

of costs but also in the saving of labour. I have pleasure in recommending the Bill to the House.

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

## **BILL—SOIL FERTILITY RESEARCH ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [6.5] in moving the second reading said: Following the introduction of the Marketing of Barley Act Amendment Bill, the purpose of this measure is to increase the number of trustees administering the soil fertility research fund from five to six by the addition of the president of the barley and oats section of the Farmers' Union. As barley and oats growers may now contribute to the research fund, it is only reasonable that they should have representation.

As in the case of wheat growers, the contribution will be entirely voluntary and will be made only on the assignment of growers. Members will recall that the parent Act was passed last year and provided for the research fund to be controlled by five trustees, four of whom are wheat growers. Experience has shown the fund to be an outstanding success. Although contributions are voluntary, 90 per cent. of growers have responded and almost £28,000 has been provided. Growers are to be congratulated on their excellent response. I am advised that the fund is greatly assisting the Institute of Agriculture in its research work, and that up to date the main efforts have been directed towards the breeding and production of important pasture legumes for the wheat belt.

I believe that oats growers have also requested to contribute to the Fertility Fund; but as no legislation is affected, the Farmers' Union will take the necessary action to give effect to the wishes of oats growers.

This is another Bill that has resulted from the request of growers and which aims to meet their wishes. It is related to the Marketing of Barley Bill which I have just explained. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. L. C. Diver, debate adjourned.

## **ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.**

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 25th October.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.8 p.m.*

# **Legislative Assembly**

Thursday, 20th October, 1955.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

## **QUESTIONS.**

### **ASSISTED SCHOOLS ABOLITION ACT.**

#### *Amendment or Repeal.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Premier:

(1) In view of the Government's decision published in yesterday's issue of "The West Australian" to extend certain subsidies to non-government schools, is it considered necessary to amend the Assisted Schools Abolition Act, 1895?

(2) If so, will an amendment be brought down this session?

(3) If not, has any Crown Law Department opinion been obtained on the subject, and if there is any such opinion, will he lay it on the Table of the House?

The PREMIER replied:

Cabinet will make a decision next week in connection with the question of amending or repealing this Act.

#### RAILWAYS.

##### *Fire in Kukerin Area.*

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware that a very disastrous fire occurred late last year in the Kukerin area adjacent to the railway line?

(2) Has a claim been made against the Railway Department by farmers whose properties were damaged by this fire?

(3) If so, what amount has been claimed and what amount paid?

(4) What type of locomotive is being used on this line at the present time?

(5) Is it the type least likely to cause fires in agricultural areas?

(6) If not, will he arrange for a less dangerous type to be used on this line during November, December, January and February?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) £12,297 15s. 6d. has been claimed. No amounts have been paid.

(4) "L" Class.

(5) and (6) In view of pending litigation it is not considered desirable at this stage to give any further information on the matter.

#### WHEAT.

##### *Commonwealth-Wide Statement on Production.*

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) In view of his reply on Tuesday, the 18th October, to my question number 4, regarding wheat production, will he take all possible steps to secure such a statement on a Commonwealth-wide basis in the very near future?

(2) Does he consider that the Australian Agricultural Council is the most suitable body to frame such a statement?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied:

(1) The subject of production aims, including wheat production, will be considered at the next meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council.

(2) The advice of the Australian Agricultural Council is always important to Commonwealth and State Governments when formulating agricultural policy.

#### GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU.

##### *Representation in Adelaide.*

Mr. HEAL asked the Minister for Fisheries:

(1) Is there an officer of the Western Australian Government Tourist Bureau located in Adelaide?

(2) Is a member of the staff of the South Australian Government Tourist Bureau solely engaged in handling Western Australian tourist and travel enquiries?

(3) If the answer to No. (1) is in the negative would the Government give consideration to the appointment of a full time Western Australian representative of the Tourist Bureau in Adelaide?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) An officer is employed part-time only.

(3) Accommodation is not available in the South Australian bureau to establish a separate Western Australian section. The provision of Western Australian representation would necessitate the acquisition of premises elsewhere in Adelaide.

#### STATE SAW MILLS.

##### *Transference of Site and Additional Depots.*

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) In view of the obvious overcrowding of the present site, has he given consideration to transferring the State Saw Mills to a more suitable location?

(2) Has consideration been given to the establishment of additional depots for State Saw Mill trading in any of the new suburbs?

(3) If the answer to No. (2) is in the negative, would he give this matter early consideration?

The MINISTER replied:

On the assumption that these questions apply to the State Saw Mills yards at Carlisle, the answers are as follow:—

(1) No.

(2) Yes.

(3) Answered by No. 2.

#### COALMINING.

##### *Tabling of Various Files.*

Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Mines: Will he lay on the Table of the House all files dealing with the following subjects:—

(a) "Black Diamond" leases;

(b) financial grants to coal companies;

(c) cost plus contracts for coal;

(d) agreement made by the State Government with Amalgamated Collieries, whereby 60 per cent. of the State's requirements of coal is supplied by this company?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) and (b) As there are 18 large files affected and as these are in constant demand, departmentally, it is suggested that they be made available for inspection at the Department of Mines, where facilities will be provided.

(c) and (d) These are State Electricity Commission and Railway Commission files and under the control of the Ministers for Public Works and Railways respectively.

#### BILL—TRUSTEES ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

#### BILL—ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

##### Report.

Order of the Day read for the consideration of the Committee's report.

Mr. OLDFIELD (Maylands) : I move—  
That the report be adopted.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) : I supported the Bill on the second reading because the Premier had not then achieved his objective of having an amendment made to the Administration Act. Therefore I am not very happy about the Bill, but only for this reason that under the existing Administration Act, concessional rights are allowed to a parent—husband or wife—and issue of a husband or wife, and that is a reasonable provision, but because of the way the Bill now exists, that concession can be given only to the widow. Orphans would need the concession just as much as a widow would, if not more, but they would be charged the full rates, and I do not think that is right.

Mr. Brady: What is the full rate up to £5,000 at present?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think it is about 5 per cent. Let us consider the case of an elderly couple, perhaps pensioners, where the home is in the wife's name, and she dies. That elderly widower would have to pay the full rates and I think that is an objectionable feature of the measure. While that provision exists I will not support the third reading and I do not think the House appreciated the effect of this amendment.

Admittedly, a widow is to receive fairly increased consideration and I appreciate the Premier's argument. He said that the Grants Commission is already penalising this State because of its rates of estate duty and that if he made a concession in one direction he would have to take away something in another. But, if he is going to make a concession I believe he should make it on the basis that orphaned children would at least receive the same allowance as a widow. Even a young widow

would get the full concession, while orphaned children would get nothing. In view of what I have said, I cannot support the adoption of the Committee's report.

Question put and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	....	....	....	....	19
Noes	....	....	....	....	12
Majority for					7

##### Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Doley	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Graham	Mr. Owen
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Styant
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Thom
Mr. Moir	Mr. May
Mr. Norton	

(Teller.)

##### Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Mann
Mr. Brady	Mr. Manning
Mr. Court	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. North
Mr. Hill	Mr. Nimmo

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Report adopted.

#### BILL—PENSIONS SUPPLEMENTATION ACT AMENDMENT.

##### Message.

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

##### Second Reading.

THE TREASURER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [2.30] in moving the second reading said: The Act which this Bill proposes to amend was passed in 1953 for the purpose of supplementing the pension rates paid to pensioners in this State under three Acts of Parliament; the three Acts in question being the Superannuation and Family Benefits Acts, the Government Employees Pensions Act of 1948 and the Act of 1871. The supplementation Act was introduced in 1953 because it was thought that some increase in pensions should be granted in view of the increase in the cost of living which had taken place in the years 1949 to 1953. Since that date there has been some further increase in the cost of living and it is thought that some adjustment upwards should now be made under the provisions of the Pensions Supplementation Act.

The Bill now before us proposes to grant an increase in pensions of £26 a year and will be payable to all those who come under each of the three Acts. Prior to the introduction of the Bill, requests of varying nature were made to the Government. I think the main request was that we should increase the value of each unit of pension. The Government could not see its way clear

to adopt that method of increasing pensions payments and its reason was that the adoption of such a method would give only a small increase—almost an insignificant increase—to those in receipt of small pensions and quite a substantial increase to those receiving the higher and the highest pensions.

We felt that that would not be reasonable in the circumstances. We considered that the increase in the cost of living was just as hard, if not harder, in its effect upon those on small pensions as it was in regard to those on the higher and the highest pensions. Therefore, we came to the conclusion that the fairest method of helping people on State pensions to meet increases in the cost of living which have taken place in the last 18 months or so was to amend the Pensions Supplementation Act by granting a uniform increase of £26 per annum. If the Bill becomes law, it will mean that each pensioner will receive exactly the same increase in pounds, shillings and pence.

Mr. Nimmo: If they are getting social service benefits or service pensions, will it automatically come off that sum?

The TREASURER: I do not think this increase will affect many of the State pensioners in that regard.

Mr. May: It would all be income.

The TREASURER: The Commonwealth Government recently increased the pension rate for old-age and invalid pensioners and I think made some easement in the means test during the last 12 months. Consequently, it is thought that this increase of £26 a year in pensions for those under the three State Acts would not, except perhaps in a few isolated instances, have any adverse effect arising from the acceptance by the State pensioners of the full amount in the increase of £26 a year. Outside of that provision, there is only one other amendment in the Bill and that has to do with giving to the board a discretionary power in relation to any pensioner who might be re-employed by the State Government.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That is not in this Bill, is it?

The TREASURER: Yes. In dealing with the amendment to the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, which was discussed in the House earlier in the week, I pointed out that it contained an amendment to give the board a discretionary right to decide whether the State pension should be cancelled during any period of re-employment with the Government. We include the same principle in this Bill.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That is so.

