

quite substantial factories in the country. We are up against the fact that the erection of a factory may involve £50,000 worth of masonry.

It is erected to house the machinery of the factory. As a rental proposition it has little value because it is used for the purpose for which it has been designed, and for that only. I am now speaking of factories which cost between £50,000 and £100,000 to build. No factory in this State is assessed on a calculated annual value.

In respect of all such factories the local authorities fall back on the arbitrary provision which stipulates that the capital value of premises shall not be less than 4 per cent. of the total value; whereas in the case of a house a local authority assesses rent at a certain figure which is generally very low, in the case of a factory which cost £1,000, the annual value is assessed at 4 per cent. Such a valuation can prove to be very detrimental.

I have here a few calculations which show the great difficulty confronting factories. In the case of a block of vacant land worth £5,000, under the existing Act and under the Bill, the annual value is 10 per cent. of the total value of £5,000, which is £500. The owner of this vacant block of land pays rates on an annual value of £500. The adjoining block may be of similar dimensions and value, but on it may be erected a factory worth £100,000. The annual value will be 4 per cent. of £100,000 plus £5,000, which is £4,200. Under the proposal in the Bill, if the 4 per cent. assessment is reduced to 1 per cent., the annual value will still be £1,050. So the owner of this lot will pay rates on £1,050, as against the owner of the first block who will pay rates on an annual value of £500. This can be proved to be of great consequence to factories in the metropolitan area and in country districts.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: The Committee has agreed to three amendments to this clause. It has agreed in principle to permit local authorities to rate on either the unimproved value or the annual rental basis. The substance of the amendment before the Chair relates to the machinery clause, the bulk of which is in operation at present under the Municipal Corporations Act. The reason for the postponement of this clause was the desirability of splitting the rating into the general and loan sections. Under this clause it is still provided that general rates and loan rates are to be grouped under one heading, whereas at present there is provision where a local authority is rating under the annual value or the unimproved value, for general and loan rates to be charged.

Since the consideration of this clause, I have raised the point with people closely connected with local authorities. Their opinion is that if the general and loan rates are grouped, as is provided in the

Bill, the notices sent out will be in the form as they appear at present, so that rate-payers will be able to see how much they are charged for general rates, loan rates and health rates. That was the point I had in mind when deciding to split the provision into two parts.

There are other aspects in the clause I would like to consider further; so I ask the Minister to accept the amendment so that the whole picture can be presented, and when we seek information on the provision we will have something to put before the people concerned.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: This difficulty can be overcome by reporting progress, and we can carry on from where we are leaving off. That will save recommitment at a later stage.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 12.11 a.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 17th September, 1957.

### CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Trust funds, investment, local and other .....	1536
Native welfare, chest x-ray tests .....	1536
Goldmining, (a) production and personnel employed, Golden Mile .....	1536
(b) details of production, Golden Mile .....	1536
Railways, (a) average haulage charge .....	1537
(b) unattended booking office, Perth .....	1537
Dredging, bay between William and Barrack-sts. ....	1537
Electricity supplies, change to 50 cycles, West Perth .....	1537
Interstate shipping freights, effect of reduction on exports to Eastern States .....	1537
Government buildings, construction by contract, day labour, etc. ....	1537
Auditor General's report, availability .....	1538
Bills : Fremantle Harbour Trust Act Amendment, 3r. ....	1538
Nurses Registration Act Amendment, 3r., passed .....	1538
King's Park Aquatic Centre, 2r. ....	1538
Associations Incorporation Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1580

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

## QUESTIONS.

### TRUST FUNDS.

#### *Investment, Local and Other.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Treasurer:

(1) How much of the trust funds held by the Treasury is invested in various approved securities and what are those securities?

(2) What investments of trust funds have been made—

- (a) in Western Australia;
- (b) outside Western Australia?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) A sum of £9,205,635 at the 30th June, 1957, which was invested as follows:—

	£
Commonwealth bonds and inscribed stock .....	1,716,769
State Electricity Commission bonds and inscribed stock .....	1,106,063
Bank deposits .....	1,892,284
Municipal and road board debentures .....	2,825,269
Metropolitan Markets Trust debentures .....	92,486
State Housing Commission debentures .....	74,934
'Other States' semi-governmental and local authorities bonds, inscribed stock and debentures .....	1,360,744
Shares in private companies .....	1,392
Bonds, titles and insurance .....	79,776
Cash held by National Debt Commission .....	55,918

(2) (a) £7,844,891, including Commonwealth bonds and inscribed stock.

(b) £1,360,744.

### NATIVE WELFARE.

#### *Chest X-Ray Tests.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

(1) On page 24, under the heading of "Health and Medical Services" of the annual report of the Native Welfare Department for the year ended the 30th June, 1956, it is recorded that of 30 natives who underwent chest x-ray examination, three suspects were found. Have further tests been made for these three suspects and results ascertained?

(2) Will chest x-ray tests of natives continue in Kalgoorlie?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Further x-ray and sputum tests of the three natives were made and proved satisfactory and non-active. Since then, one of the natives, who was over 80, has

died of old age and the other two are being subjected to quarterly tests at Kalgoorlie.

(2) Yes.

### GOLDMINING.

#### *(a) Production and Personnel Employed, Golden Mile.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What was—

- (a) the average quantity of gold ore raised and treated;
- (b) the gold produced therefrom per man employed on the Golden Mile;

during 1955 and 1956?

(2) What is the average number of men reported as being engaged in mining on the Golden Mile for 1955 and also for 1956?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) East Coolgardie District:

(a) Average quantity of gold ore raised and treated per man employed—

	Tons.
1955 .....	577.48
1956 .....	594.16

(b) Average quantity of gold produced therefrom per man employed—

	Fine ounces.
1955 .....	146.97
1956 .....	145.88

(2) East Coolgardie District:

Average number of men engaged—

	Men.
1955 .....	3,327
1956 .....	3,253

#### *(b) Details of Production, Golden Mile.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What was the amount of gold, reported to the department as required by regulations, for the Golden Mile for 1956?

(2) What was the percentage of the amount from the Golden Mile of the total amount reported?

(3) What was the average value of the yield of gold per ton of ore treated from the Golden Mile for the same year?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) East Coolgardie District, which contains the Kalgoorlie-Boulder belt, produced 474,548.02 fine ounces for 1956.

(2) East Coolgardie District, 58.33 per cent. of State gold total for 1956.

(3) East Coolgardie District, 4.91 dwts. per ton or 76s. 6d. per ton.

**RAILWAYS.***(a) Average Haulage Charge.*

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

What was the average haulage charge made by the railways for the year ended the 30th June, 1957?

The PREMIER replied:

The average earnings were 4.13d. per ton mile.

*(b) Unattended Booking Office, Perth.*

Mr. NALDER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

Will he ascertain the reason why the country booking office at the Perth railway station was left unattended for nearly 10 minutes on Thursday, the 12th September, at 7.20 a.m., thus causing much concern and inconvenience to the travelling public?

The PREMIER replied:

There are only two booking clerks on the early morning shift, each of whom is in a separate locked cubicle.

The clerk in the country booking office was unavoidably absent for a few minutes, and as there is no relief clerk available, some little inconvenience may have resulted.

No passengers were caused to miss a country train or bus.

**DREDGING.***Bay Between William and Barrack-sts.*

Mr. HEAL asked the Minister for Works:

While the dredge "Stirling" is working near the vicinity of William-st., will he approve of the bay between William and Barrack-sts. being dredged to a depth of four feet below water level, for the purpose of cleaning up the area concerned?

The MINISTER replied:

As available dredges will be occupied on urgent work in connection with the bridge over the Swan River at the Narrows for some considerable time, the dredging referred to will be listed for consideration at a later date.

**ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.***Change to 50 Cycles, West Perth.*

Mr. HEAL asked the Minister for Works: When will the change-over from 40 to 50 cycles be made in the West Perth area, north of the railway line, within the boundaries of Beaufort, Bulwer and Loftus-sts.?

The MINISTER replied:

The change-over in this area will be carried out progressively during the next seven months.

**INTERSTATE SHIPPING FREIGHTS.***Effect of Reduction on Exports to Eastern States.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Supply and Shipping:

With reference to the answer given to my question on the 12th September, about improved freight shipping services between Melbourne and Fremantle, what action is proposed to stimulate exports to eastern Australia?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:

The Department of Industrial Development will fully inform manufacturers of the improved services offered.

The services of the Government liaison officers in Melbourne and Sydney will also be made available in securing markets, agents, etc.

All possible other avenues of increasing exports will be explored.

**GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.***Construction by Contract, Day Labour, etc.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Works:

(1) To what extent is the Government using private contractors to undertake Government building projects such as schools, and other Government buildings?

(2) Are tenders called for all jobs and does the Public Works Department tender in competition, or are jobs to be undertaken by Government day labour not submitted to tender?

(3) When jobs are undertaken by Government day labour, what control is exercised over actual costs as against estimates?

(4) (a) What is the current departmental policy for purchases from State Saw Mills and State Brick Works and State Engineering Works?

(b) Are purchases, services and other supplies from these State trading concerns acquired by open tender?

(c) If not, how are they acquired?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 40 per cent. approximately.

(2) Tenders are not called for all jobs; neither does the Public Works Department tender in competition, nor are jobs to be undertaken by Government day labour submitted to tender.

(3) All works are costed.

(4) (a) Goods are purchased from the State Saw Mills and State Brick Works at the same rates as are charged to private builders.

In the case of the State Engineering Works, goods and services are obtained both on quote and at cost.

(b) No.

(c) See answer to (a).

### AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

#### *Availability.*

Hon. D. BRAND (without notice) asked the Treasurer:

Can he say when the Auditor General's report will be made available to this House?

The TREASURER replied:

Not exactly, but in the reasonably near future. I shall make inquiries and try to give the hon. member a definite date during tomorrow's sitting.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Fremantle Harbour Trust Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

2, Nurses Registration Act Amendment.

*Passed*

### BILL—KING'S PARK AQUATIC CENTRE.

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 10th September.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [4.41]: I appreciate the opportunity to speak briefly on this measure. It is one which I have been looking forward to for quite a long time. The question before us is novel rather than exciting. I should say it is also more peculiar than it is exciting. It is novel inasmuch, if I understand the situation aright, as this is the first time that Parliament has been called upon to adjudicate in such a case as this, and to make a decision as to whether certain land is to be granted to the Perth City Council for the right to erect an aquatic centre thereon. I say that it is novel because of this aspect.

I should say it is peculiar rather than sensational inasmuch as many furtive attempts have been made to create a tremor of sensation amongst the members of this House because of the publicity that has been sent to us from supporters of both sides, or from people who have different views. On the whole, these attempts have been tantamount to failure because I believe that members are in a position to exercise their own minds and to reach a decision of their own volition on such a question as this.

It is also interesting that this question is one on which members can speak, because they do so with a freedom of thought. It is a non-political matter, and it is one on which members of the three parties here have differed. In that

respect, it is also quite novel and quite peculiar. However, there is one point that has arisen out of this controversy—and a controversy it has been—and that is the mixed thinking which has been allowed to creep in.

I say that in adjudicating on such a situation, we must not confound confusion with commotion, and therefore the one question of paramount importance is this: Do people want an aquatic centre in King's Park, or do they want an aquatic centre in Perth? I believe that the great majority of people interested in water sport, and those who wish to see the beauty of Perth enhanced want an aquatic centre, but not necessarily in King's Park. I firmly support the building of an aquatic centre in Perth. This is something which Perth should have had many years ago.

Further, I would also like to see olympic pools built in the suburbs. One pool is not the answer to the need that exists in Perth and in the metropolitan area, yet any publicity given to us by supporters of the plan we have seen, envisages the situation, if this plan is rejected, where children right throughout the metropolitan area will be deprived of the opportunity to learn to swim in still-water conditions. Given the pool, no matter where it will be built, I say that one pool will not be sufficient for the needs that exist in the metropolitan area.

Coming from an area where we have long enjoyed an olympic pool—that is, Kalgoorlie—and having been a school teacher and having taken children to swimming classes conducted at that pool, I know the problems that exist in Kalgoorlie with a population of something over 22,000 people. I am aware that in the areas of the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council, the Kalgoorlie Road Board and the Boulder Municipal Council with a population of over 22,000, there exists a problem in the summer months for teachers when school children have time allocated to them to attend swimming classes. During those times the general public are limited in their scope to use that pool. So what is the situation to be in Perth, with one aquatic centre, or one olympic pool?

I am not decrying the need for an olympic pool in Perth at all. I advocate the provision of one, but I am opposed to the pool site being in King's Park. One might ask why I should be opposed to that site. My decision has not been aroused without due thought and consideration of all the aspects. I have been privileged, besides having seen the plan, to visit the Lord Mayor in company with my colleague, the member for Geraldton. We discussed with him the many features of his plan. I have paid due regard to the matters that have been raised by the

opponents of this measure. As a composite of thought-providing ideas that have arisen out of my endeavours, I consider that I am justified in my proposal to oppose the second reading of this Bill when that stage is reached.

For my part, I have tried to analyse the past in connection with King's Park. We have heard a great deal of the past discussed in this Chamber from the time of that great giant, John Forrest. I have tried to consider the present, and what is more important, to visualise the future. In so doing, I have been impressed by the wine of words, long-aged in the cellars of thought, spoken by that great giant, John Forrest. He said—

This will enable the children a thousand years hence to see what the bush was like when Stirling came here to found a city.

With those words, I claim that John Forrest and other great statesmen of his time not only envisaged the children of the metropolitan area but also the children of Western Australia as a whole. And the children of today are, of course, the citizens of tomorrow. That was as true then as now. Therefore, in using those words I claim that King's Park has become one answer to the many rebukes that have been directed to country members in that they have no right to interfere with a matter relating to the metropolitan area.

