

would be liable, criminally as well as civilly. That is unfair. Such a provision should not be incorporated in the measure.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill makes it an offence for an auditor to neglect to carry out his duties properly. The provision is inserted for the protection of the public. Any reputable firm of auditors would be quite prepared to accept the sub-clause.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: No. They are not happy about it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They may not be, because it is something new so far as this State is concerned. We have had sufficient experience in the last few years to make us careful in matters of this kind. What was the reason for the appointment of the Joint Select Committee? Was it not because we had had so many cases where accounts had been manipulated and money stolen by various officers of various companies?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The auditor is already liable in money for any negligence. An auditor himself cannot possibly go through every transaction of a big company. He has no control over the officers of the company who are employed to look after the accounts; he can only keep a watchful eye on them. Should one of those officers commit a theft the auditor would become liable to a fine of £100. That is grossly unfair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The clause makes it an offence if it can be proved that the auditor has been negligent.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 140 to 146—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, State Government Insurance Office Act Amendment.

2, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance.

Received from the Assembly.

House adjourned at 10.14 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 30th September, 1943.

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

QUESTION—MEAT, AS TO SUPPLIES AND RATIONING.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that most metropolitan butchers are complaining that they have a 30 per cent. cut in supplies?

(2) That the figures for the cut were based upon sales taken from the month of May which is the lowest month for sales?

(3) That the sales of pork which were considerable, were not allowed for when the cut was made?

(4) That the present rationing system of meat is not in the best interests of producer, wholesaler, retailer, or consumer?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Premier) replied:

(1), (2), (3), and (4) The position in this State in regard to meat supplies was some time ago placed before the Commonwealth authorities who control meat rationing and kindred matters. The Deputy Controller of Meat Supplies of this State is at present in Sydney and has been specifically asked by the Government to have this State's circumstances properly explained and given further consideration.

MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PRECEDENCE.

THE PREMIER [4.32]: I move—

That on and after Wednesday, the 6th October, Government business shall take pre-

cedence of all motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays as on all other days.

Question put and passed.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

THE PREMIER [4.33]: I move—

That the House shall meet for the despatch of business on Fridays in addition to the days already provided.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—WHEAT.

As to Acreage Restriction, Price, Manpower, etc.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [4.34]: I move—

That this House is of opinion, in view of the altered war situation, that the Western Australian Government should request the Commonwealth Government to remove the wheat acreage restriction which imposes a one-third reduction in areas sown to wheat, provided that it is agreed that:—

- (a) A guaranteed minimum price be paid for all wheat produced in Australia of 5s. a bushel at siding for a period of ten years, commencing with the 1943-1944 season, and to be proportionately increased with any rise in the cost of production during that period;
- (b) To provide superphosphate to ensure reasonable supplies for cropping and top-dressing;
- (c) To ensure manpower to provide for adequate labour for wheat farmers;
- (d) In view of the fact that farmers in Western Australia have already prepared the restricted area for the 1944 sowing the compensation payment of 12s. per acre be retained at least until after the crop is harvested.

This is really a revised motion of the one moved last week. The Minister for Agriculture, in his remarks, showed that he was largely in agreement with the contents of the motion, but he pointed out that room for clarification of the position existed. The Premier has facilitated the motion coming before the House today. The suggestions made by various members have been considered, and the motion has been altered to accord generally with their ideas. There is no occasion for a long debate on the motion in its amended form, and I hope members will not be unduly long as the Premier has gone out of his way to make this time available. I do not intend to repeat my previous statements, but I do wish to refer to certain criticisms, not made in the House, as to what would have hap-

pened had the other motion been carried. To illustrate the point I will take the Kellerberrin, Merredin, Nungarin districts which comprise a good cross-section. The average acreage per farmer sown to wheat before the war was 400 acres. The wheat acreage restrictions reduced the average to 270 acres.

If we take a conservative estimated average of 250 acres per farmer sown to wheat we find that on a 12 bushel per acre average the return would be 3,000 bushels at 3s. 10d., equivalent to £575, plus acreage compensation of 12s. per acre on 130 acres restricted amounting to £78, or a total of £653. Under my proposal the return from a similar acreage at 5s. a bushel would be £750, or an advantage of £97 to the farmer without any acreage compensation. It is quite possible, and this year probable, that many wheatgrowers will have much higher averages than 12 bushels to the acre. If we take the example of a 15 bushel average under present conditions the return to the farmer on 250 acres of crop would be 3,750 bushels of which 2,000 bushels would return £575 and 750 bushels 1s. 10d. per bushel, or £68, which, together with compensation amounting to £78 would give a total of £721.

Under my proposals, without acreage compensation, the return would be £937, or an advantage of £216. So, any suggestion that the farmer would lose by lack of acreage compensation is very wide of the mark and is based evidently on a mere cursory examination of the proposals I put forward. I noted the remarks of the Minister for Agriculture regarding the marginal areas. The restriction, of course, already applies to those areas. It was brought about by National Security Regulations before this business was commenced. It will take three years to reach anything like a normal wheat output in this State. I have now made provision for an acreage compensation of 12s. per acre for that period. Whether the Commonwealth will agree to my suggestion is another matter. The present one is only an annual arrangement. The proposals I have put forward for the excess beyond 3,000 bushels to be paid for at 5s. per bushel, will mean an increase of 3s. 2d. a bushel to the farmer on the excess.

I do not wish to say anything more beyond this fact that a telegram sent from Canberra under date the 25th September is really a justification of the motion which

was telegraphed to the Federal Capital. I was very pleased to see that Senator Nash had in the Senate advocated practically the same ideas as are contained in the motion. The newspaper report reads—

Canberra, September 24.—The Federal Government is negotiating for the sale of huge quantities of Australian wheat to the Middle East. It is understood that more than 3,000,000 bushels will be disposed of to Turkey, Iraq and Iran, and that this will be only a first instalment of further big purchases.

The initial contract will probably be completed within the next few days. These sales and other contracts which the Australian Government is completing with other overseas purchasers may bring about a reversal of the acreage restriction policy which has been operating in Australian wheatgrowing areas for several seasons.

The negotiations now in progress, it is expected, will transform the Australian wheat market. The difficulties associated with large overseas sales of Australian wheat in the past have mainly been concerned with shipping, but it is believed that the Turkish Government will provide its own ships to lift its purchases from Australia.

Current estimates show that the next Australian wheat crop is likely to be short and this, in conjunction with overseas purchases, will influence Government policy when a review of the acreage restriction policy is made.

A representative of the Turkish Government has been negotiating the purchase, which it is believed will be made on terms favourable to Australia.

I am aware that 80,000 tons of wheat have been sold to Peru and that the Imperial Government has placed an order for 25,000,000 bushels, and it is time that the wheatgrowers of Australia shared in the improved wheat position. There is an important point in the motion that gave rise to some criticism, hardly justifiably, and I wish now to make it perfectly clear. The Minister for Agriculture stressed this particular point. This is contained in paragraph (d) which states clearly that in view of the fact that farmers in Western Australia have already prepared the restricted area for the 1944 sowing, the compensation payment of 12s. per acre be retained at least until after that crop is harvested.

MR. PERKINS (York): In supporting the motion, I wish briefly to touch upon paragraph (d). Whether the Commonwealth Government, either of its own volition or as a result of our carrying this motion, alters its acreage restriction policy or not, I think the representatives of Western Australia

can make out a very good case for the carrying on of the payment of compensation to our wheatgrowers for the next cropping season. If the restriction were lifted forthwith, the area of crop that could be sown by our growers next year could not be materially greater than that sown in the season immediately past. The area of fallow prepared for next year is more or less completed now; it cannot be increased to any great extent, and that will largely govern the area that can be sown next year. In a few districts wheat can be sown on other than fallowed land, but those areas are limited, and in the bulk of the wheat-growing country it is inadvisable to sow wheat on other than fallowed land. Therefore the fallow prepared this year has been prepared on the basis of the restricted licensed acreage. Farmers had no knowledge but that the one-third reduction would continue for next season, as well as for the present one. We have a good case to submit to the Commonwealth Government that 12s. per acre compensation should be paid to Western Australian growers for next season, and should apply in those cases where it is impossible for growers to sow the whole of their licensed area. We cannot get back to normal sowing in this State before 1945 at the earliest, even though manpower and superphosphate are made available. I rose to stress that aspect of the motion.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington): I support the motion. The wheatgrowers are entitled to a profitable price for the wheat they grow. The present acreage discrimination against this State should be removed as soon as possible. The Eastern States have great and valuable secondary industries which are there for all time, but we should remind the Commonwealth Government that we in this State have few staple industries and that wheatgrowing is one of the greatest. Therefore we would be wise to pass the motion.

MR. BERRY (Irwin-Moore): This is a very different motion from the previous one; seemingly we have got rid of the sting. I have found that a great deal of dissatisfaction existed amongst farmers because they were under the impression that we were endeavouring to interfere seriously with the Scully scheme, with which the farmers are well satisfied. The altered motion, in my

opinion, makes it clear that there will be no interference with that scheme. It only asks for a guaranteed minimum price of 5s. for wheat after such time as it is no longer necessary for farmers to have the Scully scheme. On that understanding, I am in thorough agreement with the motion.

Motion put and passed.

BILL—LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (WAR TIME) ELECTORAL.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [4.50]: This Bill proposes to make fundamental constitutional changes and consequently there is no doubt as to its importance. It contains provisions similar to those embodied in the Bill which was before this Chamber not long ago relating to voting for the Legislative Assembly. It contains the same provision, namely, that any member of the Forces of the age of 18 years and upwards may vote for the Legislative Council irrespective of any property qualification. Workers in the Civil Construction Corps are also to be given a vote, but they must have attained the age of 21 years. The wives of service men and of Civil Construction Corps workers will be entitled to vote provided their husbands were householders and on the roll prior to enlistment. It seems to me, however, that the Bill bristles with inconsistencies. For instance, provision is not made to give the franchise to the munition worker, the railway worker, the workers engaged in the farming industry and people in reserved occupations. Why should certain sections of the people be picked out for special favour while others, who are doing essential work and who must leave their homes in order to carry it on, are denied the privilege which it is proposed to confer upon a certain few? Personally, I cannot see why the vote should be given to the Civil Construction Corps worker any more than to the worker engaged in a munitions factory.

There can be no question that this is contentious legislation. Were the Government sincere in its desire to give the soldier a vote for the Legislative Council it would do

so under the existing law. We already have the machinery necessary to allow the soldier to vote. Legislation such as this should never have been brought down at this late stage of the session. The measure is a party one; I do not think there is any doubt on that point. It is the policy of the Government—and always has been—to alter the franchise for the Legislative Council, but I do not think this is the occasion on which it should be done.

I say to members opposite that a more opportune time could be found than the present. I have not heard any demand for this legislation. I do not think it would arouse the slightest enthusiasm among our soldiers. I can imagine someone going out among these hundreds of young girls and boys of 18 years and telling them that they were to be given a vote for the Legislative Council. I do not think hats would be thrown in the air or that it would be a day of great rejoicing. The Minister for Justice, when introducing the Bill, talked a great deal about patriotism and the gratitude which we owe to those who are engaged in the Fighting Services. No one will deny that. We are all grateful; and probably all members of this Chamber have relatives in some arm of the services, some of whom would be under 21 years, but I question whether that can be claimed as a reason for extending the franchise to these young people.

The Minister also said when introducing the Bill that we should show our gratitude in a practical way. I do not think this Bill is the kind of gratitude we want to show, and I feel sure it would not create any enthusiasm. If it is necessary to alter the franchise for the Legislative Council, let us be consistent and give this privilege to the other sections I have mentioned. It is certainly inconsistent to select merely one or two sections for this privilege and leave the other sections as they are at present. In the closing hours of this session we shall not be able to give the measure the consideration we consider it deserves. However, the matter in the main is one for the Legislative Council to decide.

The Minister for Mines: You bet your life! The Council will do that!

MR. McLARTY: I do not mind this House passing the second reading. I am prepared to leave the decision to the Legislative Council, the Chamber most concerned.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): I hold with regard to this measure somewhat the same views as those expressed by my friend the member for Murray-Wellington.

The Premier: I thought you were going to say the Minister.

Mr. WATTS: Were I to start at the end of the hon. member's speech, I could make quite a good beginning. In other words. I am not opposing the second reading of the Bill because I believe it will be suitably dealt with by the Legislative Council.

Mr. Withers: Why hand it to the mutilators?

Mr. WATTS: It has to go to that Chamber in any event because, without its concurrence, the measure will never become law. Did I believe it were intended that this Bill should become the law of the land, I might hold different views on the subject; but I am perfectly satisfied from the terms of the Bill that it has been brought down in anticipation of the Legislative Council—to use a well-known phrase—throwing it out of the window. The terms of the Bill are such as to make it quite obvious that in no circumstances would the Council be likely to agree to it by the necessary constitutional majority.

Mr. Cross interjected.

Mr. WATTS: I have not the faintest notion what the member for Canning is talking about, nor do I intend to try to find out. But the position is this: The Legislative Council would, I think, have agreed to a Bill without any question whatever which conferred upon those members of the Forces who are qualified by the existing law to vote and cannot vote, the privilege of voting in the same circumstances as those mentioned in the Bill which has just passed this Chamber with reference to the Legislative Assembly. But to ask the Council at this stage of the session, when we all know the condition of business—and we all are aware that we anticipate leaving this Chamber in the course of the next fortnight at the latest—to deal with a Bill which fundamentally alters the Constitution of the State to an extent which no other Bill introduced as far as I know has done—never during my term as a member of Parliament—is evidence, and conclusive evidence, that the Government of this State does not want the Bill to pass.

The Premier: You are not justified in saying that.

Mr. Cross interjected.

Mr. WATTS: Anybody who gives the matter a little more thought than the member for Canning can be expected to give it will discover, as I have discovered, that the terms of the Bill are such that there is not much prospect of its being passed in its present form. It would be so difficult to amend it into a form that I think would be more suitable to the Legislative Council—in the short time available the Council just will not be able to do it—that the position will amount to this: The Bill will not be passed nor will any other Bill be passed in its place. Accordingly, persons who have a right to vote for the Legislative Council, and also their wives—and I have some sympathy with the clause relating to soldiers' wives—will not get the vote to which they are entitled at the next election for the Legislative Council. Therefore, instead of conferring any benefit on the members of the Forces who are qualified to vote for the Legislative Council, instead of providing a franchise for them to which they are entitled this Bill will prevent them from having a vote, because it is introduced at a time when there is no hope of its being amended, since a considerable time is required to draft amendments to a Bill of this character. So the Bill will not be passed in any form at all. That is what I think will happen. My view may prove to be erroneous; I do not know.

