

one product from which no deduction should be made. Mr. Parker referred to the freight question of  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. I have been following this, though not as long perhaps as Mr. Parker; but since the passing of the Navigation Act we know that the Australian steamship owners and the seamen started out to bleed the public in this way. The men went to the court and got a 5 per cent. increase in their wages. The shipping companies then advanced the fares 10 per cent. In calculating the fares they calculated the original wages, not plus 5 per cent., but plus 10 per cent. So I imagine that the oversea shippers found the opportunity convenient and added a 5 per cent. increase to the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. But when competition came in, as it did come in to a greater extent, they were generous enough to take off the 10 per cent., and this custom, originating in Australia, has grown up as the result of an Arbitration Court award. I do not know that the grower would get much out of this to commence with. I hope we are here to grow wool for ever. Whilst the buyer may resent this for the first year or two, I think he will soon forget about the one lb. in every hundredweight, and that we shall quickly get back to normal. Apparently Mr. Parker has studied this question, because he tells us that men have been trained to value wool on the basis of a deduction of one lb. per hundredweight. One would imagine that all these men would have been trained in the one school, but he tells us that in South Africa there is a different deduction per hundredweight from what the deduction is in Australia.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You misunderstood me. I did not say that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Apparently it means that there is one school for the training of people to buy Australian wool, and another school for the training of those who buy South African wool.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: I did not say that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: However, this is not a legal question, but a business one. It is a wool question understood by the Woolgrowers' Association of Australia. The woolgrowers have asked for this measure, and, so far as I am concerned, they can have it.

On motion by Hon. H. V. Piesse, debate adjourned.

## BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly, and read a first time.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.18]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 5.19 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 23rd September, 1936.*

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

## QUESTION—POLICE, GOOD CONDUCT BADGES.

Mr. WARNER asked the Minister for Police:—1, Is he aware that as a result of the abolition of Police Regulation 44, which provided for the wearing of a good conduct badge, considerable dissatisfaction and dis-

content exist among the members of the Police Force in Western Australia? 2, What reason prompted the abolition of the regulation? 3, Will he favourably consider the re-enactment of the regulation and permit the wearing of the good conduct badge?

The DEPUTY PREMIER (for the Minister for Police) replied: 1, No. 2, No good purpose was served by the issue of such badge, which led to invidious distinctions between members of the Force, and the badge conveyed nothing to the general public. 3, No.

### QUESTION—EDUCATION, PERTH GIRLS' SCHOOL.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works:—1, What was the original estimate for the building and completion of the Perth Girls' School and associated buildings? 2, Were tenders called by advertisement, and, if so, what was the lowest tender received? 3, What was the complete cost of the buildings?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, £68,700. 2, No. 3, This information cannot yet be given as not all expenditure has yet been finally allocated to the work.

### BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS, AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### NOTICE OF MOTION—VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF YOUTHS.

#### *Ruled Out of Order.*

Order of the Day read for the consideration of Notice of Motion given by Mr. Hughes that in the opinion of the House a vocational training building scheme for youth should be established.

Mr. SPEAKER: After considering the motion which stands on the Notice Paper in the name of the member for East Perth, I regret I shall have to rule it out of order. I do so on the ground that it is not couched in the abstract and general terms necessary to permit of its not being made the subject of a charge upon the general revenue. As

an authority for my ruling, I would quote from "May," 13th Edition, page 518—

In like manner, motions advocating public expenditure, or the imposition of a charge, if the motion is framed in sufficiently abstract and general terms, can be entertained and agreed to by the House. Resolutions of this nature are permissible because, having no operative effect, no grant is made or burthen imposed by their adoption.

The motion of the hon. member is not framed in abstract and general terms; rather to the contrary, for it provides for a very definite scheme, and leaves it to the Executive of the Government to give effect to it by the provision of funds. I am not personally concerned whether the Executive would take action to give effect to the opinion of the House, but I must presume that it would. Since the establishment of responsible Government in this State, many rulings have been given from the Chair on this question. I will content myself, however, with quoting one example. Some years ago the member for Guildford, the present member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), gave notice of motion as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House the wages paid to railway employees should be increased from 7s. to 8s. per day.

This motion was ruled out of order on the ground that the Commissioner of Railways, on its being carried, would be compelled to find additional funds. There is an abundance of other rulings on the same subject, and many authorities could be quoted in justification of those rulings. In the circumstances, I regret I have no option but to rule the motion of the hon. member out of order.

#### *Dissent from Speaker's Ruling.*

Mr. Hughes: I move—

That the House dissents from Mr. Speaker's ruling.

I contend it is a remarkable attitude for the Speaker to adopt. This motion has been on the Notice Paper for over a week, but no intimation was made to me that it was going to be ruled out of order. I had, therefore, no opportunity of looking up the authorities which would support me in disagreeing with this ruling. This is not what one would have expected. At least one would have imagined that some warning would have been given that the motion was to be ruled out of order, so that the necessary authorities could be looked up and quoted to the House.

Mr. Cross: Can you not put this notice on the paper again?

Mr. Hughes: Had your ruling, Mr. Speaker, pointed to the portions of the motion which, in your opinion, levied a charge on the revenue, I would have had an opportunity to amend it so that a debate might take place upon it. The motion is sufficiently abstract because it does not make a direct charge on revenue. It merely gives the House an opportunity to express an opinion on the subject matter. Any motion before the House does make a charge on the revenue. There is a motion for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the housing problem. In an abstract way it postulates a charge upon revenue, and if the House carries the motion certain public revenue will have to be spent. Under our Standing Orders no charge can be levied on the public revenue simply as the result of a motion. If the member for Guildford-Midland did on a previous occasion give notice that in the opinion of the House certain things should be done, I do not agree that such a motion should have been ruled out of order. If it is right that it should have been ruled out of order, it would be impossible for any member of the House to get an expression of opinion from the House on anything which, if carried and later put into effect, would involve a charge upon the general revenue. The result will be that the freedom of members will be stifled. We shall be placed in the position of members of the first Fascist House of Italy, where they simply have the privilege of saying yes or no.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If they say "No" they mean "Yes."

Mr. Hughes: They have a limited opportunity of saying "No" to certain measures that are submitted to them. Everywhere in this State we see the Fascist tendency to concentrate the right of speech and the right of thought in a few people, and to curtail everywhere the freedom of members of Parliament to express themselves in the public interest on sound foundations and democratic lines. This spread of Fascist ideas is awakening a reaction against them. If a mere motion that in the opinion of the House certain things ought to be done, is going to be ruled out of order, it simply means that a private member will be unable to apply himself to any matter of public interest. However sound or however important to the public the subject may be that he

wishes to bring before the House, the member can only bring it up in such an abstract way as to get no expressions of opinion at all. If you, Mr. Speaker, had pointed out to me in what particular this motion was not sufficiently abstract, it might have been re-drafted. To rule it out of order at the last minute is very unfair to a member of this House. It is contrary to all known forms of practice and procedure wherever deliberative bodies exercise themselves. When people are called upon to justify a case or to answer an allegation they are generally given the opportunity and have the courtesy extended to them of being prepared to answer the case. I have no doubt that had I been given the opportunity I might have turned up many authorities to show that the mere passing of a motion by this House, as an expression of opinion, on no account makes any charge upon the revenue, and that even if the motion were passed, the people in charge of the Treasury would be justified in not expending public funds on the strength of the motion. Before revenue could be spent an ordinary Bill would require to be introduced by the ordinary methods, a message from the Governor, etc. If because of your ruling, Mr. Speaker, we are not to have a discussion on this question of youth employment and training, youths who have unfortunately lost their trade, youths who are mainly sons of the workingmen of this country, because the sons of other people are for the most part being trained for professions etc., it means that we shall not be able to ventilate the subject in this House, and indicates that Parliament is not concerned whether the youths suffer the disabilities they have suffered and are continuing to suffer from the effects of the depression. It is a sorry expression to have from this Chamber. I submit with all due deference that your ruling is wrong, that this motion does not make any charge on revenue, but is simply the ordinary exercise of a member's right to bring a matter of public interest before the House. I therefore move that your ruling be disagreed with.

Mr. Sampson: I second the motion. Would it be competent for the member for East Perth to amend his motion?

Mr. Speaker: You cannot amend something that is out of order.

Mr. Sampson: It seems to me that if the first paragraph were amended—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member cannot discuss paragraphs. He must discuss the ruling. The motion is not really before the House, as it is out of order.

Mr. Sampson: The motion is of great importance from the standpoint of the youths of this State. I am, therefore, hopeful that we shall be able to find some means whereby the subject may be discussed. I realise it is difficult to do that immediately, and my sympathy is with the hon. member in that his effort cannot be proceeded with because of the Standing Orders. If I may be permitted to put a question, I would like to ask you, Sir, if it will not be competent for the hon. member to submit a motion subsequently in varied phraseology, and thereby permit a discussion to take place.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, decidedly.

The Minister for Mines: But that is another matter altogether.

Mr. Sampson: I hope the member for East Perth will do that as soon as possible, for I feel sure that a most helpful discussion will take place, and, as a result, steps may be taken to enable the youth problem to be dealt with.

Hon. N. Keenan: I should have liked an opportunity to study the ruling you, Mr. Speaker, have just given, because it is very important. It will largely restrict the nature of motions brought before the House if they are to be dealt with in the restricted sense suggested by the ruling. It is very rarely, indeed, if ever, that motions of this description could be said not to involve some expenditure if, and always if, the Executive chose to give effect to them. The motion is merely a pious expression of opinion. Motions are carried every session of Parliament, and yet no effect is given to them. No one can compel the Executive to give effect to such motions. If they are to be ruled out of order because, should the Government choose to give effect to them, the expenditure of revenue will be involved, it is true that a large majority of such motions would come within the ambit of such a prohibition. That is a very serious matter for the House to consider. I do not know, Mr. Speaker, whether you will permit an adjournment of the discussion, because I have not been able sufficiently to hear your reading of the ruling. If members have not had an opportunity to study it, it will be absurd for them to address themselves to the correctness or otherwise of the ruling. I assume for the moment that the ruling is correct; on that

assumption, I regard this as a most important matter for Parliament to consider, not as affecting the present alone but the future.

The Minister for Justice: Do you suggest we should alter the Standing Orders?

Hon. N. Keenan: That may be found necessary. For myself, I am speaking completely in the dark, because I was not able to hear all the Speaker's remarks. It is a matter of grave importance not for the present Parliament, but for all future Parliaments, because it is only too true that very few motions do not involve expenditure, should the Executive choose to give effect to them. It will mean that the method hitherto adopted of ventilating many important matters will not be available for members to pursue in future. I should like the discussion adjourned if that is possible.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I submit that the motion is definitely out of order.

The Deputy Premier: It is an instruction.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The ruling will not limit the discussion of any matter that a member may desire to bring forward. I submit to the member for Nedlands that conditions would become absolutely impossible if it were open to members to submit motions directing the Government to do this or that. The motion does not suggest consideration of a scheme; it deals with the establishment of a scheme.

Mr. Sampson: The motion is a recommendation.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is nothing of the sort. It is definite that the direction of the House is that the scheme shall be established. In all my experience of Parliamentary life, I have no recollection of such a motion having been previously moved.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You moved one yourself! The Speaker said so!

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No one would move such a motion because it would be so clearly out of order. The member for East Perth can secure as much as he is entitled to under the Standing Orders, and as much as he should obtain from a commonsense point of view.

Mr. Patrick: But you were ruled out of order when you submitted a similar motion.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is true that I was ruled out of order, but my motion was really not out of order at all. I merely asked for consideration. In fact, I think

that on that occasion I was harshly dealt with.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You said in your motion that the men should get an extra shilling a day.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I wanted the Government to give consideration to the matter. The member for East Perth would be justified in moving his motion if he desired the Government to give consideration to the matter. But that is not the wording of his motion. On the other hand, it declares that there shall be established a vocational training building scheme for youths. The member for Nedlands knows full well that the motion is quite out of order, and, in addition, is definitely dangerous. If such a practice were permitted, any member, without the responsibility of government, would be able to direct the affairs of State and instruct the Government as to what they should do.

Mr. Doney: The Government need not follow the direction given them.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The motion embodies definite instructions to the Government, and as such is definitely out of order.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I would point out to the member for Guildford-Midland that it has been customary for Governments not to take notice of resolutions passed by Parliament. One would think, after listening to his remarks, that it was customary for them to give effect to resolutions, but that is not so. It has been pointed out that the Executive Council are not bound to give effect to them.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You quote one such instance.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I could quote a number of instances. Had I known that this point was to have been raised, I would have been in a position to quote authorities. I certainly have not heard the present Acting-Premier make such a declaration, but previous Premiers have referred to such motions as pious expressions of opinion that do not bind any Government.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The motion says that in the opinion of Parliament the scheme should be established, and could any Government ignore such an instruction?

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of course.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You cannot give the House one instance of that.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of course, Governments have ignored such motions. They do not bind Governments to take action, and the only time Parliament can direct the Government is when legislation is passed. Governments do not accept directions from Parliament unless they desire to do so. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, you found it necessary to rule the motion out of order. Members would like to express their opinion on this important question as it affects the youth of the State. We could debate whether the scheme propounded is wise. As a matter of fact, I would not be prepared to ask the Government to find £250,000 for this particular scheme at this juncture.

Mr. Speaker: Order! The hon. member is out of order in discussing the effect of the motion.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I shall accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker, for I realise that if the words complained of had been omitted, the probability is that you would not have ruled the motion out of order. I hope that members will be given an opportunity to express their opinion on such an important question.

The Deputy Premier: I take the opposite view from that indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, who is a little in the dark regarding the point at issue. The motion does not represent a pious resolution. The preamble does not set out "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable" or "it is advisable" that certain things should be done. There is nothing abstract about the motion at all. It asks the House to give a definite instruction to the Government, and that means taking out of the hands of the Government the control of the finances of the State. There is a great gulf between motions that represent pious expressions of opinion and the motion, which sets out that "in the opinion of this House there should be established a vocational training building scheme for youths . . ." The motion sets out that the scheme shall be on such and such a plan; that the Government shall find the necessary money to set aside for the purposes of the scheme. The whole motion is on the basis of a definite instruction to the Government.

Mr. Patrik: That is, if the Government give effect to the motion.

The Deputy Premier: The motion directs the Government what to do and how to give effect to the plan. The Standing Order

that no amount of money must be voted except on the introduction of a Vote by a Minister of the Crown, and on a Message from the Crown, was specifically designed to meet such instances as that now before the House. In Pollard's "Unreformed House of Commons" instance after instance is given regarding matters that happened in the House of Commons in the past, showing the need for such a provision. Those instances show how members had voted sums of money to their families or to their constituents, and how they had voted army and navy officers to positions such as governorships in the Dominions, and so forth. Because of that tendency, and because the control of the finances had been taken out of the hands of the Government, the Standing Order, or rule, was devised. If members peruse the records of the House of Commons, they will see that this was done to assure to the Government control of the finances, so that members would have no power to direct the Government as to the expenditure of money. The Leader of the Opposition was not right in his reference to an abstract resolution, for the motion embodies a definite instruction to the Government.

