

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Is the Committee prepared to let this clause go on the statute-book? It proposes to delete the first part of paragraph (b) of Clause 1 of the schedule down to the proviso thereto and substitute in lieu thereof the following:—

(b) When total or partial incapacity for work results from the injury, a weekly payment during the incapacity not exceeding—

(i) fifty per centum of the wages of the worker in the week immediately preceding the accident. If the worker has not been so long employed, his wages, for the purposes of the paragraph, shall be deemed to be a full working week's wages (exclusive of overtime) at the rate of pay for the work at which he was employed at the time of the accident, and the compensation is to be computed and assessed accordingly; or

(ii) fifty per centum of his average weekly earnings during the previous 12 months, if the worker has been so long employed, but if not, then for any less period during which he has been in the employment of the same employer,

whichever is the larger sum.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member referring to the whole clause as printed?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: As Clause 4 embraces a variety of amendments, I would suggest that Mr. Baxter, if not in accord with paragraph (a), could move to recommit the Bill for the purpose of further considering that paragraph.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 21st October, 1911.

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

PRIVILEGE—"THE PRIMARY PRODUCER."

Mr. Boyle and Mr. Speaker's Ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: My attention has been called to an article that appeared in the "Primary Producer" of the 9th October under the heading: "Speaker's Extraordinary Action." In this article, which I will not quote in full, appears the following statement which I deem to be a serious reflection on my impartiality as Speaker of the House:—

In the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday of last week, Mr. I. G. Boyle who had addressed a letter to the Speaker (Mr. J. B. Sleeman) notifying his intention to move the adjournment of the House, was refused permission to do so. Mr. Boyle desired to draw attention to the Government's failure to implement legislation by drafting necessary regulations to the Growers Charge Act (which came into operation on 1st March, 1911, but without which the Act cannot operate); and also to the fact that no regulations had been made under the Act to amend the Industries Assistance Act which was passed last session and which necessitated regulations to carry out farmers' drought relief.

When the House met, the Speaker said he had decided not to accede to the request made by the member for Avon for permission to move the adjournment of the House. Quoting from May's "Parliamentary Practice," Mr. Sleeman said that the matters indicated were not urgent, the letter was not definite, and opportunity would present itself to discuss the subject indicated under the Supply Bill then before the House.

Commenting on this matter to a representative of the "Primary Producer," Mr. Boyle said, "The Speaker's ruling can be termed extraordinary. A perusal of my letter to him

was definite in the two points raised, that the Government had neglected to: 1, Frame regulations to operate the Growers Charge Act which became operative over seven months ago; and 2, no regulations had been framed under the Act to amend the Industries Assistance Act which was passed last session.

The office of Speaker has at all times been held in the highest respect, and any reflection on the holder of that office has been taken not only as against the Speaker but against the House itself. I quote from May's "Parliamentary Practice" 12th edition, page 81—

Reflections on the character of the Speaker and accusations of partiality in the discharge of his duty have been treated severely by the House.

This is the first occasion in our Parliamentary history that such a libel has appeared against the Speaker. Standing Order 142 provides the procedure for bringing this matter before the House, but, in the circumstances, I feel that to bring the printer and publisher of this paper under a charge of breach of privilege would serve no good purpose as the person responsible for the matter complained of is a member of the House.

The circumstances attending the private ruling which I gave to the hon. member were these: Under Standing Order 49 the hon. member submitted to me a letter seeking leave to move "That the House do now adjourn" under Standing Order 48. After consideration of the letter, I informed the hon. member that I could not submit his letter to the House, as in my opinion, the matter to be discussed was obviously not urgent, an opinion which must always be left to the discretion of the Speaker. The Growers Charge Act was assented to in December last and no regulations had been gazetted up to the time the session began. From the beginning of the session to the day on which I received the letter, ample opportunity had been given for the matter to be discussed, and as the Estimates were before the House opportunity was given to discuss the matter, as "May" points out. In this ruling the hon. member readily agreed. For the information of the House I quote Standing Order 49—

A member wishing to move "That the House do now adjourn" under No. 48 shall first submit a written statement on the subject proposed to be discussed to the Speaker who, if he thinks it in order, shall read it to the House,

whereupon, if seven members rise in their places to support it, the motion shall be proceeded with.

I now leave the matter in the hands of the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle).

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [4.35]: I must thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your courtesy in drawing my attention yesterday to this matter. In the first place, to explain the position from the beginning, it is customary when a member desires to move the adjournment of the House for him to place in your hands a letter setting out the ground upon which he desires to move the motion. That is laid down in the Standing Orders. I attended at your office at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of Thursday the 2nd October, and in your absence placed the letter on your table. I did not leave the precincts of the House, and at 4.25 p.m. you saw me in the corridor and informed me that you could not allow the motion to be moved. In conversation with me—I know you will not mind my informing the House on the point—you explained that the reason you were not in your room at 3 o'clock was that you had business to transact in the city and that you returned to your room at about 4.10 p.m. Personally, I think I extended to the Speaker of the House the respect due to him in attending at his room to discuss with him the matter I wished to bring forward in the House.

It was unfortunate that you, Mr. Speaker, were not in your room at the time but, of course, you are not bound to be there at any specific time. You received my letter at 4.10 p.m., and at 4.20 or 4.25 p.m., you informed me that I could not move the motion. Later from the Chair the Speaker ruled the motion out of order and gave as his reason that the matter to be discussed was not urgent—which was one consideration; that it was not definite—that is another consideration; and, thirdly, that the matter could be dealt with under the Supply Bill. I immediately saw the Chairman of Committees who told me he would permit me to raise the subject in Committee of Supply on the Legislative Council Vote. I did not therefore, move to disagree with the Speaker's ruling.

Members are in a very difficult position in circumstances such as I have outlined. When prohibitory notice is received at 4.25 p.m. it is difficult for a member to be in a

position to advance arguments in support of a motion to disagree with Mr. Speaker's ruling given a comparatively few minutes beforehand.

Mr. Cross: Why was the matter published in the Press?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOYLE: I am coming to that phase and will reply to the interjection. It must not be inferred that I sought out the Press to ventilate this matter. I did not do so. The editor of the "Primary Producer" rang me up a few days after this incident occurred, and said there was considerable comment as to why my motion had not been accepted by Mr. Speaker. I thereupon told him I would go into the newspaper office and discuss the matter with him, which I did. It was agreed that as the Speaker had not read my letter in the House, its contents should not be published. I point out to hon. members that private members have very few opportunities of drawing attention to particular matters of this description. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I propose to read the letter which I sent to you. The letter was as follows:—

The Hon. J. B. Sleeman, M.L.A.,
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly,
Perth, W.A.

Dear Mr. Speaker,

Dated 30th September, 1941, I have received a letter from the Minister for Lands stating that it is impossible for him to draft regulations to implement the Growers Charge Act, which came into operation on the 1st March, 1941. Without such regulations the Act (which is to affect the proceeds of crops now almost ready for harvesting) cannot operate, and grave difficulties are likely to arise.

Further, no regulations have been made under the Act to amend the Industries Assistance Act which was passed last session and which necessitated regulations to carry out farmers' drought relief. In consequence (and this is evident from the answer to a question by the Minister yesterday) no borrower knows on what terms advances are repayable. It is essential that these regulations should be made before harvesting commences; also that they should be subject to consideration by either House of Parliament.

I, therefore, propose at today's sitting to move, under Standing Order 49—

That the House do now adjourn.

to call attention to the Government's failure to implement such legislation and the urgent need for such implementation.

That is the letter I addressed to you, Mr. Speaker. I think it will be admitted that the letter is concise, and that it sets out the

points on which I was to move the adjournment of the House and in its closing words state the urgent need for doing so. I do not dispute the Speaker's right to rule how he pleases. The suggestion that I questioned the Speaker's impartiality is not borne out by the article. I particularly refrained from expressing opinions of that nature. This is not an article, but a statement to the editor of the paper, and it includes the following words:—

The Speaker's ruling can be termed "extraordinary."

So can a judge's decision in a court of law be termed extraordinary. That is not derogatory.

The Premier: Of course it is!

Mr. BOYLE: A perusal of my letter shows that it is not. It states—

The object I had in mind when attempting to move the adjournment of the House was to direct attention to these two flagrant delinquencies on the part of the Government. The action of the Speaker in disallowing the motion is surely worthy of further explanation, more particularly in view of the fact that Mr. Sleeman refused to read the letter containing the request made. The House was entitled to know what it was all about, and to a more comprehensive explanation of a procedure which involves the rights and privileges of private members of Parliament.

If members think there is an imputation of partiality, I say it was never intended. I drew attention to the fact that in matters of this kind a private member has certain rights and privileges which he can assert in this Chamber only upon notices of this kind. I now take my peregrinations on the Supply Bill, of which measure you, Sir, were good enough to tell me I could take advantage. I had not proceeded far in moving for the reduction of the Legislative Council Vote, which of course was merely a peg on which to hang my argument, when I was stopped by the Chairman of Committees, who informed me that I was out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to burke the hon. member's discussion, but he must not discuss the action of the Chairman of Committees now.

Mr. BOYLE: Very well, Sir. I only wish to explain to the House that although I was shown the way to go, that way was again made rather difficult—though not intentionally: I do not say that at all. My contention is that the article in the

"Primary Producer" was not initiated by me. I did not go to the Press. This particular paper invited a comment, which was given, and in making that comment I scrupulously refrained from impugning your impartiality, Sir, at all. I spoke from the standpoint of a private member of Parliament making a protest against rulings of this kind.

It can be urged that I should have moved to disagree with your ruling straight away. I am not competent, however, to advance arguments and authorities and all the embellishments necessary for disagreeing to a ruling unless time is allowed me. Had you, Mr. Speaker, been in your room when I visited it, probably nothing of all this would have occurred. We could have discussed the matter. I was not lacking in courtesy. I took my letter into your room, and waited within the precincts of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: You should have made an appointment.

Mr. BOYLE: You were not present, Mr. Speaker. Had you, at 4.25 p.m., when you spoke to me, asked me to defer the matter for, say, 24 hours, the request would have met with a ready response from me. At no time had I any intention of impugning your impartiality. I say that in all sincerity; but one labours under a sense of injustice when not knowing how one can get in a protest at the right time. Authorities like "May" are quoted. I know very little about such authorities. This, however, is a democratic Assembly, and, as Speaker of the House, you are entitled to receive a support which, I think you will acknowledge, you have at all times received from me. In this particular case I had a request from the editor of a farmers' paper to find out for him whether there was anything more behind.

If I have offended against you, Mr. Speaker, or impugned your impartiality, I unreservedly apologise; but I do not admit that at any time I sought to impugn either your integrity or your impartiality. In the seven years I have been here it has been my invariable rule to obey the Chair implicitly. During my time in this Chamber I have more than once remarked how little opportunity private members have to register protests for which necessity occasionally

arises. If we happen to have the good fortune to be here while particular Estimates are under discussion, it is true we have the necessary opportunities. Notice to move the adjournment of the House has been given here, and this is the only occasion on which a matter of this kind has arisen. I hope, personally, that no such matter will ever arise again. I will admit, however, that there is reason for clearing myself of any desire to impugn your integrity or impartiality in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker; and I do so unreservedly.

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order: I do not think there can be any more discussion. In fairness to the hon. member I had to give him the opportunity to reply. Unless the Premier intends to move under privilege, there can be no more discussion. Personally I am prepared to accept the apology of the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle).

Hon. P. Collier: What about his use of the word "if"?

Mr. BOYLE: I withdraw the word "if," Mr. Speaker, and apologise unreservedly.

QUESTION—COAL PRICES.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the number of separate shipments of Eastern States coal received by the Railway and Electricity Supply Departments from the 1st January to the 30th September, 1941? 2, What was the price per ton of each shipment of coal delivered on rails at Fremantle? 3, What was the price per ton of Collie coal at the pit's mouth from the Proprietary, Co-operative, Stockton, Cardiff, and Griffin mines respectively?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

1. Ton.		Large Coal.	Small Coal.
2.		per ton.	per ton.
1st shipment	....	....	45/4.1
2nd	..	48/4.2	....
3rd	..	48/4.2	....
4th	..	48/8.1	45/8.1
5th	..	49/3.2	....
6th	..	49/3.1	....
7th	..	49/3.1	....
8th	..	49/0.4	....
9th	..	49/0.4	....
10th	..	....	....
3. Proprietary	....	15/7.27	11/3.64
Co-operative	....	10/8.27	
Stockton	....	15/1.27	
Cardiff	....	14/7.27	
Griffin	....	14/7.49	

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Perth Dental Hospital Land.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

2, Metropolitan Market Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

1, Collie Recreation and Park Lands Act Amendment.

2, Water Boards Act Amendment (No. 2).

**BILL—POTATO GROWERS
LICENSING.**

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION
ACT AMENDMENT.**

Report of Committee adopted.

**BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR
RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMEND-
MENT.**

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 4: Add at the end of the clause a further new section to stand as 12C, as follows:—

12C. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to extend the terms of any lease of land which has expired during the operation of this Act, nor to entitle the lessee to remain in possession after such term has expired.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The Council's amendment proposes to insert in the Act a new section to stand as Section 12C. I oppose that amendment. The definition of the term "lease" in the Act indicates that it means any lease, letting or agreement, whether in writing or verbal, under which land is held by a lessee of a

lessor for any term or period whatever. It is all-embracing, and covers the letting arrangements in connection with any property, including a dwelling-house let by a landlord to a tenant on the basis of a weekly tenancy. The Council's amendment, if accepted, would mean that any lease of any land which has expired during the operation of the Act could not be extended, and could not entitle a lessee to remain in possession after such term had expired. The landlord, could, therefore, give a week's notice to the tenant of a dwelling-house, and at the end of the week's notice the tenant would have to leave the house. The amendment would upset one of the main principles of the Act, namely the granting of security of occupation to tenants at a maximum rental during the period of the war, and for six months after its conclusion. I doubt whether any member of another place desires to establish a system whereby it would be possible for any tenant to be given a week's notice to vacate any premises or property, and for the tenant at the end of the period to have to vacate such premises or property.

Mr. Seward: The amendment would not give that authority.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I think it would.

Mr. Seward: The tenant could get a renewal of the lease.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: But the lease might expire at the end of the first week.

Mr. J. H. Smith: This would not apply to a weekly tenancy.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: The definition to which I have referred applies to any tenancy. The Council's amendment would apply to a weekly tenancy, and anyone who comes under the provisions of the Act would be affected thereby. The amendment would be a dangerous one to accept. Its operations would greatly disturb a position which at present is reasonably satisfactory, both to landlords and tenants, in the overwhelming majority of instances. We would be unwise to accept the amendment because its operation would undermine, to a very large extent, the legislation, by giving the landlord the right to compel the tenant to vacate the premises at the conclusion of a week's notice. No member of this Committee desires to establish such an unsatisfactory position. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. SEWARD: I hope the Committee will not agree to the motion. When the Bill was before this Committee previously I drew the attention of the Minister to cases which would to a large extent be overcome by this amendment. I mention again the case of a man who has taken a lease of a property for, say, one, two or three years, or whatever the term may be, and at present when that lease expires he cannot be put off the property no matter where he is, whether off it or on it. In one instance a man has gone to the war and left no power of attorney. He has had the lease of a property for two years and the owners cannot get possession. There is nobody with whom to negotiate. The lessee was wounded and was in Palestine, or somewhere, and it is impossible to get in touch with him. The property is lying idle. The owners of such properties should get possession of them when the leases expire. The Minister knows that, under the terms of the Act itself, when a lease expires and the lessee wants to continue he cannot be ejected unless the owner wants to use the property himself. The lessee must be given a renewal in a bona fide case, but where the person is away and the property is likely to remain idle, the owner should obtain possession. It is not a question of increasing the rent. If the property is leased to somebody else, the new tenant pays the same rent as did the previous lessee. Under the Act the rent cannot be increased. I know of other farming properties in the same position. In another case a lessee is not on the property, but has given a cropping right to some other person. There is a crop on the property and the owner cannot get possession.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I agree with the Minister that it would be difficult for us to accept this amendment as it has come from the Council. It would make the legislation useless. Attention was drawn to the fact that this would extend leases, commonly known as lases, and not weekly tenancies. The Minister gave the Committee an assurance that he had had a ruling, and it was not so. Since then we have found it does extend these leases. I move—

That the amendment be amended by inserting in line 4 after the word "land" the words "which has a period of over one year and."

It was never intended that this legislation should extend the terms of long leases. Some people probably dispose of their rights

in leases. There are cases of city hotels the leases of which have expired, and have been sold to other people. They have been protected under Section 12 of the Act. The lessee can say, "There is no possibility of my being put out; the owner of the property cannot get possession." The owners can get possession if they want the property for themselves or one of their servants, but not otherwise. The Commonwealth National Security regulations exclude licensed premises. That is quite right. All we wanted to do was to exclude licensed premises. The mover of this amendment gave no consideration to the interpretation of the word "lease." I hope the Committee will agree, if a lease is for a longer period than 12 months, that this legislation shall not be used to extend it.

Mr. McDONALD: I think the word "terms" in the second line of the amendment is an error. It should be "term"—singular. I agree with the Minister that the Bill would extend any tenancy, even a weekly tenancy. The amendment as it now stands should, therefore, not be acceptable to this Committee. I do not think the Legislative Council, by this amendment, expressed what it really wished.

The Minister for Labour: It usually does!

