

Legislative Assembly.

Friday, 6th December, 1916.

	PAGE
Questions: Northern rivers, as to investigation by aerial survey, etc.	2548
Railways, as to refusal of empties as freight	2548
Police Court offenders, as to ordering to country districts	2549
Wheat stabilisation, as to Commonwealth's proposed further legislation	2549
Bills: Canning District Sanitary Site, 3r.	2549
Eastern Goldfields Transport Board, 2r.	2549
Loan, £5,050,000, 2r., remaining stages	2551
State Forest Access, 2r., remaining stages	2550
Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	2557
Comprehensive Agricultural Areas and Goldfields Water Supply, returned	2559
Country Areas Water Supply, returned	2559
Industries Assistance Act Continuance, returned	2559
Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment, returned	2559
Financial Emergency Act Amendment, returned	2559
Companies Act Amendment, returned	2559
Marketing of Potatoes (No. 2), returned	2560
Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment, returned	2560
Western Australian Trotting Association, 2r.	2560
Licensing Act Amendment, 2r.	2560
Purchasers' Protection Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	2560
Annual Estimates: Votes and Items discussed	2571

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

NORTHERN RIVERS.

As to Investigation by Aerial Survey, Etc.

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

1, With reference to his replies to the questions regarding conservation of waters in the rivers of the North-West, to which he replied on the 12th November last, will he name the persons by whom the several inspections and surveys referred to in his answers were made or will be made?

2, Will he state at what places—

(a) in Australia,

(b) out of Australia

the persons concerned had experience of water-courses in which there exist difficulties similar to those that exist in our North-West?

3, Would aerial surveys disclose the actual condition of the river beds, the position regarding soil erosion, and any other factors

which could militate against successful water conservation?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Preliminary inspections have been made by a number of departmental officers, including Messrs. Dumas (Director of Works), Drake-Brockman (Assistant Director of Works, and late Engineer for North-West), Munt (Principal Assistant, Hydraulics), Foreman (late Government Geologist), Brennan (late Resident Engineer, North-West) and Dimond (Engineer for North-West). Further inspections will be made by those officers of the Department who have had suitable experience.

2, (a) Practically all the water conservation undertakings in Australia have been seen by Departmental officers. (b) America, Egypt and India.

3, Broadly speaking, yes; that is to say aerial surveys will take the place of preliminary reconnaissance.

RAILWAYS.

As to Refusal of Empties as Freight.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Railways:

1, Is he aware that in at least one instance a country station-master has refused to accept as freight empty bulk ice cream containers for return to Perth, on the ground that such containers were sent out from Perth by road transport during the recent strike?

2, If so, is this the considered policy of the Railway Department?

The MINISTER replied:

1, No, but if the hon. member will name the station-master concerned, inquiries will be made. If the hon. member means that the station-master refused to accept the containers for free carriage as applies to containers sent full on the forward journey by rail, the station-master would be complying with the provisions of the railway rates books. The rate for empty returns not carried by rail on the forward journey is a low one, and any more favourable rate or free transit could not be justified in the circumstances.

2, Answered by No. 1.

POLICE COURT OFFENDERS.*As to Ordering to Country Districts.*

Mr. LESLIE asked the Minister for Justice:

1, Has he received a communication from the Koorda Road Board protesting against the practice of magistrates in metropolitan courts ordering the release, or suspending sentence on convicted persons conditionally upon such persons removing to and remaining in country districts?

2, Did that communication express concern at these magisterial decisions which, it is considered, show a poor knowledge of conditions in the country districts?

3, Is he aware that the communication referred to gives expression to a wide-spread anxiety among country residents, particularly women, in regard to this practice in metropolitan courts, and that representative country organisations, such as the Country Women's Association and the Primary Producers' Association, have protested in the past against this practice?

4, Will he, in the interests of the safety of country women and children in particular, who do not enjoy the degree of protection afforded to metropolitan residents, take steps to ensure that the practice of ordering convicted persons, undesirables, especially sex perverts, to go into and remain in country districts, shall be discontinued by the courts and/or the Police Department.

5, If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Yes.

2, Yes.

3, The letter referred to certainly indicates that such is the case. A similar complaint was received from a country branch of the Wheat and Wool Growers' Association in 1945, and one from the Country Women's Association some years ago, to which the attention of the courts was drawn.

4, The attention of the magistrates will again be drawn to the complaints made.

5, Answered by No. 4.

WHEAT STABILISATION.*As to Commonwealth's Proposed Further Legislation.*

Mr. WATTS (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

1, Was he aware, when the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill was being debated in

Committee recently, of the intention of the Commonwealth Government to introduce into the Commonwealth Parliament the measure reported in today's Press and referred to as "The Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill No. 2"?

2, If so, why did he not inform this Parliament?

3, Has he considered the effect on the wheat stabilisation proposals which were covered by the original Commonwealth Act and the State Bill of the proposals contained in the reported Wheat Stabilisation Bill No. 2, and will he state whether it is both desirable and necessary to proceed with the State legislation if the Wheat Stabilisation Bill No. 2 is passed by the Commonwealth, and give the reasons for his views on this matter?

The MINISTER replied:

1, No.

2, Answered by No. 1.

3, I am having the position examined.

BILL—CANNING DISTRICT SANITARY SITE.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—EASTERN GOLDFIELDS TRANSPORT BOARD.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [2.6]: This Bill comes before Parliament as a public Bill, although personally I should have thought that it would be more properly classed as a private Bill; but the Premier, who is in charge of the measure, has referred the House to Standing Order No. 262 and also quoted a certain extract from "May" to justify its being treated as a public Bill. The matter is, of course, a purely procedural one and, as the House is obviously the master of its own procedure, the matter is beyond doubt if the House wishes to treat the measure as a public Bill. The Premier, in bringing the Bill forward, told the House all the facts which led up to it and I desire, with the leave of the House, very shortly to recapitulate some of those facts.

Some time prior to October, 1899, a gentleman named Rogers, who had obtained a concession from the Perth City Council and constructed tramways in the Perth municipal district, came to Kalgoorlie and sought leave, by way of agreement with the Kalgoorlie Council, to construct tramways in the Kalgoorlie municipal district; and on the 18th October, 1899, an agreement was entered into between the council and the burgesses, as they are described in the agreement, of Kalgoorlie and Mr. Rogers by which he was bound, under proper penalties, to lay down tramlines on the designated routes and to run trams on those lines and construct and equip all the necessary plant for doing so. That was followed, as is always the case, by a provisional order which was obtained from the Commissioner of Railways, and in turn the provisional order was confirmed by Act of Parliament. Under that agreement, Mr. Rogers, the man who obtained the concession, agreed that at the end of 21 years the council and burgesses of Kalgoorlie would be entitled to take over the whole system and the plant at valuation. He was apparently a very great optimist, for he represented that this was a gift to the council, something to induce it to enter into the agreement; but, in fact, so far as my knowledge goes, the company never paid a dividend.

However, that is of no moment because the council and burgesses did not avail themselves of the opportunity to buy the concern at the end of 21 years and no doubt they were largely influenced by the fact that at the end of 35 years they would be entitled to get the whole undertaking free of cost. An agreement in the same tenor was entered into between Mr. Dickinson, who was acting as agent for Western Australian goldfields and the Kalgoorlie Road Board district, on the 20th June, 1900; and Mr. Dickinson, acting as agent, assigned all his rights to Western Australian goldfields, and Mr. Rogers and Western Australian goldfields laid down and constructed tramlines in the Kalgoorlie municipality and the Kalgoorlie Road Board district, erected a car barn, and purchased all the necessary plant; and in May, 1902, they transferred the whole concern to a company called Kalgoorlie Electric Tramways, which has since operated the system.

That is the history of how it came into existence. I should have stated that almost

immediately after—within a little over a year—Kalgoorlie Electric Tramways became possessed of the system, it entered into a similar agreement with the Boulder Council and all three local bodies became entitled, on the expiration of the agreement, to possession of the tramways in their territory and, although nothing was provided for a division of the plant, to some proportional part of it. The matter is urgent from this point of view; That owing to the exigencies of war, the date for handing over has been passed; but a date has been finally agreed upon for the transfer to take place and that date is the 31st of this month. Therefore it is urgent the measure should be dealt with and, if Parliament approves of it, passed. The Premier told the House that by reason of Section 16 of the Tramways Act of 1885, it is incumbent that the Bill should be passed in the sense that there is no other alternative, but that is not quite correct, because all that section of that Act provides for is that nothing in the Act is to be taken to authorise any local authority to construct and lay down tramways, to run tramways or to charge tolls and fares for passengers using same.

But that would not in any way prevent Parliament passing a measure authorising the local authority to do so; and, in fact, the very section that was quoted—and the quotation was correct—provides for a local governing body under authority from Parliament to conduct a service such as this. But it is a matter that has great relevancy, although it is no complete bar. There will be an obvious disadvantage, an obvious impossibility in each local authority acquiring under the agreement with Mr. Rogers or the Kalgoorlie Electric Tramways its section and attempting to run that section or to assign to any other person the right to run it and carry on the undertaking only in its territory. The system has always been worked as one system and only by doing so is it possible to serve the public requirements. It would be impossible for the system to be run as three separate parts.

So the three local authorities met and came to that conclusion and determined to make an arrangement whereby it would be run as one system. There were three courses open to them to give effect to such an arrangement. One would be by leasing to some person or body the right to run trams over the whole system and the right to

use the plant in every way necessary. Another course would be for each of the bodies to hand over by deed of assignment of their interests under the agreement, to a third person or body. Lastly there is the course the Bill suggests. The first course is authorised by Section 16 of the Act of 1885 which contains specific authority for a local body which has obtained possession of any tramway system to lease it to any person to whom it chooses to lease it. The obvious advantage would be that the lease could be for a term and at the expiration of the term it could be open to review, and if anything needed to be improved that opportunity would enable improvement to be made. However, the local authorities have adopted what is a permanent assignment. When this Bill is passed and becomes law there is a permanent assignment to this new body of all the rights of the three separate local authorities in this tramway system. That is what they wish for; and although the other course would, to my way of thinking, be preferable, and would possibly be preferable in the opinion of some other members, we cannot defeat the wishes of those local authorities.

Before I placed on the notice paper the amendments which appear in my name, I had no opportunity to get any advice from the three local bodies concerned because the time was too short. But since then I have received various opinions and the result is that I do not intend to proceed with some of the amendments I have submitted. On the other hand, I shall ask leave to move amendments which I know the local bodies desire to be made. Further, there are some other amendments that I have put on the notice paper, which are entirely my own ideas and are designed to protect the public. Those amendments I shall ask the House to accept. I have had the honour of discussing most of the amendments with the Premier and have been assured that there will be little difficulty in an agreement being reached. I do not propose to discuss the amendments at this stage because when the Bill is in Committee I will have an opportunity to do so.

I would like, however, to draw attention to one fact that will not be discussed in Committee. Among the powers granted to the board, three are outstanding. One is that the board will have power to construct and run trams outside the district of the

Municipality of Kalgoorlie, the Kalgoorlie Road Board, and the Boulder Municipal Council. In fact, it will obtain authority to do so in any road board district adjoining. That is a very wide expansion and one that is not in the least likely ever to be used. There is no possible reason to suppose there will be any new goldfield found near enough to Kalgoorlie to be connected to Kalgoorlie by tram. If there were, we would all be pleased to see this board have the power to establish that connection.

The second right the new body will have is to use any power of any description to move the trams—horse-power, steam power, electric power, and, of course, if it remains long enough in existence and if science makes sufficiently rapid advance, atomic power. I do not know why this range is open to the board; but again there is no objection, because if it uses steam power instead of electric power, who has any right to object to it? Certainly if it were fortunate enough to be able to use a new power such as atomic power we should all be delighted that it had set the example. The third power granted in the Bill is for the board to generate electricity either in bulk or otherwise, in substitution for what, under the concession, was a contract to buy electricity from an existing company. The board has a perfect right to ask to be allowed to create its own power. So, although these are new powers compared with what exist, I do not think any member will take exception to them. Subject to my remarks, I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—LOAN, £5,050,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th November.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [2.21]: This Bill is to grant Supply to His Majesty the King, and it provides one of the few occasions on which a private member is entitled to bring forward for the consideration of the House grievances felt by any subjects. These occasions are rarely available under our procedure, which is not by any means as generous in that regard as is that of other Parliaments. It may be interesting

to recall that it is identical with that of the Parliament of Westminster, and that procedure has come down over a great many centuries. It was illustrated in the reign of Charles I when that monarch, being short of money, asked for Supply from the Commons and they refused to make it available until their grievances had been considered and adjusted by the King. As the King refused to consider and adjust their grievances, the Commons refused Supply. Then, as members know, His Majesty attempted to obtain Supply by means of a tax on shipping, which was much resented, and which was the genesis of a civil war.