As a general rule, we can look only from the known to the unknown, and in this instance the known amounts to this: The Legislative Council is extremely chary about making any amendment to the Constitution of that House and consequently, looking from the known to the unknown, it is to be assumed that the members of that Chamber will be just as chary on this occasion. In no circumstances, in my opinion, would the Council have objected—again basing my belief on past experience—had the Bill only contained provisions to give members of the Forces who are normally entitled to a vote for the Legislative Council the right to have that vote as soldiers, whether they happened to be in the State or out of it on active service in territory in or north of Australia. It seems to me, on all counts, that in introducing a Bill in these terms at this stage of the session—knowing its intentions in regard to the election and the intentions of this side of the House in the same connection—the Government did not want this Bill

to be passed. So that instead of the soldiers concerned in the next Legislative Council election being given a vote, in the circumstances in which they find themselves they will remain without the opportunity to exercise the franchise.

I do not intend to oppose the second reading. I will leave it to the decision of the Legislative Council. If that Chamber can find ways and means to make this measure suitable to itself—and after all the members of the Legislative Council are the main arbiters of their destiny in this matter—I shall have no objection to offer. But I venture this suggestion very plainly and clearly: The Bill has been introduced in such a form that it was expected the Council would reject it because it would not have the time available to amend it; and consequently instead of the Government offering a service to the soldiers whom the measure is alleged to be intended to serve, the very reverse will be the case.

THE PREMIER: I very much resent the accusation and the innuendo of the Leader of the Opposition. I am surprised at his lack of sincerity. He says that a Bill has been introduced into this House with which he does not agree, but that he is not going to oppose it. What does he call himself? He is the Leader of His Majesty's Opposition with a duty to the people of the State to oppose measures that he thinks are not in the best interests of the State. That is the very basis of his position in this House, in spite of which he says, "I do not believe in this Bill and yet I am going to vote for the second reading." It comes very poorly from the Leader of the Opposition to charge the Government with lack of sincerity when he makes a statement like that. I want to tell him that so far as we are concerned we want this Bill to pass and we think there is any amount of time in which to pass it.

Mr. Marshall: We think its passage is justified, too!

THE PREMIER: Of course we do! So far as time is concerned, there is not such an amount of verbiage or such a large number of clauses in the Bill to indicate that weeks and weeks would be required to frame suitable amendments. It is a wrong assumption on the part of the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Murray-Wellington that we should have no hope of the Legislative Council at some time giving effect to some-

thing that will "democratise" the franchise of that Chamber.

Mr. McLarty: I did not say that.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member said, "I am prepared to let them deal with it in a suitable way." The hon. member has a responsibility to deal with things himself and not to pass them on to somebody else. If he went to the electors and said, "I offer my services as a member of Parliament, but I am not prepared to express an opinion about some things concerning the Legislative Council. I will leave it to the members of the Legislative Council to deal with," how would he get on with the electors? They would say that that was not the attitude of a responsible man.

Mr. McLarty: I expressed an opinion about the measure.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member expressed the opinion that he would not oppose it.

Mr. McLarty: I did not say that.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member said, "I am not going to oppose it."

Mr. McLarty: No.

THE PREMIER: I do not like the idea that there is a pre-determined policy in regard to measures of this description; that under no circumstances will the Legislative Council effect a change to provide for a democratic representation in that Chamber.

Mr. Berry: That is not an outlook peculiar to the Opposition. I have heard it expressed on both sides of the House.

THE PREMIER: In his lofty independence the hon. member probably notices things that other people do not.

Mr. Berry: Definitely I do.

THE PREMIER: This has been referred to as a violent change in the Constitution. It is all very well to talk about a violent constitutional change. All our ideas of the Constitution will make no difference to our enemies. If they gain the upper hand, the whole of our Constitution will go out of the window and we will go with it. The people who are defending our Constitution, and preventing as violent a change as that, should be given consideration. They have a right to say what the Constitution should be. If we did not have our soldiers defending the shores of Australia it would not matter what we or the Upper House said in regard to the franchise or as to what the electors' qualifications should be. If the Japs came here they would kick our Parlia-

ment out very quickly; Oliver Cromwell would have nothing on them! This has been referred to as a violent constitutional change. We are living in a time of war and very many people have not any right to be in their own country.

We would not have the right to be in this country unless the force of might and arms determined the matter for us. It is the people who are safeguarding our position to whom we want to give a say—not a dominant voice, but merely an expression of opinion—as to who shall represent them. I do not regard this as a violent constitutional change. Everybody must realise that at some stage the democratic idea will be paramount in the general attitude toward Parliaments and Governments. We must progress slowly—if not rapidly—towards the time when every individual, irrespective of his social or financial status will have a voice in the government of the country. It has been pointed out that some of our best citizens who have amassed great wealth and who, in doing that, have assisted in the industrialisation of the country, have not had the opportunity to have a vote.

Mr. McLarty: You do not really believe that.

The PREMIER: I do. I have heard of examples of men in that position. The late Mr. McCallum, a former Minister for Works, had no vote.

Hon. N. Keenan: His wife did.

The PREMIER: I am not talking about his wife but about democracy.

Hon. N. Keenan: He put all his property in his wife's name.

The PREMIER: I am not concerned with what he did in that regard. What I am concerned about is that he was a man of high intellectual attainments and of great capacity, a man of whom history will record that he did a great work for his country; in spite of which, at one stage of his career, though he was better qualified perhaps than 90 per cent. of the citizens of this State, he was not able to vote for the Legislative Council. That is surely not very satisfactory. That is something towards the elimination of which we should seek to progress. This Bill is only a small step in that direction. We could not say that everybody should have a vote. The idea would be so unusual. People have not got into the frame of mind in which they think democratically, and there are

those who would hold up their hands in horror and withstand such progressive ideas. This Bill is designed to give a vote to people who are helping to prevent our enemies from depriving us of our Constitution altogether, and of our lives with it.

I resent the implication that there is a lack of sincerity in regard to this measure. The Government is anxious to do what is proposed in this Bill. There is nothing violently revolutionary in the proposal. The proposition is sincere and simple. It is aimed to give people who have defended this State and its Constitution and have defended the right of people to sit in Parliament an opportunity to say who shall carry on the government of the country. I do not think there can be much to quarrel with in that. I speak for myself and the members of the Government when I say we are absolutely sincere in submitting this Bill. It is a matter of mere justice. It is not generosity, but bare justice. I cannot understand anybody opposing it, but I resent very much that it should be implied that the Government has submitted the measure as a joke, with no expectation of its being passed, and that there is no justice in it: I hope that even the Tory members of the Legislative Council will take a more liberal outlook than has been demonstrated by the opinions expressed in this House.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The year 1919 was the first time, as far as I can remember, that an attempt was made to alter the constitution of the Legislative Council. My friend on my left and I were there at that time. The proposal was to give returned soldiers a vote for the Legislative Council. That was an inopportune time to make such a proposal, because we waited until the war was over. There were no soldiers fighting, and so it did not matter. I remember a bitter debate taking place in the Legislative Council on that occasion. The principal reason for opposition to the measure was that those who had fought and taken a risk for the country had no right to vote for the Legislative Council unless they had a stake in the country. I remember interjecting during the remarks of one hon. member, who is not there now, and asking whether a returned soldier who came back with a wooden leg had a stake in the country. We never had an interpretation of "stake." I say candidly that if a man

has gone oversea and fought, he has as big a stake in the country as a man with 20,000 acres of land. That man would not have his 20,000 acres if it were not for the men who risked their lives and on their return to Australia were told that they had no stake in the country.

Mr. Seward: Why not confine the Bill to those people?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That was the first time to my knowledge that an attempt was made to alter the franchise for the Legislative Council, but I venture to say that on at least nine different occasions, either from this side of the House as Premier or when he was on the other side of the House as Leader of the Opposition, the member for Boulder introduced legislation for the purpose of widening the franchise for the Legislative Council. He proposed a household franchise and made other suggestions as well. In fact, the member for Boulder tried all sorts of means, but always "the time was inopportune"; "there was no time to deal with the legislation"; "there was no demand for it." Always there was one or other of those excuses advanced for rejecting each attempt to alter the franchise of the Legislative Council. If unification is ever to be made an issue successfully, it will be because there are five Legislative Councils in Australia that are blocking progress. That will certainly be one of the reasons. I know, Mr. Speaker, that you are about to tell me that I should not proceed along those lines.

Mr. SPEAKER: In those circumstances the Minister should confine himself to the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is what I am doing.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing about unification in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am just saying that the Council may be one of the reasons.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister will obey the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not said a word about unification since! It does not matter what the provisions of the Bill may be, if it is sought to alter the Constitution or the franchise for the Council we will be told that the time is not opportune to deal with such a proposition. We will be again told that there is no great demand for it. I say there will be no new

order in Western Australia if this is the way we are going about it. There will be no possibility of any new order so long as there is a property House to prevent the passage of legislation that will bring into being any such amelioration of existing conditions. I am just about tired of people holding out about the possibilities of a new order, when I realise there is no chance of any such thing under existing conditions.

Men who are in uniform now fighting for the freedom of this country are being told all sorts of things, but conditions will be just the same for them as they were for us when we returned from the 1914-18 war. It was too late then. If reforms and improvements are not effected while the fight is on, it will be altogether too late to expect them afterwards. I am speaking for myself—the Premier has already spoken on behalf of the party—when I tell the Leader of the Opposition that we are sincere regarding this Bill. We believe the men and women in the Fighting Forces are entitled to this concession. No one could be more entitled to the right to exercise the franchise and the time is opportune now to deal with the matter. Let members opposite deal with the Bill in all sincerity. But I fear that they do not desire any alteration of the Constitution for this House or another place. We hear talk of sincerity! Let them be sincere regarding the promises that have been made to the men and women in uniform!

MR. CROSS (Canning): I am surprised at the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Marshall: So were we all.

Mr. CROSS: He says he takes no notice of what the member for Canning says! If there is one matter about which the member for Canning does know something, it is the franchise of the Legislative Council.

Mr. Sampson: It must be the only matter!

Mr. CROSS: There are 10 qualifications that entitle a person to exercise the franchise for the Legislative Council, and I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to name to the House, without referring to any authority, what those 10 qualifications are. Let him show the House just what he knows about the present qualifications for the Council franchise. He stands for the present system and the present franchise, which denies the soldier a vote.

Mr. Sampson: Don't talk rubbish!

Mr. CROSS: In Forrest Place today I saw a dozen men each minus a leg. Not one of those men has a vote for the Legislative Council—because he has no landed property. Let members consider the remarkable position that can arise under the present Council franchise system. In one street in Victoria Park there are four wooden houses that a man built 16 years ago at a cost of £400 each. The first house was bought in the man's own name and that entitled him to a vote for the Legislative Council. The second house was bought by a man and placed in the name of his wife, who therefore became entitled to a vote as a freeholder while the man himself also had a vote as the householder. The next place was put by the purchaser in the name of his two daughters who had votes as joint householders, and here again the husband was the householder. Thus for the third house there were three votes. The last house was put in the name of the man's wife, son and daughter, the wife and the family being shown as joint freeholders and the husband as householder. There, members have four houses in respect of which the votes carried for the Legislative Council were one, two, three and four respectively.

On the other hand, under the present system it is possible for a man to invest £1,000,000 in the war loans and to live in an hotel, yet he would have no vote for the Legislative Council because he owned no land! The trouble regarding the present franchise is that a piece of land with a few trees should be regarded as of sufficient value to warrant the owner having the right to a vote in connection with the Legislative Council. If members of the Opposition think that soldiers who are away giving their blood and their lives to keep this country free are not entitled to say who shall govern this State, and that those men will return and be content to be dominated by men who hold their positions merely by virtue of possession of a quantity of land with a few trees on it, they have something yet to learn. That is why so little interest is taken in Legislative Council elections when they are held. I have talked to soldiers who have returned from the present war as well as to older men who served in the 1914-18 war, and I know their views. I know there will be changes. The men say that when the

soldiers get back they intend to take an interest in the Legislative Council.

What do members opposite propose? Do they believe the Legislative Council should be allowed to exist as it is today and that the franchise should continue as it has in the past? Do they hold those views, or do they agree that the adult franchise should be extended to the Legislative Council? The soldiers will want to know all about that later on. They are not likely to continue to accept the continuation of a House that prevents progressive legislation agreed to in this Chamber finding a place on the statute book. I am in earnest in my desire to give the soldiers a vote for the Legislative Council. They deserve it and the Opposition cannot say who is more deserving. The man who fights for his country and for the protection of the Legislative Council is surely entitled to this extension of the franchise.

Mr. Sampson: I am afraid you protest altogether too much.

Mr. CROSS: I hope the Leader of the Opposition will indicate his sincerity and vote for the Bill.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth): Unlike the member for Canning, I am not surprised at the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition. I would have been surprised had he indicated his support of the Bill. As a matter of fact, I would be very much surprised if any member of the Opposition were to support it. During all the years, they have been ever anxious to keep another place as their close preserve. It is their bulwark against the march of democracy and they do not desire that bulwark to be removed. I have heard the Leader of the Opposition make some very effective speeches on behalf of the war effort, during the course of which he has pointed out what the men of Australia are doing to preserve the rights we all enjoy today. After all the praise he has helped to shower upon them from time to time, the Leader of the Opposition now says the soldiers are not capable enough and do not possess sufficient intelligence to record their votes in connection with the Legislative Council because they have not the necessary property qualification nor are many of them of sufficient age.

There is another Parliament in Australia the members of which have at least as much responsibility attached to their positions as have members of this Parliament. They

deal with matters of quite equal importance to those handled by members of this Parliament—I speak of the Commonwealth Parliament. For the election of members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives every man and woman in Australia who is 21 years of age and is of sound mind, has the right to vote. If those people are competent enough to vote in the selection of men charged with the responsibility of guiding the destinies of the Commonwealth of Australia in peace and war, surely they should be capable of exercising a vote for another branch of the legislature—the Legislative Council of Western Australia. It is not a question of the time not being opportune or of there being insufficient time to discuss the measure.

What is in the hearts and minds of members opposite is the desire to preserve this special qualification for the Legislative Council so that it may continue to be as it has been for so long the most powerful second Chamber of any Parliament associated with the British Commonwealth of Nations. Other second Chambers pale into insignificance compared with our Legislative Council. The House of Lords has not the power that the Upper House exercises in this Parliament. As members know, there is the power of veto that applies to the House of Lords and, if that House does not pass legislation within a certain period after it has been despatched to it by the House of Commons, the Bill automatically becomes law.