Mr. McDONALD: I hope the Minister will give the matter more consideration. The amendment is not the solution of the difficulty. Section 12 of the parent Act requires to be amended in the light of experience since the Act was passed. The section which it is now proposed to amend, comes from the legislation of the Imperial Parliament passed in the last war. That legislation was confined to dwelling houses. It was intended to meet a shortage in housing, and to protect the tenants from increased rents and from being ejected by landlords who might wish to obtain an increase of rent from some other tenant. I do not know whether the British Parliament has extended its legislation to cover other kinds of tenancies. In our Act of 1939, by Section 12 we have extended this provision to cover every kind of premises and every piece of land which may be occupied by a tenant. It is all-embracing.

In the Federal regulations dealing with the restrictions of rent, hotels are exempted and there is no limitation on the right of the owner of a hotel to require possession at the expiration of the lease. We might well

exclude hotels. It is well known both by the licensee and the owner that a hotel lease is sold for a sum of money. Cash is paid for the ingoing plus a rental for the period of the lease. It is sold just like furniture is sold. Both parties know that at the expiration of the term the hotel comes on the market and frequently—almost generally—tenders are called, and the lessee knows that he will have to pay the amount of the tender acceptable to the owner or else vacate the premises.

The landlord and tenant regulate their affairs on that basis. It is not a case of a man having a roof over his head, but purely a commercial proposition, and one which, in many areas, is extremely payable under the present war conditions. There is also the case mentioned by the member for Pingelly, of a lessee leaving a farm and going abroad. In those circumstances the owner could get possession by going to the court, but if the amount of rent is more than £100 a year he has to go to the Supreme Court, which is a very expensive procedure. Provision might well be made that, when a farm has been abandoned, the owner should be entitled to resume possession. The amendment of the Leader of the Opposition would improve the position but would not meet all cases. There might be a shop or boarding-house let on a tenancy of a year or more and it might be unfair to turn the occupants out. Probably quite a number of people with tenancies of a year or more should receive protection such as Section 12 confers. I hope the Minister will consider the fact that experience has shown that cases of hardship and injustice arise under the section although, in the main, it has worked well. We should bear in mind that the section is entirely for the benefit of tenants, who are entitled to remain without any increase of rent. On the other hand, landlords cannot compel tenants to stay.

The Minister for Labour: The Act has helped landlords in many instances.

Mr. McDONALD: I do not think so.

The Minister for Labour: It makes tenants keep their rents paid up.

Mr. McDONALD: I concede that point. It pays so little to build houses for letting that the race of landlords is becoming extinct. In my experience landlords have accepted in the right spirit the Act and the limitations it imposes. Many are losing

quite a lot of money, compared with what they would have received if their rights had not been interfered with. A man might have leased premises for five or seven years on terms of an ascending scale, and the Act comes in during the first year and obliges him to accept the lowest amount over the whole period, whereas an average would be a fair thing. Landlords, in spite of having suffered considerable losses, have loyally accepted the position and we should recognise the fact. The Minister should give the matter further consideration. We on this side would be glad to assist in framing amendments to meet the situation. I do not want to see this section utilised unfairly by a tenant; nor should it be continued in its present form because, in order to obtain justice, landlords are compelled to spend large sums of money in going to law.

Mr. THORN: I hope the Minister will accede to the wishes expressed and give the amendment further consideration. When the original legislation was introduced I assumed that Section 12 would not apply to leases. Various speakers who raised the point asked the Minister to accept an amendment to make the position clear. I am confident it was never in the mind of the Minister that the Act should apply as it is applying at present. Speaking generally, the hotel business is a most profitable one. Before the original legislation was introduced, some leases for licensed premises had already been sold and the Act upset all those arrangements. I do not think Parliament intended to protect those leases. Hotel-keeping is keen business and there is always somebody to buy a lease. We should not interfere with that sort of business.

The Premier: You would not want to make it much more remunerative.

Mr. THORN: No, but I do not think the Minister desired to include those in the business who are making big profits. It is a business about which we need not concern ourselves. When a lease expires, it should go on the market.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you think the Bullsbrook hotel is profitable?

Mr. THORN: Yes, but some hotels are not profitable and rents have been reduced, even to the extent of 50 per cent. If hotels are unprofitable, tenants will be unobtainable. The Minister should allow time for the drafting of amendments along the lines indicated.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I agree with the Minister that the Council's amendment would cover ordinary tenancies from week to week. The word "so" should be inserted after the word "construed" because the statement "construed as to extend" is not English. The word "terms," as has been pointed out, should read "term." Assuming that these crudities to which we are becoming accustomed—we experience them in our Bills every day—were rectified, the amendment would defeat the object of the Act. I think I am right in saying that, when the original measure was before us, the Minister gave an assurance that it would not apply to leases which had been entered into prior to the measure and which would come to an end at any time during its operation. Is that not so?

The Minister for Labour: No.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I feel sure that I read it in "Hansard." The Minister was asked what would happen in the case of a hotel if three or four years of a five-years' lease had expired. Was not that question put to the Minister?

The Minister for Labour: It was argued even on this Bill.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Was not that the exact position put to the Minister? I understood he had been advised by the Crown Law Department that such a case would not be covered. A hotel is let, not as a residence at so much per week or per month, but for a certain sum described as ingoing and a certain sum per week or per month. If £3,000 ingoing was paid for a lease of three years, the taxation authorities would add £1,000 of the ingoing to the rental for each of the three years. When the lease expires, exactly the same procedure is followed. Tenders are called for an ingoing and a rental, not for a rental pure and simple. Section 12 of the Act requires clarification and I suggest that the Minister should reconsider it. In effect, it provides that no possession may be taken by a landlord of any land to which the Act applies except by order of the court. If the whole statute is searched, however, not a single provision will be found which constitutes a court empowered to make or refuse such an order. Moreover, the definition of "court" in the Act is restricted to the local court, which by existing legislation has only a limited juris-

diction in regard to the making of an order for ejectment or for recovery of land.

The Premier: Yes, in connection with land up to a value of £300.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am not certain.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If the value should be higher the matter must be dealt with by the Supreme Court.

The Minister for Labour: Your feelings are out of order; they are not working correctly!

Hon. N. KEENAN: If my feelings are out of order, I wonder what the Minister's are like!

The CHAIRMAN: This amendment does not deal with the feelings of either the Minister or the member for Nedlands. I hope the member for Nedlands will get back to the matter before the Chair.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I will try to do so. Undoubtedly, Section 12 of the Act is inoperative with respect to hotels. That is altogether apart from any increase in trade. I am not concerned with the fact that a lessee has the good luck to have a lease of a hotel which, owing to the circumstances of the hour, has enormously increased its trade. Irrespective of that, the lessee would, at the termination of his lease, be holding the hotel for a fraction of the rent which he agreed to pay when he first went into possession under the lease. That is not desirable. There is also the question, raised by the member for Pingelly, of land held—

The Minister for Labour: By a soldier.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Or by some other person. The member for Pingelly gave an illustration of what would be the position if a person, after leasing land, abandoned it. The landlord would have no right to enter into possession unless he first obtained an order. I hope the Committee will agree to differ from the Legislative Council.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Having listened to the Minister's reply, I realise the Committee should not accept the Council's amendment. The Committee ought to give this matter further consideration; something should be done along the lines suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. I have listened carefully to the member for West Perth and the member for Nedlands, who have legally-trained minds and have no axes to grind, and I agree upon the necessity for a further alteration of the Act. I am conversant with

the hotel trade, in which I have been interested for a number of years. Ninety per cent. of the Committee knows what takes place in the hotel trade. Hotel leases for three, seven or five years are sometimes submitted to tender and sometimes arranged by private treaty.

A person may wish to lease a hotel and accordingly he approaches the owner for a lease; he may agree to pay £3,000 or £5,000 or even as much as £20,000 by way of ingoing, according to the situation of the hotel, and a rental of £10 or £100 or even £120 a week. The tenant, after having been in possession for only a few weeks or months, may then dispose of the residue of the term of his lease to another person. That person is well aware that at the end of the lease, his rights in the property cease. He can sell his furniture to the successful tenderer or dispose of it by public auction. I question whether at the time the Act was passed, it was contemplated for a moment that hotel leases would be affected in this way. The hotel trade in the heart of the metropolitan area is today very much brighter than it has been for many years past. On the other hand, the hotel trade in the country is declining. I therefore hope the Minister has not definitely made up his mind, but will agree to the suggestion that the discussion should be adjourned until tomorrow or the next day, so that the Committee may give the amendment further consideration. The Minister is fair-minded and does not want to penalise anybody.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: This matter was fully debated during the second reading debate and the Committee stage when the principal Act was before Parliament as a Bill. If we sift the information given to the Committee this afternoon, we shall find there is not much in it to justify the taking of action along the desired lines.

Hon. N. Keenan: What are the desired lines?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: From the speeches made, as far as they can be understood, I believe the main desire is to establish a position that would automatically compel a lessee to vacate a property on the expiration of the term of his lease.

Hon. N. Keenan: Under all circumstances?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: Members who have spoken have in mind hotels and the manner in which they are leased

from time to time. Hotels are leased for various periods. The complaint seems to me to be that leases of some hotels have expired during the currency of the Act, but that the Act permits the lessee to continue in occupation of the hotel. The desire of the members who have spoken to this amendment is that the lessee shall not be allowed to continue in occupation, but shall be compelled automatically to vacate the premises when his lease expires; and that the landlord should then have full and complete freedom to secure as much as he possibly can by way of premium or ingoing, and also as much as he possibly can by way of increased rent for the premises from some new tenant who might be available.

Mr. Thorn: You do that with the refreshment rooms, do you not?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I suggest to the member for Toodyay that we have a debate on the refreshment rooms in connection with the next amendment from the Legislative Council! The hon. member opposes this idea in connection with the refreshment rooms, yet he lauds the idea in connection with hotels.

Mr. Thorn: No, I did not!

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I am not able to get excited about landlords of hotels. This afternoon we have had only one instance given to us. I have had only one complaint and that concerns the landlord of a hotel in St. George's-terrace. The landlord in that instance pleads that a very much larger amount of money could be received by way of rent, and a very large sum by way of ingoing if the present lessee could be removed from occupation and a new lessee installed.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I do not think that is quite right.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: That is the information made available to me.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I think that lease was drawn before the Act came into force.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: That does not affect the existing position. I am not able to grow excited about that, or to believe that we should go to no end of trouble to see whether we can re-word Section 12 of the Act to meet every individual case of that type that might arise. The amendment from the Legislative Council has been on our notice paper for at least a month. Members have been given ample opportunity to study it and to propose any

alterations, but no such move has been made. Now, when the amendment is brought forward for consideration, it is suggested that further thought could be given to the idea of improving Section 12. That section, together with other sections of the Act, has worked very well. There might be an odd landlord of a hotel who is dissatisfied. The main, if not the only reason for the dissatisfaction, would be inability on the part of the landlord to obtain a fairly large sum of money by removing one tenant and installing another with a new ingoing and a much higher rent. Are members of the Committee anxious to assist in a case of that kind? I do not think they are over-anxious to do so, otherwise the amendment would have been listed on the notice paper for a suitable alteration.

It might easily be inferred from the speeches made this afternoon that landlords cannot secure repossession of a property in any circumstances. The suggestion seems to be that when the tenant is in, he is in, and it is difficult, if not impossible, for the landlord to obtain repossession. Section 12 sets out the reasons entitling a landlord to obtain repossession. If a tenant does not continue to pay the standard rent, the landlord has a right to obtain repossession. No order for the recovery of possession of land or for the ejectment of a tenant can be made so long as the tenant performs that and the other conditions of the tenancy, except on the ground that the tenant has committed waste, or has been guilty of conduct which is a nuisance or annoyance to adjoining or neighbouring occupiers, or that the premises have been sold by a mortgagee under the power of sale contained in the mortgage or—and this is most important—that the premises are reasonably required by the landlord for the occupation of himself or some other person in his employ, or in the employ of some tenant from him, or on some other ground which may be deemed satisfactory by the court making the order.

It is clear that Section 12 establishes a number of grounds, any one of which might easily be regarded as sufficient to give authority to a landlord to obtain repossession of his premises. The condition that the premises may be repossessed if the landlord requires them for his own occupation or the occupation of some person in his employ is very wide, and would meet the great majority of cases, if not every case. If we

endeavour to reframe Section 12 to meet one or two particular difficulties we shall, by solving those difficulties, create a new crop and spread unfairness and injustice over a much larger number of people. The existing position is not unsatisfactory. The question has been very fully debated, but everybody who has made a suggestion for the alteration of Section 12 admits that the making of a suitable amendment is a job that will take much consideration and the final decision may make the position not better but worse. I have therefore moved that we reject the Council's amendment.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In the case of a lease entered into ten years ago, when rents were probably much lower than they are today, a landlord is bound to continue those rents as they were at the 31st August, 1939. Although rates and taxes may have increased considerably, he is not permitted to make any additional charges. I was misled by the Minister when he told me he had it on the authority of the Crown Law officers that the Bill did not extend leases.

The Minister for Labour: It does not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I say it does. If it does not I have no more to say, but I know some Crown Law officers and other people who do not agree with the Minister.

Mr. McDONALD: The Minister has said that this amendment has been on the notice paper for a month and that members have not tabled any amendments. Of course we have not! It is not our place to do so. When the Government introduces a Bill, we know quite well that the Bill contains what the Government desires, and we can place amendments on the notice paper; but when a message comes from the Legislative Council we do not know, until the Minister speaks, whether the Government intends to accept the amendment or not. Very often the Minister moves to agree with the Council's amendment, and it is not much good our placing amendments on the notice paper if the Minister proposes to accept the Council's alteration.

The Premier: Nobody agreed that this amendment was much good.

The Minister for Labour: We agreed that it was dangerous.

Mr. McDONALD: I agree, but the Minister can quite easily say, "I am aware of the tenor of the debate in the Legislative

Council and what the Council's object is. Although I do not agree to this particular alteration, I move another amendment to take its place." Until that happens we have no idea what the Government intends, and it is not our place to put amendments on the notice paper. We are entitled to hear first what the Government has to say. I am not here to protect hotels. I prefer to see all the excess profits and premiums due to the war taken by the State or the Commonwealth, and not by either the landlords or the tenants. The Federal Government introduced regulations dealing with increased rents, and deliberately left out hotels. The other States—including Victoria, I think—have adopted those regulations and left out hotels.

The Minister for Labour: You are not definite about Victoria?

Mr. McDONALD: No, I believe Victoria adopted the Commonwealth regulations but, I think, has since passed its own Act.

The Minister for Labour: It was based on the Western Australian Act.

Hon. N. Keenan: Do not flatter yourself!

Mr. McDONALD: I do not know whether the Victorian legislation refers to licensed premises or not. However, let us give the Federal Government credit that, if it left out licensed premises, that course must have been adopted after advice had been taken and it was done for some good reason. Under the Act at present, when his lease expires after five years, the licensee is in a position, if he is making thumping profits, to say, "There is the Act and, in accordance with Section 12, I propose to stay on." If he is not doing well, he can say, "My lease has expired and out I go."

We know that some hotels are making big profits and the licensees are accumulating fortunes owing to existing war conditions. In such instances the licensees will stay on, but the moment trade falls off they can walk out. In other words, licensees will stay on just as long as it suits them. If there is profiteering, and fortunes are being made in hotels owing to war conditions, the Minister suggests that the tenants should have the benefit of those fortunes. For my part, if we are to consider the relative positions of landlord and tenant, I consider the former, whose contractual rights are being taken from him by this legislation, should receive the

benefits. They should go to the man who owns the premises and whose rights are being taken away.

The Minister for Labour: The rights are there for the landlord to avail himself of, if he desires to do so.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes, but in many instances that is not possible because the landlord is old, or his health makes him unfitted to undertake the work, or he may not live in the locality.

The Minister for Labour: But there is the reference to "anyone in his employment."

Mr. McDONALD: But that does not apply to landlords of hotels. The words referred to by the Minister have been taken verbatim from the English Act and apply to farms in England, to cottages for farm tenants and for employees of farmers. That provision will not help landlords of hotels one iota. The Minister stands in this instance for the tenants; I stand for the landlord. That, in effect, is the position.

The Minister for Labour: If it is a question of benefit, I am for the tenant securing it.

Mr. McDONALD: And I am not! If we take away the landlord's contractual rights, we should extend to him any benefits that accrue. All I desire is justice for the landlord as well as for the tenant; I am not in sympathy with the liquor trade at all.

The Minister for Labour: I am not in favour of excluding hotels.

Mr. McDONALD: For that reason I put forward a modified suggestion that hotels should be excluded insofar as the leases of such premises were let before the commencement of the Act.

The Minister for Labour: Nor am I in favour of that.

Mr. McDONALD: I am also aware of that fact, but I am not prepared to agree to tenants profiteering. I agree with the Minister that the instances of injustice may not be many, but it is our duty to rectify such as there are. At present I am not practising law to any great extent—I am too busy with my parliamentary duties—but in the last few months four instances have come before me and in three of them definite injustice was being done to the landlord. Those cases did not all refer to hotels. I am sorry the Minister will not disclose some elasticity of mind and will not agree to an

amendment to meet conditions that have arisen. I regret he is not prepared to make the legislation equitable. It amounts to authorising the breaking of contracts by means of legislative action, and as this is experimental legislation we should make it reasonable where experience shows that course to be desirable.

Mr. ABBOTT: I cannot see why Parliament should interfere with the rights of people unless an injustice is being done. Why should one section be penalised for the benefit of another? If we are to socialise all our activities, by all means let us do so; but why pick out one individual industry and say that in it one party shall benefit at the expense of another?

The Premier: The owner of the freehold of hotels is on a good wicket.

Mr. ABBOTT: And so are the tenants. Very often they are on a better wicket than are the owners of the premises, who have to pay heavy land tax and other imposts.

The Premier: The tenant secures his lease by tender at, presumably, the full market price.

The Minister for Labour: And the tenant has to run the business.