Since those days, the granting of Supply has always been associated with the ventilation of any grievance that any private member is in a position to bring forward, and of which he has cognisance. Accordingly, I am now availing myself of that opportunity. One of the matters I wish to discuss is the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act of 1938. That Act, under which it is not compulsory for any public servant to enrol himself, has received only small support from the younger members of the service. Of course, the elderly members practically rushed it, because it presented to them an opportunity to ensure, from a small payment, a large return. The result has been that the absence of the younger members from participation in the scheme has produced a condition by which the annual premium has been not only of a shaky character but has had to be augmented, as members will recall, by an amendment of the original Act. If we search for the reason why it does not appeal to the younger men, I submit we shall very easily find it.

The Act provides that if a subscriber or, as the Act says, a contributor, is found to be suffering from any infirmity which is not the result of his own act but renders him incapable of discharging the work of his office, he is entitled to a full pension under Section 57. It must be remembered that insurance under this Act is a simple matter of contract, and is not a dole or a gift, in which case, of course, the donor could prescribe from time to time whatever conditions he liked for the purpose of enjoying what he gave. But this is a contract under which one party to the contract, a public servant, contributes one-half of the annual premium and the other party, the State, contributes the other half.

The scheme has its counterpart in many similar schemes conducted by private enterprise. I am told that, in these ventures, it is common, for a subscriber if he is unable to discharge the duties of his office owing to an infirmity or an illness that is not caused by his own act, to receive the full pension.

Therefore, there is nothing exceptionally generous in this provision which appears in our Act of 1938. But that statute also provides that if the person suffering from an infirmity, and thereby rendered incapable of discharging the duties of his office, is able to make any income from any other employment that he may turn his hand to, then in regard to a certain fraction of that income his pension no longer becomes payable as a right, although it may be payable by grace. The fact is that if by means of any service such a person is able to render he earns two-thirds of his former wage, he is no longer entitled to receive the pension from the scheme. That is the end of his pension so far as any right is concerned. In these circumstances, what is the gain to him in being insured? None at all, because, presumably, if he is able to do that light service, he could do it whether insured or not. Therefore, the position of any man who comes under that designation is that he makes no gain from being insured but, on the contrary, makes a considerable loss because of the premiums he has paid for many years.

It is not necessary for me to say that if a private employer ran an insurance scheme on similar lines he would be made the subject of quite sharp criticism. It is easy to see, therefore, why the scheme does not appeal to young men in the Public Service. They go on paying for many years and then if by chance they should meet with an accident or encounter one or other of the disasters that beset human beings to an extent that would render them unfit to continue in their employment, they would be offered this almost sham for their benefit. Who could possibly live on the pension provided—£2 a week?

The Minister for Lands: That is not the reason why they go in for it. They get the benefit of social service payments without contributing anything.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That does not come under the heading of this scheme; it is quite independent of it.

Mr. J. Hegney: When this was inaugurated the pension was £1 per week whereas now it is much more, and in addition to that they get the social benefits as well.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If I am allowed to, I shall ask the grace of the House to permit me to continue my speech. I certainly do not think it fair to ask me to address myself to members sitting in various parts of the House—

Mr. Doney: On different subjects.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Yes, on different subjects. Since the Commonwealth Parliament has made social service benefits available without contributions of any kind—

Mr. J. Hegney: They have to contribute; they have to pay taxation.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Everyone pays taxation.

Mr. J. Hegney: But I refer to a special tax.

Hon. N. KEENAN: From which the one individual benefits! I wish the member for Middle Swan would address himself to this question instead of interrupting as he is doing. Of course, everyone pays that tax.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is so.

Hon. N. KEENAN: And the only benefit derived is that which the single individual enjoys. How can we imagine that any young man who wishes to make certain that a sum will be available to him, should he be rendered unfit to continue his employment, would be satisfied with this scheme? We know he can get from the Commonwealth, without any payment whatever, the benefits of the social service provisions whereas if he were to join the State scheme he would have to pay a sufficient sum to be regarded as the equivalent of what was calculated to be half the income that would be payable on an actuarial basis with respect to the pension that was his due. It is obvious that the scheme cannot continue successfully if it attracts only the elderly men who put in little and take out a lot, which is a very bad financial prospect for any scheme. If we do not make this matter more attractive to the younger members of the Public Service, where will it end? That is what I want the House seriously to consider.

Although I do not wish to state the details, I have knowledge of various cases where the administration of this Act has

cancelled pensions that were granted on account of infirmity. That was so because the individual had obtained what was the equivalent of two-thirds of his original pay through engaging in some particular employment he was capable of undertaking. If we desire to make the public servants content in this State, this is not the way to do so. If they are not content, I do not think we shall get good service from them, and we shall certainly not make them content as a result of this scheme if we maintain it on its present basis. There are other features to which objection could be taken but I do not wish to refer to them. The phase I have dealt with is sufficiently serious for the Government to give consideration to it if it does not want the scheme to become a debacle and to take steps to prevent that result.

Mr. J. Hegney: You do not say that this one fact will make the Public Service discontented.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have not the slightest doubt that the hon. member who is interjecting so much would be discontented without any cause at all. I always naturally look for some cause.

Mr. J. Hegney: I know a little about that but I do not know that a chappie would be discontented because—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. N. KEENAN: The member for Middle Swan wants to discuss his views regarding what he describes as a "chappie." I have no doubt the House would be glad to hear him.

Mr. J. Hegney: Not on the Loan Bill.

Hon. N. KEENAN: On any Bill. I now turn to what I believe are matters more closely related to the measure before the House. I shall not cover the ground that the Leader of the Opposition and other members traversed when discussing the Loan Estimates but there is one outstanding feature that has been completely overlooked. It is a factor of importance to the highest degree in relation to the future economy of this State. I refer to the grave possibility of industrial trouble involving either a partial or a total dislocation of industry in Western Australia in future. It would seem as if we deliberately shut our eyes to this possibility in the belief, I take it, that if we do not talk about it nothing will hap-

pen. It is surely ridiculous reasoning with which to guide our conduct and one for which no justification can be found.

Mr. J. Hegney: How do you suggest we should forestall that?

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the hon. member will wait for a very few minutes, I shall satisfy his curiosity.

Mr. Thorn: Do you think he will be able to understand?

Hon. N. KEENAN: To be content to blind our eyes to the truth would be disastrous and the truth is that all our plans however grandiose, however well-founded and carefully thought out, are completely valueless unless we can obtain relative peace in industry in order to carry them out. The one supreme question is: What is the prospect of relative peace in industry in the future? The next question is: What steps can we take to secure that relative peace? If we ask ourselves what is the prospect of industrial peace in the future, our answer, if we are honest, is that it is of a very doubtful character.

The late industrial trouble was not the crisis of a long series of discontent. It was nothing more than a mere breath of the storm which all of us can see gathering on the horizon—that is, if we allow matters to drift as, unfortunately, we are doing today. How is it possible to stop this drift? That is what the member for Middle Swan is anxious about. Personally I have no doubt whatever what ought to be done, although I may not have the complete endorsement of the member for Middle Swan. The issue is simply between the adoption of arbitration as the sole means of settling industrial dispute, other than by way of mutual agreements, or, on the other hand, to attempt to settle industrial disputes by the complete dislocation of industry and produce out of the turmoil and chaos some state of affairs that suits the views of one party alone, and that party is not the State. That party is at most a small fraction of the State. The issue, therefore, is one of whether the law of the jungle is to prevail in industrial matters or whether the law of the people, as pronounced by the Parliament of the people, is to prevail.

If the majority of the electors favour the law of the jungle as the means for adjusting, or attempting to adjust, industrial disputes, let us face it, sit down and bear what

comes to us. If, on the other hand, the issue were left to the electors of the State, no-one believes that they would give a verdict of violence as being the means of settling industrial disputes. If that is so, if we believe that a majority would support arbitration as the means of settling industrial disputes, we are justified in taking steps to see whether that belief is fully justified or not. The mere assertion that a majority of the workers and of the other people who constitute the citizens of the State are in favour of arbitration is of no value whatever. It is entirely insufficient.

On a matter of this kind there must be a verdict which is beyond any doubt, beyond any question; and that verdict can be obtained, I submit, only if we leave the issue in the plainest possible manner to the people of the State at the next general election. If we are justified in our belief and the people return a verdict in accordance with our belief, namely, one in favour of arbitration, then we must be prepared to take every step necessary—whether by new legislation or by enforcing existing legislation—to prevent a small number defeating and destroying the peace of this State. There is no other matter that can be suggested of equal importance to the future of the State. Everything depends on it. If we are successful in establishing relative peace in industry, then all the plans which the Minister for Works has in mind, and all the plans which any member of this House might conceive, are possible. On the other hand, if the law of the jungle is to prevail, then no plan has any hope whatever, nor has any industry of the State any hope whatever.

Everything we have is at stake. What have we heard of this matter in Parliament, this Parliament which had an experience in person of the result of the dislocation of industry? Nothing whatever! It is ignored, put aside, as if to mention it was to provoke it. That is not so. If we ignore it, if we do not face it, then it will come, because we have no power to stop it. It will come under circumstances most disastrous to the State and disastrous to us. What the final result will be no-one can tell, except that we know it will be something we do not even like to think of. There was once a gentleman in English history who was called upon to face a very severe crisis

—Mr. Gosham—and he made a famous statement. He said he would make his will and then receive his deserts. If his deserts were of a character that bore ill, then he would bear them. On the other hand, if his deserts were of a character that entitled him to succeed, he was certain he would succeed. But he had taken the final step which a man has to take when he has made up his mind to see a thing through, and that is what we must do. We must resolve that we have to grapple with this evil. We cannot afford to ignore it. We can only grapple with it in the manner I have indicated. We can only grapple with it by asking the people of the State what is their will. Let us show the courage in the first instance to ask that question, and when they have given us their will, then let us show the courage to give effect to their answer.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. A. H. Panton—Leederville) [2.46]: Usually, only the Minister introducing the Loan Bill speaks in reply to it; but after listening to the member for Nedlands I cannot refrain from saying a few words in reply. To hear the hon. member speak, one would almost believe that Western Australia was in the throes of an industrial dispute that had continued for weeks and months. As a matter of fact, there have been only three major stoppages—and there is usually a general stoppage of industry when the railways cease working—over the last 45 years. My association with the Labour movement of the State extends over 45 years and, as I said, in that period there have been three general stoppages. The very trouble which the hon. member mentioned—the recent railway strike—was a clear demonstration that the majority of the workers and the people of the State did stand for industrial arbitration. There are 7,500 to 8,000 workers in the Railway Department; over 1,000 of these men stopped work, but they had all of the other railway unions against them. If that is not a demonstration of what the workers stand for in this State, I would like to know what is.

Hon. N. Keenan: That merely shows how a very small minority can dominate the majority.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: I quite agree. Any small minority in a key position can cause a dislocation of industry; but surely, because that happens, the hon.

member is not going to say that the workers of this State believe in jungle law and not in arbitration.

Hon. N. Keenan: I said the very reverse.

Mr. **SPEAKER**: Order!

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: That is not what the hon. member said, nor could that inference be drawn from his remarks. The Arbitration Court of this State is one of our busiest institutions. I go further and say that hardly a day passes without my being called on, as Minister for Labour, to act as a conciliation officer. I am called upon to intercede in this or that dispute, to keep the wheels of industry going. All over the world there is industrial unrest; there is unrest of other descriptions also, but the workers of Western Australia, in my opinion, have been doing and are doing a magnificent job in standing up to what they believe in themselves—arbitration. After all, arbitration was not born in this Parliament. Arbitration was born down in the mines, in the factories, and in other places where men worked, and it was built up on that foundation until we have the Industrial Arbitration Act that is on the statute-book today.

