result of the census, the Commonwealth will make a redistribution of seats. It was the intention of the State Government—I daresay it still is—to make strong representations that the boundaries fixed for the Commonwealth electorates should be coterminous with those of the State. If that were done, we could, without difficulty, introduce uniform rolls, which would be of immense convenience to the people.

There is more misconception and misunderstanding as to whether people are on the roll or not than about anything else. They have to be on the roll for a local authority, for the Legislative Council, for the Commonwealth and for the State—four different rolls. If we could reduce the number to three, it would be advantageous. This amendment would make it impossible for the Commonwealth to agree to a system of joint rolls because its laws as to eligibility would be different. For that one reason I would oppose the Bill. I hope we shall retain the existing provision, which is uniform with that of the Commonwealth. Then, after the census when a redistribution must take place under the Commonwealth Constitution, if boundaries are made coterminous we shall be able to have a uniform roll, State and Commonwealth, which will be of great convenience to all.

MR. WATTS (Katanning—in reply) [5.17]: I am indeed amazed at the opposition of the Minister to this measure, particularly on the grounds he gave, namely, the ground of uniformity and the ground that there were already sufficient provisions in the Act to protect the genuine elector. I have said before and I repeat that uniformity may be desirable, but it is not necessarily desirable in itself. There must be some sound reasons why it should be undertaken, and I do not think that as yet those reasons are evident in Western Australia. Our law is our own law, and we are entitled to make a law that is satisfactory to us and to our

people. Therefore the main consideration is whether there are sufficient provisions in the Act to protect the genuine elector. I am of the opinion that in the present state of the law there definitely are not sufficient such provisions if we take the genuine electors in every district as being the people who are the residents of that district, who are domiciled there or who have some reasonable permanent intention of remaining there. For such people, there is little or no protection in our law. Because there is little or no protection for them, I introduced this amending Bill. My mind recalls several examples, one or two of which I shall quote.

At the end of 1932, something like 500 men were transferred from the metropolitan area to a place called Rocky Gully, then recently incorporated in the Katanning electoral district. An election was not far distant; in fact, it was held in February, 1933. An organiser of the party that sits opposite to me in this House made indecent haste to have those people placed upon the roll, with the result that something like 450 names were placed upon the roll of the Katanning electorate, the residence of those people being given as the camps at Rocky Gully. None of those people had any intention of residing permanently there. They had come from a tremendous number of electorates in the State and, from their claim cards, many of which I saw, could not in a number of cases recollect on which roll they were, although it was discovered that they were on various rolls.

As a result of the indecent haste to which I referred, approximately 300 of those applicants were struck off the roll by the magistrate, on the application of the then member for the district, Mr. Arnold Piesse, because they had not complied even with the one month's residential qualification which the law then imposed and still imposes. They were struck off the roll for the reason that the gentleman who had enrolled them, and had signed practically every claim card, had apparently made quite insufficient inquiry as to how long the applicants had been in the district, and when evidence was given as to the time of their arrival by responsible officers of the department, the hundreds of them to whom I referred were removed from the roll. I might add that they left the district within three months of election day and never came back, nor did any of them return to that area for any other purpose so far as my knowledge, which is fairly considerable, goes.

Had those persons been enrolled and voted at that election—and the organiser apparently thought most of them would vote in one way—they could easily have completely changed the political representation and complexion of the district without the slightest justification. That is not the only instance. I think the member for Pilbara himself may have some recollection of the fact that, by act of God, at the end of 1938, I think, considerable damage was done to public buildings at Port Hedland. In consequence, a substantial number of men were transferred to that area by the Public Works Department, the majority of whom upon the expiration of one month were promptly enrolled.

Mr. Thorn: That is how he won Pilbara!

Mr. WATTS: The number has been given to me as at least 100 and the member for Pilbara secured his seat upon that occasion by 38 votes.

Mr. W. Hegney: To be correct, 43. Most of the men came from other parts of the electorate, Nullagine and Marble Bar.

Mr. WATTS: I am sure there were approximately 100 men transferred.

Mr. W. Hegney: Your information is not correct.

Mr. WATTS: There were more than 43.

The Minister for Works: From where?

Mr. WATTS: Various other places.

The Minister for Works: Within the same electorate?

Mr. WATTS: Outside the electorate. They were sent there for the purpose of effecting certain necessary repairs. I am not suggesting the men should not have been sent there, as the work had to be done; but what I am suggesting is that they were merely itinerant and should not have been able to impose their will, as I believe they did, upon the electorate.

Mr. W. Hegney: How do you know they voted for me?

Mr. WATTS: The people at Rocky Gully, if I know anything about the organiser in question, would, if he had had his way, imposed their will on the electorate. That is what would have happened in these two instances. There is not sufficient protection for the genuine elector as the Minister

would have us believe. There is almost an entire absence of it when it comes to cases of that kind. If a suitable opportunity presents itself, especially in electoral districts with comparatively small population, a tremendous influence can be exercised by methods which are known to many of us, I believe as roll-stuffing.

To make a long story short, because I believe that and because I am convinced a measure of this sort is the only thing which is going to minimise or stop this particular disease, I have introduced this measure. It would go a long way to doing it. People would at least have some idea of permanency in their residence before they could get in. Another attempt was made, I believe, by some Government in the past. That Government moved a lot of men to a district to do some work on the roads for which neither tools nor machinery were available, the object being that the men should have the month's qualification before the closing of the roll. Much publicity was given to the matter at the time. It happened the better part of 20 years ago. I say without hesitation that a Bill of this nature is an attempt at preventing a repetition of that kind of thing; and the opposition of the Government today merely convinces me that the Government approves of that sort of chicanery. So far as I am concerned, I do not.

I did not give vent to my view on this particular aspect of the matter until the Minister had expressed his views because, had he not taken up the attitude which he did, he and I would have been in agreement on this subject. At this stage we are not. I say that the measure is desirable and I hope that the House will agree to it and thus give a greater measure of protection to the people who are domiciled in the district—who have a permanent residence there—and who are entitled to elect its representation. It has been suggested that the measure, if passed, would disfranchise a great many people. That point was satisfactorily disposed of by the member for West Perth, because it will certainly disfranchise nobody. The position will be, if the Bill is passed, that the elector will be entitled to remain on the roll for the place where he resides so much the longer, and he will not be disfranchised by the expiration of three months any more than he is by the expiration of one month under the existing law. Therefore, to talk of disfranchising persons by the passage of this measure is simply to draw a red herring across the trail in order to distract attention from what is the real issue involved in this proposal. I leave it at that. If the House carries the measure I shall be glad. If it rejects the measure I shall know where my friends opposite stand in this matter.

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

Ayes	14
Noes	21
Majority against	7

AYES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Seward
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Mann	Mr. Thorn
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Watts
Mr. North	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Owen	Mr. Doney
	(*Teller.*)

NOES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Needham
Mr. Cross	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Fox	Mr. Roderda
Mr. Graham	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Triat
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Withers
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Leahy	(*Teller.*)

PAIRS.

AYE.	NOES.
Mr. Stubbs	Mr. Millington
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Panton
Mr. Read	Mr. Styants

Question thus negatived; Bill defeated.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT 1919-1942 AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [5.33] *in moving the second reading said:* This is a very short Bill but one of considerable importance to certain social movements in this State. It is a proposal to amend Section 199 of the Road Districts Act. I propose to read that section and to point out shortly what the proposed amendment is. The section to which I refer, as printed, is as follows:—

The Board may from time to time appropriate out of its ordinary revenue such sums as it may think proper for maintaining or

improving agricultural halls, libraries or reading rooms vested in or under the control of the board or for acquiring or building agricultural halls, libraries, or reading rooms or for acquiring sites for such buildings.

It is not compulsory on the board under that section or under the section as it is proposed to be amended to take any action of that character but it may do so completely at its own will. Secondly, it may appropriate ordinary revenue for the purpose. The difficulty in the case of all boards in making grants for which they have no power to use ordinary revenue is that if they take such grants out of what are generally referred to as three per cents. naturally they find this fund becomes very soon drained—I do not mean it in the sense in which it appears to appeal to the Minister for Works, but that the fund becomes exhausted. All this Bill designs is to bring into the same category as agricultural halls and the other works I have mentioned as appearing in the Act, infant health centres, civic centres and kindergarten schools or playgrounds. These are all very worthy objects.

Although the board has power to use its ordinary revenue for agricultural halls and the other works to which I have referred, it cannot use any portion of its ordinary revenue in respect of infant health centres or of kindergartens or for the erection of civic centres. I do not think any member would object to giving the board that power. It is perfectly within the power of the board to use this authority or not to use it. It may appropriate some of its ordinary revenue or may refuse to do so, and there is no right to demand of it that it shall use its ordinary revenue. It will remain absolutely in the board's wisdom to act as it thinks best. There is one other amendment made in the section by the Bill, and it is that which affects the portion that regulates what is to be the control of the property which is, under this Bill, entitled to receive support from the road board. The present law is that the property is vested in or under the control of the board, and this Bill proposes to add to that the provision "or under trustees approved of by the board."

In the case of infant health centres, for instance, the board cannot possibly take control of the carrying on of the work of an infant health centre, but it retains complete power because that control must be vested in trustees that are approved of by the board. There is, therefore, no loss of authority, but there is a delegation of authority from the road board to persons who are approved of by the board. That would also apply in the case of kindergartens. There again the ordinary control is some local committee, generally of ladies who attend the premises and see that the work is conducted properly, but the board itself is not called upon and could not be called upon to do that. What the board would have to do would be to require the trustees who are charged with that particular duty of supervision to be persons approved of by it. It would be an unnecessary waste of the time of the House to ask members to consider the work done by kindergartens or by infant health centres. I know it is within the knowledge of everyone that it is work of an excellent character. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. J. Hegney, debate adjourned.

MOTION—STATE HOTELS.

As to Use as Community Hotels.

Debate resumed from the 21st August on the following motion by Mr. Perkins:—

That where a local community desires to take over a State Hotel to be run by it as a "community hotel," on a co-operative basis, giving good service and using profits for financing local amenities, this House considers that the Government should adopt a policy designed to make possible and further this objective.

MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. A. A. M. Coverley—Kimberley) [5.39]: In rising to oppose the motion I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am not opposing the control or ownership of community hotels in country districts, but I do oppose the motion which deals particularly with State hotels and specifically with the Bruce Rock State hotel. If one reads very carefully the remarks of the hon. member who moved the motion and those of other members who supported it, one finds no room for doubt that this is a specific motion from the local residents of the Bruce Rock district designed to get control of the Bruce Rock State hotel. I have grave objections to State hotels being controlled or leased or sold to any particular community

for selfish reasons, because I claim that the State hotels are, in the broad sense, community hotels at the moment.

That was the only sound argument that was put forward by the hon. member when introducing this motion as to why the Government should change its policy to permit communities to take charge of State hotels: that they would be community hotels. He put forward some very good arguments as to why a community hotel is good for a local district, and I agree with him; but I disagree with him when he wants a community to take charge of a State hotel on the ground that that hotel is not a community hotel. The hon. member entertained the House at some length in explaining the benefits that the Bruce Rock people would obtain if they had control of the hotel and enumerated quite a lot of amenities that would result, implying, of course, that Bruce Rock had no share in the amenities which the district has received from past and present Governments through Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. Abbott: Should they?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes. That has played a big part in the making of the town of Bruce Rock. I would not be too inquisitive, if I were the hon. member, as to what the Government has done for Bruce Rock, and for the wheat industry in other parts of the State through Consolidated Revenue.

The Minister for Works: The member for North Perth cannot help being inquisitive!

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No. The Bruce Rock hotel, together with other State hotels, has paid profits and interest to Consolidated Revenue which, in turn, is allocated throughout the State to all Government activities.