The TREASURER: The purpose of the amendment is to leave it completely to the discretion of the board as to whether the State pension being paid is to be cancelled in the event of re-employment by the State Government. From time to time there are

cases where a pensioner is re-employed by the Government, usually on a part-time basis, and in some instances in the past the board has considered that the pension should continue to be paid in full. However, the board has had no discretion in the past, and has none at present, because the law lays it down that upon the re-employment of any pensioner by the State, the pension must be cancelled.

Hon. L. Thorn: Would it affect an employee who stayed on after he had reached 65 years of age and who went on until he was 66 or 67?

The TREASURER: No, because that employee would not be receiving any pension at all. He would not be in receipt of a pension until he actually retired from the service. If after retiring on a pension he was re-employed by the Government in the future, the board, if this Bill were to become law, would have a discretionary right to determine the question of whether the pension would be cancelled or not.

I mentioned earlier in the week that it was the desire of the Government to have this Bill passed through all stages at the one sitting. The urgency in that regard is in the fact that some pensioners who will benefit as a result of the passing of the Bill will not be able to receive the increase set out in it until such time as the Commonwealth Parliament passes complementary legislation. There are not many of such pensioners. Those concerned are men—and perhaps some women—who were employed by the State Government for a number of years and who subsequently were employed by the Commonwealth Government. When they retired they were still in the employ of the Commonwealth Government. Consequently the State and Commonwealth Governments together share—not necessarily in equal parts—the cost of the pension paid to each of those people. These pensioners will not be able to receive the increase provided in this Bill until such time as the Commonwealth Parliament has taken action to enable them to receive the higher pension rate because the Commonwealth Government is the paying authority. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [2.41]: The Treasurer has clearly explained the Bill. A system of supplementation is a little unfair in that those who have attempted to ensure themselves full protection without the assistance of a pension do not enjoy the same advantage as those who provide for themselves only the minimum amount of protection. Section 8 of the Pensions Supplementation Act reads—

Where a person is receiving a pension under an Act of the Commonwealth Parliament, he is not entitled

to supplementation under this Act which together with his other income, exceeds that which he is permitted by the provisions of that Act to receive as income without reducing the pension under that Act.

So if a man is receiving superannuation benefits and £1 over the permissible income he is not entitled to any advantage.

Mr. May: Yes, he is. He only loses £1 in every year.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am talking about the full permissible income.

Mr. May: So am I.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: However, I do not think that can be avoided, but it is a little hard on those who have a private income or on those who are receiving superannuation benefits which exceed the permissible income. Those Government employees who have retired often supplement their superannuation benefits by part-time work. That applies particularly to women.

If a person earns a few shillings per week, it is unreasonable that his superannuation benefit should be affected or reduced. Of course, if a man is on a full salary, it is not unreasonable that his pension should be cancelled. But, as the Treasurer has said, because some of these people help themselves by earning a few shillings per week, their total amount of pension is reduced. This Bill now proposes to give the board discretion as to whether this will be done in the future.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

#### *Standing Orders Suspension.*

The TREASURER: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Bill to be read a third time at this sitting.

Question put.

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

Question thus passed.

#### *Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### **BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT.**

#### *Council's Message.*

Message from the Council notifying that it insisted on its amendment now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Housing in charge of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: On my appreciation of the measure, as it now stands, I consider that the amendments made to the Bill this session have rendered the legislation practically worthless, in that the provisions which were designed to protect the people are now incapable of so doing. The Legislative Council submitted a number of amendments—some of them quite unreasonable—which were accepted by this Chamber with the exception of the one now under review. It was thought that this one provision sought only to deal with a situation in respect of which Parliament indicated it desired to afford protection, and to overcome the position in which lessors could put their thumbs to their noses so far as the intention of Parliament was concerned. Notwithstanding that, the Legislative Council has decided to stand on its dignity in this matter.

I am not so far removed from realities not to acknowledge the fact that, notwithstanding what the representatives of the people say or think, with or without a mandate, whatever the Legislative Council feels disposed to impose automatically becomes the law of the land. Accordingly, it is not my intention to resist the Legislative Council, as that would be futile. We are bound to accept the inevitable and appreciate that, in fact, the Legislative Council is governing this State. For that reason, I repeat, I do not desire to disagree with the amendment any further, and I move—

That the amendment be no longer disagreed to.

Mr. WILD: I cannot let the Minister for Housing get away with this. It is difficult for me to understand him. He always gets to his feet with this tirade against another place.

Mr. Heal: I do not blame him for that, either.

Mr. WILD: Here again come the parrots! I cannot understand why they do not hop off the fence. The Minister knows that if ever the housing position had eased, it has eased today. It has eased to the extent that the day is not far distant when he will have difficulty in letting the houses that have been built. Two or three years ago, the Legislative Council took its stand on prices, as it did on rents and tenancies, and history has proved that that stand was

right. The Minister knows, however, that with an election in the offing he must have some peg on which to hang his hat, and so he indulges in this tirade.

The Minister for Mines: You have been electioneering too long.

Mr. WILD: That does not matter. In this House we endeavour to work in the best interests of everybody. The Minister is trying to gag his way through this amendment.

The Premier: Get wise!

Mr. WILD: It is just as well that we have another place which can protect the people; otherwise we would have some lovely "Evatt"-socialistic legislation in this House.

Several members interjected.

Mr. WILD: I deplore the attitude of the Minister and I am glad the Legislative Council adopted the attitude it has.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: It is obvious that the member for Dale imagines he is still on a soapbox at Bunbury.

The Premier: His liver is not too good.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: There were 11 amendments sought by the Legislative Council, 10 of which were accepted by this Chamber.

Mr. Wild: Does that mean that the 11th is right?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The member for Dale seems to feel that whatever the reactionaries decide is illywhite and should be accepted, but whatever this Government does is wrong.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You changed your mind.

Mr. Wild: You turned over in bed.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: In respect of what?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: In respect of this amendment.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: The member for Mt. Lawley had better pay closer attention to the matter under discussion. I have not gone to the trouble to outline in detail the provisions affected by this amendment, in other words, this proposed deletion by the Council. It would appear that the member for Mt. Lawley has no appreciation of the matter with which it deals. I think it is purely academic. As members of the Opposition were ranged with the Legislative Council then, it is presumed that they are so at present. Those on this side of the Chamber are not in favour of it, but as there is no course open to us other than to allow the measure to lapse completely, or else go into one of those abortive conferences, it does not matter what the amendment is about. For that reason, I did not go into details about it. I have nothing further to say on the matter.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Apparently the Minister wants a debate on this issue.

The Minister for Housing: I am quite happy.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I have a recollection that on an occasion the Minister moved an amendment that the Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act should not apply to new leases that came into operation on a specific date.

The Minister for Housing: That is so.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Now the Minister wants to delete that provision. So I think I am right in saying that the Minister has changed his mind on that point.

The Minister for Housing: You have misunderstood the position.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think the Minister changed his mind.

The Minister for Housing: No. This is to deal with three-year leases; it can be the same landlord and the same tenant.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is so.

The Minister for Housing: Then it is not a new lease.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The Minister's amendment applied to those conditions when he moved it.

The Minister for Housing: No.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: As far as I recollect, it would apply to three-year leases. I think the Minister's amendment applied to all leases, whether for three years or not. That is the way I see it.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

#### **BILL—LOCAL AUTHORITIES, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA MEDICAL SCHOOL APPEAL FUND CONTRIBUTIONS AUTHORISATION.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [2.58]: I support the measure to permit local authorities to expend more than 3 per cent. of their total ordinary revenue for purposes indicated in the Bill. Apart from anything else, it also removes any argument about the legality of donations to the medical school appeal by local authorities. I invite the attention of members to Section 335 of the Road Districts Act, which states—

The board may, in any year, expend a sum not exceeding three per cent. of its ordinary income for any purpose relating to the district or the credit

thereof, although such disbursement may not be otherwise authorised by this Act.

Further, Section 480(1)(a) of the Municipal Corporations Act provides for the local authority to—

Expend out of the ordinary revenue of the municipality any sum not exceeding three per cent. of such ordinary revenue for any purpose connected with the municipality and for the benefit or credit thereof, although such purpose is not within the scope of this Act.

There are never-ending arguments between the Government auditors in the case of the road districts, and elected auditors in the case of municipalities, as to what those sections and subsections mean, particularly the reference to "purpose relating to the district or credit thereof". Therefore it is wise to remove beyond any doubt that payments made to the medical school appeal come within the limit of authorised expenditure, regardless of the wording of the respective sections I have quoted.

I feel certain in my own mind that the wording of the Bill before us is sufficiently wide to satisfy any argument. The only point that I would like to touch on, in addition to what I have already said, is the reference by the Premier to the different approach by various districts to contributions to appeals, such as the medical school appeal. I am rather disturbed with the intrusion of the old argument by certain people that they favour contributions to schemes such as this being made by a local authority, rather than by individual giving.

It is the old bogey lifting its ugly head again of "making the Government provide," or "it should be the responsibility of the Government". I feel this is a very poor outlook and it does attack at the very heart of a self-reliant people. There is no doubt that the response to the appeal has been first class so far as the general public are concerned. I do not want to suggest that my comments are in any way opposed to the principles of this Bill, because, as I indicated, I support it.

I would not like this measure to be interpreted by local authorities, or by people living in the districts covered by those authorities, as an excuse for individuals not to contribute, and I hope that they will contribute generously as a sacrifice to this very worthy appeal. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

### **BILL—ROMAN CATHOLIC BUNBURY CHURCH PROPERTY.**

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

**HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT** (Mt. Lawley) [3.5]: This Bill has been introduced by the Government to assist the Roman Catholic Church in connection with the creation of a new diocese, that of Bunbury. Prior to that creation, all church property which was situated in what has now become the Bunbury Diocese, was vested in the Perth Diocese and in the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth. It is desired by that church that the land in the Bunbury Diocese be vested in the Bishop of Bunbury.