Mr. ABBOTT: And gets well paid for it in most instances. The Minister said that the Act applied to certain hotels in the Terrace, and probably there was some objection to it because some increase in rent was sought. I know of one hotel in the Terrace to which the Act applies, and I can assure the Committee that there is no question of increasing the rent. Such a course is not warranted and is not desired.

The Minister for Labour: There may be a desire to remove the present tenant.

Mr. ABBOTT: We need not go into details, but the Minister ought to be better informed than to make a suggestion without having the full facts before him. Why should there be any desire to remove a present tenant?

The Minister for Labour: For one thing, he may be unsuitable.

Mr. ABBOTT: Then he can be removed.

The Minister for Labour: Or it might be that a grave injustice was being done to someone else.

Mr. ABBOTT: I cannot see why one section of owners of property should be preferred against another.

Mr. SEWARD: In the course of his remarks the Minister stated that the object of the amendment was that landlords should be given power to put tenants out, but that is not my objective. I did not mention hotels in connection with the amendment, so I cannot be accused of fighting their battle. What I had in mind was the position regarding estates in instances where it is perfectly obvious that the wife or a family, consisting of girls, cannot take over a property and run it.

The Minister for Labour: Do you refer to a case where a man has gone oversea?

Mr. SEWARD: Yes!

The Minister for Labour: Soldiers' interests are protected irrespective of this Act.

Mr. SEWARD: I know there is ample protection, but in one instance the soldier left authority with his bank to pay the rent as it became due. In that instance the owner does not know who is on the property and has no access to it, yet the lease expired 12 months ago. In one instance a property was rented for £70 and offers of from £100 to £120 have been received for it, but the business cannot be gone on with because the man who went oversea left no power of attorney.

Amendment on the Council's amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	19

Majority against 4

AYES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. North
Mr. Boyle	Mr. Seward
Mr. Hill	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Warner
Mr. Latham	Mr. Willmott
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Sampson
Mr. McLarty	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Berry	Mr. Panton
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Cross	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Fox	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Wise
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Nulsen	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Stubbs	Mr. Collier
Mr. Patrick	Mr. Needham
Mr. Mann	Mr. Raphael

Amendment on the Council's amendment thus negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.18 to 7.30 p.m.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2—New Clause: Insert a new clause after Clause 4 to stand as Clause 5, as follows:—5. Section fourteen of the principal Act is hereby repealed.

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: I understand this amendment was approved in the Legislative Council because of the fact that several weeks ago a number of railway refreshment rooms and bookstalls had to be offered for public tender.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Why?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: In several instances the highest tenders received offered higher rentals than had previously been paid, and the officers of the Railway Department naturally gave the leases of the rooms to the highest tenderers. It is obligatory upon the Commissioner of Railways, under the provisions of the Government Railways Act 1904-1933, to call tenders for the letting of the refreshment rooms and bookstalls.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And that will be superseded by this Bill?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: No. The Government and all its instrumentalities will be excluded from the operations of this measure. Because of that a legal obligation was placed upon the Commissioner to offer the leases of these refreshment rooms and bookstalls for public tender. In doing that he carried out the law, as he was bound to do. That is the explanation why some of the refreshment rooms and bookstalls are now let at higher rentals than were operating before new tenders were called a few months ago. In view of the legal obligation placed upon the Commissioner I do not see how he could have done other than he did. The Commissioner himself never had power to fix the rentals of these places, and therefore a continuation of the present system cannot seriously be criticised. Had the Commissioner of his own initiative fixed the rentals, it might reasonably be argued that he fixed them at what he thought was a reasonable and profitable figure, and therefore by virtue of setting his own rental figure his decision should be accepted and continued without alteration during the period of the war and for a short time after. He did not, however, fix the rentals for these places and never had any right to do so. Under the Act, to which I

have referred, the rentals have always been fixed by the calling of public tenders. It would not be wise by this Bill to delete from the Act that section which excludes the Government and its instrumentalities from the provisions of the Act. The State can generally be expected to do the right thing in regard to its tenants. If the occasion arises when it does not do the right thing Parliament is here to see that the right thing is done.

Mr. Seward: Even if Parliament is not sitting?

The MINISTER FOR LABOUR: That is a fairly reasonable safeguard in the circumstances. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I know the Minister had a difficult task to justify his opposition to the Council's amendment. He has reversed the argument we heard in this Chamber before the tea adjournment.

The Minister for Labour: You will have to be careful.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Government had no right to accept higher rentals than those which were in operation at the end of August, 1939. By statute the public is debarred from doing that sort of thing. In the case under review higher rentals are being paid today than were paid before, and the Minister seems to think the Commissioner is justified in accepting those higher rentals. There is every justification for the arguments we submit from this side of the Chamber. Certain classes of business have proved more lucrative during the war period than they would otherwise be. The Minister's argument is a very weak one. I hope the Committee will at least see that it is consistent and will vote in favour of the Council's amendment. I look to members opposite to be consistent—even though they are not always right—and to support me in this matter. An amendment similar to this was moved in this Chamber but the numbers were against it. The Government should be placed in the same position as are private individuals.

Mr. McDONALD: When listening to the Minister I could not help thinking he had somewhat changed his views. He said the Commissioner did not fix the rentals of these premises. In actual fact the Commissioner fixed them in the most effective way possible by calling for public tenders, just as is done

by the owners of hotels. When the Commissioner receives higher tenders than were previously handed in he is certainly agreeing to the payment of higher rentals. There was no obligation on the Commissioner to accept the highest tender. He could have accepted tenders at the rentals previously obtained. We have said to everyone else, "You are not merely prohibited from accepting or demanding any increased rent beyond that which applied on the day when war broke out, but you are committing a criminal offence if you do so, one for which you can be fined and sent to gaol." In spite of that principle and penalty the Commissioner, acting on behalf of the State, instead of setting an example to citizens generally has received a higher rental for these premises than obtained at the outbreak of war. The Committee must proceed upon some principle. We must give the public confidence and assure them that there are no privileged people in time of war, whether they happen to be Crown landlords or private landlords. If we agree to the Council's amendment we shall be giving the public that confidence. As the Minister said, if there is any departure from that principle on the part of the Crown, this Parliament is the place where the wrong can be put right. By the Council's amendment the action of the Commissioner, which was taken by him in good faith although contrary to the principle as understood here, will be set right. If the Minister is consistent he will place Crown instrumentalities and the general public on the same basis so far as deriving increased profits from the rental of premises is concerned during the period of war.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am disappointed at the Government's desire to take advantage of its position, while declaring similar behaviour on the part of the public improper. Throughout the world Parliaments are becoming more subject to doubt and misgiving and to public opprobrium than ever previously. The Government's attitude as evidenced in this instance does much towards increasing the discredit in which Governments generally are held. And members of Parliament suffer because of their association with Governments.

The CHAIRMAN: I want the hon. member to deal with the amendment, which does not mention either Parliaments or members of Parliament.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am inclined to agree with you, Sir, because the Government's attitude is most improper and insincere.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I ask your ruling, Mr. Chairman, as to whether that language is parliamentary.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot say that I have heard anything unbecoming or improper.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Government's attitude is illogical and therefore disappointing. If it is wrong for the public to do something during war time, surely it is equally wrong for the Government. The conglomeration of errors represented by this Bill would not be supported by the Minister if he were outside Parliament.

Mr. McDONALD: Will the Minister assist the Committee by stating what the old rent was, and what is the new rent under the tenders?

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

Ayes	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	16
Majority for				3

AYES.

Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cross	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Fox	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styan
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Triat
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Nulsen	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Berry	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Boyle	Mr. Seward
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Hill	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Warner
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Latham	Mr. Sampson

PATRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collier	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Raphael	Mr. Mann
Mr. Withers	Mr. Doney

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: I am treating the word "terms" in amendment No. 1 as a clerical error for "term."

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Hon. C. G. Latham, Mr. Triat and the Minister for

Labour drew up reasons for not agreeing to the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £1,200,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 7—Delete paragraph (b).

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is suggested that instead of the Commissioner of Railways, the Commissioner of Police shall be the licensing authority. I explained, when the Bill was previously before this Committee, that the Commissioner of Railways was to be the authority to examine the men and see that they were properly equipped to drive a tram car, trolley bus or omnibus. The Council evidently considers they should come under the control of the Commissioner of Police. I pointed out that those driving omnibuses used for the Government tramway service would have to comply with the traffic regulations. The only question was, who should conduct the necessary examination and issue the license. It is not worth troubling about. I have great confidence in both the Commissioner of Police and the Commissioner of Railways. It is now proposed that these drivers should come under the Commissioner of Police, the same as other drivers do. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2. Clause 9—Insert the words "or animal" after the word "vehicle" in lines 4, 9 and 14.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment merely seeks to insert the word "animal" as well as "vehicle." I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 3. Clause 11—Delete all words after the word "is" in the first line and substitute the following:—

"repealed and a section is inserted in lieu thereof as follows:—

Substitution of vehicle for vehicle whilst under repair.

50. Any license granted in respect of an omnibus, or passenger vehicle, or goods vehicle shall, during such time or times as such omnibus or vehicle is under repair, authorise the holder of such license, with the previous consent in writing of the Commissioner of Police or any officer acting for him, when the omnibus or passenger vehicle or goods vehicle is licensed within the metropolitan area or any outlying land or with the previous consent in writing of the local authority in whose district the omnibus or passenger vehicle or goods vehicle is licensed when such omnibus, or passenger vehicle or goods vehicle is not licensed within the metropolitan area or any outlying land as aforesaid to substitute another omnibus or vehicle for the bus or vehicle under repair, and to ply for hire therewith or otherwise use the same for profit without being required to pay a further license fee, during only such period or periods as the first-mentioned omnibus or vehicle is under repair and not plying for hire or otherwise being used for profit."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At the present time it is permissible, where there is a fleet of omnibuses or passenger vehicles and one is being repaired, to allow its number plate to be transferred to another vehicle. It is now proposed to include goods vehicles. It is fair that it should apply to goods vehicles, of which some firms have quite a number. If one of those vehicles is under repair a new license would have to be taken out for the vehicle taking its place. This permits the number plate to be used on the substituted vehicle. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1941-1942.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 14th October; Mr. Withers in the Chair.

Vote.—Public Works and Buildings, £86,924.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [8.10]: It is usual when introducing the Revenue Estimates to present a brief resume of the activities of the department during the preceding year. I will be dealing mostly with figures which are a set of balances and information as to the amounts expended. It is necessary that the Committee should have the information. The expenditure last year from ordinary revenue on public works and buildings was £90,452; from revenue votes, for maintenance and other charges, including interest and sinking fund, Goldfields Water Supply, £136,753, and other hydraulic undertakings, £63,316, or a total of £200,069. From loan funds, excluding appropriations to buildings suspense account, £6,000, the total was £793,346. From suspense accounts, funds appropriated from General Loan Fund for the year 1939-40 amounted to £13,656, or a total of £1,097,523.

In addition, an amount of £245,936 was expended by the department in connection with works not provided for on the Estimates under my control. They were as follows:—

	£
Commonwealth defence works, etc. . .	61,528
Hospital Fund buildings, and other departments generally . . .	171,826
Harbour works generally, dredging, etc.	12,582
	<u>£245,936</u>

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you get a recoup for the Commonwealth money?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. A comparison between the total expenditure for the year 1940-41 of £1,343,459, and the total expenditure for the previous year of £1,401,362, shows a decrease of £57,903. The dissection of the total expenditure referred to, £1,343,459, plus expenditure on town planning, £1,679, makes a grand total of £1,345,138, as under—

	£
Salaries and incidentals	99,168
Harbours and rivers	97,642
Water supplies, drainage and irrigation	752,914
Roads and bridges	41,734
Public buildings (including abattoirs)	268,138
Commonwealth defence works, etc. . .	61,528
Bulk handling of wheat facilities—	
Bunbury and Fremantle	1,073
Miscellaneous	22,941
	<u>£1,345,138</u>

The principal works undertaken by the department last year were—

	£
Wyndham Meat Works jetty	1,303
Derby jetty extension	1,252
Fremantle Harbour works	46,909
Swan River improvements	17,029

The Swan River improvements are finished for the time being.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is the dredge that was being used on the river laid up?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, no work is being done there now. Water supplies for towns comprise the following—

	£
Albany water supply	4,009
Katanning water supply	19,131
Geraldton water supply	6,660

Regarding the goldfields water supply, members will be interested in the following items:—

	£
Further progress in renewing main conduit, and steel and wood pipes	95,664
Cement lining reticulation pipes, Kalgoorlie	17,548
Improvements to mines trust main . .	3,583
Purchase of meters	2,494
Cunderdin service reservoir	8,399
Kellerberrin summit tank	5,175
Norseman water supply, booster pump	1,479
Canning-Mundaring link	60,456

Dealing now with water supplies in agricultural areas, including drainage and irrigation, I have the following facts:—

	£
Collie district irrigation and drainage	4,965
Harvey district irrigation and drainage (including Stirling reservoir, £102,606)	176,254
Herdsmen's Lake tunnel	4,997
Waroona irrigation and drainage (including Samson's Brook reservoir, £131,794)	135,273

I have particulars of several country tanks that are being completed this year—

	£
Cowcowing East	1,058
Dalwallinu	1,426
Barbalin No. 1 district water supply	7,281
Great Southern district, boring for water	1,610
Ongerup tank	1,589

Mr. Sampson: What about one for Kalamunda?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That might come when some of the urgent jobs in the country have been completed, but until then a near suburb like Kalamunda will

have to wait. Under the heading "Abattoirs," £2,530 was spent on the Midland Junction saleyards for pig pens, and on the continuation of the road programme under the heading of "Roads and Bridges," £34,539 was expended. On public buildings the expenditure was as follows:—

	£
Public Works Department, architectural workshops	3,710
New schools and quarters (including new Perth Technical College, £15,820)	39,149
Hospitals and institutions (including Perth Hospital additions, £137,428)	144,191
Police stations, gaols, courthouses and quarters	3,448
Electrical workshops	1,853

Mr. Seward: Can you give the expenditure on the Perth Hospital for the year?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, I have given the total expenditure to date. The estimated amount of revenue from all sources for the year 1940-41 was £402,050. The actual revenue received amounted to £458,308, showing a surplus of £56,258 on the estimate for the year.

Hon. N. Keenan: From what source did you get the excess?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Probably from the revenue of the goldfields water supply, not the metropolitan scheme. The estimated revenue for 1941-42 and the actual collections for 1940-41 are as follows:—

	Estimated, 1941-42.	Actual, 1940-41.
	£	£
Public Works	32,000	42,013
Town Planning	50	45
Goldfields Water Supply	345,000	347,748
Other Hydraulic Undertakings	74,000	68,502
	<u>£451,050</u>	<u>£458,308</u>

This shows a decrease for 1941-42 of £7,258 on the actual amount received last year. I have other details which can perhaps be better supplied when the items are being considered. Included in the Works Department's Estimates is provision for unemployment relief. The position has altered completely from that which I have had to report in previous years. In former years we had a number of men whom we had the utmost difficulty in employing. Now the whole scene is changed and the difficulty is for employers to get the men they need. I propose to show the advance that has been made in what has been the paramount problem since this Government took control in

April, 1933. A marked improvement is shown on the position of last year, the employment position now being better than at any time since 1931. War conditions have been responsible for the placement of a large number of men in industry and, in addition, many are now serving in one or other of the defence forces. When the present Government took office 13,645 men were dependent on us for relief work or sustenance, of which number 4,977 were on rations. The policy of endeavouring to place workers in industry has been rigidly followed, and a consequent reduction in the number of men dependent on the Government for support has been shown yearly. The following figures indicate the result of that policy:—

	No. on Relief Work.	No. on Sustenance.	Total.
April, 1933	8,668	4,977	13,645
June, 1933	7,374	6,070	13,444
June, 1934	9,950	1,309	11,259
June, 1935	8,355	859	9,214
June, 1936	7,334	752	8,086
June, 1937	5,694	791	6,485
June, 1938	6,167	467	6,634
Sept., 1939	5,623	1,035	6,658
Sept., 1940	4,138	717	4,905
Sept., 1941	2,469	17	2,486

Mr. W. Hegney: How many single men are included?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I may be able to give that information later. The 2,469 were all married men on full time and included 393 employed on the East-West road, which will be completed this year with the exception of a few men who will be taken back for servicing. Actually the formation of the road will be completed this year. I think we had between 400 and 500 miles to construct on the Western Australian side. With the graders and big machinery available, the formation of the road has proceeded apace. The military authorities have also provided help. Generally, the job has been done most expeditiously. When completed I think the road will be a passable one.

May I interpolate here that many inquiries were made about the direction the road should take after it left Norseman? The military authorities, however, are concerned only with the road east of Norseman. They take the view that, having got to Norseman, they have the advantages of an excellent road from Norseman to Coolgardie, a railway line and a water supply. The pipeline follows the road for the whole distance. As to those who think there should be a shorter cut from Norseman to Southern Cross, the military authorities state that they will not

take to the bush while they have a road, a railway and a water supply already available. With regard to the other roads that have been mentioned, I have stated that the Main Roads Department does not consider itself to be a military authority. The only roads the State has built are those that have been asked for by the military authorities.

The East-West road is the first military road that has been paid for by the Commonwealth. Good reasons may be advanced for a shorter route, but actually little would be saved even with a shorter cut from Norseman to Southern Cross. As regards the other routes, they would be about the same distance from Perth. To Perth from Norseman would be about the same distance as the road from Norseman to Coolgardie and Southern Cross to Perth, and this is a made road, running along a railway and with a water supply. Again, having arrived at Norseman, the military authorities would have available to them the State railways and rolling-stock, whereas at Kalgoorlie there would be great difficulty as regards the Commonwealth railway, which is really a bottleneck, the gauge being 4 ft. 8½ in. from Port Pirie to Kalgoorlie. Having arrived at Norseman, however, as I said, the military authorities could transport troops over our railways, using our rolling-stock. That I assume is why it was decided to make the East-West road, for which, as I said, the Commonwealth paid.

