work is in progress and a great improvement is evident. But unless that road is sealed, it will never stand up to the heavy traffic it is asked to carry; and, though finances are tight, I would ask the Government to do all it possibly can in the way of sealing a section of that road each year.

On the Shark Bay main road and subsidiary roads, a considerable amount of money has been spent, but there again the maintenance must be kept up or that money will go down the drain. I spoke before of a staging that should be erected at Shark Bay so that the port can function as a port and not as an inland village. I also mentioned that the slipway should be built so that the fishermen will have facilities for attending to their boats. If the jetty were constructed to the deep water to accommodate the lighter, there would be enough water to build the slipway at the end of the jetty.

Those are the main things of which I wish the Government to take heed. As I said before, I know that finances are extremely tight, but certain financial commitments must be undertaken if we are to keep the people we have in the North and that, after all, is the main consideration.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

BILLS (16)—FIRST READING.

1, Health Act Amendment (No. 1).
Introduced by the Attorney General (for the Minister for Health).

2, Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment and Continuance.

3, State Housing Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Housing.

4, Child Welfare Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Child Welfare.

5, Education Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Education.

6, Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier.

7, Fremantle Harbour Trust Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Education.

8, Milk Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

9, Fremantle Electricity Undertaking Agreement.

10, Main Roads Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Chief Secretary (for the Minister for Works).

11, Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act Amendment (Continuance).

12, Fremantle Electricity Undertaking (Purchase Moneys) Agreements.
Introduced by the Chief Secretary.

13, Pharmacy and Poisons Act Amendment.

14, Physiotherapists Act Amendment.

15, Health Act Amendment (No. 2).

16, Nurses Registration Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Health.

House adjourned at 9.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 11th September, 1952.

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CONTENTS (continued).

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

QUESTIONS.

BUS SERVICE.

As to Extension of Caledonian Avenue Route.

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

In view of the fact that Queen-st. and Stone-st. have both now been constructed through to Garratt-rd. and that Lisle-st. is about to be reconditioned and re-surfaced, will consideration be given to extending the Caledonian Avenue bus route through to Garratt-rd.?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

No request has been received for such an extension, but if particulars are submitted the matter will receive consideration.

SULPHUR.

As to Recovery from Gold Treatment Plants.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Has any experiment or research been made yet by the C.S.I.R.O. in connection with recovering sulphur from the fumes emitted from gold treatment plants on the Golden Mile?

(2) What conclusions (if any) were arrived at?

(3) What is known in this State of the result of experiments conducted by the South African Government with an electrical process for the treatment of phosphate rock without the use of sulphuric acid?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

(1) Not to the knowledge of the Government.

(2) Answered by (1).

(3) Nothing is known of experiments in South Africa. The use of electrical processes for the manufacture of a soluble phosphatic fertiliser is dependent on a source of very cheap power, such as might be available from a large hydro-electric scheme.

POLICE.

As to Provision for Station, Bayswater.

Mr. J. HEGNEY asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that tenders were called last February for the erection of a Police Station at Bayswater?

(2) Is he aware that the price quoted by the tenderers was considered too high and the question was referred to the Treasury, and no further action taken?

(3) In view of the need and urgency of a Police Station in this rapidly expanding district, will he make provision on the 1953 Estimates for the erection of the Bayswater Police Station?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes. Tenders had been called on four previous occasions without response.

(2) I am aware that the price quoted was too high and action was taken to defer the matter in the hope that a better tender could be obtained later.

(3) No. Funds are not available this financial year to permit of this work being authorised.

EDUCATION.

As to New School, Hillcrest, Bayswater.

Mr. J. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Works:

(1) How many classrooms are included in the new school being erected at Hillcrest, Coode-st., Bayswater?

(2) Is the work being carried out by a private contractor or by the Public Works Department?

(3) What is the estimated cost of the building?

(4) When is it expected the building will be available for occupation?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) Four.

(2) Public Works Department.

(3) Building, £23,260; earth works, £5,400; total £28,660.

(4) May, 1953.

STATE ALUNITE INDUSTRY.

As to Disposal of Buildings.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Is it proposed to dispose of the buildings of the State Alunite Industry at Chandler?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, and in furtherance of the Government's policy of decentralisation and its undertaking to increase rural production, will consideration be given to making the buildings available to farmers and organisations in the district?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) No decision has yet been reached. It is considered that a resolution of Parliament might be necessary to implement any future decision to dispose of plant or buildings.

GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY SCHEME.

(a) As to Diameter of Main.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What distance (if any) of 24in. diameter piping is still in the main conduit of the Goldfields Water Supply system?

(2) Where is this 24in. section situated?

(3) When is it anticipated that this section will be replaced by larger diameter conduit?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) Thirty-two miles 25 chains.

(2) The single 24in. pipes are in numerous sections in lengths of from 20 chains to some 3½ miles, almost all between No. 5 Pumping Station and Kalgoorlie. They are on sections of the conduit where pressure is low.

(3) There is no immediate call for replacement of any of the sections of the 24in. main in order to give increased capacity. There are other sections of the 30in. main, particularly near Mundaring and Cunderdin, which must be replaced first to cope with increased pumping when the new pumping station is completed at Mundaring.

(b) As to Reduction of Farm Consumption.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it a fact that the Rural and Industries Bank has circularised its clients who are served by the Goldfields Water Scheme and its subsidiaries, requesting to be advised of what effect a one-third reduction in water consumption during the coming summer will have on their farming activities and economy?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, does this mean that a 33 1/3rd per cent. reduction is to be imposed on consumers on the Goldfields Water Supply system?

(3) If the answer to (2) is in the affirmative, will the reduction be effected by a "discing" of all consumers' meters? If not, how will it be achieved?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) The Rural and Industries Bank conducted an inquiry, mainly verbally, among its clients in some areas served by the Goldfields Water Supply system, mostly in the Barbalin district, in order to advise the Public Works Department on the problem of stock maintenance if the ban on overtime continued in operation. This inquiry was commenced some weeks before there was any sign of the ban being lifted.

(2) As 24 hours per day seven days per week is now operating, the position is entirely different.

(3) Answered by (2).

HOSPITALS.

(a) As to Remuneration of Country Secretaries.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is she aware that as a result of the re-imposition of full scale of patients' fees the work performed by secretaries of country hospitals has increased substantially since the 1st May last?

(2) Is she aware that, due to reduced bed averages, many hospital secretaries, although experiencing considerably increased work, are being paid less salary now than they received prior to the 1st May last?

(3) In view of these increased duties, will she undertake to have the question of secretarial remuneration investigated with a view to an up-grading in the present scale of salary rates?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes, in some instances.

(3) This is already under review.

(b) As to Alterations and Sewering, Wyalkatchem.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it a fact that funds to defray the cost of alterations to the Wyalkatchem hospital and the sewering thereof cannot now be made available?

(2) If so, when will the matter of providing the necessary finance be reconsidered by the Treasury?

(3) Is the work considered to be necessary by the Department of Public Works?

(4) Pending the matter being reconsidered by the Treasury, will she arrange that the necessary plans and specifications be completed so that if and when funds are available, tenders can be invited with the least possible delay?

(5) Will work for which departmental approval has already been given, but which has been shelved owing to existing financial conditions, be given a high priority and not be superseded by work subsequently approved when the loan money position improves?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) From time to time.

(3) The Medical Department considers the work necessary.

(4) There is no likelihood of delay from lack of plans and specifications when funds are available.

(5) All works will be considered in the light of conditions as they exist at that time.

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION.

(a) As to Checking Street Lights, Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it the intention of the State Electricity Commission to give North Fremantle Municipality a weekly check of street lights as the council used to do?