The Bill seeks to create the Bishop of Bunbury a corporate body for the purpose of holding land, and secondly, to vest in that corporate body all land belonging to the Roman Catholic church within that diocese. There can be no objection to the Bill. It has been requested by those to whom the land belongs, and will bring about better administration of the property of that church. I support the second reading.

#### *In Committee.*

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

### **BILL—UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL.**

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 18th October.

**MR. COURT** (Nedlands) [3.10]: In supporting the second reading, I think it would be appropriate to make a few brief comments regarding the public response to the medical school appeal fund. All fair-minded people will agree that the spontaneous response of the general public has been one of the reassuring occurrences of our time, and we would be remiss if we did not give credit to that small but stout-hearted band of citizens who, in an honorary capacity and with complete confidence in the success of their cause, have placed their faith in the people of this State by setting about raising what at first appeared to be an impossible sum.

The Minister for Housing: I do not think that the medical fraternity have helped by their recent attitude to pensioners, which has been most disappointing.

**Mr. COURT:** That is not relevant to the Bill and is not fair comment having regard to the matter under consideration because, with respect to the appeal, the members of the medical profession have set an example to the rest of the community in their giving on what might be termed a sacrificial scale in many ways. We were

perturbed that they might not set a lead in their contributions to the appeal such as was necessary, but they have demonstrated their faith in the profession and their loyalty to the profession.

The Minister for Housing: My point was that they have shaken the faith of the public by their attitude to pensioners.

Mr COURT: That might be the Minister's opinion, but the people do not agree with him. The matter has been made clear to the public, and the public has for the first time understood what contribution the medical profession have made to the pensioners' scheme. Rather than feeling resentful, I think the people have shown their understanding. However, I do not wish to be sidetracked into a debate on social service when I am trying to demonstrate what a wonderful thing has happened, namely, that a small band of public minded citizens have grasped the nettle, as it were; and we are all delighted to feel that they are within sight of their goal. In my opinion, history will record that something really wonderful and inspiring has been achieved through the establishment of a medical school. It means more to us and to our families than the mere development of another faculty at the university.

I suggest that the capital expenditure planned at £300,000, of which half is to come from the Government and half from public subscription, would have been a waste money had it not been accompanied by this very bold venture on the part of the appeal committee to match the capital sum with an amount of £250,000 for research. As I understand the situation, the very soul of such an institution is not the bricks and mortar or the equipment in the buildings, but is, in fact, the spirit of research that is carried on year in and year out, sometimes with success, sometimes with disappointment, and conducted by people who are prepared to devote their lives to the work, who often do not receive the greatest material reward for following their profession, but who are devoted to their profession and to the cause of mankind.

Therefore the more important part of the appeal is not so much the sum that will be provided under this Bill but the public contribution that goes towards the research fund. I make that point for very good reasons, and I trust that in years to come this will not be forgotten by members when the work of the school and possibly requests for finance come before the Government of the day.

When financial assistance is given by the Government to any institution, be it educational or otherwise, there is always a tendency for the Government of the day to want to take charge of or influence the administration of that organisation, and it would be well if, in years to come, members of the Government of

that day could be reminded of the people's spontaneous and generous contributions to the initial research fund and one-half of the capital expenditure. It will have a deep and lasting significance because the people will for all time feel that they are part of this great institution; and let us hope that in due course we shall find the school achieving world fame as a medical centre.

There is only one discordant feature in the measure upon which I feel it my duty to touch, and that is the method of financing the Government's contribution of £150,000. From what I am about to say, I do not want it to be construed that I am in any way opposed to the medical school scheme. I am very much behind it both through organisations to which I belong and as an individual citizen.

I should like the Government to know that, when the Bill was introduced, I hit some of us members of the Opposition with a very severe reaction upon finding that the Government, after all the publicity given to its contribution, was not going to pay £150,000 as such, but was going to make it available indirectly to the university through the borrowing power of the university, over a period of 15 years. The Premier explained that the full amount would eventually be received by the university without any interest cost, because the Bill provides that the Government will meet, not only the capital sum, but also such interest as is incurred by the university authorities.

The initial announcement by the Government that it would give £150,000, being one-half of the contribution to the estimated capital cost of the school, was a very commendable one, and I think it met with the approval of all members of Parliament and of the public generally. I was the springboard, as it were, from which the appeal committee could go to the public and say, "This is to be your school. The Government has shown its confidence in the project by giving a generous sum of £150,000. We want you to do your part and show that you really want a medical school and believe in it."

I suggest that had it been known at the time that this amount would be financed through another method, which meant the university's borrowing £150,000 to be repaid by 30 half-yearly instalments, it would have damped the enthusiasm of donors and made the task of the committee more difficult. It is perhaps as well that the announcement was made in the Press only yesterday following the introductory speech by the Premier on the previous evening.

It will be of interest to members to know that I have received a series of messages over this Press report in view of the fact that it was stated at the foot of the report that I had secured the adjournment of the debate. Doubtless that



was the reason why they seized on me. I suggest it would have been much more practical if they had discussed the matter with the Treasurer instead of with me. I feel that the method of finance proposed by the Bill is not a desirable one for this occasion.

I can understand the Government's desire to conserve its funds and make them go as far as possible within the limits of the available revenue and loan funds. This is not the first Government that has attempted to squeeze a little more money out of the available resources by adopting methods which can be classed as slightly unorthodox as far as government finance is concerned. I feel that this amount should have been paid as a straight-out contribution by the Government to the appeal. I would not in any way oppose the payment of £150,000 over a period of two or three years.

As we know, the public contributions will be made partly in cash and partly by donations on a prearranged basis over two, three or four years. It suits some donors to spread their contributions over more than one year, and that also suits the appeal because it is not going to spend the £400,000, plus the Government's £150,000 in the space of 12 months or two years. A steady flow of money will, no doubt, suit the medical school just as well as it will suit the donors.

Therefore the Government of the day could have said, "It is of no use giving you the money and having it lie idle for two or three years. We will give you these payments by instalments over a period with the right of the school to call the money up quicker if it finds it is committed on capital expenditure prior to the expected day." That would have been a fair basis.

I suggest that the proposition of getting the university to borrow the money at a time when Governments are exhorting the business community not to seek borrowed money any more than is absolutely necessary and at a time when there are very severe credit restrictions, is wrong, and we force this institution to go on the money market and borrow this sum of money which the Government will repay over a period of 15 years—

The Premier: Why does the hon. member use the word "force"?

Mr. COURT: I might have misused that word. I do not suggest that the Premier held the gun at their head because he explained—

The Premier: It is a gross exaggeration for you to use the word, and you should withdraw it.

Mr. COURT: I think I have.

The Premier: No, you have not.

Mr. COURT: Well, I will unconditionally withdraw the word "force".

The Premier: It was an anaemic sort of qualification that you made.

Mr. COURT: I have done so. I never intended to use the word in the way of gun-at-the-head tactics at all.

The Premier: What did you mean to convey?

Mr. COURT: I meant to convey that instead of the Premier giving these people £150,000 in instalments of £30,000 or £50,000 every six months, he negotiated with them and no doubt said to them, "I am short of money. The Commonwealth will not give me money. You will have to borrow this and we will make certain it is repaid to you over 15 years."

The Premier: Why do you say we said to them, "You will have to borrow this"?

Mr. COURT: I assume that is what the Premier said; that he could not pay them £150,000.

The Premier: It is all presumption on the hon. member's part.

Mr. COURT: I am going on the Premier's speech.

The Premier: Sheer imagination!

Mr. COURT: I do not think that the Premier would deny that because of the official announcements and the published announcements made by the Government up to the introduction of the Bill, the public were left in no doubt that the Government was going to contribute £150,000.

The Premier: It will.

Mr. COURT: Now we find it is going to do it on the time-payment system, spread over 15 years.

The Premier: That will not cause any delay in the establishment of the school.

Mr. COURT: No doubt because of the fact that the public have contributed so generously.

The Premier: That was understood all the way through.

Mr. COURT: It was never conveyed to the public.

The Premier: Yes, it was.

Mr. COURT: I dispute the correctness of that. At no stage in the Press reports—I have taken the trouble to seek them out—can I find where the Premier or his Government, or anyone connected with or on behalf of the Government has indicated that this would be anything but a straight-out contribution by the Government.

The Premier: The form of contribution was never discussed publicly, or at all.

Mr. COURT: I do not think the Premier would say the public were stupid in accepting the fact that the Government was going to pay £150,000.

The Premier: The public were told that the Government would be responsible for £150,000.

Mr. COURT: That might be playing on words.

The Premier: That is what the hon. member has been doing all through his speech.

Mr. COURT: I do not agree. The public were entitled to assume that the Government was going to pay a lump sum of money in support of its contribution. With that comment, which I feel I should make, I reiterate my support for the measure.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam—in reply) [3.27]: It is a great pity that the member for Nedlands was not able to approach this measure, and the general project of the medical school for Western Australia, on a non-party basis. If there is one subject out of which party politics should be completely kept, it is this of the medical school for Western Australia.

The outlook of the member for Nedlands in connection with this great undertaking was so prejudiced, unconsciously if not consciously, that he was able to bring himself to give credit for this great undertaking, as he described it, to everybody except the Government. Evidently his party-political outlook is so restricted and so mean and paltry as to make it impossible for him to give even the slightest word of credit to the Government for the undoubtedly vital part which it played in bringing the undertaking to the stage in which we find it at the present time.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I think you are being very unfair now.

Mr. COURT: I do not think you were listening when I paid tribute to the Government's contributions.