Mr. Patrick: Does that not apply when we move for the appointment of a Royal Commission?

The Deputy Premier: Only for the purpose of inquiring into some subject.

The Hon. C. G. Latham: But that involves expenditure of public money.

The Deputy Premier: The motion embodies a definite scheme, and involves expenditure of £250,000. If the House agreed to the motion, members would give the Government an instruction to spend that money. If the Government were compelled to accept that instruction, there would be no other alternative but the expenditure of a large sum of money which could not be raised. The ruling you have given, Mr. Speaker, is perfectly correct.

Mr. Marshall: I very much regret that the ruling has been given in the circumstances, because it places all members, including the member for East Perth, in an invidious position. The member for East Perth has not had an opportunity to consider the ruling. Nevertheless I am obliged to support the ruling, but I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that on this occasion he is playing with fire. He hopes one day to be Treasurer of the State.

Mr. Raphael: He has given up hope.

Mr. Marshall: The member for East Perth will not be denied an opportunity to discuss this important matter, because there is nothing in the Standing Orders to prevent him from re-introducing the motion in an amended form. But I would draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to this, that apart from the fact that the notice of motion of the member for East Perth reads, "That in the opinion of this House there should be established, etc.", the hon. member sets out also a formula for the purpose of the proposed establishment, as follows:—

That in order to inaugurate and carry out a scheme, the Government should raise under the provision of the last subparagraph of paragraph 5 of the Financial Agreement, 1928, the sum of £250,000 at 4 per cent., the principal and interest of which to be liquidated by five equal instalments from Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. Sampson: That is a recommendation.

Mr. Marshall: It is a direct instruction as to how the amount shall be raised, and as to the method that shall be adopted for repayments.

Mr. Sampson: It could still be in the hands of the Treasurer to determine.

Mr. Marshall: That is true, but it is not within the rights of a private member to interfere with Consolidated Revenue. And what an invidious position the Government would be in if I could come along immediately after the member for East Perth has got his proposal through, and introduce another for the benefit of those living in my electorate. In those circumstances the Government would soon find that the whole of the Consolidated Revenue had been used.

Mr. Hughes: But my motion does not mean that the scheme should be used exclusively for the electors of East Perth.

Mr. Marshall: Of course not. But if this proposed motion were in order I, in turn, could force the Government to spend money in my electorate; because the proposed motion is a direction to the Government to raise money and spend it and repay it. That is not within the right of any private member. I am sorry the ruling has had to be given, for I would rather the motion were discussed, but at all events the hon. member will have an opportunity to redraft the motion and re-introduce it. We can then discuss it.

Mr. Speaker: I regret as much as any other member that the ruling had to be given. I wish to assure the member for East Perth that there was no intentional dis-

courtesy in my ruling. I merely carried out my duty as Speaker exactly as I have always seen it carried out in similar circumstances, and as I myself have carried it out during the last three years. It is not my duty to intimate to members anything irregular about their notices of motion until such motions come before the House. Every member will agree that it is not within the province of a private member to move for money to be expended. The member for Swan said the Government might not give effect to the motion even if it were passed. But I am in the unhappy position of having to presume that the Government will give effect to the decisions of Parliament, and in accordance with that, I have to rule. If the member for East Perth is correct in saying that members' speeches are going to be curtailed, that is not my fault, but the fault of Parliament. In accordance with the Standing Orders, I am placed in a position to interpret the Standing Orders. No. 1 of our Standing Orders reads as follows:—

In all cases not provided for hereinafter, or by sessional or other orders, resort shall be had to the rules, forms and practice of the Commons House of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, which shall be followed as far as they can be applied to the proceedings of this House.

If there were nothing in our own Standing Orders to guide us—as of course there is—that Standing Order No. 1 would have to be followed. "Todd's Parliamentary Government in England" by Spencer Walpole, Vol. II., page 187, deals with the restrictions upon Parliament in matters of Supply, and shows how far this goes back in parliamentary history. It reads as follows:—

According to ancient constitutional doctrine and practice, no moneys can be voted by Parliament for any purpose whatever except at the demand and upon the responsibility of Ministers of the Crown. In former times when any aids and supplies were required for the public service, the Crown made known its wants to the House of Commons by message; this message was taken into consideration by the Commons, and the necessary supplies were voted by that House, according to its discretion. This mode of procedure in obtaining grants of money admitted of no exception. It therefore left no opportunity to any private member to introduce any scheme of his own whereby any charge would be made upon the people. But in the beginning of the last century a specious evasion of this constitutional rule crept in. The wholesome system of exchequer control in the custody of public moneys—which afforded protection alike to the Crown and to Parliament against illegal appropri-

tions—was made the occasion of attempts to induce the Crown, by the exercise of parliamentary influence, to sanction expenditures that were extravagant and unjustifiable. Finding that there was generally a balance of public money remaining in the exchequer, as yet unappropriated to any specific service, there was a growing disposition on the part of private members to regard this money as available for any purpose they might be disposed to favour. Petitions were presented to the House from various persons claiming pecuniary assistance or relief; which being often promoted by members who were friends to the parties, and carrying with them the appearance of justice or of charity, induced the House to approve, or at utmost to be indifferent to, their success. By this means large sums were granted to private persons improvidently, and sometimes upon insufficient grounds. In the year 1705 this abuse became so notorious that early in the next session, on 11th December, 1706, before any petitions of this sort could be again offered, the House resolved, "That they would receive no petition for any sum of money relating to public service but what is recommended from the Crown." This resolution was made a Standing Order on 11th June, 1713, and amended on 25th June, 1852, to bring it into conformity with existing practice, by the substitution of a new order to declare, "That this House will receive no petition for any sum of money relating to public service or proceed upon any motion or granting any money but what is recommended from the Crown." The uniform practice of the House has construed this rule to extend to any motion which involves the expenditure of public money, even though it may not directly propose a grant.

That has come right down through the years, and we are bound by our Standing Order No. 1 to conform to the usages of the House of Commons. I am simply carrying out that ruling. If the House thinks otherwise, the matter is in their hands.

(Question put and negatived.)

## PAPERS—STEEL AND IRON IMPORTS.

MR. NULSEN (Kanowna) [5.10]: I move—

That a return be laid on the Table of the House showing the value of the following imports into Western Australia for the year ended the 30th June, 1936:—1, Steel and iron for building, railway permanent way material, and general manufacturing purposes. 2, Fencing wire, wire netting, nails, etc. 3, Steel wire ropes. 4, Steel or iron chain. 5, Black and galvanised iron, plain and corrugated. 6, Steel tubes and tubular products.

The reason for the moving of this motion is that I do not like to see the iron ore from Yampi Sound being taken away from this country. It is a very valuable indus-

try and should be developed. From the "Quarterly Statistical Abstract" of the 30th June, 1936, I notice that the imports into Western Australia of machines and machinery and metals and metal manufactures amounted to £4,898,711. Out of that amount we find that from the Eastern States alone we have received imports of the value of £2,944,405, and from the Eastern States but of overseas origin, goods to the value of £258,336, or a total import from the Eastern States of £3,202,741, leaving the imports from overseas of a value of £1,695,970. That is an enormous amount, considering that the whole of the exports from Western Australia to the Eastern States do not exceed £1,500,000. The majority of the bigger industries of Australia are founded in New South Wales and Victoria, where the natural resources of iron ore and coal are contiguous to good harbour facilities. Every industry must have a beginning, and from humble beginnings expansion has taken place to an extent that most of the heavy industries are now run on Australian soil, and practically all our requirements in such things as structural steel, wire ropes, rails and fastenings, bolts and nuts, fencing wire and wire-netting, piping, steel chain, etc., are now made in Australia by subsidiary companies of the Broken Hill Proprietary. Such well-known firms as Stewarts & Lloyds, the Australian Steel Wire Works, Lysaght's and Ryland's, are now operating in the Eastern States. In Yampi Sound this State possesses an enormous deposit of iron ore. There are in the Sound splendid port facilities, including a depth of water from 24 ft. to 28 ft. right adjacent to this huge deposit. We have in this State coalfields that have already been developed, and all that is now required is initiative in the establishment of the iron industry. At present many thousands of pounds are being sent to the Eastern States in payment for goods that could be produced locally, whereas, if the industry were established here that money could be kept in the State. There would be a permanently employed works personnel which would provide other avenues of employment in housing, clothing and feeding. Further development of the State coalfields would result, and naturally expansion of business activities in those districts would follow. Coastal shipping would soon enjoy a permanent expansion and the State's revenue would benefit accordingly. A

quick result would be the necessity and justification for providing docking facilities, which again would stem the outward flow of money now spent in the Eastern States and at Singapore on shipping repairs. The tide might even turn and bring work from overseas ships that at present pass our ports without our getting a share of it. Thus again increased employment would follow. With all this internal development, would there not be a ready influx of British capital, and would not the tide of immigration be encouraged in a natural manner? Orchardists, poultry farmers, market gardeners and all primary producers would reap a quick harvest and further farms could and would be established. All these increases would mean a considerable augmentation of population and the benefit would be reflected in increased demands in practically every industry now carried on in the State. Even the suggested steelworks would find an increased demand for their products. Greater coastal shipping activity would follow; there would be increased employment and again more business would develop, and so on round the circle. Now let us look at the other side of the question. Eastern States vested interests might prove an obstacle by price-cutting and such other methods as are often employed to strangle a new industry. However, once the works were fully established, such opposition should be efficiently countered. On the other hand, they might, seeing the possibilities, even decide to co-operate, and so share in the establishment. Another possible difficulty would lie in the fact that our present population is small and incapable of absorbing large quantities of any one of the units that go to make up the multiplicity of products turned out by such an industry. The third major difficulty is that of finance, but if the case I have made out is sound, that difficulty would disappear, as capital is always available where profit is forthcoming. I commend the motion to the House, and hope it will receive due consideration, because our imports of steel products are so very high. All possible assistance should be given by the Government to get the industry established here. The iron industry of any country is of very great importance. Since the inception of the Broken Hill Proprietary Co., enormous profits have been accumulated, and quite a lot of employment has been provided for the eastern part of Australia. From what I can learn, the iron deposits at Yampi



Sound are amongst the richest and most extensive in Australia, and therefore every effort should be exerted to get steel works established in this State. Past Governments have been more or less short-sighted. For evidence of that we have only to look at Hay-street or reflect on our railway system. If we do not give due consideration to establishing the iron industry, the time will come when we shall realise how foolish it was to allow that body of ore to be developed by a foreign country. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that while the iron ore remained at Yampi Sound, it would be an asset, but that when it left our shores it would not be. Seeing that it will be profitable for Britain and Japan to ship the ore from Yampi Sound and manufacture it in those countries, surely we could make it a profitable industry to the State, and thus help to absorb the unemployed! Iron is required by everybody. It matters not whom one meets, where one goes or what one does, iron is required. Men who are merely walking about require iron in the shape of sprigs and nails for their shoes. Women require it for hairpins.

The Minister for Mines: Do they?

Mr. NULSEN: Iron is required in every direction. A telegram from Sydney on Saturday last contained the following information:—

“Between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000 would be spent by the American Rolling Company, known in Australia as Armeo (Australia) Proprietary, Limited, in the establishment in Australia of steel mills,” said Mr. A. W. Jones, manager and acting director of the company, to-day. The establishment of the industry was announced in the House of Representatives yesterday by the Minister for Trade Treaties (Sir Henry Gullett).

Mr. Jones added that it had been decided to establish works in Australia for the manufacture of highly-finished steel suitable for motor car bodies, and the construction of enamelling and deep drawing steel. The location of the Australian mill had not been decided. Mr. R. S. Connors, managing director of the company, was visiting the United States, where details of the scheme were being finalised. Armeo Proprietary, Limited, held the world rights for what was known as continuous rolling. This metal was run out at a very rapid rate, and finished completely by one battery of mills. By this method, an even quality in product was assured.

Such a company might give consideration to establishing steel works in this State. It seems to me that the Eastern States, because of their larger populations, secure the whole of the advantages. I know the Minister for

Mines is doing his best to conserve the interests of this State. Those people are endeavouring to establish the industry; they can see profit in it, but rather than have the iron shipped away to be manufactured elsewhere, I would retain it in the State.

On motion by the Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

## PAPERS—AGRICULTURAL BANK BOOKLET.

Debate resumed from the 16th September on the following motion by Mr. Styants (Kalgoorlie):—

That the booklet giving terms and conditions of service and general instructions to the staff of the Agricultural Bank be laid on the Table of the House.

**THE DEPUTY PREMIER** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [5.27]: I have no objection to tabling the booklet. I understand that it merely contains instructions issued to officers by the Commissioners of the Bank.

Question put and passed.

## MOTION—HOUSING PROBLEM.

*To inquire by Royal Commission.*

Debate resumed from the 16th September on the following motion by Mr. Shearn (Maylands):—

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed for the following purposes, that is to say:—Generally to inquire into and report upon—

- (a) The housing position in Western Australia with special reference to—
  - (i) the metropolitan-suburban area;
  - (ii) the goldfields;
  - (iii) the agricultural and other districts.
- (b) Residential financing; and the provision of facilities for home-ownership.
- (c) The special problem of citizens in the lower income groups and the necessity of there being available for their occupation, at a rental within their means, a sufficient number of houses which conform with reasonable standards of health, decency, and general amenity.
- (d) The adequacy and effectiveness of existing provisions for—
  - (i) the prevention and/or clearance and improvement of unhealthy areas;
  - (ii) the repair or demolition of insanitary houses; and
  - (iii) overcrowding.

(c) Co-operation between the State and Federal Governments, local governing bodies, social and welfare organisations, and all interested branches of private enterprise in the solution of housing problems and in the planning, finance, and development of housing projects, and to make recommendations calculated to promote the welfare of the community and to effect any improvement or development which may be considered necessary or desirable in respect of the foregoing matters or any of them.