(2) If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) A weekly check of street lights is the normal practice of the Commission, and this will be applied to North Fremantle.

(2) See answer to (1).

(b) As to Interest Rate on Loan.

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Premier:

(1) Is it a fact that the Government is seeking permission to issue the State Electricity Commission loan at an interest rate above 4½ per cent.?

(2) If so, at what rate?

(3) What are the reasons for the proposed increase?

The PREMIER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) This matter is still under negotiation with the Loan Council.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Pre-fabricated Homes Imported and Erected.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) How many pre-fabricated houses were erected in the State during the 12 months period which ended the 30th June, 1952?

(2) How many of the pre-fabricated houses were imported from—

(a) other States; and

(b) other countries?

(3) How many pre-fabricated houses were built during the last quarter of 1951-52?

(4) How many of the pre-fabricated houses were imported from—

(a) other States; and

(b) other countries?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Information available only in respect of State Housing Commission, 388 and W.A.G.R., 19.

(2) State Housing Commission—

(a) Nil.

(b) 12.

W.A.G.R.—

(a) Nil.

(b) 19.

(3) Information available only in respect of—

State Housing Commission—114.

W.A.G.R.—18

(4) State Housing Commission—

(a) Nil.

(b) 12.

W.A.G.R.—

(a) Nil.

(b) 18.

It is known that a total of 196 pre-cut and pre-fabricated houses, including those mentioned in question (2) (b) were imported from oversea and erected during the 12 months ended 30th June, 1952, and for the three months ended the 30th June, 1952, a total of 86, including those referred to in (4) (b) were imported from oversea and erected.

(b) As to Stored Components of Pre-fabricated Homes.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) How many pre-fabricated houses are stored by the Department at Northam?

(2) How long have they been stored at that centre?

(3) What is the reason for the long delay in commencing their erection?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) Twenty-seven.

(2) Thirteen since the 1st February, 1952; 14 since the 20th June, 1952.

(3) Initially delays in finalising land resumption, and latterly shortage of funds.

PROMOTIONS APPEAL BOARD ACT.

As to Introducing Amending Legislation.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Premier:

Does the Government intend, during the current session, to bring down a Bill to amend the Promotions Appeal Board Act for the purpose of giving the right of appeal to Government employees on the higher salary ranges?

The PREMIER replied:

This matter is receiving consideration.

TRAFFIC.

(a) As to Motor Vehicle Accidents.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Police:

(1) How many accidents in motor vehicles have occurred on the roads in the State during the financial years 1946 to 1952, both inclusive?

(2) How many people were injured in those accidents?

(3) How many people were killed, or died, as a result of injuries received in such accidents?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 52,562.

(2) 6,855.

(3) 827.

(b) As to Accidents Involving Drunken Drivers and Others.

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Police:

In this State, during the 12 months ended the 30th June last, what number of drivers of motor vehicles involved in traffic accidents were—

(a) deemed to be under the influence of liquor;

(b) not under the influence of liquor?

The MINISTER replied:

The total number of accidents reported to the police during the 12 months ended the 30th June last, was 13,338, and the drivers of 94 vehicles involved in these accidents were deemed to be intoxicated at the time of the accident.

ROTTNEST BOARD OF CONTROL.

As to Personnel, Employees and Conditions.

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Who are the personnel on the Rottnest Board of Control?

(2) How many employees are there on the island, and what is the designation of each?

(3) Are these covered by superannuation, and if so, from what date?

(4) Are these also entitled to long service leave?

(5) If the answer is in the negative, why?

(6) Does the control of Rottnest come under a Government department?

(7) Is the Board of Control financed by a grant or departmental advance, and if not, from what source are funds made available?

(8) Is an annual balance sheet available to Parliament?

(9) What was the total expenditure in the years 1949-50, 1950-51 and 1951-52?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, M.L.A. (Chairman); Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, M.L.C.; Mr. E. Le B. Henderson; Mr. T. Sten; Mr. R. Smith; Mr. J. Young; Mr. R. J. Dumas.

(2) Sixteen males and one female, comprising—Managing secretary, assistant secretary, office staff (two males, one female), engineer, carpenter, plumber, gardener and handyman, truck drivers (4), labourers (casual) (4).

(3) Staff officials classified as permanent are covered as from the 25th August, 1950. Employees who work under an industrial award or agreement are not covered.

(4) and (5) No employees are entitled to long service leave. It is not provided for under the industrial award, nor has it been included in any staff agreement.

(6) Rottnest Island is a Class "A" Reserve and is controlled, subject to the Minister for Lands, by a board constituted under the Parks and Reserves Act.

(7) The Board's revenue is received from landing charges and rent from premises leased by the Board. The Board does not receive any annual grant from the Government. A special grant of £1,000 was made on one occasion to assist in checking beach erosion.

(8) No. A balance sheet and profit and loss account are audited each year and these may be inspected by the hon. member at the office of the Chairman.

(9) Year 1949-50—£17,241, 1950-51—£17,265, 1951-52—£17,383.

GOLD.

As to Production, Kurrawang Area.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

(1) Has any gold been produced from the area comprised in a radius of one mile of the Kurrawang railway station?

(2) If so, how much?

(3) By whom was the gold produced?

(4) When?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING replied:

(1), (2), (3) and (4) There is no record of any gold production from the area mentioned having been reported to the Department.

KWINANA OIL REFINERY.

As to Dredging Contract.

Mr. LAWRENCE asked the Premier:

(1) Has any contract been entered into by the Government for the dredging of Success and Parmelia Banks?

(2) If not, will he explain the reason for the delay?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) No.

(2) The Anglo-Iranian Company is not yet in a position to announce a commencing date as agreement has not yet been reached between the company and the Commonwealth Government.

As the terms of the Oil Refinery Industry (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Ltd.) Act, 1952, provide for annual financial contribution by the company for dredging work, the Government is unable to proceed with the dredging until the position is clarified.

BEER.

As to Supplies and Exports.

Mr. LAWRENCE asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that very large consignments of bottled beer are being exported to the Eastern States, Singapore and other centres, from this State?

(2) Is he aware that this will create a shortage of bottled beer in this State within the next few months?

(3) If this is so, is there any means of rectifying the matter, and thus ensuring adequate supplies of bottled beer for the consumer public in this State?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) I am informed that the quantity exported is surplus to the State's needs and it is expected that supplies will be adequate to meet Western Australian requirements.

(3) Answered by (2).

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT

As to Agreement with Commonwealth.

Mr. HOAR asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) As the War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act of 1951 repeals the War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act of 1945 and empowers the Minister to enter into a further agreement with the Commonwealth, will he tell the House does the new agreement differ in any way from that embodied in the 1945 Act; if so, in what respect?

(2) Are the regulations drawn up in 1947 in respect to the War Service Land Settlement (Land Act Application) Act, 1945-1950 still in force; if not, what other regulations are in operation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The new agreement between the State Government of Western Australia and the Commonwealth has been altered only to provide for an extension of eligibility to ex-servicemen of the Korean and Malayan campaigns and for the conversion of tenure to other than perpetual leasehold.

(2) Regulations under the War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act, 1951, are now being drafted. Until the new regulations are gazetted the regulations made under the Land Act, 1933-50, in conjunction with the War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act, 1945, and published in the "Government Gazette" on the 9th day of May, 1947, stand.

STATE FINANCE.

As to Government Expenditure.

Mr. KELLY asked the Premier:

What was the total Governmental expenditure from all sources in each of the following financial years:—

1941-42; 1942-43; 1943-44; 1944-45; 1945-46; 1946-47; 1947-48; 1948-49; 1949-50; 1950-51; and 1951-52.