The PREMIER: I think the member for Nedlands does not need the doubtful help of the member for Mt. Lawley in connection with this matter; if he does, it is a tremendously poor outlook for him.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It was not intended in that fashion at all. You know you are being unfair.

The PREMIER: The member for Nedlands, when I allowed him to amble along smoothly and without correction of any kind, quickly went from one exaggeration to another. It was only when he reached the stage in his speech of making a statement that was without justification at all that I thought the time had arrived when he should be brought down to earth; when he should be dragged, if that is the right word to use, somewhere, at least, reasonably close to the truth.

So far since the hon. member has been in this Parliament he has had a remarkably free run. I must admit that I have not bothered much about him, but it seems

that as time has gone on, and as he has succeeded in getting away with a good deal of misrepresentation in regard to separate subjects, he has developed the idea that it is possible in this House to get away with murder. I will stand for a lot, but I will not stand for murder, even though it might be committed by the member in question.

One would think that the all-important consideration in the mind of any person considering the financing of the medical school—this ought to be the overwhelming consideration in the mind of a person who claims to see in this medical school the greatest achievement of the age so far as Western Australia is concerned—ought to be the establishment of the school within the shortest practicable period of time; but that was not the main consideration in the mind of the member for Nedlands. To him it was not a consideration at all—not even a minor one.

Mr. COURT: I think you are less than just there.

The PREMIER: I say that what the members of this House should do is to look at the great objective and not be concerned with mean and paltry criticisms of methods which might be employed to make the money available in order that the school may be constructed within the shortest possible period of time. What does it matter from which source or under what methods the money is made available, as long as it is made available?

Personally, I could have understood the criticism of the member for Nedlands if the adoption of this method by the Government, in co-operation with the University Senate, would have led to a delay in the steps to be taken to establish the school. The truth, however, is that there will not be one single moment's delay under this method, as compared with any other method. Until I brought the member for Nedlands back to earth, he was in the process of leading members of this House and of the public to believe that the Government was forcing this arrangement upon the University Senate.

Nothing could be further from the truth. I wish to say here and now to the credit of members of the University Senate that they were completely co-operative with the Government in regard to the development of this method of raising the £150,000 which the State is to contribute towards the capital cost of the medical school—and it is a good method. It is an exceptionally good method, particularly at a time when economic conditions in this State and throughout Australia are becoming more difficult—particularly at a time when the Government of this State is beset with considerable financial difficulties of an immediate character in relation to expenditure from both its loan funds and Consolidated Revenue.

I ask the member for Nedlands from where he would have taken this £150,000 immediately, or during this year and next year? From Government loan funds? Would he have taken it from loan money which otherwise would have been available for the building of school classrooms? Would he have taken it from funds allocated for the construction of additional accommodation at hospitals, or from money set aside for water supplies or any of the other essential community facilities that are so urgently required in almost every part of Western Australia?

For my part, I say that this method of finance has everything in its favour. It is a method of approach in regard to financing the State's share which ought to be commended. It does not hurt anyone. If the Government had taken the £150,000 from the loan moneys available this year—or only half of it—considerable hardship would have been created for some section of our community. I think I have previously told members—during other debates—that the Government is desperately short of loan funds with which to finance urgent community requirements in this State.

So much is this so that, in the interests of the community, it is undertaking the letting of contracts for the building of schools, the provision of hospital accommodation and the building of some houses, under the deferred payment system. In other words, the Government has not the money with which to pay for the work urgently required to be done under these headings.

Yet we feel that this work is required so urgently that we are prepared to mortgage the future in order that the work may be done now so that schoolchildren might have reasonable classroom accommodation, so that patients in hospitals might have reasonable accommodation and so that families who are urgently requiring houses might have them. We are getting the work done under this deferred payment system but we will not pay for it until next financial year.

Mr. Court: But the borrowing of the money by the university through the ordinary financial channels will considerably curtail the amount of money available for other purposes.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member does not mind, I will remain for the moment with the point with which I am dealing and will complete my consideration of it, which the hon. member is anxious I should not conclude. I will not be dragged away before completing my consideration of that point to some other point which the hon. member would like me to debate. However, I will be prepared to discuss that other point in a moment or two.

If we had followed the advice which the member for Nedlands gives to us, the situation which I have been describing

would be intensified and so I think this method of finance has everything to commend it, taking the urgent needs of our community into consideration. The members of the University Senate raised no objection to it. They are not concerned as to whether the Government makes its contribution immediately out of loan funds or Consolidated Revenue. All they are concerned about—it is all they ought to be concerned about—is to get the money, and they are to get it, and at the time when they need it; so obviously and naturally they have no complaint.

It would be interesting indeed to know from what source the member for Nedlands received those telephone calls—very interesting indeed. The fact that the persons concerned did not contact me—

Mr. Heal: Probably from the headquarters of the Liberal Party.

The PREMIER: —makes much more interesting the question of the source from which the inquiries came to the member for Nedlands. The hon. member did not suggest that this is a completely new method of approach in regard to government finance; he did not even suggest that it is a new method of government finance in relation to university buildings. Indeed, it is not a new method of finance under either of those headings. In the year 1952, which is fairly recent and during which time a Labour Government was not in office in Western Australia, the Government of that time brought down a Bill for the provision of certain buildings for the University of Western Australia and for other incidental purposes. The member for Mt. Lawley will recall this Bill because he was a Minister in the Government of the day, and he has an amazingly good memory.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Thank you!

The Minister for Housing: A convenient one, too.

The PREMIER: Perhaps I should not have included the word "good"; but I did so, because I think it was justified. This University Buildings Act, No. 43 of 1952, is the basis upon which the Bill now before us was framed; it is exactly the same type of legislation and it is set out in exactly the same form from the first page through to the end of the measure itself. So it seems to me that the member for Nedlands was going into a great song and dance about nothing. I was surprised that he should, in the same speech, express wonderful admiration of the people of Western Australia and then, before the speech was concluded, inferentially condemn the people of the State.

Mr. Court: I do not know how I did that.

The PREMIER: I am sure the hon. member would not know, but the onlooker sees so much more; he sees most of the game.

Mr. Court: I do not know in what manner I did it, either.

The PREMIER: The manner in which the hon. member did it was to suggest that had the Government told the people of Western Australia that it would make its contribution in the form and manner set out in this Bill, the response from the people of this State, in connection with the medical school, would not have been anywhere near as good as it has been. He said that any such announcement would have dampened the enthusiasm of all concerned. What ridiculous nonsense!

Mr. Court: I do not think that is right.

The PREMIER: It is a great pity that the member for Nedlands is not able to see the purpose of this medical school undertaking.

Mr. Court: I think I can see it as much as you can.

The PREMIER: Surely, the purpose and great objective is to establish the medical school. All of us want to see the school established.

Mr. Court: I think I have seen that clearly enough, and I have probably worked harder as an individual than you have towards its establishment.

The PREMIER: I am afraid that I am not able to reach the towering heights of self-esteem which the member for Nedlands is able to scale. I simply content myself by saying that I did, as Premier of the State and Leader of the Government, do the best I could in difficult circumstances. As I say, the great objective is to have the school established, and the Government, in selecting this method of finance in co-operation with the University Senate, is not prejudicing the establishment of the school in any shape or form. It is not even delaying progress towards the final establishment of the school for one second. Therefore, I should say that the method decided upon by the Government in co-operation with the University Senate would meet with the approval of both Houses of Parliament and of most members of the general public.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.10 p.m.*

*In Committee.*

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Authorisation:

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No one can argue against the great objective of this Bill which as the Premier stated, is

to help in the establishment of the medical school. Such an objective should be encouraged. The Premier has not yet stated whether the university will be able to borrow the money, as authorised by this clause.

The Premier: I did make a statement to that effect.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It must be admitted that the State is not in a position at present to make a straight-out grant to the university; that would have been preferable from the university's point of view. The reasons given by the Premier for not being able to do so must be accepted. It is necessary that an effort should be made to establish schools and hospitals wherever possible, but it should be pointed out that the method of financing such projects is not appreciated by those who direct the financial policy of this country.

The Commonwealth Bank has issued a directive to all banks that it is against the Commonwealth's financial policy for banks to lend money to clients for capital improvements. That is an unfortunate event. Against that, the outcome of avoiding that directive by the Commonwealth Bank must be considered. The Premier has given his view in that respect. The Government should have given the full particulars of its assistance to the university; perhaps it did, but the particulars were not published.

I was not aware until the Bill had been introduced that the Government contribution was to be made over a period of 15 years. The Premier has stated that it was a side issue, and was insignificant when compared with the objective to be achieved. I agree with that view. Most people believe the Government had made a straight-out grant of £150,000 to the university. I am pleased to learn that the university is able to borrow the amount of money required over the same period as the contribution by the Government is to be made. I presume the rate of interest will also be comparable.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4, Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

## **BILL—SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [4.17]: There can be no objection to this Bill and I propose to support it. To a large extent the measure assists in the administration of the superannuation fund.

I can see no objection to the amendments that have been put forward at the request of the persons administering the fund, neither can there be objection to the clause which provides that persons remaining in government service, after the date on which their superannuation contract has expired, need not be subject to any penalty, to which they are now subject, in the event of their dismissal from the service.

As the Treasurer said, it would be rather hard when a man has completed a contract and his services are retained by the Government, that he should not only pay the penalty for any lapse subsequently, but that the amount he should receive from the superannuation fund might be materially affected. The Treasurer also stated that it was proposed to grant an increase of 7s. 6d. a week for each child of a deceased contributor. I am not sure that is correct. I think the increase is 5s.—2s. 6d. to be contributed by the Government and 2s. 6d. by the board.