**MR. FOX** (South Fremantle) [5.29]: I do not intend to support the motion for a Royal Commission to inquire into housing, not because I consider that the proposals submitted by the member for Maylands lack merit, but because I believe that a Royal Commission is unnecessary. No good purpose would be served by such an inquiry. The Workers' Homes Board is capable of coping with the housing problem, provided sufficient finance is made available. I believe that if an additional £40,000 or £50,000 per year could be voted by this House, the Workers' Homes Board would be able to deal effectively with every application for a worker's home coming before them. We know that at present the board are not able to deal with every application submitted, by reason of the disabilities I have mentioned. In support of that statement I have here a letter which has been handed to me by a resident of Fremantle who made application for a home some months ago. I believe it will be several months hence before his application is finally dealt with, notwithstanding that the board have intimated that he is a suitable applicant and one for whom they are willing to provide a home. The letter is from the Workers' Homes Board, and reads—

Receipt is acknowledged of your application for assistance under the Workers' Homes Act to build at Fremantle, and in connection therewith I have to advise that on account of the large number of proposals for attention it is not possible to state when applications lodged will be finalised. However, immediately the board are in a position to proceed in the matter, you will be notified accordingly.

That is convincing evidence that the board have not sufficient finance available to cope with the many applications received. I believe that if Parliament could set apart £45,000 or £50,000 annually—I base these figures on the number of applications dealt with by the board last year and the number of applications on hand—that would cover

the whole of the applications and enable the board to keep them up to date. In my opinion, people in receipt of, say, £6 per week or more ought to be able to make their own arrangements with building societies or other financial institutions to provide homes for themselves. The people we should concern ourselves with mostly, are those with incomes on the basic wage or less than the basic wage. We know that relief workers are in receipt of sums considerably lower than the basic wage, many of them 10s. or 11s. per week under the basic wage. Those are the people whom the Workers' Homes Board should cater for. If the board could provide homes at a weekly cost, covering rent and sinking fund, of 10s. to 12s., it would give those people an opportunity to secure homes within a reasonable time. They have to pay rent in any circumstances, and are a class of people to whom we should devote our attention in order to provide them with homes. One of the great hindrances to providing homes in many quarters is the by-law passed by municipalities and road boards establishing brick areas. Although I am advised that really these authorities could not enforce such a by-law if it were contested, nevertheless it represents a great bar to the building of cheap homes in many suburbs. I do not know whether a Bill could be brought down which would prevent any local authority from declaring brick areas. I see no reason why wooden homes could not be built just as artistically as any of the brick homes to be seen throughout the metropolitan area. In other Australian States there are thousands of wooden homes, and more are now being built. The whole of the material required for wooden homes would be produced locally. I dare say most of the materials for brick homes are also produced locally. Still, in my opinion something should be done to prevent municipalities and road boards from forbidding people to put up wooden homes in any area in which it may be desired to build them. Another source from which perhaps funds could be obtained for the Workers' Homes Board is the Lotteries Commission. I believe certain amounts have been granted by the Commission to the Workers' Homes Board at various times for the purpose of building homes to accommodate indigent people. I wish to instance a case which was brought under my notice two or three days ago, showing the absolute

necessity for the State doing something to provide homes for people in poor circumstances. We know that there are many pensioners living in the metropolitan area and throughout Western Australia who have no homes. They have to pay rent, whereas if they had cheap homes they would be able to live at least better than they are living at the present time. If a married couple receive 36s. per week and have to pay out of that 10s. per week for rent, they have not much left to live on. People who have been on incomes equivalent to or less than the basic wage during the whole of their lives, have not had much opportunity to provide themselves with homes. The case to which I desire especially to refer is that of a woman with four children, her husband being an inmate of the Lemnos Home. He is an ex-Imperial soldier; and the wife does not receive any pension, as his disability is not due to war causes. The only assistance she receives is 36s. per week from the Child Welfare Department, and out of that sum she has to pay 10s. per week for rent. There is a girl of 15 receiving 7s. 6d. per week for working from eight in the morning till 10 at night at household duties. Perhaps it is just as well to say no more about that. The case is one where I think the Government should provide a home free of rent. When the children are old enough to provide a home for the mother, they could move out to a home of their own, and the original home could be granted to another family in poor circumstances. Another factor militating against the progress of the workers' homes scheme is, I understand, the shortage of architects. In my opinion, it would be a good idea if some of the money that has been collected for youth employment were utilised in educating a few youths to take up architecture as a profession. That would do away with the shortage of architects which, I understand, exists in Western Australia. I regret that I am not able to support the motion. The suggested Royal Commission would be fairly expensive, and the money required for the purpose would be better used in providing some of the services suggested by the member for Maylands.

**MR. TONKIN** (North-East Fremantle) [5.39]: The member for Maylands (Mr. Shearn) has moved for a Royal Commission to inquire into quite a number of things. I ask myself, is the hon. member

seeking information about the housing position in order to ascertain whether additional houses are necessary, or does he know that houses are required and is he taking this action in order to get those houses built? Most people already know a good deal about the questions which the hon. member seeks to submit to a Royal Commission. Indeed, very few people are not well informed upon those matters. The hon. member suggested that the subject of residential financing should be inquired into, as well as the provision of facilities for home ownership. I think we all know about those matters. We know the facilities existing for men on reasonably good salaries. We know the facilities existing for those on medium wages, and we know what facilities exist for those on the basic wage or less. We could name the facilities, such as they are, for these last-mentioned. However, the member for Maylands would have a Royal Commission inquire into the special problems of citizens in the lower-income groups. He would have a Royal Commission inquire into the necessity for such people being able to obtain, at a rental within their means, a sufficient number of houses conforming with reasonable standards of health, decency, and general amenity. We do not want a Royal Commission to tell us those things. We know them already. We know that there ought to be a sufficient number of homes available for people of those means, and we know that they are not available. We do not need a Royal Commission to tell us whether there are sufficient homes available or not. Inquiry on those lines would be a waste of time and a waste of money. I hold that we know all that we need to know about the necessity for those homes. We know in which stratum of society they are most needed. What we do not know is how we are to supply the homes which are required. Unquestionably, the requisite most needed is money. Housing is not the acute problem in Western Australia that it has been in some countries. In making that statement I have in mind the severe nature of the problem existing in European countries—Great Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands, for instance. There they have had a great deal of trouble not only in providing decent houses for the people, but in providing anything like a sufficient number of houses to prevent over-crowding. The result has been that the Governments of

those countries have had to step in to prevent the growth of epidemics due to unhygienic conditions. They have been compelled to take drastic action. For example, in Great Britain the Government have made available out of revenue large sums which were paid as subsidies to municipal authorities in order to encourage them to effect slum clearances. That simply had to be done, because the position was approaching a national calamity. Similar action has been taken in other countries. Public loans have been floated for the purpose. In some States a tax has been placed upon the permitted increase in rentals of old houses in order to provide funds for the building of new houses. That is a method which I would not recommend here—taxing the people already renting old houses so as to make it possible for new houses to be built. I mention it merely as one of the methods which have been adopted in various parts of the world. Further, in order to encourage building, some Governments have granted tax exemptions to private builders. In some cases they have also granted home sites to people on highly advantageous terms. That I consider a good move. If it were possible for our Government to buy up land cheaply and make it available to people on such terms, I am quite certain that more people would be in a position to build homes for themselves than is the case to-day. If one goes to a building society, one is told it is possible to obtain an advance up to 75 per cent. of the value of a house and land. The trouble in such instances is that the individual has not the first 25 per cent. and needs assistance in that regard. If a man possesses a block of land and a few pounds in hand, he can secure the advance from a building society and erect and purchase a home on very good terms. Therefore there is a method by which it is possible for some people to obtain homes but, as I have already indicated, the difficulty is that most of them have not sufficient funds available to enable them to make a start. Some even have not a block of land. The Government could assist by making blocks available. I daresay that could be done in certain localities where land is cheap. That would be an incentive to people to arrange for the erection and purchase of their own homes. What we seek to-day is to make it possible for a large number of people—I would even say for every family—to have their own homes.

Experience in all countries shows that the system of free competition is unable to produce a sufficient number of dwellings at reasonable rates to meet the requirements of working people. In those circumstances, it would seem that the Government must step in and take action by providing the necessary funds to make dwellings available for the people. Private enterprise will not do it; that is the experience in all countries. The cardinal principle that must be adopted in any scheme of housing is that the dwellings must be suited to the purchasing power of the people for whom the homes are provided. This is where the Workers' Homes Board have not met the position effectively to date. The Board have adopted a certain standard type of house and the effect has been to encourage people to go in for homes the price of which is well beyond their means. Had those people sat down and calculated the possibility of their being able to purchase the homes and to maintain regularly the payments on their houses, the probability is that in many instances they would never have entered into the contract. On the other hand, they were encouraged to go in for a certain type of house because it looked better and, of course, it is a laudable desire to live in a very nice dwelling. It is necessary to provide homes of a cheaper type that are well within the purchasing power of the people it is desired to assist. Homes must be provided at rentals of from 10s. to 12s. a week. There are thousands of people who will never be able to pay any more than that, and they should not be denied the right to secure homes. Something should be done to enable them to enjoy that privilege. I see no reason why homes could not be provided for about £300 apiece. Houses have been provided on the goldfields for such a price.

Mr. Styants: You would get a very poor house at that figure.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not so sure. I was born on the goldfields and lived there for many years.

Mr. Styants: The position is different to-day.

Mr. TONKIN: The houses are not different. The type is the same.

Mr. Hegney: There have been big changes in the last 50 years!

Mr. TONKIN: Many of the homes erected on the goldfields in the early days were sold when the mining industry de-

clined. They were pulled down and re-erected in Perth.

Mr. Styants: Yes, stables.

Mr. TONKIN: Not stables by any means.

Mr. Styants: You would not be allowed to re-erect those homes in the metropolitan area.

Mr. TONKIN: I tell the hon. member they were re-erected.

Mr. Hegney: Not in the municipality of Perth.

Mr. TONKIN: Perth is not the only place in the universe. They were re-erected in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Styants: That is better.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the same thing.

Mr. Styants: You can go a long way from Perth and still be in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Cross: Three or four of those houses can be seen now in Ascot Road, Victoria Park.

Mr. TONKIN: Many of those houses that were pulled down on the goldfields were transported to Perth or Fremantle for re-erection. Some were re-erected as far south as Busselton. Some may be seen at Mandurah, while others were re-erected in the farming areas. Even today they represent better houses than many others in North Fremantle, for which people have to pay a rental of from 12s. to 16s. a week. There are hundreds of such houses in North Fremantle that are not nearly as good as the dwellings that were transferred from the goldfields to the metropolitan area. In my opinion, houses of that description could very well be provided for the workers in the metropolitan area. I am not certain, but I believe the group settlers' houses cost from £250 to £300 each. If the Government consider houses of that type suitable for the group settlers, and regard them as desirable and healthy, then such houses should be acceptable in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Fox: It would be hard to convince a lot of the civic fathers on that point.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the type of house we shall have to go in for, if we are to meet the present position. The people cannot afford to pay any more. Only the other day I was asked by an individual to endeavour to find a house with two bedrooms and the rent was to be not more than 12s. a week. I could not find a vacant dwelling in North Fremantle that met the requirements. It is well known that the families of the people in receipt of the lowest wages are, generally

speaking, the largest, and therefore three bedrooms are usually necessary. That means that these people are obliged to occupy houses for which they must pay a rental beyond their means. The member for Maylands (Mr. Shearn) should realise that those who really need houses of this description are those in the lower income group. If we are to provide houses at all, they must be cheap. There already exists Commonwealth legislation in this respect for the assistance of the States. The Commonwealth Housing Act of 1927-28 empowers the Commonwealth Savings Bank to lend money to the States under the Federal housing scheme. When the legislation was introduced, Dr. Earle Page said that the aim was to set up a revolving fund of £20,000,000 in Australia for the purpose of assisting various State bodies to provide housing facilities for the people. In the report that was tabled by the Premier last year it was stated that no assistance had been received from the Commonwealth under the provisions of that Act during the year. I sent a telegram to the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, Mr. John Curtin, to find out whether any assistance had been granted to any State during the previous five years. The reply I received was that no such assistance had been granted under the Commonwealth Housing Act. Apparently no use is being made of the money available under that legislation. I suggest that the Treasurer endeavour to obtain some of the money, seeing that we are short of funds in Western Australia. It would represent one more means of obtaining money that could well be expended within the State. Seeing that the intention was to establish a revolving fund of £20,000,000 and as practically none of that money has been used, there must be a large sum available for expenditure. It might be worth while endeavouring to obtain some of it in order to provide homes for our people. If there is no other way by which the necessary homes can be provided, I shall support the motion for the appointment of a Royal Commission. I do not want to do that because I regard that method as a sheer waste of time and money. I would like some other method adopted to secure immediate action. I hope that the Government will be able to make a statement regarding this matter in order to assure the House that they are alive to the importance of the problem, that they realise that something must be done and that they are prepared to take steps to

do something. If that assurance be forthcoming, I shall vote against the motion.

**MR. HEGNEY** (Middle Swan) [5.58]: Previous speakers have submitted concrete evidence indicating why a Royal Commission should not be appointed for the purposes set out in the motion. Members are fully conversant with the need for a better housing scheme throughout the State. In the metropolitan area housing conditions are not all that could be desired and in my own electorate many of the workers are living in homes that are not satisfactory. That can also be said regarding conditions in other electorates, and it applies equally to the outer metropolitan area and to many country districts. It is not a question of an investigation by a Royal Commission but rather is it necessary to obtain cheap money in order that homes may be provided for the people. If money cannot be obtained at a low rate of interest, then the workers, farmers, and others, who would benefit by any housing scheme, will not receive the assistance we desire. Their income is such that they cannot pay the rent that is demanded under existing conditions. The motion sets out in detail what the Royal Commission should deal with, but my opinion, which I have voiced during previous sessions, is that what is required are homes for the workers in the lower income group and the cost of those premises should not exceed £400 or £500. Money should also be made available to workers who themselves were prepared to erect their own homes. I know numbers in the Middle Swan electorate, men even on low sustenance rates and on part-time employment, who have been forced out of the city areas because they could not pay the higher rental. Those men have gone out and bought a small block of land in the Belmont district, and by paying in small instalments they have eventually acquired the freehold. During the intervening period they have improvised shelters of hessian and galvanised iron for themselves. They were forced to do that by the economic pressure, for they had no other means of putting a roof over their heads. Then as things improved they have succeeded in getting continuous employment, whereupon they went to the State Sawmills and secured timber on credit and built better places by their own labour, places that certainly gave them good shelter. I have

advocated in the House that the Minister controlling the Workers' Homes Board should provide more funds for the erection of cheaper homes for workers. Not long ago Sir Charles McNess, our local philanthropist, made available certain funds for the purpose of building a cheaper class of home, with a view to helping people who were in difficulties.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of helping the unemployed.