The PREMIER replied:

Governmental expenditure for years 1941-42 to 19-52 (Trading Concerns Excluded), was as follows:—

Year.	Total.	Classification.				
		Revenue.	Loan.	Roads.	Traffic Trust.	*Hospital Fund.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1941-42	13,778,257	11,938,381	791,951	535,964	137,060	374,901
1942-43	15,221,941	13,127,242	774,606	792,288	146,395	381,412
1943-44	15,222,370	13,551,154	377,330	726,630	149,624	417,632
1944-45	15,669,674	13,949,340	695,229	456,462	152,420	416,223
1945-46	16,448,676	14,407,557	1,081,549	368,017	165,899	425,654
1946-47	18,768,300	15,028,427	2,230,984	724,280	195,479	589,150
1947-48	23,268,968	18,062,392	3,030,763	1,141,858	256,846	777,109
1948-49	28,003,378	21,377,907	3,818,724	1,386,168	323,457	1,097,122
1949-50	37,416,855	25,787,203	8,351,015	1,636,068	348,629	1,293,940
1950-51	43,825,254	27,996,834	11,404,253	2,446,570	378,829	1,598,768
1951-52	59,476,169	34,546,768	18,757,784	3,320,407	415,572	2,235,638

*Hospital Fund Expenditure includes allocation from Revenue.

WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT.

As to Introducing Amending Legislation.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: (without notice) asked the Premier:

Is he aware that, when the Workers' Compensation Act was amended in December, 1951, the metropolitan basic wage was £10 5s. 8d. per week? Is he aware that that basic wage is now £11 12s. 3d. and as his Government recently caused Standing Orders to be suspended so that class legislation against industrial workers could be passed, will he act in a similar manner to amend the Workers' Compensation Act to give injured workers more reasonable compensation while they are incapacitated?

The PREMIER replied:

First of all, I am not aware of any class legislation that has been introduced by the Government—

Mr. Bovell: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: —and secondly, I suggest to the hon. member that he put that question on the notice paper.

CEMENT, IMPORTED AND LOCAL

(a) As to Comment by Auditor General and Criticism by Member for Fremantle.

Mr. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Premier:

In this morning's issue of "The West Australian" there appears an article under the heading of "Government Worse than Ned Kelly".

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRIFFITH: Has the attention of the Premier been drawn to this article, and if so, has he any comment to make on it?

Mr. J. Hegney: It is an insult to Ned Kelly.

The PREMIER replied:

The hon. member notified me today that he intended to ask this question without notice and I have some information I would like to give him. My attention has been drawn to the article referred to and I can only conclude that the comments attributed to the member for Fremantle exhibit a complete ignorance of the position. The subject-matter of the article was dealt with last year when it was raised by the member for Melville. I submitted to the hon. member a statement explaining what had taken place.

Briefly stated, the facts are that in April, 1950, owing to an extreme shortage in the production of local cement, the Government agreed to confine its use of cement to the imported product. Imported cement is, of course, dearer than local cement, but the Government felt that in order to assist the building industry, and for the benefit of the community generally, it should not draw on the limited quantities of local cement. The Government had been drawing approximately 400 tons of local cement per week, and by that time had arranged for fairly large importations of oversea cement.

About 200 tons of cement were required each week for the raising of the Mundaring Weir wall, and it was found that, because cement in bulk was required to meet the needs of that work, imported cement, which came in bags, would be very expensive to use. Therefore, it was agreed that the Government should draw 200 tons of local cement each week, and in order not to deprive the community of the use of the local product, would release a similar quantity of its imported cement, but would charge no more than the price that would be payable for the local product.

Mr. Graham: Is this a second reading speech?

The PREMIER: The local users who received this imported cement were few in number and were engaged in cement pipe making, tile making and the manufacturer of cement asbestos sheeting, all of which were necessary for housing.

The Auditor General raised two queries. The first query was that the quality of imported cement released by the Government was greater than the quantity of local cement drawn by the Government. However, this query was due to the fact that the Auditor General's investigation related only to the period up to June, 1950. It is true that up to that date greater quantities of imported cement were sold by the Government than were the supplies of local cement drawn by the Government. This was due to the fact that owing to a power breakdown, the production of local cement was severely curtailed. After the 30th June, 1950, however, the Government continued to draw quantities of local cement and when the scheme finished had drawn a greater quantity of local cement than it had released of imported cement, the figures being—

Imported cement sold by the Government	....	6,132 tons.
Local cement drawn by the Government	....	7,842 tons.

The second query related to the question of charging the Mundaring Weir work with the cost of imported cement when, in fact, local cement had been used. The Auditor General considered that a special appropriation should have appeared either in the Loan or the Revenue Estimates for this difference in price. This is purely a technical matter of book-keeping, because it is obvious that if the work at Mundaring Weir had been so equipped that imported cement could have been used, it would have been used and the cost properly debited to the work.

Merely because the Government, in an endeavour to help the community, released some quantities of imported cement at a lower price than it cost the Government, does not alter the fact that the difference in cost as between imported and local cement would have been borne by the Government.

There is, and can be, no question of misappropriation of funds, nor is there any suggestion that a subsidy was paid from Loan Funds. If the action of the Government in endeavouring to help the community is to be branded as equivalent to those of Ned Kelly, then Ned Kelly must have been a benefactor.

(b) As to Time of Making Explanation.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Premier:

After having waited while the Premier read a long reply in answer to a question asked by the Government stooge, can the Premier explain why it has taken him so long to make this explanation?

Mr. Griffith: Last night you accused the Government of being worse than Ned Kelly and tonight you say I am a stooge. You are always insulting.

The PREMIER replied:

As I have already stated, this information was given to the member for Melville when he raised the question last year. I saw the headline in the paper this morning, and I was amazed that it had become front line news because the statements of the hon. member were entirely incorrect. At the time I did not think the matter was worth any publicity.

Mr. Graham: Why did you not answer the query last night?

(c) As to Use by Government.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Premier:

Reverting to the article that appeared in this morning's issue of "The West Australian" on the use of cement, when the Government made its decision to confine its use of cement to the imported article and not local cement, was that decision to cover all jobs, or only the Mundaring Weir job? As the Premier appears to have such a fund of information on this subject, I hope he will endeavour to answer this question now and not ask for it to be put on the notice paper.

The PREMIER replied:

At that time it was decided that the cement should be used at Mundaring Weir, but the Government also had in mind that some of the imported cement could be used elsewhere, if it were considered in the best interests to do so. As I have already explained regarding the cement used at Mundaring Weir, it was bagged and expensive to handle, and in the circumstances it was in the best interests that local cement in bulk should be used.

(d) As to Book-keeping Entry.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Premier:

As it is an established fact that the Mundaring Weir job was charged with the cost of 340 tons of cement that never went into it, and that charge came out of Loan Funds, what book-keeping entry was made to put the matter right?

The PREMIER replied:

The difference between the cost of imported cement and local cement was, of course, referred to last year by the member for Melville, who drew attention to the fact that the Auditor General had said that the expenditure should have been credited to revenue. It was credited to Loan Funds and, as explained in my reply just now, this is purely a technical matter of book-keeping. It is Government money, and the expenditure is shown. No attempt has been made to cover it up, and, in the view of Treasury officials, the procedure to credit it to Loan Funds was correct.