Such an increase is warranted. The Treasurer also said that if it was felt that further increases could be made to pensioners, they would be made where possible. It is purely a question of finance. I hope that later on if the finances of the State improve, the people who have served the Government for many years and have retired, will not be forgotten.

Then there is the other point regarding a man who takes up sufficient units to give him the maximum protection and who loses the advantage he would have had if he had invested his money in a house and contributed less to the fund. If he had invested his money in a house and then retired, he would have the use of the house and he would also receive the maximum pension and superannuation allowance permissible in accordance with the appropriate Federal pensions Act.

At present, if the amount he is receiving from superannuation exceeds the permissible amount, he gets little or no advantage, although he may have contributed for many years. I cannot see any way of altering that, but I hope that the pensions will be increased from time to time and that this will encourage those who have contributed large amounts to the fund and enable them to receive the full advantage. I support the second reading.

**MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON** (Cottesloe) [4.22]: I support the second reading. My only reason for speaking is to give some foreknowledge of an amendment that I should like members to adopt in the Committee stage. The Bill proposes to amend Section 63 of the principal Act, and I desire to refer to Subsection (3) of that section. It is well known that the widow of a contributor or pensioner under the Act receives one-half of the superannuation to which the contributor would have been entitled had he survived.

In 1947, Subsection (3) was added to Section 63, and the purpose of it is that where a contributor or pensioner marries after he has attained the maximum age for retirement, or after his retirement from the service, no payment whatever shall be made to the widow or in respect of her children that may be the result of that marriage. I consider that that is a very harsh provision. It would mean that a man who had reached the age of 60 or 65 should not contemplate marriage, because he would probably feel that in the event of his death, his widow would not be cared for under the superannuation scheme. Possibly there was some reason for inserting the subsection but it seems to be most arbitrary and I hope that the Treasurer will give some indication of his attitude to my suggestion that the subsection be deleted.

I have had a quick look at "Hansard" for 1947. Mr. Wise spoke on the Bill, which contained quite a number of sound features as does this measure, but he did not make reference to this subsection, and I feel that its full implication was not realised. This matter was brought to my notice by a widow who approached me only this morning. Her plight is not desperate, but she is not entitled to receive any of the benefits of superannuation such as would be the right of a widow who was married prior to the retirement of her husband.

**MR. LAPHAM** (North Perth) [4.27]: I support the second reading and wish to deal with the point mentioned by the member for Cottesloe. I feel that a hardship is being imposed by the operation of Subsection (3) because it makes provision for the nonpayment of superannuation to the widow of a pensioner who married after he was in receipt of a pension. Under that provision, a woman who married a pensioner one day before he received the pension would be entitled to payment of half the amount on his death, whereas if she married a day after, she would not be entitled to any pension. I cannot understand why that provision was inserted in the Act as I can see no equity whatever in it.

For my part, I believe in superannuation for various reasons, one of them being that a man should provide for old age and for the benefit of his widow and children in the event of his death. It should not make any difference whether the children are born before or after the individual becomes a pensioner; the fact remains that the children are still his. Why there should be a differentiation between the two cases, I cannot understand. I ask the Treasurer to look into the subsection with a view to having it deleted from the Act.

**THE TREASURER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam—in reply) [4.30]: It is true, as mentioned by the member for

Mt. Lawley, that the proposed increase for children in most instances is 5s., but there is one instance in the Bill—in connection with orphaned children—where the increase is 7s. 6d. In connection with the point raised by the member for Cottesloe and the member for North Perth, I will undertake to look at the question which they have raised.

My recollection of the reason for this provision going into the Act when it did is that it was due to anxiety on the part of members of the board to discourage, as it were, a pensioner, who at that stage might be a bachelor or widower, from marrying or allowing himself to be married by a youngish thing whose expectation of life could be many years and who could, of course, possibly with the co-operation of the husband, have quite a number of children before the husband passed on.

I think it was felt at that time by those who were advising in regard to this phase, that if that particular sort of situation were allowed to be covered by the provision of pensions, the strain upon the fund could become very great which, in turn, might necessitate the raising of contributions and the increasing of the amount which the Government would have to pay into the fund.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You could not say, yet, whether you would agree to the deletion?

The TREASURER: I would not be prepared to agree to it at this stage. I would desire first of all to talk with members of the board, who understand the financial implications of the operation of this system better than I do. If they saw no serious objection to carrying out the suggestion made by the two members I have mentioned, I do not think the Government would be likely to have any objection.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You might go half way, in so far as it related to females.

The TREASURER: We might, but I would like first of all to discuss the suggestion with members of the board. After all, they have been given the responsibility—by Parliament—of administering the fund and caring for it. Where there is a proposal to increase the burden on the fund I think the board should first be consulted for an expression of its views. I will undertake, before the third reading is passed, to have this discussion with at least the chairman of the board and if the Government, after that discussion, is able to see its way clear to support an amendment along the lines suggested, the Bill can be recommitted at that stage.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Treasurer in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Section 63 amended:

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I appreciate the remarks of the Treasurer in his reply to the debate, but I wonder whether he would agree to a proviso being inserted at the conclusion of Subsection (3), after the word "marriage".

The Treasurer: Are you amending the Bill, or what?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Yes. After the word "marriage," in the last line of Subsection (3), I want to add a proviso.

The Treasurer: I suggest that the hon. member have an amendment developed and it could be dealt with during the re-committal of the measure at a later stage. I do not think his proposed amendment would work.

The CHAIRMAN: We do not know whereabouts in the Bill to put it.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 12, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

### **BILL—ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS ACT AMENDMENT.**

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 18th October.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [4.40]: I find nothing in the Bill on which to comment adversely. I am rather pleased about that because I would not like the Premier to increase his blood pressure twice in one day. He should realise that he is at an age and period of his life when he is most vulnerable to blood pressure and I would not like to think that I was partly the cause of his untimely death.

The amendments in the Bill seem reasonable. It was suggested previously that I should have permitted the member for Mt. Lawley to secure the adjournment because the Bill deals with a subject on which he has very strong views, namely, the Zoological Gardens. But perhaps in the interests of the lions, tigers and other animals, it is just as well that someone of a more moderate temperament obtained the adjournment.

The proposed increase in the borrowing power of the Zoological Gardens Board is not only necessary, but also such power is very well guarded in Section 6 of the Act, which reads—

All moneys raised by mortgage under the powers aforesaid after payment thereof of all reasonable expenses attending such mortgage, shall

be applied in the improvement of the said gardens for zoological, acclimatisation or recreation purposes, in the erection, maintenance, and repair of buildings, in the planting of trees and shrubs, and in the permanent improvement of the said gardens.

Obviously that provides adequate protection over the use of money raised by mortgage as well as over the increased amount for which this Bill makes provision. Therefore, I support the measure.

**HON. A. V. B. ABBOTT** (Mt. Lawley) [4.42]: In view of the comments made by the member for Nedlands, I have a few words to say on the Bill. It is purely a question of values. Other Class "A" reserves receive government support. The Zoological Gardens, of course, are located on a Class "A" reserve. If the Government had unlimited money—which it has not—I would be in full agreement with this provision, but when money is keenly sought after, the Government should exercise some discretion in matters such as this. In the circumstances, the Government could well give consideration to other public reserves.

One I would mention is the Rottnest Island reserve. I will say that the Government has assisted the Rottnest Board of Control in the past and deserves commendation for that, but the board would like a great deal more assistance. The provision of adequate facilities at Rottnest, where many schoolchildren spend their holidays, would prove to be more useful than taking children to see lions and other carnivorous animals at the zoo. If the Government can afford £15,000 a year to spend on the zoo, could it not give an annual grant to other reserves which, to my way of thinking, serve a more useful function?

As the Minister for Industrial Development said the other day, at present the Rottnest Board of Control cannot provide sufficient facilities for all the women and children who desire to go there for their holidays. Rottnest, undoubtedly, is a wonderful place, but if the board could spend £15,000 a year, what could it not do with that money? I am not objecting to the Bill, but the Government in granting this amount to the Zoological Gardens should give further consideration to other boards under its control which serve a more useful purpose in the community.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

#### **ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1955-56.**

##### *In Committee of Supply.*

Debate resumed from the 18th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates, Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair.

*Vote—Legislative Council, £7,453:*

**HON. C. F. J. NORTH** (Claremont [4.46]): I have a few points to make on the Estimates. The first one is in regard to the Electoral Act. Over the years the public notice that when elections are held in certain districts, a great deal of money is spent. It might be quite in order for that money to be spent and legal advice may have been obtained that it can be spent, but to the public it appears to be far in excess of what the law allows and that develops a very disturbing attitude on their part.

On the one hand they know there is a certain limit to what can be spent on election canvassing and so forth and yet on the other hand, they see the enormous expenditure upon canvassers and others at election times, on behalf of candidates for election to both Commonwealth and State Parliaments. I voice no undue criticism of that. I am making a comparison only between the money that is actually spent and that which, under the law, should be spent.

Let us deal with the party aspect whether it be Liberal, Labour or Country Party. During the course of an ordinary election one often sees large-scale advertisements appearing in the Press daily which must cost the respective parties many thousands of pounds. As I have said, this may be quite in order and carried out on legal advice. However, if it is in order, the legislation should provide for such expenditure.

Then again we come to party contests in individual electorates. For instance let us take the Nedlands electorate. If I had been one of the candidates in an election there that I have in mind and I had had the funds available, I would have done exactly what was done by the candidates during that contest. If one candidate spends such large sums of money, naturally the others have to follow suit and it develops, more or less into a horse-race.