With regard to other military roads, there are now roads running from Mandurah along the coast to North Beach and Balclutha. Many of these roads would not have been constructed except that the Commonwealth asked us for them. The road from Mandurah across to Rockingham is not a road which the State would have constructed but it was considered to be necessary by the military authorities. We have had many advisers in respect to defence works, but the only authority of which we take notice is the Commonwealth Government. We are asked why certain roads were built. We reply, "Because they were asked for." We are asked why the East-West road was built. We reply, "Because the military authorities asked for it."

Hon. N. Keenan: The road from Rockingham to Mandurah was in existence 40 years ago.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No!

Hon. N. Keenan: I travelled over it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Has the hon. member been along the road from Mandurah to Safety Bay? It cuts across swampy land and is, I understand, a vulnerable spot. Nevertheless, we now have perfect roads from Mandurah across to Safety Bay, thence to Rockingham and thence along the coast. These roads were asked for by the military authorities and were constructed from moneys available in the Petrol Fund.

Hon. N. Keenan: Why did not the East-West road start from Kalgoorlie?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It does, in effect.

Hon. N. Keenan: It goes to Norseman.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. It is accessible now from Kalgoorlie through Coolgardie. A suggestion was made to follow a different route, but this was the one decided upon by the military authorities. Our Commissioner of Main Roads, with Mr. Drake-Brockman in conjunction with Eastern States military authorities, recommended and surveyed the route. The military authorities had the advice of our Commissioner of Main Roads, their own experts and of a South Australian road authority, and that route was considered to be the best. It is nearer the coast and water supplies are available. In the future it will be a valuable road and will have a telephone system installed throughout its length. Before the road was constructed, it was considered pioneering to travel along the route to South Australia. When the war is over and the road completed the journey will be comparatively easy. It will be used very considerably.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Does it go through the Madura Pass?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and also the Eucla Pass. In one case it goes down on to the lower strata, and in the other it rises. Both portions are being bituminised. There was great trouble about it—I happened to be there myself—but now no difficulty exists. The road is being properly constructed and will withstand the weather. There will be no trouble in future so far as the weather is concerned. It will be a tourist road.

The Minister for Lands: There are much worse roads in the Kimberley district than at the Madura Pass.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Unemployment in the State has decreased to such an extent that we have been able greatly to reduce the staff employed at Marquis-street. A few clerks are still employed there; they have been assisting the Commonwealth, which took advantage of the State organisation to receive applications from workers desiring employment in munition works. From now on, those applications will have to be made to the Commonwealth authorities. Up to date, we have succeeded in dealing with 3,875 applications of which 2,047 were from males and 1,828 from females. Those are workers who will be required for the munitions factory at Welshpool when it is completed. When the factory has advanced to such a stage that it will be possible to estimate accurately the time when work will start, I understand girls from this State will be sent to similar works at Hendon, in South Australia, where they will be trained and then returned to this State. I was speaking to Mr. Fuller, who is in charge of the Hendon works and of other works near Port Adelaide, including the brass foundry. He was in Western Australia recently and said that if we could get machinery there would be no difficulty. He proposes to start one shift with one set of machines.

Afterwards, when the machines are duplicated, it is proposed to employ up to 600 workers a shift, in two shifts. In the Hendon works 1,500 persons are employed, the girls numbering three to one. Although some people seem to be restive because the works at Welshpool are not being pushed ahead quicker, so far as any assistance from the State is concerned there has been no difficulty. I think it was mentioned here the other night that complaints have been made in respect to the water supply, sewerage and drainage of that area. It is a rare thing for the State Water Supply Department to make mistakes. It works to plans. As this was a Commonwealth job, plans had to be supplied by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is calling for tenders for the buildings; we have nothing to do with them, but the water supply, sewerage and drainage were installed according to plans. I have made inquiries from Mr. Dumas, the Director of Works, and can assure members that the work has been done according to plans. There is nothing whatever wrong with it. Some alterations may

be required to the buildings, but it is incorrect to say that the work has not been properly executed.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The outside critic always seems to know more about the job than does the person who is responsible for it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. When I first heard the statement I did not offer any remarks, but referred to the man in charge, who told me that the work was completed without delay as far as the State was concerned. It may be some comfort to members to know that when the Commonwealth has deputed the State to do any work, it has been properly carried out. The first work we did for the Commonwealth was the erection of the camps at Northam. These were completed within a month.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The job on the Esplanade is a wonderful one.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Among the jobs were the military roads I have mentioned, including the East-West road and water supplies. All the camps, including the aerodromes and landing grounds, have had water supply, sewerage and drainage installed. It must be borne in mind that each of these camps is in that respect tantamount to a town. We have not merely offered to co-operate but, in every case in which our assistance in regard to various works has been sought, the programme has been expeditiously and effectively carried out. It is very fortunate that in these times the Commonwealth Government, which has no organisation of its own, has been able to take advantage of organisations set up by the State. The Main Roads Department is a very effective organisation, having efficient engineers and a competent staff and working throughout the whole State. When anything requires to be done there is a ready-made organisation to do it. We have the necessary technical staff that has to be employed in laying out a job. By taking advantage of the State organisation, the Commonwealth has received most effective assistance. I think the same applies to the other States. South Australia is co-operating to the utmost. The complaint here has been that the State departments are doing too much, and that the private contractors have not participated in public works for the Federal Government to the extent they desire. We have, however, co-operated to the utmost and the cost of supervision has

been reduced. We are actually doing the work at cost rates, which is as it should be.

In regard to employment, we recently appointed the Secretary to the Premier's Department, Mr. Stitfold, to act as liaison officer in respect to man power. There will be great difficulty in this State in securing sufficient man power for certain work. My colleagues—the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Agriculture in particular—will have something to say on that matter. We have been anxious for some time to have an inventory of those requiring assistance, particularly in the agricultural districts, during the harvesting season. We can release men who are at present on Government works, but there is no guarantee that they would be prepared to undertake agricultural work or that they would be capable of doing it. I understand that good wages are offered those capable of assisting to take off the harvest, wages quite commensurate with those paid in other industries. But what is required are men who can do the job, farmers' sons and others who are used to the work, and they are mostly in camp. Man-power organisations have been set up and Mr. Stitfold recently attended a conference in the Eastern States.

If the harvest is to be taken off not only in this State, but also in the other States, some of the men in camp will have to be released. That, of course, is a matter for the Military Department; it is a matter of policy. We have taken an inventory of the men employed by us, but it is difficult to persuade those who have farming knowledge to admit the fact. They generally describe themselves as labourers. Even if we stopped works and threw several hundreds of men out of employment, there would be no guarantee that from that pool suitable men, capable of assisting at harvesting, would be obtained. Consequently it seems to my colleagues and myself that if men able to do the work are to be secured they must be released from the camps. The matter is one for the Commonwealth Government, to which representations are being made through the various departments. As I have said, an organisation has been established and we have an inventory, such as it is, of those we now employ. The numbers have considerably decreased during the last few months.

For the purpose of town planning an amount of £1,750 has been provided. It is well that in these times we should remind

ourselves of the reason for the establishment of a board and the appointment of the Town Planning Commissioner. The Town Planning and Development Act was passed in 1928 and proclaimed in November, 1929. It has thus been in operation for 12 years. During that time the board has dealt with 4,650 subdivisions which have resulted in some 3,800 street corners being truncated at no cost to the Crown or the local authorities, and 410 acres of land have been acquired for parks, schools, and water supply reservoirs, at no cost to the Government, including 2½ miles of frontage to the Swan River at Attadale. That land was made available through the efforts of the Town Planning Commissioner.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I thought you were going to say the Murray River.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; it is something to have obtained 2½ miles of water frontage to the Swan River.

Hon. N. Keenan: Who gave it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That would be portion of the T. M. Burke estate. It is in respect of the cutting up of large estates that the work of the Town Planning Commissioner has been of so much value. He has to approve of subdivisions of large areas and there have been quite a number in the metropolitan area including that at Wembley. He has assisted in subdivisions and in other ways. Under the Act it can be demanded that roads shall be built through subdivided estates and that proper reservations should be made for public purposes. I believe the Commissioner has insisted that 10 acres shall be reserved for school grounds on certain large estates. There was a large subdivision in the Wembley district and not one acre was reserved for public purposes. That was before the coming of the Town Planning Commissioner. Since then land has had to be bought for school and recreation reserves.

Although the Town Planning Commissioner arrived too late in Western Australia, it is just as well for members to know that he has not been idle and that his appointment has been to the advantage, not only of the city, but also of the suburbs and country towns. He has drawn up very fine plans zoning the Geraldton area, and I think Bunbury, Albany and Collic have also been assisted. All country towns that have

asked for his assistance have had made available to them his specialised knowledge. Some credit is due to him and to the board.

Hon. N. Keenan: It is non-existent!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Do not make any mistake about that! We have on the board men like Mr. Clare, the Principal Architect. He is not merely a figure-head. He has a knowledge of town planning and his special knowledge of architecture is useful. Mr. Steffanoni, who is also on the board, is a very capable man and his knowledge as a valuer has been very advantageous. We owe a debt of gratitude to those who, in the first instance, acted in an honorary capacity. I have not with me information as to the personnel of the original board. I think that Mr. Klem was one of the architects who assisted and Mr. Boas also rendered assistance. Much honorary work was done.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That was the Metropolitan Town Planning Board.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. That was the genesis of the larger movement. When we think of what took place in Perth before we had the advantage of the services of the Town Planning Board and the Commissioner we can appreciate the value of their work. People desired to get the utmost out of their land. There were master builders whose one idea was to see how much they could erect on any given piece of land. In the circumstances we needed a town planner who was an idealist and a vigorous propagandist, if the Act was to be effective.

The value of the land acquired through the operations of the Act has paid for the cost of administration by the board many times over, the annual cost being between £1,300 and £1,700. Four local authorities in the metropolitan area have gazetted town planning schemes, and five have used their powers under the Act to zone their districts by bylaw. The Perth City Council has zoned the City of Perth. So far the action has not the force of law but the Council has acted and defined areas for residences, businesses, factories and so on. There is the utmost necessity for watching local authorities. Some time ago a select committee was appointed by this House and later converted into a Royal Commission, and amongst other things it had to deal

with the question of slums. I will not specify the district where slums in the metropolitan area can be found, but this generation is not responsible for them.

We shall be responsible, however, if we allow slum conditions to arise in first-class suburbs like Wembley. That is a district where the residents build one house on one block, but there is creeping into it—and I think there has been considerable trouble over it—the practice of putting two houses on a 50ft. block. The Town Planning Commissioner would not allow an area to be subdivided and two houses built on one block, but the City Council regulations, while prohibiting semi-detached houses, permit what are called duplex houses and flats. When the Royal Commission's report was being discussed, I pointed out that on the City Council's building committee there was an architect and a master builder. There are now an architect and two master builders. The result is that these subdivisions are approved and then passed to the council. The council does its business expeditiously and adopts the report, and that is how buildings are erected. I have heard that members of the council say that they finish their business in record time. It simply means that if subdivisions were proposed and the suggestions were actually examined by the council, the position would be entirely different from that which would be created by their being simply scrutinised by a committee of two master builders and an architect. Someone has to do this work. Those who have observed must have watched what is happening, and we must see to it that slum conditions do not creep into the newer districts. It is all very well to talk about overcoming the difficulty regarding slum areas in Perth. Decidedly that will be difficult and will give rise to a lot of talk, but we should prevent such a state of affairs in the newer areas. Considering that the City of Perth possesses some 3,000 acres of endowment land between Wembley Park and the coast, there can be no need for the overcrowding of houses in that part.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You must provide cheap transport for people once you encourage them to take up residence away from the city.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: As to that, I remind the Committee that in these days the transport difficulty has been largely

overcome. Those who reside four miles out from the centre of the city can be transported to their offices in 20 minutes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But at a cost of 4d. a time, it represents a lot to a man who is on wages.

The Premier: The fare is cheaper early in the morning.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let us not make excuses for these hungry people who seek to build two or more houses on a block where one should be erected.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I am not trying to do that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no need for that in Perth.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I am simply pointing out that if people are to reside in the outer areas, they must have adequate and cheap forms of transport.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is too much congestion in the Eastern States and if we want to keep our people healthy, the living conditions adequate and our standards maintained, we shall have to give more attention to this problem. As a Parliament and as a Government we must keep in view the necessity for adequate town planning not only in the City of Perth but in other districts throughout the State. I mention this fact because at present there seems to be a disposition to favour the erection of flats. We had a good deal to say about that phase some time back.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And we were not very successful.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so, and at present they are being erected here, there and everywhere. We should give particular consideration to the position in Perth and have a proper town planning scheme for the metropolitan area. Such a plan has already been adopted by some of the smaller municipalities and road boards, and the scheme is being applied in certain areas. That is as it should be. The erection of flats promiscuously here, there and everywhere should not be allowed. The same consideration applies regarding shops and factories. Now Perth is tending to become industrialised there is more than ever need for the adoption of adequate town planning methods. The city should be zoned. Already the department has approved of a set of model by-laws that would

be appropriate in that regard. They could be applied not only in the city but throughout the whole of the metropolitan area.

By means of building by-laws, plus a zoning scheme, there is no reason why Perth should not develop along the lines of a modern city. For that reason I am directing particular attention to this phase and directing the minds of members pointedly to it, because the time has arrived when we must take steps to ensure the adoption of decent town planning conditions so as to circumvent the activities of men hungry to get the utmost out of blocks they may purchase. At present there is a zoning system, and I have assisted the city authorities when objections have been raised to buildings in any given area. When such appeals have come before me, I have in every instance stood behind the City Council and other local authorities. I have maintained the standard as high as those authorities have desired. So it should be in connection with a zoning scheme. Although it has not the force of law at present, we have insisted that its provisions shall be observed in every instance where the opportunity has arisen.

There is no reason why such a system should not be put into operation as a scheme under the Town Planning Act or under by-laws. In those circumstances, it would have the force of law and there would not then be the excuse that local authorities did not possess power to refuse applications from people who were endeavouring, by means of various building schemes, to spoil suburbs that in the past were models of what residential areas should be. They are now being spoilt by the erection of what I may class as second-grade tenement houses, and by the construction of two or more houses on one block. They may be described as duplex or semi-detached buildings, but they are really tenements—and so are flats. Personally I do not know how families can really live in some of the flats that have been constructed.

Mr. McLarty: They cannot—not decently!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. There is the one I complained of in Stirling-street, which is in the City Council's area. We see eight flats on one block with only one laundry. Members will recollect that a regulation affecting that position was disallowed in this House on the motion of the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Now they have no laundry at all?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There must now be one laundry to five flats or any part thereof. Formerly, it was one laundry to ten flats. Fancy that, in a civilised country where we have more land for residential purposes than has any other country in the world! That is what the City of Perth has allowed.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Were new regulations provided?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We fixed that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You could not initiate that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, but we have dealt with it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You used persuasive eloquence.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That was not the position. I claim that the Town Planning Commissioner and the Town Planning Board have done much to improve housing conditions. They have worked in with the Workers' Homes Board, and members will appreciate that practically all the dwellings constructed by the Workers' Homes Board have been erected on quarter-acre blocks. Thus the Workers' Homes Board is endeavouring to maintain a high standard. That should be made quite clear and should have considerable effect in the future development of the metropolitan area. I do not refer only to the city area but to the surrounding districts.

There are about 20 local authorities operating within the greater metropolitan area and all those bodies can secure the advantage of the advice and assistance of the Town Planning Commissioner and his board. I desire to mention that fact specifically at this juncture because, although I am prepared to give full credit to local governing authorities for what they do in an honorary capacity, it does not follow that they should have a free hand. Local governing bodies are not in the same category as Parliament. No matter what a Government may be, there is always an alert Opposition watching what is done and criticising when necessary. With local governing authorities the position is different. Most of them refer matters to committees. The members are very friendly and do not like to criticise each other. Recently I noticed that the members of the finance committee of a local

governing authority were offended because their report and recommendations were criticised by other members of that body. Evidently they are more sensitive than are members of Parliament! In my opinion a live Opposition such as we have in Parliament is much more liable to keep the activities of a Government along right lines compared with the conditions operating in local governing circles.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is when there is a good Opposition, such as you have now.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not desire to reflect upon the work of local governing authorities, but I maintain that in some instances arbitrary powers have been exercised in connection with buildings—which means that we must devote more attention to that phase than we have in the past. I wish to pay a tribute to the Town Clerk of Perth. I look upon him as one of the most practical town planners with whom I have been associated. He has done a lot for the City of Perth, and I am always prepared to give credit to those who have done good work. At the same time we must watch the position. As the Town Planning Act is on the statute-book and we have the advantage of a Town Planning Commissioner and a Town Planning Board, we must accept the responsibility of seeing that local authorities maintain the standard contemplated by our legislation. I have pleasure in submitting the Estimates of my department.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [9.11]: The Public Works Department is one in which we are all interested. It represents the barometer of governmental activities, and indicates to us what money has been spent during the year. I wish the Minister would give us some insight regarding what he considers will be the activities of the department in the future. I know he has done so to some extent. The fact remains that when peace reigns once more and thousands of our men return to us, they will have to be employed. Despite the fact that we have heard a good deal about the promised new order, the establishment of secondary industries and other activities that will serve to provide some employment, I believe that upon the Public Works Department will be thrown the responsibility of finding employment for a great many men. I do not think there is any doubt that many

of the returned soldiers will look to the Government for employment. That being so, now is the time for us to commence planning ahead and deciding which public works should be undertaken in the future. Under existing circumstances, I rather think that those who clamour most and make the greatest noise sometimes secure the undertaking of works that should not be given priority from the standpoint of relative urgency.