(e) As to Debit for 340 Tons.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Premier:

Surely the Premier does not appreciate the position as I am stating it. It is a fact that the cost of the Mundaring Weir job has been inflated by charging against it 340 tons of cement which were never used on that job. That is a fact! And the price of the cement which was charged to the job but not used on it was the imported price. Assuming that an equivalent quantity of cement was made available to industrial users at the local price, then the difference between what they were charged for the cement and the amount charged against the Mundaring Weir job is a subsidy to those private users paid out of loan funds. Is that not a fact?

The PREMIER replied:

No, it is not a fact.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Why is it not?

The PREMIER: The cement used on the Mundaring Weir job, it is true—

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: This cement was not used.

The PREMIER: Well, the hon. member talks about the difference—

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Three hundred and forty tons were not used.

The PREMIER: It is a matter of price. That is what the hon. member is talking about. As I have tried to explain, this extra cost had to be debited somewhere. There is no question about that, and it was debited to the Mundaring Weir job, where cement was being used in order that local manufacturers could obtain the benefit of the local cement.

(f) As to Checking Users' Commodity Prices.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: (without notice) asked the Premier:

As the Premier has said, the purpose of these transactions was to make cement available at a reduced price to industrial users who manufactured pipes, asbestos sheeting and tiles from it, did anyone, on behalf of the Government, check the price at which those articles were made available to the general public to ensure that the industrial users did not get cement at the local price, and charge it on the manufactured article at the imported price?

The PREMIER replied:

At that time, I understand that the articles being produced from local cement were under price control, so there would be no danger of the public being fleeced, as suggested by the hon. member.

(g) As to Identification of Cement Used.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Premier:

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier—

The Premier: Put it on the notice paper!

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Hon. J. B. Sleeman interjected.

The Minister for Lands: Go on, you squealer! Shut up!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Order !

The Premier: Anyway, I am not going to answer it; put it on the notice paper!

Mr. Bovell: Where are the Ned Kellys now?

Members: They are worse than Ned Kelly.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Hoist by their own petard! Can't take it! Let the member for Canning get the Premier out of it!

Mr. Griffith: What are you getting red in the face about, anyway?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Better than being white in the liver, if that is the way you want it.

Mr. Griffith: Keep your boys on the back bench in order.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Premier may be right in refusing to answer my question, Mr. Speaker, but it is my undoubted right to ask it. The Premier can please himself whether he answers it now or next Tuesday. In preface to this question, I would point out that the Premier has said that as price control on these commodities was operating at the time, the public could not be fleeced. My previous question was, did any officer, on behalf of the Government—and that would include the Government's price control office—take any steps to ensure that, when the price was being charged to consumers for these articles, it was not fixed on the basis of the imported price of cement instead of on the local price? I ask straight out: Can the Premier assure the House that any check was made on the cement used for the manufacture of these articles and, if so, how was the cement identified?

The PREMIER replied:

I understand that the local manufacturers were using local cement throughout, so the fact that they were using local cement on this occasion would not make any difference.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: But they were using imported cement.

Mr. May: Can the Premier assure us that the "Kelly" he referred to has no connection with the member for Merredin-Yilgarn?

(h) As to Recommendations of Auditor General.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN(without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that the Auditor General is a most responsible officer and a servant of this Parliament, and that part of his duties is to act as watchdog to ensure that the public's money is spent in a proper way after appropriation?

(2) If so, will he inform the House if he is going to take any notice of those portions of the report by the Auditor General last year which set out that certain things should be done, or is he going to ignore the recommendations of this important officer?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) I can assure the hon member that notice will be taken of the Auditor General's report, but I would remind him that it has been the practice over many years for the Auditor General to offer certain comment in regard to Government transactions.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Not over this appropriation.

BILL—MARGARINE ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

As to Leave to Introduce.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth) [5.2]: I move—

> That leave be given to introduce a Bill for "an Act to amend the Margarine Act, 1940".

In so doing I feel it is imperative to say a few words in anticipation of a miserable step which I believe the Government is shortly to take.

Point of Order.

The Attorney General: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member permitted to do more than move for leave to introduce at this stage?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, he is entitled to make remarks.

Debate Resumed.

Mr. GRAHAM: The position is that there is a motion on the notice paper of the Legislative Council to submit an amendment to the Margarine Act. This evening the Minister for Lands has given notice of his intention to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Margarine Act. It is six weeks ago today that I, as a private member, gave notice of my intention to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Margarine Act.

I understand it is the intention of the Government to refuse to grant me leave to proceed; in other words it proposes to defeat the legislation which I am now submitting. I protest at the discrimination and the lack of fair dealing on the part of the Government. No member is aware of what is proposed in my Bill, but merely for the sake of some petty advantage to be gained, not on merit, nor on precedent so far as the time factor is concerned, but solely by reason of its superior numbers in this Chamber the Government seeks to deny me, a private member, an opportunity of introducing legislation. The attitude of the Government can perhaps be summarised in the two words, "it stinks."

The Minister for Lands: So do you.

Mr. GRAHAM: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement just made by the Minister for Lands:

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Chuck him out!

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister must withdraw his remarks.

The Minister for Lands: I demand a withdrawal of the hon. member's remark that the attitude of the Government stinks.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You have been called upon to withdraw first.

The Minister for Lands: I will withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for East Perth must also withdraw his remark about the attitude of the Government; it is unparliamentary.

The Minister for Lands: Come on, withdraw; do not quibble!

Hon J. B. Sleeman: Alter it to "it smells."

The Premier: It is not the only thing that smells in this House.

The Minister for Lands: He is dumb.

The Minister for Education: As a sheep before the shearers is dumb so he openeth not his mouth!

Mr. GRAHAM: If I am permitted to resume—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw his remark.

Mr. GRAHAM: I would like an opportunity of speaking to you for a moment, Mr. Speaker. Surely I am permitted to seek your protection. Had I made a reflection on any individual then I could have been asked to withdraw.

The Minister for Education: You have made a reflection on the whole lot of us.

Mr. GRAHAM: I made a statement about the projected attitude of the Government.

Point of Order.

The Minister for Lands: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member objected to my remark and I withdrew it. He reflected on the whole of the Government. Is he allowed to make a speech?

Mr. Speaker: No.

The Minister for Lands: I ask for an unqualified withdrawal.

Mr. Graham: What is it you desire of me, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member must withdraw the remark, "it stinks." He may substitute some other strong remark if he pleases. As it is, the remark is unparliamentary and far too strong.

Mr. Graham: I wonder if you could make a suggestion, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member might say, "exasperating."

Mr. Graham: If you, Mr. Speaker, regard the term "it stinks," as being offensive, then I withdraw it, but I say that the action, or contemplated action by the Government, is grossly unfair.

The Attorney General: What do you know about the contemplated action of the Government?

Debate Resumed.

Mr. GRAHAM: If we were to wait for pronouncements in this Chamber in order to become aware of what the Government or its Ministers were doing or saying, we would know nothing whatsoever. It becomes necessary for us, therefore, to learn of these contemplated steps from sources other than the official ones. Accordingly I have learnt that it is the intention of the Government to treat a private member, who has priority because of the time at which he gave notice, in a manner displaying a lack of respect for his position as a member. Surely I am entitled to protest; surely the strongest criticism I can level against the Government is warranted on account of that. Have private members no rights?

Mr. Needham: None whatever.

Mr. GRAHAM: If a private member feels that there is some matter of public concern which requires attention, and so long as it does not impose a burden upon the Crown, surely he is perfectly in order in taking steps he believes to be appropriate to the occasion. Surely one has a right to introduce legislation and then leave it to members to decide whether it is worth their support or not. But if a private member is to be denied the right of even disclosing his intention in a piece of legislation then, to me, that savours of a dictatorship. In other words, if the Government cannot move in this matter it is determined that nobody else will, and I daresay those who sit behind Ministers will automatically follow the Government.