No-one knows better than the member for Nedlands himself—if he will cast his mind back over 20 years ago—the difficulties we experienced under the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1902. He and I were associated in some of those difficulties, and he knows what Parliament had to do to meet them. We succeeded in getting the present Industrial Arbitration Act passed, and appointing a permanent president of the Arbitration Court, whereas formerly that court was presided over by the Chief Justice or by a Judge taken from the divorce court. Since the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1925 and its amendments were passed, there have been but few industrial troubles or little industrial unrest in this State. I glory in the fact that the workers in this country, who advocated arbitration, and demanded that it go on the statute-book, have stood by it. If the rest of Australia can do with as little trouble as we have had in this State, and as we will continue to have, there would be nothing to be afraid of. In addition, the Minister for Industrial Development would be able to get his work done, too.

We are not afraid to talk of industrial unrest because the more we talk about it the more the workers will realise the necessity

of using the Arbitration Court. Industrial boards, conciliation boards and the Arbitration Court itself, are continually sitting. Little matters crop up all the time and where there are boards that can be quickly called together, my experience, as Minister for Labour, has been that we can settle them, and in only very few cases do they go further. If the hon. member would give further consideration to this point he would realise that there is nothing to fear from the workers so long as they are given a reasonable opportunity to have their disabilities dealt with. All they want is to have some board to which they can take their plaint and, in 99 cases out of 100, they abide by the decision.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—STATE FOREST ACCESS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 4th December.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [2.49]: The purpose of this Bill is the acquisition of certain land to enable reasonable access to be obtained to newly opened forest areas. With that aim I find, and I think other members will agree, no objection. The Minister has been good enough to make available to me plans of the areas to be acquired or resumed. In addition, I have made inquiries of the people concerned and, in the short time that has elapsed since the Minister introduced the Bill, I have had no reply indicating that any exception is being taken to the resumption of this land. It is, however, necessary for me to point out that although people, when they acquire land in Western Australia, are aware that this power of resumption is in existence and that at any time the Government might call upon them to relinquish portion of their property for public works or for other essential Government reasons, they do, at the same time, hope that such a claim will not be

made and that the land they have purchased will be theirs to dispose of and use as they see fit, subject, of course, to the common welfare.

It is because the average person acquiring land has faith in the security of his ownership and in the good intentions of the Government that it is necessary at all times for the power of resumption to be exercised with the utmost care. Where, as in this case, land is acquired for the construction of roads or tramlines it is important to make certain that the owner of the land will not have the remaining portions of his holding devalued because of the acquisition of what the Minister describes as just a narrow strip. The plans provided by the Minister show that in a number of cases a tramline will actually bisect portions of privately owned land. That may be no disadvantage to a landowner who is left with two pieces of land of approximately equal size, but, on the other hand, it is possible that it would interfere with his plans for the development of his property.

Mr. McLarty: It might cut him off from his water.

Mr. LESLIE: It might. In other cases, where only a small portion of land is being cut off, it might be possible that the tramline or roadway would bisect the area in such a way as to leave a small area of negligible value that could not be used at all. So, it is necessary that not only should the power of resumption be wisely and carefully exercised, but where it is done for the purpose of constructing a roadway it should be exercised so as to ensure that the land affected is not devalued. Although in this particular instance it would be necessary for the survey to follow the contour of the land—the easiest route and the easiest grade—at the same time every endeavour should be made to ensure that no alternative route is lost sight of which would leave the private owner of the land secure in his ownership, and in the confidence he had that the land would be his.

I do not oppose the Bill, but when a measure such as this is brought before the House, members should be advised fully of what action has been taken to ensure that there is no alternative but to adopt the course submitted in the measure. That is particularly necessary at a late stage of the session when time does not permit lengthy

inquiries to be made such as should, in my opinion, be made before the House agrees to a Bill of this kind. Parliament is here as the guardian of the rights of the people, and that is its essential purpose. We must exercise that function. I support the second reading, but would offer the suggestion that on future occasions the fullest possible information should be given. In a matter of this kind the House should be told whether other routes would not serve as useful a purpose. We should be given some intimation of the loss—not the mere cost of resuming the land—to landowners that may be involved when a roadway, railway or tramway is laid through their property.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [3.3]: I am glad the Government has taken this action to make provision for a better supply of timber to meet the requirements of the State. The member for Mt. Marshall has rightly raised an important point as to the resumption of land whereby a severance will probably take place of a small acreage, which will definitely devalue such a property. Under the law any property owner has a claim for compensation for severance. I was recently connected with a case against the Commonwealth Government, where the claimant was awarded a substantial amount for severance. I think the landowner always has that right, and can exercise it. I am particularly pleased that a move is being made to assist the timber position in this State. Naturally the Government wants access to these virgin and valuable forests and it must therefore take the action necessary to get its transport facilities through to the areas concerned. It is necessary for land to be resumed for that purpose. I am pleased, from a personal point of view, because recently I had a conference with the Minister for Forests, and discussions with the Premier, on the dire shortage of the different timbers required in this State today, such as case timbers and box boards.

I hope that, as the result of this resumption and the starting of these new mills, the position will be remedied. There is a tremendous added cost to the industry owing to the shortage of timber. In the industry with which I am connected we were trading with the State Saw Mills, and were able to purchase our requirements of case timber and

the boxes we required at 11s. 6d. per dozen. I have recently been informed that they are now to cost 20s. 6d. per dozen, which is an enormous increase, taking into consideration the high cost of packing foodstuffs for London. I hope it will not be long before there is a move to get the mills going in these forests in order to relieve the position.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (PROMOTIONS APPEAL BOARD) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 4th December.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [3.8]: This is a Bill for which, as far as I am concerned, the Government must take full responsibility. It was introduced last night and between 11 p.m. yesterday and 2 p.m. today, though I have endeavoured to get in touch with people who might have had some views to offer or objections to raise, the time has been too short, in spite of resolute endeavours on my part, to trace and contact such people. So, while there is possibly good reason for the Bill—and I am prepared to assume that the Minister has consulted all those who are likely to be affected and that they have acquiesced in it—

The Minister for Labour: It was at their request.

Mr. McDONALD: I will accept the Minister's word for that, and it will help to fortify my mind as to the justification for this Bill which has, however, one or two peculiarities. I listened to the Minister's explanation, and it appears that there is a union whose members are engaged in public works mainly or entirely. That is the union to be served by this proposed legislation. The reason appears to be that the members of that union, or some of them, are sometimes

permanent employees of the Government, and as such are entitled to the benefits of this legislation, but at other times they are temporary employees and are therefore then outside this measure. It is understandable that they might be outside the legislation, because those who are entitled to the protection or benefits of the Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act, 1945, are employees of the Government, and "employee" means a person employed under the State in a permanent capacity in any department.

It is difficult to understand—though the Minister may be able to explain it to my satisfaction—how an employee can be permanent one week or month, temporary the next month and then permanent again. That is a type of permanency that seems a little difficult to understand. I mention this matter because, on the Minister's explanation of the Bill, that difficulty struck me. However, it may be capable of quite a simple explanation. If the legislation is to apply to permanent employees, one would think they would be people who would be permanent all the time and not people who are shuffled backwards and forwards from permanent to temporary positions, even though the temporary positions might be in the service of the State. Another aspect is that the measure provides—

Any union as hereinafter defined in Section six whose membership includes any employee may request the Minister to declare in respect of every employee being a member thereof that this Act shall cease to apply.

So the union makes the request, and presumably does so in consequence of a resolution passed by a majority of its members. That is a democratic procedure. On the majority of members so deciding, all members come outside the measure if the Minister decides to make a declaration to that effect. The Bill says that any union as defined in Section 6 may make application for such a declaration, and under Section 6 of the Act the term "union" means "an industrial union of workers within the meaning of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1941," and includes the Civil Service Association of Western Australia Inc., the State School Teachers' Union of W.A. Inc., and the Western Australian Railway Officers' Union. They are all unions within the meaning of the parent Act and within the meaning of the Bill now before the

House, so apparently if the majority—assuming a majority rules—of the Civil Service Association, the Teachers' Union or the Western Australian Railway Officers' Union decides to bring all its members outside the Act, by a majority vote, then if the Minister so agrees he can, by a declaration, exclude all the members of that union from the rights or protection given by the Act.

It is conceivable that all members of the Civil Service Association might find themselves outside the Act. That is a possibility. The Minister, however, might say the possibility is so unlikely that we may safely ignore it. As I read it, that appears to be legally within the possibilities of the measure. I have heard of no contrary reactions from anyone who may be affected by this legislation and I have had no time to consult anyone.

While the Bill seems to be somewhat difficult to understand by one who is not a member of the Civil Service or closely in touch with its ramifications, still, on the Minister's explanation relating to the union referred to, there seems to be reason why we should provide in certain circumstances for putting all the members of that union on the same footing rather than that some should remain permanent and enjoy the advantages, protection and preferences of the Act, while others who may cease to be permanent and who become temporary find themselves outside that protection and therefore in a position of inferiority in the matter of promotion compared with the permanent men. With these observations largely advanced to explain my situation and to protect my interests and responsibilities in connection with the Bill, I propose to offer no objection to the second reading. In certain circumstances it would be reasonable and fair, and I will leave it to the Minister and the Government to ensure that the Bill contains nothing that might operate unfairly against other branches of the Civil Service.

THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR (Hon. A. H. Panton—Leederville—in reply) [3.23]: I can quite appreciate the hon. member's difficulty. I myself found it a little difficult to understand the position, although I am more closely associated with unions than he is. We may say that Government employees fall into four classes—

(1) professional, (2) engineers, architects, etc., (3) clerical, (4) constructional and maintenance. Constructional men are employed on jobs that might finish at any time and then they have to stand down until another job starts. Obviously they are not permanent men. Another gang of men may be engaged on a railway line doing nothing but maintenance and they would be permanent men. Consider the big construction work at Stirling Dam where something like 300 men are employed at present on construction work! When the job is finished, they may be out of work for several days or weeks or they may be transferred to another job. Those men do not come under the Act. Most of the A.W.U. men are constructional men and do not come under the Act. Members of this union when engaged on constructional work receive a different rate of wage and a larger margin than when on maintenance work. They may be on maintenance work for a couple of days or a week. Then they may go on to some big constructional work such as sewerage. They move backwards and forwards. This union is more peculiar in that way than is any other.

Regarding the civil servants and railway officers, the hon. member's fears are not likely to be realised. With the exception of a very few temporary men and women who do not come under the Act, they are permanent employees. The possibility exists, but not the probability. There are only three groups of people concerned—the Minister for Labour or the Minister for Works, the engineers and the union.

Hon. N. Keenan: Which union, the A.W.U.?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: No, the Metropolitan and Goldfields Water Supply Employees' Union of Workers. I happen to be the State President of the A.W.U. I have had the engineers, the men and the Solicitor General in conference on this question and this Bill represents the only solution we could reach. These men were inadvertently brought under the Act in the first place. As a matter of fact they were overlooked owing to the peculiarities of their work. If the Bill be passed, they will revert to the original position. The engineer will be responsible for promotions and, if there is any dissatisfaction, he will get the Minister to appoint an independent chairman to settle the argu-

ment. I got Mr. Bateman to sit on a case a few days ago. I repeat that the position of this organisation is peculiar and that the measure is not likely to affect other people.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILLS (8)—RETURNED.

- 1, Comprehensive Agricultural Areas and Goldfields Water Supply.
With an amendment.
- 2, Country Areas Water Supply.
With amendments.
- 3, Industries Assistance Act Continuance.
- 4, Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment.
- 5, Financial Emergency Act Amendment.
- 6, Companies Act Amendment.
- 7, Marketing of Potatoes (No. 2).
- 8, Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment.
Without amendment.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TROT- TING ASSOCIATION.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. A. A. M. Coverley—Kimberley) [3.29] in moving the second reading said: Members will recall the reasons that actuated the Government in bringing this legislation before Parliament. There was a disagreement between the breeders, owners and trainers of trotting horses and the committee controlling and conducting the sport. This disagreement brought about a stoppage of the sport and the Chief Secretary, who administers the Racing Restriction Act, was appealed to. He appointed the then Crown Solicitor to inquire and make suggestions for the guidance of the Government, and the Crown Solicitor recommended an amendment of the Racing Restriction Act to permit of the Trotting Association conducting its sport. As an outcome of that

inquiry, a Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council last session. It was not approved, but a suggestion was made that a Royal Commission should be appointed. That was done and, after very thorough and exhaustive inquiries, the Royal Commissioner made his report and recommendations to the Government, and a Bill was prepared in conformity with those recommendations.