No matter what we may do here, members of another place are immune from that threat to their power. As the Minister for Mines pointed out, various attempts have been made to amend the Constitution—we have even tried to have a referendum—but the Legislative Council would not agree to what was proposed. Any attempt made by this Chamber to change the situation in that regard must pass the other Chamber. That Chamber stands pat, and will not allow the legislation to pass. I do not know why that should be. Within the past ten years, since I again became a member of this House, representations were made to the Privy Council requesting that august body to advise as to the powers of another place in regard to money Bills. What reply did we obtain from that source? That if the Legislative Council also made representations to the Privy Council, then the Privy

Council would go into the matter and reply. When the other Chamber was moved to fall into line—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is, of course, getting away from the Bill.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I was endeavouring to show that there is necessity for alteration of the Constitution—especially now, when we are making an endeavour to give to the men who are fighting to preserve our liberties a chance to vote similar to that which has been given them by the Commonwealth Parliament. If the Commonwealth Parliament grants the franchise as proposed by this Bill, why should there be objection here on the question of age? A member of the Fighting Forces, wherever he may be, should have the right to vote for the men who represent him in the Legislative Council, just as he has the right to vote for the men who represent him in this Chamber.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin): It is possible, I admit, to have an idea, or quite a number of ideas, as to the intentions of the Bill. This much, however, should be plain to all of us. From the point of view of members of another place, the Bill is drawn in highly provocative terms.

Mr. Withers: How do you know that?

Mr. DONEY: How do I know! I am referring to the proposed new form of franchise. If the hon. member interjecting were to canvass the opinions of members of his own party in another place, he would quickly discover that that is their view also. The speech of the member for Canning disclosed that it is the present system of voting for another place he hopes to upset by means of the Bill. It is that intention, and no desire to secure a better franchise provision for the men in the Services, that exercises his mind. I do not for a moment assert that such a thought is in the Premier's mind. I do not think it is. But it certainly is in the mind of the member for Canning, who—quite inadvertently, I admit—went to a great deal of trouble to show that it was so. The Minister for Mines spoke of a promise to the soldiers in regard to this matter.

The Minister for Mines: I said, "Promises of a new order."

Mr. DONEY: Which obviously was meant to include provisions of the kind to be found in this Bill. Otherwise there would have been no point whatever in such an observa-

tion. I tell the Minister that no promise to allow the franchise to soldiers of 18 years was ever made or implied. This is to be remembered, too, that no request has ever come from the soldiers for such a privilege as this. Why therefore pretend that there has? It is proposed, therefore, to give the Upper House franchise to thousands of youths and girls who have no interest in it and who have never asked for it. All those heroics and nonsense of the member for Canning about shedding blood and so forth had far better not have been made at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not reflect on another member.

Mr. DONEY: It has been charged by the Premier against the Leader of the Opposition that the latter hon. member has indicated a lack of sincerity on the Premier's part. I listened to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, and I do not remember any such charge. It may easily be that persons who take offence readily, might read into the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition a great deal that that hon. member had no intention of conveying.

The Premier: Do you think I am a man who easily takes offence?

Mr. DONEY: No; I do not know that the Premier is. But I do reflect upon the fact that some of the Bills introduced here—such as the one now under review—are of a nature that easily arouse strong feelings here and elsewhere. Therefore the Premier may have been upset to a degree greater than was really necessary. I believe the view of the Leader of the Opposition was that in the special circumstances of the day, when the Premier is putting up strenuous endeavours to hurry the session through to its conclusion, another place obviously has a great deal more time to attend to a Bill of this kind than we have. We could quite easily put in two or three days—which we have not at our disposal—dealing with our somewhat involved and tangled franchise. As the measure presents itself to another place, it is just an invitation to suicide. The member for Canning knows that; and so, I think, do most members on the other side of the Chamber. Holding this view, I still am prepared to vote for the second reading of the Bill, so that it may go to another place which is concerned in it to a greater degree than we are.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly): I cannot allow the remarks of the Minister for Mines to go unchallenged. In the course of them he attributed to members on this side of the House an unwillingness to give the franchise to a soldier, or to one who has the right to go and fight for his country. What was done in 1919 is no responsibility of ours. I would have no hesitation in opposing such an attitude as described by the Minister. Had the Government brought down a Bill to give the franchise to soldiers fighting at the front or returning from there, I would certainly give my full support to such a measure; for I maintain, and I place it on record, that every qualification of citizenship should be bestowed on those who have given their services in the defence of this country. But the Bill goes far beyond that. It has been asserted that we are unwilling to give to the soldier who is willing to fight for his country the qualification to vote. Those who make that assertion overlook the fact that the soldier when he enters the Service to fight is not in a fit state to fight, and has to be trained to fight. Objection was raised when it was hinted that men had been sent away before they were thoroughly trained to fight. Surely there is also an obligation to be trained to vote. The Commonwealth Parliament did not do what this Bill asks us to do. The Commonwealth Parliament did not give the vote to everybody.

Mr. Cross: Who prevented the Commonwealth Parliament from doing so? The Tory Senators!

Mr. SEWARD: The hon. member cannot have that excuse. I think I heard one member describe these soldiers as children running about the streets of Perth in uniform. To say that they are qualified to vote for, or have the slightest interest in, either the Legislative Council or any other House is stretching the imagination too far. If the Bill were designed to give the vote to those who have fought in the front line area, I would unhesitatingly support it. But it would confer the franchise on people who have never been within a thousand miles of the battle zones, people in these base camps.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They might get to the battle zone yet. You are keeping your tongue in your cheek.

Mr. SEWARD: If I were the hon. member interjecting, I would not say that. I kept my tongue in my cheek when he was talking last night.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Guildford-Midland to keep order.

Mr. SEWARD: As for keeping the Legislative Council a close preserve, that is only a play on words. Eight shillings a week qualifies a man to vote for that Chamber, and then it was said that a member of His Majesty's Government in Western Australia was not qualified for that vote! If he was not, he did not want it. There must have been some reason for his not attaining that very easy qualification. This measure might well be introduced in the Legislative Council. It refers to that House. If the Council is willing to do what this Bill asks, let it pass such a measure and send it to this Chamber. I contend that the provisions of the Bill should not be introduced here, seeing that they affect the Legislative Council. If there were some vital matter affecting the Assembly introduced in the Council, my attitude would be that the Council should leave the Assembly to decide whether what was proposed should be done or not. Whether or not the Council will adopt that course, I do not know. This Bill, however, goes far beyond giving soldiers the right to vote. Otherwise I would support the second reading.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara): I support the Bill. It is remarkable to me the extent to which members of the Opposition attempt to frustrate any move which has for its object the liberalisation of the franchise. I said last night that it was possible for the Prime Minister of Australia not to be qualified to become a member of the Legislative Council.

Mr. Doney: Are you complaining about that?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: If members opposite can argue that any young man of 18 who is on active service has not been sufficiently trained to entitle him to vote, is not that a grave reflection upon our present educational system? For many years we have had compulsory education, and facilities are offered to every young man and woman to realise his or her responsibilities to the State. Large numbers of boys and girls pass their Junior Examination, and many also pass the Leaving Examination. For any member of this House to suggest that a young man of 18 who is in the Fighting Forces has not sufficient intelligence to enable him to realise his responsibilities as a

citizen is indirectly—it may not be done intentionally—insulting those whom we are endeavouring to enfranchise by this Bill. If members will admit the truth they will agree that the young men of today understand more about their political responsibilities than do many older members of the community.

In the case of our soldiers, I do not think it would be necessary for members of any party to put into their hands "how to vote" cards before they go to the poll. All this Bill seeks to do is to allow members of the Forces to exercise the vote for another place. If their income is sufficient they will be subject to the taxation laws of the country. As they are old enough to fight and they are responsible citizens the least this House can do is to see that they are also given the right to vote. I point out that when a Bill of this kind was introduced in the Commonwealth Parliament, it gave the franchise to every member of the Forces. Unfortunately the measure was defeated in the Senate. In reply to the interjection of the member for Pingelly I would point out that many of those members of the Senate who voted against the Bill have since lost their seats.

Mr. Wilson: Good!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: My opinion is that every person over 21, whether in the Forces or in civilian life, should have a vote for the Legislative Council. As, however, there is no question at the moment of enfranchising civilians I do not propose to trespass upon the Speaker's liberality and pursue that subject. The time is opportune not only for giving the franchise to these men, but for this House to do what it can to see that a measure is brought forward to provide for the adult franchise in connection with the Legislative Council. Whilst we have an Upper House the wishes of the majority of the people as expressed in this Chamber will from time to time be thwarted.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): I do not personally understand the Leader of the Opposition to impugn the sincerity of the Premier or of members of his Government in this matter.

The Premier: The hon. member said he did not think we expected this Bill to be passed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not think the hon. member said anything that would create

that impression, and in any case I would dissociate myself from any such view. I would not suggest that the Premier or his colleagues, or any member sitting on the Government side of the House was not absolutely sincere in the views they hold with regard to the franchise which is now prescribed by law for the Upper House. It may be that an erroneous impression has arisen from the conduct of the Minister for Works the other night. I wanted to amend a Bill in a particularly logical manner by an amendment which I think would have commended itself to all members.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing another Bill which has been dealt with this session.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am not discussing another Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is discussing what the Minister for Works said in connection with another Bill. He must not do so.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Am I in order in suggesting what in certain circumstances might have occurred?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing another Bill that has been dealt with this session.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Marshall: The other Bill is not now under discussion.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Is it permissible for me to say that the view may be taken that we have before us a proposal which on the face of it is likely to be unacceptable to another place? I will, however, proceed. Whilst I willingly admit the sincerity of the Premier and members of his party in this matter, I do not think it necessary that that sincerity should be voiced in the loud manner that we heard it voiced. It is said by the Premier that this measure is in the nature of being one to democratise the franchise for another place, as it clearly is. If I understand the word franchise aright and the application of democratic principles to that word, it is that it stands for one vote one value. That is not the case in this House. There are five constituencies represented on the Government side of the House—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I think the hon. member is out of order again.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am discussing the phrase "democratizing the franchise of the

Upper House." That is not out of order unless you deliberately tell me so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark. Does he withdraw it?

Hon. N. KEENAN: Yes. I now propose, with your leave, Mr. Speaker, to refer to what the Premier told the House, namely, that this Bill is designed to democratize the franchise for another place.

Mr. Cross: Only in the case of soldiers.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I point out that the very element of democracy as applied to the franchise is to make one vote of one value. That is not the case in our own House.

The Premier: We do not deny adults the right to vote for this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are not discussing the right to vote for this House at present.

The Minister for Works: Are you not disparaging another place?

Hon. N. KEENAN: No.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member had better proceed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I presume I am justified in saying that we have no conceivable right to lecture another place in a matter in which we ourselves are very great sinners. That is the case with regard to the franchise. When the late Mr. McCallum was a Minister of the Crown we were told that he had no vote for the Upper House. I am well aware that at that time he was the owner of a great deal of property, and could have qualified a hundred times over to vote for another place. The property included farms. For his own private reasons—I do not challenge those reasons—he chose to keep his property in the name of his wife, and she had the vote. Is that to be put up as an illustration of what we ought to do in this case? For reasons which I do not challenge Mr. McCallum chose to put in his wife's name property which would have qualified him a hundred times over to vote for the Legislative Council, and thereby deprived himself of the franchise to which he would otherwise have been entitled. That is not an example which would convince anyone.

It has been pointed out that this Bill goes a long way beyond conferring a certain right upon those whom the Premier described as soldiers who were defending Australia. No one would challenge the giving of rights

and privileges to those who were engaged in that task, as was done in case of the identical Bill affecting this particular Chamber. I observe that this Bill intends to give the franchise to little flappers who are in uniform. Every member of the Forces, no matter what their age may be, 14 or 15, in offices, or even it may be sometimes below that age, will be entitled to the franchise.

Mr. J. Hegney: Many of those young people are doing a man's job, amongst other things driving motorcars.

Hon. N. KEENAN: There may be some, but the great mass of them do nothing but look pretty, and they do that excellently. I refuse to be a party to giving the franchise to that particular class. These young people possess very attractive looks and many other virtues, but I do not think they have any commonsense. I am not prepared to allow them to settle a question which requires commonsense. That is entirely apart from extending this particular privilege to those who, in the words of the Premier, are prepared to defend Australia or who in many cases have already defended Australia and have returned wounded to our shores. I call attention to the statement of the member for Murray-Wellington, namely, that this Bill for some reason, because it has not been explained, confers this benefit upon members of the Civil Construction Corps, and at the same time leaves out entirely from any consideration those who are engaged in work of the same character, who are doing equally well as far as the war effort is concerned, and are equally deserving of any benefits that are to be given because of their war services. The Minister in his reply may explain that inquiry to the hon. member.

Mr. J. Hegney: That may be an oversight. We must rectify that.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not wish to delay this matter, but it must be readily confessed that we are at the end of the session and to rush through a measure of this kind, which is what we are doing—and I will admit it is within the right of the Government—is not commendable. However, the Government having the right to do so, has submitted the Bill. I would be wholeheartedly in favour of it if the portion to which I have just directed attention, and which I am ashamed to see there—I suppose that is due to my excessive age—were eliminated.

The Premier: Age and wisdom are no disgrace!

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not propose to oppose the Bill, but I do not profess any enthusiasm in conferring the franchise on a number of young ladies who do not care for it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Marshall in the Chair; the Premier (for the Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 21—agreed to.

Clause 22—Voting by members of the Civil Constructional Corps:

Mr. DONEY: I wanted to ask the Minister for an explanation. As he is not in his place, I do not know that it is of much use my submitting the question.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 23 to 32—agreed to.

Schedule, No. 1:

Hon. N. KEENAN: I would like to ask for an explanation of the particular form of footnote that is inserted. The one I refer to is in these terms—

I am aware that it is an offence to personate or attempt to personate any other person for the purpose of securing a vote—

Every elector and citizen is aware of that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have not yet put the question in regard to the schedule. The question is that Schedule No. 1 be agreed to.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am asking the Premier to explain the particular phraseology used. The schedule goes on to say—

—to which I am not entitled or wilfully to make any false statement in this declaration or to vote more than once at an election.

Is it suggested that the ordinary citizen does not know that he or she cannot vote more than once?

The Minister for Mines: Every person who goes into a polling booth is asked the question, "Have you voted before today?"

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is a statutory question. They are not asked, "Do you know you cannot vote twice?" This implies an extraordinary want of knowledge by the persons to get the benefit conferred by this measure. Every citizen is presumed to know the law. I think it is absurd and I ask the Premier why it is included.

The PREMIER: The hon. member dealt with the persons on whom this Bill proposes to confer the franchise. Some of these nice-

looking flappers who wander around, with, apparently, nothing to do except make their personal appearance as bright and beautiful as possible, are to be given the right to vote. These young people have not the inclination to study the law and become acquainted with it, although I agree that everyone is presumed to know the law. This matter will be forcibly brought to their notice so that they will not break the law. One of the objections to this and another measure is a fear that all sorts of unwanted things may be done by certain people. I have heard it said that soldiers, because of the conditions under which they are living, and when in a state of excitement, might do anything. I can assure members that when people are in a state of active warfare their actions are not always responsible.