The Premier: If they are wise they will.

Mr. GRAHAM: It could happen on very many matters that several members may be prompted to initiate a measure of reform. If member A. gives notice in advance of member B. surely the latter member should not take umbrage at that fact, and adhere to methods which are not democratic with a view to denying the member who has given earlier notice of his right to move in the matter. It is a most extraordinary state of affairs that a Minister in the Legislative Council and a Minister in the Legislative Assembly should both give notice in respect of a Bill to do approximately the same as is sought to be done by a private member, who is very many weeks ahead of them in giving his notice.

All I can do is to make an appeal. I do not make my appeal on the basis of what might be contained in my Bill, because it would appear that if the Government has its way members will have no opportunity of seeing the provisions contained in my Bill. I appeal, however, as a private member who has precious few rights and who seeks to introduce a piece of legislation.

The Premier: Why do you make a second reading speech on the motion for leave to introduce the Bill?

Mr. GRAHAM: Will the Premier give me an opportunity to introduce it?

The Minister for Education: What but your disordered imagination suggests that you will not have the opportunity?

The Attorney General: That is what I cannot understand! Who has told him that he will not have that opportunity?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It is no good shutting the door after the horse has gone.

The Minister for Lands: But the horse has not gone!

Mr. GRAHAM: It would be quite simple for the Premier to give me an undertaking that I will have an opportunity to proceed with the various steps necessary to have the Bill dealt with.

The Premier: What do you want? Do you want an assurance regarding the second reading and the Committee stages?

Mr. GRAHAM: I first want to have the Bill placed on the notice paper.

The Premier: It is there.

Mr. GRAHAM: Does the Premier intend to permit me to have the Bill proceeded with?

The Premier: You are asking for leave to introduce the Bill.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Will the second reading debate take place and a vote be taken?

The Minister for Lands: There will be a vote in all probability.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Will there be a full second reading debate and the vote on the second reading?

The Minister for Education: We do not know what is in the other fellow's Bill. The member for East Perth is asking for leave to introduce, and he is putting up the suggestion that the Government will not allow that.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Will the Government allow the debate on the second reading to proceed?

The Minister for Lands: That is in the hands of the House.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is not. It is in the hands of the Government, and the Minister knows that is the position. As I said, information came to me that the Government intended to refuse to allow me to proceed with my desires regarding the introduction of the Bill. What happens at the second reading stage is for members themselves to decide, as is their right. All the discussion that has taken place on this motion would have been avoided if the Premier had intimated there was no intention on the part of the Government to deny me the opportunity to introduce my Bill. As to whether there is any conflict between my Bill and the Government measure, or whether the legislation is similar, that can be resolved when both Bills have been submitted.

The Premier: You want leave to introduce your Bill, do you not?

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so.

The Premier: All right.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Premier will not oppose it?

The Minister for Education: That is, your motion for leave to introduce?

Mr. GRAHAM: I thank the Premier for his assurance. That is the first step overcome.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. L. Thorn—Toodyay) [5.6]: The member for East Perth has been arguing that the Government will not allow him to introduce his Bill. That is not the position at all.

It will be recollected that the hon. member stated in this Chamber that he had prior knowledge of the contents of the Government's Bill. That should indicate the interest of the Government in the matter and show that it also intended to bring a Bill forward. That is the only assumption that we can arrive at from his remarks. He stressed the importance of the question of increasing the quota of margarine available to the public and impressed the Government with that importance. I gave him an assurance that the Government was taking active steps to see that the manufacture of margarine would not be restricted in any way until the stage was reached when the present quota of 364 tons was available. The Government realises the necessity of making margarine supplies available.

The member for East Perth stressed the importance and urgency of his Bill. If he will study the notice paper of the Legislative Council, he will see that members there are still engaged in the Address-in-reply debate. That means that the Minister for Agriculture, who has given notice of his intention to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Margarine Act, will not have an opportunity to do so in that Chamber for some little time. That is the reason why I gave notice of motion for leave to introduce the Bill in this Chamber so that some progress can be made with the legislation. The member for East Perth will have an opportunity to present his Bill and the House will decide which measure to accept with a view to maintaining and regulating the manufacture of margarine. The point is that the industry will be regulated. I shall not take up any further time of the House. We certainly are treating the matter as one of urgency.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth—in reply) [5.7]: I do not want the position twisted by the Minister for Lands.

The Minister for Education: What a suspicious mind you have!

Mr. GRAHAM: It is not a matter of a suspicious mind at all. If he does not realise the position, the Minister for Education should read the "Hansard" report of what the Minister for Lands said, and if he were to do so he would appreciate that the Minister for Lands drew certain inferences from my remarks, which were not in accordance with the facts. He inferred that because of prior knowledge which I am alleged to have had—

The Minister for Lands: You said you had it.

Mr. GRAHAM: If the Minister for Lands will allow me to proceed, I will explain the position. He suggested that because of prior knowledge I am alleged to have obtained, I proceeded immediately to give notice of my intention at an early date to introduce a Bill to amend the Margarine Act. That is not in accordance with the facts. I gave notice of my intention to introduce the amending legislation on the opening day of this session of Parliament. My notice of motion was on the notice paper for several weeks before I was aware of what the Government intended to do about the matter. My notice of motion had already been given long before I gained any knowledge of the action the Government proposed to take.

The Attorney General: You did say you had knowledge of the contents of the Government's Bill.

Mr. GRAHAM: I did, but when I gave notice of my intention to move for leave I had no idea that the Government intended to do anything about the matter. As a fact, I did have the idea that perhaps a private member on the Government side of the House intended to do something along these lines because I understood that he had had a discussion with representatives of one of the margarine manufacturing firms in this State. However, I am happy to have the assurance given me by the Premier.

Question put and passed; leave given.

First Reading.

Bill introduced and, on motion by Mr. Graham, read a first time.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Constitution Acts Amendment.
Introduced by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke.

2, Bank Holidays Act Amendment.
Introduced by Mr. Johnson.

BILL—CHILD WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR CHILD WELFARE (Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling) [5.20] in moving the second reading said: The contents of the Bill are necessary in order to rectify certain anomalies and effect certain desirable improvements in the law relating to child welfare. The first amendment to the parent Act is to add a further definition of "destitute child." This will provide that a destitute child may include one who has been placed in a subsidised institution otherwise than in pursuance of an order of the court and whose near relatives have not contributed regularly towards the maintenance of the child.

It frequently happens that children are placed in institutions by their parents or guardians and no payment is made in respect of them. It is impracticable for the Child Welfare Department to deal with the matter unless the child can be made a ward of the department, and in those circumstances, unless the definition includes a child who has been placed in that

position, the court cannot deal with the case. As a result, difficulties have arisen. The department is quite prepared to undertake the responsibility in certain of those cases, which are not numerous, and desires that the definition be added to in order to be quite certain that the court can deal with such cases.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Would the department still have redress in the matter of recovering payment?

The MINISTER FOR CHILD WELFARE: Yes, if it can find the responsible person. The next definition proposed to be amended is that of a "neglected child." Members will find definitions of "neglected child" in the parent Act, but there is grave doubt as to whether cases coming under the new definition proposed in this Bill—if a child is living under such conditions as to indicate that its mental, physical or moral welfare are likely to be in jeopardy—would be covered by the existing definition. A child may be living a life of vice and crime and so forth, but experience has proved that the existing definition in some cases does not give the court sufficient grounds for the committal of the child to the care of the State, notwithstanding that the circumstances of its environment and upbringing are such as to be detrimental to its mental, physical or moral welfare. The desire is to give the court unquestioned authority to deal with cases of that nature.