It is estimated that within a few years—this does not take an actuary to work out—the population of this State will have greatly increased. Even all of us in this Chamber, with our mixed feelings on this particular plan, can only hope that this is so. We all want to see Perth grow, but we want to see regulated growth. We must not lose one asset simply to create another, and the establishment of an aquatic centre would be the creation of an asset. It is, therefore, imperative that King's Park remain intact as a heart of nature within the heart of the city, which itself is the heart of a great State. I want to emphasise the point that we must not lose one asset simply in order to create another. It might be asked why the giving away of a minute area of King's Park—a mere 20 acres—to the Perth City Council for the purpose of establishing an aquatic centre would mean the loss of an asset. To some it would appear the creation of an asset.

It appears to me from a reading of the correspondence received from supporters of the plan and the ideas expressed therein, that these various sporting bodies—and I hold nothing against them—definitely express the view, or imply it, that they have visions of King's Park becoming a greater sports area of this great metropolis. There would be the establishment of an aquatic centre and possibly the next step would be the establishment of a running track.

Mr. Crommelin: They never said that.

Mr. EVANS: Has the hon. member read the letters?

Mr. Crommelin: I have read them all.

Mr. EVANS: Then the hon. member could not have understood them! What was expressed, or implied, in those letters was sufficient for me to gain that impression. If an aquatic centre is established in King's Park to cater for the needs of swimmers and those who go to witness a swimming carnival, what will be the feeling of the members of other sporting bodies who find that with the growth of population there are not sufficient areas of land available to them for their purposes within the city, with the result that they would have to move further out? They would say, "There are over 900 acres of land available in King's Park. Can't we also have some of that land?" In my view, the needs of swimmers are no greater than those of other sporting people, and I can definitely see a dangerous precedent wavering before us, a precedent which I would not like to see created.

Many of the people representing sporting organisations wrote to members of this Chamber and it would seem that this plan was backed by a great number of those organisations. But there is a very wise old saying which I think is appropriate, "He who begs alms for God's sake, begs for two." In this case, I feel that these people—and I do not blame them—are looking to the future to guard their own interests. There is another quotation which I think is appropriate at this stage and it comes from Shakespeare's Henry IV. It is as follows:—

What I have I will hold.

What I need I will obtain.

Hon. D. Brand: Where is that from?

Mr. EVANS: From Henry IV.

Mr. Court: When was he on the King's Park Board?

Mr. EVANS: I claim that that quotation is quite original so far as this debate is concerned. History records—and "The West Australian" is the chronicler of such history in this case—that in 1927 a committee was set up by the Government of the day to inquire into a site for a hospital, and the committee, after exhaustive investigations, returned a verdict that King's Park was the only suitable site. But the Premier of the day, the late Phil Collier, said, "There will be none of King's Park given away for a hospital or anything else." His Government's policy was, "Hands Off King's Park."

The hospital was not built in King's Park but was erected elsewhere. The fact is that King's Park is not the only site for a hospital and those who claim that King's Park is the only suitable site for the establishment of a swimming pool, will be faced with the same argument in rebuttal that it is not the only site and that there are alternative sites.

Mr. Hall: You would say that the Royal Perth Hospital has been erected on the best site?

Mr. EVANS: No, but King's Park was not the only site for such a hospital, and the erection of the Royal Perth Hospital on the present site proves that fact.

Those who claim that the beauty of King's Park is man-made—and the claim has been strongly made—must be perplexed when they try to visualise what it was that influenced Sir John Forrest to set aside King's Park as a reserve. At that time it was virgin bush and contained no man-made improvements. What was it in the area that influenced Sir John Forrest to move for its preservation? Obviously it was not man-made improvements.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is not correct.

Mr. EVANS: Of course not. I would like to draw attention to the sentiments in another quotation by a great Australian poetess, Dorothea Mackellar. Dissatisfaction expressed by someone who visited Australia from England and was extremely dissatisfied with what she saw, provoked this poem by Dorothea Mackellar.

Mr. Court: It is all in Hansard of 1954.

Mr. EVANS: Then it is going to be there again. Here is the quotation—

The love of field and coppice,  
Of green and shaded lanes,  
Of ordered woods and gardens,  
Is running in your veins.  
Strong love of grey-blue distance,  
Brown streams, and soft, dim skies—  
I know but cannot share it,  
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of ragged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains,  
I love her far horizons,  
I love her jewel-sea,  
Her beauty and her terror—  
The wide brown land for me!

And, with all apologies to the poetess, I would say that that included even veldt grass.

Mr. Court: I must say that the member for Cottesloe said that with much more feeling in 1954.

Mr. EVANS: I feel that we must admire the great men of the past who had the great foresight and immense courage to preserve King's Park as a quiet spot in a busy city. A lot has been said of cars rushing over the Causeway crammed with people leaving for the bush to get away from the city. Those are privileged people, it is said, but what about the underprivileged?

Mr. Oldfield: Think of the worker.

Mr. EVANS: I am thinking of him. The hon. member thinks of him; but I do something for him. I regard King's Park as a

quiet spot in a busy centre, a centre that is likely to become busier still, and therefore there is necessity for that quiet spot to be protected. It is our responsibility to protect it for those who are with us and those who will come after. I reiterate that I am not opposed to an aquatic centre in Perth; but I cannot agree that other sites do not exist. I intend to vote against the Bill and I only hope that the thoughts that are mine as a member of Parliament called to cast a vote on this question, and the faith that has been mine in pleading it, will also be shared by this House when the vote is taken.

MR. HALL (Albany) [5.0]: I believe that what Parliament has to decide in respect of King's Park is whether we are going to leave it in its natural state or clean it up by thinning out the trees, planting lawns, establishing barbecues and so on, in order to make it more attractive for use by the people.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: And a few motor-cycles.

Mr. HALL: If, as we are led to believe, the park was designed to be used by the people, I feel we must clean it up and improve it with that end in view. If one visits King's Park, as I believe some members did—I did not go with them on that occasion but was there previously—it is obvious that those portions of the park where the trees have been thinned out and lawns planted are the parts that are used by the majority of the people. The other parts of the park are used by a minority only.

Whether an olympic pool is to be established in King's Park or not, the thinning out of the rougher timber and the following of a plan for the preservation of the flora would, I think, commend itself to the mind of every member. When I refer to thinning out the timber, I have in mind the fire hazard at King's Park. In its present state, the park presents an ever-increasing fire hazard. With the increase in our population the fire danger will become greater year by year. With the greater influx of people to the park the danger from matches, cigarette butts and so on causing fires, will increase, as will the responsibility of the board.

Hon. L. Thorn: What difference would 20 acres make to that?

Mr. HALL: It would make quite a difference. I have had 25 years' experience of fire brigades and I know something about the subject. Fire is an ever-present menace in a setting such as King's Park. If the park is not thinned out, the hazards to which I have referred will remain. The metropolitan fire brigade was called out three times to King's Park last summer and assisted the King's Park fire brigade, which is present there every day of the week and which I believe does a wonderful job.

I repeat, there is always the possibility of a serious fire in King's Park unless the rubbish is thinned out. With the thinning of the trees and the planting of lawns, the establishment of barbecues and so on, whole families could find their entertainment in a picnic setting. If improvements such as I have referred to were effected, the park could be used by all of the people all the time.

We must now consider the establishment of an aquatic centre and modern swimming pool. There is no doubt in my mind that an aquatic centre in King's Park would be a definite acquisition to Perth and to the State in general. It would provide an added amenity for the people and allow them to make full use of the park. I recently visited Melbourne and saw there at first hand a modern olympic swimming pool.

Mr. Toms: With no one swimming in it!

Mr. HALL: No doubt it is one of the best in the world, although it has no setting such as would surround a similar pool in King's Park. We could compare a modern hotel without parking facilities to King's Park without an olympic pool—

The Premier: Fancy swimming in Melbourne, in the winter!

Mr. HALL: An aquatic centre, as visualised for King's Park, would provide for whole families, from the youngest to the oldest, with its barbecues, lawns and so on, and the setting would be second to none. There has already been a precedent established, as the member for Kalgoorlie admitted, because there are in King's Park the tennis courts that have been used by continental players and tourists from all parts of the world who have visited Western Australia.

I am sure that the establishment of the centre would be a great attraction to tourists. We have already achieved one major step in that direction by Perth becoming a terminal for overseas air transport. We read in "The West Australian"—

Perth's air status is to be lifted in January. The Perth, Melbourne and Brisbane airports are to gain international status by next January. The three airports will have direct overseas connections by Qantas. The Prime Minister said that Perth would obtain improved connections with Europe and Melbourne and would have direct connections from both Europe and North America.

That is the first step, and so I think we should accept our responsibility and, by means of the aquatic centre, secure an added share of the tourist trade. That trade is available if we do what is necessary to attract it here, and unless we take action such as this we will miss it. I commend the proposal for the establishment of an aquatic centre and give it my full support.

MR. HEAL (West Perth) [5.7]: I support the Minister's endeavour to have this measure agreed to and, as a member of the King's Park Board, I wish to answer the remarks of some of those members who have criticised that body. I believe all members of this House should face the facts as to what the park really was dedicated for. Some say that Lord Forrest was the first to have a grant of land set aside for a park in this locality, but that is far from the truth. I have here a photostat copy of one of the first minutes taken from a meeting of the King's Park Board. It says—

Submitted herewith for the information and consideration of His Excellency the Governor are a tracing and a description for gazetting of land proposed, on the suggestion of His Excellency, for the purpose of a public park and recreation ground.

The land occupied by the poor-house and gardens has been excluded and possibly the rifle range might, but that may be done at a future date.

Malcolm Fraser.

12/7/57.

I do not think members can get away from the fact that the original intention was to establish a public park, as a park and for recreational purposes. That is borne out by what later boards have done in regard to the park. I am sorry the member for Cottesloe and the member for North Perth are not in their seats as I wish to refer to some of the remarks they made in relation to King's Park Board. I will deal first with the remarks of the member for North Perth and will quote an extract from "The West Australian" of the 12th September, 1946, in which the superintendent and secretary, Mr. Watson, is reported as saying—

The fame of King's Park rested largely in natural bush so close to the city. The policy of the board is based, to a large extent, on the preservation of the existing area against any type of alienation.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Tell us the rest.

Mr. HEAL: To continue—

That was only a decade ago yet, all of a sudden, we find a complete switch by the board. Under what pressure? It does not do these things for nothing. Again, in "The West Australian" of the 10th December, 1949, the secretary made further reference to the loss of the State's unrivalled flora through settlement, clearing, bush fires and indiscriminate wildflower picking and stated, "The last wildflower stronghold of our lovely flowers would be our national parks and more remote areas of State forests."

At this stage, I will refer back to the first portion of the quotation, "The policy of the board is based to a large extent—." Anyone with commonsense will realise that "a large extent" does not mean the whole of King's Park. I would say that it means perhaps 75 or 80 per cent. of it, but the secretary of the King's Park Board has pointed out to me that he is always careful in making these statements because someone is always ready to criticise what he says.

Let us see what happened further on, when the King's Park Board must have been under some pressure. Members know the type of people on the board and I am sure they will agree that none of them would be influenced by any pressure. I think the board was first approached in 1954 by the Perth City Council with the idea of a proposed aquatic centre in the park. The city council in its wisdom selected what it thought would be the most suitable site for the centre and it was inspected by members of the board, but before they came to any further agreement, they informed the city council that it would have to produce some concrete proposal in relation to what an aquatic centre would mean.

Members have seen the picture in the corner of the Chamber. When it was presented to the board and explained by the Town Clerk and the Lord Mayor, who is a member of the board, the board made a recommendation to the Minister that it had no objection to 20 acres being made available to the Perth City Council. I would point out that 20 acres of the park represents 2 per cent. of it, and I do not think that by giving that much of the land to the city council for the establishment of an aquatic centre we would be inserting the thin end of the wedge or giving away something that belongs to the people of the State. I think King's Park was set aside for the enjoyment of the people and the more types of attraction that can be provided there, the better for the population.

Mr. Roberts: Why not make it a Luna Park?

Mr. HEAL: No. We have enough Luna Park in Bunbury and we ought to keep it there—and also the member for Bunbury. The member for Cottesloe made an amazing statement. I think all school teachers must be stung by a bee or something, as they come to this Chamber and quote Banjo Paterson or some other poet. I believe the member for Cottesloe was driving around the corner of King's Park-rd. and Thomas-st. and saw that a signboard there had been taken down. He immediately applied his brakes and dashed madly into the bush to see what had happened to it. He then rang "The West Australian" and asked that a photographer be sent up to photograph him leaning against the post where the sign had been, just as we saw it in the Press one morning. I

think that must have upset him and he has never recovered from it. The hon. member referred to the board as a team of defeatists, or words to that effect. That is far from the truth, and I am sure the member for Cottesloe did not really mean what he said.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Here he is.

Mr. HEAL: I am glad the member for Cottesloe returned to the Chamber, because he knows what I am going to say, and I am sure he will have plenty of opportunity to read my speech. Another statement that the hon. member made was that he was amazed and disgusted at the fact that the board had tidied up the park so much in recent years. What does the hon. member expect the employees to do? They are being given a fair day's wages and they are doing a fair day's work, and the tidying up of the park constitutes part of that work. Does the member for Cottesloe want the employees of the King's Park Board to sit around playing cards and drinking tea? If the natural portions of the park are not tidied up, I am certain that the veldt grass and other weeds will obtain a stranglehold, which will eventually kill the natural flora, and the last stage will be worse than the first.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I have no objection to their tidying up the park so long as it is done with an eye to natural flora.