**Mr. HEGNEY**: Not merely the unemployed, but widows and pensioners and others unable to help themselves; and under that scheme in many instances no rent was chargeable if so be the tenant could not afford to pay rent. Even those who could pay rent had only to pay a nominal sum. That scheme was taken over by the Workers' Homes Board, who at once proceeded to line the unlined houses that had been built at a cost of £250. Of course the lining of those places added something to the cost. From time to time the secretary of the Workers' Homes Board has definitely said that the board are willing to construct such homes if the workers will but make application for them. The original purpose of the board is to build homes for workers on the lower incomes. The board do not require even 10 per cent. on the cost; all that is necessary is to pay down £10 with the application and 5s. in fees. It is a pity that more workers do not make applications to the board, for the board, I feel certain, would give consideration to such applications. The fact remains that many workers have not applied because they are within an insecure income range. Hundreds of them are not working for the Government at all, but are casual workers with an insecure income, and so they are reluctant to take on the obligation of paying instalments on a home. Consequently they have to continue paying rent. During the last few years there have been advances made in suburban rents. I know of a number out my way who have had their rents increased by their landlords, and so they have been forced out. Still, the agent, anxious to aid them, sends them a couple of miles farther out, perhaps beyond transportation, and there they are expected to live and raise their families. I feel sure the Workers' Homes Board have all the machinery necessary to go on with a housing scheme. I do not think that slums in this city are nearly as bad as those in Melbourne or in

European cities. We have the Town Planning Commissioner, and he and others have shown us by lantern slides the rotten conditions existing in the Old World, and perhaps in lesser degree in Sydney and Melbourne. But in this State the slum areas are small and can be coped with by the local authorities. The member for Maylands (Mr. Shearn) said that the essential requirement of home purchase by the average citizen is a long-term mortgage repayable by a system of instalments over a period of years. That means an impossibility for people on lower incomes, whether farmers or workers in the metropolitan area, unless some special scheme can be devised for the provision of cheap money for workers' homes.

Mr. Warner: Bring down the interest rates!

Mr. HEGNEY: Would the hon. member support such a proposal?

Mr. Warner: Yes.

Mr. HEGNEY: Other members on that side stand for the perpetuation of the present economic system. I have listened to them on many occasions and I know they are definitely opposed to Government interference with the existing order of things. They believe in laissez-faire. We can all recall what happened when Mr. Scullin in the Federal sphere proposed to reduce interest rates. The air was filled with the forebodings voiced by the other side. The interest rate to be charged to these homeless folk in search of homes will have a material bearing on the success or failure of the proposition, especially amongst the farmers. The Sudan Government initiated the Workers' Homes Board under a most excellent Act. Provision was made for either leasehold or freehold, and many homes were built on the leasehold plan.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Was it not all leasehold to begin with?

Mr. HEGNEY: Even if that were so, the freehold was introduced later. I know numbers of people who have leasehold homes provided by the board. If that system were further extended it would help solve the problem of acquiring freehold land, and would help to do away with the enormous capital cost involved in the purchase of such land. Whenever a fair rents Bill is introduced, the principal argument used against it is that it will affect building activities, and that people will not go in for a building programme. But the existing capitalistic system has made it difficult to

provide homes for the people. The Government have to come into the picture, and are solicited to provide funds for the purpose of erecting cheap homes for the workers. Of course, it is unadulterated socialism, and many call us out-and-out socialists because of it. Yet if it comes to the point, those same people will readily take advantage of that kind of socialism. As to the point made by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) in respect of local authorities defining certain areas as brick areas, it may apply to what is done in the newer suburbs, but there are suburbs in close proximity to Perth, suburbs such as Belmont and Riverdale and Maylands, where weatherboard houses eminently suited to the workers can be erected. I do not think Ministers could find funds for a better purpose than that which we are discussing. I know that Mr. Collier provided extra funds to permit of building workers' homes. The Workers' Homes Board say they are behindhand in their programme because of lack of architects. That is the reply put up when representations are made to the board respecting applicants who want to know when their homes will be built. There is a waiting list the equivalent of six or 12 months, and the board give as a reason why they cannot catch up to their programme, the lack of architects! We ought to be able to overcome that difficulty, and so speed up the board in the construction of homes.

On motion by Mr. Watts, debate adjourned.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

## MOTION—HEALTH ACT.

### *To Disallow By-laws.*

Debate resumed from the 16th September on the following motion by Mr. McDonald (West Perth):—

That the amendments to the by-laws made by the City of Perth under the provisions of the Health Act, 1933 (deleting paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of Subclause (ii) of Clause 29 of Part VI., and substituting new paragraphs in lieu), as published in the "Government Gazette" of the 5th June, 1936, and laid upon the Table of the House on the 12th August, 1936, be and are hereby disallowed.

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH** (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [7.32]: I intend to oppose the motion for the disallowance of these by-laws. I have had at least four

deputations—three from women's organisations, and one from a men's organisation—protesting against the present methods of the cartage of meat from the abattoirs to the city, and I cannot understand the idea of cleanliness or hygienic conditions of any who regard the present method as satisfactory, particularly in the summer time.

Mr. Doney: For how many years have you put up with the present methods?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: We have put up with them until now, I admit, but it has not been because we have not tried to get them altered. We have tried before, and are trying again now. The by-laws put up did concern me considerably at first, from another angle altogether. It was to my way of thinking giving a much greater concession to the man we tried to out some little time ago by regulations which were disallowed. Those who cart carcasses to the Perth City Markets, the Meat Producers' Association or the Distributors' Association, claimed that they were under an unfair disadvantage compared with the man who carted his own meat to the markets. I am given to understand by the Chief Inspector of the Perth City Council that 90 per cent. at least of the carcasses that go to the Perth City markets, are taken there by carriers and not by the producers themselves. There are few who take their own. The regulation would not apply to them. The regulation as drawn will apply to the 90 per cent. of the carcasses that are taken to the Perth City markets by the carriers.

Mr. Patrick: They are not referred to in these by-laws.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: They will have to provide this class of conveyance, and they know it all right. As a matter of fact, one has agreed to put on the necessary van. They know it will apply to them. Under the present method the carcasses are carried in a truck, piled on top of one another, as many as eight or nine deep. I admit that a covering is placed over the lot. Sometimes it is tied, and sometimes it is not. I believe that on every occasion when a lorry leaves the abattoirs the covering over the meat is tied down, but after the first stop made for the delivery of meat, and from then until the lorry is emptied, the covering is very seldom tied down, and in the summer months the meat is exposed to dust and,

more particularly, to flies all along the road. By-laws of this sort have been in force in the other four capital cities for many years, and for not less than 12 years in the last city in which they were introduced. In Sydney they have been in force for 40 years, and in Adelaide for 20 years, and the by-laws now put up by the Perth City Council for the cartage of meat are the same as those in force elsewhere. The organisation opposing these by-laws wrote a fairly long letter on the subject in which it was stated that if their members had to go to the expense of new lorries for the purpose of carting this meat, it would mean an increased cost to the consumer. They said it would cost at least £1 per bullock, and 3s. for each sheep. They also supplied an estimate of the cost of purchasing new lorries to comply with the new conditions. They said that a new lorry would cost £1,600. Whether that is true I do not know.

Mr. Withers: You are doubtful?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am doubtful.

Mr. Patrick: You do not mean £1,600 for one lorry?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: They say that each lorry purchased to comply with these by-laws would cost £1,600. Suppose it did cost that. They state that twenty-five lorries would be required to complete the job. At £1,600 per lorry, the total cost would be £40,000. Returns from the abattoirs indicate that last year 28,000 bullocks and 400,000 sheep came from the two abattoirs. At a cost of £1 per head, the bullocks would return £28,000, and at 3s. per head the sheep would return £60,000. So that those gentlemen who are protesting so much, are going to get a rake-off from the general public of £88,000 a year in increased cost, because they are put to the expense, if their figures are correct, of finding £40,000 additional capital for the purchase of lorries. I do not believe it will cost anything like £1,600 for each conveyance. They did make the statement that the van, to be of any use, would have to be equal to one of the Metro buses. I have seen the lorries in South Australia. They are certainly big, but they are a long way short of the size of a Metro bus.

Mr. Patrick: The abattoirs in Adelaide do their own delivery.



The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: They use the class of conveyance provided under these by-laws.

Mr. Patrick: They are big.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Not as big as the Metro buses. They approximate in size the buses on the North Beach route, but they are much smaller than the Metro buses.

Mr. Stubbs: There is no upholstering in them!

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No. There is no question which is the better method of the two. Under the new by-laws, carriers will be compelled to hang all the quarters in the conveyance, and I do not think anyone can argue that in carting the meat to the city from the abattoirs, to have it lying on the floor crushed and piled six or seven carcasses deep is good for the meat or as sanitary as having it hung in the vans. I do not know how far we are going to get towards bringing health requirements up to anything like a proper standard if, every time we attempt to get a regulation for the improved delivery of food, it is baulked. The by-laws, according to the Perth City Council, are not to come into operation until the 1st January. I do not know what attitude the Perth City Council will then adopt, but I admit that as we are approaching the end of the year there might be some difficulty to get the necessary conveyances constructed before the 1st January. Still, I do not think the Perth City Council would mind if the period were extended for another 12 months. As Minister for Health I would not object, but any vehicle now being used and becoming worn out before that time should be replaced by one of the regulation vans. I do not think the Perth City Council would object to a 12 months' extension of time. A year and four months would not be long in passing, and if we could then depend upon getting this sanitary method of carrying meat from the abattoirs to the shops, I think we should be content. The present method is unsatisfactory. The by-laws are not extreme because they follow the lead of Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Each of those cities has the regulation van which the Perth City Council have prescribed for use here, and it is nearly time we reached the standards of the Eastern capitals. So far as I can learn—I cannot vouch for this information—about 12 years have elapsed since the last of those four

capital cities adopted the improved system. Sydney has had it in operation for 40 years and Adelaide for 20 years. Surely we are not going to lag behind for another 20 years in the method of conveying meat from the abattoirs to the shops in the metropolitan area. The carriers have also asked that they be not compelled to get the new vans until such time as the butchers instal railings around their shops and under the verandahs, so that the meat may be run from the van into the shops without any handling at all. I do not see why we should wait until the butchers provide those railings at their shops. If these by-laws become law, then within a very short period the butchers will adopt that system, but if the by-laws are disallowed, the butchers never will provide the railings because there will be no necessity for them to do so. The carriers say that the by-laws cannot be put into effect here as in the Eastern States because our streets are so narrow, that they would be unable to turn the huge vans and back them into the footpath so that the carcasses could be run off the hooks. That may be so, but I know butcher shops in streets in Sydney that are not as wide as Hay-street, and I question whether some are as wide as Barrack-street. Still, the vans have been in operation there for 40 years and no difficulty has been experienced. I see no reason why any difficulty should be experienced here. These by-laws have the endorsement of the Health Department. The Health Department intend to put them up as model by-laws, and I believe that when that is done every local authority in the metropolitan area will adopt them. I wish to give the Perth City Council credit for adopting this sanitary method of carrying meat, and I hope the House will not disallow the by-laws. The statement that to provide the improved vans will increase the cost by £1 per bullock and 3s. per sheep is ridiculous, even leaving pigs and calves out of the reckoning, for, on the number of bullocks and sheep carted, this would represent an additional cost of £88,000 a year. It is absurd even allowing for a construction cost of £1,600 for each of the 25 lorries required or £40,000 in all. On their own figures the carriers would take £88,000 per annum from consumers of the metropolitan area. I do not know whether they consider people so stupid as to be unable to verify figures of that kind. If they expect people to accept a tale of that sort,

I cannot understand them. I am prepared to use what influence I have to get the Perth City Council to extend the period for another year, but even if they refuse to do it, I hope the House will not disallow the by-laws but will agree to their coming into operation on the 1st January, 1937. Then, on that date, we can be assured that the carriage of meat from the abattoirs to the shops will be conducted under sanitary methods.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [7.47]: I listened carefully to the remarks of the Minister for Health, and was surprised that he made no reference to the statement of the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) regarding the varying by-laws of adjoining authorities.

The Minister for Health: What difference would that make? Do you think the other local authorities would object to the adoption of a better method of carrying meat?

Mr. Doney: No, the point was the introduction of different methods.

Mr. SAMPSON: There are various local authorities whose districts the conveyances traverse, and while the vehicles at present used might be in order in Midland Junction, and possibly in Perth, they might not suit at Fremantle. I do not recall the exact authorities referred to, but it was made clear to the House that there are various authorities, and that the by-laws are not uniform.

The Minister for Health: They are uniform at present, but if these by-laws were put into operation they would not be. This, however, is a better system than the existing one.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister admits that the existing by-laws are uniform.

The Minister for Health: The present method of carrying meat is uniform.

Mr. SAMPSON: If that is so, I wonder that the Minister did not dispute the statement of the member for West Perth.

The Minister for Health: He did not make that statement.

Mr. SAMPSON: It was said that there were varying by-laws in the districts of the different local authorities. Of that I am positive.

The Minister for Health: He said the by-laws would be different if these by-laws were allowed.

Mr. SAMPSON: Is that desirable?

The Minister for Health: Yes, because this is a better system.

Mr. SAMPSON: We should approach this question from the standpoint of securing uniformity. I should have liked the Minister to refer to that aspect. The regulations have no bearing on the cartage of carcasses by small producers in the outlying districts into market. They relate mainly to the cartage of meat from the markets.

The Minister for Health: From the abattoirs.

Mr. SAMPSON: From wherever the animals are killed. The matter has been discussed in this House, and regulations appertaining to it were disallowed in another place last year.

The Minister for Health: They had nothing to do with the cartage of meat.

Mr. SAMPSON: The matter was referred to by the Minister, though I do not know why it was brought in. Reference has been made to the cartage of meat from the abattoirs in South Australia. The system there is probably ideal, and is certainly better than it is here. The member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) did not defend the method at present in vogue in Perth. He said it would be more reasonable if new regulations were made, that those who have already provided trucks to meet the existing requirements of the authorities, should be given a reasonable time in which to make a change and provide for the new requirements of the authorities. The finding of enough money for the purchase of a new truck and equipping it with an expensive class of body, to conform to the new regulations, would mean a very severe burden upon a section of people who during the past few months at least have had a difficult time. I do not claim to know anything about butchering or the supply of meat, but I listened to what the member for West Perth said as well as to what the Minister said. Whilst I am with the Minister in his desire to improve the conditions appertaining to the cartage of foodstuffs, I cannot agree with him that regulations such as these should be brought in without notice. I trust he may yet decide to accept the suggestion of the member for West Perth, and give the people concerned reasonable time in which to provide a different type of vehicle. The suggestion to postpone the application of these regulations was a good one, and might well be adopted by the Minister without injury to anyone concerned. From what I can recall of the remarks of the member for West Perth, three new trucks would cost about £1,700.

Mr. Doney: Three new trucks would cost £1,600 each.

Mr. SAMPSON: That makes it more difficult than ever for those concerned in the distribution of meat. I hope the by-laws will be withdrawn, and that the Minister will insist on the present regulations being carried into active effect. The tarpaulin should be spread properly over the poles, and the authorities should see to it that the protection the Minister spoke of as having been afforded in the past should be made effective in the future. If that were done, and reasonable notice were given to those engaged in the transport of meat of an impending change, no objection would be raised. I support the motion.