To overcome that difficulty I think now is the time to take stock of the position and determine what public works should be undertaken in the future. It will be remembered that in the depth of the depression unemployment was rife. That did not apply to Western Australia alone. It affected every other State of the Commonwealth. But we had to rush around looking for work that could be done; men had to be employed immediately. In my opinion, had we then had some thought-out scheme many of the works put in hand could have been carried out far more economically. I have in mind one great work that was carried out, and had it been known at the time that eventually a big dam was to be put across a river not so much money would have been spent on that work as was actually spent.

In respect of works that will be needed, there is no doubt that we can go on with road construction. This country cannot have too many roads, especially in the settled areas. Many districts are in urgent need of attention, particularly as regards feeder roads. Again, there are further irrigation works that could be put in hand. Consideration must be given to the question where the most suitable country is to be found for works of that class.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Some costly drains are being made in your district!

Mr. McLARTY: I can reply to that interjection. I was glad to see that the director of Public Works recently visited the Kimberleys with a view to ascertaining whether irrigation works could be started there. Undoubtedly we must give attention to that part of Western Australia. If work of this nature can be carried out there, it will be something for us to look forward to as an aid in planning ahead. We are fortunate in having a man like our present Director of Public Works, who has extensive experience in regard to providing water storage. We have not exhausted all the drainage

works that we can advantageously construct, in spite of the remark of the Leader of the Opposition that some of those works have been expensive. I have no doubt that the money being spent on drainage will prove reproductive. The prosperity of the South-West and its growth are due largely to the area of good country that has been drained there, and well drained too.

Apart from water for irrigation purposes, the time is opportune to give consideration to conservation of water for some of our country towns. I do not wish to trespass on the ground of the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) and his Great Southern colleagues, but I may say that in my opinion they would be justified at this juncture in pushing to the utmost for consideration of water supplies to those towns. I understand that a dam site has been practically settled at North Dandalup. I am aware that it would cost a great deal of money to store sufficient water there to supply Great Southern towns. Despite that fact there is strong justification for the work. It is not a work which can be carried out in a short time; probably it would have to be spread over a number of years. It would be a wise provision and would assist us in planning ahead. I know the Minister has had surveys made and has collected a great deal of information in regard to the proposed scheme. In the past we have been told that money is not available for the work, the cost being too great; but as I said when speaking here some time ago, I do not think there will be the same difficulty in obtaining money for these works in the future as there has been in the past. I believe that money will become available for great public works, especially when employment has to be found for men returning from the front.

Another scheme which I would suggest as a practical one is sewerage in some of the largest of our towns. Such sewerage systems would be reproductive, and therefore should receive consideration. These are just a few suggestions I have to offer in regard to future planning. I believe them to be well worthy of consideration. Great public works have been started in certain districts, and unquestionably many of our country towns have grown enormously; but I fear that provision has not been made for extension of public utilities. Population in country towns increases many times over,

but nothing is done, for instance, in regard to increased school accommodation. If the Government wishes to encourage growth of population in certain centres Ministers must plan ahead, and see that provision is made for the instalment of public utilities generally. The Minister for Public Works will shortly visit the Waroona district to open a new irrigation scheme. Though the growth of Waroona during the last few years has been phenomenal, the town has only two small schoolrooms, totally inadequate for the needs of the district. Let me instance Harvey.

The Minister for Lands: And Manjimup and Brunswick.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, Harvey and other towns are making great progress. In view of that fact I ask the Government to give special consideration to the provision of adequate school accommodation in all of them. The position of Harvey is also acute in that respect.

I agree with what the Minister said in regard to the crowding of houses in certain areas, and the building of flats in the city. If legislation were introduced to prevent the construction of flats I would willingly support it. We know that flat life is not a healthy life, and not in the best interests of either families or the country. Yet we permit it to go on. Many a man comes into his flat and knows there is nothing for him to do when he has finished his work, whereas if he had a home of his own he would find something to interest him on the place. The same remarks apply largely to the wife and children. We should discourage the further building of flats. The Minister is right when he says that the Town Planning Commissioner is doing good work in preventing houses on newly cut-up estates from being crowded together, in view of the vast areas of land available in the metropolitan area where people could live in peaceful surroundings and with an area of land attached to their homes. Now I come to the question of unemployment.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Unemployment or employment?

Mr. McLARTY: Whichever the hon. member likes!

The Minister for Works: The position is completely reversed now. Employers are looking for men.

Mr. McLARTY: A man need not now rush the Employment Department to look for

work. There is a demand for workers throughout the country. It does appear to me, however, that farmers will have greater difficulty in obtaining labour in future than they have had in the past. It is not to be wondered at. Men on Government works command better wages and have shorter hours, and in some cases have better conditions generally. But the fact has to be faced that the man on the land must have labour, whatever happens. It may be necessary, in order to encourage men to occupy themselves in rural pursuits, to offer some subsidy. In the depths of the depression this was done, and it was a wise move. But we cannot expect men to go to the rural areas if they are to receive lower wages. If a man is prepared to take on farm work he should be rewarded for it. If we fail to get farm labour, there must be a great drop in the national income; and that is something Western Australia cannot afford. In the future we may have to consider some scheme for encouraging men to go in for rural activities in order that production shall be maintained. I again express the hope that the Government will take into consideration, in relation to this department, the policy of planning ahead.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.29]: I desire to express my appreciation of the work done by this department in the completion of the linked main connecting the Canning Dam with the Mundaring Reservoir. I believe it is the Minister's intention at the earliest opportunity to provide for greater capacity of water storage in that reservoir. It is disquieting to know that 4,000,000 gallons of water are running to waste daily. I realise, however, that it is impossible to do everything immediately. I acknowledge that very considerable progress has already been made. The matter of water supply for Kalamunda is necessarily always present with me. It is a never-ceasing subject of conversation in that district, and I am hopeful that, now a better season has come about, it will be possible for the supply to be provided. I understand the department has given serious thought to this.

I wish also to express appreciation for the work done by those on sustenance in connection with the needs of local authorities. Although everyone regrets that there should be men on sustenance, it is important that their efforts should be used to the best advantage both for themselves

and for the community generally. It is pleasing to know that the need for this, and other work, has diminished and has, in fact, almost disappeared. I was interested to learn of the East-West road, or I should say the West-East road. I recall the efforts made by that great pioneer of inland travelling, Mr. P. W. Armstrong, who travelled from Western Australia through Central Australia, or at least over the Nullabor Plains, and through that famous pass to which reference has been made, on to Sydney, on more than one occasion. I know that the construction of this road has been one of the objects of Mr. Armstrong's life work. I have no doubt that although the "Daily News" was ultimately successful in securing the approval of the Federal authorities, the initial pioneering work of Mr. P. W. Armstrong was responsible for a good deal of the interest taken.

I listened to the statement of the Minister dealing with the road. It is advisable, in the highest degree, that it should traverse the area along the constructed road running parallel with the railway line until Coolgardie is reached, and then travel the main road to Norseman and on to the East. The decision to establish an experimental farm in the Kimberleys is one which will be generally approved. I have noted some of the statements made on this subject, and the comparatively small amount provided is well justified. More money will, I hope, be found if necessary. Mr. Kim Durrack has taken a leading part in respect to this. I believe the result will justify this action.

Reference has been made to the Town Planner. Of all our officers, not one has done better work in the comparatively short time he has been in charge of the work of town planning. He is exceedingly enthusiastic and capable. We may, as a State, well be grateful that an earlier Government made the appointment and that his work has been so well carried on. Speaking as a member of a local authority, I say no difficulty has been experienced in getting the best advice from Mr. Davidson. His work has been very helpful, and I am sure that the State in many ways is indebted to him. Good progress is being made. It is gratifying to note the atmosphere created by the Minister when set-

ting out the work done by the Public Works Department. It is a good department and its officers, together with officers of Government departments generally, are prepared to give every assistance in their power.

MR. BERRY (Irwin-Moore) [9.35]: I congratulate the Minister upon what I am sure he feels, and I feel, is a successful year. The members of my electorate will be delighted to get that very excellent dam which is shown in the report—the unfinished Dalwallinu Dam. It has since been completed. The report refers to the Dalwallinu tank as an enlargement to 1,000,000 gallons. That was a most excellent piece of work. The Minister, and all concerned with it, have the full appreciation of the people for whom the service was inaugurated. The time will come, and I hope very shortly, when the Minister will see fit to extend that service so that the whole town may be piped and the full advantage of the scheme distributed equally among the residents of Dalwallinu. Many people are at the moment pressing for that. They have been told that the water in the dam, from the standpoint of domestic consumption, is contaminated by virtue of the fact that a certain amount of drainage comes from the town of Dalwallinu. That is not an insuperable obstacle. All that is necessary is to arrange the drainage in such a manner that the flood waters of the town do not enter the dam.

The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) spoke about the need for consideration to be given to post-war planning, about which we hear so much, and planning which would embrace public works throughout the country. He has my full agreement. Western Australia bristles with public works needs, but it does not, unfortunately, bristle with the same amount of money. When the war is over I feel that the department will give full consideration to the suggestion made, one with which I am in full agreement. I pass on to the question of labour. Perhaps one of the most serious questions raised tonight is: How are we going to take the harvest off this year, by whom, and in what period of time? It may be that wheat surpluses are embarrassing at this moment, but I do not think the embarrassment will be maintained. Already starvation is looming in Europe, I

feel, and I am sure the Minister concerned feels, that labour should be found to take off the crop. As many young fellows from the farms have gone into the army, to a great extent in the home defence forces, surely the home defence army could find the time—a matter of a few weeks—to provide men, under N.C.O.'s, to harvest the crop and put it safely away. That could be done. I hope both Ministers, because there are two concerned in the question, will state in replying whether such a scheme could be put into operation. My suggestion is embryonic and it is up to those in authority to complete it. In any other country where such a matter was absolutely essential, the army would be used to gather in the crop.

Another avenue which could be explored is one which has already been mentioned—the use of the Italian people in the internment camp at Harvey or wherever else they may be. A certain amount of labour alleviation could probably be found there and quite safe alleviation. People could be drawn from internment camps who could be controlled on the farms and would do no damage. Oddly enough I received a letter tonight on this subject from a man in my electorate. He says—

Like most farmers I am in difficulties regarding labour and can foresee complications galore before long in harvesting my crop. I noticed in the "West Australian" a report regarding the possibilities of internees being released for harvest hands. (The report referred to was in the issue of the 15th inst.) During September last I applied to the authorities for the release of an Italian who had been employed by me previously and had proved particularly capable at the work. In my application I stated that I was willing to enter into any bond for his safekeeping while in my care, but their reply stated that as no recommendation had been made for his release, it could not be granted.

He goes on to dilate on that point and finishes up by asking me if I can do anything in this connection and attaches a statement which says—

An Italian internee, Augusta Lamberti, late of Meekatharra, now believed to be at Harvey camp, application for release of above man will be made by a farmer of Miling for harvest and general farm work. Will guarantee his safekeeping and will pay 50s. a week and keep for the harvest.

He then signs it. It might perhaps be a flea-bite to a rat, but such a scheme would help. I do not think there would be any trouble

with these people if we could have them released for farm work.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What does he mean by "No order for release?"

Mr. BERRY: He apparently applied for release.

Hon. C. G. Latham: An internee cannot be released without authority.

Mr. BERRY: If a man is required from an internment camp direct representation has to be made to the authorities concerned. I understand the recommendation is sent to Canberra, and then comes back after some tribunal adjudicates and decides whether the particular internee shall be released. This man, being a farmer, could not apply. Some men could safely be released. I know of one who I am prepared to take myself to assist on my farm. We must have our crop harvested, and for that we must have labour. The difficulties of getting labour in the ordinary market were referred to by the Minister as almost insuperable. Soldiers in the army could be released to get off the crop. If the matter were taken seriously the crop would be cleaned up in a few weeks, and stored in case it is wanted—and it will be wanted. I have heard prophecies all round this Chamber and I make my own now, that in three months every grain of food grown in Australia will be wanted in Europe to feed somebody.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think it is wanted now if we could get it there.

Mr. BERRY: Yes, but that is getting me on to the subject of ships, about which I am not allowed to talk in this debate. The report of the Public Works Department deals with various works performed on vessels at Fremantle. The dredge "Sir William Matthews" which has been lying idle in Fremantle harbour since the completion of the work at Geraldton in 1936 has been maintained as far as possible. I do not intend to go into the story of what could be done with that vessel. I was under the impression that she had been sold and had gone to the Eastern States. A story was current in the city that we failed to convert it into a trading vessel as we could have done, and that Eastern States people representing the Commonwealth Government came here and made the usual Commonwealth grab.

Mr. Hill: Are you sure that dredge is not with the Melbourne Harbour Trust?

Mr. BERRY: I hope the Minister will give us the facts. A little while ago a wooden ship at Fremantle, 53 ft. long, broke away or dragged her anchors during a gale and went ashore on the beach at South Fremantle. The bowsprit sticks out almost over the road; at any rate one gets the impression that it is nearly on the road. The owner of the vessel was a poor man and he wanted her pulled off.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member intend to couple that with the Vote of the Public Works Department?

Mr. BERRY: The point that worried me was that if vessels such as dredges and barges were being handled, perhaps it was the duty of the department to get that wooden vessel afloat again because she was valuable. Since she went ashore, there have been something like seven heavy gales and she could not be got off now unimpaired. Thus a public utility has been allowed to break up. She is there today worth a matter of a few pounds, whereas a few months ago a hull like hers would have been worth £2,200. Perhaps the Minister can tell us the true story of that vessel and why she was neglected.

The Minister for Works: Who is the owner?

Mr. BERRY: An Englishman, I believe, named Hope. The vessel has been lost at a time when ships are very important. A friend of his came to me about the matter, but I could not do anything. I have wondered, however, why a valuable ship should be left there, especially as we have such a virile department. I have a great respect for the department and for all associated with it. Since I have been in Parliament I have received the greatest courtesy from the officials, and they have done quite a lot for my electorate, though naturally there is much more to be done. Still, I hold to the opinion that that vessel should have been pulled off and that the Works Department might have undertaken the job.

The report says that the department has been responsible for the supervision of all contracts for workers' homes outside the metropolitan area, and that, for the year 1939-40, 50 contracts for erections, alterations and/or repairs were supervised, and 78 inspections for valuations and reports were carried out by district architects and supervisors. On that matter we had a lot of discussion the other night. I should like

to be informed—although I already know—how many of those particular homes were erected for farmers. With these expressions, I conclude with the remark that I congratulate the department on the excellent work done last year.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [9.51]: I support the plea of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) that we should plan for public works when the opportunity arises because the staffs of the departments will be more or less slack for the next few months or even more, and should be used to plan out future works, though not for the purpose of putting them in hand now, because there is no necessity whatever to do so. Public works were resorted to, and properly so, to deal with unemployment, but once the position is completely reversed, as it is today, no necessity arises for that action. On the other hand it will be necessary to have all possible public works that can be usefully contemplated ready to be put into operation when our men return from the war. It is not from the point of view of putting public works in hand now that I support the member for Murray-Wellington, but from the point of view that there is a great demand for labour, a demand on the farms so great that it is constituting a grave danger to the harvest, as the member for Guildford-Midland, who is connected with farming, knows.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Hear, hear!

HON. N. KEENAN: There is no necessity for public works today unless some urgent need exists for them. Therefore I suggest that this is the time to use the staffs, which necessarily will be more or less idle, to plan out public works that may be put in hand a year or even more than a year hence. We must not flatter ourselves that this war is likely to come to an end in any sudden manner or at any time earlier possibly than two years. After that we shall want public works ready planned and to some extent, if possible, with the financial side planned also. That is my view and I hope the Minister will thoroughly understand that I am not supporting the member for Murray-Wellington in any demands to proceed at once or even in the near future with public works. On the contrary, I think that every atom of public works that can possibly be postponed should be kept in hand and left ready for the men when they return from the war.

A few words now on the subject of unemployment, on which the Minister congratulated himself and his Government and gave some statistics. The unfortunate part about statistics is that we must know the history of the times in order to appreciate their value. From 1930 to 1933 we were suffering a most acute depression and there was a large number of unemployed not only in this State, but in every State of Australia. The prices for the products of our industries were at bedrock, and our only salvation lay in the fact that we had a good Government. The only means by which the State survived a crisis of the most extraordinary character was the fact that there was in power a Government prepared to face facts and carry out the policy that those facts required.

Mr. Cross: Yes, made the workers work harder, longer hours for less wages.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are throwing bouquets now.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have been compelled to do so because of the interruption by a member for a metropolitan constituency.

The Minister for Works: I think I congratulated the country.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No, the Minister congratulated himself.

The Minister for Works: No, the country.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It was the gradual but marked rise that began in 1933 that saved the situation. It is not generally recognised that in 1935-36 there was a boom in Australia. It was one of those extraordinary recuperations that occur in Australia. In 1935, owing to favourable foreign markets being available to our primary products, we recovered to an enormous extent. The national income of Australia rose by £100,000,000 on the figures for 1932-33, at which time they had fallen, speaking from memory, to £300,000,000 from close on £700,000,000 in 1929. Members will appreciate what a colossal fall it was in the value of the production of Australia's industries. Then there was a gradual rise until in 1939 the total was £500,000,000 or £600,000,000.