The Minister for Mines: They might kill a man!

The PREMIER: That is their job. This must be put in front of them so that they will exercise commonsense and reason. We have heard that soldiers might vote twice. In fact, a Select Committee has been appointed by another place to find out how the votes should be taken. It is possible that suitable preventive arrangements might be made.

Mr. WATTS: Without entering into any discussion on the merits or demerits of these young persons, I am in agreement with the Premier that it is advisable to have this paragraph included. I thought the same in connection with the Legislative Assembly Bill. Two sets of schedules, as amendments, were offered to the Chamber on that measure, one by this side and one by the Minister. They both contained a paragraph similar to this. I appreciate that every elector—whether he has been one in the past or will be one in the future—is, as a citizen, presumed to know the law.

The Minister for Mines: There would be a bad time for the lawyers if we did all know it.

Mr. WATTS: It is a reasonable assumption because it would be a sad state of affairs if all defaulters could say that they did not know they were breaking the law. Under those circumstances we would never get a conviction. It seems to me that a number of the persons who will be affected by this measure will not know too much about the law. This provision was retained in the Bill relating to the Legislative

Assembly under which fewer persons in proportion are to become entitled to the franchise. It should remain in the schedule to this Bill, if for no other reason, at least as a warning that that is the state of the law.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedules Nos. 2, 3 and 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

THE PREMIER [6.12]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): I feel impelled to make an observation or two on the third reading of the Bill in view of the extreme divergence of opinion between the Premier and the member for Perth. The Premier expressed some resentment at the fact that I was not prepared to oppose the Bill, which is the expression of which I made use. The member for Perth expressed some disagreement with me because he said I was going to oppose it; his objection being that I would not support it.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. WATTS: I was pointing out the great divergence of opinion between the observations of the Premier and those of the member for Perth. The Premier is disappointed that I did not oppose the second reading of the Bill, and the member for Perth says that I have opposed it. I was of opinion that my remarks on the subject were not capable of two understandings, and as I believe that the Premier was paying the greater attention and therefore heard me accurately, I am in agreement with him that I said I was not going to oppose the Bill.

This is not to say that I am entirely satisfied with the law as regards the franchise applying to the Legislative Council. I would be prepared to consider some alteration to it; in fact I was very willing on one occasion to support a proposal by the then member for East Perth which might have solved the difficulties that arise between the two Houses. That measure, however, never reached the stage of being sent to the Council for decision; it died in the closing hours of the session in this House. This Bill pro-

poses such a major change in the method by which Legislative Council members have been elected that it is quite obvious that at this stage the Council is unlikely to accept it and, because I think that and because I believe it must be apparent to the Government, I cannot do other than express surprise that it has been brought down at this stage, when there was ample time to introduce it earlier in the session. Either that or we could have embodied these amendments in a general amendment to the Electoral Act and dealt with the two Houses in the one measure, as was suggested during the debate by the member for Nedlands.

I do not deny that I have taken no part to prevent those members of our Forces who go oversea fighting for this country to exercise the franchise for either House. I took the attitude on the Bill dealing with the Assembly that those men were entitled to some concession, and I am prepared to extend the concession in regard to the Legislative Council franchise as well to those particular people, who are by no means a majority of those serving in the Fighting Forces. Because I wish, if it is at all practicable, that that section, plus the soldiers who are normally entitled to the Council franchise but who, owing to the existing state of the war, cannot exercise it, should have a reasonable opportunity to exercise the vote, I did not oppose this Bill, but let it go through without any opposition.

[Mr. Marshall took the Chair.]

The Minister for Labour: And urged the Legislative Council to throw it out.

Mr. WATTS: I did not. What I said was that the Government had introduced the Bill in such a form as almost to ensure, judging from past knowledge—and the Government has a very wide knowledge of the Legislative Council—that another place would reject the measure, especially bearing in mind the period of the session at which the Bill had been introduced. I regret if any implication of insincerity was read into my remarks although in my opinion I did not imply anything of the sort. If I did so, I will not hesitate to say I regret that that interpretation was placed upon my remarks. In my opinion the Legislative Council is the place to deal with this matter. If the Government had brought down a Bill to deal with the question in a reasonable

manner—to give a vote to the men who have seen active service oversea and to those who will be disqualified from exercising the franchise in the ordinary way—I would have supported it. It seems to me that the Government has got itself into an unfortunate position, and that it is almost certain the Bill will not be passed, and that in consequence there will be a very regrettable state of affairs in that those persons reasonably entitled to a vote will not get it.

THE PREMIER (in reply): I accept the hon. member's withdrawal of the charge of insincerity, but I do not want the impression to go forth that we allowed the Bill to be introduced so late in the session that there was no reasonable opportunity to get it passed, knowing as we do the attitude of the Council to various measures dealing with its own franchise and its own existence. We did not want to jeopardise the Bill to give the soldiers a vote for the Assembly by tacking on to it a proposal dealing with votes for the Legislative Council. Of course, with all our experience of the Council we might, like Robert Bruce, be content to try again. Still, we did not want to jeopardise the passing of the Assembly Bill by tacking the proposals for the Council on to it.

The Assembly Bill was introduced at the earliest possible moment in the session. But for the fact that the Government Printer was not able to deliver the printed copies, it would have been practically the first Bill introduced. Four or five months ago, when we were closing down the last session, I informed members—and I presume Council members are aware of what happens here—that the Government would meet Parliament a few months later, and meanwhile asked them to give attention to means whereby soldiers might become entitled to exercise a vote so that they would not be disfranchised. I asked members, on dispersing for the recess, to give attention to the matter. If they formulated any ideas, these could be expressed as soon as the House reassembled. The Government framed a Bill and introduced it on the first day we were open to receive such business. We passed the Bill as quickly as possible, though it was not rushed through; we gave everyone reasonable time to deal with it and sent it to the Council. Now this Bill dealing with the Council franchise will catch up with the other one in another place.

There has been no delay or waiting about until a time arrived when we knew that the Bill would not be passed. We have another fortnight or three weeks to sit if the Council desires sufficient time properly to deal with the question. If that House shows an inclination to pass the measure, there will be no lack of time because the Crown Law officers have advised that this session may be continued right up to the eve of the election, if so desired. On this occasion there is no constitutional bar as there is with ordinary elections, when Parliament is dissolved by statute on the 31st January in the year when an election is due. Thus, if necessity demanded, we could sit on this occasion right up to the eve of the election.

The Minister for Labour: The Legislative Council deals quickly with Bills that suit it.

The PREMIER: Yes. If the Council shows a disposition to consider the Bill seriously and with the object of passing it, I will not rush that body in such a way as to lead it to hurry consideration or say there is no time to deal with it. The measure might be amended in another place; I do not object to the Council amending a Bill if an amendment should be made. That is the Council's prerogative.

Mr. Watts: I hope the Council will be in a frame of mind to do that.

The PREMIER: Yes, but not to throw it out on the score of lack of time to consider it. The Council could arrange to sit tomorrow, just as we shall be doing. I do not think it intends to sit tomorrow. The Council could sit tomorrow, and would not find any objection being raised by the Government if it took all the time reasonably needed to pass the Bill in a form that would do justice to the soldiers.

Question put.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have counted the House and assured myself that there is an absolute majority of members present, and there being no dissentient voice I declare the question duly passed.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ALBANY CEMETERIES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

MR. HILL (Albany) [7.43]: I support the second reading and thank the Minister

for having introduced the Bill. The position in connection with the cemeteries at Albany has never been satisfactory. From time to time various efforts have been made to improve matters, but nothing has been accomplished. A few months ago meetings were held of representatives of the municipality, the road board and the various denominations interested, with the result that the Minister was asked to introduce this measure. The Bill is in accordance with the wishes of all those interested and I commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Messages from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

- 1, Public Authorities (Retirement of Members) Act Amendment.
- 2, Public Authorities (Postponement of Elections) Act Amendment.
- 3, Financial Emergency Act Amendment.
- 4, Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment.
- 5, Industries Assistance Act Continuance.
- 6, Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment.
- 7, Main Roads Act (Funds Appropriation).
- 8, Pensioners (Rates Exemption) Act Amendment.

[The Speaker resumed the Choir.]

BILLS (3)—RETURNED.

- 1, Road Closure.
- 2, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment.
- 3, Road Districts Act Amendment.
Without amendment.

BILL—MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

MR. HILL (Albany) [7.50]: First, I would like to say that I am a firm believer

in compulsory third party insurance. This Bill is long overdue, and I have no hesitation in saying that the absence of this legislation has caused very heavy loss to our hospitals as well as much loss and suffering to many people. I have no doubt that most members, like myself, know of instances where third party risk insurance would have been most desirable. I shall quote one instance in which all the parties concerned were my friends. A young fellow was travelling on a motor cycle along the Denmark road and a motorear was driving towards him. As it came round the corner the sun caught the eyes of the driver of the motorear and dazzled him for a few seconds. When he saw the motorcycle in front of him he became flurried and steered straight for it. A very severe collision occurred and the young fellow was seriously injured. He spent about six months in hospital. When it came to considering compensation, he had a clear case against the owner of the motorear. Nevertheless, he received only a fraction of the compensation to which he was entitled, and the payment of that compensation seriously crippled the owner of the motorear financially.

This legislation will prove to be of benefit to the car owner. Speaking as an owner, I say without hesitation that no man can afford to drive a car unless he has effected third party insurance. As a matter of fact, I have my receipt for such insurance in my pocket now. A man may be the most careful driver in the world, but he never knows when he might meet with an accident. I am not a man of straw myself, but I would not like to be without that cover. But where there is a man of straw, it is not the car-owner who suffers; it is the victim of the accident. It is the duty of this House to protect the general public and therefore we should agree to pass this Bill. The principle of the Bill is sound. It is based on similar Acts of other States. Nevertheless, I regret that the following provisions, contained in Clause 5 of the Bill of 1941 were not included in this measure. These provisions read—

(2) In relation to obtaining insurance as required by Subsection (1) hereof, the following provisions shall apply:—

(a) The insurance shall be obtained by the owner of the motor vehicle, when applying for a license for such motor vehicle, paying to the local authority to whom the application for the license

is made, the premium appropriate to the class of vehicle for which the license is required, as fixed from time to time by the insurer.

(b) The insurance shall commence on the day upon which the period of the license applied for commences and shall run concurrently with the period of the currency of such license and no longer.

(c) The premium for the insurance shall be calculated at the rate fixed as aforesaid, but shall be paid only in respect of the period of the currency of the license in relation to which it is paid.

(d) There shall be incorporated in or indorsed upon or annexed to the license a memorandum in the prescribed form stating the amount of the premium paid and the period for which the insurance is effected; and such memorandum shall constitute a policy of insurance for the purpose of Part IVA of this Act between the owner of the motor vehicle in relation to which the license is issued and the insurer.

Had those provisions been included in the Bill, it would have been far more acceptable. Under the proposed measure of 1941, I believe the State Government Insurance Office was to have had a monopoly of third party risk insurance. I consider that would be most undesirable, as I do not favour the creation of a monopoly by legislation of this kind. At the same time, I strongly support the proposal that the State office should be allowed to cater for this class of insurance. I have had experience of various insurance companies and have paid them a good many hundred pounds, and I can assure members that my conscience has never been troubled when I have benefited from some of my insurances. I am afraid that, if the State office is not allowed to cater for this insurance, there might be a tendency for private companies to benefit at the expense of motorists. I regret the measure has been introduced so late in the session, as I would have liked to make some alterations to it; but I fully realise that to attempt to make alterations at this late stage would be a mistake, as the Bill might be lost. While I would like those alterations to be made, I realise it is better to pass the Bill as it stands than run the risk of losing it. I have been in touch with the officials of the Royal Automobile Club, who have carefully examined this Bill and said that it meets with their approval. I support the second reading.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): I join with the member for Albany in regretting the absence of the provisions to which he drew the attention of the House and which were incorporated in a former Bill. I suggest to the Minister that, if practicable, he should have those provisions inserted in another place. We should not attempt here to frame off-hand the necessary words now; but by the time the measure reaches another place the Minister will have had an opportunity to get the Crown Law Department to submit a properly drawn amendment. The amendment referred to is most desirable. Another matter which I hope the Minister will deal with in his reply relates to what are known as comprehensive policies. As I read this measure it is not clear that the holder of a comprehensive policy, of course taken out in an approved company, is thereby complying with the law as laid down in the present Bill. If the Minister will look at the Bill, he will see that no express exemption is made from the operation of the particular provisions in favour of a person who is insured under a comprehensive policy issued by a company that will be an approved insurer.

Some such provision seems to me to be desirable, because otherwise an owner would be compelled to take out two policies. He might take out two policies with the one company, one for the purpose of complying with the provisions of this Bill and another for protection against fire and damage to his car and against damage that he might do to cars belonging to other people. This Bill, of course, deals only with personal injury. The taking out of separate policies will mean unnecessary trouble and work. An owner might forget to take out the second policy; indeed, he might be induced by some feeling of austerity to leave it alone. That is not desirable. I ask the Minister to consider not only the amendment suggested by the member for Albany, which I heartily support, but also the amendment I have indicated now, which will exempt from the operation of this measure, if it becomes an Act, all holders of comprehensive policies issued by approved insurers.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): I propose to support the Bill because it is something which has been required for a long time. There have been considerable difficulties and

cross-currents in the way of legislation of this character which has been introduced from time to time. Some were concerned with controversies in regard to the State Insurance Office; others with controversies in regard to the method by which the insurance was to be obtained; and on one occasion at least the point was raised in another place that a Bill of this character had been introduced too late to allow it to be effectively dealt with. That argument would be tenable on this occasion here were it not for the fact that in this House we have become fairly well acquainted with this type of measure. We have seen at least three such Bills and, except for the part relating to the actual taking out of the policies, the Bills have been very similar. In consequence, most of us have a general idea of what is intended and what is proposed by this legislation. I join with the member for Albany and the member for Nedlands in expressing the hope that the Minister will take steps to see that there is some simplification of the method of taking out policies.

In these days we are surrounded, as it were, by applications and proposals and licenses and ration tickets, so that it becomes more and more difficult to remember on the one hand and to complete on the other the various forms that have to be dealt with. A suggestion was made in connection with the 1941 Bill—I forget whether in the Bill as introduced or whether later by amendment but I think the latter—to make use to some extent of the services of local authorities, so that when a person applied for a motor vehicle license, and paid the prescribed amount for third party insurance, the license was actually the policy by virtue of the Act, and the holder was able to produce it if any dispute or claim arose. That had the effect of removing altogether the necessity for making proposals in writing to the insurer and receiving from him a policy. Labour and effort are involved in the preparation of a proposal and more time and labour are taken up in the preparation of the policy, whereas under the suggestion made the license would have been, in effect, the statutory policy, the terms of which would have been prescribed by the Act or regulations and would have served a very effectual purpose.