**MR. RAPHAEL** (Victoria Park) [7.55]: The question of the cartage of carcase meat has been before the Perth City Council for many months. The opinions of the health inspectors have from time to time been brought before the council, which has weighed carefully all that has been said about the deplorable conditions associated with the cartage of carcasses. The trucks now used in that class of trade, the conveyance of meat from the abattoirs, are open, but have a tarpaulin across the top. When one of these vehicles calls at a butcher's shop to deliver meat the tarpaulin is thrown back, and perhaps for three-quarters of an hour the meat on the vehicle is exposed to flies, dust and germs. In South Australia enormous covered-in lorries are used for the cartage of meat, and are called upon very frequently to travel in streets far more narrow than the streets of Perth.

Mr. Sampson: To which streets do you refer?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have seen these big lorries in Adelaide in streets half the width or two-thirds of the width of Hay-street.

Mr. Sampson: Which streets would they be?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The hon. member who is possessed of a gold pass can find out for himself.

Mr. Sampson: You make a statement and ought to substantiate it.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The member for Swan has suggested that model by-laws should be framed, and that those of the city of Perth and the road boards should be in conformity. He also said that the member for West Perth had brought forward a proposition, when in fact he did not do so.

If in seeking uniformity as between the different local authorities we are going to take a retrograde step, I think the Minister would be lacking in his duty if he accepted such a suggestion. Members must have seen for themselves the conditions under which small producers in outlying districts bring their meat to the open market. They must have seen fowls, vegetables, dead pigs, etc., all mixed up with the ordinary carcasses. Is that what the member for Swan wishes to continue? The Perth City Council has from time to time given consideration to these facts. Members opposite seem to deplore the cost of new vehicles for the transport of meat. Are these people making so little out of the trade that they cannot afford this expenditure? Do members opposite know what the farmers have been getting for their stock? The prices charged in Perth for meat indicate what profits are being made by the master butchers. The public health should be the first consideration of this House, and the new by-laws should have the support of both sides.

**MR. MARSHALL** (Murchison) [8.0]: I want to give a conscientious vote on this motion, for the health of the people is my first concern. We cannot view too lightly any system that has to do with the transportation of our food supplies. We must guard against any method that may lead to the spread of disease in our congested areas. So far as I can ascertain from the debate there has been some exaggeration, but very little in the way of a solution of the difficulty has been offered, nor have we any useful guide as to how to vote on the subject. The member for West Perth, who moved the motion, has described exactly what the regulations demand. If that were the only point for consideration, we could vote straight away for the retention of the by-laws. But the Minister, in putting forward his argument, said that to-day meat is transported in an ordinary lorry covered by a tarpaulin. This was supported by the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael), who added that at the first stopping-place the tarpaulin was undone, and thence onward was never attached again.

Mr. Raphael: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. MARSHALL: Can the hon. member explain how it would be possible with the ordinary modern caravan to get the meat out—

Mr. Raphael: Because there are doors to the caravan.

Mr. MARSHALL: And are the doors shut in order that the meat may be got out? There is no use arguing about it.

Mr. Raphael: No good whatever.

Mr. MARSHALL: In one case it would be necessary to open a side of the tarpaulin in order to get across to the carcasses, and in the other case it would be necessary to open the door in order to get at the carcasses.

The Minister for Health: I have seen a lorry come up the Fremantle-road with the tarpaulin flapping about.

Mr. MARSHALL: I respectfully suggest that if the Health Department knew about that, a stop would be put to the practice immediately. I care not about the expense involved; I care about the health of the community. If the tarpaulins now used are not clean and locked down, the health inspectors are not doing their job. I will put it to hon. members this way: If we have caravans as described by the member for West Perth, those caravans must be permanent structures. My experience leads me to suggest that there is a much greater chance of germs gaining access to the interior of a caravan and remaining there, than there is of their doing so while the ordinary method of clean tarpaulins obtains.

Mr. Raphael: The vehicle should be sterilised before starting.

Mr. MARSHALL: So should tarpaulins be sterilised before the start. Here is my difficulty. In the course of holstering up a case on the one hand, the position is exaggerated. Therefore I am more inclined to support the motion, unless I can be given a guarantee that the caravan, or "van" as it is called, will be kept clean, fumigated, and properly looked after. Otherwise we should be in no better circumstances with the proposed system than we are in to-day—not one whit. From what I gather, metropolitan consumers of meat would, under the proposed system, have to pay higher prices, while getting very little return indeed in the form of protection from contagious diseases. If tarpaulins are kept clean, and put down on the bottom of the truck—which also must always be clean—and if the tarpaulins are fastened down, I see no great danger. If these things are not being done, it is the job of the health inspectors to see that they are.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is a flimsy way of doing it.

Mr. MARSHALL: It may be flimsy.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There are proper plans for the purpose.

Mr. MARSHALL: We can always try to run before we are able to walk. So we pile up costs on the consumer unnecessarily, whereas the desired results could be obtained by efficiency. I fear I cannot be convinced that the extra cost will be borne by the wholesale merchants. It is a moral certainty that the workers will bear the extra cost, plus depreciation on the more expensive means of transportation. If I could be assured that the desired results were obtainable by the cheaper method, I should be prepared to vote for leaving matters as they are, and should support the motion.

MR. RODOREDA (Roebourne) [8.7]: So far as the debate has progressed, I also feel disposed to support the motion. The Minister for Health has admitted—what we all know—that someone will incur extra cost through a change in the system of cartage. Someone has to pay for it. The Minister proved definitely that the cost to the wholesale butchers would not be nearly as much as they have stated.

The Minister for Health: Not that. What they have stated the cost per carcass would be.

Mr. RODOREDA: Well, per carcass. We have no guarantee that they will not impose the extra cost per carcass which they have stated. We know that distributors, whether wholesale or retail, pass on the cost threefold or fourfold. That has been our unvarying experience. If advantages commensurate with the increased cost were obtainable, I would be inclined to agree to the change, though it seems to me that this is hygiene running riot. I do not think a little dust on the carcass will injuriously affect any consumer of the meat. All meat is washed by the householder before it is cooked. I should say there is far more danger connected with the handling of cooked meat. That is a matter which badly needs to be looked into.

Hon. C. G. Latham: More important this one, anyhow. Go to the shops and note what is to be seen there.

Mr. RODOREDA: The Minister has not told us that any alarming epidemic has been

caused recently through the current system of transporting meat. That system has been in operation for a long time, and no epidemic has resulted from it as yet. The only reason given for the change is that the Health Department say they want it, and that Sydney and Melbourne have it.

The Minister for Health: All the capital cities have it.

Mr. RODOREDA: Sydney has a bridge, and Melbourne has electric trains; but we have not got either yet. The fact that some other city has a particular system is no reason why we should necessarily adopt it. The Minister has not told us that any advantage will be derived from the proposed system of carting meat.

The Minister for Health: The consumer will get it cleaner.

Mr. RODOREDA: The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) admitted that the caravan door has to be left open while meat is being handled into the retail butcher's shop, and that the door will be left open for half an hour or three-quarters in the same way as tarpaulins are left off now. With vans, the flies cannot get out again, being anchored. We have no control over the man who handles the meat in the butcher's shop, where it is just as likely to become infected as on the way to the shop. Unless I hear some other arguments that will cause me to change my opinion, I shall vote for the motion.

**MR. DONEY** (Williams - Narrogin) [S.10]: A case has not been made out for the amended by-laws. If there had been a case made out, every member would gladly vote for them irrespective of the cost. I am sure any views put forward on the subject of health by the Minister for Health are entitled to attention and every respect, but I did not hear the Minister in his endeavour to justify them—

The Minister for Health: I did not try to justify the by-laws.

Mr. DONEY: What the Minister said prompts me to support the disallowance sought by the member for West Perth. As to the necessity for the by-laws, each member who has spoken, including the Minister himself, has indicated that they would be amply sufficient provided only they were properly enforced.

The Minister for Health: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. DONEY: I know, but that is a proper deduction to draw from the admissions the Minister made.

The Minister for Health: Not at all.

Mr. DONEY: If effect is to be given to the amendments, they will, without the slightest doubt in the world, add to the cost of living without securing any compensatory benefits at all. The by-laws in force require that carcase meat that is transported through the city shall be wrapped, as I understand it, in a clean canvas covering. Is that what is required?

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. DONEY: Then I am afraid in saying that, I have copied what the member for West Perth stated. Even so, the covering by tarpaulins which has been mentioned so freely during the debate ought to be sufficient, provided the by-law dealing with these coverings is sensibly enforced. After all, the efficacy of the present by-laws is not properly tested unless they are constantly in vigorous enforcement. Unless they are constantly enforced, no one is entitled to claim that the by-laws are insufficient. We have heard the remarks of the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) on this matter. The present by-laws are somewhat of a disgrace to the Perth City Council. According to the admissions made by several members, meat, in the course of transport through the city, has been covered with dirty tarpaulins. We have been told that not only is the meat covered with dirty tarpaulins, but that the coverings are worn, full of holes, and so forth. The result is that the meat is exposed to all the dust and flies that may settle upon it. In addition, as every member knows, many of the vehicles used for the transport of the meat are themselves pretty dirty. I was astonished to hear the huge cost of the trucks. I could hardly understand that they would cost as much as £1,600.

The Minister for Health: That is what they said the trucks cost. I do not know what they cost.

Mr. DONEY: If it is absolutely essential that hooks be swung from the ceiling—

The Minister for Health: No, from the rail.

Mr. DONEY: That amounts to pretty much the same. As they are suspended from hooks on the rail, the carcasses will certainly hang down six or seven feet. Naturally that will imply the use of a pretty tall vehicle.

The Minister for Health: It will be a pretty tall beast that, when cut into quarters, requires six or seven feet for hanging.

Mr. DONEY: Of course, many of the carcasses will require that amount of room. As the meat is transported, there would certainly be set up a sideways swaying, and when rounding corners the effect would be highly dangerous to the vehicle. I would not be astonished if this caused some to capsize. There is a point on which I would appreciate an explanation from the Minister. I have been approached by a couple of my farmer friends who, during the week, work on their properties and return to their homes in the city for the week-ends. Generally they bring down from the farm a side of mutton for the use of the family. On the strict wording of the proposed amendments to the existing regulations, they will be no longer allowed to bring that meat down.

The Minister for Health: Of course they will be. The amendments will not affect them in the slightest.

Mr. DONEY: I refer to the strict wording of the proposed amendments. Provided the Minister will give me an assurance that this practice will not be interfered with, I shall be satisfied.

The Minister for Health: I have been definitely assured that it will not affect such a practice unless the farmers are carriers, and carry meat in bulk. In the latter event, the regulations will apply to them equally with the others.

Mr. DONEY: I am glad to have that admission from the Minister. Apart from that, it appears to me that the House is being asked to promulgate by-laws that will be extremely costly to comply with, and will yield no benefit commensurate with the heavy cost involved. In those circumstances, I think members will be justified in voting for the point of view expressed by the member for West Perth.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [8.16]: It seems extraordinary that, year after year, we should be confronted with this type of regulation or by-law. In the old days when horse-drawn vehicles were used on dusty roads, this class of by-law was absolutely applicable. Now when we have bitumen surfaced roads and other arrangements making for cleanliness, we still have to consider this type of by-law.

The Minister for Health: The last commodities we should neglect are those associated with the people's food.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will tell the Minister something that he does not know. When I was Minister for Health, I suggested that something of this sort should be done, and Dr. Atkinson persuaded me against that course.

The Minister for Health: That may be so.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Dr. Atkinson said that if we proposed to turn our attention to this sort of thing, there were other foods that should be dealt with, foods that the people ate in the condition in which they were received. He pointed out that, as regards meat, the people cooked it and if any dust or flies had lighted on the meat the cooking would render the food germless.

The Minister for Health: There have been some improvements effected since you were Minister.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If the Minister intends to take sides with the Perth City Council so carefully—

The Minister for Health: I do not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Why does the Minister exclude the butcher who delivers the cut joint to the householder?

The Minister for Health: You want us to require that he shall hang every pound of steak he delivers?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister must see that it is a question of proper covering. He knows that if we enforce these provisions the public will have to pay, and if there is one direction in which the House would be justified in taking action, it is in respect of the cost of meat, particularly as the working man needs meat more than anyone else.

The Minister for Health: That is why they have protested three or four times against the present method.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Who have protested?

The Minister for Health: The workers.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I guarantee they have not expressed their opinions at all.

The Minister for Health: Through their organisations.

Mr. Raphael: Trades Hall has protested on numerous occasions.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Trades Hall does not represent the workers of the State.

Mr. Raphael: No, you do.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, we do.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Why this reference to the trade unions? I am sick and tired of the Government doing what the trade unions tell them to do. The Government should give consideration to the interests of the public. We have had enough of outside control in this State. It is time members viewed matters from the point of view of their electorates.

Mr. Raphael: Do not you do what the Primary Producers' Association tell you to do?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does it require the members of the Trades Hall to tell members of this House what they ought to do? Of course not. If this is a production from the Trades Hall, the sooner that state of affairs is altered, the better.

The Minister for Health: It is the Perth City Council.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The member for Victoria Park, who hangs about these places, tells us that it originated with the Trades Hall.

Mr. Raphael: On a point of order. I take exception to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, when he suggests that I hang about these places.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are the places referred to? The Trades Hall?

Mr. Raphael: No, but I object to the hon. member saying that I hang about these places.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing offensive about the Trades Hall, so I am afraid the hon. member cannot ask for a withdrawal.

Mr. Raphael: Very well, let him walk along.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I was remarking that if we are going to make these changes, they cannot be made without expense; and, after all, all these expenses are passed on and added to the price of the commodity. This is a most inopportune time for any increased cost.

The Minister for Health: Then we cannot have any alteration because of the expense?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There is no reason for the proposed change, but the public will have to pay for it. The improvement of our roads has brought about much cleaner conditions. As for the flies, you cannot beat the abattoirs where the carcasses are picked up. And if you speak of filth, it cannot be avoided in those places.

The Minister for Health: Are there flies or filth in the refrigerating rooms?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But they do not skin the carcasses or dress them in the refrigerating room. There must be messes and smells in any abattoirs. One notices the smell as he goes past in the train. The conditions are as clean as it is possible to make them. Of course there is manure about, and there is the place where the offal is treated. After all, if there are any flies likely to get to the meat, that is the place where it will happen. I hope the House will agree to the motion moved by the member for West Perth. Of course, when the existing vehicles are worn out, I believe an improved type will be introduced, if the authorities are approached in the proper way.