Being the member for the district which lies next to the Nedlands electorate I can say that during the last general election there was apparently no election campaign going on in Claremont; it was as dead as mutton. The candidates for the Claremont electorate did not have their photographs published in the Press day after day. The funds that were spent on the conducting of the campaign in the Nedlands electorate were amazing. The people looked upon such campaigns as a sort of a game. Admittedly, it is a fair

game, because all candidates take part in it. Nevertheless, the law was flagrantly breached by all of them. As far as I am concerned, I can see a situation arising during elections which will correspond to the betting situation.

Before the betting legislation was passed last session, there was considerable public outcry to either make it legal or suppress it. The same applies to elections. Either there should be no bar to all the things I mentioned, or the law should be enforced. The following is not an important subject, but I raise it to show how elastic is the law relating to candidates' expenses. In the Electoral Act there is provision to prevent gifts or donations to clubs by candidates. The late Sir James Mitchell introduced legislation to prohibit any money from being spent within three months of an election by way of donations or gifts to public bodies by candidates.

Mr. Brady: Could that period be extended to two years instead of three months?

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH: Let us see what is the penalty that can be imposed on a candidate who is out to win a seat. The penalty comes under the heading of "electoral offences," and the maximum is a fine of £50. What deterrent is that to a candidate who is out to win a seat, after he has, perhaps, spent £1,000 in influencing public bodies by gifts in his electorate? The penalty is that he must pay another £50, but that is no deterrent at all. I suggest, as was proposed some years ago, that the offence should be one of unduly influencing in which event the penalty would be a heavy fine or a gaol sentence. In that event, a candidate would be perhaps more careful in conducting his election campaign.

I touch on another subject of interest; that is, the place of members of Parliament in the community. Recently I read a book published on this subject entitled "The Passing of Parliament", and I would point out a few comments made therein. One was that Parliament is gradually being superseded by departmental powers and regulations. The question arises as to whether members of Parliament today have any real powers at all. As would appear from the Press, members are not as important as they may think, and they do not appear in as favourable a light to the public as they are entitled to.

From personal experience, I know that if a member is absent from the Chamber, he is unable to find out from the newspaper next day what transpired in Parliament. The work of Parliament in many cases does not appear to be important to the electors, and if one were to ask them whether Parliament was sitting, they would not know. The pressure on the newspapers to publish world news and organised publicity is so great that, perforce, the work of this Parliament is hardly noticed. This

leads one to ask whether it is time to appoint a parliamentary public relations officer to inform the public of what is going on here. I do not wish to laud the work of Parliament, but I do protest that it is presented to the public in such a poor light.

Mr. May: Do you think our debates should be broadcast?

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH: There should be some method of informing the public. I do not think the broadcasting of parliamentary debates is necessarily the answer. I am told that going on the air has had a bad effect on the Federal Parliament. It is a shock to the ordinary elector when he first listens to those broadcasts, because usually he is not at all familiar with the procedure. The idea of broadcasting the debates from the State Parliament could be considered.

I was trying to voice the attitude of the ordinary elector who does not approach his parliamentary representative on any matter. Usually, seven out of ten electors have no business with their members, and the remaining three are probably his supporters because of work done for them. Those three are able to see the work of members in a favourable light. The other seven see Parliament in quite a different light. An unfair and unreasonable attitude is adopted towards members of Parliament regarding receiving an allowance.

To illustrate this, the other evening I was present at a meeting in my electorate at which a Federal Minister was also in attendance. The question of parliamentary allowances arose, and he explained that one of the economies contemplated by the Federal Government was the postponement of increases in the salaries of Federal members of Parliament. The response to this comment was just as I thought. The meeting consisted very largely of people of the Minister's own political colour, and when the remark was made, there was a rustle in the room.

The mayor of the district, who was present, said, "Thank God, that has been put off," or words to that effect. In seconding the vote of thanks at that meeting I made a few comments, and the people were somewhat surprised at the information. The first was that in the early days of Parliament, as mentioned in "May," members were paid 4s. a day 400 years ago. That shows that the idea of payment to members is not of recent origin. The second remark I made was that a barrel of beer in those days cost 3d. That would show the high purchasing power of the 4s. because 16 barrels of beer could be purchased with one day's salary, which is in sharp contrast to the purchasing power of the salaries paid today.

Let us see what it costs for the Governor General, Governors and parliamentarians in Australia. The total amount is



£3,000,000 per year, but if that amount is divided into the national income of £4,000,000,000, the cost would be less than 1d. in the £. The public should not be misinformed to the effect that a small increase in the salaries of parliamentarians will increase the cost of living and place a burden on the shoulders of the people. It has often been mentioned that the salaries paid to members of Parliament would not represent the price of one haircut per head of population each year.

On the question of the duties of members of Parliament, I am directed to a remark made by the member for Collie. He once asked what were the duties of members of Parliament? That is interesting, because they are not defined. Each member has his own ideas about his duties, apart from requests made by the public. This is something in which I consider that members should display a good deal of interest for they should certainly study their position.

I have always had a feeling that the ordinary member is expected to attend far too many functions and that he has not enough time to make the inquiries and research he should into questions associated with his job. I learnt this from Sir James Mitchell when I first entered Parliament. He told me that the job would bring me no money, but that I would learn quite a lot about the country which I could not do if I was all the time attending functions as members were expected to do.

Over the years I have tried to keep these attendances down to a minimum. I attend the annual meeting of some of the parents and citizens' associations and probably a bazaar each once a year, but on the other hand, I have been requested by various committees to attend their monthly meetings, and as there are five or six of these committees, that would absorb two or three nights a week. Then there are football, surf, cricket, tennis, bowling and all the different clubs. If members are not careful, they can get into a good busy line there.

I have found it necessary to ration a good deal of the time that I am supposed to spend and do not spend in attending many of those meetings. I reached a stage up to about two years ago of attending an evening at the theatre where all the little dears were dancing and holding their competitions in the presence of their proud parents. No doubt that was a very interesting evening, but when we recall what is happening as communism spreads over the world and all the problems such as inflation that confront us, we should not have to spend so much of our time in that way.

The average elector thinks that all we have to do is to attend shows and meetings. He does not seem to realise that this House does not run of itself on olled

wheels. One is expected to go like an actor to a theatre, walk on the stage and do his stuff without a word of rehearsing. We are asked why Parliament does not sit all the year round and why members spend half the year loafing about. Of course, members are aware how difficult it is for anyone to rise in his place here and make a speech without a fair amount of preparation, that is, unless he is going to make a galah of himself. We do not want any galah performances here; what we want are gala performances, and I think we get them, because members for the most part do prepare their matter and give us something worth listening to. I feel that I have been greatly educated by the many debates I have heard in this Chamber by members who know their subject, whether it be on farms, business, or anything else.

However, I feel that the time has come when we should have some method of some public relations officer or committee to try to bring to the people a realisation of how different is the real job of a member from what they suppose, and how silly it is for them to think, as many of them do, that this place is nothing else than a place of graft and repartee and indifference to their affairs. I am speaking of seven-tenths of the people who do not approach their member.

Let me repeat that the three-tenths who do normally get into touch with their member have a different attitude entirely. I have seen the contrast. Some of those who had scorned this place later had to approach their member in real trouble, and then they became supporters of the system for the rest of their lives. People should know that Parliament and Government are not a burden on them, seeing that they are costing them less than a farthing in the £ each year. If they had a system like that operating behind the Iron Curtain where the military and the commissars are so prominent, they could be excused for thinking that the cost of government was terrific.

We need some method of bringing to the notice of the public the real truth of the matter and convincing the people that they are getting good service. Every seat is at the mercy of the electors, and it is for them to decide what the member should or should not do for them. The great superman in politics, perhaps the greatest of all, Sir Winston Churchill before his election a little while ago, told the people what he considered to be the duties of a member of Parliament. He put them under three headings. The first was the member's duty to the nation; the second was his duty to the electors, and the third was his duty to the party.

This has been a bone of contention with some of us in our endeavours to hold our seats. Over the years I have tried to represent the district first and place my

duty to the party second. Both are undoubtedly important, but if an issue arises where the electorate wants something and the party does not, the member is in a dilemma. He has to decide whether the party comes first and the district goes hang, or whether the district comes first and the party second. Whichever he does, he must find himself in trouble, but the interesting and correct thing to do—and this has been confirmed by the great Sir Winston himself—is to put the electors first. Sir Winston has boasted in his writings that in his political life he has not only rattled but has also rerattled, and so it is clear that he has been guided and directed by his electorate.

Now I go back to my earlier remarks that a member's electors—in my case, seven-tenths of them—have never had occasion to approach him. If the electorate is keen in its support and the member stands by it, I do not think he could be defeated. That is the most interesting side of this game because over the years parties have become stronger and stronger. I have been here long enough to witness the exit of independents. They are important in their way, but how can an independent be worked into the system while we still have parties? It is a contradiction of terms.

If an electorate comes out on an issue in defiance of the party and the party is broad enough to accept that issue, we get the idea of an ideal party system and of an individual electorate supporting a new line. I have known of a member who was an independent and who later joined a party. That is another way out. The Minister for Mines who was originally an independent has been absorbed into a party. I think the ideal should be that when a member finds his electors want something new, the party should accept him as was done in the case of the Minister for Mines.

Mr. May: He made a good choice of party.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH: Yes; we all have to make a choice of parties, but we must be guided by the electors. Of course, in this State the party policies are so similar that it is difficult to cause contention except in a few matters. I am aware that the leaders who occupy the front benches can lash themselves into a fury on occasions, but nine-tenths of the policies in this State are common to all parties. It is the same with the nations as with parties. They change their tunes; they change their coats. Of course, when a member occupies the Chair, he takes an impartial view, but let me give some instances.