The Bill also proposes to alter the definition of "wad" by bringing within its meaning a child who is committed under the provisions of this or any other Act to an institution or to the care of the department for a period which has not expired. Many children are committed to institutions but never enter them, because the court adds a recommendation to the order that the child may remain with its parents while it is of good behaviour. The child in that case is really a ward on parole, but under the definition in the Act, that procedure could be challenged, and it is desired to place this question beyond doubt. The proposed amendment will clarify the situation, it is believed, beyond any possible doubt.

The next provision in the Bill is to empower the court, upon the hearing of an application, to declare a child a destitute or neglected child and order him until he attains the age of 18 years or for a shorter period to be committed to the care of the department, and sent to a specified institution, there to be detained or otherwise dealt with under the Act, or released on probation. That is a proposed new section to be substituted for the existing Section 30. The main idea underlying the proposal is to permit the court to commit a destitute or neglected child to the care of the department for a specified term.

The implementation of the new definition of "destitute child" is provided for in the next amendment. As I have already stated, the new definition will cover cases where the person responsible for contributing to the maintenance of the child has failed to do so. The proposed new section provides that the governing authority or the department on behalf of a subsidised institution, having taken all available proceedings to obtain an order against the near relative of the child for regular contributions towards the maintenance, has failed in those proceedings. The application will be made to the court with the approval of the secretary of the department. That covers the point raised a few minutes ago by the member for Eyre. When the court is satisfied, it may declare the child to be a destitute child and commit it to the care of the department.

Another amendment seeks to authorise the department in certain circumstances to give a name to a destitute child. The provision in the Bill will apply only in cases where there is an absence of positive evidence of the name. Poor little waifs, infants, babes sometimes only a few days old, have been found on door-steps and in rose garden beds on odd occasions in the history of the department, and while the department is always most willing and anxious to do its best for such children, in some cases it has no knowledge whatever of the child's parentage or name.

It has given names to such children in the past, but had no authority to do so, and questions have arisen when steps have been taken for the registration of the birth and so forth as to whether the name has been properly given to the child. This amendment provides that the department may name the child in such circumstances and that the name so given shall be regarded as the correct one, but there is also a provision that if at any later time positive evidence comes to light as to the proper name, the records of the court and of the department may be altered accordingly.

The next provision is one of considerable importance. For many years past, it has been the practice of married women to approach the Children's Court for a maintenance order covering their children, immediately after they had divorced their husbands and obtained a decree absolute in the Supreme Court. This was a procedure which has worked quite smoothly, and it is a simple process and inexpensive to approach the Children's Court in a matter of that kind. It is also easy and comparatively inexpensive to take proceedings to enforce an order made in the Children's Court.

In a recent reserved decision given by the Perth Children's Court, however, it was held that it was not competent for the court to make an order for the maintenance of children following a divorce

action in the Supreme Court, and it was laid down that the proper course to take was for the woman concerned to approach the Supreme Court and secure there her order for the children's upkeep. The proceedings in the Children's Court are less expensive and less difficult, and in circumstances of this kind it is desirable that the procedure which had worked in past years, until investigated, should be given the sanction of the law. Therefore, the amendment to the Act which is contained in this Bill provides that where, after the expiration of three months from the date of the final order or decree absolute for dissolution of marriage, if there is no order in force in the Supreme Court in respect of the maintenance of a child, proceedings for its maintenance may be taken in the Children's Court.

The next amendment is to provide for an increase in the amount that may be ordered by the magistrate or the court for the maintenance of a child. At present, there is a maximum amount of £1, which has obtained since 1927 and which, of course, is no longer sufficient. There is no obligation on the magistrate or the court to impose the maximum amount allowed by the Act; the means and circumstances of the individual are taken into consideration. But no matter how well to do the parents or near relatives may be in any given case, and no matter how well able to pay a greater sum, the court cannot order more than £1 a week to be paid. .

The subsidy for wards of the department boarded with foster parents stands at £2 0s. 3d. per week, and in some cases as much as £2 10s. per week is paid by the department. It is obviously not right that the maximum of £1 should remain in those cases where there is ability to pay a greater sum. It is therefore proposed that the words "one pound" shall be struck out and the words "two pounds" inserted in lieu; and, in the case of a ward, for future and past maintenance and for such period as may seem sufficient, such sum not exceeding £2 10s. per week as the secretary of the department shall certify in writing to be the weekly cost of the maintenance of the ward, shall be paid.

As most members know, quite apart from the authority of the court to determine what is a reasonable amount up to the maximum, many hundreds of pounds are written off almost every day. The writing off of such sums has been undertaken where it has been shown that the circumstances of the folk concerned had changed and they could not pay, or that they had fallen upon evil times or were in ill-health. Members acquainted with the department will know that it is only in cases where circumstances warrant that proceedings are taken for the recovery of money by the department.

Mr. Graham: What is the full implication of the words "past maintenance"? Has that a retrospective application?

The MINISTER FOR CHILD WELFARE: Yes; but there again it is possible to make an order of that nature only where it can be shown that there is ability to pay. We do not desire, nor do I think the court would be entitled, to make an order other than that. But we do not see why, when we have maintained a child, the people responsible should not be under some obligation to pay something for its past upkeep if the opportunity presents itself. At present they are under no obligation at all.

The last two amendments in the Bill are to enable officers of the department to obtain entry to premises where they have reason to suspect that a destitute or neglected child is residing. At present they may receive information to that effect and may ask to go and have a look, and they can be refused and have no remedy. There have been one or two cases of that kind in recent years. Everybody knows that occasionally people can be very cruel and unkind, and perhaps even worse than unkind, to children who are under their care. So it is desirable that if the department has any sound reason to believe that happenings of that kind are taking place, it should be able to require inspection.

At the same time, there must be reasonable safeguards to ensure that such a right is exercised only under definite, restricted conditions. So the Bill provides that where a Justice is satisfied by information on oath that there is reasonable ground for suspecting that a destitute or neglected child is residing on any premises or in any place, he may grant an order in the prescribed form authorising the secretary or other officer of the department to enter at all reasonable times the premises or place named in the order and to inspect such premises or place. It is provided that the person named in the order shall, if required, produce the order, and it will then be an offence to hinder or obstruct such person in his inspection.

The last provision is to make it an offence for any person to impersonate or to attempt to impersonate an officer of the department. There have been four occasions in the last three or four years when, for purposes of their own, persons have endeavoured—and in one case succeeded, I think—to pass themselves off as officers of the department. No action could be taken against them, because it was not an offence. This amendment proposes to remedy that.

While on the subject of child welfare, seeing that this Bill and its parent Act would cover many cases to which I am about to refer, I would like to say a word or two in connection with child migra-

tion. Since the inauguration of the child migration scheme in August, 1946, 725 children have arrived in Western Australia. Of this number, 660 were from the United Kingdom and 65 from Malta. The first group of 150 children arrived on the "Asturias" on the 22nd September, 1947, and since that date regular drafts have been coming forward. On arrival in Australia, these children are placed in institutions approved by the British and Australian Governments. At the present time there are 11 such institutions in Western Australia.