Although the figure of the era of great prosperity in 1929 was not reached, it was approximated, and of course that relieved the unemployment position. In the Eastern

States where secondary industries had been established for a considerable period and with great success, the boom of 1935 reduced unemployment in trades having trade unions to some figure almost commensurate with that of 1929, though there were many outside the trade unions who were not readily accounted for. There was still in our State a considerable number, though a dwindling number of unemployed, and then came the war and a demand for man-power both for the army, for the services that supply the army and for all the other utilities until the position had changed to that which the Minister indicated where employers cannot get labour sufficient to meet demands. Therefore this is not the time to discuss the carrying out of any public works whatever merely on the ground of providing employment. In fact, the very opposite is the case. This also is not a time to take credit for what has been produced, in the first instance by the marvellous recovery that Australia made from 1934 to 1937; and, secondly, by the awful disaster the world has suffered since 1939.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is always well to have these things on record. The facts stated by the Minister are now record.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It has been suggested that some steps should be taken of a crucial character to supply labour for farms. I quite agree with the suggestion, because I know from personal information that in some cases crops are almost certain to be lost for want of labour. On one particular farm, as I have been told by the father of the young man who is the owner, two farm hands left and joined the A.I.F. We do not for a moment blame them for having done so; on the contrary, we are very proud that they should have done so. But the farmer was then left with one old man. This year the farmer has what he has not had for some years past—a marvellous crop. He estimates it at 20 bushels to the acre. At the present moment he is left with no labour at all. His father told me that he tried to cut portion of the crop for hay. He put his wife on the tractor, but she was unable to control it sufficiently. She then tried to work the reaper and binder, but found she could not manage it. As a result of her efforts to assist her husband in his farming operations, she

has broken down completely and has had to be sent to Perth and is an inmate of a hospital. She is the daughter of a well known citizen of Perth. That is a concrete case of a farmer who is at the moment in such a position as to be unable to save his crop.

Mr. Berry: His is not an isolated case, either.

Hon. N. KEENAN: That case points to the necessity, which I know is realised by the Minister for Lands, for obtaining labour for this purpose. It is, I am afraid, useless to suggest that that labour should be obtained by releasing part of the forces that are in training.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is no need for it.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is useless to attempt it, because the Commonwealth just now, in the present position of affairs and having regard to the threatening tone of the Japanese, would be extremely foolish to allow our armed forces, who have been trained and may be called upon at any moment to act in the defence of Australia, to be sent away from the training camps. So the only possible means that seem to me to be open are to get selected internees, men with good characters, which should be obtained from persons in whom confidence is placed.

Mr. Berry: How many internees would be trained to do this work?

Hon. N. KEENAN: The only difficulty I know of is to find what internees may be released.

The Minister for Lands: It is claimed there are very few.

Hon. N. KEENAN: We must recognise the claim put forward by the military authorities that it would be dangerous to release some of the internees. What happened when war was declared was that aliens not naturalised were assumed to be dangerous. That had to be so, because although some might not be dangerous others would be, and so all of them were placed in internment camps. The young farmer whom I mentioned knows of two internees in respect of whom he is prepared to enter into a bond that they will return to the internment camp if they are released for the purpose of working for him until his harvest has been garnered. He is also prepared to enter into a proper bond to pay them the right wages for the work they will do and

to observe all proper conditions. I think it unwise to resort to the policy of 1930 and 1931, when grants were made to farmers to supplement the wages paid by them to their employees. That would be a difficult scheme to finance and still more difficult to work.

The Minister for Lands: You would not know where your responsibility began.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No. If the Minister for Lands can—I am sure he can—bring my suggestion to fruition, undoubtedly the position of the farmers would be to a large extent relieved. The internees could be released, not on some military report, but on a police report or upon the reports of their neighbours or those who knew them best. As I suggest, the employer could enter into a bond to report the presence of the internees on his land, and immediately to report their absence should they leave it. The employer could also undertake that the internees would return to the internment camp at the end of a certain period of time. That is the only possibility and if it is not rigorously pursued there is every reason to believe that the harvest which Nature has most generously bestowed on us will be lost.

There is a small matter upon which I would like the Minister to give the Committee information. Regarding the link between the Mundaring Weir and the Canning pipeline, am I correct in assuming that the Mundaring Weir is considerably higher in altitude than is the Canning pipeline?

The Minister for Works: The water gravitates to Greenmount and then has to be pumped back.

Hon. N. KEENAN: From the Canning pipeline?

The Minister for Works: Yes.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Is it correct to say that the Mundaring Weir, or some considerable portion of it, is higher in altitude than is the Canning pipeline?

The Minister for Works: The water would not gravitate back.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I desire to ascertain whether it is sufficiently high to dam all the excess water now overflowing at Mundaring. Could that excess water be used instead of the water from the Canning Dam? There is ample room in the Canning Dam for the storage of the excess water from Mundaring. Could not the excess water from Mundaring be used through this connecting line to supply Perth, instead of

Perth being supplied from the Canning Dam? We should secure all the water possible in the Canning Dam. Although this year we have been fortunate in our water conservation, we have no right to assume that we shall always be so fortunate. Every million gallons saved and stored is so much precaution against future dry years.

I wish to say a few words on the subject of town planning, but first I desire to make it clear that I am strongly in favour of control being exercised to prevent the abuse which has been mentioned during the debate by some members and by the Minister. I refer to the erection of houses close together in a country such as ours, where land—except in the centre of the city and near it—is procurable at reasonable prices. Some of the results mentioned by the Minister were pure and simple gifts by private individuals. For instance, the Attadale land was given by T. M. Burke Proprietary Limited. It was a gift for various reasons, one being because of the establishment of a large school in the neighbourhood of which Mr. Burke was the patron, or which he had some reason for supporting. Further, there was the construction of roads, which made the land easy to settle, and consequently the remainder was more likely to be sold. Actually, the acreage was not obtained by the Town Planning Commissioner or by the board. By the way, I have not yet heard of that board having had anything to do with the matter.

I have had on many occasions to approach the Town Planning Commissioner on behalf of public bodies and private owners of land, and have always received a decision, sometimes one that was difficult to accept. I have, however, never yet heard of a board meeting, and in all my conversations with the Town Planning Commissioner I have never heard him mention anybody but "I." I do not think anyone else has, either. It has always been "I think so-and-so," and "I did this and that." That is unfortunately one of the reasons why there is a certain amount of friction. The Town Planning Commissioner is a man with very good ideas, as the Minister pointed out, but with a most unhappy manner. He has, in many instances, with intent to do good and serve the local authorities, irritated them beyond bounds; and all over nothing. When the whole matter has been thrashed out it has been found to be some ridiculous difference of opinion.

On the whole, however, there is no doubt that to have had an authority to control the local governing bodies, and prevent abuses that have been so clearly set out in the course of this short debate, has been of great advantage, and I think that the cost, £1,600 a year—that was the figure, I believe—is low.

The Minister for Works: That is for the whole office.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Town Planning Commissioner receives £700 a year.

Hon. N. KEENAN: On one occasion I think he had a "chucker-out." There was a police court case, was there not? I have no doubt that was a very good idea in respect of an office that might be visited by unwanted people. The work is done cheaply considering the amount of good that is effected and the bad that is prevented. Though I have no personal admiration for the gentleman, and although I do not entirely agree with his choice of ridiculous manners, he has to a large extent done a good job.

The Minister for Works: Most artists are sometimes temperamental.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I would like him to be temperamental when I am not present. There remains one matter on which I wish to speak and which I regret to say is parochial. However, I have not so far dealt with any matter that comes under that head. I refer to the school at Nedlands. The Public Works Department carries out instructions it receives from the Education Department but there is a kind of vicious circle. One is told by the Education Department, "We would do this work. We thoroughly approve of it and think it is quite necessary; but the Public Works Department has not the money." Then the Public Works Department falls back on the other side and says, "Oh, yes, it is a work we carry out when we get instructions from the Education Department."

Mr. J. Hegney: What about the other phase, when the Public Works Department says, "Consult the Treasury?"

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is the last straw! When they are driven from the front and second lines, as the Minister for Mines would say, they fall back on the pill boxes. In my part of the world the population consists almost entirely of young people, of newly married folk. Every year there has been a large increase in the school

population. When I first became member for Nedlands there was one Nedlands school in existence and that was overcrowded. While the number on the electoral roll has increased to something like 13,500—and I suppose we can assume that there are at least as many children, or more—there is still only one main school. True, there are two infant schools, one at Holly-wood and the other at Dalkeith, but that is all that has been done in that district where the increase in population has been about 700 or 800 per cent. At the one main school that does exist, and where children have to be taught on the verandahs in the most inclement, wintry weather because there is no room for them in the school buildings, there are most dangerous playgrounds. It is true that there has been considerable improvement.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Effected by the local people, too!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Before that improvement was made the condition of the grounds was unbelievable. It looked at though military works had been carried out and trenches had been dug.

Mr. J. Hegney: You are not alone in that respect.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It constituted the gravest of grave dangers.

Mr. Cross: I would like to change yours for some of mine.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not propose to change anything with the hon. member, not even my playground. I assure the Minister that if in consequence of public works being temporarily shelved, he has any spare money, there could be no better way to spend it than by erecting a large school or increasing the present classroom accommodation at the existing school at Nedlands. But the best plan would be to erect another building. At present nothing more has been done than the addition of a few extra wings to the school. That was supposed to be good enough, and was good enough 10 years ago, for a population one-tenth of the present one. I compliment the Minister on the way his estimates are presented. In a very clear and reasonably concise manner he has told us the story of his department in the last 12 months and, to a limited extent, has prophesied his expenditure for the next 12 months.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [10.20]: The hour is late and I shall only be a few minutes. I would like to say that I have always received every courtesy from the officers of the Minister's department—although they do not always carry out the things one wishes. Some time ago I sent a letter requesting that the Axon-street bridge be put into a proper state of repair. It appeared in the Press for a day or two afterwards that this was to be done. So far nothing has been done.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Plans have been prepared, I suppose.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The bridge is in a disgraceful condition. Twelve feet of fencing is down on the boundary and children have been found in the cutting playing on the railway line. Since then one of the railings of the bridge has broken away and any child sitting on the bridge to see the trains going through the cutting could easily fall 20ft. or 30ft. Probably many children do watch the trains as there is a school just opposite. It is extremely dangerous. I would like the Minister, in his reply, to say whether these repairs will be attended to shortly, or not.

The Minister mentioned that there were very few unemployed. At Marquis-street about 30 or 40 men a week are dealt with, and I have been informed that the five or six employees there really have nothing to do. If Marquis-street were closed down for the duration of the war and Francis-street used the Government might be saved some expenditure. The Minister spoke of the profits from excess water. Although one likes to feel that the departments are, at least, not losing money, one does not like to feel they are making money. I suggest, therefore, that the people who have street gardens have their water rates reduced so that they can keep the streets of their suburbs in good order. At present it is very expensive for a householder to keep a garden in nice condition.

Members have spoken about the new order to prevail when our men return. I would like the Minister to keep in mind something that would be of great importance, namely, the widening of the Hay-street subway from Rokeby-road to Jolimont, and the continuation of Hay-street to the beach. That could be done, although the road would have to go through some endowment lands. I daresay the Minister could get over that.

Mr. W. Hegney: Where would it meet the beach?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Between Wembley and Swanbourne. It would run parallel to Cambridge-street, approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south, and would be an excellent thing in every way. It is to be hoped there will never be any war in Australia, but if necessary it would be very helpful for the defence of Perth.

Dealing with schools, I wish to ask the Minister if it is possible to get a few sinks. That may, perhaps, sound absurd to some members, but in some schools soup centres have lately been started. We have supplied, from the Thomas-street school alone, 900 to 1,000 children a day. We have been making the soup there and taking it to five or six other schools in the district. The women have to carry the water from the kitchen a full 60 yards, and it is all voluntary labour. I have had an estimate taken out. It would cost the Government only about £20 to £30 to put in a sink so that the water could be carried away. This is a very excellent work and I feel sure the Minister will treat it sympathetically. The same thing occurs at the Victoria Park school where a soup centre has been started. It is hoped to supply the surrounding schools. They, too, want a sink. The playgrounds at the Bagot-road school are also in a very bad condition. The member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) has mentioned the Nedlands school, but I assure him that if he saw the Subiaco school he would have great sympathy for the children attending there. I am not asking for money, but for sand and gravel. I do not know whether I am in order in dealing with abattoirs. The matter was mentioned by the Minister. Am I in order?

The CHAIRMAN: That does not come under the Public Works Department.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I will deal with it under another Vote. In conclusion I wish to thank the members of the Minister's department for the courtesy extended me during the year.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [10.28]: I wish to say something on the Pingelly water scheme. After the remarks of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) if I do not do so, the people in my electorate may think I was not here tonight. I hope the Minister will not allow the good start of last year to lapse. A certain amount of in-

vestigation and experimental work has been carried out, and the people are wondering what is going to happen. They have not seen anything done recently. I was also struck by the remarks of the member for Murray-Wellington concerning the overflow from Mundaring. There are 50,000,000 gallons a day going over the wall.

The Minister for Works: No, 4,000,000!

Mr. SEWARD: I read the other day that it was 50,000,000 gallons. Even 4,000,000 gallons a day would give us our annual supply in a week.

The Minister for Works: It was just trickling over this morning.

Mr. SEWARD: It was more rapid when I read of it. The weir is not going to overflow very long this year, but in normal years an enormous amount of water might be deflected to the Great Southern towns. Last year a certain amount of work in the way of boring for water in the Great Southern districts was carried out, about £1,600 having been spent. I would be the last to speak disparagingly of such work, but I cannot help drawing the Minister's attention to the fact that after the expenditure of the £1,600 he did not get one bore with decent water. Thus there seems to be something wrong. I have received complaints from some of the road boards. Seemingly a bore was put down 100 ft., and then it was said to have struck rock. The bore was pulled up and taken somewhere else, once more put down 100 ft., only to strike rock again. For work of that kind the payment should be by results. If the Government man cannot strike anything but rock, he should stand aside for men who are prepared to back their knowledge of water divining or other means of finding water.

The Minister for Works: It would take a diamond drill to pierce that rock.

Mr. SEWARD: I am not suggesting that it should be pierced. In one locality I met a farmer who guaranteed to get water there, though perhaps not exactly where the Government man had put down his bore. This farmer was prepared to accept payment according to results.

I support the remarks of other members on the problem of farm labour. A man telephoned me from the country yesterday. He has 1,000 acres of crop ripening and there will be nobody but himself on the farm after next Saturday. He has had a man working for him for two years, but the other day the man went to his employer and said,

"There are no pictures in this town and so I am going. I will be leaving you on Saturday." The farmer has an excellent tractor, but he cannot put any but a proved man on it, and he is coming to Perth hoping to get a man to do the work. It is of no use our talking about the matter; we shall have to get down to some workable scheme to enable this crop to be taken off. It will not wait for us; it is ripening quickly.

In many places the crop has ripened beyond the hay-cutting stage, and once it is fully ripe, must be taken off. To take it off, we must have labour. If necessary, a conference should be called so that those interested might give whatever assistance they can towards formulating a scheme. The shearing has not been finished. In many instances in my district, not more than 60 per cent. of the shearing has been done. The grass is beginning to seed, and it is not easy to get shearing done once the wool becomes full of grass seeds; and there is also the resultant deterioration in the value of the wool. I have had exemptions granted for boys, but to get these exemptions takes a fortnight, while in some cases the exemptions have not been granted. Something more expeditious is required to make the requisite labour available. I hope that a conference will be arranged or that something will be done in the next few days to enable us to take off the crop and get the shearing done.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [10.34]: Now that the Public Works Department is experiencing a lull, certain officers should be set aside to draw up a plan for post-war work. Much work will be required, and many men will need to be placed in employment soon after the war is over. The department will be faced with new problems, and I am of opinion that a start should be made now with the necessary preparations. If we wait until the war is over before we begin planning, we shall be faced with numbers of men coming back into industry without any arrangements having been made to receive them. Even the uninitiated know that to make surveys and draw up plans, a considerable amount of time is required.

As soon as the war is over and petrol restrictions are removed, there will be a tremendous increase in the volume of motor traffic on our roads. The three main exits from the city are too narrow. The Minister

announced as far back as two years ago that the Albany-road through Victoria Park to Armadale, the main road to Midland Junction and Canning-highway would be widened. Something will have to be done in this direction. A new causeway is needed and it is imperative that this job be done fairly soon. The Minister is aware that another department has reserved half-a-dozen trolley buses for a South Perth service. It will not be long before they are available, and I think that the provision of a new causeway and the question of transport on the south side of the river will be found to be linked problems.

If the information I have is correct—and it should be—nearly half of the total cost of putting in a trolley bus service to South Perth will be absorbed by the section from Barrack-street to the eastern end of the Causeway, and a large part will have to be expended on the Causeway for the simple reason that the present poles on the Causeway will not carry any more wires. New poles of steel will have to be provided. Some of the piles in the Causeway have been down 80 or 90 years and are worn out. Although the Causeway was widened some years ago, it has outlived its usefulness and is too narrow to meet present-day needs. Immediately the war is over, the department should be prepared to put in hand the construction of a new causeway. It will certainly be needed to carry the increased traffic, because I am satisfied that when the petrol restrictions are lifted, the volume of traffic will be three times as great as it was before the war.

Mr. J. Hegney: People will not be able to buy cars after the war is over.

Mr. CROSS: That problem can be met when it arises. The changes will be great.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Buy without money?

Mr. J. Hegney: They will be so impoverished that they will not be able to buy cars.

Mr. CROSS: Every British Prime Minister during the last 300 or 400 years has said, after a war, that no money would be available for public works. That cry has rung down the ages; even our own Premiers and Ministers have taken up the cry. Yet they find the money. After this war, the requisite finance for public works will have to be found. If I am any judge of affairs,

I am convinced that the people of the British Empire will not willingly revert to the conditions that prevailed before the war. They will demand changes and improvements, and they will get them or they will alter the existing system. The Minister should appoint a committee to prepare a programme of works now. Various works are required, including possibly irrigation schemes and water supplies in the country.