Mr. Perkins: Do you pay any taxes in those areas?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: No. Taxes are not paid to the local road board, and the hon. member knows it and has stated it. He is aware that no State trading concern pays taxes. State hotels have contributed to Consolidated Revenue and that in turn has contributed to the establishment and upkeep of schools, and the cost of police protection, water supplies, main roads and many other amenities enjoyed by Bruce Rock; and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. Perkins: But the residents of the district pay their ordinary income tax, the same as people in other districts do.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The hon. member knows the difference between paying local taxes and the amenities he spoke of when introducing this proposal. That is what I am replying to. I want to impress upon him that my opposition to this motion is due to the fact that the State hotels are already community hotels and do subscribe to the amenities that the Bruce Rock town has enjoyed through the Consolidated Revenue of this country. The member for York instanced the financial returns of the State hotels. He spoke of the last year's profits paid into Consolidated Revenue by the Bruce Rock State Hotel. That was the most unfair year he could have selected, because he knows as well as every other member of this House that during the years 1943, 1944 and 1945 State hotels were under a rationing system, and half the time they had nothing to sell. Consequently their revenue, like that of everybody else, was down considerably. On several occasions the hon. member made a very unfair comparison, whether intentionally to boost his own case or not I do not know. I presume that he had not thought fit to go back over the 35 years the Bruce Rock Hotel has been in existence.

Mr. Perkins: I did not refer to one particular hotel.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I am aware of what the hon. member referred to. I am making reference to the principle he placed before this House as to what happened financially. As a matter of fact, the position is that the capital invested in State hotels from the inception is £76,479, and the profits paid to revenue total £198,372, and the interest on capital £90,944. So there is a vast difference between quoting the profits made during one year and taking them over a period. A point missed by the hon. member was the fact that under the State Trading Concerns Act we pay interest on the capital as well as the profits, which no private concern does. The hon. member will find on investigation that the State hotels have paid a profit, over and above interest, of over £8,000 per annum for the last 35 years. So they have not done quite as badly as was indicated by the short comment made by the hon. member. I have

given the principal reason why I disagree with the motion, and I hope other members will adopt the same attitude.

The member for York gave three particular reasons in favour of his motion. The first was that he desired the Bruce Rock people to have the right to run a community hotel. I have not disagreed with that. Secondly, he contended that the motion was introduced because of the dissatisfaction of the local residents with the present hotel and its accommodation. To my knowledge, there have been at least two public meetings in Bruce Rock with the object of getting control of the hotel. All the complaints that have been made against the hotel since it has been under my administration have been confined to beer. I have never had one complaint against accommodation or meals. I can quite understand the people getting off their bikes over the booze. During the war years, under rationing, there were many hours each day during which the Bruce Rock Hotel had to close, the same as many other hotels in Western Australia had to do, because there was nothing to sell.

Mr. Cross: Some hotels in Beverley closed for a week.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: They had to conserve their supplies in order to equalise distribution to local residents. That was done with my knowledge and consent. The hon. member mentioned how drinking, and lounge drinking in particular, had increased in Bruce Rock during the war years.

Mr. Withers: Where has it not increased?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: He sought to explain discontent amongst local residents; but I want to point out that I have never had a complaint against the accommodation or the meals at the Bruce Rock Hotel. I will admit it is some years since I had anything to do with the hotel as a private citizen, but I guess I have drunk more beer and eaten more meals at the Bruce Rock Hotel and slept there more often than has the hon. member, during the time I was a resident farmer in that district. The Bruce Rock Hotel has, and always has had, a reputation for very good meals. Another thing that the State hotel at Bruce Rock does is to provide accommodation for people who cannot get homes of their own. That is done at reduced rates. Accommodation, of course, has to be reserved for the travelling public. A hotel license is issued not for the sole benefit of the local residents, but also for that of travellers.

I have mentioned the hostility evinced against the local manager by some of the residents, because they could not get beer just when they wanted it and could not get other concessions when they wanted them. The hotel itself is, I frankly admit, out-of-date, and not up to standard. It needs alteration and refurnishing. The department knows that, without a motion being forced on it through this House. The money has been approved and plans drawn for these purposes for the past two years, but the member for York knows, as well as do other members, the difficulty in getting material and labour to carry out renovations. It has been impossible to get the necessary material and labour. That is the explanation about the accommodation, and when I refer to accommodation I do not mean the sleeping quarters but the bar and lounge. It has been suggested that there is not enough seating accommodation in the bar and lounge, and not sufficient attendants to carry the booze to the people. More important things are needed than for someone to sit down—

Mr. Perkins: The Minister has missed the whole point of the motion.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The point is to start a community hotel. I have not disagreed with that, but with the whittling away of State hotels, which are community hotels.

Mr. Thorn: Like hell!

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Quite a lot of criticism and hostility have been brought about by the fact that the Bruce Rock people made application for a gallon license. I was surprised at the innuendo made by the member for York when he said that he supposed the Government would see that no other license was granted. An application was made for a gallon license for Bruce Rock, but it was refused by the Licensing Court. If members care to read the evidence in support of that application they will learn why. It was opposed by 35 local residents, some who were shareholders of the co-operative company, and people of that type. That is why the application was not granted.

Mr. Perkins: I made no reference to that.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The hon. member did.

Mr. Perkins: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The member for York did not mention the gallon license, but his innuendo against the Licensing Court was unnecessary and uncalled for.

Mr. Mann: The late Licensing Bench deserved criticism.

The Minister for Works: So does the present member for Beverley.

Mr. Watts: Ask the Minister for Mines; he knows all about it.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: The other point made was that if they had a community hotel at Bruce Rock they would be able to make available more amenities to the public there by means of extra lounge accommodation and the other things that were mentioned. All that is quite true, but it is a very selfish viewpoint when there is only the one hotel involved. That hotel, together with the other State hotels, provides part of our Consolidated Revenue which is distributed throughout the State. I must oppose the control of State hotels being whittled away by means of lease, sale or management by local people as is suggested. I know enough about executive positions to realise what would happen if a local committee at Bruce Rock were put in as an advisory committee. We can imagine the advising that would be done, and the stand-over attitude it would take in regard to the staff. The manager's life would not be worth living. He would not keep the job, and I would not blame him.

Mr. Abbott: Would a local committee be any worse than members of the Government?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Of course it would. That is a very unintelligent interjection. The members of the Government are in Parliament House; the local committee would be on the doorstep of the hotel manager and the staff. I imagine that the member for North Perth is judging this matter by himself and imagining what he would do if he were the Minister in charge of State hotels; and I have a fair idea as to what he would do.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister must not reflect on a member.

Mr. Thorn: You seem to be in a fighting attitude.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I am opposed to this motion on principle and hope members will disagree with it.

MR. ABBOTT (North Perth) [5.56]: I prefer not to make personal comments in this House because they are usually made by people who have nothing better to say and who, therefore, engage in personalities.

The Minister for Works: You are a beaut at it.

Mr. ABBOTT: First of all this motion, as I understand it, does not particularly refer to the Bruce Rock hotel. That hotel is not mentioned in the motion.

The Minister for the North-West: You evidently did not read the speeches.

Mr. ABBOTT: I therefore do not propose to deal with the Bruce Rock hotel, but with the motion which reads, "That where a local community desires to take over a State hotel . . . "

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why limit it to a State hotel?

Mr. ABBOTT: It says that here.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why not make it broader?

Mr. ABBOTT: I am dealing with the motion. After all, my view of the Government is that it is to regulate and not to trade unless it prefers, as it could no doubt, to become a communistic Government. I can never quite find out why the Labour Party is always demeaning the communists when their principles are so similar. After all, State ownership and State trading are principles of the Communist Party. I do not approve of those things, therefore I do not approve of State hotels. I do not think that they are as efficient as a business run by a private individual who gets no sympathy if anything goes wrong. That is quite right. He is kept up to the mark, not only by members of the public who complain at once if he is not doing things properly, but by the Government of the day and by the officials of the Government. Therefore private enterprise is, practically on every occasion, more efficient than a State trading concern.

It is very difficult for one Government official to complain about and reprimand another. It is only human nature for there to be a certain amount of sympathy between one civil servant and another. Therefore it is difficult for a civil servant to criticise the management or the staff of a State trading concern. That is another reason why a State concern is not likely to be as efficient as a private one. The figures of the State hotels are not very good, because with a capital of about £76,000 the profit last year was £2,179. Admittedly interest had to be paid, but most private concerns have to pay interest and, in addition, they have to pay local taxes. I think community hotels are a stage better, but I am not enamoured of them. I still believe that an hotel which is no-one's personal responsibility—being that of a number of people who have no personal interest in it—is less likely to be conducted efficiently than would be an hotel conducted by a private individual whose goodwill depended on the service rendered.

Mr. Thorn: They treat it as being just a job.

Mr. ABBOTT: That is so. Therefore I think community hotels are better than State hotels, but I would prefer to see private enterprise running hotels.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for North Perth cannot discuss that on this motion. He must deal with community or State hotels.

Mr. ABBOTT: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I would prefer community hotels to State hotels. I cannot understand why the Government and its supporters take so much pains to disclaim any interest in the Communist Party which is, after all, in favour of State trading and control.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Socialism!

Mr. ABBOTT: Yes, socialism. The Government says it will have nothing to do with the Communists, yet its policy and that of the Communists are so similar. For the reasons I have stated I propose to support the motion.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [6.2]: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 the word "State" be struck out.

I have a great deal of sympathy with the ambition of the motion. I believe in community control—

Mr. Mann: On a co-operative basis?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. I believe in as much local control and supervision as it is possible to have. I favour municipalisation, as against nationalisation, because it enables concentration and localisation. I believe in community ownership of hotels. It has been tried in other parts of the world and in Gothenburg many years ago it was introduced as a municipal activity, with wonderful success. I do not like the motion being circumscribed. I would rather test the House on the question of whether we are community-minded or believe in individuality in the control of these public amenities and essentials.

Mr. North: That is the acid test.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not mind what it is called. I have my views, and they are deeply seated.

Mr. Thorn: They are erratic at times.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The member for Toodyay cannot understand, as he has no fixed convictions and does not understand them. He twists as circumstances demand.

Mr. Thorn: You are the best twister I know.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I cannot twist as he does. Any movement towards a recognition of community rights has my support. I know a good deal about State hotels and, as Minister for Works in the Government with which I was associated, was responsible for building most of them.

Mr. Mann: What a tragedy.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It was a good ambition, and if it had been continued and the policy set down at the outset followed rigidly we would by this time have had a large number of hotels, and control of the breweries. At a given period there was a change of opinion and policy, and the building of State hotels ceased. A number were built, and I have no regret. I prefer State ownership to private ownership, and naturally seized every opportunity at that time of supplying hotels where the public demand was such as to impress the Licensing Board with the fact that an hotel was required. There never was a State hotel foisted on the community. They were put in as an alter-

native to private ownership. Having done that much and having no cause to regret that policy, I believe, by and large, that the State hotels have been creditably run. Like the Minister, I know the Bruce Rock hotel. I was associated with its construction and, being interested in a farm close by, I followed it for many years. I have called there on thousands of occasions and have never had cause to complain of the service rendered. It is true that the hotel is small, in view of the present-day public demand. The district has grown beyond the capacity of the hotel to serve it adequately. There is a great deal of congestion. The lounge is altogether too small and is more like a committee room or a bar parlour. Nevertheless, I have never had occasion to complain about the service generally or on the accommodation side, both upstairs and in the dining-room. All the same I would love to see it under community control.