The Minister for Health: They have been approached for the last 20 years, but without avail.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: They will have to scrap all those vehicles.

The Minister for Health: Are there no other uses for them?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There may be, but if they cannot be used for other purposes, it will mean a big loss. I am sorry we have wasted so much time in considering this subject, but it having originated in the place where the member for Victoria Park is well known, probably it is the outcome of deliberations in that place. I might well ask the House to be excused from having to continue this discussion. There are many other things to which members might turn attention, as, for instance, some instruments that are used from time to time might be sterilised more frequently than they are.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing in the motion about that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is remarkable that in three years' time what was perfectly safe previously becomes objectionable.

The Minister for Health: They have never been recognised as safe, or even efficient.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I have seen bread delivered from the sidecar of a motor bike without any covering over it.

Mr. Raphael: But they are fined when caught. You ought to know, for you were once Minister for Health.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: And I put through a by-law against it, but the practice still goes on. The passing of this by-law before us applies only to Perth, not to the suburbs.

The Minister for Health: The man who carts meat to Perth carts it through the suburbs as well. It is the same firm and the same men.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What will actually happen is that the carcasses that are brought to the city will be brought in the new vehicles, while the old vehicles will have to serve for the suburbs.

The Minister for Health: There are enough butchers between Midland Junction and Maylands to take all the meat in one of those vehicles.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister knows very little about wholesale butchers, or he would know that nearly all the shops are owned by the same people.

The Minister for Health: I know that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will oppose the regulation on the ground of cost, and support the motion.

**MR. FOX** (South Fremantle) [8.27]: I wish to say a few words on the score of cost. I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition has gone into that question, but while he was speaking I worked out a few figures. Take the population of Perth as 90,000, and let us assume that each person consumes a quarter of a lb. of meat per day. If the price be increased by  $\frac{1}{8}$ d. per lb., it will bring in a profit of £17,000. It would be a poor truck that would not last for three years. The Minister said the trucks would cost £40,000.

The Minister for Health: That is their figure.

**Mr. FOX**: Well, say the trucks did cost £40,000—which I doubt—all that would be required would be a slight alteration of the present trucks.

**Mr. Doney**: Slight?

**Mr. FOX**: Well, a not very extensive alteration. For three years they would bring in £51,000 if the price were increased by  $\frac{1}{8}$ d. per lb. So the Leader of the Opposition's assumption that there will be an increased price of meat is not a very sound argument. I agree with the member for Victoria Park that when meat is carted it is thrown in higgledy-piggledy, and the sheets have to be taken off while the meat is delivered into the shop. While it is not perhaps very objectionable in the winter time, it is more objectionable in the summer time because the meat is more likely to decompose. Therefore, I hope that the by-

laws will not be disallowed as suggested by the member for West Perth.

**MR. McDONALD** (West Perth—in reply) [8.31]: The Minister for Health and I are, in fact, substantially in agreement. We both want to see the most hygienic conditions prevail with regard to the cartage of carcase meat. I would draw attention to the last words I uttered in moving my motion. I said—

I hope the by-laws will be disallowed, not necessarily to discourage the City Council, but disallowed so that the matter may be given further consideration.

I think the by-laws should be disallowed on that ground. I hope that it may be possible for the Perth City Council to frame new by-laws which will give more adequate protection to the carriage of carcase meat and at the same time not impose a wholly unfair and sudden hardship on the class of trader now lawfully carrying on under the existing by-laws.

**Mr. Marshall**: And on the consumer.

**Mr. McDONALD**: Yes, and on the consumer. Whether large or small the cost will be passed on to the consumer. The Leader of the Opposition has very properly pointed out that if these by-laws remain we will have two kinds of vehicle—the new kind of expensive vehicle which will operate when meat is carted into the Perth City Council markets from the abattoirs and the old class of vehicle which will be used in the cartage of meat from Subiaco to Fremantle. The same thing will apply to any carting taking place south of Mt. Lawley, between the Midland abattoirs and the southern or eastern boundary of the City of Perth. These new by-laws apply only to the area covered by the Perth City Council. All the other areas through which transport takes place are covered by by-laws different from those proposed by the council. The remarks of the Minister show that the real trouble to-day is that the existing by-laws are not properly policed. He told the House that the Commissioner of Health proposes to revise his model by-laws so as to bring them more up to date.

The Minister for Health: These were put up to the Commissioner as model by-laws.

**Mr. McDONALD**: Let the Commissioner revise his by-laws so that outlying municipalities and local authorities may adopt them and uniform by-laws thus be brought into operation throughout. Every point



raised by the Minister supports my argument that it is not fair to expect the few people who are engaged in this trade to find £40,000 or £30,000 or even £20,000 for a new type of truck inside the next two or three months. They might not even be able to import them.

Mr. Raphael: They build the bodies here; you know it.

Mr. McDONALD: I do not know it.

Mr. Raphael: You do.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: I am told that they have to be special bodies with a low carriage so that the floor of the vehicle will be close to the ground.

Mr. Raphael: You have been told the wrong tale and you have listened.

Mr. McDONALD: Whatever may be the facts in that case, the Minister has properly told the House that he would support the enforcement of these by-laws being postponed for a further 12 months. I think it is a harsh treatment for any local authority to bring into force by-laws making any radical change which would involve any body of traders in an expenditure of many thousands of pounds unless in such a way as not to create unfairness, hardship and undue loss. I am not opposed to the idea completely that there may not be some change possible for the better in the cartage of meat, but if it be necessary for a new type of vehicle to be introduced, let it be provided that as an existing vehicle goes out of commission it must be replaced by one of this new type. But do not compel these people suddenly to replace all their present vehicles with a special type at great cost.

Mr. Raphael: For ten years we have been trying to secure this improvement.

Mr. McDONALD: My view is that the regulation now brought forward is premature and that it creates unnecessary hardship in compelling people wholly to revolutionise their business without giving them adequate time to do so. I suggest therefore that the by-laws should be disallowed, not as any reflection on the Perth City Council—I think they deserve every applause for any effort they are making to improve conditions—but simply because I think the by-laws could be reconsidered with a view to their being framed in a more equitable form.

Question put and passed.

## MOTION—LICENSING BOARD'S ACTIVITIES.

*To inquire by Select Committee.*

Debate resumed from the 16th September on the following motion by Mr. Marshall (Murchison):—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the activities of the Licensing Board in the granting and refusal of the different forms of licenses granted under the Licensing Act, 1911, and also the qualifications of the person or persons making application for any form of license or transfer of license before the Board.

and on the following amendment by Mr. Hughes (East Perth):—

That the following words be added to the motion:—“and to inquire further—

1. Whether, and if so, to what extent—

(a) applicants for licenses during the past 12 years have been ‘dummies’; if there have been such ‘dummies,’ who were the real applicants;

(b) there has been trafficking in licenses;

(c) lands upon which licensed premises have been built have been sold for excess values in consequence of the prospective licenses; if so, what persons have derived such excess values;

(d) premises to which licenses have attached have provided rentals over and above the true economic and site rental value of the premises concerned; if so, what persons have derived such excess rentals.

2. Whether the present system of gathering signatures for new licenses provides adequate means for ascertaining the true will of the residents concerned.

3. Whether in gathering such signatures a full disclosure as to the real applicant, the number of licenses already held by such applicant, and all other relevant information is supplied to the prospective signatories.

4. What have been the methods of remunerating the persons so employed as signature gatherers.

5. Are the methods of obtaining such signatures conducive to obtaining a true expression of the will of the electors in the areas concerned.

6. Does the operation of the licensing laws tend to create a monopoly or a situation in the nature of a monopoly.

7. Have proceedings for breaches of the Licensing Act been instituted against licenses and subsequently discontinued; if so, upon what grounds have such discontinuances been made.

8. What are the methods employed of financing the building and furnishing of hotel premises?

9. Is, as a consequence of—

(a) trafficking in licenses;

- (b) excessive land prices;
  - (c) monopolistic tendencies;
  - (d) methods of financing applications for new licenses and petitions in support thereof and the building and furnishing of hotel premises;
  - (e) any other causes;
- the price of alcoholic liquor too high?

10. Are any existing licensees merely 'dummies' employed by others; if so, by whom are such 'dummies' employed."

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE** (Hon. F. C. L. Smith—Brown Hill—Ivanhoe—on amendment) [8.40]: This very lengthy amendment which occupies about a column of the notice paper proposes the appointment of a select committee to conduct an inquiry of a very extensive and far-reaching nature into the ramifications of the liquor trade. So far-reaching and so extensive are the references in the ten paragraphs which comprise the amendment that members will find some difficulty to come to a decision as to whether the member for East Perth is dummying for the Historical Society or for some temperance organisation.

Mr. Hughes: We can add a paragraph to inquire into that.

**The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE:** The hon. member seems to have adopted a new doctrine. He has adopted a doctrine—I do not say it offensively—the dogma of which is that suspicion warrants accusation, and that such accusation, based on the false premises which he has established, calls for some inquiry. I consider it a curious complex in a member of the legal profession to lay down that a person, if suspected, should be accused, or that some measure of suspicion warrants accusation. But everything has its compensations. The hon. member has demonstrated that he has a decided taste for the use of a probe, and it is fortunate for the community of Perth that he is a member of the legal profession and not of the medical fraternity. I should like to make reference to some of the provisions of the Licensing Act dealing with the granting of licenses. When the Act was amended, certain licensing districts were established. They may have been provided for in the previous Act; however, they are now in the Act and conform to the electoral boundaries. It was provided that when a license was required in a district, if it was in excess of the number of licenses that existed in 1922, a petition for the excess had to be signed before the application would be considered. But in other

electoral districts where the number of licenses, for various causes, was less than those that existed in 1922, and it was desired to apply for a license in those districts, no petition was required. Regarding the petition required where licenses are in excess of those which existed in 1922, and a further license was desired, the Act provides—

Where a petition is presented to the Governor asking that the Licensing Court may have authority to grant a new license within any district, and such petition is signed by a majority in number of the electors living in an area therein defined, and it is shown by such petition that—

(a) there has been an increase of population in such area, and that such increase is likely to be permanent;

(b) there are insufficient licensed premises to meet public requirements, or no licensed premises within such area,

the Governor may refer such petition for inquiry by the Licenses Reduction Board during the operation of Part V. of this Act and thereafter by the Licensing Court.

Hence it is necessary in connection with the petition to show that not only is there a majority of the electors within the prescribed area desirous of a license, but that there has been an increase in population in such area, and that such increase is likely to be permanent; or that there are insufficient licensed premises to meet the public requirements, or no licensed premises within such area. Until the petition is signed, and conforms to those conditions, no application comes before the Licensing Bench. The member for East Perth, in the course of his speech, said that applications were made for licenses by people who had no intention of building hotels, and he wants a select committee to discover who those persons were. How are we to discover what their intentions were? They may have intended to build and conduct an hotel when they were granted a provisional certificate, but as a result of changing circumstances, or because of an attractive offer for their rights in the provisional certificate, they may have changed their intentions, as they had a perfect right to do. Wherein arises the necessity to discover what their intentions were? They may have intended to obtain a negotiable and transferable right. I remember there was a man in the South Kalgoorlie district who had made application for a license before the Licensing Bench was established. He applied on two or three occasions, but the license was refused. He was a pertinacious man, and

eventually had a license granted to him for premises that yet had to be erected. By the time he secured the license he was not in as good a financial position as he was when he first made the application. He had, however, set his heart on getting the license for the premises. When he got it he endeavoured to obtain the necessary finance so that he could build an hotel and conduct it. He failed in that, but did not fail to dispose of his rights in the license that had been granted to him. Although he was only a working man he had established a right in something that he was able to negotiate and transfer to another. I consider that was a perfectly legitimate deal. When making an application for a license, or even preparing a petition with a view to making such application, any sensible man would first secure the deeds of the site of the proposed premises, or obtain an option over it. As the hon. member pointed out, the whole thing was a business proposition. Very often it is a costly business to obtain the necessary signatures to a petition. It is a form of enterprise that costs a considerable sum of money, even if one intended never to build or conduct an hotel, and was merely moving in the matter with a view to transferring the rights obtained to someone else. The hon. member himself pointed out that in some cases as much as 3s. 6d. per signature had been paid in the getting up of a petition. As I have shown, there is no guarantee that after a petition is signed the license will be granted. The petition is only a preliminary to the application. Other factors enter into the question. There is, for instance, the desirability of the site on which it is proposed to erect the building. There is also the question of the necessity for a further license in the same district. The whole proposition is purely a speculative one, whether a person intends to build and conduct an hotel, or merely wishes to establish a negotiable right, as he is entitled to endeavour to do under the provisions of the Act. It may be that it is a comparatively poor man, as poor as the man I quoted in the South Kalgoorlie district, who first sees the desirability or the prospect of securing a license in a particular district. Someone must have the original conception of the need of a district for a further license, and it may be that a poor man has that in mind first. He speculates with what money he can command in an application to secure

the right to build the licensed premises, or he may sell that right if he gets it, and never have any intention of building or conducting an hotel. There is no need for a select committee to find out what the intentions were of those who made application for licenses. The hon. member postulated in certain parts of his speech that the Licensing Act makes for monopoly. He would deny to the poor man the right to venture into any business associated with licensing. He would reserve that right to those who could afford to build and conduct such premises, and who were in a position to get up a petition with that object in view. This effort to establish rights is a legitimate procedure in many industries and walks of life. All over the mining fields there are men engaged in establishing rights in mining areas, who never intend to mine. They establish perfectly legitimate and negotiable rights. There are men who have bought farms who never intended to farm. Others have bought ships without intending to go to sea. Why should we deny a right to a man because he is poor? Why should we prevent such a man from establishing certain rights associated with licenses under the law of the land? It is a common form of enterprise, as the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) knows, to endeavour to secure rights in many ways. The right to run the Perth Tramways was secured by people who never intended to run them.

Mr. Hughes: And we socialised them.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Never mind about that. I am talking about the rights of certain people to run trams in Perth.

Mr. Hughes: We took that right away.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The concessionaires established certain rights, floated those rights, and sold them to a company. The same thing happened with the Kalgoorlie trams. A certain group of people obtained a concession, and established certain rights to conduct a tramway service there, and then sold their right to a company.

Mr. Hughes: You ought to read "The Views of Labour, by F. C. L. Smith."