That Bill was presented to the Legislative Council and received very close scrutiny. Many amendments were made, and the Bill has been forwarded to this Chamber for our consideration. I think that no measure introduced into the legislative halls of this State has received more publicity than this one. There has been a controversy in the Press. Public opinion has been expressed, both for and against the proposals originally made, a Royal Commission has sat, and this is the result. It would be presumption on my part to repeat all the arguments for and against this Bill which have taken place over the last 18 months.

Mr. Watts: Tell us one thing! How far does it depart from the Royal Commissioner's recommendations?

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: I do not think it departs from those recommendations in any material way. Some amendments were introduced in another place that departed from the recommendations, but the Bill was recommitted, and the original measure was reinstated. I feel there is no need for me to go to any length in trying to convince the House that the measure should be agreed to. There was a good deal of opposition to the Bill as originally introduced but, as this measure has passed through another place, that opposition has disappeared, and all those interested are now convinced that this is a much better Bill and will be regarded by fair-minded people as a reasonable proposition to which the House should agree. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Leslie, debate adjourned.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 4th December.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [3.33]: Introducing the Bill, the Minister for Justice, in his inimitably naive way, said that

it was just a small measure and therefore would not worry members very much. At least, that is what he intimated. I say advisedly that he said it in his inimitably naive manner; because, whether he is aware of it or not, he has thrown a bombshell into this Chamber, for he has stirred up a question which was the subject of investigation some time ago, and on which legislation has been passed in this Chamber on a couple of occasions. The purpose of the Bill is to remove from the control of the Licensing Court the liquor facilities in railway refreshment rooms, which are to be operated directly under the Commissioner of Railways. It is peculiar that after the Minister introduced this Bill, we find a proposal submitted for the consideration of the House to make the Commissioner of Railways wholly and entirely subservient to the dictates and directorship of the Minister for Railways. If that purpose is achieved, it will mean in effect that the Minister for Railways will be the deciding authority as to what is to happen in connection with the sale of liquor in railway refreshment rooms.

I think it is as well that members should be aware of what has happened in connection with liquor licenses on those premises over a period of years. The Act in its present form was introduced in 1910 and passed in 1911. A provision in the Government Railways Act empowered the Commissioner of Railways to give liquor licenses to lessees of railway refreshment rooms. That continued until 1922, when a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the operations of the Licensing Act. One of the terms of reference was that the commission should inquire into the licensing and conduct of railway refreshment rooms. That Royal Commission consisted of Mr. Alex McCallum, then member for South Fremantle, Mr. Willoughby Mann, the member for Perth, Mr. O'Loughlen, the member for Forrest, Mr. Pickering, the member for Sussex, and Mr. Richardson, the member for Subiaco. Referring to that term of reference, the report of the commission said—

The Commission considers that the Licensing Court should control all channels through which liquor is sold, and suggested amendments provide that the powers conferred on the Commissioner of Railways shall be exercised with the confirmation of such court.

That means that after 10, 11 or 12 years in which the Commissioner of Railways was

the sole authority in the granting of liquor licenses for railway premises, a Royal Commission, after extensive inquiries, recommended that the Commissioner of Railways be deprived of that power, and that the licenses for railway premises be brought under the Licensing Court. I have not seen the evidence that led the commission to reach that decision, but a member of the commission, when speaking to the Bill introduced to the House as a result of the Royal Commission's recommendations, said—and I am quoting from Vol. 66 of "Hansard"—

A good deal of evidence was given regarding the conduct of railway refreshment-rooms, and it was thought advisable to bring those refreshment-rooms under the Licensing Court rather than permit licenses to be issued by the Commissioner of Railways.

The Bill that contained the clauses repealing Section 59 of the Government Railways Act which gave the Railway Commissioner power to grant licenses without reference to the court was introduced by Sir James Mitchell, and when he introduced it he said—again I quote from Vol. 66, this time from page 439—

Then we propose to deal with the licensing of railway cars and refreshment-rooms. This is a perfectly reasonable provision. Under the Government Railways Act, 1904, power is given to the Commissioner of Railways to say who shall be licensed for these purposes. In future, the court will have to decide that, and these people will have to conform with the directions of the licensing bench.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is no power to wipe them out altogether.

The PREMIER: They will have to be approved by the licensing bench. The board will control the licenses and they will be subject to the Act, just the same as any other seller of liquor. The leases run out next year, and we will have to respect the arrangement during that period. After that, therefore, the right to lease these refreshment-rooms will come under the Licensing Act.

The Minister for Mines: The Bill will only deal with the sale of liquor.

The PREMIER: As the Minister for Railways reminds me, the Bill will only affect the railway refreshment-rooms so far as the sale of liquor is concerned, otherwise the refreshment-rooms will be able to proceed with their business the same as usual. The licensing bench will decide who is to sell the liquor.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Will the bench over-ride the Crown?

The PREMIER: The bench will over-ride the Commissioner of Railways. The Bill will regulate this question.

Hon. P. Collier: It is time it was put under the control of someone. They are abolishing it, granting it, and changing again. We want some stability.

The Minister for Lands: Then they abolished the cars altogether.

Mr. LESLIE: They abolished the cars, but left the Commissioner to sanction the granting of licenses under the control of the Licensing Court. In introducing this Bill, the Minister has conveyed no reason why at this stage a departure should be made from a practice that has existed for the last 20 odd years. This is the first occasion on which I can find any reference to dissatisfaction on the part of Parliament with the existing arrangement.

Mr. Cross: If you grew wheat and failed, you would not keep on growing it, would you?

Mr. LESLIE: That is a matter of what I would care to do! At the time when the then Premier introduced his Bill as a result of the Royal Commission's report dissatisfaction with the conditions existing then in railway refreshment rooms in connection with the sale of liquor was very great. This particular clause in the Bill went through without comment except for that by the Premier, and the interjections made during his speech. I have examined the debates of the Committees in both Houses, and that particular provision was never mentioned. Therefore it was evidently welcomed. Circumstances as they exist today have given rise to no complaint concerning the set-up, although one may find much cause for complaint about the services that are rendered. One would not be very proud to take anyone into the liquor part of the refreshment room of the Perth railway station or to invite a traveller by a train to partake of some refreshment there. It is literally the black hole of Calcutta. The beer could be swarming with flies for all one could say, and there is difficulty in seeing whether there are any flies in the glass or not.

The Minister for Justice: That is an exaggeration. I have been there and found the place quite clean. It is unfair criticism and condemnation.

Mr. LESLIE: Circumstances that have existed there in the past have completely discouraged me and many other people from using that particular facility. If the facili-

ties and surroundings have improved, I am glad to know it. Other people who have had occasion to make use of the railway refreshment rooms in Perth would also be glad to know that an improvement had taken place, and that they can now make use of them.

The Minister for Justice: Your statement is an exaggeration.

Mr. LESLIE: I am pleased to receive the assurance of the Minister. It is no use having a service unless people can take advantage of it. As to the present set-up, the only complaint that comes to my mind now in view of the circumstances is that the Licensing Court appears not to have carried out its duty and to have seen that the conditions associated with the liquor portions of the railway refreshment rooms are the best that could be provided for the public. At any rate, the court has not made public the result of its inspections, if any have been carried out. I do not know whether any investigations have been made into this question, and I have seen no public comment coming from the Licensing Court as to the conditions appertaining to railway refreshment rooms where licenses have been issued.

If there has been a weakness in the present set-up the only one can be that the Licensing Court has not carried out its duty as faithfully and conscientiously as it might have done. That, however, does not justify depriving it of the opportunity to carry out this task. The attitude of the Commissioner towards the Licensing Court and its services in general is one that the Minister in charge is most fitted to express an opinion about. Because the Licensing Court has failed in its duty and because the Commissioner has not exercised sufficient supervision over the refreshment rooms is no justification for saying to the Commissioner, "We will give you all these powers." I can only judge the position by what I know, and I do know the Commissioner has failed to see that proper services are rendered to the public. The Commissioner should have some supervision over all these establishments. It is now suggested that the powers he has had in the past should be taken from him. I cannot see the necessity for removing from the Licensing Act the right of the court to exercise supervision over licensed premises attached to the railways and also the right

to grant licenses for railway premises. I agree that it may be necessary to provide that the Commissioner shall nominate one of his servants where it is intended that the Railway Department shall operate the license. I believe that is to be the policy of the Government in future.

It is correct and proper that the person who shall be licensed to operate a railway refreshment room that is selling alcoholic liquors shall be nominated by the Commissioner, but I still think the conditions in connection with that license and the operations conducted under it should be under the control of the Licensing Court. We are going to be placed in a very anomalous position if the Licensing Court visits any centre where both a publican's general license and a railway refreshment room license are in operation, and where the court has to maintain a certain standard in connection with the publican's license while it has to stand by and see the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in connection with railway premises licensed in the same locality and perhaps within a few hundred yards of the establishment it is criticising and condemning. I do not say that such a condition would prevail in the future under the proposed change nor do I say that has prevailed in the past, generally speaking, though it has prevailed in the case of some railway refreshment rooms.

The Minister for Lands: That also applies to hotels in some cases.

Mr. LESLIE: Yes, and the Licensing Court has attempted to remedy such defects. Members will agree that if a public complaint arises in regard to a railway service and that complaint is made to the Commissioner himself, in almost every instance the reply received is most unsatisfactory. I do not know whether that is because of a feeling of responsibility on the part of the Commissioner to officers immediately below him or whether it arises out of an unwarranted sense of loyalty to lower officers in the service, but generally speaking when a complaint is made the department is wholeheartedly defended, and the complainants are always left unsatisfied and with the feeling that they were wrong in having had the temerity to bring forward some unsatisfactory feature in connection with railway administration. We can only judge a case by what we know of it. Whilst

we know that sort of thing has applied in the past we are nevertheless hopeful that it will not apply in the future. At this stage we should not take the risk. We must have some very sound and vital reasons before we agree to a departure from a set of conditions that may land us in greater difficulties than we are in at present.

I hope it is not the intention of the Minister to proceed with the Committee stage today. I have a number of amendments to move, but unfortunately the typewritten copies have not come to me yet. I have endeavoured to point out that whilst I agree that the person who is to hold a license in connection with the railway refreshment rooms shall be responsible to the Commissioner, I also consider that the refreshment rooms themselves should be under the surveillance of the Licensing Court. It is very necessary that there should be some amendment to the Bill to provide for that being done. The Bill at present takes away entirely the power of the court in this matter. I am prepared to limit its powers in certain directions and to give the Commissioner what powers he thinks are necessary in connection with the licensed holders, and it is for the purpose of making such appointment that this Bill is desired. I do not propose to interfere with that aspect, but I want to leave to the court the responsibility for seeing that all these places are as well conducted as they ought to be.

The Bill also provides that railway refreshment rooms operated by the Commissioner shall serve liquid refreshments to anyone during the normal periods when public houses are open, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. in all places remote from the Goldfields, and from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. on the Goldfields. The Bill does not say that these refreshment rooms shall be open during those hours, but no doubt that is a matter for the discretion of the Commissioner and the licencees who are appointed to operate the licences. That would be quite a good provision. It is probably wise to leave the Bill as it stands in that respect. Once the bar of a railway refreshment room is open during the normal hours of trading, anyone can obtain refreshments there.

Mr. Thorn: Do you object to that?

Mr. LESLIE: No, that is reasonable. If I went to the railway station to meet the member for Toodyay on his return from a

trip to his electorate, although I might not have been a passenger I would be able to invite him to partake of some refreshments if the premises were attractive enough.

Mr. Watts: Which they rarely are.

Mr. Thorn: In quite a number of places there is only the railway refreshment room, because there is no hotel.

Mr. LESLIE: I see the point mentioned by the hon. member. The Commissioner at present has discretion in this matter but if the intention of the Minister for Railways is carried out he, the Minister, will have discretion to say whether railway refreshment rooms, which may be the only places in the locality at which alcoholic liquor can be obtained, shall remain open all day.

The Minister for Justice: He will not deal with such trivial things as that.