Now that Bruce Rock has grown to such an extent, I believe it would be a fine gesture on the part of the State as owner of the hotel, together with the community who could purchase it, to establish there a community hotel along the lines of a number already operating in Australia. Those who have been to Renmark and have seen the wonderful progress made with the community hotel there will, I am sure, lend enthusiastic support to this proposal. In recent times, owing to the goodwill of Mr. P. A. Connolly, who as a rule generously tries to do some good in the way of giving support to any laudable objective—

Mr. Mann: What about giving the people some decent hotels?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Mr. Connolly decided he would try out community ownership and control at Cunderdin. I think he treated the people there very generously because he desired to see exactly how the scheme would work. He told me he had been influenced by the wonderful service that was provided at the Renmark hotel. I was surprised to hear from him that he visited Renmark regularly and stayed at the hotel there because of its surroundings and the success that was attending its operations. Because of this, he had an ambition to try out a similar scheme in Western Australia, and I applaud Mr. Connolly for the magnanimous way in which he approached the question and made the Cunderdin effort possible.

I would like to see the principle tried out further and therefore I do not wish to vote against the motion. On the other hand, I do not like its terms to be cramped. It is not right for Parliament to select one sort of hotel and say that it should be run as a community undertaking. In the circumstances I believe it would be advisable to test the feeling of the House as to whether it favours localised community control for the benefit of the community itself and the advancement of social services as a result of the enormous profits from the drink traffic which, instead of going into the pockets of private individuals or into the coffers of the State, could better be diverted for the service of the community by providing for general improvements of the surroundings. In order to test the feeling of the House, I shall move to amend the motion. If the House agrees to delete the word "State"—I have already moved an amendment to that effect—I shall subsequently move for the deletion of the words "adopt a policy designed to make possible and further this objective" and to insert in lieu the words "encourage the ambition." The motion would then read—

> That where a local community desires to take over an hotel to be run by it as a "community" hotel on a co-operative basis, giving good service and using profits for financing local amenities, this House considers that the Government should encourage the ambition.

On motion by Mr. W. Hegney, debate adjourned.

MOTION—PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE.

As to Legislation for Appointing.

Debate resumed from the 21st August on the following motion by Mr. Mann:—

> That in the opinion of this House the Government should introduce legislation for the appointment of a Public Works Standing Committee representative of both Houses of Parliament, but on which the number of members of the Legislative Assembly shall be greater than the number of members of the Legislative Council, so that no public work to cost more than £30,000 shall be authorised unless it has first been investigated by such standing committee.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [6.12]: I oppose the motion because I do not agree with its phraseology.

Mr. Thorn: That is reasonable enough.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: This subject was discussed last session when the member for Beverley brought it forward and a decision was reached on it. I shall not support the motion because it proposes to set up a committee of five members, three representing this Chamber and two another place. I would not agree to that representation of another place on the committee because financial responsibility rests with the Legislative Assembly. For that reason the decision in respect of any public work that costs a considerable sum of money should definitely be reached by members of this House. It is said that another place is a House of review, but it has no power in connection with finance, although on very many occasions it has tried to impose its authority upon the Legislative Assembly in that respect. The member for Perth gave some reasons why he supports the motion. Generally speaking, Government departments in this State are definitely supervised by the responsible Ministers.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Before tea I stated that I was not prepared to support the motion as submitted for the reason that it contemplates giving a substantial amount of the authority to members of another place. If the motion were amended to confine the personnel of the committee to Assembly members, I would be prepared to support it. To that end I move an amendment—

That the words "representative of both Houses of Parliament, but on which the number of members of the Legislative Assembly shall be greater than the number of members of the Legislative Council" be struck out and the words "comprised of at least five members of the Legislative Assembly and" inserted in lieu.

If the motion as amended were agreed to, the personnel of the committee would definitely be restricted to members of this House, which is vested with the financial power under the Constitution. Such a committee would be appropriate to determine the financial aspect of public works and to advise the House of their soundness or whether money was likely to be wasted or mis-spent. The Assembly must take the responsibility for such expenditure.

There is some merit in the proposal to set up a public works standing committee. The Minister for Works quoted instances of similar committees having been set up in New South Wales and Queensland and then having ceased to exist, though some of the other States still retain committees of this sort. State Ministers, I believe, are in closer contact with the departments and their advisers than a Commonwealth Minister would be. Apart from that, let us consider the routine of the Works Department. When any undertaking is proposed, investigations are made by engineers and technical officers, and in due course the information is submitted to the Minister for his consideration. Possibly some revision may be made or the scheme might be referred back for additional information or consideration. As a rule, the Minister is a layman and in consequence must depend upon the advice tendered to him by his engineers and advisers.

In some instances in this State there has been wasteful expenditure, and possibly if the works in question had been investigated and the views of outside experts had been obtained, as could be done by a public works committee, some of that expenditure might have been avoided. One advantage of this system would be that the advisers to the Minister, knowing that outside advice could be sought, might be more careful in framing their estimates and in planning the proposed work, and might have greater regard for its cost to the community. From that angle, unquestionably, such a committee would be of advantage.

The Minister told us that a similar committee in New South Wales had not proved to be successful. However, there is no reason why the idea should not be tried here, provided the committee is constituted solely of Assembly members, whose duty it is to scrutinise the estimates of expenditure closely and who are directly responsible to the people for the finances of the State. The Loan Estimates each session indicate certain public works proposed to be carried out, and members of this House have an opportunity to discuss them. Another point to be borne in mind is that, after professional officers have advised a Min-

ister on the construction of certain works, the personnel might be changed. In the past, many public works have been authorised on which money was spent to little purpose. Possibly if a committee had examined the proposals beforehand, that expenditure would have been obviated.

Let me refer to the substantial expenditure of public funds on one public work close to the city—the draining of Herdsman's Lake. Speaking from memory, the original estimate was in the vicinity of £30,000 or £40,000. The final cost exceeded £120,000, and I believe there are not more than six or eight settlers in the area. There is a public work in hand at the moment near to where my parents live at West Midland. A sum of £39,000 on the Railway Estimates has been allocated for the construction of a reservoir for the storing of Collie coal. I have heard many members discuss the merits and demerits of this scheme, and they have contended that when the coal is taken out of the reservoir it will pulverise and be of no use. Evidently the expert advisers of the Commissioner of Railways and of the Minister have other ideas. Some of the members who question the utility of this scheme had been associated with the coal industry or with the usage of coal for many years before they entered this House, and their contentions appeal to me as being fairly sound. If we had a public works standing committee, it would be available to probe the merits of such a scheme.

Other works that have been undertaken could be mentioned on which large sums of money have been expended and on which the expenditure has largely exceeded the estimates of the engineers. We have heard on many occasions of estimates for public works having been revised. After a certain expenditure of money had been budgeted for on the estimates of the Minister's advisers, the amount provided for the work had to be considerably excessed. If it is possible to call in expert advice before such work is undertaken, I have no doubt that a great deal might be saved. Of course, it might not be. The estimates of the departmental engineers and advisers might be quite sound; but if these officers knew that their estimates would be subject to consideration and review they would probably be more hesitant about submitting estimates that might exceed the correct amount.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin—on amendment) [7.42]: The only thing satisfactory to me in the remarks of the member for Middle Swan is that he supports the principle embodied in the motion. He has the idea that it will be far better, far stronger and far more suitable if no members of the Upper House are included in the personnel of the committee.

Mr. J. Hegney: Too right!

Mr. DONEY:: The member for Middle Swan had some rather strange reasoning to make good his point. I cannot see any sense at all in a member of this Chamber seeking to perpetuate the feud which some wrong-thinking people regard as existing between the members of this House and of another place. Plainly, what is required is the best balanced committee obtainable; and if in appointing that committee we leave out what is offering in another place we shall be making a big mistake.

I can think of some half-dozen members of another place who would suit admirably as members of such a committee. Some three or four of them might properly be regarded as financial experts and therefore excellent to have on such a committee. I have in mind at the moment Hon. A. Thomson and one other member, both men with very considerable experience as builders. I could think of no-one better suited than those two gentlemen to have a place on the committee that is in our mind. It will be very wrong indeed, having regard to the interests of the State, if we deliberately exclude from such a committee men of the type that I am referring to. I therefore hope the House will not agree to the amendment. The member for Middle Swan, having committed himself to the principle underlying the motion will, I take it—and indeed he would need to, in order to be consistent—vote for the motion if the amendment, as I hope it will, should happen to be defeated.

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke — Northam—on amendment) [7.44]: As the Government is opposed to

the setting up of a committee of this kind, it will oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

[Resolved: That motions be continued.]

MR. ABBOTT (North Perth) [7.45]: I have expressed my views on this subject on several occasions. I have said that I favour the appointment of a committee such as this, and I therefore do not propose to engage the time of the House in what would be repetition on my part. My chief reason for supporting the motion is that private members would have the opportunity to take a greater interest in the activities of the Government. After all, we are paid by the people; and, although our advice or our suggestions might not later be considered by the Government to be correct, or to be of not much value, nevertheless on occasions some suggestions could be put forward which would be of value to the Government. It would certainly spur members on to take a greater interest in the activities of the Government. It is on those principles that I propose to support the motion.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth) [7.47]: Probably many members are in general sympathy with what I believe to be the underlying motive which prompted the member for Beverley in submitting his motion to the House, on account of the fact that many of us unfortunately are unfamiliar with what the Government contemplates until, in fact, the work has been publicly announced. I can say that with respect to certain works in my own locality. We, as members of Parliament, are entitled to know generally what works the Government proposes to undertake, but specifically what works affect our own particular electorates. There is probably another motive; it would appear that in many matters our efforts and, indeed, our presence in this Parliament, are subject to futility and, might I say, frustration. We express our views on particular matters, but by and large what private members have to say would appear, on the surface, at any rate, to be completely ignored.

Private members of Parliament, who are elected in the same way as Ministers, feel that they would at least like to hold a responsible position so far as the work of Parliament is concerned. They feel they should be able to influence or in some measure direct the activities of Parliament and particularly of this House. here may be another reason also. Without question, private members feel that insufficient reward or remuneration is accorded to them, bearing in mind the responsibilities and the uncertainty of the positions which they fill. Personally, I have other ideas as to how some improvement could be effected in that regard. I sympathise with the motives behind the move by the member for Beverley, because, if he succeeds in his motion, the members of the committee would receive some payment. There would then be some additional members who would be receiving rewards more in keeping with the responsibility of the positions which they occupy. I concede all of those points, but at the same time I am not too happy about the proposition.

On reading the remarks of the hon. member who introduced the motion, it would appear that the only reason he submitted for it was that this procedure had been adopted by other Parliaments, either of the Commonwealth or of other States. That, of course, in itself proves nothing. I do not know that generally speaking there can be any ground for reasonable criticism of the action taken by this Government or previous Governments with regard to the policy followed in connection with public works. But in any case it is the responsibility of the Government. The fact of there being a number of members who are Ministers and who have available to them expert and technical advice places those Ministers in the position of being able to make authoritative statements to this House. It assures us, too, that before any project is proceeded with, the Minister, who is a man of substance, has evidence submitted to him by his professional advisers; and after going into the matter thoroughly he then makes his determination. That determination is submitted to the Government, which then decides that it will proceed with the matter.

I feel, as I have expressed on a previous occasion, that if there were a public works committee as is envisaged in the motion, to a great extent that committee would be seeking information and advice from the very

people who have already tendered such information and advice to the Government.