Mr. HEAL: I am sure that the King's Park employees have no desire at all to destroy the natural flora, and I think the hon. member will agree that they are doing a very good job. The member for North Perth said that the King's Park Board should change its policy but I do not see how that could be possible when its hands are tied by the amendment to the Parks and Reserves Act that was passed in 1954. Under the provisions of that legislation, it is necessary for any major alterations in policy to be placed before Parliament for approval. Apart from this, we know the Minister who is in charge of the board has power to replace the members of that body if he feels they are not doing their job properly.

Up to the time the proposal for an aquatic centre in the park was mooted, there was very little criticism, if any, of the board, but since then we have had members criticising that body for no reason at all. For instance, such statements as that suggesting the board constitutes a team of defeatists, is very far from the truth; and I cannot understand the attitude of the member for Cottesloe or that of the member for North Perth; no do I appreciate the statements they have made in that connection. Many people in Western Australia, and apparently some members of this Chamber, seem to be of the opinion that Lord Forrest was the first statesman to suggest that the area of land known as King's



Park be set aside. Now, however, that members know more of the history of the park, they are aware that in 1871 the then Governor of Western Australia, F. A. Weld, and the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, made recommendations to the effect that so many acres of land be set aside for a public park and recreation ground. After this, Lord Forrest added further land in order to bring the area up to approximately 1,000 acres.

I would ask members: What part of the park is most visited by people in Western Australia? My answer to this question would be that at least 90 per cent of the people visit that area of King's Park which has been improved by the ingenuity of man. The other 10 per cent. of the people—and I give this as just an approximation—visit those areas of the King's Park which constitute natural bushland. If the House agrees to the establishment of the aquatic centre in King's Park, it will not in any way prevent the 10 per cent. of the people to whom I have referred visiting the natural bush land which would constitute approximately 900 acres. The Perth City Council is merely asking for 2 per cent. of King's Park to be set aside for the establishment of an aquatic centre.

Mr. Johnson: That is, on this occasion.

Mr. HEAL: That may be so, but if any one approaches the King's Park Board and makes recommendations to the Minister that other parts of the park be set aside for certain objectives, it will be necessary for the proposals to come before Parliament for approval unless, of course, the Act of 1954 is repealed. I cannot for the life of me think why members should imagine that this is the thin edge of the wedge. The Perth City Council is asking only for 2 per cent. of the park to be set aside for the purpose in question.

If this provision is made, it will be a facility that will not only attract the people of Western Australia but those throughout the world. At a recent R.S.L. conference some concern was expressed with regard to the damage which might be caused to the memorial trees. The members of the R.S.L. and the executive of that body need have no worry in that regard at all because the King's Park Board holds these trees as sacred and its attitude in that direction will be governed accordingly. I would like to read a small article in this connection. It is as follows:—

The idea of memorial avenues started with the board in 1918. The board has done the whole of the work in all its aspects in regard to those avenues, and the board continues to care for and generally maintain the

avenues. The board finances all the work entailed but there is some assistance given to the board in various ways by a small committee of the Public Service Sub-Branch of the League, and the superintendent of the park is a member of this committee.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Don't they get a subsidy?

Mr. HEAL: No. The moneys are found from the general grant given to the board annually. Accordingly, members in this Chamber and members of the R.S.L. need have no fear that the memorial trees will in any way be hurt or damaged by the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park. I would now like to read what Lord Forrest had to say in a statement regarding the park. It is as follows:—

This will enable the children of a thousand years hence to see what the bush was like when Stirling came here to found the city.

If the bush in King's Park is left in its natural state for another 1,000 years, I can imagine what it will look like, particularly when one considers the growth of veldt grass and other weeds. I do not think there would be much left of our natural bushland if these weeds take over. The statements have been made that we should consider the children yet unborn and those who are likely to be here 1,000 years hence. I would point out that it is the children who are here now who must be considered; they are our main concern, not those who are yet unborn and who may be here in another 1,000 years' time. I hope therefore that members will consider these children rather than those of 1,000 years hence.

It is a strange thing, but Lord Forrest was chairman of the board when it gave away so much of this land. We find that in 1892 an area of land was made over for what was then known as High School—it is now Hale School. In 1898 further land was made available for purposes of the tennis club and other recreation, and in 1903 the bowling club was given a certain area of land, which it still holds. I may be wrong, but I have not heard members objecting to the bowling club or the tennis club being established in the park as they are today. As a matter of fact, several members in this Chamber have visited those places. Indeed, I am certain that they visit those places more often than they visit the natural bush land area of the park.

Accordingly, I think that members speak with their tongues in their cheeks when they say that an aquatic centre should not be established in King's Park. Let us consider the advantages of an aquatic centre in Perth or, for that matter, in any part of the metropolitan area. It is

quite obvious from the petition, or statement, or memo—whatever we may like to call it—that was signed by a majority of members of this House, urging that this Bill should not be passed.

Let us, however, see what advantages would accrue if the Bill were passed, and an aquatic centre were placed in King's Park. Firstly, the parents and children of Western Australia would have still-water facilities available for swimming; and this they have not got at the present time. It is my earnest hope that in future years two or three olympic pools will be established in and around the metropolitan area. We must also consider the fact that the establishment of this aquatic centre would prove a great tourist attraction, not only to people in Australia but to those in other parts of the world, because there is no doubt that the photograph of what the proposed centre will look like indicates that it will be something without parallel.

It is a great thing to find that we have a body in Perth that is willing to spend £200,000 on the erection of an aquatic centre. I would also point out that in my electorate of West Perth, and I have no doubt that this position obtains in other electorates, particularly those in the metropolitan area, there are many people who are at present out of work; and if this proposed aquatic centre eventuated, and the Perth City Council were to spend this large sum of money, it would give a great number of people employment, and it would also help to step up the building industry and its subsidiary activities. I do not think that we should dictate to a body that wishes to spend £200,000 and tell it where and how that money should be spent. As I have pointed out, if this large amount of money is spent on the proposed aquatic centre, it will help relieve the unemployment position in Western Australia at the present time.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that when he introduced the Bill the Minister for Lands indicated that he would have no objection to anybody moving for the appointment of a select committee to look into this matter. I would be quite prepared to move in that direction, but at the same time I must draw the attention of members to the fact that if the appointment of a select committee is to be approved, the second reading of this Bill will have to be passed. If, after the select committee has brought down its report, members are still not in favour of the Bill, they will have an opportunity to throw it out on the third reading. The terms of the inquiry could possibly incorporate the following:—

- (1) Whether the provision of an aquatic centre in King's Park would be in conflict with the purpose for which King's Park was set apart.

- (2) Whether the selected site in King's Park, as approved by the King's Park Board, is suitable for the establishment of an aquatic centre.
- (3) Whether any of the other sites within the boundaries of the City of Perth, which have been suggested by the opponents of the King's Park site, is as suitable, or better than, the King's Park site for the purpose of an aquatic centre.

The recommendations made by the select committee could be passed on to the Perth City Council.

I hope a lot more thought will be given to this matter. In considering the fact that King's Park was set aside and dedicated for the purpose of a public park and recreational area, I do not think members can say truthfully that Lord Forrest or anybody else said that the whole of the park should remain in its natural state. Where this idea originated, I do not know. I am not one who would suggest that a large portion of King's Park should be given away. This matter should be left to Parliament to decide, because Parliament has taken upon itself to more or less direct the board as to what should be done.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Hear, hear!

Mr. HEAL: After hearing the hon. member's interjection, I feel that he should be a member of a committee which could be appointed to decide how the park should be used. I hope that will be done in the near future. I support the Bill.

MR. MARSHALL (Wembley Beaches) [5.29]: I desire to make some contribution to this debate, and in doing so I intend to confine my remarks to the proposals in the Bill. We know, of course, that this Bill was introduced in consequence of the legislation passed in 1954, which took away the powers of the King's Park Board to lease any portion of King's Park without first bringing the matter to Parliament. Therefore, the first point in the Bill which we have to consider is whether we will agree to give power to the King's Park Board to lease or alienate a certain area or number of acres of a Class "A" reserve to the Perth City Council. I think that is one of the most important points in the Bill, because we have to satisfy ourselves whether we are going to agree to that proposal.

Members will, I think, agree that over the last 100 years or so, even before the time of responsible government in this State and since that time, the Governments of the day have been very generous indeed in granting considerable areas of land which exist within the municipal boundaries of the City of Perth. There is no question, of course, that over the years the Perth City Council has established

quite a number of public parks and recreational areas, and has used its endeavours considerably to improve the area within its own boundaries. However, we find that these recreational areas cater for every type of sport other than swimming. One could name quite a considerable number of areas within the city which are enjoyed by the people and which have been developed by the council.

The Perth City Council is to be commended, at the present stage of its history, in making an endeavour to provide for the sport of swimming, which has been so sadly neglected for very many years. As I have already said, what we have to consider in this Bill is the question of allocating a certain portion of a Class "A" reserve to the Perth City Council and whether we consider that it has within its municipal boundaries sufficient areas on which to establish this aquatic centre. It is interesting, therefore, to read from the last available municipal year book the history over the years of the provision by the Perth City Council of various parks and reserves.

On page 60 of the Municipal Year Book, 1956, City of Perth, is a brief summary of the parks and reserves as at the 31st October, 1956, and we find that, in addition to the parks and reserves and endowment lands, plus the Government foreshore reclaimed lands and other than King's Park itself, the Perth City Council has, within its own boundaries, land to the extent of 2,750 acres. With the exception of the endowment land, all those areas have been allocated as parks and recreational areas, and it would appear that the allocation of a few acres from King's Park would not be of very great importance to the general public or to the Perth City Council in its endeavours to establish an olympic pool for the benefit of the people.

Letters from the Lord Mayor indicate that it is the desire of the Perth City Council to establish an aquatic centre for the benefit of the general public in the metropolitan area, and for not less than 40,000 children. In regard to the proposal to establish an aquatic centre, I think all we should concern ourselves with is the pool itself, because that is naturally the most important part of the project, and would be used by the general public and the professional and amateur swimming associations.

According to the Lord Mayor, it will also provide facilities for the teaching of children to swim. We have to ask ourselves whether we consider a pool of this description and size will in any way adequately serve the needs of the general public and the number of children it is estimated will be using the pool.

Mr. Potter: I thought there were several pools.

Mr. MARSHALL: It appears to me that one pool will be totally inadequate, and I would suggest to the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth that it would be serving the needs of the people within the municipal boundary areas and possibly the fringe of local authorities, if he considered a proposal which I propose to put forward. When speaking tonight, the member for West Perth said that to date no member had come forward with a proposal in relation to the opposition to the project. I am perfectly satisfied in my mind that the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park, as proposed by this Bill, will not adequately meet the demand of the people which the Perth City Council is so desirous of meeting.

I appeal to the Perth City Council to reconsider this proposal and offer the suggestion that instead of spending £225,000—or in that proximity—on this particular venture, it spends £80,000 in the eastern suburbs, £80,000 in the northern suburbs and £80,000 in the western suburbs, in order to establish pools in the municipal area of the City of Perth. I feel confident that such a proposal would meet with the full approval of the majority of ratepayers and that they would raise no objection to a slight increase in their rates in order to finance this proposal. I feel sure that a much better service would be given to the general public, particularly in providing facilities for school children who are not taking part in competitive swimming.

Local governing authorities are now taking a keener interest in this type of sport and are establishing centres as a result, no doubt, of the initiative shown by the Perth City Council in its endeavour to provide an olympic pool within its boundaries. As I said earlier, the Perth City Council has, over many years, provided recreational facilities for every type of sport other than swimming. We find that many other local governing authorities, both in the metropolitan area and country districts, have also neglected swimming facilities and have, more or less, concentrated on other sports and pastimes.

I pointed out to the Lord Mayor, in reply to a letter he wrote me, that an article appeared in "The West Australian" of the 15th June which stated that there were more pools planned for the city and suburbs. The article went on to say that apart from the £225,000 for the proposed aquatic centre, there were at least eight big swimming pools—some of olympic standard—being planned or mooted for the metropolitan area. The Lord Mayor entirely disagreed with the viewpoint expressed in this article and asserted to me that the only reason these proposals were being submitted now was to provide opposition to the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park. I am afraid I do not agree with the Lord Mayor on that statement, because in the outer fringes of

the metropolitan area at Kelmscott and Armadale, pools of olympic standard have already been established, and the Perth Road Board has also intimated support for a similar proposal at Maylands and another at Scarborough.

Owing to the interest taken by the Perth City Council in this regard, local authorities in the outer metropolitan area and throughout the country have wakened up to the fact that it is necessary to provide facilities for amateur and professional swimming associations and facilities in order that children can be taught to swim. The article which I mentioned as appearing in "The West Australian" was quite a lengthy one and it was accompanied by a plan of sites and prospective sites where local authorities intend to provide pools. It stated—

They are at Kelmscott, Dalkeith, Guildford Grammar School, Maylands, Lake Claremont—

Mr. Crommelin: You can cut out that one!

Mr. MARSHALL: This list of names continues—

Burswood Island, Scarborough and South Perth Zoo.

I am just reading these because I am not certain that all the proposals will be agreed to. We know that some are in the process of construction or that the proposals are before the committees which will be responsible for their construction. This newspaper report mentions that some businessman is prepared to restore the pool at Dalkeith to a reasonable standard. The report states—

A Melbourne businessman has asked the Nedlands Municipal Council if he can use the concrete pool on the Dalkeith foreshore, now disconnected from its hot artesian water supply, as the basis for an aquatic centre.