For many years members on the Labour side did not believe in migration. Yet it was Labour leaders who adopted the migration policy that will save this country. Similarly there were matters on the Liberal side. Some Liberals did not

believe in the payment of decent wages or rather thought that the economic system could not function if the wages rose too high, but now Liberals agree with Henry Ford that the biggest wage that can be afforded is the best. I can remember an occasion when the Labour Party people believed in an Australian Navy and I think that at that time our side ridiculed it, whereas now we are all for it. So it has been with nations—look at Russia and Germany!—one time for us and another time against us.

Perhaps the answer is for a party not to be in power too long, not to be too enthusiastic about the line that is popular at the moment. As I have said, there is very little difference between the parties in Western Australia, and I am glad that that is so. I was always 100 per cent. for the Liberal side, but after a few years, I found that this place was a sort of county council. I wanted Western Australia to progress very rapidly, and therefore that was the important consideration rather than that any party should be on top for too long.

MR. McCULLOCH (Hannans) [5.15]: This seems to be the time of the year when we learn what the financial position of Australia really is. On this occasion we find that the country is compelled to apply trade restrictions and four years ago the same thing happened. Now we are told that the country is in a bad financial position. I think we all agree that it is. We are informed that the reason is because our exports have not kept up with our imports, and this means that Australia has been overspending. We now find that our overseas credit has gone to such a low ebb that we have to impose restrictions on many imports.

What is the real reason for having to impose these restrictions? Lately I have heard a lot about the hire purchase system that operates not only in Australia, but all over the world, and I think it has something to do with our overspending on imports. I realise that people want refrigerators, washing machines and other modern household appliances, but if we have to go outside the country to get them, it is obvious that our overseas debt will mount considerably.

I am not a believer in the hire purchase system; I never have been and I hope never to be. Nevertheless, I realise that it is of assistance to many families, and I know that it has come here from other countries where they have established homes that are up to the modern standard. But I also know that those families will not be out of debt for the next fifty years unless they have a windfall which will assist them to pay what they owe under hire purchase agreements.

In connection with exports, I can remember that in 1932 I took a trip to the Old Country and I had the pleasure of

going through the big markets in Glasgow where I saw a considerable quantity of Australian foodstuffs; and there was a ready sale for them. At that time the I.R.A. trouble existed in Ireland and in Britain. It intrigued me to know that butter and cheese were in high demand in Scotland. There was competition so far as these articles were concerned, from Latvia and Denmark.

It seemed strange to me that a person could go to a retail shop in Scotland and buy a lb. of cheese for 7d. whilst at that time, the same cheese was costing 10d. a lb. in Kalgoorlie. The best Australian butter could be bought in Scotland for 10d. a lb. whereas we were paying 1s. 3d. a lb. for it in Kalgoorlie. I could never understand how that took place.

Mr. Court: There is a comparable situation today.

Mr. McCULLOCH: Yes, maybe. The same conditions applied to tinned fruits. We were paying much more for Australian tinned fruits in Kalgoorlie than they could be bought for in Glasgow. All empire goods got a big advertisement in the city of Glasgow at that time because some of the shops in the principal streets there had in their windows nothing but Australian foodstuffs—tinned fruits, jams, cheese, butter and various other commodities. It seems that today we have slipped back considerably in that respect.

Not only in regard to foodstuffs are we slipping back in so far as our exports are concerned. We know that our lamb exports are only about one-third of what they were in prewar days. Of course, the reason is, probably, that most of the lamb producers have turned to the more lucrative product, wool. However, wool is probably not as good as it was, and it may get worse. The Premier told us, when introducing the Estimates, that the income from wool was £29,500,000 last year which was in excess of £6,000,000 less than the year before. Therefore, we cannot always rely too much on wool to balance our overseas trade.

With regard to wheat, we know it has been estimated that this season we will have a harvest of about 33,000,000 bushels, but we do not know where we are going to sell it or what is to become of it. Therefore, we have to look elsewhere to try to meet our imports with our exports.

I had a look at some figures in connection with our import and export balance, and I found that even our exports to the Eastern States were down compared with our imports from there to the extent of £66,989,881. That seems to be pretty bad so far as Western Australia is concerned. Although I realise that this is a young State and that only in recent years have we started to build up our industries, we should try to be self-supporting in regard

to these commodities. It seems, however, that we have a long way to go to meet this deficit of more than £66,000,000.

Our overseas figures are in the red, because, over the last three years, we have developed a debit of £64,285,092. We have been going from bad to worse. In 1952-53 we had a small credit; in 1953-54 we had a deficit, and in 1954-55 our deficit was greater. Where are we going to stop? I do not agree with the member for Toodyay who, when speaking on imports, said that a lot of rubbish came from Britain.

Hon. L. Thorn: I did not say anything of the sort; I said Japan.

Mr. McCULLOCH: The hon. member did. I agree that a certain amount of rubbish comes from some of the continental countries but the hon. member particularly mentioned Britain.

Hon. L. Thorn: I did not.

Mr. McCULLOCH: I think if he looks at his speech he will see he did. Maybe he did not mean it. I would not say it is all rubbish that comes from the Old Country. I think some very good quality articles come from there. I do not say that I always buy those goods, because I cannot afford to. We could make some of those articles here, and by so doing we could go some distance towards easing our financial position.

Personally, I agree with the member for Toodyay with respect to a ship that the Government wanted to buy not so long ago. Two vessels had a shot of towing this ship to Western Australia—I do not know who are the experts who went to buy this boat, but I understand they came from Sweden—and ultimately, I believe, the ship was put on the scrap heap. The Premier told us that we had two new ships on order, and I interjected that the one from Glasgow would, I thought, serve the purpose; and I believe it will.

I was a little disgusted to think that some of our bureaucrats should recommend to the Government a ship such as the one that was going to Sweden, when we could not possibly get it to the country.

The Treasurer: It was never intended to buy it.

Mr. McCULLOCH: I do not know why it was being brought here.

The Treasurer: It was intended to charter it.

Mr. McCULLOCH: Perhaps I made a mistake there. I always think a new article is much better than a second-hand one. No matter whether it is a motorcar, a refrigerator or anything else, if it is purchased second-hand there is considerable risk. The best policy is for a person, if he can afford to buy something that is new, to buy it, and if he cannot afford it, not to buy it until he can afford it.

We have some enterprising concerns in Australia. Recently I read that Metters Ltd., of Subiaco, was, for the purpose of expanding its business, prepared to spend £100,000. That does not seem to be a great amount of money in the terms of the millions we hear discussed, but nevertheless for a firm such as Metters I think it is fairly considerable; and what the firm proposes is very enterprising. According to the reports I have seen, this firm intends installing an automatic moulding machine. This does not mean that workers will be deprived of their employment. After all, moulding is a very heavy industry and Metters Ltd. intends, as a part of its expansion programme, to purchase an automatic moulding machine. This will mean that instead of having to buy all our metal goods from the Eastern States we will be able to have them made here.

In addition, Wundowie iron will be used by this firm to manufacture its goods. I understand that about 4,500 tons of Wundowie iron will be used by Metters for this purpose. The manufacture of these products in Western Australia will relieve the high charges of sea and rail freights. That, too, will be a good thing because we often hear that we cannot import goods into this State because the ships are not able to carry all the freight offering. This means that certain commodities, which are in great demand here, cannot be purchased in this State.

This local company is spending £100,000 on its works. Yet the Cockburn Cement Co., which desired to establish a cement factory in this State, wanted money from the Government in order to assist it to establish the factory. I do not altogether disagree with the company's coming here, but I think at least it could bring its own capital; it would be to the company's benefit and certainly to the benefit of the State.

Mr. Wild: Did the Cockburn Cement Co. get any money from the Government?

Mr. McCULLOCH: I understand that it received £500,000 and asked for a further £500,000 but the Government was not in a position to grant that request. It is a good thing that that company has established a factory here. But it would be much better if it had brought in its own capital. Several small industries are being established in Western Australia and, in fact, all over Australia.

A firm making Remington razors built a factory at Lidcombe, near Sydney, in 1952. It is an American firm and the company supplied all the money necessary to establish the factory. The manufacture of razors is not a big item because I would say that not one person in 10 would use that particular brand. Nevertheless, instead of sending out of the country for this type of razor, people who want to buy it can now purchase the Australian-made article. The management of the firm must

have been fairly slick because, although the firm did not establish its factory until 1952, its electric razors were on the market in 1953, only a year after the establishment of the factory.

That shows what can be done in Australia and it is something that one would have thought impossible only 10 years ago. The firm brought out its own technicians from Britain, Canada and America and they taught the Australian workers how to make these razors and how to adopt the company's sales procedure. As a result, that firm has been most successful in its efforts.

A good deal has been said about General Motors Holdens. I would say that 90 per cent. of the people in Australia never visualised that a car, such as a Holden, produced in Australia, would ever be in such demand as it is today. According to the Australian figures last year 28 per cent. of all the registrations throughout Australia were Holdens. I understand that the company has spent in the vicinity of £18,000,000. I can remember in 1931 when the late Mr. Theodore asked for £18,000,000 to try to help the country by the starting of public works in order to provide employment.

Mr. Sewell: They howled him down.

Mr. McCULLOCH: There was a great howl that that would ruin the country. An individual came here and told us that the country was in a bad state. Yet here we have General Motors Holdens spending £18,000,000 in 10 years.

A good deal has been said about the profit of £10,000,000. But that company is putting back into the concern about 72 per cent. of the profit in order to expand the industry further. That is a good thing for the country. I do not think any of us would like to be sinking money into a concern that was going to show a loss. This firm is at present manufacturing between 300 and 400 cars a day and both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition drive Holdens. I had one myself and found it most satisfactory. I got rid of it only because someone thought he had a greater right to it than I had! I think we are moving along the right road in regard to production.