Mr. Needham: And from outsiders.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. But outside information is available to the Government at present and very much of it is tendered without invitation from the Government. When there is any suggestion of a particular work being undertaken, interested parties in very many categories submit ideas and views concerning it. Therefore all the evidence necessary is already in the hands of the Government. It is merely, at the conclusion of that stage, a matter of whether or not the judgment of the Government is sound; and, after all, the House itself can take certain action if it feels that the decision arrived at by the Government is not sound. Further than that, the Government is responsible to the people. Therefore I think there are ample safeguards; and if a committee were appointed, a situation would probably be created which would not be conducive to that harmony which should exist. I am not suggesting that we should not have the strongest differences on major policy. But if the Government had determined upon a particular public work or undertaking and then this public works committee— a committee of private members —decided otherwise, there might be a first-class disturbance in this House, which would serve no particular purpose because, in the final analysis, the will of the Government must prevail and ultimately it is subject to assessment by the people when election time comes round.

Mr. Watts: What about the will of Parliament or of the House prevailing?

Mr. GRAHAM: I have expressed myself on that matter on previous occasions. As all members are aware, I am anything but happy as to what constitutes the Parliament of Western Australia at the present moment. If for no other reason, I would be opposed to the setting up of a public works committee in the terms of the motion because it seeks to grant some authority to or permit the Legislative Council to have some say and influence in regard to such matters; whereas, so far as I am concerned, my energies in connection with relationships between the two Houses will be directed towards whittling away any powers members in another place have and, in the final analysis, towards completely abolishing that second Chamber.

I would therefore be a recreant to my own beliefs—and members are entitled to their opinions with regard to that attitude just as I am free to hold my opinion—I would be false, I say, to my own convictions, if I did anything to give an additional say or influence in Parliamentary and political matters to that House which I regard as being undemocratic and redundant in what ought to be this enlightened age of 1946 and the years that are to follow. Accordingly, because the motion has reference to the Legislative Council, on that ground alone I would oppose it. But, as previously stated, because the Government has available technical experts and advisers and because the Government and its supporters are on trial for three years before the people, that section of Parliament—namely, the Government—which accepts responsibility should have the complete say as to which works should be proceeded with and which should not. Accordingly I oppose the motion.

Mr. WITHERS: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	19
Noes	11
Majority for	8

AYES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Smith
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Telfer
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Triat
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Needham	(*Teller.*)

NOES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Watts
Mr. Mann	Mr. Willmott
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Seward
Mr. Owen	(*Teller.*)

Motion thus passed; debate adjourned.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £2,700,000.

MOTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

To Disallow Angle-Parking Regulation.

Debate resumed from the 21st August on the following motion by Mr. Doney—

That new regulation No. 106A, made under the Traffic Act, 1919-1941, published in the "Government Gazette" of the 5th April, 1946, and laid upon the Table of the House on the 30th July, 1946, be and is hereby disallowed.

MR. READ (Victoria Park) [8.0]: Last Wednesday evening I was in haste to rise to tone down the statements of the member for Toodyay when speaking antagonistically as to the parking of motorcars in an angle position in St. George's-terrace. I was rather surprised that this motion had been brought forward without some of us being consulted. I feel sure that those of us who have resided here for 30 years and have represented the environs of the city, should at least know more about parking and traffic control than do country members. The member for Toodyay said that angle-parking of cars was unsightly, that it slowed up traffic and was dangerous in that it caused accidents. In regard to being unsightly, certainly the cars are of different sizes, colours, and of many vintages. But the sights of the city should be viewed as a whole. We see in our busy streets crowds of people going to and fro, darting into shops and sometimes overflowing on to footpaths. We see the dingy unpainted trams but we take little notice of them because they are part of the picture of a busy city.

The unsightliness mentioned by the hon. member is, to my mind, not unsightliness, but is something of which we in a measure can be proud. To me it spells progress and development. I come now to the matter of the traffic being dangerous. The slowness caused by this method of parking minimises danger. One member said that he travelled up and down St. George's-terrace and found that the traffic had slowed down. I myself would like to deal with the matter from the point of view of a constant user who does not go to and fro in the terrace, but uses it as a means of doing business. The people who traverse the terrace for the purpose of going through town would be better advised to take the Riverside-drive. That would relieve, in some measure, the traffic passing along the terrace. I have frequently to do business in St. George's-terrace. Sometimes it is with insurance companies in connection with workers' compensation business, and at least three times a week I have to visit the E.S. & A. Bank. In the past my disability has been, because of parallel parking, to find space alongside the kerb. Under the system of parallel parking a motor owner, when he drives into the kerb, leaves sufficient space between his and the next car so that he can manoeuvre out when he has finished his business.

Mr. Rodoreda: What is the position with angle-parking?

Mr. READ: With angle-parking definite lines are marked out and if one does not keep within the circumscribed area one contravenes the regulations. Today there is ample room for three times the number of cars to be parked in the terrace than was the case under the old system. I have frequently had to go right around the block, and sometimes as far afield as behind the Supreme Court before I could find parking space for my car.

Mr. Thorn: You seem to be talking from your own selfish point of view.

Mr. READ: I was coming to that later, but I can answer the interjection by saying that we are sometimes guided by the requests of electors who put us here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must remind the member for North Perth that a member must not walk between a speaker and the Chair.

Mr. READ: Some of my electors, many of them business people, made complaints to me about the matter of parking, and I asked that the traffic advisory committee should bring the question before the proper authorities for a ruling and to see what could be done. As a result the Minister was approached and, in his endeavour to relieve the congestion in the city and make more facilities available for people doing business, angle-parking was introduced. Its introduction was made with the idea of giving it a trial to see if it would be an improvement. Prior to angle-parking I took particular notice of the position and only twice on 10 occasions was I able to get space to park where I wanted to in the Terrace. In the last five or six weeks, since the advent of angle-parking I have been able to park seven times out of 10. That, to me, indicates the success of the system up to date.

The traffic problem is a great one. As our road traffic increases, something will have to be done to keep the private motorcar from entering and parking in the town. The central city block will ultimately have to be kept clear of private cars to enable goods to be transported to and from warehouses. I do not think that would impose a great hardship on the motorist. If we cast our minds back to when we all used the tram, train or bus, and had not acquired motorcars, we will recall that it took us but little time to travel from the railway station to our business in central Hay-street. I hope that the vote of this House will be such as to enable the Minister to prolong this experiment so that possibly it might become permanent. I have heard, on good authority, that the system is to be somewhat modified so that the very large trucks, that overhang the line, thus contravening the regulation, will not be allowed in that particular parking place; also that there will be a less acute angle provided for the cars heading in to the kerb. Furthermore, the distance between parked cars and the intersection will be lengthened. That will make for greater safety, though allowing fewers cars in.

It was said at the time that the visibility and congestion in the centre of the main way were such as to be dangerous, but I think that the drivers who were backing slowly out from the kerb overlooked the fact that at short intervals the policeman on point duty stops the traffic either way and during that interval the traffic lane is empty, making it easy to back out and get away. It takes longer, but it is safer. On behalf of the people on the south side of the river, who have enjoyed the extra parking facilities during the last five or six weeks, I hope it will continue.

On motion by Mr. Perkins, debate adjourned.

BILL—BUSINESS NAMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 22nd August.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [8.11]: Although I am not without a great deal of sympathy for the activity which the member for Guildford-Midland has in mind under this measure, I am not satisfied that the proposal he put forward to the House and the amendment that he brought up on the Business Names Act will do only that which he contends. He indicates that it will enable the word "co-operative" to be used in the business name, for registration, of a firm or business, provided only that the persons who are taking part in that concern are engaged in co-operation in the sense in which he uses that term. I do not think he is right. He mentioned the fact that I had made to him some reference to the difficulty that I have in mind, during recent weeks, when I inquired of him what his intentions were in regard to this measure, he having given notice of it. He stated that he had given consideration to the point that I raised and, I think, had taken advice on it, and had come to the conclusion that it was quite all *right to proceed in this manner.* I do not think it is.

As I understand the position, under the Business Names Act a partnership of any number of persons, or an individual carrying on business under a trade name which is not his own name, may seek registration. John Jones may desire to trade as "The National Cafe," and not to disclose his name, John Jones, in his transactions with the public, so he registers himself under the Business Names Act as "The National Cafe," consisting of John Jones. A partnership of two or more persons may register itself as "Brown & Smith," "Brown Bros.," or "Brown & Co.," and, until the word "co-operative" was excluded under the Business Names Act, which was introduced a couple of years ago, could, so far as I can discover, lawfully have called themselves "Brown's Co-operative."

The Companies Act which is at present in force certainly makes provision that the word "co-operative" cannot be used in respect of a company registered under the Companies Act, a limited liability company or some other company which the Companies Act contemplates, unless such a company carries out all the conditions that are prescribed in relation to co-operative companies, but there is nothing to prevent a collection of persons, as I see it, which is not a limited company or not a company that requires registration under the Companies Act, from opening up business and calling itself a co-operative concern, because as far as I can see the provisions of the Companies Act do not apply to ordinary persons or

firms carrying on business in their own right, but under business names which are registered, and so it seems to me that if we take out the prohibition in the Business Names Act against the use of the word "co-operative," then immediately it is possible for any individual or partnership to register himself or itself, quite lawfully using the word "co-operative" in his or its business name. If that is so, it is not in the least what the member for Guildford-Midland desires.

It is true that the exclusion of this word would suit the B.D.Q., or whatever this interesting concern is, in the York-Beverley district, to which the hon. member made reference, but it is not only that that he wants to serve. He wants to ensure that the word "co-operative" shall not be used except in relation to institutions or concerns that comply with the general principles involved in co-operation as we know it, and I think he has gone further than that in this Bill. I anticipated, of course, that the Minister would have addressed the House on this subject before I did, and that I should have had the benefit not only of such ideas as I have of my own, but also those of officers of the Crown Law Department, which no doubt would have been conveyed to him. Unless I can be convinced that the passage of this Bill and the consequent permission to use the word "co-operative" for registration under the Business Names Act is not going to allow anybody and everybody at some time or other to use the word "co-operative," then I shall have to oppose the measure, and that is my view at the present time; that, as it stands, it seeks to get over a difficult problem by too easy a route.

There is doubtless a way of getting what the hon. member wants, but as far as I can see he is getting there too easily. Not only is he opening the way to the deserving institution that he has in mind, and perhaps some others like it, but also to persons who may easily use the word "co-operative" for fraudulent reasons. Until I can be satisfied—which I am not now—that that will not be the position, I cannot vote for this measure.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTORAL (WAR TIME) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. ABBOTT (North Perth) [8.20]: The object of the Bill is to make some necessary alterations to the Act owing to changed circumstances. The three principal matters for consideration are that Service personnel are now serving in Japan and Borneo, that the Allied Works Council and Civil Construction Corps have ceased to exist, and that discharged members now have facilities for being enrolled in the ordinary manner. I can see no objection to the measure. Another proposed amendment aims at permitting commanding officers to appoint non-commissioned officers to take votes, whereas under the Act that duty is confined to commissioned officers. It might have been wiser to have restricted the discretion of commanding officers to some extent by limiting the rank of non-commissioned officers who could be entrusted with these duties. I appreciate that a commanding officer is probably quite able to exercise proper discretion in the discharge of this rather important function. On the other hand, whether it is fitting that a lance-corporal should be appointed to the position is somewhat doubtful. I do not propose to take any action in the matter as apparently the Minister is satisfied to rely upon the discretion of commanding officers.

The Minister for Justice: That was the case in connection with the Legislative Council.

Mr. ABBOTT: Yes, I realise it is a little difficult. I have had some experience in this regard, because on two occasions I was an officer appointed to carry out these duties, once in connection with a Federal election. The difficulty I found was that the average soldier-elector, or at any rate very many of them, did not know the electorate in connection with which he should vote. If one did not happen to be a resident of Victoria and the voter came from that State—I am now speaking in connection with the Federal election—it was extremely difficult to know exactly which electorate the soldier was concerned with. The same position arose in connection with a State election. Many who were resi-

dent in Mt. Lawley did not know the electorate in connection with which they should vote. A man who lived in North Perth did not know whether he should vote for the candidates for the North Perth seat. In many instances if the officer were not a resident of Western Australia his position would be difficult.