I do not know whether the Nedlands Municipal Council is prepared to accept that proposition, but at least it is indicative of the fact that quite a number of people are interested in establishing pools other than within the boundaries of the municipal area of Perth.

The first question we have to consider is whether the Perth City Council has sufficient area of recreation reserves and public parks to establish various pools within its area rather than spend £250,000 on one pool. Another question we have to deal with is whether we should allow the King's Park Board to alienate so many acres to the Perth City Council in view of the fact that the council has many hundreds of acres of parks and reserves within its boundaries.

A very important point of view, as far as the Bill itself is concerned, is that the proposed centre will not, I feel, adequately

serve the needs of the people in the metropolitan area. So I offer the suggestion that I mentioned to the Perth City Council, namely, that it reconsider the proposal. I feel that if it did, it would get much more support, and that the establishment of three pools within its municipal boundaries would serve a much greater need and would be much better for the public and for the school children in the areas concerned. If the council will do this, it will be rendering a much better service to the community as against endeavouring to establish one pool in King's Park.

MR. JOHNSON (Leederville) [5.47]: I feel that all the relevant facts in regard to the Bill have been adduced by one or other of the speakers and it is not my intention to run over all of them or even many of them but simply to indicate the way I look at this proposal and the reasons why I am going to oppose the second reading of the Bill. It has been clearly indicated in the Chamber that there is a real sentiment existing about King's Park. It has not been proven that this sentiment is necessarily a majority sentiment, but no one will doubt that it is real, and a sentiment that desires that King's Park be left without any further major encroachment of the type proposed in the legislation.

The world being what it is today, I feel there is a call to have regard for sentiment on all occasions on which there is not a completely sound reason for moving against it. It can be claimed that the provision of an aquatic centre for Perth is real progress. It is, and it is something that Perth should have had long ago. It is something that has been proposed in a number of forms over many years but has never been taken up by the Perth City Council with any vigour until this current proposal.

So we find that whilst it can be said that the proposal for an aquatic centre is one for improvement, it is difficult to suggest that the improvements—placing the pool in King's Park—is sufficient to break down the very real sentiment existing amongst the people of Western Australia—particular of the Perth area—because there is no proof that there are no other areas where such a centre could be placed and thereby not breach sentiment.

Despite the fact that I might be regarded as a little parochial, I will speak of an area in my electorate, alongside the Leederville oval, which is available for this purpose—we have no reason to doubt that it is—and in regard to which there is no sentiment and there do not appear to be the slightest engineering or traffic difficulties. The area of which I speak is the park that lies between Loftus-st. and Leederville oval. According to the contour maps, it has a clearance of at least 50-ft. over the water-table. The fall from the top of Loftus-st. to the lowest point in

Vincent-st. in front of the oval, is more than 50-ft., and the lowest point in front of the oval is above the water-table.

The park, if such it can be called, is used for no purpose other than car parking at the time of important football matches—in which the major teams participate—and it is by no means fully suitable for that purpose. If it was much used, it would be unusable for parking and could be regarded only as a sand trap. In other words, it is a place that is in need of some degree of improvement. Furthermore, it is bounded by well-made traffic arteries all of which are capable of carrying a fairly large traffic flow; and at the major corner of Loftus-st. and Vincent-st. traffic lights are at present being installed.

Whilst I am aware that there are other areas—for instance, the East Perth cemetery; and I have reason to believe there are areas in Mt. Hawthorn and Victoria Park which could be improved similarly—which could be used, I am naturally inclined to the one in my own district, particularly as it is closer to the Perth Town Hall than the proposed site in King's Park, by a matter of a hundred yards or so—at any rate, not a great difference. So I can say with a good deal of certainty that it has not been proven that King's Park is the only area in which this amenity could be established, and unless it is proven that there is no other place, then I feel that public people have no right to cut across well known and existing sentiment of some real value.

We have heard that a famous notice-board has been taken down from the area where it is suggested that this place should be established. I draw attention to the fact that there is existing in King's Park at the entrance to the tennis courts, a notice board which carries the same wording. I examined it only four or five days ago.

Mr. Roberts: Is it still there?

Mr. JOHNSON: It was there then, but I do not know whether it is now. It could have been taken down. It is of importance to remember that the King's Park Board, prior to recent changes, subscribed to the sentiments on that notice board, and the now managing secretary put his signature, in the form of "Superintendent-Secretary" to this notice, the commencing part of which reads—

This park was founded in 1873. Its area is 1,000 acres and it has for its primary object the preservation of its indigenous flora.

There is a good deal of indigenous flora in the 20 acres concerned. At present there is a very fine flowering of kangaroo paws and some nice donkey orchids as well as a couple of large Geraldton wax plants and quite a deal of other bushland flora. There is some veldt grass, but I point out

to those who have spoken of it, that the veldt grass does not appear to penetrate the park beyond about half a chain from the edges of the paths.

Hon. D. Brand: It will not be so for long.

The Minister for Mines: You have not visited it very often.

Mr. JOHNSON: I was there a couple of weeks ago for the purpose of looking at it.

The Minister for Mines: You must have had very dark glasses.

Mr. Lapham: He could see what I could see. I was with him.

Mr. Potter: I do not know whether the hon. member saw the whole area because the Warburton natives have made a mia mia with some flags.

Mr. JOHNSON: No, they were the children of the electors of Subiaco.

Mr. Potter: Or West Perth.

Mr. JOHNSON: At least the children of the West Leederville district do not go to the park very often; it is too difficult for them to get to it.

Mr. Rodoreda: No other children go there.

Mr. JOHNSON: Slightly older children go there, I know.

Mr. Rodoreda: I said that no other children go there.

Mr. JOHNSON: I would not agree with that, because while we were there we saw a number. Quite a few different points need to be considered in relation to this project. It must be remembered that the Perth City Council has an efficient engineering section and there is little doubt of their ability to provide the type of swimming facility that is asked for, in any area of land including water-logged areas, if they really set their minds to it. I have not the slightest doubt of their ability to do so. However, it must be remembered that, in connection with water-logged areas, the cost would be extremely high; and the matter of cost is one that comes into the question in a large measure, because in trying to ascertain the feelings of my electors on this proposition I have found three lines of thought.

There are those who are urgently concerned about the provision of swimming facilities. They do not care two hoots where the swimming facilities are provided, so long as they are provided. The sum of their argument is, "If we do not allow the city council to ruin the park for this aquatic centre, we won't get one." That has been a veiled threat, I feel, in correspondence from the city council. However, there is no reason to believe that. There is no reason why the City of Perth cannot provide an aquatic centre of equal

standing in its own area; and it is of interest that King's Park is not within the area of the Perth City Council. That information is in accordance with the answer to a parliamentary question which was asked on the 4th September of this year.

The second point of view is the one concerning the historical attitude towards King's Park. The people who hold this view are those whose attitude can be regarded as one of sentiment. They desire the park to remain as close to unaltered as possible. The third group, and by far the largest I regret to say, are those who are concerned with the most sensitive of our nerves—the pocket nerve. They are concerned about the cost. They consistently refer to the cost of approximately £250,000. They say, "This will put up our rates and they are already too high," a point with which I whole-heartedly agree and a point about which there is very strong feeling in my district, and has been for the last four or five years.

It is safe to say that if a referendum were held on the city council's loan proposal to borrow £200,000 or more for the aquatic centre to be built outside the Perth City Council area, the vote in the region which I represent would go strongly against the council's proposition. There would not need to be any organising in regard to the matter, either. I know that ratepayers in my district would not agree to any proposal which would mean an increase in their rates, particularly if they had an opportunity to oppose it.

Mr. Rodoreda: Would the city council have to have a referendum?

Mr. JOHNSON: It would if challenged, and I feel certain that some of the sentimentalists would challenge the proposition. I think we should have regard for those who make up the Perth City Council—the councillors. It is significant that six of them—I think I am right in this—are non-residents of the Perth City Council area and therefore, to some extent, they are less entitled to speak for the people of Perth than are those who reside in it. It is noticeable that a large proportion of the correspondence that came to us as members, pressing us to agree to this Bill, came from outside the Perth City Council area. It is noticeable also that quite a proportion of those who are supporting this legislation are folk who are not directly concerned with supplying the money for this pool; and I could not help being struck by the support for this proposal which came from those members whose electorates are going to benefit most from it. I refer to those members whose electorates are closest to the pool—Nedlands, Subiaco and West Perth.

Mr. Potter: And they would probably make their contribution to the payment of the money involved.

Mr. JOHNSON: It is impossible for the ratepayers of Subiaco to make a contribution towards the payment of rates in the City of Perth.

Mr. Hearman: They could.

Mr. Potter: I am talking about the pool.

Mr. JOHNSON: The pool would be running at a loss.

Mr. Potter: It will not be a loss.

Mr. JOHNSON: The Lord Mayor thinks it will be run at a loss. I have, over the Lord Mayor's signature, a letter, part of which reads as follows:—

... I would advise that the financing of the aquatic centre in King's Park, or any other similar project, would be met by raising the necessary loan funds which, of course, would be repaid on the usual basis from a sinking fund over a number of years to be decided upon.

Any deficit which might arise in the operating costs of the centre would naturally be met out of current revenue in the same way as the maintenance of the many other parks and reserves for which the council is responsible is covered.

Hon. D. Brand: That is only a provision. He did not say that there would be a loss but only what would happen if there were.

Mr. JOHNSON: Yes, but it is envisaged that the proposal will be a loss and having regard for the facts that have been put before us, it is unlikely that it can be run at a profit.

Hon. D. Brand: Does the olympic pool at Kalgoorlie pay?

Mr. JOHNSON: Kalgoorlie is not the City of Perth and there is no City Beach to go to at Kalgoorlie. There is very little surf within close proximity of Kalgoorlie; but here, once a person has learnt to swim, he goes to the beach which is so handy. It will be only those who wish to take up competitive swimming who will use the pool, because the beaches are so close.

Mr. Potter: I think time will prove differently.

Mr. JOHNSON: I think that some of the neglect of our river beaches stems from the habit of going to surf beaches. It is certain that the accommodation provided by this project will not be sufficient for the total population of Perth and it is most unlikely that it will be run at a profit. It is unlikely, too, that it will be other than deficit producing. That is to be expected but I, like the member for Wembley Beaches, would prefer to see several smaller projects scattered throughout the Perth City Council area. Whilst support comes from those members whose electorates will be served most by the aquatic centre, a good deal of the opposition to the proposal has come from those members who represent Perth

City Council areas, whose electors will have to find the finance and who will find it difficult to get to the pool.

Mr. Potter: They also opposed the parking Bill.

Mr. JOHNSON: The parking Bill was an entirely different proposition.

Mr. Lawrence: Is there any amortisation period set down by the Lord Mayor and his council as regards the loan of £200,000?

Mr. JOHNSON: I have not been advised of that, but I should imagine that it will be the same as other propositions of a similar type. The Perth City Council, which is our major local governing body, covers a fairly large area, and certainly an area with a large population who would like swimming facilities in still-water made available to them. It is reasonable to suggest that the area which the Perth City Council should use for the aquatic centre, when it provides one—and I hope it does before very long—should be reasonably central to its own ratepayers. It should have more regard for its own ratepayers than for those who live outside its borders.

The argument has been advanced that there is a good traffic flow at King's Park, and particularly at the corner concerned. That is true, but I fancy that it would not be difficult to find several other places within the Perth City Council area which are just as easy to get to, if one has a motorcar, and it would be quite easy to find several areas which are easier to get to than King's Park, if one has to travel by bus. I think I have made it quite clear that, speaking for the people in my district, we are concerned particularly with the cost. Speaking for myself, I cannot see any reason why we should breach an undoubted sentiment unless there is a good and profound reason for doing so.

The Minister for Lands: You are not breaching any sentiment in this.

Mr. JOHNSON: Anybody who has listened to any portion of this debate and who does not think there is any sentiment about it—

Mr. Rodoreda: Sentiment in here!

Mr. JOHNSON: And outside. There is a very real sentiment both in here and outside and anyone who listened with half an ear, or watched with half an eye, and failed to realise that there was any sentiment, would be an ideal supporter for my football team, West Perth, because anybody as one-eyed as that would be an asset to the team.

The Minister for Lands: If you are referring to the indigenous flora, it does not apply, for there is nothing to say that the board should apply that principle over the whole of the park.

Mr. JOHNSON: I would draw the Minister's attention to the fact that the last alienation as regards the park was over

50 years ago and there have been a number of claims for further alienation since then, but they have been refused. So I think there is some sentiment in it and whether it is recorded in the documents of the board or in the hearts and emotions of the people, does not matter; it does exist and no further proof is needed than the debates which have taken place in this House. There is a sentiment in regard to the matter and I do not think we should breach that sentiment unless we have a really good, sound and profound reason for doing so.

Finally, if we accept the arguments put forward for the provision of an aquatic centre in King's Park, we leave ourselves in the position where it will be utterly impossible for us to refuse similar requests put forward by other sporting bodies. If the argument is a sound one in regard to an aquatic centre, it is equally sound as regards the establishment of a race club. I imagine that the chairman of the W.A. Turf Club could put forward an identical plea, nearly word for word, for the centralisation of that sport. If we accept this argument for the establishment of an aquatic centre there is no logical reason why a 36 hole golf course should not be established or why 20 or 30 ladies' basketball courts should not be built. This sport would attract more supporters and spectators than a swimming pool.

Because of the housing encroaching on its grounds, those conducting the Harley scramble will have to conduct that event at some place other than the area near the ropeworks. I know of no place more suitable or more central than the Mt. Eliza foreshore. It would be an ideal place for motorcycle scrambles and if we accept an aquatic centre, we must accept the running of Harley scrambles up and down the hill near Mount's Bay-rd.