I should like the Minister to say when a start will be made to widen the Albany road. With the increase of traffic that must follow the conclusion of the war, that thoroughfare will become extremely dangerous. Other roads, too, need widening, as I have pointed out, but I am particularly interested in the Albany road. When the Minister attends the Canning Show next week he will probably be asked about this matter. I would like the Minister also to tell us what arrangements his department is making as the result of conferences in regard to the lighting-up of the Canning Bridge. The bridge is a good job, but it remains unfinished for the simple reason that it is not lit up. A promise was made that something would be done, but so far, no arrangement has been made to provide any lights.

The member for Nedlands had something to say about school playgrounds in his district. He said he would not change them. Certainly he would not change them for some of the school playgrounds in my electorate. During last winter the seats in the playground of the Victoria Park school were surrounded by six inches of mud and water; a ferry boat was needed to approach them. Similar conditions have obtained in the Kensington and South Perth school-grounds. The department's policy being to acquire the cheapest land, it naturally gets land situated in the lowest area. How such land is to be drained I do not know. Actually the area I refer to is lower than the surrounding country. The Kent-street school has a magnificent site, and will be all right when the sanitary depot has been removed. The Perth sanitary depot also should be removed. That will represent a very considerable improvement. I sincerely hope that, although there is a war on, the Minister for Works will see that a certain amount is provided for minimum require-

quirements in the way of repairs and attention to school buildings and school grounds. The two grounds I have mentioned would not cost a large amount for essential repairs, essential even during war time in order to preserve State assets.

I thank the Minister for what he has done in my district, but I wish to point out again that the requests with reference to school grounds are not very great. In my opinion a long-distance plan should be established in that regard. For years past it has been the practice to put down a bit of gravel over the sands, and only on rare occasions is the gravel covered with bitumen. When a school ground is made it should be protected from the weather by a cover of bitumen. I know that just now bitumen is hard to obtain, but I know of no reason why the product "Coltex" should not be used. The worst grounds should be done first, independently of where they may be situated. In the case of the Forrest-street school in South Perth, the quantity of gravel put into the ground to be washed away every winter would have paid for covering with "Coltex" about three times over. A portion of the ground was done last year, and that has proved highly satisfactory; but the whole lot should have been done, because the gravel that was put down last year was washed away during this winter. The same remarks apply to the ground of the Victoria Park school. Gravel is put down and then is washed away, and the necessary repairs are not effected.

MR. KELLY (Yilgarn - Coolgardie) [10.46]: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. KELLY: It has been highly interesting to me to listen for the first time to the debate on Estimates. Certainly any member who has recently entered this Chamber would highly appreciate having the activities of the Public Works Department presented to him in such a clear and concise manner. Even a layman can then appreciate the great difficulty of conducting a department of such immense size. I was gratified to have the Minister's assurance regarding the East-West road, which latterly has been the subject of a good deal of controversy. I am indeed pleased that there is no present

intention to divert the road from its natural course, which is from Norseman through to Coolgardie and down the main line.

The Minister mentioned that towards the end of the year he would be releasing 393 men employed on the East-West road. Some few weeks ago I mentioned in this Chamber two highly urgent jobs worthy of the Minister's consideration. Indeed, at that time I understood that both works were being considered. I would like the Minister in replying, to make some reference to the matter of diverting those 393 men on to the Broad Arrow-Ora Banda road and then on to the Southern Cross-Evanston road. Those are two highly important works, and extremely urgent. I would be happy to know that they were soon to be put in hand. Another subject dealt with by the Minister was the Town Planning Commissioner and the Town Planning Board. These references were pleasing, and I can assure the Minister that the feeling of myself and many other members is that much more than the £1,750 that has been budgeted for this excellent department should be expended upon it.

The Minister also mentioned that local governing bodies are prone to oppose what he considers to be important town planning measures. The opposition that exists in this Chamber does not prevail at road board discussions. As a past member of three or four road boards, I assure the Minister I cannot subscribe to his opinion that sufficient consideration is not given by road boards to vital matters affecting town planning. I have sat on many boards and have always found the discussion to be of a lively and informative character; it was not merely a matter of members sitting around a table and agreeing in a friendly way to whatever suggestions were brought forward. Possibly I have misunderstood the Minister in this respect, as I am certain he realises that such discussions are at all times conducted in the best interests of the districts concerned. Another important matter was mentioned tonight by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty). It is in regard to post-war planning. I was particularly interested to hear him speak of the possibilities of our vast North-West, more especially at this time than at any other time. The almost totally unprotected state of its shores has been brought forcibly home to us of late. Many districts in the

North-West are capable of intense development.

I congratulate the Minister and his department upon the excellent improvement that has occurred in the goldfields water scheme. The improvement is most noticeable to the travelling public because of the diminishing waste of the water. During the last two or three years the Government has expended a huge sum of money on the maintenance of the pipeline, with the result that waste has practically been eliminated, and consequently more water has been made available for consumption throughout the goldfields districts. The increased consumption of water must be of benefit to the department, and many of the repair gangs required in the past are not now needed. I desire to bring under the notice of the Minister one of the mines in my electorate, the Yellowdine Gold Development at Mt. Palmer. This mine is worthy of better treatment. A pipeline was laid to Mt. Palmer for this one mine alone, and I compliment the Government on its far-sighted policy in enabling the mine to get very early into production. The original outlay on the pipeline was, I understand, about £17,000. The mine is a big consumer of water and up to a few months ago was charged 8s. per thousand gallons. During the course of the mine's operations the department has received by way of revenue for water supplied the sum of £36,000, and thus the cost of the line has been repaid to the department more than twice over.

A few months ago the department decided to reduce the exorbitant charge of 8s. per thousand gallons to 7s. per thousand gallons. The 1s. reduction was a big relief to the mine, but it is inconsistent with the capital cost and maintenance of the line. I have not been approached by the company to make this plea, but I do so from my own observations and in the interests of the welfare of the district. At present, the Yellowdine Gold Development is working on a head value of 8.2 dwt. per ton. The high cost of production has forced the company to mine only such ore as will return a reasonable profit on outlay. I do not desire to make the assertion that excessive water charges are the only factor preventing the mine from lowering its head value. What I do say, however, is that, if it were possible to grant the mine some further relief in that direction, it would mean that the life of the

mine would be considerably extended. If by reducing its costs the company could profitably treat 2, 3 and 4 dwt. dirt, naturally the life of the mine would be prolonged and that would mean not only a great improvement to the district but to the State in general. I commend to the Minister's attention the possibility of reducing still further the water charges to that mine.

Mr. Cross: The mine converts most of its water now.

Mr. KELLY: I do not think the hon. member understands the position.

Mr. Cross: I do. I was there when the new plant was erected.

Mr. KELLY: There is another matter to which I wish to direct attention. I refer to one of the smaller mines in the district which is unfortunately situated many miles from the pipe line. Because it happens to be on a spur line, or within 14 miles of the pipe line extension and not on the general main, that mine is asked to pay 10s. per thousand gallons notwithstanding the fact that at present it has to meet a very heavy cost in respect to carriage of water. Other mines that are more or less closely situated to the pipe line are able to get their water at the same rate without extra charge. This particular mine is having a very hard struggle to pull through and I would like the Minister to give particular attention to the matter. I do not think there is any need to mention the name of the mine here, but I would be pleased to supply details. If relief could be given it would be appreciated by the company, and would be the means of helping to extend the life of the mine.

The Minister for Works: The water supply estimates have not yet been introduced. They are far down the list. I am not replying to water supply matters tonight.

Mr. KELLY: Perhaps I had better leave the balance of my remarks on that subject to a later date. The Minister spoke about the goldfields water supply and estimated certain figures—

The Minister for Works: I made one passing reference to the cost. The water supply estimates will be dealt with later.

Mr. KELLY: The goldfields water supply is what interests me, and it was because of the Minister's reference to the goldfields water supply that I spoke.

The Minister for Works: You will not be deprived of an opportunity to refer to the matter later.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may proceed.

The Minister for Works: I do not propose to reply to remarks about water supply. The hon. member can talk all night if he likes.

Mr. KELLY: I will not speak a second time. Regarding the water supply at Mt. Hampton,—

The Premier: You should confine your remarks to the Estimates under discussion.

Mr. KELLY: Very well; I bow to the Premier's ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not the Premier's ruling that matters, but mine.

Mr. KELLY: I have not much else to say except with regard to water supply matters. I am sorry I have not the opportunity to proceed. As the hour is late perhaps it is just as well.

Mr. J. Hegney: They cannot suppress you.

Mr. KELLY: I will have an opportunity to speak at a later stage, I suppose. I conclude by complimenting the Minister on the manner in which he introduced the Estimates.

MR. HILL (Albany) [11.4]: I must admit I listened with considerable envy to the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) when he told us of the progress made in the South-West. In my electorate the Government has at last, after many years of agitation, arranged for a survey of the big drainage scheme for the Young-Torbay area. I also listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks made about the necessity for post-war development. I assure members that in the southern end of the State we are fully alive to that need. If members will draw a line on the map midway between Fremantle and Albany, and out to the rabbit-proof fence, they will find in that area a second Victoria. I believe that section contains the largest area of undeveloped land capable of settlement to be found anywhere in the temperate zones of the world. A few weeks ago a conference representative of all local governing bodies south of Wagin was held at Narrogin, and there was a unanimous desire to have that end of the State embraced in a post-war development scheme. Very

energetic committees were formed and another meeting is to be held at Tambellup on Saturday.

One notable feature of the first conference was the unanimous desire of delegates for the development of Albany as their port. I have with me a copy of a return tabled a few days ago giving the expenditure on the ports of Western Australia since the Collier Government took office in 1924. These are the figures: Fremantle harbour works, £1,236,009; Geraldton harbour works, £794,709; Bunbury, £318,166; Albany, £131; Esperance jetty, £70,113; other, £637,413. There is a footnote that the paltry £131 expended on the Albany harbour works came out of the Railway Department vote. Surely the Premier was not serious last Thursday when he attempted to justify that neglect by saying that Nature had done so much for Albany there was no need for the Government to do any more. Sydney has one of the most wonderful harbours in the world. Over £12,000,000 was spent to make it fit for shipping. At Geelong there is another wonderful harbour. A sum of £300,000 was spent before it was possible to get into that harbour and another £400,000 in making it fit for shipping. In Adelaide £2,000,000 was spent on dredging alone.

The CHAIRMAN: That money did not come out of the vote we are discussing.

Mr. HILL: This matter comes under the department of the Minister controlling harbours and rivers. On behalf of the people of the Great Southern and those who represent various local governing bodies, and who will meet at Tambellup on Saturday, I ask the Minister whether he will explain why Albany has been so neglected and why he has refused every request to provide modern facilities at that port. Also is it the intention of the present Government to continue this policy of neglect? I am speaking on behalf of a very large part of the State and consider my question is entitled to an answer.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [11.8]: There are several matters I wish to discuss.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You have a few schools in your electorate, have you not?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: There are 13 schools in the Middle Swan electorate. I desire to support the remarks made by the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) in regard to the

need for widening of the Great Eastern Highway. That has been on the stocks for a considerable time. Over two years ago, with the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), I made representation to the department for the widening of that highway. From time to time I receive correspondence as to when it is proposed to begin the widening. It was supposed to have been done at a convenient time. Time has passed on and nothing has been done. There is a good deal of traffic on that highway, particularly in the Belmont district, and the road should be widened. There is need for a new subway at Rivervale. For a number of years I have advocated the construction of such a subway where the lights are at present installed. There is no doubt that work should be undertaken.

Some years ago in conjunction with the Belmont Park Road Board and the Perth City Council we had a deputation to the then Minister urging that a subway should be constructed at that crossing. Since then lights have been installed. Nevertheless the time has arrived when a subway should be built at that crossing, because it is dangerous, notwithstanding the lights. It is used by people from every part of the State. The time has arrived when a subway should be installed at the Greenmount crossing, over which the eastern goldfields train, and other trains, pass. Electric warning bells have been installed there, but subways should be built for the convenience of the travelling public.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about Rivervale?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I have already mentioned Rivervale.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: These crossings affect people like farmers and others from the country not conversant with the lighting system, and who do not know the danger until they approach right to the crossing. Many accidents have occurred. It is a work which should be done when the opportunity presents itself. Some months ago I introduced a deputation to the Minister urging that the Guildford road should be straightened at Watley Siding. I know the men engaged on main roads work are today engaged on works of a defence character, but I urge that at the earliest oppor-

tunity the work be undertaken, because there is as great a flow of traffic on that road as on the main road. A census has been taken at Bassendean, and at the Helena River bridge. The census from time to time has disclosed that the flow of traffic along the Guildford-road is equal to that on the main highway. It is also at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles shorter from Midland Junction to Perth than along the main highway. That is a considerable saving to motorists. I know the department has examined the matter. I understand a survey has taken place, and the matter has been reported upon. I hope the work will be proceeded with at the earliest opportunity.

The question of the improvement to school grounds has arisen tonight, and I have listened to the member for Nedlands and others on this subject. Always the plea is that these things cannot be tackled because no money is available. I do not desire to be parochial. I know what happens in my territory applies with equal force in other electorates. Something ought to be done. A greater amount should be made available for improvements to school grounds. The member for Nedlands has beaten me inasmuch as he has secured the bitumenising of a playground in his area, although I remember introducing a deputation to him when he was Minister for Education. I am still endeavouring to get the playground, then mentioned to him, covered with a bitumen surface—or at least portion of it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You would have been all right if there had not been a change of Ministry.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I am doubtful of that. Nothing was done then, because no funds were available.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We were really short then.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I know a good deal of cheeseparing, cutting and pruning takes place. I have made representations to the Education Department, which knows the work is necessary. It may be on the urgent list, but the department refers the matter to the Works Department, an official of which, in turn, confers with a Treasury officer, and they decide whether the playground at Bayswater should be done, or one at Nedlands, or somewhere else. The vote is insufficient, and should be considerably increased so that improvements could be effected to play-

grounds. A good deal of work has been done to the Bayswater school ground, but it is most unfortunate that the school is situated where it is. Some money has been spent on improving the ground, but much remains to be done before a proper playground is available to the children.

Over 500 children attend the school, and the front portion is positively dangerous. It is rutted and without proper drainage. There is no surface gravel on it; it has all been washed into the street. A scheme has been drawn up for its proper drainage but has not yet been undertaken. A big portion of the ground was levelled, and surfaced some time ago with gravel but, as the schoolmaster said, if it is not bound together with bitumen, the gravel will be washed away. Every Minister for Education during the past 12 years has visited that school and seen the ground, from the member for Nedlands, and the late Mr. T. A. L. Davy, to the present Minister for Works, the Minister for Agriculture, and also the Premier when he was Minister for Education. I have had every Director of Education there, and the Town Planning Commissioner, and have introduced numerous deputations. Yet today the playground is not finished. Representations are being made to me as to what can be done; or when improvement can be expected. Only today or yesterday I received a letter from the Bayswater Road Board stating—

The board will be pleased to be advised when improvements to the grounds in front of the school facing Murray-street are to be put in hand as, in the opinion of the board, this particular portion of the grounds is in a disgraceful state. The portion referred to is badly drained and, incidentally, the flood waters flow uncontrolled on to the board's footpaths and roads, depositing a lot of gravel and sand and debris which has to be continually cleaned up. The board feels that you should draw the Minister's specific attention to this matter.

That letter is dated the 17th October, and, like other members, from time to time I bring the matter to the notice of the department. The departmental officers say they know the improvements should be carried out, and will be done when funds are available. Because only £3,000 is allocated to school grounds in the metropolitan area and two or three receive the benefit of the amount, the rest are left over to some other time, and so it goes on. The time is long past when the job of improving the Bayswater school grounds should be tackled.

There are five schools on the other side of the river—the Belmont side. I have visited them and know what is required. The Minister for Education has visited schools both at Belmont and Rivervale, and he, too, knows what is necessary. Unfortunately, nothing is done.

A new classroom is required at Belmont, and has been promised. It is supposed to be on the list of urgent works. The one in which the children are educated today is a condemned building. It is bad on the children's eyesight. From the point of view of the schoolmaster the building was condemned years ago, but it is still used. The Rivervale school, at which 250 children attend, is fast increasing in numbers, and the playground again is deplorable. The attention of the Minister for Education has been drawn to it, and the Director of Education has visited the school. The lavatory conditions are dreadful. To support my statements I shall quote the report of the Belmont Park health inspector, who was dealing with criticisms forwarded by citizens to the local authority—

Rivervale school, 253 pupils, eight pan services. Lavatories—(1) Screen to boys' lavatories is falling down; (2) the tar has worn off the flashing of the urinal wall. The urinal wall is badly ventilated and smelly.

Girls—(1) Screen is falling down; (2) doors to lavatories require repairing; (3) trap doors require repairing and should be made to hang properly. No lavatory accommodation is made for the teachers.

I have, from time to time, received numerous complaints that the sanitary conveniences are very smelly. This is quite true. In my opinion this unsatisfactory state of affairs is due not to neglect on the part of either the sanitary contractor or the school cleaner, but to the antiquated design and general condition of the structures.

There is no proper flushing system at the boys' urinal. The girls' lavatories are only 20 ft. from a handy food shop.

This school is in the midst of a closely populated area. No deodorants are supplied by the Health Department as previously mentioned. (1) A number of weatherboards require replacing on the shelter sheds; (2) the soakwell at the south-west corner of the main building is not functioning; (3) there are a number of holes and ruts on the gravel portion of the playground due to the action of storm-water. These are, in my opinion, dangerous. The playground should, I suggest, be regravelled and asphalted.