Mr. LESLIE: The trouble has been that the Commissioner has not worried about trivial things which are actually of tremendous importance to the public.

The Minister for Justice: To the little man.

Mr. LESLIE: I suggest that possibly the Minister and the Commissioner of Railways are the only two persons who are out of the picture. The set-up at present is anything but satisfactory. It is the little things of life that make up the big things. Unfortunately the Commissioner seems to have been looking at the millions of pounds and lost sight of the fact that these millions are really made up of so many more millions of pence. It may be only a question of a humble cup of tea or a glass of beer served in an attractive manner; but it is the little things that become matters of importance. In the case of some centre where there is only a railway refreshment room and no other licensed premises, an extension of hours to meet the public needs and requirements would earn public commendation of the Commissioner and of the Minister, and indicate that they were interested in the welfare of travellers.

The Minister for Lands: We had better give him a publican's general license and have done with it.

[Mr. Rodoreda took the Chair.]

Mr. LESLIE: I would have no objection to that so long as the application were

made to the Licensing Court; but under the Bill the Minister will be a law entirely to himself.

The Minister for Justice: If he had that type of license he would need to have dining-rooms and everything else.

Mr. LESLIE: That might be quite so. Another provision in the Bill will enable the refreshment-rooms to remain open for "a reasonable time." I hope the Minister will be able to satisfy the House as to what is a reasonable time before and after the departure of passenger trains.

The Minister for Lands: And what it would be if the train were running late.

Mr. LESLIE: Yes; I do not know how it would work out then. During the hours when the ordinary licensees are compelled to close their premises, passengers—and only passengers—can, according to the Bill, obtain liquor during a reasonable time before and after the departure of the train. That is not what is intended, but according to the Bill as it stands, only the departing passengers will be able to obtain liquid refreshments within that period. It will be necessary for the passenger to produce his ticket to an inspector to prove that he is to undertake a journey of at least 20 miles beyond the station where he is at the moment. The arriving passenger had no means of proving that he is a passenger. He is not going to proceed on a journey of 20 miles even though he may have just concluded one extending over 1,000 miles. He is not to be entitled to a drink at the railway refreshment room at all. That is my interpretation of the Bill.

Mr. Watts: And it is a correct interpretation.

Mr. LESLIE: I do not think that is in accordance with the intentions of the Minister. In the circumstances, that particular provision will definitely have to be amended to make it reasonable and to give effect to what the Government desires. Then I trust that the Minister will agree to embody in the Bill a clear definition as to what type of inspector is to be able to demand the production of a ticket in order that a passenger may prove his bona fides. There are all kinds of inspectors—railway inspectors, police inspectors, licensing inspectors and so on. We should clearly set out what type of inspector is entitled to demand the production of a passenger's ticket. If that is

not done, I could say that I was a ticket inspector and demand the production of the ticket. Candidly I do not like the Bill.

The Minister for Lands: That is too bad.

Mr. LESLIE: I hope the second reading will not be agreed to because I think the legislation is entirely uncalled for. The Minister has given the House no evidence as to the necessity for it, and I very much doubt if he could do so. There have been no complaints against the present set-up. I would like to have the opinion of the members of the Licensing Court.

The Minister for Justice: They have already approved of the Bill.

Mr. LESLIE: I would like to know the reasons why the Licensing Court members approve of it. Perhaps they have given up the Commissioner of Railways as a forlorn hope and consider this represents a way out of a bad situation. Altered circumstances might result in the members of the court changing their opinion. To my mind the House would not be justified in agreeing to the second reading; but, if it does so, I trust the Minister will be prepared to defer the Committee stage so that I may place a number of amendments on the notice paper.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [4.5]: I agree with the member for Mt. Marshall when he urges that the Licensing Court should have some say in connection with the granting of licenses for the sale of liquor in refreshment rooms. It is just as necessary for men in charge of those amenities to be of good character as it is that those granted licenses to conduct hotels should be men of that type. Why this power should be taken from the court I find it difficult to understand. The member for Mt. Marshall also referred to the wording of the Bill and particularly to that part where it says—

Such liquor shall be sold only within a reasonable time before and after the arrival or departure of any passenger train.

I presume that means that passengers can obtain a drink in the refreshment room during the time the train is in the station, but it does not say so.

Mr. Watts: It does not allow even that.

Mr. McDonald: That is so.

Mr. McLARTY: It makes me feel on sounder grounds when I hear the legal members of the House endorse my view. I do not like the phrase "within a reasonable time." I understand that under the existing law members of the general public cannot go to a refreshment room to secure a drink unless they have tickets, but under the Bill the local population will be able to do so.

The Minister for Justice: I have never been asked for a ticket when I have been in a refreshment room.

Mr. Watts: But this has not been the law before.

Mr. McLARTY: I am talking about the law as it will be if the Bill be passed. As worded now, it will mean an "open slather" for the general public.

The Minister for Lands: Have you ever been asked for a ticket when you have had a drink in a railway refreshment room?

Mr. McLARTY: No.

The Minister for Lands: Nor has anyone else.

Mr. McLARTY: Reference has been made to the fact that in some instances the railway refreshment room is the only place where liquor can be obtained because there are no hotels at those centres. If the Bill be agreed to, the refreshment rooms will be in open competition with the local hotel-keepers at places where such hotels exist.

The Minister for Justice: We have never heard of any such complaints.

Mr. McLARTY: They will be forthcoming if the Bill be agreed to. I am not at all satisfied with the term "reasonable time." What is a reasonable time?

The Minister for Justice: A reasonable time would be 20 or 30 minutes before or after—whatever the regulation may set out.

Mr. McLARTY: The time should be specified, otherwise the man in charge of the refreshment room might say that an hour was reasonable or he might even place no limit on the time at all. With such a loose term embodied in the clause, it could have very wide application. I trust the Bill will be amended in that respect.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [4.10]: I must say that with the great bulk of the remarks so ably made by the member for

Mt. Marshall, I am in entire agreement. I cannot conceive of any sufficient reason why the approval of the Licensing Court should not be required for the acquisition of a license for a railway refreshment room where liquor is sold. I do not propose to cover the ground traversed by the member for Mt. Marshall but merely to comment on one or two matters that occur to me. One has been referred to by the member for Murray-Wellington. The Bill is worded in a most extraordinary manner and I am convinced that the clauses do not convey what the Minister intends. In that regard the statements made by the member for Murray-Wellington were absolutely correct. As the Bill is worded, the only people who can buy a drink between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. in ordinary places or between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. on the Goldfields are those who are not travellers on the railways. I say that because the people in charge of the railway refreshment rooms will only be able to sell liquor at a reasonable time before or after the departure of a train. The man who is travelling by train cannot buy a drink at the refreshment room before the train arrives and he certainly cannot do so after the train has departed because he will be on the train.

The Minister for Justice: But he has already travelled by train.

Mr. WATTS: That does not matter because the liquor can only be sold to him within a reasonable time before and after the train has departed.

The Minister for Lands: If I went to the York station and had to wait 20 minutes before my train arrived, could I not get a drink?

Mr. WATTS: The Minister would be all right but the only people who can buy drink are those who are not on a train when it arrives or departs. The next point I do not like is the fact that when other licensed premises are supposed to be closed, liquor shall only be sold at the railway refreshment rooms to such persons as are in a position to produce their railway tickets to an authorised inspector. A passenger buys a ticket in Perth and travels to Katanning, a distance of 225 miles. He leaves Perth at 7.25 p.m. and arrives at Katanning at 5.40 a.m. next day. His ticket—he will take a single ticket, because people nowadays do not take return tickets seeing that

they have to pay merely double the single fare—is taken from him at Woodanilling, which is 12 miles from Katanning. When he arrives at that town he is without a ticket and cannot produce one to the inspector and therefore is deprived of the opportunity to secure liquid refreshment.

Then again a passenger may leave Albany at 5 p.m. after purchasing a single ticket enabling him to travel to Katanning. He arrives at Katanning, if the train is on time, at 10.30 p.m., doubtless the time when a great proportion of our citizens would care to have liquid refreshment. He, however, has handed over his ticket to the ticket inspector between Broomehill and Katanning. That is the invariable system. Consequently, he has no ticket when he arrives at Katanning and is deprived of the benefits of this Bill, if it becomes an Act, because liquor is only to be supplied to persons who are in possession of and can produce to the licensee a ticket authorising him to travel by train. The only way of overcoming this difficulty is that when he gets off the train at Katanning, he is to go into the stationmaster's office and acquire a ticket for a distance of more than 20 miles, a ticket which he does not propose to use, but which he merely produces to the licensee for the purpose of obtaining what he thinks are his lawful rights.

As there are two portions of this Bill which obviously have been ill-considered, I am not at all sure that the whole Bill is not equally ill-considered. There is nothing to commend those two paragraphs so far as their wording is concerned, nor the last one. As I said, I do not know that the same remark that the measure is ill-considered would not apply to the whole Bill. Without detaining the Minister or the House, I propose to adopt the same attitude towards the measure as was adopted by the member for Mt. Marshall and the member for Murray-Wellington.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [4.17]: I desire to join with other members who have opposed the Bill, but I do so principally on the ground that the Minister has stated he intends to transfer the refreshment rooms from the private lessees to the Commissioner. In my opinion, that would be a retrograde step. I see no reason why the licensees or lessees of these refreshment rooms cannot

be kept up to the mark if the right kind of action is taken. As I have said before in this House, some refreshment rooms are run well and one can obtain reasonable refreshment at them. I refer to Spencers Brook, as I have done on previous occasions. There a person can obtain a pie, toast, cakes or bisenits. There is a variety of choose from. But the refreshment room at Chidlow is a disgrace to the people conducting it. Numerous complaints have been made about it, but nobody takes the slightest action. When one asks for refreshments there, one is told, "There is only coffee." That is all nonsense. The lessee has a ration of tea in proportion to the consumption by the persons patronising the rooms. When one gets the same complaint time after time about getting only coffee, one can but assume that the lessee is selling his ration of tea. He must get it. As I said, this complaint has been brought forward from time to time, but not the slightest notice has been taken of it. I well remember the late member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie complaining in this House about the Chidlow refreshment room. He said it was a disgrace, but no action was taken.

Mr. McLarty: You cannot get a cup of tea at Perth Central Station in the morning.

Mr. SEWARD: No. It behoves somebody to find out what the lessee does with the tea. Another disgrace is that at Chidlow one is supplied with a sandwich containing tinned meat. The customers have to pay the same price for those refreshments as they pay for refreshments which they get at rooms conducted in a proper way. If the Railway Department cannot adequately supervise these refreshment rooms which are let to tenderers, have we any assurance that the department will run them any better? I hope the House will reject the Bill. People tender for these refreshment rooms in competition with others, and it is only reasonable that they should be made to live up to their contracts. I contrast the position here with the position in Victoria. There are different classes of refreshment rooms in that State, known as A, B and C refreshment rooms. In the A refreshment room one is provided with a sit-down meal.

The Minister for Lands: Those refreshment rooms are run by the department.

Mr. SEWARD: No.

The Minister for Mines: They are in Victoria.

Mr. SEWARD: They may be.

The Minister for Justice: They are in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Mr. SEWARD: They were not years ago. My point is that passengers were supplied with guide books containing the menus of these refreshment rooms, the lessees of which were required to supply what was contained in the menus.

The Minister for Lands: The department in this State is taking over the refreshment rooms and re-organising them.

Mr. SEWARD: I do not view with any pleasure the prospect of the department taking them over.

The Minister for Lands: They could not be worse than they are.

Mr. SEWARD: But they could be better. The control which the Commissioner could exercise over private tenderers would be far better, if it were exercised, than the control which the department might exercise if it ran the rooms itself.

The Minister for Justice: The system of tendering is bad.

Mr. SEWARD: The only other point I desire to touch on is a continuation of what was raised by the member for Mt. Marshall and the Leader of the Opposition with regard to the clause in the Bill providing that a person can get liquor at the refreshment rooms when the hotels are closed. All that is necessary to entitle a person to a drink is the possession of ticket which would enable him to travel 20 miles. I know a particular station where a train is due to arrive at about three minutes past nine at night. One can imagine what will happen there. At about five minutes to nine there will be an exodus from the hotel to the station, where for 2s. 9d. a person can buy a ticket entitling him to travel 20 miles. If the train is late, one can imagine the people clamouring at the bar for a drink and producing tickets entitling them to travel a distance of 20 miles.