Mr. Potter: There is nothing in the legislation about that.

Mr. Rodoreda: You are spoiling a good speech.

Mr. JOHNSON: The same arguments can be used; and once the argument in favour of the establishment of an aquatic centre is accepted, we cannot be consistent unless we accept the same principle in regard to any other sport; and so a further 2 per cent. of the park would be given away. I think we should reject the proposition. We should say to the Perth City Council that while we agree that there should be an aquatic centre, we would like to see a number of pools established and we would like to see them built in a number of districts, but none of us is particularly concerned about which of them should be the principal pool. I trust that all the various sporting bodies that have written to us will be prepared to give their support—and I trust their financial support as well as the postage stamps which

were provided for them—to help in locating the pool in some other district. I can assure those sporting bodies, and the Perth City Council, that if they desire to locate a swimming pool or an aquatic centre in a more reasonable portion of the Perth City Council area, they will have my support.

The Minister for Lands: In other words, you would not mind their making a loss in Leederville but you object to its being in King's Park.

Mr. JOHNSON: Can I put it this way. If the council establishes a pool in Leederville, the loss will be considerably less than it would be for an aquatic centre in King's Park, and at least it will serve the City of Perth ratepayers instead of the people living in Subiaco, Nedlands and West Perth.

Mr. Lawrence: Does the Minister suggest that they should put it in London?

Mr. Potter: It will serve the Leederville ratepayers too.

Mr. JOHNSON: It would serve those with motocars but not everybody in Leederville has a motorcar.

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

MR. WILD (Dale) [7.30]: I find it impossible, even though we have heard much argument for and much against the hopes of the Perth City Council to provide an aquatic centre in King's Park, to let my vote go unrecorded. I want to say that I very much deplore the action of some members of this House who subscribed their names to a document before any legislation had come before Parliament. If that is to be the concept of British Parliaments—and I think we can say that this Parliament follows very closely the procedure of British Parliaments—then I suggest that many of us are wasting our time in coming along here, as we have in this particular instance. If we are not to be heard, then all of us, on both sides of the House, are wasting our time.

Then again, I very much deplore the action of the member for North Perth in circulating among members what was termed a petition giving an indication to the Premier that there were approximately 30 members who did not want an aquatic centre in King's Park. Furthermore, this subject has created a great division of opinion amongst the members of all parties in the House, and even among my own colleagues. I deplore the fact that little riots have been created among us, because some of us are very much in favour of the Bill and some of us are very much against it.

When I listened to some of the reasons that have been advanced—not all of them from the floor of this Chamber—as to why it is not desired to establish an aquatic centre at King's Park, I am indeed

amazed. I wish to indicate one or two objections that I have against their reasoning. One member went so far as to say that he did not like the Lord Mayor and there he would not support the measure. If that is to be the reasoning why he should not support one of the most progressive moves undertaken by the Perth City Council—

Mr. Lapham: Was that statement made in this Chamber?

Mr. WILD: No, but it was made to me personally. That was one of his reasons for not supporting the measure. Then other members referred to the old, old history of King's Park and the purpose for which it had been dedicated. The views of those members have been very clearly debunked by the Minister who introduced the Bill. Even if the purpose was, as indicated by those members, I suggest that much water has flowed under the bridge since that time. Surely, as people representing the electors of Western Australia in this Parliament, we should accept conditions as they exist, not as they were some 50 to 53 years ago!

We have been told that King's Park had been set aside by Lord Forrest for the people of Western Australia. It seems very strange to me that the same gentleman, as chairman of the Perth Park Board, as the King's Park Board was known in those days, was himself partly responsible for handing over part of the park for bowling and tennis, and another part in exchange for the land on which Hale School boys now play cricket.

The Premier: At a time when the population was much smaller than now.

Mr. WILD: That is quite right.

Mr. Lapham: Tell us what happened in the last 54 years.

Mr. Potter: We have things today that were undreamed of even a few years ago.

Mr. WILD: As the hon. member said, we have things today that were not dreamed of even a few years ago.

Mr. Lapham: In another 50 years' time, we will have them also.

Mr. WILD: If we are to leave King's Park as it is, it will remain as a tangled forest. That can be the only description given to it. With the exception of the south side of the park overlooking the river, I suggest the rest is nothing less than a tangled mass of undergrowth.

Mr. Roberts: Have you ever walked through it?

Mr. WILD: I do not suppose the hon. member has, either. I suggest that unless one happened to be a boy scout or serviceman, trained to find his way in the bush, or unless one is able to read the stars, one would lose his way in the undergrowth of King's Park. In places one would not be able to see the sun when walking through it. Here is an area of



land comprising 998 acres. All that is desired to be used to establish an aquatic centre for the benefit of all the people of the State is 20 acres.

The Minister for Education: For a start.

Mr. WILD: The Minister says, "For a start." I would put the point to the Minister in this way: If we are to have the same hullabaloo every time a member comes forward with a proposition for a sporting proposition to be established in King's Park, I venture the opinion that in future no member of the House would be game to take up such a proposition. Never before have we been inundated with so much correspondence. I would point out that I represent 6,000 odd electors, but I have had exactly one person writing to me to say that he hoped I would disagree with the proposition. We have heard from other members that correspondence they received had been prepared on a duplicator.

The one letter I received in protest is not only a duplicated copy with a space for a name to be added at the top, but my name was not inserted. Furthermore, the letter was unsigned, simply bearing the typed inscription "An Elector of Dale". Are we, as members of Parliament, to completely disregard the other organisations representing all forms of sport, which have sent correspondence? Are we to say that all such correspondence is a form of propaganda from one source?

Mr. May: They were all sent under pressure.

Mr. WILD: It is absolute rot to say they were all sent under pressure. That is a slight on all the sporting bodies in Western Australia which have looked to the members of this House to put forward their views on the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park.

Mr. Lapham: Not in King's Park.

Mr. WILD: The hon. member says "Not in King's Park", but surely we should have regard to the views of the city fathers who have considered the matter and who hold great responsibility. They are unpaid and they have come forward to make a big decision. In this instance, they have stated that, from all the knowledge that has been collated by their engineers, from the town planner, the Police Department, and the Main Roads Department, they have come to the conclusion that the ideal site, if we are to have an aquatic centre in the City of Perth, is King's Park. Yet we find members in this House criticising the Lord Mayor. Several alternative proposals have been put up, but I would repeat that the Perth City Council, having considered all the alternative proposals has, in its wisdom, put forward its proposal with the best of intentions.

I know that the focal point of this discussion is as to whether the aquatic centre shall be built in King's Park or not. I cannot help but throw this point into the ring for consideration. I take it that we, as responsible people, desire to see that every child in Western Australia is given the opportunity to learn how to swim. There are some 40,000 children in the metropolitan area who each year are given instructions on how to swim.

Mr. Lawrence: Nobody is objecting to that.

Mr. WILD: On very many occasions in recent years, children were not permitted to go to Crawley Baths to learn to swim because of weather conditions or the state of the water. By opposing the measure, these children will be denied the right to learn how to swim. If we, as representatives of the people, were able to ensure that every child, on leaving school at 14 or 15 years of age, was able to swim, then we would have justified our positions in that respect.

Mr. Lapham: Would 40,000 be able to swim there?

Mr. WILD: It seems to me that the 40,000 children who are being taught to swim each year are being jammed into Crawley Baths.

Mr. Andrew: How can they all go into one pool?

Mr. WILD: That is a simple matter of organisation. It could be organised by providing that certain children from certain schools use the pool on certain days. This point raised by the hon. member is a red herring across the trail.

Mr. Andrew: You cannot answer the question.

Mr. WILD: Can any member think of any better site than King's Park to establish an aquatic centre, where mothers on a tiring day can take their children for recreational purposes, and at the same time show them the beauties of the bush land of King's Park? Yet many members still want to see King's Park left in a tangled mass of undergrowth! As for taking a bare 20 acres out of 998, not one argument has been submitted so far in this debate to convince me that we will desecrate King's Park by the giving away of such a tiny morsel of land.

Mr. Lawrence: Where is the tangled mass of undergrowth?

Mr. WILD: One has only to look at the area around Thomas-st.—and, in fact, practically anywhere—to discover that it is a tangled mass of undergrowth and it is only trifling with the subject to talk about preserving the indigenous flora and that sort of thing.

The member for Subiaco pointed out the different types of trees in the park that had been planted there by the King's Park Board, and, as a member of

the board asked this evening: How many have survived? I only hope that members who added their names to that petition or whatever it may be called, will reconsider their decision, because I am certain that, in the interests of the people of this State, that decision should be reversed for the reason that it was a wrong one.

Here we have the Perth City Council, for the first time for many years, hoping to give not only to Perth but to people throughout the State something of great beauty. Not only that, but the same city council has, during the past two or three years, made big moves that previous city fathers have never been game to make. I refer particularly to parking. In conjunction with the Minister for Transport, the Perth City Council has at long last tackled that problem. There is also the matter of access ways and the lanes between Hay and Murray-sts. That problem is being tackled by the Perth City Council against odds, because it knows that such a procedure is right.

The city council consists of men who—like members of all local governing authorities—are unpaid. They are the butt of anyone who cares to criticise them. But they are men who have put forward a sound proposition in the interests of the State and I want to make certain that my name is recorded in Hansard as being very much in favour of this project. So many have talked about posterity in 1,000 years time. I do not want anyone to say in the future, "What a mouse Wild was. He disapproved of the city council doing something in the interests of the people of Western Australia." I whole-heartedly support the measure.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION** (Hon. W. Hegney—Mt. Hawthorn) [7.47]: I propose to be brief in my remarks. I would comment by altering the last sentence of the member for Dale. He said he wanted his name to be recorded in Hansard as not being opposed to the excision of 20 acres in King's Park. I am prepared to take a risk so far as posterity is concerned and have my name recorded as being that of one who is against the proposal.

Members: Hear, hear!

**The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** This is a Bill in regard to which the Government and members of the Opposition are mixed in their opinions. I would like to say that the Perth City Council has done what it thought was correct. I have no quarrel whatsoever with it. I have no reason to doubt that the members of the Perth City Council are very sincere and honestly believe that their efforts and objective are praiseworthy. So far as I am concerned, there can be half a dozen olympic pools within the confines of the city, but there will be none in King's Park.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Hear, hear!

**The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** I would like to refer at this stage to the remarks of my very respected friend on my right—the Minister for Lands. In the course of his very fine address, with which I did not agree, he said—

There is nothing that the present board or any of its predecessors have done all through the years that has encouraged any form of Cheap-Jack entertainment. They have jealously guarded this particular section of land which we call King's Park; and, on a number of occasions, have refused applications for the setting aside of portions of it for polo fields, hospitals, golf courses and so on, so certain were they that those activities were not in keeping with the general character of the reserve.

That brings me to the point that the member for West Perth, in his remarks, indicated—quite honestly, from his point of view—that he did not think the setting aside of 20 acres would establish a precedent for further excisions.

But I submit that if this Bill is passed and 20 acres are excised from the park, a precedent will be established. I suggest, with all due respect to those who are in favour of the measure, that if this Bill is passed and an approach is subsequently made by a great number of sporting bodies within our community for further excisions of from five to 10 acres for a similar objective, we would find it difficult conscientiously to object to further excisions. Could we do that? That is a question that has to be decided.

Mr. Wild: Would not Parliament have to judge every application on its merits?

**The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:** I asked whether, if this proposal were carried, Parliament would be consistent if—when a similar proposal was submitted to this Chamber in 12 months or two years time from other sporting bodies for the excision of from five to 20 acres—we could with consistency refuse those further excisions.

Altogether there are 1,000 acres. The member for West Perth says that only 20 are to be excised. This statement is made by others who are in favour of the proposal. I give them full credit for being very sincere in their desires, because I would like people to believe that I, too, am sincere in my expression of opinion. My view is that if we allow 20 acres to be excised today, once the barrier is let down, there will not be many native trees in the park in a few years time. That is my candid opinion.

I will not go into details as to what Sir John Forrest said 50 or 60 years ago. I am merely expressing my own opinion as to what should happen. It has been said that there have been a lot of groups

exerting pressure on members of Parliament and there have been many circulars spread around the City of Perth. That is so. I have received a number of them—some roneoed; some signed.

There is no objection on my part to the Perth City Council trying to further its objective by endeavouring to create public opinion in favour of this measure. The fact remains that a number of people in the City of Perth area—including Mt. Hawthorn—have been circularised. I can go further than the member for Dale. He said he had 6,000 electors in his constituency. Mine is an electorate of over 12,000, part of the area being in the Perth Road District. I have received four letters and had one telephone conversation. That is the amount of correspondence that I have received in connection with this matter. I think that three of the letters were in favour of the proposal and one was against.

In the telephone conversation, a lady in Mt. Hawthorn indicated in no indefinite terms what her view was. I took the precaution to explain my attitude first, and her views coincided with mine. She was very strongly opposed to the proposition. That brings me to the point that she spoke volumes in a few words. She is an Englishwoman—and of course, my friend on my right is English—but she took this view. She said, "I came from a very thickly populated city in England, and I realise the value of these open spaces. The City of Perth, beautiful as it is, has a population of approximately 300,000 within a radius of 20 miles." I agree; and I agree, too, that in a few years time the population of Perth and its environs will be doubled. And as the population grows, so will the need for these parks.