I know that in that Bill the State Insurance Office was to be the only office. That

would have simplified the system to which I referred, because the local authority would have been required only to despatch the premiums at regular intervals to one place, namely, the State Insurance Office. I notice from this Bill that it is intended—and I think rightly—to include the State Office along with other insurers who are approved for the purposes of the Workers' Compensation Act. That would, of course, mean in regard to those local authorities, that they would have to despatch the premiums to those various insurers unless an arrangement could be made for some central authority to handle them, and subsequently distribute them, which I should say would be quite a practicable way of dealing with the matter by arrangement with the incorporated insurers and the State Office. I do not think there would be any real reason why that system should not be put into operation. I am thinking of the people who have to make out these proposals and forward them to the insurance companies and go to all the trouble involved therein: and also the issuing of policies takes time and trouble. I hope the Minister will go into this question as suggested by the members who spoke before me, with a view to having some such provision in the Bill.

I would also like to support the member for Nedlands in regard to the comprehensive policy. On looking through the Bill I could not find any place in which it was clearly set out that the holder of a comprehensive policy would be complying with the provisions of this Bill if it becomes an Act. As I see it, the position is that the comprehensive policy at present covers third-party risk, and a portion of the premium is paid to cover that risk. Unless it is made quite clear that such a comprehensive policy complies with this measure, the insured person might find himself in the position of paying two premiums for the same service.

The Minister for Works: You have not read Clause 4.

Mr. WATTS: I looked at it but it did not seem to me that it was at all clear. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will look at it before I say any more. I do not find it as clear as the Minister suggests.

The Minister for Works: Your objection is that there is no provision for anyone holding a comprehensive policy to be exempt from the provisions of this measure?

Mr. WATTS: That is so. I cannot see any provision to exempt him, and I think it should be so, because unless there is a clear provision we will find some people paying twice for the same service. I know that is not the Minister's intention. I am not suggesting for one moment that that is in his mind, but I think the matter needs to be cleared up in the interests of those people who have always taken a care in this matter. A large section of our motorists have insured themselves for many years, not only against this type of risk but against other risks attendant upon driving on the roads. We should not make them feel that the reward for having taken care in the past is that they shall be put to additional trouble and/or expense in the future. I think the general text of the measure is satisfactory. It follows in many instances fairly closely on the lines of measures we dealt with two and four years ago respectively, and I propose to support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interpretation:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I left my reply to the points raised until the Committee stage, which is the only time we can deal with clauses. The question I am now dealing with is the definition of approved insurer. In the Bill mentioned, if I remember rightly, the license and the policy went together. Exception was taken to that because it was pointed out that 50 per cent. of motor owners who were insured against risk had comprehensive policies, and it was estimated that the others had no policy at all, not even one covering third-party risks. It was claimed that the men with comprehensive policies would be at a disadvantage because of the difficulty of assessing the third-party risk. At the time the insurance companies placed that risk rather high—I think as high as 33s. The point raised now was taken as an objection at that time. This proposal sets out those who are entitled to take out insurance for third-party risk. That is all we are concerned about in this measure. Later on I think I can show that those who have comprehensive policies are not liable to take out a policy under this

measure. The comprehensive policy is sufficient. Their exemption is provided for in another clause to which we shall come. We are not dealing with property, but merely with third-party risk.

Hon. N. Keenan: You say that Clause 4 provides that exemption?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Hon. N. Keenan: We have not come to that yet.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There are about 150 licensing authorities in the State. Although in the metropolitan area the Police Department is the licensing authority it only undertakes the work on behalf of local authorities. What we sought to have carried out under the earlier legislation was regarded as imposing too burdensome a duty on the local authorities. Under this legislation, however, the question of seeing that the necessary policy is taken out is left with the companies and the responsibility is placed also on the insurer. The motorist must have his insurance policy, for without it he cannot secure a renewal of his license. It may be that many owners may insure for the licensing period and some may take out a comprehensive policy for the full period. In any case, if he is covered for the first nine months of the licensing year the motorist must make provision for cover for the balance of the year so as to embrace the full period for which he requires his license. If he already has a full comprehensive policy he will not incur any liability under this legislation.

Mr. HILL: I suppose my position would be typical of at least 50 per cent. of the motorists. My insurance policy expires on the 25th September, and I take it I will have to arrange with the insurance company to give me cover for the balance of the period until the new license is taken out on the 1st July. It will be my responsibility, as a car owner, to see that I hold the necessary insurance cover.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—Insurance against third party risks:

Hon. N. KEENAN: The Minister seems to have thoroughly grasped the objection regarding the position of the comprehensive policy-holder, and to be of opinion that the point raised is met by Clause 4. I do not think that is so unless Subclause (1) is

amended. The contract of insurance mentioned in the clause is one under the Bill itself, and if the Minister looks into the matter he will see that that does not adequately meet the contention that has been raised. I am viewing this matter in the proper light and I have no desire to hamper the passage of the Bill in the slightest degree. It is urgently necessary that it be passed. I think the earliest steps should be taken to clarify the point that has been raised, and I claim there is nothing in the clause that specifically exempts the holder of a comprehensive policy from insuring under this Act. To make it clear, I suggest that at the end of paragraph (b) of Subclause 1 the following words should be added: "unless such owner has at all material times insured with an approved insurer against third-party risks." I hope the Minister will look into that matter, for I do not propose to delay the passage of the Bill.

The Minister for Works: I assure the hon. member that I want the Bill tied up properly.

Mr. RODOREDA: I agree with the member for Nedlands regarding the point he has raised. I think the Minister should clarify the position along the lines suggested.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have no objection to making it very definite that the car-owner must be insured for the whole period. If a man has a comprehensive policy for nine months and his license is for the full 12 months, I should say he must get cover for the remaining three months. I think the member for Nedlands, if he looks further into the matter, will see that the position is clear. If it is not, I shall re-commit the Bill in order to make doubly sure. The safeguard is that no licensing authority can issue a license for a given period unless the authority is satisfied that that period is covered by a third-party insurance policy. There is no doubt about that. What we are concerned about now is whether a person holding a comprehensive policy satisfies the requirements of this measure.

Mr. RODOREDA: I notice that in this clause the words "comply with this Act" are used, and also the words "under this Act." I do not know whether there is any difference in meaning between the two phrases.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The words simply mean entering into a particular form of

insurance in accordance with the Act. I move an amendment—

That at the end of paragraph (b) of Subclause (1) the following words be added:—“unless such owner is at all material times insured with an approved insurer against third-party risk.”

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Does the member for Nedlands say there is no provision later in the Bill similar to that which he has moved?

Hon. N. Keenan: I will not interrupt you now.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We should make sure of the provisions of the Bill as we go along. If the hon. member will go right into this matter he will find that it is tied up completely.

Hon. N. Keenan: Yes, tied up so completely that I shall re-insure.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This is a very limited insurance. Therefore the person holding a comprehensive policy shows that he is insured for the full period. That will satisfy any licensing authority.

Mr. WATTS: Of two different types of licensee, one will bring a comprehensive policy and another will bring a special policy. How is the authority to know whether they are both complying with this measure?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The point is that if you have a comprehensive policy, included in that is the third-party risk. There is no getaway from that.

Hon. N. Keenan: Unfortunately there is. I want to be sure there shall be no getaway.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The applicant must show that the car is covered for the third-party period, whether three, six, or twelve months. A cover note would be accepted by the licensing authority.

Hon. N. Keenan: The insurer will issue a cover, which protects until the policy is issued. When the policy is issued it may be found not to include third-party insurance.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will have the clause examined in the light of the observations of the member for Nedlands. If the matter is not completely tied up, I shall have no objection to the recommitment of the Bill.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I suggest that the Minister allows me to discuss the Bill with the Crown Law authorities. No-one objects to the provisions of Subclause (8) but that is not the point.

The Minister for Works: What is the point?

Hon. N. KEENAN: If we had a comprehensive policy we would under paragraph (b) of Clause 4, be obliged to take out a comprehensive policy, and also one under this Act. That is not intended. Under this clause it is an offence not to take out a contract of insurance. If I were allowed to discuss the matter with the draftsman, he might agree with me that the holder of a comprehensive policy would be entitled to exemption from the operations of the paragraph.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will give an undertaking that after we have made some progress I will refer this Bill to the Crown Law Department.

Hon. N. Keenan: Have I leave to see the Crown Law authorities?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member can always see them.

Hon. N. Keenan: I would not attempt to do so without your leave.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not want any loophole left, so I will see them, at any rate. I give this assurance, that if the matter is not provided for I will recommit the Bill, but I do not think it will be necessary.

Mr. RODOREDA: This is important. Subclause (1) deals with an entirely different matter from Subclause (8). Subclause (1) provides that every owner shall be insured. That does not necessarily mean a licensed owner. The Minister should look into that point. The whole of Subclause (1) needs redrafting.

Mr. WATTS: I hope the Minister will agree to accept an amendment, or have the clause recommitted and have an amendment of his own drafting inserted.

The Minister for Works: I have agreed to that.

Mr. WATTS: The position of the local authorities would be that they would say they are directed not to issue a license unless the applicant produces a policy of insurance complying with the Act. The only such policy would be one covering third-party risk and nothing else. If I went along and produced a comprehensive policy, they would say, “We cannot, in accordance with the Act, accept it.” It would be far better to have a proper definition in the Bill than to leave the possibility of complaint later.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Because of the understanding given by the Minister, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Applications by persons to become approved insurers:

Mr. WATTS: I draw attention to the proviso to Subclause (4). Does the Minister think it reasonable that the withdrawal should be permitted at a time less than three months after notice of withdrawal? The provision is that it shall not be more than three months. Notwithstanding what the subclause contains there ought to be a greater lapse of time before the withdrawal actually takes effect.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The approved insurers take the liability comprehensively for everyone, including uninsured vehicles. Therefore, if they are approved insurers, there must be some lag in allowing them to relinquish their liability, not only for the vehicles they insure but also for the comprehensive liability spread over all insurance.

Mr. Watts: I thought 12 months would be more reasonable than three.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will have the point looked into.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 29, Title—agreed to.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have given an assurance that Clause 4 of this Bill will be recommitted.

Bill reported without amendment.

BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [8.58]: This Bill is complementary to the one we have just dealt with, and provides that the State Insurance Office may undertake the class of insurance contemplated by the last Bill, and also that relating to motor vehicles generally, which would cover the type of policy known as the comprehensive policy. I well remember the position of the State Insurance Office when, some eight or nine years ago, it had been carrying on for a number of years without any legal qualifications. I was a member of the Select Committee that inquired in 1937 into the proposal brought down by the

Minister with the object of constituting the State Government Insurance Office on a legal basis. I remember also with some degree of pleasure—and I think I am right in this belief—that the views expressed by the member for Murray-Wellington and myself as members of the Select Committee, taken in conjunction with the views expressed by the Minister, who was chairman, and his colleagues, resulted in Parliament giving the office legality so that it could continue its operations in accordance with the law.

The Bill we were discussing at that time was to give the State Insurance Office the right to conduct various classes of insurance, which right has not been allowed to it up to the present, but the report of the Select Committee did have the effect of securing approval for it lawfully to conduct workers' compensation insurance and certain types of accident insurance that previously it had not been able to do. Since then the State Insurance Office has carried on business dealing only with those classes of insurance, and it has also undertaken the insurance of Government properties and matters of that kind. From time to time legislation to add to the rights of the Government office in a very considerable way has been rejected. One Bill, mentioned by the member for Albany, proposed to give a monopoly to the State office of their third-party insurance. That was rejected by Parliament in common with a third-party insurance Bill which was before us at the time.

Now we have this Bill which proposes to give the State office the right to conduct third-party insurance and general motor vehicle insurance. I think the Minister is justified in asking Parliament to give the office the right to conduct those two types of insurance. There are grounds, as was suggested by the member for Albany, for believing it is right for the State office to be one of the offices approved for the conduct of third-party insurance. The Bill, however, does not contemplate a monopoly and, because of that, I think we should be prepared to support the measure. A few months ago we debated at some length the question of monopolies, and a great deal of opposition was voiced in this House to their being allowed to exist without regulation and control. The State Insurance Office, were it entrusted with the sole right to deal with this type of insurance, would be a small

monopoly, but I think it would be none the less objectionable. However, there is no such suggestion in this measure and, because I believe the State office will help with advantage in the carrying out of third-party insurance, I propose to support the Bill.

There may be some who believe that, by allowing the State office to conduct the class of business known as comprehensive insurance for motor vehicles and insurance for vehicular accidents generally, we are not doing right, but the more I consider the question, the more I am forced to the conclusion that the one will not work without the other. If we say that we will not give the State office the right to deal with all classes of insurance mentioned in the Bill, I think we are going to make it extremely difficult for the office to operate under the Bill with which we have just dealt.

The Minister for Labour: The State office would not accept any business if it was limited to third-party insurance.

Mr. WATTS: I think it would be justified in adopting that attitude. We have accepted under the previous Bill, of which this measure is the complement, the principle that the State office should conduct that type of insurance. I have given the matter a good deal of thought, and have come to the same conclusion as the Minister that we cannot have the one without the other. As we accepted the principles of the one we should accept the principles of the other. There has been no serious complaint against the conduct of the State office in the six years that have elapsed since it obtained a measure of the validity that previously it did not have, and it is reasonable that it should be given the powers proposed under this Bill.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): The Leader of the Opposition has covered the ground so accurately and clearly, and voiced the views which I myself hold and which I entirely endorse, that I do not propose to say more than that I support the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR [9.10]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): In making some observations on the second reading, I omitted to comment on the fact that it is not obligatory on the State office or on any insurer to accept third-party risk. Perhaps it would be more relevant to consider this matter in the other Bill that will come before us again, making it compulsory for the owner of a motor vehicle to take out a policy of insurance against third-party risk. If no insurance office will accept the risk, what will be the position? Originally it was proposed to make it obligatory on the part of insurers to issue a policy and so relieve an applicant from being placed in a position where—if he was a carrier—he unfortunately would be unable to carry on his business. That provision, however, does not appear in the present legislation. I cannot now ask the Minister to recommit the Bill, but perhaps the matter could be dealt with in another place. Obviously it would be a gross injustice to pass a law compelling a man to do something and not provide any means by which he may do it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Although third-party insurance will be compulsory on the part of motor vehicle owners, it will not be obligatory on any insurer to accept the risk. For that reason the State office proposes to take the right to insure these risks. If we compel an owner to insure his vehicle, ways and means should be provided to enable him to insure. It would mean that only those would be refused insurance who had a very bad record.