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am not specially dealing with the system; but so long as the system operates, it is the equal right of every man to take advantage of all the opportunities that the system

offers, whether he be rich or poor. The right is not reserved to those who can afford to build and conduct. On our railway system the right to advertise was established. Certain people had that right exclusively. During the war the banks were given certain rights. I know a man in Kalgoorlie—not a man of affluence, or of influence either—who recently noted a block of land which he considered would be a desirable site for licensed premises in a district in which the number of licenses is considerably less than it was in 1922. He put his money into the speculation, securing a title to the land before making his application for a license. But he had no money to build and conduct. He was speculating on the prospect of securing a license and getting someone to assist him financially to build and conduct. If after securing the license he had failed in that direction, he would have simply had to sell the license which he had secured as the result of acquiring the land. Why should he be denied that right? Or the right to take part in an enterprise of that description? That man, who is connected with the South Kalgoorlie Hotel, was merely a miner working in a mine; but he was just as entitled to take advantage of anything permitted by the Licensing Act as any other man in the community, whether rich or poor. The hon. member wants to deny that right to the comparatively poor, and restrict it to those able to build and conduct. The hon. member spoke of certain dummies applying for licenses. I suppose dummies do apply for licenses. But is it not common in all forms of business to negotiate through agents? I think it would be a fairly safe bet that the hon. member himself has acted as agent for another person. I regard it as not improbable that the hon. member has acted as agent for securing a license. If the Swan Brewery, for instance, wanted to buy a hotel, would the hon. member expect Mr. Jacoby to come along and conduct the negotiations? Of course not. Would the management of the Swan Brewery be so stupid as to let people know that the brewery was in the field as buyer, or in the field either as applicant for a license? Everywhere business men conduct their negotiations through agents. The hon. member spoke as though the applicant for a license should be compelled to go around personally collecting signatures. The hon. member wants to make some inquiry as to the cost of petitions. Would he expect an

applicant for a license to go around and get signatures himself? Is not the applicant entitled to employ men for the purpose of preparing his petition? Undoubtedly he is so entitled. Would the hon. member deny me the right to apply for a license if I had appreciated a prospect which others had missed? If I secured an option on a proposed site, would he deny me the right to go to someone able to finance the venture? And if I went to someone who could finance it, and he was prepared to finance it for me as the applicant who secured the license, would I then be a dummy for that man who was financing me in my venture? Would the hon. member deny me the right, if I had the necessary money, to say to another man, or to say to the hon. member himself, "If you can get a license in such and such a place, I will finance it?" But in such circumstances the hon. member suggests he would be a dummy. He would, of course, be nothing of the kind. It would be a perfectly legitimate procedure for me to endeavour either to finance a proposition on behalf of others, or endeavour to finance a proposition on behalf of myself. It is a procedure that occurs in every class of business. Where a person conceives the possibilities of a definite form of enterprise and cannot afford to finance it himself, he must naturally seek assistance from others. The hon. member, however, wants to single out the liquor trade for special inquiry and for differential treatment in connection with such enterprises. He wants a select committee to inquire into all the ramifications of the trade, to discover a poor man who made a few pounds for himself by carrying out the preliminaries of an application and securing a license. Those are the things the hon. member wants to find out. He wants to discover a poor man who established for himself certain negotiable and transferable rights, and afterwards transferred them. The hon. member mentioned in the course of his speech that there were many hotels in Perth, and elsewhere in the State, whose licensees were merely the employees of the real licensees. We all know that there is not a hotel in Perth where the name of the licensee is not over the door. Under the Act the licensee must reside on the premises. He is the real licensee who must take the responsibility. Even the licensee of a State hotel is responsible for the proper conduct of the establishment, and can be penalised for any breach of the

Licensing Act. The name appearing over the door is the name of the man who is responsible for the proper conduct of the hotel. I do not know what kind of argument it is to suggest that there are hundreds of hotels of which the licensees are not the owners. Everybody knows that. There are hundreds of such cases. The licensee is often the lessee of the hotel—more often than not the lessee. It is common knowledge that breweries own many of the hotels in Western Australia. I dare say they own the majority of the hotels in most centres. It is also common knowledge that in addition to owning the hotels, the breweries dictate the terms on which they will grant a lease of, or rent, the licensed premises. That is merely the usual form of business dealing, not only in connection with licensed premises but all kinds of premises. The hon. member desires to single out the liquor trade for special consideration in connection with this legitimate procedure. What does it matter, from the point of view of the requirements of the Licensing Act, who owns an hotel? It is in the interests of whoever owns the premises to see that they are properly conducted, and it is also to the interest of the lessee to see that he properly conducts his hotel, because, notwithstanding the fact that the hotel has been leased to him, the lessor, or owner, has still a considerable amount of control over the actions of the lessee. There was an instance at Kalgoorlie of a man who was conducting an hotel and had a lease for about seven years. It was considered by the lessor that the lessee had failed to conduct the hotel properly. In those days there was a Government in power who did not understand goldfields conditions, and the lessee of the hotel was repeatedly fined for Sunday trading. Under the Government of the day he endangered his license, and so the lessor stepped in with an application to the court for the return of the lease. He was successful in getting it and took over the control of the hotel in order to see that it was properly conducted.

Mr. Hughes: Did he stop Sunday trading?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Not at that time. Why should we have a select committee to inquire into all these matters? The leasing of a hotel is a common form of enterprise. It seems to me that an intemperate hostility to the liquor trade runs through all these proposals. I think it was unnecessary for the member for East Perth to inform the House, as he did the other

evening, that he is a teetotaler. He spoke of the increased value of the land resulting from the prospective license not being the lawful property of the landlord but of the people of the State. Here the hon. member raises the vexed question of the unearned increment. I do not know whether he is a disciple of Henry George, but the question of the unearned increment is not confined to land in connection with which licenses are being applied for. Many years ago a man bought a block of land in Melbourne at an auction sale. He was drunk when he bought the block for £25, and his descendants have been living on the unearned increment ever since. At the time the land was not worth a postage stamp. The unearned increment applies not only to the land on which a hotel is built, but to the building erected on it. The same thing applies to land in the metropolitan area where buildings have been erected as the result of the activities of the people generally and the extension throughout Western Australia of our public utilities. Here again we see this intemperate hostility. The hon. member raises the question of the unearned increment in connection with the liquor trade, because he is one of those who can see all the vices associated with the trade and none of the virtues. Personally I cannot see how this matter of the unearned increment enters into the land, particularly with regard to hotels. I cannot imagine that anyone would attempt to make an application for a license in connection with any particular site unless he had first secured an option over the land or had obtained the title to it. In any case, what gives the land the increased value, if it is not the building that is to be erected upon it? And for what purpose could it be used in the future than to hold the building that is erected on it? The building and the license to sell is what gives the added value in respect of that land. In fact, the land represents a very small item in the whole proposition. A license is usually granted on condition that a building shall be erected complying with definite specifications, and it is the building that is the important factor in the whole enterprise. The value of the land in comparison with the cost of the building that must be erected when the license is granted, is not worthy of consideration. The hon. member speaks of getting a license as though the mere fact of being granted

a license is a guarantee of success, whereas we all know it is no such thing. It is just as risky a speculation as any other. There are hotels throughout the country districts that have never paid interest on the capital invested. I venture to assert that the member for East Perth knows of many hotels in the city that have never paid interest on the capital invested. They did not secure that return in the good times, even if these days are considered bad. I know of an hotel in Hay-street that has never paid, and of another in Wellington-street, near the station, in connection with which the proprietor, not very long ago, was losing £12 a week. The mere fact that a license has been secured is by no means a guarantee of success, and the whole enterprise is just as risky as any other type of speculation. The member for East Perth talks about fabulous rents. Usually the rent is established by mere economic considerations, by the demand that there is for the particular property. No one can get more out of the usual lessee than the hotel is worth, unless the lessor has the lessee tied up with a lease and a depression should follow, thereby affecting the position. Generally speaking, in the open market the rent of an hotel is the economic rent, the rent that can be paid after the expenses have been paid and some profit allowed to the individual who has the enterprise to run the hotel. The hon. member speaks of a tin shack in a mining town for which a rental of £75 a week was paid. That tin shack was worth £75 a week on account of the revival that took place in that particular mining town, namely, Norseman, where the hon. member himself was for some time. He knows that there are many men employed on the mines there now. He is aware that a few years ago the hotel was merely a wayside inn where the takings would not amount to more than £1 weekly. Suddenly a change came over the scene; the price of gold increased, and mines commenced operating everywhere. There was a great influx of miners into the town and they restored some of the old prosperity that formerly existed at Norseman. The hotel he refers to was the one left out of three. The other two had gone out of business, due to economic reasons, and if the depression had lasted much longer, the owner of the remaining hotel would have walked out.

He was not taking enough to pay for the kerosene for the lamp he had in the bar. But a change came over the place. What the hon. member did not tell us was that in the same district a year or so after the revival, the person who owned that hotel built a new hotel at a cost of nearly £12,000. The hon. member wants a select committee appointed to find out all those things. He spoke of the method of getting signatures to a petition being unsatisfactory, and in this connection also he wants a select committee of inquiry to see whether the method is satisfactory or otherwise. He has signed a good many petitions himself, so he ought to know whether the method is satisfactory. I dare say it is unsatisfactory in many respects, particularly as there is a strong desire on the part of those preparing the petitions to get the necessary signatures. We can understand, of course, that they resort to a few tricks, perhaps, to secure those signatures. But a petition is only a precedent for the application. I do not know whether it is a very important factor, or whether the whole question of a hotel being built in a given area might not be determined by some other means altogether. However, the securing of a petition is only a preliminary to the application for a license. There have been many cases in which the necessary signatures have been secured, but the court has not been satisfied with the site in connection with which the application is made; the site perhaps is too near a church, or is down in a hollow where it is not desirable to have an hotel. And there may be many other reasons. So this question of the method of getting signatures to a petition does not warrant a select committee inquiry, for it is not a very important matter, after all. The petition is not signed for a particular person, but is signed for the purpose of showing that a desire for a license exists in a district. It is not signed for any particular person whatever, but merely to express the desire that there should be an additional license in a given district. Then the hon. member spoke about monopolies leading to high prices. He said there were monopolistic tendencies in the trade, and then drew the attention of the House to the fact that he had no objection whatever to breweries holding licenses, or to one man holding nine or ten licenses, so long as he had his name over the doors. That is the only condition he imposes; you can have as

much monopoly as you like so long as you have your name over the door.

Hon. C. G. Latham: He could not have his name over more than one door.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, he could. He wanted the name to be over each door. What he suggested was that we should have a condition here such as prevails in Melbourne, where you see the licensee's name over the door and perhaps "Sydney Hotels Ltd." on the wall. He had no objection to that. He was condemning monopolistic tendencies, but had no objection whatever to them so long as the name was over the door. And he says the price of liquor is high on account of monopolistic tendencies. Of course the hon member must know that the price is high on account of the high excise duty. That is what makes the price of liquor high to-day. Were it not for the high excise duty, liquor would be cheaper to-day than it was several years ago. But this State has nothing whatever to do with the high excise duty on liquor. The control of brewing and the distillation of liquor is one of the powers conferred on the Commonwealth—one of the matters with which they have to deal. So, of course, those are the men who send up the price of liquor, notwithstanding the hon. member's ideas about monopolistic tendencies. There was an implication he made there, to the effect that there is not sufficient competition in this State as a result of those monopolistic tendencies. Why, in Kalgoorlie today they are selling Richmond beer, Swan beer, Kalgoorlie beer, Northam beer and Merredin beer, and all at the same price; because they have to charge the price in order to make a profit and pay the excise duties that are imposed upon liquors by the Commonwealth. I consider there is more competition in Western Australia to-day than there was many years ago. I can remember in Kalgoorlie only a few years ago when the zone system existed, when the Swan Brewery could not go into the Kalgoorlie Brewery's territory, the Kalgoorlie Brewery could not go into the Swan Brewery's territory, and the Northam Brewery could not go into either of the other territories. There was a monopolistic tendency in those days, but it has since broken down, and to-day they are all in one another's territories under the same Licensing Act, and the keenest competition in the sale of liquor exists in this State to-day. The hon. member concluded with a sneer at the court. He said the court did not know what every Tom, Dick and

Harry knew. He arrogates to himself a full knowledge of the liquor trade in all its ramifications, but denies that knowledge to the members of the court. He has never had a drink, but he knows all about the degradation of the home and the ruination of families, and he cannot see any virtue whatever in drink. No, his attitude is that of those intemperate temperance advocates who want to make some aim at the nefarious liquor trade. He wants to scrub the decks to delve into all the transactions associated with that trade. It seems to me in connection with his recent speech, the hon. member made some charges associated with the liquor trade against the Government, and this amendment of his looks like an attempt to make his own terms of reference. Whether that be the case or no, perhaps this lengthy amendment is just a fishing expedition into the nefarious liquor trade in all its ramifications. He wants an inquiry into all the associated features that are to be found in the liquor trade. I want to know why the liquor trade should be singled out for this special consideration. Why should we have a select committee to inquire into all these matters associated not with the question of whether the board has carried on its work under the terms of the Act, but into the Act itself, and all its effects and ramifications? I do not see any particular reason why the liquor trade should be singled out for this particular purpose, or why there should be any differentiation between it and other enterprises in connection with licensing, leasing, renting, and owning.

On motion by Mr. Coverley, debate adjourned.

### MOTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

#### *To Disallow Mid-block Crosswalks Regulation.*

Debate resumed from the 16th September on the following motion moved by Mr. Rodoreda (Roebourne):—

That the new Regulation 312 of the Traffic Regulations, 1931, as published in the "Government Gazette" of 26th August, 1936, and laid on the Table of the House on 8th September, 1936, be and is hereby disallowed.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [9.32]: The regulation referred to reads as follows:—

In the city block in Perth and in the city block in Fremantle the driver of every vehicle

shall yield the roadway to any person crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk, except at the intersections where the movement of traffic is being regulated by a police officer.

Last year this House passed amendments to the Traffic Act. Included in those amendments was the authority to regulate traffic within the City of Perth, and, for that matter, throughout the State. After the passing of the Act the Commissioner of Police, in association with the Traffic Department, formulated certain regulations with the object of giving effect to the amending Act. They were not hurriedly formulated, but considerable difficulty was experienced in drafting them. Up till that time the policy with regard to the regulation of traffic in the city had been one of an open go, and we were far behind any of the Eastern States cities and large cities throughout the world in this connection. The Commissioner of Police can, I think, be considered an authority on traffic matters. He had a good deal to do with the framing of the regulations which, it became apparent, were necessary for the control of traffic in Perth. The motion now under consideration has been referred to the Commissioner, and I propose to give his views on these regulations which the member for Roebourne seeks to have disallowed. The Commissioner states:—

Crosswalks are in existence in towns and cities in America, Great Britain and Melbourne (Victoria). The ruling with respect to them in such countries is practically the same as applies in Perth. It is admitted that the actual crosswalks, quite apart from those at intersections, do tend to slow down the pace of vehicles to a certain extent, with the result that a few seconds are lost to motor drivers when traversing streets where these crosswalks are laid down. It must be realised, however, that the system is of a very definite and practical value in enabling pedestrians to cross the roads. If all persons were forced to walk to intersections before being permitted to cross the streets there would be a great deal of congestion and irritation caused. In the city block of Perth there are only eight crosswalks, and they are sufficiently distinctive for motorists to know where they are laid down. If drivers of motor vehicles would slow down the pace of the vehicles, or, if there are a number of pedestrians crossing, stop for one or two seconds, there would be no difficulty experienced by such drivers in passing over the particular points where the crosswalks are laid down. It must be realised by all concerned that for centuries, in English speaking countries, pedestrians have had the right to cross roads when and where they liked, and the breaking down of this very old privilege or custom will take a considerable amount of time and will mean the slow

education of the people to such ideas. It cannot be rushed and miracles cannot be expected in a week or a fortnight, or even six or twelve months. Though, however, the regulations in regard to these crosswalks have only been in existence for a very little while, still, it is amazing to see the manner in which the pedestrians have become accustomed to them, and also the amount of appreciation shown by pedestrians for the methods that have been provided to enable them to cross the roads. If the regulations were now disallowed it would be a very retrograde step, and would throw back the education of the public in regard to crossing at selected points another 10 or 20 years.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Don't you think these crosswalks occur too frequently?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There are only eight.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They are side by side, with only a small space between them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The report goes on to say—

It would also mean that the old days of "go as you please" in crossing streets would again come into existence.