Delhi Square is being cleared. There are going to be parking areas—quite rightly—on the foreshore. But King's Park has been preserved for many years; and, as far as I am concerned, it will remain in its present state. The ex-Minister for Forests, the member for Dale, and my friend on my left are in favour of the Bill. Apparently they do not have the view that King's Park as it stands is beautiful. I have a different view.

Mr. Wild: We believe in progress.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I believe that King's Park is beautiful, and I have been through it on hoof. In its present state, it is natural; and the time will come when there will be plenty of people travelling through it. Some people may consider that the native banksia and sheoak trees are not beautiful. To me they are.

The flora of this country, within a radius of 20 or 30 miles of Perth, is being denuded and the time is not far distant when one will have to travel a number of miles from the city to see anything in its natural state, such as we have in King's Park. You, Mr.

Speaker, know that many years ago in Midland Junction and West Midland there were many, beautiful trees and flowers.

The Minister for Native Welfare: And opossums.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. Then the axe went through and bush fires. Travelling further afield, as a lad I spent many happy days walking through the bush from Midland Junction to Swan View; and where National Park now is I followed the stream—I and my friends—and I used to see the hills covered with everlastings. But when bikes and motorcars came into vogue and fires spread, many of those flowers and trees were uprooted and burnt. What is left is still beautiful, and it must be preserved. The member for Pilbara says that I am growing lyrical. To me this is a subject on which—

Mr. Rodoreda: No; I would say you are growing hysterical.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I thought I was being a little historical. If I do grow hysterical on the matter it is only because I am so anxious to preserve the park in its natural state for posterity; that is the reason.

Hon. L. Thorn: Take no notice of him.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I would like those who have not yet spoken and who may be in favour of this proposition, to explain to me what their attitude would be if similar proposals to this one for the excision of areas from the park were submitted to this Chamber in years to come.

Mr. Court: Parliament would not have to approve of future propositions just because it approved of this one. Each would be considered on its merits.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is an old phrase. I have used it very often.

Mr. Court: I'll say you have!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: But not in a case like this which is entirely different. This is a matter which calls for a great degree of consistency.

The Minister for Native Welfare: And statesmanship.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, and that is why I am adopting this attitude.

The Minister for Lands: You mean you are not considering this on its merits?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. I studied the speech of the Minister and he put up a very strong argument on a very weak case. The position is that if this Bill is carried, Parliament cannot refuse to be consistent with regard to further submissions of the same character, and before many years have elapsed we will have no native bush within the confines of King's Park. In conclusion, I give

the city council full credit for its efforts. I believe there are other places in the metropolitan area where a number of pools could be constructed, but if a select committee is appointed it will, so far as I am concerned, be done on the understanding that King's Park must remain sacrosanct.

**MR. ACKLAND (Moore)** [8.11]: To me the most surprising feature of this Bill is the tremendous amount of publicity it has received and the importance it has been given in the Press and elsewhere.

**Hon. J. B. Sleeman**: Who was responsible for that?

**MR. ACKLAND**: Many people were responsible for that, but I do not think it matters one scrap, in the ultimate, to the prosperity or otherwise of Western Australia, whether this Bill is passed or defeated. It will not in any way affect the economy of Western Australia. Had it not been for the tremendous amount of publicity that the question has received in the Press—by "The West Australian" itself and through letters to that journal—and the sloppy sentiment of so many of the writers, I do not think we would have had our galleries packed as they have been during this debate. So far during this session, there have been 42 or 43 Bills introduced into this House and none of them has aroused the public interest that has been caused by this question which, in my opinion, is not a very important one.

**Hon. J. B. Sleeman**: Having now seen what they have been missing, no doubt the public will come more often.

**MR. ACKLAND**: There has been introduced into this House legislation that will have far reaching effects on many people. Some residents in country districts consider that promises made to them years ago have now been repudiated, and they feel that the ultimate prosperity of the State will be affected by legislation that has been passed.

**Mr. Lawrence**: Why not get down to the question and debate it?

**MR. ACKLAND**: In this instance we have the City of Perth fulfilling its rightful function in the community and approaching Parliament with the object of obtaining a site for an aquatic centre. The Perth City Council has certainly circularised members of this House and has gone in for a great deal of propaganda, but of the propaganda I have read—I have read it from both sides—that emanating from the Perth City Council contained more factual information than that emanating from those who oppose this measure. The City of Perth has asked that 2 per cent. of the nearly 1,000 acres which comprises King's Park should be used for an aquatic centre. Already there have been passed regulations that have made available to organisations with a confined membership, as instanced by the King's Park Bowling Club, the King's

Park Tennis Club and the playing fields of Hale School, areas from which the public are excluded.

Here we have a proposal for something to provide for the public, with land made suitable for playing fields, for picnic parties, camping areas and so on, with no charge whatever to the public for making use of that area, except in the case of the swimming pool. It has been said in some of the correspondence in the Press that the swimming pool would be a close preserve for a few favoured people, but, in fact, it would be no more a close preserve than would any theatre or public place of entertainment, and apart from the swimming pool itself there would be no entrance fee.

**Mr. Lawrence**: Did you say there would be no charge?

**MR. ACKLAND**: I said that only in the case of the swimming pool would a charge be made. The rest of the amenities would be free to everybody. We have heard a lot about what Lord Forrest said in regard to King's Park. I have read the documents and there is no doubt that one of the objectives set out by Lord Forrest and those closely associated with him was that King's Park should be used for the preservation of native flora, and I believe everyone who supports this measure is in complete agreement with that. But he also said that the area was to be set aside for the pleasure and enjoyment of the people.

If the portion of the park with which we are dealing is used for an aquatic centre, somewhere between 900 and 950 acres will still remain in its native state. I do not agree with the contention of the Minister for Education that a dangerous precedent will be created and that Parliament will be compelled, if it agrees to this Bill, to make other ground available in future. He skipped over the fact that we already have the King's Park Bowling Club, the King's Park Tennis Club and the sporting ground used by Hale School—

The Minister for Labour: Two wrongs do not make a right.

**Mr. Ross Hutchinson**: How would you vote later on if the cyclists moved to have a velodrome placed there?

The Minister for Education: Two wrongs do not make a right.

**MR. ACKLAND**: I would treat each application entirely on its merits. I believe the construction of this aquatic centre will enhance the prestige of Perth tremendously. We already have in King's Park a tennis club about which international players, I understand, have been most eulogistic, saying it has a playing surface equal to that of Kooyong, but that its environs are ever so much better. I believe that will apply even more so, should the aquatic centre be built in King's Park.

**Mr. Ross Hutchinson**: And the environs will not remain long in their present state.

Mr. ACKLAND: I believe that there are only three bodies vitally interested in this project. They are the King's Park Board and, unlike the member for Cottesloe, I believe it is doing a great job; the Perth City Council, which has shown a great deal of initiative in this and other matters, and possibly the most important section, the ratepayers of the Perth municipality, who would be called upon to foot the bill. I understand that the revenue of the Perth City Council is somewhere approaching £750,000 per annum and if it had to find the money for this aquatic centre, it would need £21,000 per annum to meet the interest on a loan of £250,000 and that would represent to the ratepayers an extra 1d. in the £ on the ratable value of property in the Perth City Council area. I believe the responsibility could be left in the hands of those people to decide whether they are prepared to meet such a commitment. Members of this House come from an area representing nearly 3,000,000 square miles. We represent people from Wyndham in the north to Augusta in the south.

Mr. Bovell: It is 1,000,000 square miles.

Mr. ACKLAND: That is so. I believe it is no concern of ours whether the pool is constructed or not, provided the intentions of the originators of King's Park, as set out in No. 1 objective, the preservation of native flora, are adhered to. The people most interested can decide how best the enjoyment of the people may be enhanced in their own area. I represent an electorate of approximately 5,000 people and in my area there are committees busily engaged at present in the building and construction of three swimming pools. That at Goomalling is nearly completed. At Wongan Hills the excavations have been finished and the only delay there was an assurance that sufficient water would be available for the pool. That assurance has now been received and work will go ahead on the pool.

At Moora the committee is engaged in collecting funds for the construction of a pool. I know that any of those people would be incensed if others from outside their areas told them where they were, or were not, to build. Each of those pools is being built on a Government reserve, made available by the Government of the State for them to construct their pools. Those three pools are estimated to cost between £90,000 and £100,000—a little over £30,000 each. Not only in those areas but elsewhere in the country, people are working together to do things for their own benefit.

But here we are interfering in a matter which is no concern of ours. It can be left to the ratepayers of Perth to decide. They will be paying the money and they will all have a vote to say whether the pool should be in King's Park or not. It has been said that the people of the country are opposed to this legislation—and this

has been said by one of the most conservative members of this House, a man who is always sure of his facts before giving utterance to them. In this case, however, I maintain he is completely off the beam.

The Premier: I do not think you should speak like that about the member for Nedlands.

Mr. Bovell: On this occasion the member for Nedlands, the member for Moore and the Premier are all together.

Mr. ACKLAND: I know that every local authority in Western Australia has been written to. From memory, I think there are about 147 of them and only four of that number expressed their opposition to this pool—and this is from Wyndham in the north to Augusta in the south. I have a list of 39 road boards that have answered and I happen to know that some others considered that it was no concern of theirs and as a result they did not reply.

As it has been stated that the country people are opposed to this pool, it might be a good idea to advise the House how the country people and others voted. Those in favour of it were the Merredin Road Board, the Municipal Council of Nedlands, the Murray Road Board, the Beverley and Peppermint Grove Road Boards, the Rockingham Road Board the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council, the Boulder Municipal Council, the Katanning Road Board, the Narrogin Road Board, the Kondinin Road Board, the Yalgoo Road Board, the Perth Road Board, the Victoria Plains Road Board, the Mosman Park Road Board, the Dundas, Colliie coalfields and Lake Grace Road Boards, the East Fremantle Municipal Council, the Geraldton and Tammin Road Boards, the Kalgoorlie Road Board, the Goomalling Road Board, the Municipal Council of South Perth and the Broome Road Board. The four authorities against the proposition happen to be the Brookton Road Board, the Geraldton-Greenough Road Board, the Corrigin Road Board and the Gnowangerup Road Board.

Mr. Roberts: What about the rest?

Mr. ACKLAND: There is another list which I have not read where letters have been received from those who have said that it is no concern of theirs. Those who did not consider it worth while answering, we can reasonably assume have no objection to what was being done.

In my own area there are seven road boards; four of them are in the list I have just read. Two others have told me that they have no objection to it; that they have no right to have any objection to it. I have not been able to contact the other one in question. That is the position as it exists in the country. I have had letters from two very fine women in my electorate and they have asked me to oppose this Bill and to have nothing to do with an aquatic centre.

One of these women is an eminent botanist who has written books and received widespread publicity far beyond the State of Western Australia. As a botanist, she has asked that not one wildflower be destroyed in King's Park. The other woman to whom I have referred is the granddaughter of the surveyor general responsible for the surveying of King's Park, and the King's Park Board has erected a memorial to this gentleman. Like the botanist, she is very jealous that nothing should be done in any way to desecrate King's Park. Those two ladies have very good reasons for their attitude and if I thought there was any fear that King's Park would be spoilt, I would be on their side and would oppose the Bill.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The botanist is an expert in these matters.

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, but even experts sometimes get carried away. It would not be a bad idea to approach the matter from a practical angle. The good lady will still have more than 900 acres through which to wander looking for her specimens.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Not if you vote for this pool.

Mr. ACKLAND: I have heard misleading statements made in this House and have seen such statements in the Press from people who have not been at all careful of their facts. When the Minister introduced the Bill, he spoke about Stanley Park and he gave factual information as to what exists in that very fine park in Vancouver. Then again we had a letter from a doctor who occupies an important position in this State and he contradicted what the Minister had said. In today's "Daily News" there is a plan of this park in Vancouver and from it we see that there are a number of areas in the park which have been used for different purposes.

The greater part of the park is covered with Douglas firs and the eminent doctor says that one can get into the fir forest and not hear anything of the traffic outside. That is quite true. The Douglas firs standing in that park are 10 times as thick as the karri trees at Pemberton. When Douglas firs are cut—although they are not cut in that park—they have to be cut on the face because the trees are so thick that they cannot fall otherwise. Stanley Park is noted throughout the world—it must be or else we would not have had these people rushing into print.

If King's Park were improved to some extent, it would be very much better for the people of Western Australia. I go through that park about four times a day when I have occasion to be in the metropolitan area, and I must say now that I am as proud of King's Park as are those members opposing the Bill. It compensates

somewhat for a man having to live in the metropolitan area rather than in the country.

During the last six or seven months, however, since this matter has come before the people, I have always driven along the northern road which goes quite close to the Subiaco entrance. In that period I do not think I have seen 20 cars—I certainly have not seen 50 people—using that part of the park. We all know, of course, that there are people with their slobbering sentiment who do frequent that park, but they would be too afraid to go too deep into the park for fear they would be bitten by an insect. The member for Cottesloe talked about skeletons in the park, and we know that at least one of them was in the park for years before it was discovered. That alone would indicate how little that part of the park is used.

Mr. Bovell: The quiet tranquility of the park.

Mr. ACKLAND: I would now like to address a word or two to the member for North Perth. He made an attempt to put me in my place. I know that Mr. Watson, who is in charge of King's Park, is terribly worried about the African veldt grass. I watched experiments carried out in the park over a considerable period to see if they would do anything to control that weed which, with all his knowledge, the member for North Perth told us would not stand up to stocking. I do not know whether he meant to convey the impression that he was proposing to convert the park into a grazing area. This veldt grass is destroying the natural flora, so much so that the authorities do not know where next to turn in this respect. I have here a very fine booklet entitled "The Western Naturalist" of the 15th August, 1957. I would like to read the following extract:—

Once established it is an active invader of all disturbed habitats. However, for successful growth it needs an open canopy. It does not succeed in the closed canopy so often seen in jarrah woodland. When the grass first appeared in the Park is unknown. It was first noticed in the State at East Guildford about 1900 and was recorded at the Crawley end of King's Park in 1924.