I have visited that school on numerous occasions.

Mr. Cross: Why did not the health inspector condemn the building?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: From time to time the reports of the health inspector have been sent to the Education Department. Dealing with the Redcliffe school, the inspector reported—

Redcliffe: Sanitary conveniences (4 services) (60 pupils). Boys—clean and in good condition. At this school deodorant is supplied by the headmaster at his own expense.

Girls' lavatories—The pans do not fit properly under the seats; to remedy this the concrete floors could be chipped away approximately 2 ins. in front of the pans.

Shelter sheds—The weatherboards on the shelter sheds are in a bad state of repair and some are missing.

Stormwater drainage—The downpipes from the school porch discharge under the verandah floor. The other downpipes, except where connected to the rain-water tank, terminate at the foot of the wall at the south-east corner of the school.

The natural drainage of the school grounds on the south side is towards the school. The combined effect of stormwater from the ground and the roof has been to make a distinct hollow on the south and east sides of the school which forms a pond during the winter months, with the result that the damp can be noticed creeping up the south wall of the classroom during the winter.

There is also a distinct hollow at the side and back of the shelter sheds in which another pond forms during the winter.

I consider that the department should be asked to have these depressions filled in and provision made to carry all storm water to the street drain.

The soak for waste water from the wash basins does not function. At present the waste water is led to a hole filled with brickbats. I consider a properly constructed soak-well is required.

A few weeks ago I visited the Redcliffe school and saw the conditions for myself. It is an excellent brick building erected many years ago, but two corners of it were under water and the damp had risen above the damp course and halfway up the walls. From the point of view of preserving the building, that should not be tolerated. For nearly two years the attention of the department has been drawn to this state of affairs and men have been sent out to effect repairs, but they have remained only a few days and then have been taken away. A ladder was lost by the department, and only after a period of nine months was it found at the Redcliffe school. At one end of the school the waste-pipe, instead of draining away from the building, leaks right under it. The water was supposed to drain into

the soak-well, but there is no proper soak-well at all. These conditions should be rectified. The complaints have frequently been brought under the notice of the authorities and the time is long overdue for putting repairs in hand. The expenditure entailed would not be great. The building will certainly deteriorate on account of the dampness due to the lack of drainage facilities. Damp has definitely affected the building. The matter has been brought to the notice of the departmental officials and they are acquainted with the facts.

Belmont School: 120 pupils; six pan services. The below-mentioned defects require attention at this school:—

To the original building—(1) There are numerous cracks in the plaster; (2) the front door step and a window frame on the south wall are affected by white ants; (3) the wash troughs in the kitchen, at which milk bottles, etc., are cleaned, are not fitted with wastepipes. The water discharges across the kitchen floor and thence into an apparently untrapped and unventilated soak-well.

In my opinion the building is unfitted for use as a school.

Main school building—The south-east corner of the wall is badly affected by damp. Some weatherboards on the porch and shelter attached to the school require renewing.

Shelter shed and wood shed—The floor and weatherboards require attention. Rainwater guttering and downpipes require repairing.

Lavatories—(1) The flashing of the urinal is in bad condition; (2) one hinged lid is missing. The trap doors require repairing. One seat in girls' lavatory white-ant eaten; (3) the door at entrance to both lavatories has been pulled off and broken; (4) the corner post at entrance to girls' lavatories requires removing; (5) the trap of the urinal requires a grating.

The lavatories are approximately 36 ft. from the south-east corner of the main school building and when the prevailing south and east winds are blowing in the summer, I can well believe that the windows on that side of the school have to be kept shut.

The position is, of course, aggravated by the fact that no deodorants are supplied by the department. This is rather an anomaly, when private individuals and businesses can be prosecuted for failing to supply deodorants.

I have visited these schools and, in company with the headmasters, inspected the conditions for myself and I say that the existing sanitary arrangements should no longer be tolerated. I urge the Government to take steps immediately to improve the hygienic conditions in the interests of the children.

Then I come to the South Belmont school, which has 58 pupils and four sanitary services.

(1) The railings round the ramp leading to the infants' classroom are broken and badly need repairing.

(2) The chimney of the fireplace in the infants' classroom smokes badly.

(3) Stormwater downpipes need repairing. Lavatories:—

(1) Cement floors are required under the pans in the boys' privies.

(2) Trap doors and seats lids require overhauling.

(3) Cement wall of urinal requires repairs.

(4) There is no lavatory accommodation for teachers.

The Rivervale school I have already dealt with. The general observations are—

The calomine and paint work at all schools is for the most part shabby and dirty. This particularly applies to the old building at the Belmont school, at which, owing to the partially enclosed verandah on the south side, the lighting is indifferent even on bright days, and to the infants' classroom at the South Belmont school.

Educationalists attach great importance to children at the most impressionable period of their lives being in bright and cheerful classrooms. I do not think that any of the Belmont schools could be said to comply with these conditions.

As regards septic tanks. The ground of all five schools is suitable for the installation of septic tanks. Scheme water is laid on to all the schools.

To save expense, the existing lavatories should be converted or reconstructed for use with septic tanks as is frequently done when private premises are connected to the deep sewerage scheme.

Those are the conditions of the schools, and that officer, at the request of the Belmont Park Road Board, knowing that complaints had been made from time to time without attracting the notice of the department, eventually submitted this report to the members of his board. They in turn sent it to me to ventilate in the proper place. I have taken the opportunity tonight to bring the situation under the Minister's notice. Some of these matters come within Revenue Estimates and not within Loan Estimates. Proper repairs and maintenance, for instance, come within the Estimates now under consideration. The Minister should instruct an officer to give attention to these matters. In many cases the school buildings deteriorate for lack of attention. At the Rivervale and Redcliffe schools the conditions are such as to be definitely unhealthy

for the children. We ought to have healthy surroundings for our children. Cheeseparings in connection with repairs and so forth is most undesirable. If we spent less on roads and more on schools it would be of advantage to the rising generation. If, as I presume, the difficulty is to find money for these purposes, we must face the re-allocation of some of our funds so that the necessary work in this connection can be carried out.

It is to the rising generation we have to look. Those boys and girls are to fill the waste taking place today as a result of the war. It is the interests of those young girls and boys we have to safeguard. Even though the hour is late, I owe a duty to the people I represent to voice their opinions before the responsible Minister. The position at Bayswater I have put before Ministers ad nauseam. I am tired of driving Ministers out to Bayswater to let them see what should be done. I hope the Minister will instruct an officer to visit the place and ascertain what is required. I feel sure that the officer will endorse all I have said to-night. Having seen the position for myself, I know this report to be true. I thank members for their patient hearing.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn—in reply) [11.36]: I shall follow the advice of the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) and be very concise in replying. First of all, as regards planning for the future, I assure members that is being done. Works are being planned, and when opportunity offers a full reply will be furnished as to the many important works already being planned and surveyed. I am glad so much interest is taken in a subject of so much importance.

As regards water supplies, I promise that when the Water Supply Estimates are introduced there will be opportunity to discuss goldfields water supplies and country water supplies and metropolitan water supplies, and also drainage works in various districts. The man-power question, which is highly important, will be effectively dealt with by my colleague the Minister for Agriculture when he introduces his Estimates. Special attention was called by me to town planning. There is a Town Planning Board comprising the Principal Architect, Mr. Steffanoni, and

Mr. Hawkins, who is a master builder. The Town Planning Commissioner, needless to say, is not an office boy, but exercises the powers he has under the Act. The work being done by these gentlemen, each section of it highly important in its sphere, is most valuable. I assure members that the Town Planning Board is not a mere board in name but a board in reality.

As regards employment, I have not quoted figures showing what this Government has done in contrast with previous Governments. I have shown, though, and I think justifiably, that the 1933 number of unemployed, namely 13,000, has now been reduced to a matter of about 2,000. I meant to congratulate the country on having rid itself of the unemployment problem for the time being. In regard to schools and playgrounds, I fully recognise from my own experience that this is a matter of vital interest. I may mention that it is not exactly my affair. First of all, members can discuss the subject when the Education Estimates are before the Chamber. If the Treasurer will make money available for the purpose, and if the Education Department will send along its list of works in priority of urgency, that is how those works will be carried out by the Public Works Department. The Education Department has discretion as to which works are to be proceeded with first, and they will be carried out as funds become available.

With respect to roads and bridges, the Axon-street bridge has been mentioned. There seems to be an impression that this bridge is the business of the Main Roads Department rather than of the greater metropolitan area. The Main Roads Department is not responsible for the Axon-street bridge but, because no other authority would undertake to do the work, we had to volunteer to reconstruct the bridge. We are not dealing with the repairs of bridges, and I warn members that that is not the business of the Main Roads Department. Have we not local authorities? The City of Perth alone receives at least £25,000 annually from traffic fees and about £3,000 from the State Transport Board. In one year the council received over £30,000 from those sources. I want to know what the City of Perth and the municipality of Subiaco are doing with respect to the Axon-street bridge. What do they do with their money? The

22½ per cent. of traffic fees collected by the Main Roads Department is spent on the Stirling-highway, the Canning-highway, the Albany-road and the Guildford-road. In passing, I assure the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) that the Albany-road is one of the first works that will be proceeded with immediately bitumen is available.

While on the subject of roads, it has been asked whether the Main Roads Department intends to widen the subway at Subiaco and put a useless road through the bush. I have never heard the Commissioner suggest the formation of that road, nor has it been mentioned by any civic authority, the municipality of Subiaco or the City of Perth. The Main Roads Department does not intend to build a road through territory owned by the Perth City Council over 3,000 acres of land. The department will not build a road through that property; that is a certainty, so the money will have to come from elsewhere.

With regard to the Albany district—the much-neglected Albany district!—if I were to spend money there I would spend it willingly on drainage, which would be a reproductive work. I would favour that. It is one of the works that will be put in the forefront when planning for the future, as it is well justified. As for the port of Albany and the statement that it is neglected, whether the member for Albany knows it or not I can produce letters from the Secretary of the Albany Road Board and also from Hon. H. V. Piesse, a member of the Legislative Council, congratulating the department on the splendid work it has done in the district with respect to roads.

Mr. Hill: That is a Commonwealth scheme.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Who told the hon. member it was a Commonwealth scheme?

Mr. Hill: The Commonwealth is providing most of the money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What money?

Mr. Hill: Commonwealth money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about. Commonwealth! It is main roads money. The roads in the Albany district are in good order. The hon. member was surprised what an excellent job the department made of the Kalgan River bridge after it had been washed away. That work was done in an incredibly short time.

The Albany district is not neglected. A road has been constructed along the coast for 50 miles. As regards the harbour, no sane man will say that one additional boat would come into the Albany harbour even if half a million pounds were spent on it.

Mr. Hill: I have never suggested half a million.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If £100,000 or £50,000 were spent on it, I repeat that no sane man would say that one additional vessel would be attracted to the harbour.

Mr. Hill: Yes, it would.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I said "no sane man."

Mr. Hill: Would not you call Mr. Cumming a sane man?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If more attention was given to developing the hinterland of Albany and less prattle were indulged in about the harbour, it would be better. There is nothing wrong with the harbour, which has facilities for the biggest boats. No vessel is kept away from the Albany harbour because of lack of facilities.

Mr. Hill: What about the wheat boats?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is nothing to prevent the wheat boats from going there.

Mr. Hill: Except lack of facilities for loading wheat. Wheat cannot be loaded there.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government has done its part in providing bulk handling facilities.

Mr. Hill: Has it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. Hill: For Bunbury, £70,000; nothing for Albany.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member will find that the Minister for Agriculture can explain that. He should spend a little time in thinking.

Mr. Hill: I do!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member should do that instead of telling everybody about the harbour until everybody is sick and tired of listening to him.

Mr. Hill: Are they?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. When I was in Albany I was quite concerned because none of the local authorities took the slightest notice of the hon. member.

Mr. Hill: I object to that statement because it is not true. Am I justified in demanding a withdrawal?

The CHAIRMAN: No. The Minister repeated what someone else told him.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Statements were published in the Albany Press—most ridiculous stuff—and sent to me. I have the reputation of being a very patient man, but my patience becomes worn out with this repetition. One thing about it is that it is good for "Hansard." Turn up the speeches delivered by the hon. member 12 months and two years ago, and members will find that the speeches are the same. If it is intended to shake up the Minister for Works, I can assure the hon. member that there are representative people in Albany, on the road board and the municipal council, who do appreciate what has been done for the district by the Public Works Department. The hon. member knows perfectly well that the Albany water supply was allowed to get into a desperate condition. It was taken over by my department and the district now has an adequate supply of good water under our management. I could mention many other matters that have received the department's attention, but the hon. member need not worry. The Government has the district of Albany well at heart and is giving it the same attention as it is bestowing on other districts.

But we do not spend money unnecessarily. Money should be spent in the Albany district upon the hinterland in order to make it more productive, so that something may be grown to export from the Albany harbour. As to the harbour itself, there is no demand for expenditure upon it except by one man, and he does not say how the money should be applied. Albany is fortunate in having a magnificent harbour and the State is perhaps unfortunate because it has to spend millions on other harbours of the State, for instance, Fremantle. It is essential that money should be expended on the Fremantle harbour in order further to develop it. No matter what concessions were made in respect of preferential freights, shippers would still demand that their goods be shipped from Fremantle. If we could attract the shippers to Albany we would do so and we shall try to do so in the future, but that does not rest with the Government. It rests with the shipping interests and these interests prefer to use the port of Fremantle.

Mr. Hill: Because it is equipped and Albany is not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would not make the slightest difference. That is not what keeps the shippers away from Albany. Speaking of Albany, I can assure the hon. member that we have a record in that district as good as in any other district. Albany is not neglected; essential works will be carried out there irrespective of the opinion of the member for the district. I am sorry I have kept you so late, Mr. Chairman, but with regard to the question of water supply raised by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Kelly) I promise him that a full reply will be given to him later on. Certainly the questions he raised are important and will be dealt with when the Water Supply Estimates are under discussion. I know of no work of greater importance than that connected with water supplies, and I think we can well devote an evening later in the session to the question of water supplies, whether they be for the goldfields, the metropolitan area, or country districts.

Item, Repairs and Maintenance, North-West Harbours, etc., £14,000.

Mr. RODOREDA: I am a bit worried about mentioning this matter in view of what the Minister has just said. On the Estimates, £14,000 is provided for repairs to all North-West harbours, jetties, buoys, tramways, rolling stock, etc. Up to the last couple of years, the amount under this heading was £20,000, and that was inadequate. If the Minister and his department pursue this cheeseparing policy, I think they will regret it. In my electorate there are two jetties of a capital value of £200,000, and not enough is spent on maintenance. Consequently, when the first decent willy-willy comes along, both jetties, or whichever one gets hit by the cyclone, will disappear. I want the Minister to realise that once maintenance is neglected, preservation becomes exceedingly difficult.

It is not a matter of getting a number of men and putting them on, because there is little time available, owing to the peculiar circumstances. On account of the rise and fall of the tide, damage is caused about low water mark, and there are only three or four days in each fortnight on which work can be done. This is interfered with by rough weather, a big squall preventing the men from

working. I ask the Minister to give serious attention to this matter. I do not want to have to approach the Government with pleas for a couple more jetties because maintenance has been neglected. Timber has been available but money is required for labour to repair the Point Samson jetty. This work has been delayed for six or eight months to my knowledge. This policy is fatal to the security of the jetties, and requires more than passing attention.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Town Planning, £1,750; Unemployment Relief and State Labour Bureau, £17,600—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.51 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 22nd October, 1911.

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

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Introduced by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt and read a first time.

MOTION—GERALDTON-MOONYOONOOKA BUS SERVICE.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [4.35]:
I move—

That this House disapproves of the action of the State Transport Board in granting a monopoly to D. J. McVea, of Geraldton, to conduct omnibus services between Geraldton and the R.A.A.F. training camp at Moonyoonooka, without first calling tenders for such services, and is of the opinion that such licenses

should be waived and that tenders should be called for same as provided for in Section 10 of the State Transport Co-ordination Act.

Preparatory to presenting my case, I wish to quote from the State Transport Co-ordination Act which governs the State Transport Board. That Act sets out in Part II, Division 2, the powers and duties of the board, and states that, subject to the Act, the board may of its own volition, or under the direction of the Minister shall, give impartial and equitable treatment of all conflicting interests before granting any new license and call tenders and invite premiums in any case where, owing to the importance of the route or area in which the applicant proposes to operate, it considers that the members of the public would be best served by calling tenders. Section 14 provides that the board has power to issue licenses for an omnibus at the rate of not exceeding six per cent. on the gross earnings of the vehicle.

I propose, with the assistance of the files which I have before me, to prove that the board did none of these things. It did not, as I stated in my motion calling for the papers, invite tenders for the service to the aerodrome. It did not avail itself of the section, and require the man to whom it granted the sole right to pay any charge other than the ordinary license fee.

When one rises in Parliament and makes a statement to which the Minister replies in the definite terms the Chief Secretary adopted in virtually contradicting it, one feels entitled to enter upon a defence. If you will permit me, Mr. President. I would like to deal with the statement made by the Chief Secretary on this matter. He said that the Transport Board adopted the view that it would not have been fair to allow anyone else the right to conduct a bus service over the route, unless the party concerned was prepared to accept the responsibility of providing the service to the beach as Mr. McVea had previously done. Having devoted some considerable time to searching these files, I find they do not support the Chief Secretary in that assertion. There is nothing in them about Mr. McVea providing a service to the beach prior to receiving this license.

Further, the Chief Secretary ridiculed the statement made to me by Mr. Waldeck, of Mullewa, that the chairman of the board had told him he would have to refer the matter to Melbourne. I also found that statement