Hon. N. Keenan: Who is to determine that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would be determined by the court. Some motorists have a bad record.

Hon. N. Keenan: If a company said it would not give a certain man a policy because he had a bad record, would that be conclusive?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The point I wish to make is that in my Bill there is no provision to compel an insurer to accept the risk.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR (in reply): The Bill in the hands of the Minister for Works provides for the setting up of a premiums committee, which will be charged with the duty of declaring what is a fair premium for motorists to pay. I give an assurance that the State office will do business on the basis of the premiums recommended by the committee.

Hon. N. Keenan: I do not challenge that at all.

The **MINISTER FOR LABOUR**: If private insurance companies refuse to accept the business from motorists, it would appear that the State office will have a monopoly of it.

Mr. Fox: Did not that happen under the Workers' Compensation Act?

The **MINISTER FOR LABOUR**: If insurance offices are prepared to accept the business, they may do so in competition with each other and, of course, in fair and reasonable competition with the State office.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [8.14]: This continuance Bill merely re-enacts for a further period of one year the provisions that appeared in the 1931 Act in respect to certain matters. There is no possible objection to the Bill being read a second time and passed through all necessary stages in this House. It is, however, regrettable that on this occasion no provision has been made to deal with what is undoubtedly a hard set of circumstances, namely, the case of small mortgagees who lent money on mortgage before 1931 and who are in great need of that money in the circumstances in which they are living today; and have been for some years past.

It is an extraordinary and indefensible anomaly that the provisions of the Act do not apply to mortgages made since 1931, but only to mortgages made over 12 years ago. That difficulty was attempted to be solved by the Minister last year, but unfortunately he could not obtain agreement among the members of the House to the

proposal he brought down and it was abandoned. I venture on this occasion to express my regret that he has not made another attempt to deal with the matter; because it is unquestionably an extreme hardship, which is known to almost all of us—certainly many of us—that mortgages made as far back as 1924, and intended to be repaid some years after 1931 in order to provide funds for the old age of the persons who lent the money or for the education of children and their advancement in life, are subject to the provisions of the Act. We have tied their hands all those years and are keeping them tied. That is the only opposition I desire to make; otherwise I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS [9.18]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan): I am disappointed that year after year, without any real explanation or justification, this continuance measure is brought down and re-enacted. That has been occurring for a period of 12 years.

Mr. Cross: Have you just awakened?

Mr. SAMPSON: I beg your pardon!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SAMPSON: No doubt the member for Canning understands this matter as he understands everything else. For his personal—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Canning is not mentioned in this Bill.

Mr. SAMPSON: He should be, because it is a measure which I think needs amending. A different view should be taken of this matter. The Minister is not doing himself justice. The depression period has long since passed. We may later on require to devote some special consideration to this class of legislation. Members should hesitate before agreeing to support these hardy annuals which, once approved of, become part of the permanent legislation of the State. I am hoping the practice will not be continued.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): I must say that I agree with the member for Swan to this extent, that the Act which this Bill seeks to continue has been in operation for 12 years. Beyond that I cannot subscribe to the point of view which he put forward. It seems to me the Minister for Lands is right in asking for the Act to be continued for a further period. It only deals, I admit, with mortgages entered into before the 19th August, 1931.

The Minister for Lands: Very large sums are involved.

MR. WATTS: But notwithstanding that it deals only with mortgages executed before that date, there are a good many of them and, as the Minister observes, they doubtless secure substantial sums. I do not know that the economic situation of the mortgagors concerned has improved so greatly as to justify us at this stage in taking away the protection conferred by the Act. That should not be suddenly taken away from them, with no alternative. We are not in possession of sufficient facts to satisfy me, at any rate, that that would be a proper thing to do at this juncture. I think the mortgagors are entitled to know for a considerable period ahead that this measure will remain to protect them from the importunate claims of the mortgagees who are concerned. It has been freely admitted that there are occasions when some mortgagees have suffered hardship, but I have always contended that that hardship has frequently been due to the fact that they were reluctant to apply to the court for an inquiry into the particular mortgage.

The Minister stated in his second reading speech that he was endeavouring to assist in those cases where it was difficult for mortgagees who have suffered this hardship to approach the court probably for financial reasons. Last year he attempted another method to overcome the difficulties that were raised in the House, but the Bill was not proceeded with in the form in which it was introduced. In my opinion, it is essential that this measure should be passed and that the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act of 1931 should remain in force until we have evolved some other method, equally satisfactory, of dealing with the position or until we are satisfied that the economic position of those concerned has so righted itself that there is no occasion for the Bill. Neither of those things has yet

been reached, so I support the third reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (in reply): I appreciate the words of the Leader of the Opposition. He has very clearly explained the only reasons why it is necessary to continue the Act. I was astounded at the comments of the member for Swan, who could not have been in the Chamber when the whole matter was satisfactorily explained to other members.

MR. MARSHALL: He was out drawing up mortgages.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: If he was present he certainly was not listening to what was said. It is quite idle to suggest that this legislation can be suddenly and sharply discontinued, thus taking away the protection afforded by it. It was explained to the House on more than one occasion, but particularly when reviewing this class of legislation last year, just what was involved as nearly as could be measured, and the amounts which were covered by the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act. Although those sums appear to us to be vast—they run into millions—they may appear small sums to the member for Swan. I think there would be great difficulty today in making any arrangement, first, for the re-investment of the moneys which are affected and might be called up and, second, to find replacements of the moneys for the unfortunate people who would be sadly circumstanced if this legislation were discontinued.

A very serious position would have arisen had we not made inquiries from the Commonwealth Bank in an endeavour to ascertain the position, and had we not continued this legislation. The position was thoroughly examined by the House and, as the member for Nedlands suggests, perhaps it would have been wise again to scrutinise the provision we attempted to incorporate in the continuance Bill last year in the hope of finding a solution for the indigent mortgagees, or the people sadly in need of money saved for their later years in life. I repeat. I am astounded at the attitude of the member for Swan. I suggest to him that he scrutinise the possibilities and the difficulties that would arise if this legislation were discontinued.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1943-44.*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

Vote—Public Works and Buildings, £195,780:

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS [9.27]: It is usual when introducing the Revenue Estimates to present a brief resume of the activities of the department during the preceding year. The expenditure last year was as follows:—

From Consolidated Revenue Fund:	£
Public works and buildings, including £100,000 transferred to a suspense account for future expenditure on delayed maintenance of public buildings	251,978
Goldfields Water Supply undertaking	184,642
Other hydraulic undertakings, including £6,000 transferred to a suspense account for future expenditure on delayed maintenance of country water supplies ..	74,878
From Loan Funds, including £10,000 transferred to a suspense account for future expenditure on Perth Government Chemical Laboratory equipment	189,989
From suspense accounts, being funds appropriated from General Loan Fund in previous years ..	16,852
	<hr/> £668,339

In addition, an amount of £1,145,167 was expended by the department in connection with works not provided for on the Estimates under my control, as follows:—

Commonwealth and other defence works, etc.	£ 983,724
New Perth Hospital erection ..	53,579
Hospital Fund buildings, and other departments generally	68,093
Harbour Works generally, dredging, etc.	1,302
Construction of wooden ships ..	20,719
Construction of shipbuilding yards, etc.	17,750
	<hr/> £1,145,167

Town Planning, £1,635, a grand total of £1,815,141, is as follows:—

	£
Salaries and incidental	100,692
Harbours and Rivers (excluding Defence Works)	103,295
Construction of wooden ships and ship yards	38,469
Water supplies, drainage and irrigation	236,325
Development of agriculture, North-West	3,735
Public buildings (including Abattoirs	306,093
Commonwealth and other Defence Works, etc.	943,088
A.R.P. Works	40,636
Miscellaneous	42,808
	<hr/> £1,815,141

The amount of £236,235 under the heading "Water supplies, drainage and irrigation" includes £6,000 transferred to a suspense account for delayed maintenance, country water supplies. The sum of £306,093 under "Public buildings" includes £100,000 transferred from revenue funds to a suspense account for delayed maintenance, public buildings, and £10,000 transferred from Loan funds to a Public Buildings Suspense Account for equipment, Government Chemical Laboratory.

The principal loan works undertaken by the department last year, were—

Harbours and Rivers.	£
Fremantle Harbour Works, New slipway	57,199
Fremantle Harbour Works, North Quay reconstruction	3,943
Carnarvon, Babbage Island foreshore protection works	3,094
Water Supplies for Towns.	
Albany water supply	11,115
Goldfields Water Supply.	
Further progress in renewing main conduit	17,065
Extension to Lake Champion Aluminate Works	15,692
Water Supplies in Agricultural Areas.	
Boyup Brook Dam, construction ..	5,674
Development of Agriculture in North-West.	
Ord River Irrigation investigations	2,554
East Kimberley, Preliminary engineering survey	1,181
Midland Junction Saleyards, additions and improvements	3,854
Public Buildings:	
Fremantle Technical High School ..	5,167
Perth New Chemical Laboratory ..	16,852
Barton's Mill Prison	9,130
Claremont Old Men's Home, sewerage	4,963
Perth egg dehydrating factory ..	8,122
Perth Government Stores, Wittenoom-street	1,710

A comparison between the total expenditure for the year 1942-43 of £1,813,506, and the total expenditure for the previous year of £1,131,512, shows an increase of £681,994. The dissection of the total expenditure referred to, £1,813,506, plus expenditure on

The estimated amount of revenue from all sources for the year 1942-43 was £373,530. The actual revenue received amounted to £447,192, showing a surplus of £73,662 on the Estimates for the year. The estimated revenue for the year 1943-44 compared with the actual collections for the year 1942-43 are as follows:—

Public Works—	1943/44.	1942/43.
	£	£
(a) slipways	55,000	17,910
(b) other	72,000	73,281
Town Planning	20	12
Goldfields Water Supply ..	278,000	273,779
Other Hydraulic Undertak- ings	80,000	82,210
	<u>£485,020</u>	<u>£447,192</u>

This shows an increase for the year 1943-44 of £37,828 on the actual amount received last year. I have given those figures so that they will be placed on record. I would like now to refer to other items associated with the Department of Works. Questions have been asked in respect of the State Transport Board and the activities of the Liquid Fuel Control Board and a question was also raised in regard to the control of tyres and tubes. I intend to give some information in that connection. It was proposed that particulars should be obtained of all vehicles licensed at the 30th June, 1942, and at the 30th June, 1943. This would appear to have been suggested with a view to ascertaining what vehicles have been delicensed from which second-hand tyres could probably be acquired. An examination of the figures prepared by the Government Statistician shows that a greater number of cars was licensed at the end of June, 1943, than at the end of June, 1942. At the 30th June, 1942, the number of cars licensed was 20,022. At the 30th June, 1943, this number had increased to 29,750; that is, 728 more vehicles. Registration of waggons, vans and utilities decreased from 21,341 to 20,869. The difference of 472 is scarcely sufficient to warrant the setting up of machinery for control of tyres and tubes. The suggestion that a great number of vehicles have been left in garages is a mistaken one. It is rather surprising that the car licenses for this year are 728 more than for last year.

Mr. Patrick: How did the figures for last year compare with those of the previous year?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have only the figures for last year and this year. I think it will be found that the number of licenses has been maintained to a surprising degree. This information surprised me. I was under the impression that a great number of vehicles were not being licensed or used.

Mr. Mann: How do you account for that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think it can be accounted for in this way: There is such a demand for tyres that, so long as it has a set any old vehicle will be brought out and set on the road. I may say that the statement on which I am basing my remarks was prepared by the Liquid Fuel Control Board, which points out that the effect of the release of new vehicles upon these figures must not be lost sight of. Some vehicles have come into Australia through the ordinary importation channels. A great number have come in under the lend-lease principles. The release of new vehicles is under the control of Mr. R. L. Millen, Director of Emergency Road Transport for Western Australia. The Commonwealth has taken control of transport, liquid fuel and also rubber, and the Transport Board here is agent for the Commonwealth authority. Mr. Millen has been placed in charge and he has set up an organisation in this State.

Mr. Mann: Not for rubber.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will come to that presently. Since January of this year over 450 new vehicles, with full tyre equipment, have been put on the road, in many instances replacing vehicles that from a war economy point of view must be scrapped. The flow of these new vehicles, replacing worn-out vehicles, continues. Since the 1st July this year 296 new vehicles have gone on the road, and in the near future it is anticipated that new trucks to the value of a quarter of a million pounds, fully equipped with tyres and adequately provided with spare parts, will be engaged in essential work. So, if we are not getting our share, we are getting a percentage.

The proposed Government-controlled acquisition scheme has already been attended to by the Commonwealth Government which, under National Security Regulations, has placed the control of all rubber in the hands of the Controller of Rubber, Mr. C. S. Butte. He was previously the general manager for Australia of the Olympic Tyre & Rubber

Co. Ltd. The company has made his services available to the Commonwealth free of cost for the duration of the war. Mr. Butto has had a very wide experience in the rubber business in Australia, and has a thorough knowledge not only of the production and use of tyres but also of the requirements of Australia and its various industries. He is, therefore, fully qualified to occupy the position as controller of rubber, and is very keen to ensure that the distribution of tyres and tubes is on the most equitable basis and has due regard to the requirements of essential industries. Conferences have been called from time to time of representatives of the various States to discuss the position. In Western Australia the position is administered on behalf of the Controller of Rubber by the Perth branch of the Department of Supply and Shipping, operating in close co-operation with the Director of Emergency Road Transport, Mr. Millen, who is also chairman of the State Transport Board.

On each occasion that the subject has been discussed, both in Perth and in the Eastern States, Mr. Millen and his officers have impressed the controlling authorities with the particular circumstances applying in Western Australia and its dependence on the use of motor vehicles by reason of its scattered population, long distances and absence of other transport facilities. So that the suggestion that a number of motor vehicle tyres could be brought into use is rather discounted by the information we have. I should say that obviously the question of the conservation of rubber and its control is appropriately a Commonwealth function, in which the Liquid Fuel Control Board is interested.

Mr. Mann: But it is not recognised.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, it is.

Mr. Mann: Our information is quite different. Merritt is the man who decides.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, Butte is the man in charge.

Mr. Mann: My dealings have been with Merritt.

Mr. Patrick: Butte is the Australian controller.

Mr. Mann: And Merritt is in charge of Western Australia.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The information we receive is from the Liquid

Fuel Control Board, which has very considerable control regarding transport matters, although that power is not exercised to the fullest extent.

Mr. Watts: And is exercised indirectly.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The board has very wide powers regarding transport and, if a state of emergency should arise, and would become very evident.