The Minister for Justice: We must have some terrible people in Western Australia.

Mr. SEWARD: The Bill is so stupid that I do not know what induced the Minister to bring it into the House. One could drive

a coach and six through any part of it. For a couple of shillings or so a person can buy a ticket entitling him to travel 20 miles and get as much drink as he wants at the station.

The Minister for Justice: I am going to Russia, where there are some good people!

Mr. SEWARD: The Minister ought to get some good Bills. I sincerely hope that this Bill will not be passed. I am against the department having the control of these refreshment rooms. Apart from that, some of the clauses in the Bill are so badly drafted that I do not know what conditions would exist if the measure were passed.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Kanowna—in reply) [4.23]: I am quite willing to defer the Committee stage of the Bill until Tuesday next, to give members an opportunity to study the measure. It would appear that there are some anomalies that require to be rectified. The reason for bringing the Bill down is that the Government intends to take over the railway refreshment rooms because of the many complaints about the way in which they have been conducted by the present lessees. The object of the Bill is to facilitate the sale of liquor in the refreshment rooms by the Commissioner of Railways. He will be placed on exactly the same basis as are the Commissioners of Railways of all the other States and New Zealand. Formerly, the licensing of these refreshment rooms came under the control of the Commissioner, but in 1922 an Act was passed placing the rooms under the Licensing Court. At that time great dissatisfaction was expressed with what were then known as railway refreshment cars. I remember travelling on trains with such a car, and about half the passengers were under the influence of liquor. They caused many disturbances and the Commissioner of Railways came in for much criticism on that account. These railway refreshment cars will not again be used. I do not see any reason why the Commissioner of Railways should not have control of the sale of liquor in these rooms.

Mr. Doney: Do you see any reason why he should?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do, because he should not be hampered. He should have a free hand.

Mr. Doney: We all want that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Commissioner of Railways is a reputable and honest person. I defy anyone to question his integrity.

Mr. Leslie: Nobody has suggested that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It has been suggested in this House. I have listened to much criticism of the Commissioner.

Opposition members: No!

Mr. Doney: You have never heard a word against the personal character of the Commissioner at any time.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: These refreshment rooms should not be under the control of the Licensing Court. That court deals with hotels, which are obliged to furnish living accommodation and meals. The Commissioner will run these rooms solely for the convenience of the public, not for profit.

Mr. Doney: I do not think you know too much about these railway refreshment rooms.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I think I know just as much as does the hon. member.

Mr. Doney: You may know a lot more, but you do not know everything, by a long way.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: My friend on my left says I do not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister must not reflect on members.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am sorry if I have done so.

The Minister for Lands: The Minister is reflecting on himself.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so. The refreshment rooms will be opened a reasonable time before and after the arrival of the train, between 20 and 30 minutes. The member for Murray Wellington mentioned that he did not see any method by which people could be served with liquor at the rooms between those times; and that is a point that must be looked into. As I said, the desire is that the Minister should not be hampered in any way, but that he should be given a free hand and put on the same basis as the Commissioner of Railways in the other States of Australia and New Zealand. If he is not, it would be a reflection on him. We should not reflect upon a person with the

responsibilities of the Commissioner of Railways.

Mr. Doney: He would not have the records of various licensees in the way that the police have.

[*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

The Minister for Lands: He would have to check 25 licensees at 25 different stations!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It certainly would not be convenient for him to have to arrange for licenses to be granted by the Licensing Court. That would hamper him in the conduct of his business and be unfair, especially as there is no necessity for it. The reason for the proposed change is that the refreshment rooms now leased are not conducted satisfactorily by the lessees. I was, when travelling, often disgusted with the railways, and that is one of the reasons why, at that time, the member for Boulder took from the Commissioner of Railways the means of licensing. Under the Bill, the position will be exactly the same as it is now, because if any rooms are to be leased they will come under the jurisdiction of the Licensing Court.

This measure deals only with refreshment rooms run by the Commissioner. The only difference is that it is now the policy of the Government to take over the refreshment rooms, and they will be controlled by the Commissioner, who will be given full authority over the selling of spirituous and fermented liquors by his servants. I cannot see any objection to this. If we were going to allow any Tom, Dick or Harry to run these places, there might be some objection, but the Commissioner is a high servant of the State—a man with status equal to that of a Supreme Court judge, we might say—and he, for the protection of his own character, will be careful to see that these rooms are run as they should be, and would be, if under the control of the Licensing Court. If he is not given that privilege, he will be hampered and restricted in many ways, and it will be an infernal nuisance for him when he has to change employees who are not satisfactory.

Mr. Leslie: It will bring about the same set of circumstances that the member for Boulder complained of in 1922.

The Minister for Lands: If you had been on the Kalgoorlie express at that time,

you also would have complained. I know all about that.

Mr. SPEAKER! Order.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I know about that, too. All the time I was Minister for Railways, I never had one complaint about the sale of liquor in our refreshment rooms.

Mr. Leslie: People were fed up with complaining.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I did not even receive a complaint from the member for Pingelly, so there could not have been much wrong. I hope that the House will agree to the second reading of the Bill. If members have any amendments, they will, so long as they do not take away from the Bill what is intended, be given consideration. But we intend that this measure shall become law, because the Commissioner would be hampered considerably if he did not get full control of the refreshment rooms. The Minister will have no say in the matter, because it will come under the administration of the Railway Department, and Ministers do not look after little things in their departments; they deal only with Government policy and matters that are important and essential.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	21
Noes	....	....	....	13
				—
Majority for	....	....	....	8
				—

AYES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Fox	Mr. Read
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Smith
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Telfer
Mr. Lenhy	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Triant
Mr. Millington	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Needham	Mr. Cross
Mr. Nulsen	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. North
Mr. Brand	Mr. Owen
Mr. Doney	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Seward
Mr. McLarty	

(Teller.)

PAIRS

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Holman	Mr. Berry
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Hill
Mr. Wise	Mr. Mann
Mr. Collier	Mr. Stubbs

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—PURCHASERS' PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Kanowna) [4.39] in moving the second reading said: This is a rather important Bill. It has been introduced at the request of the Returned Soldiers' League. That request was duly endorsed at the recent annual congress of the league, when it was urged that Parliament should give consideration to the position of those ex-Servicemen who had purchased land. The following is the resolution that was passed:—

That congress urges the State Government to introduce immediately a Bill to amend the Purchasers' Protection Act in accordance with the recent request made by the League.

That resolution was sent to the Government. It has been reported that legal action is being taken against ex-Servicemen who, prior to enlistment, entered into contracts for the purchase of subdivisinal land which turned out to be worthless, or nowhere near the value placed on the land at the time of the sale. In such cases, the ex-Servicemen desire the right to discontinue the contract. They feel that the land they purchased was not worth the money asked and now, because they are in a better financial position, some of the agents are taking them to court to demand what they consider they should have in accordance with the contract.

It seems that with their deferred pay, accumulated leave and other moneys, many of these ex-Servicemen have considerable savings, with the result that the land agents think that it is worth while taking them to court. Section 10 of the principal Act provides that where proceedings are taken in a court for the recovery of purchase money and the court is satisfied that insistence on the performance of the contract would inflict hardship on the purchaser by reason of his poverty, or other inability to perform his obligations, it can order cancellation of the contract. The amendment proposed will safeguard the Servicemen to a greater extent. It seeks to empower the court to cancel a contract, not only where its performance would inflict hardship but also where the local authority's valuation, within three months prior to the application of the purchaser, is less than 50 per

cent. of the original purchase price under the contract. Such cases have been brought to my notice, and they justify action by Parliament. Although these people have made a contract, many felt that the only security they were giving was the block itself.

The vendors, being businessmen, were alive to the position, and have taken advantage of it, irrespective of the family or other responsibilities that the purchasers might have. The men with family commitments should be protected against these people. Many persons say, "These people entered into a contract, and should carry it out." They probably do not realise that the land was not worth the money involved, and that the accumulation of interest has been very great. To make the position quite clear, I will read from a couple of letters I have here. One is from the R.S.L. to the Under Secretary, Crown Law Department, and it states—

I received a letter from a Metropolitan Sub-branch containing a resolution endorsed by that Sub-branch recently following a report that a certain firm of city land agents were now taking legal action against ex-servicemen who allegedly repudiated their land purchase contracts without action being taken prior to enlistments. Now, however, with deferred pay, accumulated leave and other moneys saved, many of them have considerable funds and therefore land and estate agents apparently think they are worthwhile taking to court.

The resolution of the sub-branch is—

That every effort be made to obtain an amendment of the Purchasers' Protection Act 1933-36, in order that persons who signed contracts for subdivisinal land between January the 4th, 1927, and January 4th, 1934, should have the right to apply to the court for cancellation of the contract in terms of Section 10 of the Act, where it can be proved, apart from existing remedies that at the time of the application the road board or municipal valuation of the land does not equal 50 per cent. of the original purchase price under the contract.

That seems a fair proposition, where the value was not 50 per cent. of the value of the land purchased in accordance with the valuation of any local authority three months prior to the signing of the contract. It seemed a fair margin, and I feel that purchasers who have paid and who will lose something should have the right of applying to the court for cancellation of the contract. I have here another letter, addressed by the same organisation to the Hon. A. H.

Panton, M.L.A., Minister for Lands, Lands Department, Perth. It reads—

Referring to my letter of November 1st, I desire to draw your attention to a case which has caused a very great hardship, and particulars which are reported to this office as follows:—

I will not give the name of the man concerned.

This man purchased a building block from Land and Homes on the 11th January, 1930, without making any payment as deposit. The date happened to be a Saturday morning, and on advice from his father he went to the agent's office on the Monday morning to cancel the purchase. He was informed that it was too late as the title deed had been registered. (This must have been inaccurate as no title deed could be registered over the week-end.) Since 1930 he has paid approximately £5. The agents have now secured a writ against him and the bailiffs have taken possession of his utility truck, on the 21st November, 1946. The truck is his means of livelihood, and he has a wife and seven children dependent upon him. With regard to the foregoing, I have had a telephone ring from the solicitor to say he had approached the Supreme Court on this man's behalf and had secured an order for the return of the truck on payment of £16. Advice from you that Cabinet has agreed to the suggested amendments of the Act would be appreciated.

When we have cases of that description—I have a list of 32 cases where such action has been taken—this Parliament should do something to relieve the men who have been away fighting for their country and who, now that they have accumulated a little money, are thought by the land sharks to be fair game. In the early days many of our farmers thought, when they made contracts with the Agricultural Bank, that the only security given was the farm concerned, but that was not so. That has happened to many of these unfortunate people. I feel that any person selling an article on time payment should have sufficient security in that article, with the deposit obtained on it, no matter whether it is land or anything else. I have often thought that the law should be amended in that respect and that it should be specifically understood that a vendor only has the security of the property concerned in the sale. It should be specifically laid down that extra security, if necessary, should be given.

There is too much of this sort of thing, particularly in the case of our land agents. I think that throughout Australia such matters should be handled through the departments. Land agents are more or less parasites, living, as they do, on the unearned

increment of the land. Considering all those things I feel that the people with whom I am concerned have a good case and that there should be a unanimous vote in favour of their request to amend Section 10 of the Purchasers' Protection Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [4.52]: I have consulted the Leader of the Liberal Party, and we have no desire to delay the passage of this Bill, which we realise is necessary and urgent. Undoubtedly the Government has introduced this Bill in order to protect the deferred pay of returned soldiers. It is not a reflection on the land agents of this city, but simply a matter of protecting returned men against unscrupulous land agents.

The Minister for Justice: Of course there are many honest land agents. The majority of them are honest.

Mr. THORN: The Minister said, during his speech, that the measure was only to deal with unscrupulous land agents. This Parliament has had similar experience in the past, and I remember that the member for Collie put up a great fight to introduce a Bill on similar lines to protect returned men from those people. The Government has been in consultation with the league which, through its State secretary, Mr. Benson, has made representations to the Government for the protection of such men. I know the league is very pleased that this legislation has been brought forward for that purpose. I believe it is urgent and that members have a clear understanding of the intention behind the Bill. I do not think we should delay its passage, and I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1946-47.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day. **Mr. Rodoreda** in the Chair.