The several companies that I have mentioned have done a good job although, as I said, I do not like the idea of the Cockburn Cement Co. establishing itself in this country and borrowing money. However, it is here and probably its products will be to the benefit of this country in the future. There has been a lot of criticism in regard to the iron from Wundowie. This industry might be showing a loss, but it is highly capitalised. There is a big demand for Wundowie iron; and the demand is greater than the supply at present. If there is such a demand for

the product surely the customers must be highly satisfied with the quality! If another blast furnace were installed another 100 tons a day could be produced and 200 more men would be employed. Maybe in the future this concern will be able to discharge its liabilities because at present it is only in the experimental stage.

Some people might say that they are taking a long time to carry out the experiments. But if we can keep these industries going they will all be of benefit to Australia. The iron that is being produced at Wundowie is not being thrown away. We have everything required for the smelting of the iron and we do not need to import anything to carry out the work. So I think we should give every encouragement to the Wundowie undertaking and I understand that an official of that concern has gone to the Old Country, and to other countries, to find out what the position is likely to be in regard to its expansion. Personally, I do not see any need for this trip. The officials know what is required at Wundowie; they know that they can sell what they produce and so we really gain nothing by sending this individual overseas.

We have had the same experience in regard to the bridge over the Narrows. I have seen many bridges, although I would not say that I am a bridge builder. We could have got all the drawings and specifications required from Germany, Belgium, Scotland or from other countries for the cost of a few 3d. stamps. But we have gone to the expense of sending a man around the world to have a look at bridges. I could throw a stone over the Narrows. We are told that there is still some doubt as to what type of bridge will be erected, and everybody, including the Minister, is in the dark in regard to it. The pattern, apparently, has not been decided and it seems that everybody is wanting some picturesque structure.

I do not think we want an elaborate bridge to relieve the traffic congestion. They are building a new project near the Forth Bridge in Scotland. They are not worrying about an overhead bridge, but are putting a tube under the water. The distance to be covered is five times that of the Narrows and this tube will carry four lanes of traffic. The estimated cost of an overhead bridge was £20,000,000, but the people concerned have found out that they can build the tube under the water for just over £5,000,000. All the blueprints for the Narrows bridge could have been prepared here. Photographs could have been obtained and that would have made it unnecessary to send an individual globe-trotting around the world to have a look at bridges.

That is why I say that our people know what is required at Wundowie; they know the whole position in connection with it,

and there was no need to send an official overseas. If they want to establish another blast furnace, why do not they get on with the job? They have a ready market for the iron. I think the demand for it is to the extent of 45,000 tons, and this cannot be met. I dare say that could be improved on. With an extra blast furnace and a production of 100 tons a day, the overseas demand would be met. As the industry improves in Australia, so the demand for this class of iron will become greater.

Not so long ago I had a question on the notice paper relating to the use of fuel oil by the State Electricity Commission. Here again we have the natural wealth in our own country. If it should ever come to pass—I do not say it will, but if it should—that we import oil into this country, it would be to the detriment of our own natural wealth, of which there is a great abundance only 150 miles from the capital city. It would be a bad thing for this country if that happened.

We know that the pulverised coal that is being used at Fremantle at present must have a certain amount of oil added to it to kindle it up. I was surprised to see, however, that they were using as much as 6,000 gallons a week. That seems a lot of oil to use to help the coal burn. I would not like our natural wealth to be sacrificed for imported oil. I know it is necessary to import a certain type of oil for use in diesels but when it comes to the production of electricity where there is a large demand for coal, it would be a retrograde step to allow the coal to be supplanted by oil burners.

Mr. May: There will always be a Collie.

Mr. McCULLOCH: Whether there is a Collie or not, I hope there will always be coal. We ought to make good use of the natural wealth which we have around Collie.

Mr. May: You are on the right track.

Mr. McCULLOCH: The State Electricity Commission has done a good job over the years. In 1954 it had a deficit of £94,512 but now we find it had a surplus to June, 1955, of £222,483. That may not be a great profit. I have read the report and it shows that the commission is highly capitalised, the amount being in the vicinity of £20,000,000, so while that figure may not be a great profit on the capital outlay, it does show that the trend is in the right direction.

In the last few months the State Electricity Commission has been carrying out certain alterations and changes in frequency from 40 cycle to 50 cycle. While that is not an extraordinarily big undertaking, it will prove of immense benefit to the community as a whole. On the other hand, I have been informed—though I do not know whether it is correct, because

I have not gone into the position—that the 50 cycle current is more expensive than the 40 cycle. If this is so, the householder will certainly not appreciate it though, as I have said, I do not know whether that is correct.

Up to date my house has not been wired for 50 cycle current, and when it is I hope it will not prove more expensive than the 40 cycle. I have seen denials published in the papers by people who know, and they say there is no difference. The people who are paying the bill, however, say that their accounts have become much larger since their properties have been converted from 40 cycle to 50 cycle.

There was a question on the notice paper today which related to the Government's decision to extend the system of granting subsidies for the purchase of projectors and radio equipment to non-governmental schools. I agree that this should be done. If the non-governmental schools were not in existence, where would we find room for all the children who are receiving their education at those institutions? It would not be possible to place them in State-controlled schools because there is not the accommodation; indeed there is not the accommodation for those who are at present attending the State schools. This is evident from the fact that some classes have to be conducted in sheds and wash-houses.

I think the Minister has taken a step in the right direction in this matter. This is also the case in relation to the issue of free books and stationery to school-children. I dare say most of us have grandchildren attending school, and I should imagine that at one time or another we have all heard the fathers and mothers of those children putting on a show as to the expense of equipping those children with new books. One might be obliged to buy a fairly expensive book for the eldest child, and yet when the second child comes into the same class, the book is of no use because the prescribed textbooks are perhaps by some other author.

This means people being put to avoidable expense merely because books which have been prescribed one year have to be scrapped the next. The Minister's move is a step in the right direction. I think we should place non-governmental schools on the same footing as the State schools. There may be some argument against it, but I think that if we provide a free issue to one body we should to the other. After all, they are all paying taxes whether their children attend government or non-governmental schools. As I have said already, if there were not these non-governmental schools in existence, the position of our State schools would be much worse than it is today. I desire to compliment the Minister on the step he has taken.

Progress reported.

## BILLS (3)—RETURNED.

- 1, Jury Act Amendment (No. 1).  
With amendments.
- 2, Medical Act Amendment (No. 2).
- 3, Acts Amendment (Libraries).  
Without amendment.

## BILL—UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL, TEACHING HOSPITALS.

*Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [5.57] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is directly related to the proposal to establish a medical school in Western Australia. The main purpose of the measure is to provide machinery to regulate relations between the University Senate and certain hospitals in which medical students will receive training.

Under the terms of the Bill, when it is satisfied that a public hospital is suitable for the purpose of training medical students, the Senate will notify the Minister for Health. On receipt of that report, the Minister must send a notification to the Governor, and, provided the Executive Council considers the proposal to be satisfactory, the Governor-in-Council will issue a proclamation declaring the hospital in question to be a teaching hospital under the terms of the Act—that is, if this Bill receives the approval of both Houses of Parliament.

The measure proposes that different methods shall be applied in regard to public hospitals where there are management committees associated with the hospitals, and where there are no such management committees. Where the hospital has been declared a teaching hospital, then the managing body or the management committee of the hospital, will be authorised to enter into an agreement with the University Senate, in relation to the provision in the hospital of facilities for the teaching of medicine for the admission of medical students to the practice, the appointment of members of the medical staff of the Faculty of Medicine as members of the honorary staff of the hospital and the formation of an electoral committee for each such hospital charged with the responsibility of the election of members of the honorary staff and other medical staff concerned with teaching duties at the hospital.

Where there is not a management committee associated with a hospital which has been declared a teaching hospital, the Minister will be under an obligation to set up an advisory committee. These advisory committees will, as becomes necessary from

time to time advise the Minister respecting the steps that should be taken in regard to the training of medical students within such hospitals.

The personnel of the proposed advisory committees are set out clearly in the Bill. Different personnel would be on the advisory committees that would be dealing with the training of medical students in mental hospitals as compared with those that would be dealing with students being trained in public hospitals other than mental hospitals. Hospitals that would be regarded as public hospitals under the proposed Act would be public hospitals as we know them today, infectious diseases hospitals, mental hospitals, tuberculosis hospitals and the Princess Margaret Hospital for children. It would not necessarily follow that every one of those hospitals would subsequently be declared a teaching hospital. Under the legislation, hospitals which would be declared teaching hospitals would be those recommended by the University Senate, and it would depend upon their judgment which of those hospitals would in due course become training hospitals for medical students.

The Bill has been prepared after considerable discussions between representatives of the Medical Department, the British Medical Association, the Senate of the University of Western Australia and other interested organisations. It is unanimously agreed by all concerned that this Bill will set up the machinery to enable the teaching and training of medical students in hospitals to be carried out efficiently. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson, debate adjourned.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 25th October.

I think members will know the reason for this arrangement. The Kwinana Oil Refinery is to be officially opened by His Excellency the Governor-General next Tuesday afternoon. Ministers will be attending and some members of the Opposition will also be present. Consequently, it would be extremely difficult for the House to be in session on Tuesday afternoon.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned 6.6 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Tuesday, 25th October, 1955.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 7.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. H. Hearn, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. H. K. Watson (Metropolitan) on the ground of private business.

### BILL—PENSIONS SUPPLEMENTATION ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Standing Orders Suspension.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [7.35]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Bill to be passed through all stages at the one sitting.

Question put.

The PRESIDENT: As the passing of this motion necessitates an absolute majority, it will be necessary to have a division.

Bells rung; House divided.

The PRESIDENT: I have counted the House, and there being an absolute majority of members present and voting in favour of the motion, I declare the motion carried.

Question thus passed.

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [7.38] in moving the second reading said: This Bill follows the motion with which we have just dealt, which was necessary