I suggest to the Minister that when the papers are being forwarded to Japan or Borneo it would materially assist the officer or non-commissioned officer who did not happen to be a resident of Western Australia and yet was responsible for conducting the ballot, if a supply of maps were provided showing the electoral districts. Another amendment in the Bill is for the purpose of repealing Section 25 which deals with objections to enrolments and voting outside the electorate for which electors were formerly enrolled. It seems that now that normal conditions have returned there is no reason why the section should be retained. I support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [8.25]: The member for Claremont is not able to be in his seat this evening, and he had intended, I believe, to submit to the Minister for Justice the question of whether in the case of electors on Service, who would be covered by the Bill, the polling date for them might not be fixed at a date earlier than the ordinary polling day in this State.

The Minister for Justice: You suggest it should not be?

Mr. McDONALD: No, that it should be before the ordinary polling date. The member for Claremont recalled past elections during the war period in which weeks elapsed before the returns came in from outlying centres. In those circumstances it became perhaps a matter of anxiety to the candidate or uncertainty to the State as to who would or would not be included in the membership of the incoming Parliament. I have not had time to give this matter careful consideration and I mention the point on behalf of the member for Claremont, in his absence, so that the Minister may give some attention to it. The idea would be that the polling date for Service personnel might be fixed a week or two before the normal polling day in the State. The time would then be sufficient to enable the votes to be counted and the results wired or cabled to the Chief Electoral Officer, in which case they would be available on polling day for counting along with the votes cast in this State. In those circumstances the poll could be declared without the delay that has previously occurred in connection with postal votes.

The Minister for Justice: That would involve a flood of amendments.

Mr. McDONALD: It would mean some slight amendments. It would also necessitate some consideration by the Minister as to whether there are any undesirable features associated with the proposal, and whether it is a procedure that might be adopted without there being any danger of anything unsatisfactory in connection with the conduct of elections in the areas concerned. I have not had time to consider the matter fully and therefore I do not feel disposed to move any such amendment, but I mention it for the Minister's consideration.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [8.28]: I support the member for North Perth in his suggestion to place a limit on the rank of the non-commissioned officer who could be appointed to carry out the duties referred to in the Bill. I say that advisedly because there are men who on account of certain qualifications in connection with their job in the Army are entitled to rank but who, while they may be quite fitted to hold their Army appointments by virtue of those qualifications, might not be suitable to undertake a job of this kind.

The Minister for Justice: That could apply also to the commanding officer or the commissioned officer.

Mr. LESLIE: No, because the commanding officer is a man who must have a considerable sense of responsibility.

Mr. Doney: You could not very well question the standing of a commanding officer.

The Minister for Justice: Nor could you question the standing of some privates.

Mr. LESLIE: One could not question the standing of a majority of the privates, and, because of that, it is not always true that the man who holds stripes possesses better qualifications to carry out a task of this description. The set-up of the modern Army

makes it essentially one of small units, and we might be faced with the position that a commanding officer, not wishing to be inconvenienced by sending out junior officers to small sections, will leave the duty to the N.C.O., who may be a lance-corporal or a corporal in charge of half-a-dozen men at an isolated post.

The Minister for Justice: The commanding officer will have the choice.

Mr. LESLIE: Yes. He might feel that Bill Jones could do the job and that there was no necessity to send out an officer. In this there lies a danger, because these men hold their positions on account of their qualifications for army work and not from a civilian point of view. When a man is being considered for commissioned rank, his civilian background and qualifications are considered because, as an officer, he will frequently be called upon to exercise judgment—a quality that can have been developed only by reason of his position in civilian life.

I am not prepared to move an amendment because I consider the Bill of insufficient importance to warrant argument on the point and the number of votes will not be large enough to justify my falling out with the Minister. However, there should be no difficulty in suggesting that the non-commissioned officer should be one including and above the rank of sergeant—not that I have any love for sergeants. Such non-commissioned officers while holding lower rank would have gained experience in exercising responsibility to some degree. Their job is one entailing responsibility, far more so than that of lower ranks. By stipulating non-commissioned officers including and above the rank of sergeant, I feel that we shall be giving the men confidence that everything is clear and above-board.

Mr. Seward: Do you think anyone has confidence in this measure?

Mr. LESLIE: There may be elements of doubt, but why reduce what little confidence may exist? Voting is an important matter, and the more we can make the people realise this, the more they will exercise thought when voting. If voting is treated as a cheap thing, they will be apt to ask, "What does it matter what I do with the ballot paper?" We should not permit the whole operation of such an important part of our governmental system to be cheapened. If my suggestion were accepted, I think it would improve the Bill. I support the second reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Kanowna—in reply) [8.34]: I am pleased that the Bill has been given a kindly reception and I appreciate the constructive criticism that has been offered. Regarding the suggestion made by the member for North-Perth, it is essential that those acting in the capacity of returning officers should know something about the districts. Certain it is that a number of these electors would not know the districts for which they were enrolled. There is a provision in the original Act stipulating that if a person were not enrolled before he left Australia, he would be entitled to be enrolled if he was in the Forces oversea. That provision, of course, applies to this measure also.

The member for West Perth suggested that the polling might be held oversea before it was held in Western Australia. I do not know what danger might arise if the suggestion were adopted, but it merits inquiry. I am aware that the final count has been held up awaiting the result of the vote taken oversea. I will also consider the suggestion made by the member for Mt. Marshall, though I do not quite agree with him. We should have a sense of responsibility, as the hon. member indicated, but even commissioned officers or the C.O. himself might not have the qualifications for this work possessed by an N.C.O. Usually non-commissioned officers have had to work their way from the bottom and, although they may not have had any great experience of elections, the same remark applies to officers at the top of the tree. I have known men occupying rather eminent positions and yet possessing no greater sense of responsibility than men on the lower rungs. I will inquire into the suggestions and, if there is any need for amendment, it can be made in another place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Rodoreda in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 9:

Mr. McDONALD: Some of the suggestions offered during the second reading are worthy of consideration. I take it the Minister proposes to consider them between now and the time the Bill is dealt with in the Legislative Council, so that there will be an opportunity to make any amendments desired. As I consider the suggestions warrant consideration, I should not like to think that they have been summarily dismissed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have already given an assurance that the suggestions made by members will receive consideration.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 8, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

As to Second Reading Procedure.

Mr. SPEAKER: I report to the House that an omission has occurred. I should have counted the House to ascertain that there was an absolute majority of members in favour of the second reading of the Bill, which is a measure altering the Constitution. I will have to put the motion for the second reading again and the Bill will again have to pass through the Committee stage.

Question (second reading) put.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House and assured myself that there is an absolute majority of members present. I declare the question duly passed.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—MILK

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Rodoreda in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clause 6—Interpretation:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 6, to which the Minister for Agriculture had moved an amendment to strike out in the third paragraph of the definition of "milk vendor" the words "owns or occupies a milk store which is used exclusively for the treatment, sale or distribution to consumers of ice-cream, or of milk or cream in concentrated form or solidified by freezing."

Point of Order.

The Chairman: Before calling on the Minister to proceed with his amendment, I would like to explain to the member for Guildford-Midland, who was desirous of moving an amendment to strike out the paragraph in question, that I informed the Committee I would reserve my decision on this point until the Minister had outlined his amendment. As well as outlining it, the Minister actually moved it; and unfortunately I am placed in the position that I have no option at all but to allow him to proceed with his amendment. I would point out to the member for Guildford-Midland that if I give him precedence and allow him to move to strike out the paragraph and his amendment succeeds, then the Minister has no chance whatever to do anything about the matter.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is so.

The Chairman: As the Minister has already moved his amendment, it is not within my province to debar him from proceeding with it. The amendment is now the property of the Committee and the course for the member for Guildford-Midland to pursue is to vote and speak against the clause as proposed to be amended by the Minister. Unfortunately I have no other option.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I regret that. It is distinctly unfair to me, but I must bow to your decision. I did move that the paragraph in question be struck out and I appealed to the Minister to report progress. The Minister then, instead of giving a reply, outlined his amendment. You, Mr. Chairman, say definitely that I cannot now move the amendment which I proposed to move. I am opposed to the provision as it stands and do not want to have anything to do with it.

The Chairman: I am sympathetic with the member for Guildford-Midland, but he definitely had not moved his amendment. He was going to do so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I moved it.

The Chairman: That is not the impression of myself or of the clerks, I am sorry to say. The member for Guildford-Midland sat down and allowed the Minister to proceed to outline his amendment. The matter is out of my hands altogether. I am unfortunately compelled to allow the Minister to proceed.

Committee resumed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have no desire whatever to trick the member for Guildford-Midland out of being able to do what he desires to do; but I submit to the Committee that if I am permitted to proceed the hon. member can still do what he desires to do. If, however, he proceeds, he will prevent me from even attempting to do what I desire to do, which is to amend the paragraph so as to make it do what I thought it would do when it was inserted in the Bill. I told the Committee that my desire was to exempt manufacturers of ice-cream from the provisions of the Bill. There is some doubt about the provision as it is worded. Some say it will have the effect I desire; others say it is not clear enough. To make it perfectly clear, I propose to submit the amendment which I did actually move. If I am permitted to do that, the hon. member who desires to prevent ice-cream manufacturers from being excluded can still achieve his objective by urging the Committee to vote against the clause as amended.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I wanted to do it according to the Standing Orders.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I might find a method to enable the hon. member to try out what he proposes to do.

The CHAIRMAN: Would the Minister please resume his seat? I would like to point out to the Minister that if he proceeds with this amendment and the Committee agrees to accept it, the member for Guildford-Midland can do nothing in regard to the deletion of this portion without recommittal of the Bill. If the Minister allows the member for Guildford-Midland to proceed with his amendment and the Committee agrees to accept it, the Minister can do nothing about it without a recommittal. That, as I see it, is the position that obtains at present.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so. If it were an even break between us, I would withdraw my amendment and allow the hon. member to submit his. But it would not be an even break because, if I move my amendment, he can argue that what I am seeking to do—to exempt manufacturers—should not be done, and if he could get a majority of the Committee to see with him, my amendment would be defeated, and that would be the end of the provision I seek to insert. On the other hand, the hon. member might attempt to do what he wants to do, not have the Committee with him, and fail. But he having failed, I would be prevented from doing anything about it and must accept what is already in the Bill but not suitable. That is not an even break, and for that reason I do not think it would be right for me to withdraw the amendment.

The clause which is already in the Bill is intended to exempt ice-cream manufacturers from its provisions. That is the intention of the amendment on the notice paper, but it is there stated more clearly. What this clause purports to provide for is already the practice, and has been all the time: that is, ice-cream manufacturers and other manufacturers purchase their milk not at wholemilk rates but at butter-fat prices. Peters Ice Cream Co., a big ice-cream manufacturing firm, obtains its milk from Nestle's. Nestle's buys surplus milk from the producers. It is desirable that there should be an outlet for surplus milk. There will always be at certain times of the year a considerable quantity of milk over and above the quota. That is surplus milk and all through the piece that surplus has been purchased by manufacturers such as Nestle's, Peters Ice Cream factory, Mills & Ware, and the like. Those firms have been purchasing this surplus milk already.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do they buy that in the summer?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, they buy surplus milk at all times when there is a surplus.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Have you ever had it during the summer?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, there has been surplus milk during the summer.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I thought school children went for that surplus milk.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At certain periods of the summer, but not all the time. The hon. member's question was, "Do they buy surplus milk in the summer?" The answer is that they do. I did not say they were able to buy it at all times during the summer. There must be a market for surplus milk. It is most desirable that there should be. What would the producer do with it otherwise? It is surplus milk, of which he must have a considerable quantity in the flush season.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Other dairymen make butter.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Exactly! What is the difference between making condensed milk and making butter?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Butter is not controlled and milk is.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot follow the reasoning of the hon. member.