Vote—Agriculture, £192,112 (partly considered):

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [4.57]: I listened with considerable interest to the speech of the Minister when introducing these Estimates and, like the member for Pingelly, I was startled to note his somewhat pessimistic outlook on the wheat industry.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not pessimistic, realistic!

Mr. LESLIE: No. I am afraid that for some reason both the Lands Department and the Department of Agriculture in Western Australia have been influenced to an undue degree by the report of the Commonwealth Rural Reconstruction Commission. I am not going to query the reports that that body submitted. I think it did a valuable job, and reports are still being published which are a noteworthy contribution to a study of the position of agriculture in Australia, but at the time when that Commission investigated the rural set-up of Australia we were suffering from adverse conditions brought about by abnormal circumstances. In Western Australia, as in other parts of the Commonwealth, we had what appeared to be a glut of wheat. It was not unsaleable, and there was a demand for it, but because of the war we could not get shipping.

Because we had that abundance of primary products on our hands, with only limited consumption, it is natural that anybody investigating the position, on behalf of a Government faced first of all with the problem of disposing of such products and secondly of maintaining the industry on a sound economic basis and providing some kind of return for those who had invested their money in producing the product, would be influenced by the position that existed. The problem which was then very serious would influence the report to an undue degree and minimise the future prospects of the industry. In my opinion the Department of Agriculture is the most important of all in our State, though I might also include the Forests Department and the Mines Department, because they are concerned with the production of valuable commodities. The Department of Agriculture should be concerned with providing a living, not only for those engaged in the agricultural industry, but also for a great number of people dependent upon its success. The department and the Minister should encourage in every possible way an expansion on sound lines

of agricultural production. Other departments are concerned with what must follow on. They provide the facilities that can be created only if agricultural production is successful. The Department of Agriculture, with the Department of Lands, should occupy a higher priority in the Estimates, so that discussion on agricultural subjects might come on earlier in the session.

The Minister and other members have spoken about young fellows leaving the country districts and coming to Perth, but the evidence shows that while a few, after spending some years in the country, have tired of the life and the lack of amenities, the number of people inquiring into the possibility of entering the agricultural industry is as high as, if not higher than, it has ever been.

The Minister for Lands: Seven thousand Poles.

Mr. LESLIE: I know of 4,000 Western Australians who want to go on the land here. Those are soldier-settler applicants, but there are other people in hundreds who also desire to go on the land.

Mr. Cross: On account of the high price of wheat.

Mr. LESLIE: It is going to be a jolly sight higher in future. In view of the political set-up in Australia today, the land is the only avenue that offers a man freedom, provided we can get rid of some of the existing restrictive legislation. Agriculture is the only avenue that offers the individual an opportunity for initiative and enterprise. Everywhere else he is hemmed in by restrictions and conditions. If a man goes on the land and has confidence in his own ability to stand up to the demands and is not worried about working a 40-hour week, but is prepared to produce to the maximum, provided that man is assured of a reasonable return, he knows that he can achieve success.

It is unfortunate that the economic policy of Australia necessitates producers going cap in hand to Governments for assistance to enable them to obtain a reasonable return for their products. This is due to a weakness in the economic system and that weakness can be rectified. The Government will have to face up to the position that within the next year or two, as the present political economy develops, there will be an ever-increasing demand from

people to go on the land. Even though restrictive legislation may be continued, the land will still offer freedom that will not be available to people in any other avenue, and it will offer them a certain amount of independence and enjoyment of life that will develop the best that is in them.

I felt greatly concerned when, on listening-in to the mid-day broadcast of the Canberra Parliamentary session yesterday, I heard a reply to a question asked by Senator Collett of the Minister for Post War Reconstruction. The question had relation to a statement made by a Minister or an official in Western Australia to the effect that only about 50 per cent. of soldier applicants for farms were going to obtain farms.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think he said 50 per cent.

Mr. LESLIE: I have not the full facts, but that is what I gathered from the broadcast. Senator Collett had evidently asked questions previously to ascertain whether the statement had been made by a Commonwealth or State official. The Commonwealth Minister denied all knowledge of it, but after investigation, he answered Senator Collett yesterday as I have mentioned, without saying he knew or did not know that the statement had been made. He put the position as clearly as possible so far as soldier settlement in this State is concerned anyhow. He said the responsibility for initiating land settlement schemes lay with the State.

The Minister for Lands: He did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. LESLIE: Those were about his words.

The Minister for Lands: He did not say anything of the sort. I read what he said and I knew what he was going to say.

Mr. LESLIE: The Minister read the account in the newspaper; I am stating what I heard over the air. The newspaper makes no mention of the word "initiate" and the Commonwealth Minister said responsibility for initiating rested with the State.

The Minister for Lands: For initiating what?

Mr. LESLIE: Land settlement proposals. The Minister also said that the Commonwealth was not prepared to interfere, but that the responsibility for initiating settlement rested with the State.

The Minister for Lands: Were not you here when we put the Bill through?

Mr. LESLIE: I know what is contained in the measure, but up to the present we have been shuffled between the Commonwealth and the State, and now the Commonwealth puts the blame definitely on the State and says the State is responsible.

The Minister for Lands: Responsible for what?

Mr. LESLIE: For initiating land settlement proposals. If the view of the Department of Agriculture, which must play a part in the initiation of settlement schemes, is that we have reached the limit of expansion of primary production in this State, what hope is there for the country?

The Minister for Agriculture: Who said that?

Mr. LESLIE: I am taking the limited percentage mentioned. There are 3,000 applicants from one section of the community only; they do not represent the total number who want to go on the land. Is 50 per cent. of 3,000 to be the limit of expansion in Western Australia? Surely the Department of Agriculture is consulted by the Lands Department as to the possibilities of agricultural production!

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, consulted, and both work in close collaboration.

Mr. LESLIE: That brings me back to my statement regarding the great importance of the Department of Agriculture. Upon it depends the encouragement of agricultural production. I know there is a tendency on the part of the present Governments in Australia to consider primarily the possibilities of industrial expansion, but because of Western Australia's circumstances, we must look to primary production as the main industry for the State and must seek to expand it. It is of no use looking backward and saying that in the past we over-produced and could not sell our commodities. I will not accept any argument against the one I submit that we have never yet produced sufficient foodstuffs. We can produce sufficient and do it at a price payable to the grower, a price that will establish economic stability in the State.

What does it concern us if we get 1s. a bushel for our wheat outside or 10s.? It is the return to the grower that counts. The management of our internal finances is en-

tirely in our own hands. If we can allow a bushel of wheat to go outside for 1s. in order to obtain from the recipient goods necessary for our community, that ought to be done. These are matters that can be balanced and would be balanced if we had the right people at the helm. Are we going to sacrifice the development of the country because we are confronted with these problems? Are we going to say that the economic possibilities of Western Australia in agriculture—an industry vital to the State—are such that, out of 3,000 people desirous of going on the land, only 50 per cent. will be able to do so? We have been told that the State Government is responsible for initiating land development programmes and therefore the Department of Agriculture must come into the picture. But what a gloomy picture it is!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is highly disorderly for a member to be reading a newspaper while standing in the aisle.

Mr. LESLIE: The picture confronting us is a gloomy one. Where are we to get our expansion? Why not say to the people inside and outside of Australia, "We have reached the limit of agricultural expansion. We have a population of 475,000 and we cannot cater for the people who are now here. It is of no use sending any more to Western Australia. There may be an opportunity for a few to set up as shopkeepers or start a boot factory or a slipper factory, but we cannot make any further use of the vast natural resources Providence has given us." What a picture to draw! That is the part I am worried about. The Department of Agriculture must take its fair share of responsibility for the criticism that undoubtedly will be forthcoming especially since the Commonwealth has told us that on the shoulders of the State rests the responsibility for initiating land settlement, that it will not interfere and that the possibilities for settlement must depend upon the economic opportunity and not upon the number of applicants for land.

Mr. Hoar: You want a wide open door for land settlement?

Mr. LESLIE: No. I do not believe in a wide open door, but I believe in opportunities being made available to a far greater degree than they are at present. I consider that the early report of the Rural Reconstruction Commission has influenced not only

this State but Australia as a whole to an undue degree and we are losing sight of the unfortunate circumstances that existed at the time the report was prepared. We were still in the doldrums when it was issued and I too welcomed it then because I could see no way out. I looked at it as dealing with something more in the immediate future than with something far ahead. But we seem to have accepted the fact that because difficulties existed then we are not going to be able ever to overcome them. In the same way we hear constant references to depression. Because there was a depression from 1929 to 1931, we say we must not do anything since we are bound to have another one. I would remind the Committee that in 1929 at the request of the Government the farmers of Western Australia produced 50,000,000 bushels of wheat.

Surely the Governments of Australia at that time were not so blind as not to realise that the existing conditions would mean a reduction in the return to the growers! But the goods were essential to pay our national debts. Just prior to that we had big people coming here and holding a gun at our heads and saying we would have to pay. The farmers were called upon to do the job and to pay. They did their work and produced, and gave to the nation the wealth required. Then the farmers were thrown on the mercy of the big people. It was said to the Shylock beyond our shores, "What will you give us for this piece of goods?" The farmer suffered more than anybody else; and when he fell, the rest of the community tumbled down with him. When the purchasing power of the farmer was limited and he was deprived of it, the rest of the community came to grief. Unless we are prepared to encourage production of real wealth in every possible way to the umpteenth degree, we will be only a tiny State with a tiny population. Apparently we have vast resources but without the mental capacity to make full use of them and develop them as they should be developed.

I very much regret to hear a pessimistic note from the Government in regard to this country at any time but particularly now. In spite of the remark of the Minister that the bottom is likely to fall out of the wheat market, the next few years will be ones of opportunity such as we have never had in this country before. It is an opportunity

we are losing. We will look back on these years and regret that we allowed Fortune's wheel to turn over when it was in our favour, without our putting out our hand and grasping it as it came spinning around in our turn. The opportunity will not be repeated. We will still prosper—I am sure of that—regardless of Governments; because it is the nature of the people to go ahead and battle, for they are of British stock. The Commonwealth Government has let the cat out of the bag as to where the responsibility in connection with land settlement lies. I know there is the financial side to be considered. If there is any blame lying in that direction it is up to the Minister to say where it is so that we can have a show-down.

The Minister for Lands: You have been trying to get what you call a show-down for a long time, have you not?

Mr. LESLIE: We have, because we believe that we will get somewhere when that happens, and not until then.

The Minister for Lands: Two politicians make a statement in the Federal House and you voice it!

Mr. LESLIE: No!

The Minister for Lands: Yes; you said you heard it over the air.

Mr. LESLIE: Of course I did, and I was surprised to hear it!

The Minister for Lands: Yes, you were!

Mr. LESLIE: I was surprised to hear it. I understood the responsibility for initiating the land settlement proposals rested on the Commonwealth as well as on the States.

The Minister for Lands: Nobody in this country knows more about it than you do. You know what you are talking about!

Mr. LESLIE: Of course I do! The Minister never said a truer word. The whole of the responsibility—and when it appears in the Federal "Hansard" it can be seen—was thrown on the State Government. In that case, if I were in the Minister's position, I would not hesitate to grasp the position with both hands and I would say, "You said the responsibility is ours. Now we are going ahead and you can pay the piper in accordance with the agreement!" The only thing to do is to force the position, instead of letting it float along.

The Minister for Lands: Just like that!

Mr. LESLIE: I would like the Minister to give us all the information he can about the supply of farm machinery, and to know what are the prospects of replacing some of the present worn-out machinery, the inadequate machinery, before the next cropping season, or of getting it into some decent state of repair. The position outback is deplorable; there is no blinking that fact. We have reached the stage where tractive power has become the major problem in the agricultural industry, apart from such minor matters as prices and stabilisation and things like that; and they, of course, are dependent on having the goods on hand. Tractive power today is the biggest problem we have to face. Farmers are operating machines which, unless they are able to replace them, will involve them in irreparable loss next season, greater than they are doing at present. They are not profitable machines to work. Farmers are endeavouring to carry on with them as best they can, but something will have to be done.

Mr. Needham: What do you suggest?

Mr. LESLIE: I think the Minister is in a far better position than I to make suggestions.

The Minister for Lands: That is a new one!