Its menace to the Park came to be realised and various measures were taken to eradicate it, with little success. One bold step was adopted in 1949 to 1951, when during the flowering and seeding seasons the Board tried to control the grass by means of cattle grazing. This well-meaning attempt appeared to be soundly based because veldt grass cannot stand heavy grazing. However, it failed because native vegetation was also eaten, ungerminated seeds of

Veldt grass and other weeds were left, and, most important, the litter and soil layers were broken up by the hooves of the animals.

The condition in that section of the park today is worse than it ever was.

Mr. Lapham: Read on to page 50. It is more excuse than problem.

Mr. ACKLAND: I do claim to know something about pastures even though there are times that I am told I know nothing about certain other things. If they wish to contradict me in this matter when I am dealing with features of my own industry, the member for Vasse and the member for North Perth would not know what they were talking about.

Mr. Bovell: You are capable of speaking for yourself, but let me speak on my own behalf.

Mr. ACKLAND: One of the most interesting features of this controversy has been the interest taken by people where a plebiscite was held. The idea did not originate in the Perth City Council but with one of the industrial organisations in the city which, for its own benefit, circularised the employees in its industry asking for their opinion as to what should happen in King's Park. The question was: "Are you in favour of the action proposed on the King's Park aquatic centre?" The heading of "Yes" or "No" or "No opinion" appeared in the circular. Each employee had perfect freedom to state his views either in favour or against it. The result was that out of a total of 97 employees, 90 signed in favour of it and seven opposed it. Later on, I understand the Perth City Council got in touch with quite a number of organisations in Perth. There were 24 organisations or businesses concerned which employed a total staff of 2,422, and the answers to the questions in the circular were "Yes" 2,052, "No" 331, and "No opinion" 39.

Mr. Norton: Was it the same questionnaire?

Mr. ACKLAND: Those figures show that the result in favour was 84 per cent.

Mr. Potter: Were the ratepayers asked?

Mr. ACKLAND: I do not know, but I know that the circulars were sent to firms where more than 100 both juniors, and seniors were employed. Only 24 firms were circulated, and 2,422 people were employed by these businesses.

Mr. Norton: Was it the same question as the previous one?

Mr. ACKLAND: The questionnaire was, I believe, on all fours with the one previously mentioned. I do not want to take up much more time of the House, but I want, like the member for Dale, to record that I am very much in favour of the Bill which is before the House. We have heard a great deal about propaganda

and pressure politics, and I say there has been more pressure applied by those who oppose this Bill than by those who are in favour of it, and if one looked at it fairly, one would agree to that. I think that the circular or petition—or whatever one likes to call it—was the most unethical thing that has ever happened in this Parliament.

Members: Rubbish!

Mr. ACKLAND: I think it was to bring pressure to bear on the Government not to introduce this legislation. I know that pressure was placed on me to sign the petition.

Mr. Bovell: Pressure rubbish!

Mr. Lapham: You were never asked to sign.

Mr. Bovell: Pressure by whom?

Mr. ACKLAND: By one who carried the petition around the House.

Mr. Lapham: Name him.

Mr. ACKLAND: The member for Mt. Lawley.

Mr. Lapham: He is not here.

Mr. ACKLAND: I know that, but the hon. member asked me to name him. That is the reason why I did not name him previously.

Mr. Bovell: What pressure tactics?

Mr. ACKLAND: The member for Vasse said it was not a fact. It is, and I believe that a great many who signed the petition hoped that by doing so, they would not have to stand up and be counted in the division on this matter. I believe that. I do not know who was responsible for the publication of that statement, but it is one action of the Premier with which I am in agreement, if he were responsible. I was glad to see it, because this is the place where these matters have to be decided.

Mr. Lapham: This is where it will be decided. It has to be decided here.

Mr. Roberts: Where else?

Mr. ACKLAND: I think the idea behind it was that if there were sufficient opposed to this legislation, the Government would not take upon itself to bring the measure before the House.

Hon. D. Brand: Do you think the effect of raising the money necessary for the pool will affect the building programme of schools, hospitals and the like?

Mr. ACKLAND: I did not intend to mention that matter, but I am informed that the raising of £200,000 or more loan will not in any way affect the loans which will be made available through the Loan Council. It might have this effect—I do not know—that there might not be so much money available for State electricity loans, etc., but it will not affect any of those organisations which raise money for semi-governmental undertakings.

**MR. BOVELL** (Vasse) [8.35]: This Bill has introduced into this Parliament the most refreshing atmosphere which it has been my pleasure to experience. We see members on the Government side of the House speaking for and against the Bill; we see members on the Opposition side of the House speaking for and against the Bill, and even in the cross benches there is one member of the Country Party who is supporting the measure.

**Mr. Wild:** Good on him!

**Mr. BOVELL:** I would say that in all the years I have been a member of this Parliament, this has been a display of democracy which I have never witnessed before, and I do not think any other member of this House could say there has ever before been such a democratic approach to any item of legislation presented to us for consideration.

**Mr. Potter:** Does that include the ultimatum?

**Hon. L. Thorn:** There is that voice again!

**Mr. BOVELL:** Much has been said about an ultimatum and this morning, in Margaret River, my attention was drawn to the editorial in "The West Australian." I would say that whilst "The West Australian" and any other newspaper has a perfect right to express its own opinion, we are living today in the year 1957, not 1857. Today the people of mature years have been able to receive an education which entitles them to think for themselves. It is not 1857 when the great bulk of the population was uneducated and influenced by newspaper editorials and expressions. Therefore, I say to the editor of "The West Australian," through you, Mr. Speaker, that if he wants to influence the considerations of members of this Parliament, he should refrain from notifying them what he considers they should do.

**The Premier:** You do not want to be too hard on Jim and Griff.

**Mr. BOVELL:** I can think for myself in regard to matters which are placed before Parliament, especially after considering the opinions of others. However, when an ultimatum is presented to members of this Chamber by the leading newspaper of Western Australia, I think it is high time that the editor of this publication reviewed his policy and considered the facts that we today have benefited by education and can think for ourselves, after we have the considered opinions of others.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Did you say our leading newspaper?

**The Premier:** You had better be careful about what you say in regard to "The West Australian" as you would be lost without it.

**Mr. BOVELL:** In regard to the so-called ultimatum, as it is referred to in this editorial, I would say that the procedure adopted on that occasion—as this is a non-party matter—is the procedure adopted on every measure that has been introduced into this Parliament down through the years. We know that in Caucus if a measure is opposed by a majority of the party members, it never sees the light of day in this Chamber, and I know that if members of the party to which I belong discuss a matter and a majority decide against the legislation considered it is not introduced or is not supported.

**The Minister for Education:** You are giving secrets away now.

**The Premier:** That is interesting.

**Mr. BOVELL:** That is the democratic right of party politics, but this measure was in no way a matter of party politics, and the members—I for one—who signed that notification to the Premier as the leader of the Government, did so as an indication to him—just as members in the Caucus room give an indication in regard to measures the Government may intend to bring down—of the attitude of members of this Assembly. There was no other reason than that for members signing that indication of their intention regarding their attitude towards the olympic pool in King's Park.

**The Premier:** What was the real object of the ultimatum?

**Mr. BOVELL:** It was not an ultimatum, and the Premier knows it. He should know, and he is not going to make me commit myself in the way he would like. He should realise that I have been here long enough now to even combat his attacks, if I feel so disposed.

The problem of King's Park is one of maintaining the natural native flora which is there, and it is of personal interest to many of us. I have no violent objection to any member expressing his own opinion on this matter; that is our democratic right. However, my mind goes back to somewhere in the vicinity of 1927—I think it was then—when it was proposed to build a hospital in King's Park, and there was an outcry throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia. At that time, I was a bank officer in Albany and the project was frowned upon and "The West Australian" newspaper—if my memory serves me correctly—opposed this proposal.

That project was not proceeded with, but I would say that if there is no room in King's Park for a hospital, there is no room for an olympic pool. I believe that the great building of the Royal Perth Hospital would have been much better placed in King's Park than where it is today. But the people of those days, aided and abetted by the local Press, decided that the sanctity of King's Park's natural flora



should not be despoiled, even to allow such an institution as a hospital to be erected there.

So I believe that any encroachment on the natural flora of King's Park should be resisted. I believe that if Parliament approves the proposal to establish an aquatic centre there, it will be creating a precedent and will, I fear as was indicated in the editorial I have referred to, be the beginning of the end of any natural flora in King's Park.

Mr. May: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOVELL: Listen to what the editorial states—

The Assembly should pass the Bill without further demur.

Full stop!

By doing so it will record a decisive vote for better development of the park for public use.

The Premier: Comma!

Mr. BOVELL: No, another full stop.

The question of an olympic pool is merely a test case. It offers the opportunity of establishing a principle for the beautification and landscaping of the State's most magnificent park in a way which will open it to maximum public access and, at the same time, enhance the prospects of expert care of the indigenous flora.

I do not know what indigenous flora would remain if the proposals outlined in the first part of the editorial I have read, were adopted. If I had any doubts about my intention as to the establishing of the olympic pool in King's Park, this editorial would have confirmed my fears, that the question of the olympic pool is only a test case. Having once got an area excised for the purposes of a pool, then we might have cycle tracks and even race-tracks, trotting tracks and provision for other forms of sport.

The Premier: Two or three aerodromes.

Mr. BOVELL: I make it clear that I am not in any way opposed to the Perth City Council establishing an olympic pool, but I do not consider King's Park to be the proper place for it.

Reference has been made to the veldt grass and the danger of its encroachment on the natural flora in King's Park. Perhaps the Minister for Mines, as chairman of the Rottneest Board of Control, instead of exporting some of his quokkas from the island, could be induced to establish them in King's Park where they would possibly eradicate the veldt grass. The chairman of the Rottneest Board of Control might consider this suggestion.

Whilst talking about veldt grass, I have in mind my visit to Africa by courtesy of the members of this Parliament. I was so impressed by the natural surroundings of Victoria Falls that in my report to

Parliament, I referred to what I considered to be one of the world's outstanding beauty spots. If members have not read my report, and I doubt very much that they have, I might be permitted to quote just a short extract to show what impressed me in connection with the Victoria Falls.

The SPEAKER: Are you connecting it up with the Bill.

Mr. BOVELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker.—

A solid sheet of water one-and-a-quarter miles in width crashing into a chasm 355 feet deep—

The Minister for Works: Full stop.

Mr. BOVELL: It would be a full stop for the Minister for Works if he fell over it—

—at its highest point, would be impressive anywhere. Situated in an environment of tall palms and thick tropical vegetation, it is unforgettable. The principal charm of the Victoria Falls is its unspoiled natural surroundings. Nothing has been added and nothing taken away.

That is what the Government of Rhodesia thinks of the greatest scenic attraction that I believe there is in the world. They leave it in its natural environment, and I believe that Lord Forrest had in mind that the natural charm of King's Park should be retained so that the generations of the future could see in the park the natural bush that was here when Stirling came and founded the City of Perth.

The Minister for Lands: Do you think he had that in mind when he gave away 12 acres?

The Premier: We will have to stop the Narrows Bridge and pull up the Causeway.

Mr. BOVELL: I think I have indicated that I oppose the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park. I do not oppose the establishment of an aquatic centre by the city council. That is the council's business, but King's Park is the property of all people in the State of Western Australia, not only today but in the future; and if I as a member of this Parliament in 1957 voted for the excision of any part of it, I would consider I was failing in my duty to generations yet unborn.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR. ANDREW (Victoria Park) [8.53]: I have endeavoured to get all the information possible on this subject and I have read all the pamphlets that members have quoted. I also attended a meeting at the Town Hall, which was addressed by the Lord Mayor. Furthermore, the member for Beeloo and I had an interview with the Lord Mayor to have an exchange of views.

I think there is a certain amount of importance attached to the question that is before us.

When the Minister introduced the Bill, he made certain statements to the effect that those of us who were opposed to the measure were unreasonably prejudiced; that we were not courageous and that we were very weak and subject to pressure. In regard to the second one, he said he wanted certain documents recorded because he hoped that those in the future would have the courage that we might lack. The kindest thing I can say to the Minister is that he put up a good case, but it would have been much better if he had not made those remarks.

I grant the Minister his sincerity, and I believe that what he put before the House he believes. I also grant the Lord Mayor of Perth his sincerity and I believe that that he is doing something which he believes is in the best interests of Perth and of Western Australia. I also want to suggest that we who oppose a pool in King's Park are sincere in our opposition; and we have some good arguments to support our opposition to an aquatic centre in King's Park.

There has been a great deal of propaganda made out of a certain paper which was signed in this House. It was called a petition—wrongly—and it was also in today's Press called an ultimatum. A petition is made when someone is asking for something; and an ultimatum is when it is a demand—do this or else! "The West Australian" published that this morning, and I think it knew it was stating a deliberate untruth when it called the document an ultimatum. The document made no request to the Premier or anyone; and that was stated on it. I signed this document which was to the effect that we, the undersigned members of the Legislative Assembly, wished to notify the Premier that we were against the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park.

Mr. Potter: Without hearing the case—very just!

Mr. ANDREW: I will come to that in a moment. The Premier was not asked not to bring the Bill down. He was simply given information as to the feelings of members in the House. In answer to the member for Subiaco, this matter was debated in 1954. The Bill then before the House was a different measure—a Bill to amend the Parks and Reserves Act—whereas this is one to excise a certain portion of King's Park.