Mr. Abbott: Ice-cream is not controlled.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Outside of the quantity of milk required for wholemilk, there is a considerable quantity of surplus milk to be used in a variety of ways. How are we entitled to discriminate between surplus milk used for making condensed milk, or powdered milk, and that used for making biscuits or ice-cream? If there is a surplus over and above the quota, what does it matter whether it is used for condensed or powdered milk or ice-cream? It will be purchased at manufacturer's rates for manufacturing purposes, and it is not right that manufacturers should be subject to the provisions of a Bill which is a wholemilk Bill.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Big Business!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No more big business than Nestle's condensed milk factory! They have been buying this milk all along. The provision in this Bill does not seek to alter the existing condition in the slightest.

Hon. N. Keenan: Does the use of such milk constitute any possible danger to human health?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, it does not. There is the Pure Foods Act. Apart from that, the milk bought by Nestle's factory is subject to rigid and regular testing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And what kind is it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The best quality.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Minister should know that any old milk is used.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, it is not.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I say it is.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I call on the hon. member to submit proof. I deny what he says. I say that the milk being used is subject to very rigid testing and regular testing for butter-fat content and for content of solids not fats.

Mr. Triat: And what happens to it if it is under standard?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not used for this purpose.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Where does it go?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not used for making ice-cream or biscuits.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How do you know?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am assured of it by my officers.

Mr. Needham: Is this a duet or a speech?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This clause is intended to make provision for what is already the practice and for what is a most desirable use for surplus milk. I desire to make provision for the board to grant exemption to manufacturers who require to use surplus milk for which they will pay at butter-fat rates or greater, in the same way as those who now purchase surplus milk turn it into butter, purchasing that milk at butter-fat rates. The clause in the Bill is not sufficiently clearly worded. I would have been satisfied with it had my attention not been drawn to a possible weakness in it. As I desire to do a certain thing, I want to be sure it will be done. For that reason I submit the amendment.

Hon. N. Keenan: Is it on the notice paper?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. The amendment is to strike out in line 11 of the definition of "milk vendor"

all the words after "who" and insert in lieu the words "being the owner or occupier of a milk store uses exclusively for the treatment, sale or distribution of ice-cream all milk purchased or acquired by him." I want to be certain that it will be used exclusively for that purpose, because I am not prepared to have an exemption granted to any firm that ostensibly purchases milk for manufacturing but, because of some other activity in connection with which milk is used, is able to use that surplus milk for another purpose and so deprive the producer of a fair return for the milk so used. In the past, one of the difficulties has been that people have purchased surplus milk ostensibly for manufacturing purposes, but they have then sold it to be retailed as wholemilk. So they have bought it on a cheap market and sold it on a dearer one. That is unfair to the producer. The definite intention of the amendment is to exclude ice-cream manufacturers from the provisions of the Bill, but not to exclude them if, in addition to manufacturing ice-cream, they carry out some other business connected with the use of milk.

Mr. Thorn: Will they be able to get sufficient surplus milk to carry on their business?

Mr. McDONALD: I support the amendment. I say to the Committee and to the member for Guildford-Midland that the representatives of Peter's ice-cream asked me about the effect of the measure, just the same as any person is entitled to ask a member of Parliament how an Act is likely to affect his ultimate interests. The ice-cream industry is one well worthwhile having in this State. I do not like the term big business. I shall be very sorry if we put a signboard at Fremantle saying, "No big business to come here."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We do not want it to tinker in politics.

Mr. McDONALD: Any person carrying on a lawful business is entitled to make representations in politics.

The Minister for Works: Some firms have direct advocates here.

Mr. Thorn: A monopoly—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: According to information given to me, the price paid for surplus milk is, on the average, above the butter-fat price. It therefore pays the producers better than to convert their milk into butter-fat. A New South Wales company, of the same name as the one I have mentioned, has its own factory at Taree where it converts surplus milk into dried milk which can be used for the manufacture of ice-cream. The company in this State desires to buy its products in Western Australia for the benefit of our producers. But it could import dried milk from another State in which case an avenue for the disposal of surplus milk here might be lost. No one wants to see that done. Past practice has not been unreasonable and we have no need to discourage people conducting a worthwhile enterprise and using the products of this State. I ask the Minister to accept an amendment to the words he proposes to add by inserting in the fourth line after the word "treatment" the word "manufacture."

The CHAIRMAN: The member for West Perth is out of order in suggesting an amendment at present. We are merely discussing the deletion of certain words. The hon. member's suggestion can be included in the Minister's amendment when he moves the addition of certain words.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: This matter has taken an unfortunate turn. I desired to deal with the clause, and the only way I could do that was to move its deletion.

The CHAIRMAN: Only a portion of the clause is under consideration.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I must now speak to the amendment. Ice-cream is sold for human consumption, particularly by children. It is made largely from milk. The Minister proposes to discriminate between milk used as a diet in the ordinary course, and that used and consumed in the form of ice-cream. If it is necessary to supervise, inspect, license and take all kinds of precautions to see that only wholesome milk reaches the consumers, then I will never agree that there should be some discrimination between that milk and milk consumed in another way. It is of no use the Minister trying to convey that he knows all about the milk that goes into ice-cream. He said that the company gets its milk from Nestle's factory. I know nothing about Nestle's factory except that it produces dried milk and condensed milk.

I knew nothing about the exemption of Peter's ice-cream manufactory from the operations of the Bill until yesterday when I rose to speak. I noticed then that this measure did not coincide with the one introduced last year. I then appreciated that a new and dangerous clause had been introduced. During the course of the second reading debate or in the early part of the Committee stage the Minister admitted that he had been approached by these people. The Bill introduced last year did not seek to discriminate in this way, by allowing any milk to be used in the manufacture of ice-cream. The company had to see that the milk it used was just as wholesome and pure as that which the board was able to get for general consumption. In the meantime representations were made. The Minister admitted they were made by the Chamber of Manufactures. I take exception to that, and say it is wrong.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is wrong?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is wrong for the Minister to discriminate on the representations of any particular body, and when the representations are such as to endanger the health of the children of the metropolitan area and the community it is extremely wrong. I know there are nasty insinuations going around, that I am doing something for Pascomi. I have no desire to assist Pascomi in any way. That organisation is able to look after itself. What I am doing I am doing as a member of Parliament and a representative of the community. I object to its being used by the Government to support a proposal that we should divide milk so that if it goes one way it is consumed as ice-cream without the attention, supervision and control that are exercised over it when consumed as milk.

I will not fight it any longer. If members cannot see that it is wrong, I will let it go. I will try to make another amendment to the Bill. If the position is the same when we reach the third reading I will expose fully the danger that exists when the Government is influenced by a desire to build up local production in this way. It is a great thing to have factories here and to encourage those who spend money here. I want to do all those things, but in an honest, straightforward and competitive way. I do not want to give special consideration to anyone or any company, wealthy or otherwise, or to give one of them an advantage in using, in the manufacture of products that it is putting on the market, this milk, as compared with any other. I oppose the amendment, and trust that the Committee will have none of it.

Mr. TRIAT: After listening to the Minister and the member for Guildford-Midland, I am not clear what the position is. I understood that the Minister desired this alteration in order to allow the producers of ice-cream, cakes and so on, to use wholemilk at a cheaper rate because it was surplus milk. I was not under the impression that he desired them to be absolved from testing the milk to see that it was clean and wholesome. If the desire is to allow them to use milk that is not wholesome I will be against the measure, but if it is to permit them to use surplus milk, which cannot be used otherwise, I do not wish to see the producer suffer, provided he gets a satisfactory price. I would like the Minister to tell us what security the consumers of ice-cream are to have apart from the provisions of the Pure Foods Act. If the Pure Foods Act is in operation, why do we want a Milk Bill to protect the consumers of milk? If there is to be a cheaper rate for surplus milk, I will vote for it—

Mr. Abbott: And the same for butter.

Mr. TRIAT: The surplus milk can be used for anything, provided the price is suitable. If we were putting in a water supply, with a poisoned drain running into it, people would not permit it to operate. We will not have a flow of poisoned milk running into our milk supply. I do not think the measure is stringent enough, but if the Minister clarifies the position I will vote for the clause.

Mr. CROSS: I propose to vote against the amendment for reasons different from those stated by the member for Guildford-Midland. In my opinion the amendment if carried will be the source of unfair competition. Many small shops manufacture their own ice-cream and also sell milk both as a beverage and for use by householders. This provision would prevent their getting surplus milk at a cheaper price, because they would not get an exemption. The Minister proposes to

give an exemption to big business. Any member who read the report on Peters W.A. Ltd. in "The West Australian" this morning must be convinced that that company is doing big business and can well afford to pay the price of wholemilk. That report says that the net profit for the year, after allowing for taxation, depreciation, etc., was £23,790, out of which a dividend of 9 per cent. will be paid, absorbing £11,575, leaving a balance of £12,215 to be transferred to a general reserve. The depreciation reserve was £91,412, making a total reserve of £151,214. The reserve for taxation provided by the company and the Western Ice Company for the year amounted to £64,000, as compared with £8,000 in 1940-1941.

Mr. Seward: That shows how taxation has gone up.

Mr. CROSS: Their business has gone up also. That firm can well afford to use wholemilk, and would use it, because it could not buy the constituents used for making icecream more cheaply. I will not be a party to giving powerful combines an advantage over small shopkeepers. The British Empire has been built up by small shopkeepers. It is in summertime that Peters would most want the surplus milk, but what would they pay for it then? What milk will they use when there are no supplies of surplus milk, and when shops are rationed? Peters would say, "We want 400 gallons of milk," and would get it at surplus milk prices. I ask the Democratic Party what they are doing to watch the interests of producers about whom they say so much.

Mr. Mann: You will have a heart attack soon.

Mr. CROSS: The member for Beverley will, also, when he goes to his electors. These are the people who were championing the producers and demanding a proper price for milk.

Mr. Seward: Cannot you shake the Minister's argument? You have not done so yet.

Mr. CROSS:: I will not support the amendment. I am glad I have been able to make a few points, because otherwise I would have made them on the third reading. If we let large firms have milk at a cheaper price the small shopkeeper should be permitted to buy at the same cheap price. Surely the Minister could bring down an amendment to the Pure Foods Act and lay down a standard for the production of icecream. I will vote against the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for Guildford-Midland said he would devote a lot of time later on to an attempt to defeat this clause. I suggest to him that he devotes some time to reading the Bill now, because he does not know what it contains.

The Minister for Mines: That is not unusual!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill provides that the board shall in its absolute discretion grant certificates of exemption to various manufacturers. That certificate will set down certain conditions which, if not complied with to the satisfaction of the board, can be revoked. There is the control. The Bill provides that cattle shall be tested for T.B. and if found diseased shall be destroyed.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Minister is wandering from the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am dealing with the arguments advanced by the member for Canning and the member for Guildford-Midland, the main tenor of which was that this amendment would set up two classes of milk—one controlled for the wholemilk market and another uncontrolled and therefore that milk would be liable to be contaminated.

The Minister for Mines: Too right; that was their argument!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am attempting to show that that is not so. To start with, the Milk Board will have cattle tested for disease and affected cattle will be destroyed. Milk that comes from the cattle to the various depots for sale will be regularly tested and I have already said that the surplus milk that is bought today by, for example, Nestle's Condensed Milk Factory, is subject to rigid and regular testing, just as much as is milk that is sold for the wholemilk market. That testing will continue.