Children arriving under the scheme become subject to the provisions of the Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act, 1946-52. Under the Act, the Commonwealth Minister for Immigration is their legal guardian, but he delegates certain powers to the State authorities. Up to the 14th August, 1952, the Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration was their legal guardian in Western Australia until they attained the age of 21 years or were released from the provisions of the Act. In view of the fact that these children were accommodated in institutions which also cared for wards of the Child Welfare Department, it was decided to transfer the guardianship from the Under Secretary for Lands to the Secretary of the Child Welfare Department. The alteration was made because these children were accommodated at institutions which also cared for wards of the Child Welfare Department.

It is considered that the boys and girls who have arrived to date are a fine type. Although educationally a considerable percentage of the older children appeared on arrival to be from 12 to 18 months retarded—due to their schooling being interrupted during the war years—generally speaking they seem to have made rapid progress since their arrival in the State. From reports received, it is evident that they are quickly assimilated into the Australian community.

With the arrival of the first migrant children, the Government decided that they should be treated on the same basis as State wards, with the result that institutions, in addition to receiving British and Commonwealth Government subsidies, also received a grant from the State. At the present time institutions receive 30s. 9d. per week from the State for the maintenance of wards, plus 10s. per week child endowment. The Lotteries Commission also subsidises them by an amount of 5s. per week. In all, the various institutions receive a weekly payment of 45s. 9d. per week for wards if there is a school on the premises, and 44s. 9d. if the children attend State schools. In the case of migrant children, the same amount is paid to institutions with schools on the premises, but made up as follows:—

	per week. s.	d.
British Government subsidy	12	6
Child endowment	10	0
Lotteries grant	5	0
State Government grant	18	3
	45	9

In addition to maintenance payments, medical, dental and optical attention is provided for migrant children. Every encouragement is given to boys and girls with educational ability to continue their studies and, although British subsidy and child endowment payments cease at 16 years of age, the State makes special grants to cover maintenance, etc.

Employment and accommodation are arranged for children leaving school, and if wages are insufficient to leave a margin of 20s. per week, plus the cost of fares after a child has paid board, a special subsidy is approved to make this possible. Children going to first employment are provided with a clothing outfit to the value of £30 and, where necessary, tools of trade. Every endeavour is made to place migrant children in skilled trades, and it is pleasing to note that a number are at present serving apprenticeships. In the case of boys who are placed in agricultural employment, where they receive board and residence in addition to their wages, a service agreement is entered into between the employer and the Child Welfare Department.

Institutions are visited at regular intervals to watch the progress and interests of the inmates; and migrant children boarded out and in employment are visited by departmental officers at quarterly intervals and their various problems discussed with them. Generally speaking, migrant children receive the same care and attention as wards of the Child Welfare Department. It will be clear that the operations of the department are extending. Care should be taken to ensure that all reasonable powers are given to the department and its officers to deal with these problems which, in some cases, are easy and in others not. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Styants, debate adjourned.

BILL—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling) [5.45] in moving the second reading said: The Bill

is to amend the Fremantle Harbour Trust Act by altering Section 65 to extend the powers of the Harbour Trust Commissioners to make regulations. Some short reference to the provisions of the Act might assist members in considering the position. Section 24 of the Act provides—

> The commissioners shall have the exclusive control of the harbour, and shall be charged with the maintenance and preservation of all property vested in them under this Act.

Section 65 provides power to make regulations, and the only portion of this section which could possibly be used to cover the points I am going to raise in regard to the Bill is Subsection (53), which provides that regulations may be made—

> For other purposes relating to the convenience of shipping, or of the public, within the harbour, and generally for duly administering and carrying out the powers vested in the commissioners by this Act.

The commissioners have desired to make regulations, and I think have in fact made certain regulations from time to time, for the preservation of order, the control of vehicular traffic, the sale of goods, and the closing and partial closing of the wharves as and when required. They also desire to make regulations in regard to the bringing of alcoholic liquor on to any property under their control, or its presence there. They have been advised that they either cannot make such regulations, because there is nothing in Section 65 to allow them to do so, or alternatively that where they have attempted to make such regulations there is grave doubt as to their validity.

The commissioners have asked that the amendment contained in the Bill shall be passed by Parliament so that they will have no doubt as to the validity of the regulations they may make in respect of these various matters, and any others which may crop up from time to time which may be deemed to be necessary and may come within the purview of the amendment. The Bill, therefore, proposes that power to make regulations shall be inserted for the regulating, controlling and prohibiting the entering or remaining within the boundaries of the harbour, or any specified part or parts of the harbour, by any person or class of person, or any thing or class of thing; and the doing or omission of anything or class of thing within the boundaries of the harbour or any specified part or parts of the harbour, either at all times and on all occasions or at any time or times, or on any occasion or occasions, the intention being that the generality of the anthority to be delegated by this provision is not affected by authority delegated by any other paragraph of Section 65.

It is perfectly true that the terms of that provision are pretty wide. They can be made to cover various types of activity and various persons or classes of persons. Necessarily, in order to deal with such matters as the five things I have mentioned, a wide provision is essential and that is why the amendment has been drafted in this way. The position, I think, is perfectly clear and I move—

> That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

MOTION—STATE FORESTS.

To Revoke Dedication.

THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS (Hon. G. P. Wild—Dale) [5.51]: I move—

> That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 4 and 42, laid upon the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor on the 26th August, 1952, be carried out.

The areas concerned are No. 1, which is about one mile north-west of Collie, containing approximately 146 acres of poor forest country required to provide an area for the housing of natives employed in the district, and No. 2, approximately one mile west of Quarram siding, which contains approximately 131 acres of poorly timbered land separated from the main forest by the railway line on the south and the Bow River on the east, which has been applied for by a settler for the purposes of dairying.

Question put and passed.

On motion by the Minister for Forests, resolution transmitted to the Council and its concurrence desired therein.

BILL—STATE HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING (Hon. G. P. Wild—Dale) [5.53] in moving the second reading said: This is a small amendment to the State Housing Act, to increase the limit of advance and expenditure on the erection of workers' homes from £2,000 to £2,500, with a view to giving further assistance to those people who desire to build and own their homes. Under the leasehold provision of the existing legislation the cost of erection, including sewerage connections, shall not in any case exceed £2,000. On the other hand, under the freehold provisions, while the

loan may not be more than £2,000, the purchaser may exceed that sum by paying the difference himself. With the present-day cost of building, it is found that in many cases £2,000 is insufficient to provide a home for a man and his family.

During the past 20 months building costs have risen by approximately 33 per cent. For the past year the Housing Commission carried out a limited programme of building for home ownership under the Act, and at the same time plans were laid and contracts entered into for a considerable extension of operations throughout the country districts. Much preparation has been undertaken in the past 12 months to bring three pre-cutting factories into being to work for the State Housing Commission, with a view to having pre-cut houses capable of being taken to the site so that the builder can erect them just as a child may erect a structure with a Meccano set.

These houses are supplied absolutely complete and that saves a great amount of time and labour, as the builder does not have to scout around for any of the required materials. We are now in a position to get a considerable number of builders in the country to undertake this work for us.

Mr. May: That does not apply to the Austrian pre-fabs, does it?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: These houses are coming off the production line in substantially increasing numbers. During the past 12 months 48 houses were erected under this scheme in the country and on the 30th June last a further 183 were under construction. Plans have now been made and contracts let—finance is available—for a further 350 of these houses, all of which will be erected in country areas under the State Housing Act. Home ownership has many advantages, and as soon as a man owns a home he has a stake in the country and becomes a better citizen and has some interest to keep him at home. A further advantage is that the Housing Commission does not in such cases have the maintenance problem which is causing a considerable amount of worry, particularly in the case of dwellings as far afield as Roebourne in the north, Kalgoorlie in the east, and Albany in the south.