Mr. LESLIE: But I would urge that the Minister take the people fully into his confidence and let them know what prospect there is of their getting a reasonable proportion of the machinery that is being produced and entering Australia. We hear all kinds of reports. We do not know exactly what is happening; but when we make enquiries, not in official quarters but among the people that count and are handling the goods, we find that Western Australia is apparently securing a very unequal and small proportion of the machinery entering or being produced in this country, a proportion not in accordance with the size of the industry. We definitely believe the Minister should tell us whether that is true or not, and what efforts are being made to obtain and what prospects there are of securing a more reasonable share of vitally needed goods for the agricultural industry. That applies to tractors, to machinery parts and to new machines.

I went out in the past week to watch our harvesters at work, and I saw as much wheat being lost out of the machines as went into

the bags. That is not economical farming. The next thing is that the Minister and his officers will tell us that the losses are due to inefficiency of the farmers, as we have been told for 50 years. We are informed that the farmer's disabilities are entirely his own fault, because of his inefficiency. But a man cannot be as efficient as he wants to be under the circumstances I have outlined. One-third as much again of the wheat which is put into the bags will still be lying on the ground after the harvest, because of the inadequate machinery. It is not an economical and reasonable proposition and some big effort will have to be made to deal with the situation. This is not the first time I have mentioned the matter, but the position has reached the stage where it cannot be allowed to continue without very serious loss to the economy of the State generally.

The Minister raised the question of experimental farms. Last year I suggested, and I suggest again, that the work of the departmental officers, who I do not deny are scientific experts, would be far more readily accepted and appreciated by the farmers if it were carried out under practical conditions on the farm, under conditions that the farmer knows. Most of the farmers that go to field days on research stations see work done under the best possible conditions. Those doing the work are equipped for it. Whatever they need at any moment is at hand. That is not the position on all farms. Difficulties arise every moment of the day, to which the farmers have to adapt themselves. Farmers have asked over and over again why these experiments should not be conducted on actual farms. If that were done, farmers would be more ready to adopt the valuable suggestions submitted by officers of the department. Many farmers, however, consider that these officers are theorists who merely sit back and dream fine dreams and get ideas which they propound to the farmer as something worthwhile. The farmers prefer to see something more practical.

My mind goes back to my younger days in South Africa, where the rural department attempted to introduce an expansion of sidelines amongst farmers. It was found that nothing could be done with the average farmer because he did not believe in the experts. Eventually the department adopted the practice of subsidising individual farmers to undertake improvements and to develop sidelines in agriculture. As a result, in

three or four years' time practically every farmer had adopted the practice which had started on one man's farm in some odd little corner of the district. The practicability of the scheme had been demonstrated to them under normal farming conditions and they concluded that what one man could do they could all do. But what can be done on an experimental farm is not always practicable under ordinary farm conditions. That is the average reaction. I believe that the work of the department is so valuable that it should be carried out in a way that will encourage the farmers to adopt the methods demonstrated.

Reference has been made to the work of Mr. Whitehead at Baandee or Hines Hill. It has been said that his ploughing proposition produced nothing and proved nothing. Of course, it did not do so from a scientific point of view; but there were practical results, and that makes all the difference. What he did had been previously proved to be effective in America where, with deep ploughing and the breaking up of the hard clay pan, the soil was revitalised and the erosion and salt problems were combated. When I made an investigation into the matter, I found that the plant used in America cost £3,000. I was interested in the subject three or four years ago; but when I made that discovery, I thought the scheme was an impossibility. Mr. Whitehead has proved that the American idea can be carried out by the use of a machine which is far less costly.

The Minister for Agriculture: I agree.

Mr. LESLIE: That is invaluable information to us, because it means we have something within our reach. I had intended to go to the Treasurer on my hands and knees and ask that £3,000 be set aside for the purchase of one American machine for the State. But now I feel more confident in asking the Government to provide two or three machines along the lines of that developed by Mr. Whitehead at far less cost than the American article, and demonstrate their practicability. I could take the Minister to my district where a demonstration of the effectiveness of Mr. Whitehead's methods could be applied quite easily. I am satisfied that, with financial aid provided by the Commonwealth, plus more that the farmers would make available, machinery of this type could be worked with great effectiveness there. I

believe the idea is on right lines, and the only limitation in the past has been financial. From that point of view Mr. Whitehead has proved that factor to be of no importance.

Dealing again with experimental farms, I am very interested in the problem created by the increasing number of men who are physically handicapped. Many of them are ex-Service men but others are not. Many are well up in years, and physically incapable of doing hard manual labour. They present a great problem, and consideration should be given to the handling of it. One suggestion advanced I shall pass on to the Minister for his consideration. It is that farm colonies should be established as something in the nature of experimental farms. The people I have in mind could be sent there. They are not capable of doing a hard day's work but could do light work on the farm. By that means they could become useful citizens instead of remaining as pensioners and possibly getting into mischief. Many have said they would be interested in going on to such a farm. Naturally, they would not go there as ordinary farm hands, but they could undertake quite a lot of work. It must be realised that this problem is increasing and must become an even greater responsibility for the Government.

I think it would be a good move if the farm colonies were established. They would not be expected to balance the budget, but in their operations could contribute something that would be of value to the State. As a matter of fact, that proposition will be brought before the Government shortly, and possibly the Department of Agriculture will be the one to concern itself with assistance to this unfortunate section of the community and I trust that, as a result, something will be decided to the benefit of both the department and the people. Next I come to the question of vermin.

The Minister for Agriculture: What, again?

Mr. LESLIE: I have not troubled the Minister in that respect for quite a while. I would like to know whether anything has been done regarding the suggestion advanced by the road boards in northern areas that a trap fence should be constructed between the two rabbit-proof fences up there, with the idea of trapping emus. The birds are presenting a tremendous problem. Our idea is

contrary to the evidence presented to the Royal Commission which investigated vermin matters and was informed that the birds were fading out and becoming fewer in number. We consider that the emus are increasing and becoming a greater pest than ever in the northern areas. They are not nomadic and do not leave the districts there only to return later. They remain there and we want to prevent them from coming further south. I do not know that we shall ever be able to eradicate them because they are too fleet of foot. Furthermore, there is too much undeveloped country to allow settlers to deal with them properly. Complete investigations should be made not by theorists but by someone with practical knowledge, who could examine the position on the spot. Perhaps a trial trap-fence could be erected with a view to seeing whether the birds can be held. The only doubt is whether that can be done. Even if we were to pick up the two rabbit-proof fences and construct them east and west, they would serve a more useful purpose than they are doing today, seeing that rabbits are inside rather than outside the fences.

The Minister for Lands: We have the right to some rabbits as well as you have in your country!

Mr. LESLIE: The trouble is that country people are compelled to destroy the vermin and others in the metropolitan area are not in that position. Only the country people are required to accept the responsibility of eradicating the vermin on their properties. However, the rabbits are not a very big problem at the moment but, as I go round the country, I see signs indicating that they are slowly on the increase. We have enjoyed a brief respite from their depredations during the past few years. Seasonal conditions have contributed to their control as well as the effort made by the farming community to keep the pest in check. Unless we maintain strict watch over the position, the rabbit, however, will again become the problem it was five or six years ago, and I would be sorry to see that happen. In the circumstances, I would like to know whether anything has been done in connection with the proposal to construct an emu-proof fence. Furthermore, it is high time that inquiries were made as to the practical use of the existing rabbit-proof fences. The general opinion is that they serve no useful purpose whatever. In nine out of ten

cases, the gates are more often open than closed.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is the very thing that would defeat the proposal for an emu fence and make it futile.

Mr. LESLIE: I do not know that it would. The emu is a north and south problem.

The Minister for Agriculture: Does not the bird go east and west?

Mr. LESLIE: It would not be worth while to maintain the rabbit-proof fences unless they were serving a useful purpose, but the suggestion that has been advanced would enable them to serve that purpose as a link keeping the emus out from the southern parts of the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: But surely you would not say that people who do not keep the gates shut to keep the rabbits back would shut them to keep the emus out?

Mr. LESLIE: The point I make is that the gates are left open today because people have lost confidence in the efficiency of the fences. There was a time, when I first went up north, when anyone would almost have his throat cut if it became known that he had gone through the fence and left the gate open. Today no-one worries whether the gates are open or closed.

The Minister for Agriculture: Today they do not bother about it.

Mr. Seward: They are too jolly lazy to shut the gates; that is the trouble.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, that is more like it.

Mr. LESLIE: If it is necessary to keep the gates closed, why has not the department adopted the cheapest and best means possible for overcoming the difficulty by putting in rabbit-proof ramps instead of the gates?

Mr. Watts: I have known Government drivers to go through and leave gates open.

The Minister for Lands: I have known people simply to drive through the gates.

Mr. LESLIE: The Dowerin Road Board wrote to the department suggesting that in lieu of the gates between Wyalkatchem and Dowerin, the Government should construct rabbit-proof ramps.

The Minister for Lands: That would have been a ramp!

Mr. LESLIE: The department wrote back and, in effect—of course, not in so many words—said, "If you want to put in ramps, you can put them in and jolly well pay for

them yourselves." I guarantee that since the department replied to that suggestion, three times as much has been spent on repairing the gates as the ramps would have cost. In the last 18 months or so, I doubt if I have seen the gates at one spot closed or opened, but mostly lying in a wreck alongside the fence. It would have been far more consistent on the part of the department had it agreed to put in the ramps, as suggested, on all main public roads. So long as people up north have no confidence in or respect for the rabbit-proof fences, so long will the present difficulties continue. If they are to regain confidence in the effectiveness of the fences, the attitude of the department will have to be changed. I hope that the next time the Agricultural Vote is introduced, a far more optimistic note will be heard.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 5.43 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 10th December, 1946.

	Page
Question: Nurses treated for T.B., as to number, compensation, etc.	2578
Motion: Juvenile delinquents, as to implementing Royal Commission's recommendations	2578
Bills: Fremantle Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment, 1R.	2584
Stipendiary Magistrates Act Amendment, 3R.	2584
City of Perth Scheme for Superannuation (Amendments Authorisation), 3R., passed	2584
Legislative Council (War Time) Electoral Act Amendment, 2R., Com., report	2584
Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment, 2R., Com., report	2585
Timber Industry Regulation Act Amendment, Com., report	2586
Factories and Shops Act Amendment (No. 2), Assembly's amendment	2586
Hairdressers Registration, Com.	2591
Purchasers' Protection Act Amendment, 2R.	2599
Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment, 2R., Com., report	2604
State Forest Access, 2R., Com., report	2605
Canning District Sanitary Site, 2R., Com., report	2607
Coal Mines Regulation, Com.	2608
Loan, £5,050,000, 2R.	2613
Adjournment, special	2617

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION.

NURSES TREATED FOR T.B.

As to Number, Compensation, Etc.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP asked the Chief Secretary:

1, How many nurses (trainees or trained) are undergoing treatment at the Woollooloo Sanatorium for pulmonary tuberculosis?

2, How many nurses (trainees or trained) are undergoing treatment at the Royal Perth Hospital for pulmonary tuberculosis? How many are in-patients and how many are out-patients?

3, How many of these nurses commenced their nursing training at (a) the sanatorium, (b) the Royal Perth Hospital, (c) elsewhere?

4, How many of these nurses were submitted to the Mantoux test before commencing duty?

5, What are the ages of the nurses affected?

6, What compensation do they receive (a) whilst undergoing active treatment in an institution, (b) whilst attending for treatment as an out-patient at the clinic or hospital or sanatorium?

7, If a nurse so affected is certified as having reached the stage where treatment is no longer necessary but is not yet fit for duty what compensation does she receive?

8, If a nurse who has been treated for pulmonary tuberculosis and has been certified as "disease arrested" or "fit for duty" resumes duty and at a later stage suffers a recrudescence of the disease does she receive further compensation?

9, If a nurse, such as described in Question 8 has married or given up nursing prior to the recrudescence of the disease, is she still able to claim compensation for the recrudescence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The information required by the hon. member will take some time to obtain, and will be supplied by the department as early as possible.

MOTION—JUVENILE DELINQUENTS.

As to Implementing Royal Commission's Recommendations.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [2.34]: I move—

That this House protests against the failure of the Government to implement the main recommendations of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the care and reform of youthful delinquents as contained in their report presented to Parliament on the 10th August, 1943, and desires to urge the importance of immediate consideration and adoption thereof.

I fully realise that members of the Government are extremely busy men; but the failure