Hon. N. Keenan: Who does it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is done by the board's inspectors. The member for Canning suggested that ice-

cream was made only in the summer months when the milk supply was short.

Mr. Cross: That is when they make most of it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not. They make most of the ice-cream during the winter months when there is plenty of milk and then the ice-cream is stored. It is made, frozen and then stored and is not subject to any deterioration. In the same way the ice manufacturers make ice during the winter and store it against the heavy demand they can expect during the summer months. If members opposed to this amendment are basing their opposition on the supposition that ice-cream manufacturers and others will cause milk to be in short supply during the summer because of their demands, they are arguing on wrong premises. Those manufacturers take advantage of the large surplus supplies of milk when they are available and when there is no other outlet for it. That is what has been happening, and that is what they will continue to do in the future.

Mr. Thorn: Let them answer that!

Mr. Mann: They cannot.

Mr. Thorn: The member for Canning is dumbfounded!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is a very limited outlet for whole-milk and there is always a large surplus during the winter months. What will happen if the manufacturers are not to be encouraged to use it? The producers will be the losers.

Mr. Thorn: That is so. They want the producers to dump their surplus milk.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is idle for the member for Canning to say that the manufacturers could not get supplies of powdered milk. The ordinary commercial practice is if the prices of constituents they use in the manufacture of their products are too high, the manufacturers will look for substitutes and will get them

Mr. Thorn: Then the member for Canning will growl again.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The purpose of this part of the Bill is to make provision for the continuance of a practice already in existence and about which I have not previously heard protests from anyone. One would imagine this is an innovation; it is not.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why include it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am obliged to do so because the Bill is intended to tighten up the situation in many directions.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: This is turning the screw the other way.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Because of the rigid control the Bill seeks to impose, I am obliged to include the special provision for exemptions. The big point to remember is that the inclusion of this provision does not automatically exclude manufacturers and the milk they use. They are obliged to apply for a certificate. The board, in its absolute discretion and on its own conditions, will issue a certificate and is able, again in its absolute discretion, to revoke any certificate of exemption at any time if those conditions are not complied with. Does any member suggest that the Milk Board, charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the health of the community in respect of the consumption of milk and milk products, is to disregard what is happening in the ice-cream industry? Even if the board should be lax in that direction, there is still the Health Act, and the health inspectors would play their part as well. I submit I am not unreasonable in asking the Committee to support this provision.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister says the Health Act contains provisions enabling milk to be inspected if the board cannot carry out that work. Milk is excluded from a portion of the Bill and therefore does not come under it. If members will note the definition of "milk vendor" they will see that he is the man who sells milk and distributes it. It is set out that the term "milk vendor" includes a dairyman who sells milk retail to the consumer. That is very definite and all-embracing. It goes on to say that it does not include a dairyman who sells milk wholesale to persons other than consumers, thereby definitely excluding him.

What is the use of the Minister trying to make out that there is no difference between the board's control of one class of milk as compared with the other? If that is so, why does he want this provision in the Bill? It

was not included in previous legislation of this type. It was not included last year, but is included in the Bill this time. If there is no alteration in the provision, why include it? The Minister is conscious of the fact that this is a vital and big alteration. There will be no board control. I shall vote against the amendment to the Act and trust that members will appreciate that this proposal is too dangerous. It is a departure from the protection of the health of the community. If the Bill is justified for the protection of health with regard to wholemilk, it is just as essential and to my mind more essential—I have in mind the youngsters who consume such great quantities of ice-cream—that the board should have control of the milk, whereas the provision under discussion definitely excludes it from that control.

Mr. ABBOTT: One of the principal objects of the Bill is to give the producer a higher price.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Nonsense! It is to protect the consumers.

Mr. ABBOTT: I suggest that a higher price is one of the main objects. If not, why should not the Milk Board have control of the whole of the dairying industry? Surely the production of butter-fat, condensed milk, etc., should be equally supervised! I cannot see why the production of ice-cream needs more supervision than the production of butter-fat, cheese or any other dairy product. I believe that proper supervision is exercised to ensure that all those foods are pure and fit for human consumption. The only reason why ice-cream is being exempted is that it is not necessarily made wholly of milk but is a manufactured article that could be made from powdered milk and such-like products. The member for Canning thinks that the producers should receive more for milk used for the manufacture of ice-cream. Presently he will want a higher price for butter-fat. The hon. member wishes to ensure that milk used in a manufactured product is paid for as wholemilk.

Mr. Cross: That is so.

Mr. ABBOTT: I should like to know whether that idea is also in the mind of the member for Guildford-Midland.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No.

Mr. ABBOTT: I rather thought it was, because the Pure Foods Act and the Health Act give ample power to ensure that all foods, including milk, are pure.

Mr. TRIAT: If the member for North Perth is right, some of the statements made in the report of the Milk Board are wrong. The Minister has not replied sufficiently to my statement. He said that the Pure Foods Act would operate and that cleanliness could thus be assured.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, I said the board would control it.

Mr. TRIAT: The board, in its report, stated—

> The practice of bottling in the street by some milk vendors has continued. This is most unhygienic, particularly as the method used in some cases can only be described as primitive, the method being to plunge into the milk by hand the bottles, which are subsequently capped with paper wads, carried in the pockets of the distributors.

Is that practice hygienic?

Mr. Abbott: That could be stopped under the Pure Foods Act.

Mr. TRIAT: Then why the next paragraph in the board's report?

> Here again the necessity for powers to prevent this very undesirable practice is further emphasised.

What powers does the board lack?

The Minister for Mines: Look at Clause 26.

Mr. TRIAT: I was told just now that the Pure Foods Act would control the position. I want to ensure that the milk is clean, especially as the board says it has no power under the Pure Foods Act. If the Minister will assure me that the Bill contains provision for making a thorough inspection, I will vote with him.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Will the Minister give the Committee a guarantee that all milk sold to manufacturers will come from disease-free cows and will first be tested by the board's inspectors? The Minister told us that ice-cream was made in winter and stored till summer. When I was in Paris, where Eskimos, which are like ice-creams, were sold, there was an epidemic. Thousands of people fell ill, and many children died after eating ice-cream that had been made at one season, stored, and then refrigerated and sold. When the electricity breakdown occurred, people who had ice-cream in their refrigerators know that it went bad. When the current was restored, those ice-creams

could have been re-frozen and made to look perfect. The Minister said the board would have absolute control. I do not think the board is competent to exercise such control. So far as I can see, it has no experts.

Mr. Cross: There are the health inspectors.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: But the board has no experts to supply the requisite knowledge so that effective control may be exercised. When the American troops were here, after the first few weeks, the men were not allowed to eat our ice-creams as they were considered to be bad.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At this stage I cannot give any such guarantee to the member for Subiaco. I do not know whether the Bill will be passed, but, if passed, it will confer certain powers on the board that would permit of rigid control being exercised over all milk produced and sold for human consumption. The powers of the board are set out in the Bill and have not yet been dealt with.

Mr. McDONALD: My colleague the member for Subiaco made a statement which possibly might be an injustice to the manufacturers of ice-cream in this State. I speak without exact knowledge of the subject, but I understand that when the American Forces came here they were rather subject to certain ailments, more so than those of us who live here, which might be carried by milk. The Americans therefore exercised a certain supervision over dairies and milk, as well as over ice-cream. I am practically certain that as soon as their expert officers had inspected the ice-cream factories, the Americans took—and in very large quantities—throughout the war ice-cream from those factories for consumption on their ships and by their troops.

Mr. NEEDHAM: After hearing the member for Guildford-Midland, I feel somewhat anxious as to how I shall vote on the amendment. Like him and every other member of the Committee, my desire is that ice-cream and the milk from which it is made should be as pure as other foods should be. Ice-cream is a food consumed by both adults and children and consequently it behoves us to be very careful how we vote on the amendment. The Minister, in his amendment, uses the words "the term shall not apply." This means it shall not apply to the milk vendor. The term "milk vendor" is defined. There appears to me to be a contradiction.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I ask the member for Perth to look at paragraph (F) of Subclause (1) of Clause 26 of the Bill.

Mr. Needham: Does that cover this position?

The Minister for Agriculture: Certainly. "Milk" includes "ice-cream."

Mr. NEEDHAM: I was wondering whether the board could exercise the power.

The Minister for Agriculture: It can.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I realise now that the board will have power to supervise the manufacture of ice-cream and, knowing that milk is subjected to a very severe test, I will support the amendment.

Mr. READ: I support the amendment. The Committee, in my opinion, is confusing two points. The first is the quality of the milk; the second, the price payable. The quality of the milk is to remain the same throughout. There are provisions in the measure designed to protect the quality of the milk from the source of supply up to the point when it reaches the consumer. We now come to the exemption of certain big manufacturing concerns which acquire milk at a price less than at which it is sold to the retailers.

The Minister for Mines: That is the point. You are the only member who has gripped it.

Mr. READ: The milk is sold to those manufacturers, who use it as a constituent of a manufactured article. The milk is only an ingredient of the finished product; and the price for that product must be sufficient to cover the cost of manufacture. When there is a surplus of milk and it cannot be sold at the fixed price, are we to refuse to allow it to be sold under that price and throw it away, or should we allow it to be used for a lesser purpose and permit it to be sold at a lower price? If the price is too high for the manufacturers to buy it, they will use cornflour, powdered milk, sugar and flavourings, and so the public will have to purchase an article not so palatable as it would be if it were made with pure milk, yet one which would conform to the

provisions of the Pure Foods Act. The supervision of the production of the milk at its source will, I take it, be the same whether it is sold at 1s. a gallon or 3d. a gallon. The milk will have to be pure.

Amendment (to strike out words) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	23
Noes	5
Majority for	18

AYES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Graham	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Telfer
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Mann	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wilson
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Withers
Mr. Needham	Mr. Seward
Mr. Nulsen	*(Teller.)*

NOES.

Mr. Doney	Mr. Watts
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Cross
Mr. Johnson	*(Teller.)*

Amendment thus passed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That the following words be inserted in lieu of the words struck out:—"being the owner or occupier of a milk store used exclusively for the treatment, sale or distribution of ice-cream all milk purchased or acquired by him."

Mr. McDONALD: I move—

That the amendment be amended by inserting after the word "treatment" the word "manufacture."

I believe that the word "manufacturer" is an appropriate term because, quite apart from treatment, the process of making ice-cream involves the addition of flavourings and things of that kind, and the inclusion of this word would make the clause more suitable to the process to be performed by these manufacturers. I have been assured that the process of manufacturing ice-cream is equivalent to pasteurisation and that the possibilities of bacilli or bacteria being in ice-cream are remote.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have been under the impression that the word "treatment" would cover manufacturing. The hon. member indicated that the process involved in making ice-cream is similar to that of pasteurisation, which is a method of treatment. I have no objection to the amendment as making the matter somewhat clearer, because it only does what I still believe the amendment as it stands actually does.

Amendment on amendment put and passed; amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I believe, Mr. Chairman, that you omitted to put an amendment to Clause 6 standing under the name of the member for Murray-Wellington.

Mr. McDONALD: I am prepared to move that amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: It is unfortunate. I put the clause and there was nobody on his feet, and the clause has been carried. The hon. member cannot revert to it now.

Clauses 7 and 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Districts:

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment which appears on the notice paper under the name of the member for Albany, as follows:—

That a new subclause be added as follows:—"(3) Where an area is not declared a dairy area, the Governor may delegate to a local health authority such powers as are given to the Milk Board under this Act as he deems necessary to efficiently control the production and distribution of milk in the area controlled by a local health authority."