Hon. N. Keenan: You cannot be sure that the public are only going to cross over on these crosswalks. They cross all over the place.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You have anticipated me. What I am reading are the Commissioner's ideas. I think he knows more about the matter than any of us. I am giving you the opinion of a man whom I consider to be an expert, and he is giving us advice born of long experience.

Mr. Raphael: What rotten advice it is.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Commissioner continues—

Although pedestrians are permitted to cross the roads anywhere, provided they do it strictly at right angles, such right of way is an old established custom and cannot be withdrawn except by Parliamentary action. They must, however, cross the street at a right angle, but even then there is a certain amount of danger involved. In the event of any accident the question would immediately arise as to who had the right-of-way, namely, the pedestrian or the driver of the vehicle concerned. The new regulations in connection with these crosswalks have done more for motorists, by the majority of whom they are appreciated, than they have done for pedestrians.

One has only to look at the intersections which are controlled by pointsmen to realise the great improvement that has taken place, not only from the point of view of the vehicle driver, but also that of the foot passenger, and I am certain no one would wish to go back to the system which prevailed a few months ago.



Until it is possible to prohibit the crossing of roads except at certain points or crosswalks, then it is far better in the interests of the public for pedestrians to make use of the defined crosswalks. I defy anyone to accompany me, either as a pedestrian or driver of a motor vehicle, and point out where there is any definite danger at these crossings, provided reasonable care is exercised. If motorists would only exercise patience, which is very lacking in many, and get away from the idea that the whole of the road belongs to them at any and all times, then there would be practically no objection to pedestrian crossings.

I know for a positive fact that in Great Britain the type of crossing provided by the Minister for Transport, Mr. Hore-Belisha, is not only being extended by the providing of hundreds of extra crossings in and around London, but is being laid down extensively in the provincial cities of Great Britain.

So we are coming into line with the metropolis of the world.

Such crossings are not only provided for the safety of pedestrians in London, but it has been found necessary in certain parts of that great city to erect railings along the edge of the footpaths and to provide openings at certain distances in such railings where pedestrians can cross the road. My latest information in this regard is that hundreds of yards of these railings are being erected in certain narrow streets of London which are about the same width as our principal lane in Perth, viz., Hay-street, and it is only 32 feet between kerbs.

In making this particular regulation, and all such restrictive traffic regulations, it has to be borne in mind that whilst they are of benefit to the present generation, they are drawn up with the idea of educating younger generations. In this regard I would mention that the practice adopted by the people themselves in other countries of forming their own queues has become natural to the present-day generations in such countries, but must have had a commencement similar to what is being endeavoured in Perth to-day with crosswalks. How else could it have been arranged when I mention that in such places you will see crowds queueing up to enter tramcars which are conveying them to football matches? I can imagine the protest that would be made in Perth if an endeavour were made to queue up the patrons of either football matches or trotting events at the Barraek-Murray-street intersection, although there is no doubt that such queueing-up would be of benefit to the people concerned and save the unseemly struggles which now go on. How else can one understand the queueing-up of crowds streaming out from football matches or other places where large numbers assembled to join trams to take them to their destinations, if it were not for the fact that such practice has become natural to the public in those particular cities?

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is not done in other places except where buses pull up

alongside the footpath. It does not occur with tramcars.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Commissioner's report continues—

This practice has not been brought about in six or 12 months, but has taken decades to achieve. There is no reason, therefore, why the education of the people in this State to use crosswalks in their larger towns should not commence now with a view to future generations benefiting therefrom.

I was asked to provide information of the accidents that had occurred at places other than the intersections controlled by the police—at the unattended sidings, as the member for Roebourne termed them. The following figures are taken from the police records of accidents in which motor cars, motor wagons, motor cycles, push cycles, horse-drawn vehicles and pedestrians were concerned:—

Year.	Deaths.	Serious.	Minor.
1931 .. ..	—	5	32
1932 .. ..	1	3	26
1933 .. ..	—	5	27
1934 .. ..	—	2	27
1935 .. ..	1	13	7
1936 (portion) ..	1	8	14

Mr. Marshall: Did those accidents occur in the city block?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, at street crossings other than those controlled by the police. I have also the record of fatal accidents at intersections controlled by the police. Accidents were much more numerous at those intersections.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I knew that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The figures are—

Year.	Deaths.
1931 .. ..	3
1932 .. ..	2
1933 .. ..	3
1934 .. ..	4
1935 .. ..	7
1936 (portion) ..	7

The matter of accidents is one that will have to receive very serious consideration. The member for Roebourne put up a very good case.

Mr. Raphael: But you are going to vote against his motion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, I shall say he put up a very fair case. I can quite believe that he was not influenced by any particular interest or any particular section of the community. I am not going to adopt the rather cowardly attitude of saying that the regulation seeks to protect the pedestrian against the motorist. Both

of them have equal rights, and the idea of the regulation is to protect the pedestrian and not seriously to incommode those in control of vehicular traffic. I agree that whereas the motorist has certain rights, so also has the pedestrian, but the pedestrian has not the right to block traffic or loiter on the crosswalks. He has to comport himself in the interests of the travelling public. I am not taking the stand of putting up a case for the pedestrian and that the hon. member put up a case for the motorist. I think that we equally desire that the motor and pedestrian traffic of Perth should be properly controlled. It has to be remembered that the regulation is in the nature of an experiment. We passed the law, and it is the duty of the officials of the department to give effect to the law. We expected that regulations of a certain type would be formulated and put into operation. That has been done, and it is certainly too early as yet to say they are a failure, and certainly too early to ask those responsible to put up another regulation. I do not know whether any member has ideas of an amended regulation, but I think the present one should be tried out. The effect already, I consider, has been to the advantage of the travelling public. I believe that the pedestrian has been disciplined, and I think the need for disciplining was long overdue. My experience of the main cities of Australia is that not only had Perth, previous to the passing of the amended act and the regulations made thereunder, the slowest moving traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, but it also had the least regulated pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is shockingly regulated at St. George's-terrace intersection.

Mr. Sampson: Certainly it is the slowest-moving traffic.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is more jay-walking in Perth than in any other city of Australia, and the regulation has certainly had the effect of turning jay walkers into square gaiters, to use a trotting term. People are now cultivating the habit of walking straight across the streets. The lines that have been laid down in the streets are plainly marked. I am not sure whether recently the marks have not been widened so that they are more noticeable than formerly. They have had the effect of educating the public. It has been a good start, and people are now using the

crosswalks. It is true that pedestrians are not confined to the cross walks, but they are getting into the habit of crossing the streets where the white lines are marked. To my mind it would be unthinkable to go back to the old methods that existed prior to these regulations coming into force. No doubt something further will have to be done, or there may have to be some modification of the existing regulations. The member for Roebourne will admit that the traffic is better conducted to-day than it was before these regulations were promulgated.

Mr. Raphael: It is still pretty rotten!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Roebourne instanced the case of the country motorist. That man will have to acquaint himself with the traffic conditions of Perth. That is his job on coming to the city. If he failed to do that he would, for instance, be in difficulties in respect to the one-way traffic. He must familiarise himself with the general traffic regulations, with which he has to conform when he comes to Perth. There is no great hardship in that. He will very soon find out what the regulations are. He will make inquiries if he is anxious to obey the law and comport himself as a decent citizen.

Hon. C. G. Latham: From whom will he inquire?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is one-way traffic in certain streets in Perth.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And half the city people do not know them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They ought to know them. That is a further argument in favour of the regulations. If the city people do not know them they will have to be disciplined. This may take more than a few weeks to do. An incredible improvement has been effected since these "objectionable" regulations were promulgated. We have no complaints in that respect. I know that people do not like being disciplined, but where crowds are involved, especially in a city, they have to submit to it. What used to be a hardship a few weeks ago is recognised to-day as the proper practice for pedestrians. I am not under-estimating the rights of those who are in control of vehicles. The streets are there for all. I cannot see how either commercial or privately-owned vehicles can be handicapped by the new regulations. There are only eight crosswalks, two each at Mur-

ray-street, Hay-street, William-street and St. George's-terrace. There are not many to keep in mind. Those who use the streets regularly know where they are.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Where there are two crosswalks together, do you not think that one should be done away with?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is the straight and narrow path.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There are four white lines across St. George's-terrace, near Howard-street.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The lines must be visible. It may be that more expensive methods will have to be adopted in the future. Having got on to the right track we should not now go back. It may be that we should have these walks more clearly defined. Having instituted these crosswalks, I hope the House will not agree that they should now be removed. It may be that they are not yet entirely satisfactory. We are not suggesting that they are. So far as the regulation of traffic goes, they have been worth while. I think we had better give the experts an opportunity to try out the regulations properly. I say on behalf of the Traffic Department that notice will be taken of this debate, and of the attention that has been called to the objections. For the time being, as will be noted from the Commissioner's statement, no suggestions for an alteration have at present been made. I think the idea is that the regulations should be tried out further. I do not know that this is a matter one can become violently partisan over. I suppose we are all most anxious that the people of Perth should be properly protected and regulated. I would draw attention to the fact that the police, who are responsible, have to start educating a thoroughly uneducated community. I agree with the Commissioner that although it is difficult to educate people after they have reached a certain age, we shall probably find that the rising generation will take this entirely as a matter of course. If so, the traffic will almost regulate itself as time goes on. The good effect of these crosswalks is that people are beginning to go straight across the street. The old practice was not only objectionable, but highly dangerous.

Mr. Raphael: You must have been away in the country lately.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would be highly undesirable to disallow the regulations as they now stand. I will discuss

with the Commissioner and the Traffic Department ways and means of amending them. It would be wrong entirely to knock them out. They have not yet been properly tried, and I think we should see how we are going to get on. No great harm has been done in the few weeks during which they have been in operation. We are not advertising for suggestions, and as a result of the discussions that have taken place and the views of the experts, those who are watching the effect of the new system, I have not yet learned that any fresh ideas have been advanced. I do not think any particular hardship has been placed upon motorists, but I should like to see still more responsibility placed upon the pedestrians, who should know that they are not entitled to loiter on the crosswalks.

Mr. Patrick: Most of them will not take the risk of doing that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When they do that they are obstructing the traffic, and to that extent are responsible. If it is required still further to discipline pedestrians perhaps we can liveen them up a bit. A crosswalk is not a meeting place. People must cross the street as quickly as possible, and must have regard for the motor traffic they are holding up. There is some room for improvement there, but I do not agree that the regulations have been a failure, and such a failure as to be discarded before they have been tried out. We have done wonderfully well with an untrained public, and the traffic is now being better regulated than was ever before the case. It is better regulated as a result of the regulations. I suppose we are all anxious to have in operation regulations that will afford reasonable protection to the public, and at the same time will not impede vehicular traffic. We should aim at livening up the traffic in Perth. It is very slow. To do that we must have regulations that will be enforced, and the public will have to be educated so that our city may be as well conducted from the point of view of traffic as other cities. I simply draw attention to the fact that these regulations are not entirely an experiment, but have been in operation in other parts of the world. They are the best that could be devised by those in authority. Therefore, having regard to the very reasonable case put up by the member for Roebourne—who is a clean-skin, never having had an accident, though I cannot

place myself in the same category, owing entirely to the carelessness of the other fellow—I regret having to oppose the motion to disallow the regulation. At the same time I assure the House that everything will be done to try to improve conditions and, for that matter, to devise even a better and safer system than obtains at present. I do say, however, quite sincerely, that in my opinion it would be a great mistake at this stage to disallow the regulation.

On motion by Mr. Raphael, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.3 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 24th September, 1936.*

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

### QUESTION—SINKING FUND CHARGES.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM asked the Treasurer: 1, What were the amounts charged on account of sinking fund during the year ended the 30th June, 1936, against the following undertakings:—(a) railways; (b) tramways; (c) ferries and electricity supply? 2, On what pages of the Commissioner's report do those items appear?

The DEPUTY PREMIER (for the Treasurer) replied: 1, Sinking fund is not charged to these undertakings inasmuch

as it will be seen from the Commissioner's report that the value of the assets is always fully maintained. 2, Answered by No. 1.

### QUESTION—GRASSHOPPER MENACE.

#### *Federal Aid.*

Hon. C. G. LATHAM (without notice) asked the Deputy Premier: 1, Has he noticed in this morning's newspaper a statement by the Federal Minister in charge of Scientific and Industrial Research that if the Government Entomologist of Western Australia will get into touch with the Chief of the Council's Division of Economic Entomology, the Council will be glad to give all possible help and advice, and co-operate in appropriate measures with a view to the control of the grasshopper pest? 2, Will he immediately communicate with the Federal Minister with a view to obtaining that assistance to deal with the pest in this State?

The DEPUTY PREMIER replied: I am advised that the Department of Agriculture is constantly in touch with the Council's Division of Economic Entomology, and that the Federal Minister in charge of the Council is well aware of the fact.

### BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 17th September.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [4.33]: The Bill before the House is identical with that introduced in 1934 by Mr. Kennelly, and the remarks of his successor in support of his Bill are substantially the same as those that were put forward by Mr. Kennelly. The Bill on that occasion, and for that matter on this occasion too, had two major weaknesses, and as those two weaknesses have not been satisfactorily explained away, and the Government are just a little weaker now than on that occasion, I imagine that the Minister in charge of the Bill cannot be expecting too much success with it. Both Ministers told a pretty flattering tale of large accumulated reserves and profits, making it appear to the House, or to me at any rate, that the present conditions are favourable to the making of profits and should not therefore be changed. The Minister followed that up by saying that valida-