Believing that home ownership is of vital importance in this country the Government last year amended the Act to allow the definition of "worker" to be broadened so that it would bring in a man earning up to £750, plus all basic wage increases after the 1st November, 1950. The result is that today a worker, within the meaning of the Act, can, I think, earn up to £920 a year. A survey has been made of the requirements of each country town and a programme has been drawn up with a view to providing relief for as many country towns as possible. In brief, the purpose of this Bill is to bring the allowance for building costs more into line with present-day requirements. This is essential, in order that we may carry on with our expanding building programme in many country towns. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. T. Tonkin, debate adjourned.

BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).

Message.

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

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. V. Doney—Narrogin) [5.58] in moving the second reading said: During the last few years, as members will recall, the Government has found the position regarding the introduction of continuance and amending measures rather difficult in the case of the rents and tenancies legislation. This year, on the contrary, we have found it possible to bring a Bill down early in the session and thus the measure now before us is actually, I think, the first continuance measure of this session. It is a most important Bill, in that it seeks to continue for yet another year the operation of the Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act of 1951. This measure deals with the control of rents and provides certain protection for tenants in respect of eviction from premises occupied by them.

The present Act had its origin in the Increase of Rents (War Restrictions) Act of 1939, a wartime measure, which as members know, was introduced in emergency circumstances in order to prevent unjustified increases in rents in various parts of the State. On that occasion Parliament wasted no time in passing legislation designed to prevent the exploitation of people unable properly to protect themselves. I think members are aware that similar legislation has applied in all the other States of the Commonwealth. It has also been found necessary to bring down legislation in the United Kingdom, and it is probably in operation in other parts of the world, particularly those substantially affected by the war.

Mr. W. Hegney: Have you asked the members of the Legislative Council whether they will agree to this Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why does not the hon. member ask them himself?

Mr. W. Hegney: You asked them last year.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. Since the passing of the 1939 Act it has been necessary to bring down continuance Bills and parliamentary sanction has been given to them because it has been felt that legislative control and supervision were still desirable in the public interest. Various legislative amendments have been authorised from year to year, and these have been designed to rectify anomalies and simplify procedure to meet changing circumstances as the months went by.

In the first instance, State legislation dealt only with the control of rents; evictions, on the other hand, were the subject of National Security Regulations but eventually these were merged with the legislation of the State, and today both matters are dealt with in the one Act. The points that I have made so far give some idea of the genesis of the present legislation. Admittedly the summary that I have given is brief, but I think it is sufficient to remind members of the circumstances in which this law was first launched.

It is Government policy to remove controls wherever desirable and where the need for them has ceased to exist. But where rents and evictions are concerned, such procedure is not considered possible at present. Consistent with that policy, the Government last year sought and, for that matter, obtained parliamentary approval to a measure which eased the control in certain directions. This was done in an endeavour to hold a proper balance between the rights of owners and tenants. Actually, of course, it is impossible to bring about a state of affairs equally acceptable to landlord and tenant.

Mr. McCulloch: That is quite true.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Act which this particular measure is designed to continue was not given the old title but is known as "The Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act." For the purposes of explanation, the Act may be divided into two parts, one dealing with the eviction provisions, which expires on the 31st October, 1952, and the other part with rents, which part expires on the last day of this year. This Bill seeks to continue the whole of the operations of the Act until the 31st day, 1953. It is considered to be most desirable that all provisions should continue until the same date.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Which month is that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The 31st day of December, 1953. Briefly stated, the Act provides protection from eviction for tenants in respect of certain premises by making it obligatory for the owners to give six months' notice of their intention to apply to the court. It also provides the necessary machinery for approaches to the court and pays particular attention to the needs of ex-Servicemen. If these provisions did not exist, or were allowed to lapse, the large majority of tenants would be liable to eviction with, generally speaking, no more, or little more, than a week's notice. It is obvious that this would cause unnecessary hardship on many families. The fact that he has the protection that is provided by the Act gives a tenant what might be described as a breathing space in which to look for alternative premises. That, of course, is not a very easy task in these difficult times. Since June, 1951, 1,042 evictions cases in the metropolitan area have been dealt with by the court.

Mr. McCulloch: Any in the country?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is a small number from the country, but in order to avoid confusion I am dealing with the metropolitan area cases only. Of those 1,042 cases, 724 orders for repossession were granted and of that number as many as 558 families have been provided with alternative accommodation by the State Housing Commission. During the past two years I have been particularly grateful to the State Housing Commission for the excellent job it has done in providing suitable accommodation for evictees. Of course, there are some owners who have not exercised the warrant granted to them by the Court for repossession, they having been satisfied with the court order, and have not been desirous, I presume, of inflicting unnecessary hardship on their tenants. Those figures, quite apart from any other requirements of the Bill, indicate very plainly that there is need for continuance of protection afforded by the Act.

The Act provides the necessary provision for the fixation of a fair rent by a court or rent inspector. The name of the extremely efficient officer referred to here is Mr. Norman, who is performing not a very attractive job but is carrying it out in an excellent manner. That rent inspector fixes the rent which may be lawfully charged in respect of all classes of premises, excluding those owned by the Crown, farms and the like which are, of course, not subject to the requirements of the Act as most of us are aware. The permissible margin of increase allowed by Mr. Norman in all cases that come before him is up to 10 per cent. on the rent previously assessed or at a certain date, as maybe agreed upon in writing by the parties concerned, plus outgoings such as rates and taxes, electricity and the like.

The inquiries on and requests for rent assessments continue to flow into the rent inspector's office. It would seem that the continued demand for houses which maintains the high rent level does not permit of any consideration that this legislation should lapse. There is no doubt in my mind

that if this legislation were to lapse there would be a general increase in rent, followed by an increase in the basic wage from one end of the State to the other. I do not think anyone will gainsay that.

That is a brief outline of the Bill, the circumstances necessitating its introduction and the need for its continuance. The information I have given amply justifies the continuance of the measure which, as I have already said, has its counterpart in all the other States and in many other parts of the world. Nowhere have I heard a suggestion and, indeed, nowhere has action been taken, to remove the control. I am quite certain therefore, that the need does exist for the continuance of this legislation in this State and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. T. Tonkin, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 16th September, 1952.

CONTENTS.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the State Electricity Commission Act Amendment Bill.

OBITUARY—LETTER IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT: I have received the following letter from Mrs. E. Marshall:—

Dear Sir Harold,

Would you please convey to the members of the Legislative Council my sincere appreciation of the resolution they passed upon the death of my dear husband, the late William Marshall, M.L.A.? Although my late husband was a member of the Assembly, the number of members who spoke to the motion of condolence indicates the high regard in which he was held.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Ethel Marshall.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Accommodation for Evicted Families.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY asked the Minister for Transport:

Can he inform the House—

(1) (a) How many three-unit, and (b) how many two-unit families in the metropolitan area had eviction orders made against them by the court during August?

(2) How many of such families applied to the State Housing Commission for accommodation?

(3) How many three-unit and two-unit families were given accommodation by the State Housing Commission during August?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Not known. Information only in respect of those families that apply to the State Housing Commission.

(2) Of those against whom orders were made, nine three-unit and seven two-unit families made application to the State Housing Commission.

(3) Three-unit, 20; two-unit, 15.

(b) As to Charges by Accommodation Agencies.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Is he aware—

(a) That non-licensed house-letting or accommodation agencies have commenced business in this State and are demanding a deposit of £12 10s. to obtain a rental home for an applicant, retaining £5 at the end of one month if a home is not found for such applicant?

(b) That if the above arrangement were put into practice by licensed land agents, any such licensed agent would lose his license?