I am given to understand that a request has been made to the member for Albany to submit this amendment to the Committee, because it is considered that unless there is a declaration of a dairy area the actual provisions of this Bill, if it becomes an Act, will not operate. But it may be advantageous if some were made to operate under the aegis of the local authority itself, and power should be vested in the Governor to enable that to take place between the time when there is no declaration of a dairy area and the time when such an area is declared. Those are the reasons why this amendment is sought.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I oppose this amendment. The purpose of the Bill is to provide uniformity throughout the State. If we confer upon certain local authorities the powers that are in the Bill, there is no guarantee that all of them or any of them will use those powers. Some

local authority might exercise certain of the powers and not others, and we would have all sorts of conditions operating, which would not be uniform and which would possibly be an obstacle to the Milk Board in the carrying out of its function with regard to the control of the production and distribution of milk throughout the State. At this stage, when we are trying to make the Act apply uniformly and establish a set of conditions which can be operative everywhere, it is inadvisable to start breaking away and facilitating the setting up of separate sections of control or separate organisations.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I support the amendment, but I do not think the position is as set out by the Leader of the Opposition. Clause 5 provides that the Act shall apply throughout the State. The Executive Council, by proclamation, has to take deliberate action to exclude certain portions of the State from the operations of the Act. If that is not done then that provision is of no use. But if it is done the board should delegate its authority to some reasonably competent body. A health inspector who has passed his examinations and is competent to carry out his duties should be given that authority. I can imagine that in Derby or Wyndham the Milk Board would not have much jurisdiction and would need to have an agent to act for it. The local health board, with its machinery for administration, and its experience, could do the job satisfactorily.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think the amendment would work. We could not confer upon a local authority a power which could be exercised outside of its boundaries.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Why are you going to exclude some portions of the State?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The argument is that the board should delegate powers to a local authority, but it could only use those powers within its boundaries. It may be that milk producers just outside the boundaries of the municipality, will be supplying milk within the boundary. The municipality would have no power to do anything about the production of that milk, but could only control it when it came within the boundary. Because of such difficulties we would have conditions that would not be uniform.

Mr. Seward: The Milk Board could define the boundary under this measure.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This is to delegate the powers of the Milk Board.

Mr. Seward: But in doing that cannot the board, under Clause 9, define the boundaries?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We could not confer on a local health authority the power to interfere in the area of another local health authority. By doing that we would soon get into a chaotic condition. I am sympathetic with the objective that it is sought to achieve, but I am advised that this amendment would not work because of the difficulties existing between one local authority and another.

Mr. Doney: How otherwise will you achieve this uniformity of control?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: By the board itself. If a town is of sufficient importance to want to organise and control its own milk supply it would make application to the board for inclusion in the scheme, as most big towns have already done. Most large towns would prefer to come under the conditions of the Act rather than be subject to some local authority which would have only limited power and no jurisdiction beyond its own boundaries.

Mr. Doney: What would be the exact method of control?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: By whom?

Mr. Doney: By the main authority, or by some delegated authority in a far-off centre such as Albany, Katanning or Tambellup.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Milk Board, with the powers under this Bill, would, immediately it declared an area a dairy area, be able to exercise all the powers in the measure as to inspection of herds for the eradication of tuberculosis, for the proper inspection of dairies to bring them up to standard and so on. It is intended to operate this as far afield as Kalgoorlie. I cannot imagine that the people there would prefer to have these powers exercised by themselves, apart from the general control throughout the State. They would be in difficulty if they wanted to try to compensate people in their district for the cattle slaughtered. They would not

have available for this purpose the funds that the Milk Board has. I do not think the amendment is necessary, and I do not think it would work properly if it were included.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The people in my district are concerned about this matter. I would like the Minister to tell us what is going to happen where the Milk Board does not take control or operate. Let us take Wiluna, which is a long way from the jurisdiction of the board. There may be, in that district, cows reeking with T.B. or mastitis. What is going to happen if the local authority has not sufficient funds to deal with the position, and the Milk Board excludes the area? Are the people to be subject to all this contamination—much of which is, to my mind, exaggerated—with nothing done about it, or is someone in authority going to do something? Would the matter be brought under the notice of the Milk Board? If it is no-one's business it will never get done. In a small district I cannot imagine anyone better fitted for this work than the local authority.

Mr. Doney: Most local authorities are health authorities.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, sometimes half a dozen local authorities combine in one health board.

Mr. Doney: Yes.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That would overcome the difficulty foreseen by the Minister as to administration. I want this provision to apply all over the State. I do not want the people of Geraldton to be left out of the scheme. Half the dairy herd there was infected with T.B., but the local authority had not power to deal with the position, and was not able to compensate the owners. Some producers gave up dairying and the milk supply had to be obtained from Perth. I think the local health authority at Northampton should have conferred on it power to send information to the Agricultural Department, in charge of the Dairy Compensation Act, and ask for steps to be taken to rid dairy cattle in that district of T.B. The transit of animals from one district to another is not controlled, and an infected cow from a district near the metropolitan area might be sent to a country district not under the control of the board. That should not be allowed to happen and, when such an animal arrived in that outer district, it should be inspected and if necessary destroyed.

Hon. N. Keenan: In those circumstances, who would pay the compensation?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: By an involved process, the matter might go through the Agricultural Department, as administrators of the Dairy Compensation Act. I would like the Minister to tell us how he proposes under this Bill that the scheme should deal with districts outside the jurisdiction of the Milk Board, so that pure milk supplies could be assured in such areas.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This clause is to confer certain powers of the board on local authorities, but none of its obligations or responsibilities. The member for Nedlands hit the nail on the head when he asked who would pay compensation. The clause confers on local health authorities power to oblige dairymen to submit herds for testing, and to order the destruction of diseased animals, but no responsibility to pay for them. It is proposed that the Dairy Cattle Compensation Act shall be used for a purpose different from that for which it is used at present. A Bill to implement that will be introduced later. The member for Geraldton wants to ensure that people in outer districts will have the same protection and control as those in the nearer districts. It will be a considerable time before all the dairy cows in Western Australia can be tested. The first tested will be those in areas from which the greatest milk supply is drawn. The object of the Bill is to eradicate diseases in cattle from dairy herds throughout the State. Testing will be carried out and diseased animals slaughtered where necessary. I cannot give the member for Geraldton as much information as he would like on the matter.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: The information that you are going to amend the Dairy Cattle Compensation Act is almost sufficient for my purpose.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I can assure the hon. member that the Milk Board will be anxious to confer the benefits of the Act as widely as possible as regards inspection of cattle, the eradication of disease, and the supervision of the production and distribution of the milk supply. Any district which could contemplate running its own scheme could be covered under the Bill.

Mr. DONEY: Apparently there is a good deal of the matter we are discussing about which we do not know sufficient. I cannot fully understand the matter of compensation. The Minister seems to have the idea that the responsibility would rest on the authority to whom he has delegated the powers, but the right of delegating those powers would rest with the board and the local authorities would then become agents of the board and questions of compensation would be the responsibility of the board, which, I take it, has machinery to deal with compensation.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The position would not be as stated by the member for Williams-Narrogin. Under the conditions envisaged in the amendment, local authorities would not be agents of the board. If the powers asked for are delegated to a local authority it will exercise them, but without responsibility.

Mr. Doney: That is an amazing statement.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is what is stated in the amendment.

Mr. Doney: It is none the less amazing.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am speaking of the amendment moved to the Bill, and I am not responsible for that.

Mr. Doney: That is not intended.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am dealing with what is here. Where an area is not declared a dairy area, powers may be delegated to the local health authority, such as are given to the Milk Board under this Act. The power is delegated not by way of agency but so that the local authority can do for itself what the board is doing for the rest of the State; to exercise certain powers, though without the responsibility or obligations of the Milk Board. It is not stated here that the local authority wants the responsibility of the board delegated. So far as I can see this just would not work. I prefer that the whole State should come under the control of the board because the Bill is designed for that purpose. Certainly that would be preferable to the proposal embodied in the amendment.

Mr. DONEY: It is necessary for members to re-read the amendment. The powers that the board would be asked to delegate are "such powers as he"—that is, the Governor—"deems necessary to efficiently control the production and distribution of milk in the area controlled by a local health authority." There is no question there of delegating responsibilities. The Minister cannot get away from the fact that the powers would not be delegated, but only so far as the control of the production and distribution of milk is concerned.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for Williams-Narrogin will agree that the delegation of the powers suggested would require authority to have herds tested, otherwise what good would there be in delegating the powers? It is fundamental for the purposes of the Bill that diseased cattle shall be destroyed so that we shall build up disease-free herds. If a local health authority is to be given power to control production and distribution, then it will require to have some authority over cows to see that those affected by disease may be destroyed. If cattle are destroyed, how will the owners be compensated if there are no funds for the purpose? That is the difficulty I see in connection with the amendment.

Mr. WITHERS: In common with others representing districts that will be excluded for the time being from the control of the board, we recognise that for some considerable period our areas will not have the advantage of this legislation. The position with regard to milk will be similar to that concerning meat. Where we have a local health inspector with meat inspection qualifications, we have, to all intents and purposes, a meat inspector, and meat can be inspected. At another town 10 miles away there may be no such inspector and the people there have to eat meat whether procured from a tubercular cow or not. Take the position regarding milk that is produced in a road board area and distributed in a town where the local health board has not the services of a qualified man enabling inspections of cattle to be carried out! I am concerned about that phase, and the Minister should look into it. I sympathise with the objective of the amendment, but I do not see how such a proposal could be embodied in the Bill. I think it is to the Dairy Cattle Compensation Act that we must look for assistance if we are to have tubercular-free herds. In the South-West

we see advertisements setting out that such-and-such a dairy has tested T.B.-free herds. That is what we want.

Mr. DONEY: The Minister's fancy has carried him into the realm of implications and he has drawn deductions that are not justified. He cannot read into the amendment something that is not there. If he says it is implied that because a board will assume certain responsibilities they must include the matter of compensation, then the Minister should also read into it the implication that he should provide that compensation. It would be the height of absurdity to imagine that the responsibility for compensation could be read into the amendment as resting upon a local governing authority.

The Minister for Agriculture: It would have to, if the local governing body had the responsibility of destroying animals.

Mr. DONEY: I do not know that the term "delegate" is the right word to use, but the meaning is quite clear. Whether it is clear or not, the Minister has no right to draw from the amendment the implication that the responsibility for compensation should be shouldered by a body that cannot by any stretch of the imagination be regarded as responsible for it.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 29th August, 1946.

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

QUESTIONS.

TRAMS AND TROLLEY-BUSES.

As to Plans for Conversion and Routes.

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Railways:

1, Is it the Government's intention to continue with the use of trams in the city and suburbs, or is it proposed gradually to eliminate the present system, as equipment becomes available, and instal the trolley-bus as the more up-to-date method of transport?

2, Has consideration been given to the elimination of trams, or other forms of organised transport along Hay and Murray streets, from Pier to Milligan Streets, as a means of relieving traffic congestion?

3, If so, what was the considered opinion of traffic experts?

4, What ultimate routes were under consideration?

The MINISTER replied:

1, It is the intention gradually to substitute trolley buses or other modern forms of transport for trams as the trams reach the stage where replacement is necessary.

2, No.

3, Answered by No. 2.

4, Transport requirements for the metropolitan area for the following 10 years were dealt with by the Commissioner of Railways in his report of 28th April, 1939, which was made available to the public. The intervention of the war, which prevented any development, and the Government's proposals for the control of transport services, necessitate a revision of the recommendations contained therein.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

As to South Fremantle and Collie Power Houses.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Works:

1, What stage has been arrived at in the construction of the electric power house at Fremantle?

2, On what grounds, if any, does he claim that the Fremantle project is of greater urgency that the comparable project to be based upon Collie?