Mr. Kelly: Have steps been taken to obtain a list of tyres at present out of use?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have made inquiries regarding that matter and I find the position is very difficult. A neighbour might know that the man living next door has his car jacked up, but it would be very difficult for the local authorities or the licensing authorities to supply the requisite information.

Mr. Kelly: How will control be exercised?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The only information we have is that there are 700 more licenses this year than there were last year.

Mr. Kelly: That is fictitious.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is not fictitious; it is a definite statistical statement. Undeniably the licenses are greater in number this year than they were last year. That is the information we have from the authority that has access to all the details. With regard to works carried out by the Public Works Department, the Main Roads Department, which usually spends its own funds and whose activities are restricted mainly to road work, was during last year largely employed on constructional work for the Commonwealth Government. The work applied mainly to the construction of landing strips for aviation purposes. Out of the 900 men employed, 800 were on Commonwealth work. Regarding these landing strips, the cost of the work in Western Australia compares more than favourably with anything done in the Eastern States. This is due largely to the methods adopted, and there is no question about our plant being up to date. Formerly we had to employ as many men as possible and, to an extent, do away with machinery. In these days we are short of manpower and therefore have to employ machinery to an added degree. Our gravel supplies have proved most useful in the construction of landing strips, in which respect we are more fortunately situated than the other States and we have been able to sur-

prise the Commonwealth authorities with our low costs.

Mr. Marshall: It should not cost very much, considering the natural surface on which many of the landing strips have been built.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Most of our plant has been transferred to Commonwealth defence work. The Works Department itself has carried out a good deal of constructional work for the Commonwealth Government. It has been responsible for the erection of tanks for fuel-oil and petrol and for building hospitals. Generally speaking, the department has been almost completely transferred to Commonwealth operations. That is why such a great deal of work has been done, and the enormous expenditure that has been incurred will be returned to us from Commonwealth sources. In addition, the Public Works Department has developed the State Engineering Works, and has built a slipway. The latter has been a great boon to this State and, in conjunction with operations there, the State Engineering Works have developed into an up-to-date concern. At times a large percentage of the men employed there have been away from the shop engaged on shipping repairs. Important work has been carried out. That has been made possible only because of the construction of the slipway and the modernising of the State Engineering Works. The Government either had to scrap the old implement works or modernise the undertaking, with the result that at present over 500 men are employed there.

We are now building Bren gun carriers and track-links made to a universal design. It took some time to perfect the work, but difficulties have been gradually overcome. The result is that when the war is over, instead of an old, ramshackle plant, replete with out-of-date machinery, we shall have a modern engineering works of first-class standard and quite up to date. Not only the Government, but all propagandists are doing their best to have works established in Western Australia with a view to fostering secondary industries. It seems to me that not only must we urge others to work along those lines but the State itself must show its confidence in Western Australia and its enterprises by displaying sufficient initiative to engage in the industrial field itself. That has been done in connection with the State

Engineering Works, and the Government makes no apology for its invasion of the industrial sphere. The works are a credit to Western Australia and are appropriately situated, enabling the concern to develop as a first-class marine engineering unit.

Our water supplies will have considerable influence upon the future of the State. Although we are dealing with the finances of last year, we are also concerned with the future of the State. With regard to proposed hydraulic undertakings and water supplies, south and north and in the agricultural areas, much publicity has been given to what is contemplated, and I shall not deal with that phase at any great length. We are asked continually what prospect there is of Commonwealth backing for our schemes. The State Government is justified in displaying sufficient initiative in devising ways and means of developing Western Australia. That is the Administration's job. I believe State Ministers are in a better position to devise such schemes, having the advantage of the assistance of the State's departmental officers, who are keen to give the Government the benefit of their experience and knowledge gained locally. I also believe the proposals the Government has in mind will have the backing of the people. Most assuredly it is useless to devise any such schemes unless the backing of the people is assured, particularly on the part of those who will use the water and avail themselves of other undertakings. When I am asked whether we shall have Commonwealth support, I reply that it depends largely on the merits of the schemes themselves.

The question is whether we are more likely to devise acceptable schemes that will prove useful and economically sound, working on the information we have at our disposal within the State, or whether more effective proposals are likely to emanate from itinerant visitors to the State, who could only collect evidence from the people on the spot—our own officials. I say that the State Government has sufficient initiative to look to the future and if, with the support of the people, it devises schemes for the development of the State, they will prove more acceptable than any that could be devised by somebody in the Eastern States. Most decidedly the Government offers no apology for the proposals mentioned by my col-

league, the Minister for Industrial Development. The Government will be in a position to start those works when the appropriate time arrives. I believe the Government that is ready with such schemes for the employment of men, schemes already planned and all the necessary arrangements made, is the Government most likely to secure the backing of the Commonwealth.

Mr. McLarty: But have not all State Governments such schemes already worked out?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot say. I know that one Premier in the Eastern States told me he was very much impressed with the work of our investigatory committees, and intimated that in his State they were not anything like so advanced as we are in Western Australia. Some Governments are relying upon the inquiries being made by the Commonwealth Government. In Western Australia the Government is acting on the basis of its local knowledge and the expert assistance of its own departmental officials—in some instances the schemes to be undertaken will be entirely new, while others will represent extensions of existing works—together with a proper appreciation of what the local people will be able to pay. In view of our more favourable position, we are able to make most careful estimates before any schemes are launched. There are two ways in which these proposals can be assisted. I remember a hydraulic conference held in Sydney some years ago, and that conference agreed to a resolution that the only prospect we had of extending water schemes throughout Australia was that the Commonwealth Government should bear a proportion of the overhead cost. It comes to this, that if one had a claim for water supplies from, say, the Great Southern agricultural district, one would learn that the engineers had made their calculations and found that the cost would be 5d. or 6d. per acre on the landowners. As soon as that was advertised, there was objection to the scheme. The farmers said it would be impossible to pay such a rate. I am disposed to agree with them, and that was an impression that I brought to the conference.

Such proposals to be of any practical use, to have any possibility of acceptance by the people concerned, would need to have part of the overhead cost provided. The

head works and construction costs would have to be met from Government sources, or alternatively a low rate would have to be charged. Instead of the landowner being called on to pay full rates and full working costs, those items would have to be reduced and the scheme would have to be undertaken partly as a national project. I would not advocate a scheme in which the farmers would have to be called on to pay 6d. per acre. The time has gone by when we could instal such schemes. I find that in the schemes already installed the Government, instead of collecting 6d. per acre, averaged about 2d. per acre. Where the landowners can pay we insist on payment; but in the main the holdings, especially with the low prices of agricultural products, cannot bear high rates. We find it impossible to collect them.

Now as regards the existing schemes! I have explained to deputations that these schemes were authorised and operate under Acts of Parliament which impose certain statutory charges—charges which we have tried to collect. Experience has shown us that it is almost impossible to collect them. So I say in regard to any new schemes it will have to be realised that the large schemes are without any possibility of success unless either the overhead charges are considerably reduced or money is found at a very low rate of interest. In any case, we shall be ready when the time comes; and I believe these are worthwhile schemes. I believe that the productivity, both in the Great Southern areas and the northern areas that can be served would be so greatly increased that the benefit to Western Australia would be very great. That is why we are keeping these schemes in view. Of course many other proposals have been put up in connection with secondary industries. I am dealing now with considerations relative to installation of schemes that we some time ago placed before the public. In connection with the schemes that we have advocated, I believe they will meet with the approval of the Commonwealth Government when the time comes, because they will be ready and because they will have a very beneficial effect on the State. We feel that the comprehensive schemes suggested are the best means of giving aid to the agricultural industry.

There are other departments associated with the Public Works Department, such as Employment and Relief and the State Labour Bureau. It will be noticed that the expenditures, which used to be so substantial, have decreased to such an extent that they have become almost negligible. I hope this state of affairs will continue, and that any money devoted to relief of unemployment will be expended on substantial works. I can give particulars later if required regarding unemployment relief and the State Labour Bureau. Any items of interest can, indeed, be dealt with during the general discussion.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin): I was unavoidably absent from the Chamber during the earlier portion of the Minister's speech, but I am glad to have had the privilege of listening to the remainder. The works of importance falling to the responsibility of the Public Works Department lie, of course, in the future rather than in the immediate past; that is to say, when we enter upon the reconstruction stage the Minister's department will undoubtedly be the busiest of all our State departments. The work done by that department during the past three or four years has been, I suppose, of relatively little consequence, being mainly repair work, except of course that a great deal of work of considerable importance, of a defence nature, has been carried out. But since that work has been under the control of Mr. Dumas, the Commissioner of Works, and Mr. Young of the Main Roads Department, we can rest assured that it has been done by two highly efficient men with great credit to the department and to Western Australia. It gives all of us a sense of very real satisfaction to know that when we have to do work for other parts of Australia, we have such capable officers at call as I have mentioned. I was interested to hear the Minister's remarks on Mr. Millen's department, and particularly on Mr. Millen himself. That officer seems to have almost a hundred jobs. Hardly a month goes by without those jobs being added to. How this highly capable officer stands up to all these new jobs as well as the old ones, is a mystery to me. I would like the Minister to tell the Committee later whether there is any monetary compensation given to Mr. Millen commensurate with the extra work involved in his

extra job. Here we have an officer of definite reliability who has been doing very valuable work, particularly on the Transport Board of this State, for a number of years.

I remember some two or three years ago questioning the Minister with regard to possible artesian supplies in this State. The department has been able to make the possibility of supplies of artesian water a subject of clear explanation in a series of maps. I have seen those maps, and have noticed that they refer to what is called the Coastal Plains Basin, the North-West Basin, and the Eucla Basin. Those names refer to the several big basins in this State calculated to hold a considerable supply of artesian water. Unfortunately the maps leave out of account the wheatbelt of Western Australia, and seem to indicate that that part of the State has no official hope of ever obtaining underground supplies. I trust the Minister's department will not draw that conclusion, or take it for granted. I would like to ask the Minister, as I have asked him before, whether there has been experimenting of late years to determine whether or no there are basins subsidiary to the three I have just mentioned. That information would enable me to know whether in the future the wheat lands have any hope of receiving additional water supplies from that source. If such supplies cannot be found, quite plainly water will have to be brought from the Darling Ranges. Six or eight years ago a conference was held in the Eastern States dealing entirely with artesian water supplies. If I recall aright the Minister's answer to a question, he and one or two of his officers attended a meeting in Sydney on this subject. I suggested then that although the hectic times we were passing through made it impossible at once to accede to my suggestion, there was a likelihood that in the near future, or before the reconstruction stage began, of another conference of that type being held.

Dealing with public works generally, the Minister said that it would be essential to have the backing of the people in the districts immediately concerned, that they themselves should take an interest in the matter and submit their ideas to the committee operating now under the chairmanship of Mr. Dumas. I agree that that is highly desirable; and, as the Minister knows, the public bodies in my electorate have already submitted their views. He

said too that the Commonwealth report would depend on the merit of the scheme or schemes submitted. We cannot quibble about that but the question is from whose point of view is the merit to be judged? What might appear to us to be a quite meritorious proposal might not appear so to the officials from the other side of Australia. The Minister agrees with me that itinerant visitors from the other side get their information from sources not always acceptable to us. If they receive their information from officers of the Minister's department we could, of course, depend upon the reliability of that information and would raise no objection.

The Minister said that there should be, in the matter of big works, a contribution by the Commonwealth Government towards the capital costs, or else we should be granted a lower rate of interest. I, too, think that such an attitude on the part of the Commonwealth Government towards these matters is essential. If help is not forthcoming I am afraid that we will not be able to finance the few works of any consequence. It is plain that the plan proposed—I am referring to the big water supply plan—is one suited to the needs of the population that we can expect to have in 15 to 20 years' time and, by that same token, quite beyond our capacity, with the relatively few folks that live here now, to finance. There may be other phases of the Minister's remarks that call for comment by me but, as I have already intimated, I was absent from the Chamber during the major portion of his speech and so did not have the pleasure of hearing all he had to say.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan): I listened with interest to what the Minister said, and I have been particularly interested in reading the story of a deputation which recently waited on him and to which, I hope, reference will be made by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie. The importance of decreasing the charge for water in the goldfields districts is a question which, I believe, is close to the heart of the Minister and I hope it will be possible to reduce those charges. It is a remarkable thing that in Western Australia—I do not know if it is the case in other countries—the nearer one is to the point of supply—as for instance are the people at Mundaring, Glen Forrest and Darlington and so on to the

Mundaring Weir—the more costly is the charge. Peachey-road in Swan View is not very far from Mundaring, but water costs are greater there than in Perth, and considerably so. The people say that there are more consumers in Perth. The whole tendency is to shift into Perth where not only water, but other commodities are available at lower rates. I hope the matter of the charges levied for water in the hills districts will receive consideration. It is important that local growers should produce as many vegetables as possible, and of course at times that is very necessary. Another district to which the principle "the nearer the point of supply the higher the charge" applies is the Kelmscott-Roleystone area. The water passes through Roleystone in the open flume, or the pipe, as the case may be, and the charge for water there is not only high but in a large portion of the district it is not available to those who need it.

It is rather a sad commentary, that those who live near the point of supply and whose country really makes possible a good flow of water into the metropolitan area, should not have the opportunity to use part of the supply. In those instances where it is available the cost is much higher than it is in Perth. The link-main which connects Canning Dam with the Goldfields Water Supply is now in regular operation and I hope it will be exploited to the utmost. I would tonight have liked to hear a statement in regard to the possibility of water in the Kalamunda district, but that perhaps is too much to expect in view of world conditions. It is not my intention to delay the Committee unduly. I have been interested in what has been said and particularly so in the action of the Minister in arranging for the delivery of five remarkable addresses—remarkable in their usefulness, their clarity and the information contained in them—at the recent road board conference. They were valuable indeed and I look forward with some pleasurable anticipation to the time when it will be possible, economically and satisfactorily, to expend in the districts referred to some, at least, of the £9,000,000 which it is suggested shall be utilised for the production of water throughout the State.

MR. THORN (Toodyay): As the member for Swan has just stated the Minister for Works when addressing the road board conference put forward a progressive pro-

gramme. I am, however, very concerned as to the condition of the roads and bridges in my electorate. Some of the roads are getting into a very bad state of repair. It seems to me that we can get no redress just now. I have made representations to the Commissioner of Main Roads to put the Toodyay-Bolgart road into some state of repair, but he informs me that he has no labour to do so and that he cannot carry out the work at present. That makes it very difficult for the settlers in those parts to travel from place to place. The Goomalling bridge outside of Toodyay is in a very bad state of repair. A survey for its restoration was made some time ago, but the work cannot be proceeded with. The military authorities have too big a call altogether on our manpower and material. It is all very fine to say that certain works must be carried out. That is so, but they are proceeding with a programme introduced in 1940. They are still laying down Air Force runways, and building bridges where it suits them, including other parts of the State.

Mr. McLarty: And knocking the roads about.

Mr. THORN: Exactly. They have knocked the roads about in my district. They have made the road from Toodyay to Bolgart almost impassable. There seems to be no redress. I am greatly concerned about the condition of that road. The authorities go ahead with these different programmes and I am told, "If you have sufficient pull and influence you can get certain roads and bridges put in order." That should not be the position. I appeal to the Minister to see whether some approach can be made to the military authorities.

The Minister for Works: That has never been so with regard to the Main Roads Department, which has held the scales pretty fairly.

Mr. THORN: Oh yes! And I would add that the Main Roads Act was one of the finest pieces of legislation instituted for the development of Australia. It was wonderful to see the improved condition of our roads throughout the country following the passing of that Act. A far-sighted policy was adopted. It was a very creditable policy and one that is sticking to us today regarding the defence of this country. However, I still maintain that some commonsense should be introduced into the present programme

of works. I have been informed that the Army takes over material from trucks. Perhaps there may be a load of blue-metal, gravel, or bridge-building material passing along the roads. The drivers are stopped and directed to certain jobs. I also believe that our Main Roads Department has had supplies of timber cut and different materials procured for carrying on necessary work in this State, and the military authorities have taken them over. That is very unsatisfactory.

Mr. J. Hegney: How are you going to get over that?

[Mr. Sampson took the Chair.]

Mr. THORN: We can get over it only by representation to the Commonwealth authorities. I am hopeful that representations will be made and the position altered. I want to be reasonable about this matter. I know provision must be made for defence and I want to see adequate provision made. But the military vehicles knock our roads about. Indeed, they practically smash up certain roads and then leave them in that condition, with the result that the settlers are suffering. I hope that some labour will be diverted to undertake necessary repair work. Manpower conditions vitally affect the State. Most unscientific methods are being adopted of calling up and diverting manpower. I am of opinion that the best use is not being made of our manpower in Western Australia and a tremendous waste is taking place. The Main Roads Department was very good to the road boards in my district. It pointed out that its own manpower was monopolised for important military work, but that if the local authorities could find the labour they would be assisted financially to carry out the work. But how could the local governing bodies find labour when the districts have been absolutely drained of all available manpower? I am greatly concerned about the matter because the State Government is getting the blame for the condition of our roads and bridges, which is due to military activities. I hope it will be possible to make representations to the right quarters in order that these country roads may be placed in reasonably good order.

MR. KELLY (Yilgarn-Coolgardie): I understood the Minister to say that the Estimates cover future as well as past opera-

tions of his department. I want to bring forward a matter that has nothing to do with the proposed scheme of his department or with a national scheme. I speak of the position in which a number of settlers south of Moorine Rock have been placed in past years. I brought this matter forward 18 months ago and I again commend it to the Minister's notice as being a case very worthy of consideration. The settlers number only 18 or 20, but they have battled through very many years of adverse conditions, and have improved their position as well as that of agriculture in the district in no mean manner. Today those settlers in the Mt. Hampton area have 14,000 to 15,000 sheep. While the present season holds, adequate water supplies will be available to them from their own farm lands, but the position that has confronted these people on each occasion when a dry period has been experienced is that they have either had to reduce their stock or transport the sheep to other portions of the district. The outlay that would be necessary to put these settlers on a very happy basis would not be great. A centrally situated rock catchment should be provided that would enable these people at all times to be safe against drought conditions, or the conditions that have prevailed in some of the dry seasons.

I appeal to the Minister to give consideration to placing at their disposal a water supply which will alleviate the very distressful position when the dry times come. The Minister also made reference to the State Engineering Works. I was amongst those recently privileged to witness the launching of the first Bren-gun carrier in this State. I was very pleased to be present and the remarks I am about to make are not intended in any way to deprecate the efforts made in the past and on that occasion, efforts that I hope will be continued at an even greater tempo than before. I was very disappointed that in his long list of eulogies the Minister seemed almost entirely to have forgotten—and not only the Minister but other speakers also—that the big bulk of the work accomplished was done by outside manufacturing concerns. I do not wish to deprecate the achievement of the State Engineering Works and the men employed there, but I think the Minister could have given some praise to the many outside concerns responsible for bringing that excel-

lent project into being. I have it on very good authority, and I know from personal experience of the various workshops in operation on the component parts of that machine, that between 65 per cent. and 75 per cent. of the finished article was completed outside the State Engineering Works.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the member for Guildford-Midland and the member for Pilbara to keep order.

Mr. KELLY: The member for Swan referred to a deputation which recent waited on the Minister in connection with country water supplies and which put to the Minister the suggestion that the State be placed on a flat rate basis. I am sorry to say that the results of the deputation were rather discouraging, particularly when it is considered that practically two-thirds of the State outside the metropolitan area were represented in this request. It was also disappointing that a deputation of such magnitude should be thrust aside with the same stereotyped treatment as is meted out to other deputations. So long as the people of the country are prepared to accept anything that is offered to them, they are allowed to do so. There does not seem to be any real effort on the part of the department to solve the problems confronting the people in the outback districts, and a very good purpose would have been served if mention had been made in the Estimates of a basis on which benefit could have been given to those areas. To ask the Minister to consider a flat rate basis for the whole State was perhaps ambitious, but he could have compromised by placing the goldfields and rural areas on that basis, apart from the metropolitan basis that we know exists. The positions of the metropolitan area and the outside areas are in no way comparable, and the amenities available to the two sections are definitely not in conformity with each other.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan): I was interested in the prospects outlined by the Minister regarding water schemes immediately labour and material are available. Many years ago I visited an irrigation area at Griffith in New South Wales. The town-site had not then been built, but a series of channels had been constructed to irrigate the land. I have since had the pleasure of seeing the production from that area, which is certainly marvellous. I hope many such

schemes will be carried out here and that equally good results will ensue.

There are a few matters affecting my district which I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister. The member for Toodyay alluded to the fact that the military authorities were using our roads, which on account of the heavy traffic, were falling into a state of disrepair. The time is long overdue when the main Eastern Highway should be widened. Before the outbreak of war it was intended to widen not only that but also the Albany Highway. There is a good deal of traffic from Rivervale to Midland Junction and the road certainly ought to be widened. I have passed along that road frequently. Today there is an enormous number of heavy military vehicles using it, many of which occupy more than half the road, thus forcing the rest of the traffic on to the rough gravel portion. As an artery for military traffic, it should be regarded as a work of the first importance. It is remarkable that more accidents do not occur. Anyhow, the matter is one that should receive immediate attention.

The Commissioner of Main Roads recently referred to a proposal to improve the highway on the Bayswater side at Whatley Siding. The road needs to be straightened. This matter has been spoken of for many years. Since I have been the member for Middle Swan, I have continually submitted this matter for the consideration of the powers-that-be. Had the road been straightened long ago it would have proved of great service to users, as they would have been saved the need for taking a bad wind in the road over the crossing at Belmont. Years ago there was an argument between the Commissioner of Railways and the main roads authorities as to who should foot the bill for the work. The construction of a subway was suggested but it was agreed that, as the number of trains running to Belmont was small, there was no need to incur the expense of constructing a subway. It was considered, however, that the road should be straightened. The volume of traffic on that road is probably equal to the flow on the Eastern Highway. As soon as labour and materials are available, this project also should receive attention.

In the metropolitan area numerous water supply extensions have been needed for years. Many people are anxious to have their premises connected and, although the

mains run adjacent to their properties, they are unable to get the connections made owing to the shortage of pipes. The military authorities seem to receive priority over the supply of all pipes. It is time that a proportion of these pipes was made available to the department so that urgent extensions might be installed. I made representations to the Under Secretary for Water Supply regarding some of these extensions, and he said the reason why they were not made was the shortage of asbestos piping, but that Mr. Dumas had been making representations on the matter. Everybody appreciates that the needs of the Defence Department must be met. Against this, however, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that invasion has been averted and that the enemy has been pushed further from our shores and, this being so, it should be possible to meet urgent and essential requirements. The proposals I have submitted are certainly urgent and essential to the people affected.

I have received complaints that, when sewerage mains are carried past a property, the owner has to pay the sewerage rate even though his premises are not connected. In many cases, however, they are unable to have their houses connected up with the sewer main. Seeing that they have to pay the rates, it appears to me that these people who have tried to get sewerage connections but cannot get them because of difficulties in regard to labour and material, should be allowed water equivalent to the amount they pay by way of sewerage rates. That seems to me an entirely fair proposal. An allowance of 5,000 gallons is made, but these people do not obtain it. They should get redress. I hope the matter will receive the Minister's attention. I intend to take it up with the Under Secretary.

Another point I wish to raise relates to people in the metropolitan area being urged to go in for backyard gardens. In this sandy area it is impossible to grow vegetables without an adequate supply of water. Some fertilisers are available, but water is the first essential. Almost anything can be grown in the sandy country with a fair supply of water. Representations have been made to the department that some consideration should be given to the supply of water to persons engaged in gardening. From time to time letters referring to this subject appear in the Press. During the past year the Canning Reservoir and the

Wiluna Reservoir have been full to overflowing, and supplies of water have been ample. I suggest that the department could well make available a reasonable quantity of water to persons who are willing to try to supplement vegetable supplies to the metropolitan area. We are told that in this respect the position will become more acute. Evidently an influx of allied nationals is expected. Therefore it behoves the Minister and his department to examine the subject in all its aspects and see whether they cannot extend some consideration to these people who are anxious to grow vegetables.

The subject of building schools and establishing school grounds I can discuss on these Estimates. I wish to refer to a number of school grounds in the electorate I represent. For years I have advocated here the improvement of school grounds in the Middle Swan electorate, which has 13 State schools.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member might bring the matter up under the Education Vote.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I have been too often advised in this Chamber to take a matter up on some other Vote. Were I to bring this matter up on the Public Works Vote, I would probably be told that I should have brought it up on the Education Vote. First of all let me mention the Rivervale school ground, which is situated within three miles of the city. The population of the suburb is increasing, and likewise the number of school children. The local authorities are willing to improve the footpath outside the school ground provided the Public Works Department puts in a drain to carry off the surface water. Suitably to improve the playground would cost about £500. Paths would have to be levelled, a small retaining wall put in, and a suitable play area provided. The Normanby-street School, in Inglewood, is adjacent to where I live. It is another school where the accommodation has been severely taxed for the last two years by influx of children of the age of six years. That school has to seek for other accommodation.

I took the matter up with the Education Department, and the excess in the number of children was taken from the Inglewood School and a hall made available for the overflow. There is now need for increased accommodation at the school. I heard the Minister refer to the fact that from the point of view of gravel Western Australia is in a unique position, having an ample supply. It

is a marvel to me, knowing an adequate supply of gravel is available, that apparently the hardest thing to get for school grounds is gravel to make them clean for the children to play in. The playground at the Normanby-street school is gravel, but the quantity applied to the ground is quite insufficient. As a result, the children play in the sand and come home filthy because of that. The gravelled portion that is available is rough, and on the tracks that lead in from the footpath on the outside of the school there are pools of water in winter time. The footpath needs repairing. Parents have complained to me about the matter, and I have made representations to the department. Another school that I have mentioned here year in and year out is the Bayswater school. Unfortunately the war has deprived us of supplies of bitumen.

Only recently the department made available the sum of £112 for the purpose of providing drainage; nevertheless the area in front of the Bayswater school is disgraceful. There are corrugations running from the school to the footpath owing to faulty drainage, which requires attention. We are told that our children must be looked after and cared for. They spend a large portion of their lives at school, and we should therefore see that the conditions there are safe and satisfactory. A number of accidents have occurred because of the roughness of the entrance and of the area immediately in front of the school. I have been campaigning, as most members have been, and consequently many matters have been brought to my notice. One such was the inadequate accommodation at the Middle Swan State School. The member for Guildford-Midland knows that up to the end of last year that school was being used by the children who formerly attended the Midland Junction school.

Many complaints were made about the insufficient sanitary accommodation. In addition, a girls' orphanage in that district is sending children to the Middle Swan school, thus further taxing its accommodation. The back verandah is being used for school purposes. Extra accommodation and improvements are urgently required at that school. For years there has been an agitation for a shelter shed of which the children could take advantage on hot summer days and in rainy weather. The member for Perth

mentioned the other night that because of the extreme difficulty in finding money for schools and playing fields, the Commonwealth Government should be compelled to take over education in Western Australia. Certainly we shall have to find a great deal more money to provide the facilities I have mentioned. I am only one member of 50 in this Chamber; but I suppose that what I have said in respect of schools can be said with equal force of most of the other schools in the State.

Mr. McLarty: They are probably worse.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The department has done its best with the money at its disposal and the vote has been increasing from year to year. The Treasurer has made much more money available for education now than was made available in past years.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the hon. member that this is not the Education Vote. We are discussing the Public Works Vote.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I bow to your ruling, Sir. As the hour is late and I have no desire to tire members with a narration of the needs of Middle Swan, I will raise these matters subsequently. I hope the Minister will take notice of the many proposals I have brought before the Committee.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Friday, 1st October, 1943.

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

BILL—MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE).

Recommendation.

On motion by the Minister for Works, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clauses 5 and 6.

In Committee.

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

Clause 5—Applications by persons to become approved insurers:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have an explanation to make regarding the effect of Subclauses 4 and 5. These deal with the proviso that should an insurer—that is, an insurance company—desire to withdraw from this class of insurance business, it must give three months' notice of its intention. I conferred with the Leader of the Opposition regarding this matter, and pointed out to him that in other States the period of three months has operated satisfactorily. It is merely a matter of arrangement between the insuring companies themselves. If 90 companies were participating in the business and one withdrew, the remaining 89 companies would have to carry the liability associated with the hit-and-run motorist, uninsured motorists and so forth. That would be done out of the pool in which all the companies participate. I understand that, in consequence of the explanation I was able to make, the Leader of the Opposition does not wish to press for an amendment. If he desires to go on with it, I shall not raise much objection. The provision in the Bill will make our legislation uniform with that operating elsewhere.

Mr. WATTS: The Minister was good enough to discuss the matter with me and he has cleared up the point about which I was concerned. In the circumstances I shall not proceed with any amendment. I was under the impression that the proposal in the Bill would have the effect of removing part of the responsibility from the companies but, in view of the opinion of the Solicitor General, there seems to be considerable doubt as to whether any extension of time would not operate in the opposite way. As the three months' period is in other comparable legislation and has apparently worked satisfactorily, I shall not move any amendment.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—Requirements in respect of policies:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Solicitor General has drafted several amendments to the clause which I think will meet the contentions raised by the member for Nedlands. The clause deals with the policies required to be issued by insurers. After