The Minister for Lands: It does not excise anything.

Mr. ANDREW: But they are both on the same thing; they are both on the question of the Perth City Council establishing an

aquatic centre in King's Park. The member for North Perth, in bringing the Bill forward in 1954, stated—

I have here an extract from "The West Australian" dated the 22nd September, 1954, which reads—

#### Olympic Pool May be Built in Park.

The King's Park Board has agreed in principle to the establishment of an aquatic centre and Olympic pool in King's Park.

This decision was made at the board's last meeting.

Permission was given for the Perth City Council formally to submit plans and specifications to the board for consideration.

The president (Sir Thomas Meagher) said yesterday that the board's decision did not bind it to the establishment of an Olympic pool in King's Park.

It merely gave the council the authority to go ahead and prepare plans and specifications for the board's consideration.

This shows definitely that it was about the Perth City Council establishing an aquatic centre in King's Park. Some members spoke on that occasion, and the Minister for Lands stated—

Apparently there has been some opposition in the metropolitan area to a suggestion that an aquatic centre be built in the park, and I can well understand how this can come about.

The Minister for Lands: Is that all you are going to read of what I said?

Mr. ANDERW: No. I am just quoting these remarks to show that the debate was about the same subject. The member for Beverley stated—

I feel that any attempt to touch King's Park would be detrimental to the State.

Mr. Potter: What did the member for Subiaco say?

Mr. ANDREW: I do not know. I have quoted the first speakers on the previous measure to show that the debate now before the House is on the same subject. See the statement that we have prejudged the measure before debating or considering it is totally untrue because we fully debated it previously.

Mr. Court: Why did you sign the document?

Mr. ANDREW: We who oppose this Bill have some very good grounds for doing so and personally I am not going to speak—

The Minister for Lands: It is about time we heard some good grounds.

Mr. ANDREW:—regarding the preservation of King's Park in its natural state. Other speakers have dealt fully with that point. My argument is based on two other points. One has reference to the question of decentralisation and the other point is that we could do better. We often say, "Why didn't our forebears use their imagination and look a little further ahead, because they have left many problems to confront us today?" If we put an aquatic centre in King's Park, we will only help aggravate the problems that we already have. Perth is built principally between the main railway line and the river and the business area, entertainments and sporting areas are between those boundaries.

We are still continuing to erect more buildings in that area and I would like to draw members' attention to the "Daily News" of the 14th August this year. It contains an aerial photograph showing the number of buildings in the course of construction, and those which are to be built in the future. The heading of the picture is "Look how we are growing." It indicates that approximately £7,000,000 will be spent on new buildings in that area.

At present we have a traffic problem and if an aquatic centre is built in King's Park, more people will come into that confined area, and yet we cannot cope with the number who use it now. If we add to the already growing number who do business in that small confined space in Perth, and build an aquatic centre in the park, we will make our traffic problem even worse than it is today. Those people who come from Victoria Park will have to use the Causeway, and that is already congested, and those who come from East Perth, Mt. Lawley, Bayswater and suburbs in that direction, will have to use the subways or come through the city. This also will affect our traffic problem.

When introducing the Bill, the Minister said that approximately 460 cars an hour travelled along King's Park-rd. and that 620 cars an hour travelled along Thomas-st. He also said that the city council proposed to build a parking area to handle 500 cars with an additional provision for 300 cars, making a total of 800. He went on to state that if parking space for more than 800 was required, some further provision would be made for them. On Thursday, the 29th August, I asked the Minister for Transport a question regarding the number of motorcars registered in the metropolitan area in 1953 and the number today. The answer was that 75,600 were registered in 1953 and 109,565 in 1957, an increase of 34,000, or nearly 50 per cent. There is no reason to suggest that that rate of increase will not continue and if, according to the Minister's figures, a car travels along Thomas-st. every six seconds now, on an

average, in eight or ten years' time a car will be travelling along Thomas-st., on the average, every three seconds.

Mr. Potter: That is why we want the aquatic centre.

Mr. ANDREW: So if there was a swimming competition at the aquatic centre in King's Park, and a large number of people attended, most of them would have to park their cars on or off the roadway, and with a traffic density of a car travelling along Thomas-st. every three seconds, the congestion would be terrific.

The Minister for Lands: The Commissioner of Main Roads thinks it would be all right.

Mr. ANDREW: Half of these cars would have had to travel through an already congested area to get to the pool.

The Minister for Lands: Our traffic experts say that it will be suitable.

Mr. Rodoreda: The same thing would apply wherever the pool was built.

Mr. ANDREW: But we are putting everything in a confined area; we are centralising instead of decentralising. We often growl about our forefathers not using their imagination as to what was likely to happen in the future, and we say that they have left us problems. But we are also creating problems for the future if we accept the proposition in this Bill. To put the aquatic centre where it is proposed in this Bill, is a town-planning blunder of the first water. It will add to and aggravate the problems we already have. I know that the Minister for Transport is most energetic and enterprising in his attempts to solve the traffic problem; so why add to it?

The Minister for Lands: There is no traffic problem up there.

Mr. ANDREW: The second reason why I am against the project is that we could do better. Speakers in support of the Bill have said that this is the only site. That is ridiculous. It was said that the park was the only site for the Royal Perth Hospital. But other sites have been found for this and other hospitals, and so I think we could do better in this instance. When the member for Beeloo and I spoke to the Lord Mayor, we suggested that instead of spending £210,000 or £220,000 on building an aquatic centre in King's Park, it would be better to build three pools for £70,000 each. These could be built in the suburbs—one south of the river, where it is particularly needed because the districts are so far away from water suitable for swimming, and the other two could be built north of the line. Instead of people having to come into the centre of the city they would be going out and away from the city.

During his speech the member for Dale said that if this proposal were defeated, approximately 40,000 children would be

deprived of a pool. Those of us who oppose this Bill are not against the building of a pool; we are against it being built in a particular spot. I would remind the member for Dale that if three pools were built, instead of 40,000 children being deprived of a pool three times that number would have swimming facilities made available to them and they would not have to come into a confined area as would be the case if this measure were passed.

Mr. Potter: You can have as many pools as tin baths, but you cannot have as many aquatic centres.

Mr. ANDREW: The hon. member has had his say and if he would say something which would warrant a reply, I would answer him; but I do not think I can answer that interjection. There are a number of other members who wish to speak to this measure but I have put up what I think are two good reasons why it would be wrong to establish an aquatic centre in King's Park.

I suggest to the Lord Mayor, who believes he is doing what is right and best, that he consider the other proposal that I put to him. Personally, I do not think he can do it at present until he gets the idea of King's Park out of his head. I ask him to sit down quietly and dispassionately and consider what would be in the interests of all the ratepayers of the City of Perth and that he use the same sum of money to build a number of pools—I suggested three—in the suburbs. If he did that, I think he would be doing a much better job for the city, which he serves so well. I say that I am definitely and strongly against the pool being established in the park, and I oppose the Bill.

MR. CROMMELIN (Claremont) [9.11]: I shall not speak at length on this Bill but at the outset I would like to say that possibly I was born as near to the park as any member in this House, having been born in Ord-st.

Mr. Heal: A good electorate.

Mr. CROMMELIN: A very good electorate. Since that time, there has been a vastly different outlook in regard to the park and I can remember that when I was a boy the park was much cleaner than it is today. There were large trees and plenty of shade and most of the people around Subiaco and West Perth spent a lot of their time there. I ask any member today to go through that part of the park and see how many children play there now. None. They are not there because of the changing outlook. Thirty or forty years ago children would go to the park on Saturday afternoons for their entertainment. Today they go to the pictures, go cycling or indulge in some other more modern sport.

Also, the change in the actual formation in the park over the last 30 or 40 years has been terrific. I spoke to a friend of mine the other day. He has lived in that district for years and he told me that he could not take his dog for a walk through the section of the park, which is at present the subject of the debate, because the undergrowth was so thick. He is a man who does not exaggerate. I went to the trouble of getting hold of a forestry expert in order to get some information on the growth of trees, and he told me that practically the only natural trees left are banksias.

This man is also a photographic expert and he spends his spare time going all over the park taking pictures of orchids and other wildflowers. He told me less than a fortnight ago that on his last walk through the park the undergrowth was so thick that it had retarded the growth of orchids and wildflowers to such an extent that, in his opinion, if it was allowed to continue, there would be few orchids left in a few years' time. But he thought that the kangaroo paws could survive. I told him that I had heard members speaking in the House about the future of the park and that they wanted it to be the same in 1,000 years time as it is today. He said, "Unless the undergrowth is completely stopped, the seeds from the banksia trees will not have the opportunity to reach the earth in order to reproduce." He suggested that unless trees were planted, there would be no trees left in 1,000 years. He is a man who had spent his life in the forest work.

Members tonight have spoken about a Bill having already come before the House in 1954. That might apply to the majority of members, but not to all, and that includes myself. The Bill that was passed in 1954 took away the right of the King's Park Board to give away any portion of the park with the approval of the Minister for Lands, and vested the right in Parliament. That legislation took the power out of the hands of the board and gave the same to Parliament. So all we have to decide here is whether Parliament should give away a portion of the park. The responsibility for making such a decision falls on every one of us.

But can any one of us say that we speak on this matter for the people who have elected us to Parliament and whom we are supposed to represent? It has been utterly impossible in the few weeks at our disposal to get around the whole of our electorates to ascertain the true feelings of our constituents. Consequently, I venture to say that not one member here knows the exact feelings of the people he represents. Until such times as he can say that he knows the true feelings of the people, he has no right to express their views. The only way to find out the true views of the people in regard to this Bill is by a referendum.

The Minister for Education: Who would take part in the referendum?

Mr. CROMMELIN: The people of the State who own the park. If a referendum were to be held—I understand it will not be held because of the expense involved—I venture to suggest that more than 50 per cent. of the people of this State would vote in favour of the project.

The Minister for Education: How would you know that?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I do not know, but I am suggesting that would be the result. I am prepared to take a big bet with the Minister on the result. Will he accept that wager?

The Minister for Education: You are not going to pool me!

Mr. CROMMELIN: Questions relating to the cost of the pool, the raising of the necessary finance and the effect on the ratepayers are not being debated in this House. The ratepayers of the City of Perth possess rights and privileges to throw out this proposal, if they do not agree with the suggestion of the Perth City Council. We should not therefore give any consideration to the aspects I have just mentioned.

I do not say that I do not enjoy walking among trees or in bushland, because I have seen much of it. I find, however, that many of us are prone to refuse to accept changes. I well remember a few years ago when the question of felling the sugar gum trees in King's Park-rd. arose. From the noise made by some people, one would have thought that the whole city was being pulled down. Yet today to drive along King's Park-rd. minus the trees, but with the addition of the flowers in bloom, is to experience a drive along one of the finest streets in Australia. Although the trees have gone, we have become accustomed to the new surroundings, and I think in some ways we appreciate the new even more than the old.

The granting of 20 acres of land in King's Park for an aquatic centre is the only question to consider. We need not take into consideration the argument that applications will be made by sporting bodies in the future for other areas. If the 20 acres are provided, it will be a very small portion of the existing 1,000 acres of the park. Some members seem to lose sight of the fact that the attraction of King's Park in its present stage is the view to be obtained of the Swan River. It is not so much the park as the view of the river that is the attraction. I wonder if people would be so keen to preserve King's Park intact if there were no river within 50 miles of the park.

The average overseas visitor to the State, on being taken on a tour of the park, cannot help but admire the native flowers, but invariably the visitor does not ask to get

out of the car to view them or to walk through the bushland. But when the visitor is taken around to the developed part of the park, very seldom does he remain in the car. Almost invariably the visitor gets out of the car and crosses over to the edge to obtain a good view of the river. In my opinion, therefore, the beauty of the park is the beautiful view of the river.

The question of veldt grass has already been raised. In that regard, I have made inquiries into this problem at the university. According to the university authorities, there is no doubt that the presence of veldt grass is evident in practically every part of the park. How on earth can the King's Park Board, in view of the miserable pittance allotted to maintain the park, be expected to get rid of veldt grass. Until the veldt grass can be eradicated the future of all the wild flowers in the park will be precarious.

It is only within the last two months that some members have really gone into some of the less accessible parts of King's Park. Usually when they visit the park, they have done as other people have done, that is, drive around it and perhaps walk along the bridle paths. Not a great number of people walk through the bushland, unless they are naturalists or tree and flower lovers. If they are, of course, they devote much time and leisure to making a study of the flora. Day after day I have driven through the park and around it, but nowadays I do not see children playing in the bush as they used to. Today children can be seen all along the developed part of the park overlooking the river where swings and other forms of amusement are available to them.

We hear of the terrible things that will happen if the aquatic centre is established in King's Park, such as the overcrowding of children and adults. I do not agree with those views. I would point out that there are quite a few schools in the vicinity of King's Park including the Hollywood High School and Perth Modern School. It is reasonable to assume that, with the provisions of one swimming pool and a little one for learners, the schools will organise classes so that everyone will be able to make use of the pool now and again.

If the Bill is rejected I do not think that the Perth City Council will take this attitude, "Well, you had your chance. We will not build any other pool." The Perth City Council has, in all sincerity, endeavoured to select the best possible site, and it has asked for a site in King's Park. If the move is successful, many people in this State will get a great deal more enjoyment from using the park. If no aquatic centre is established there, the people will not be able to enjoy still-water swimming facilities for quite a long time ahead.

I am not suggesting that more than 20 acres be given away at this juncture. I do not agree that other organisations will make application, year after year, for part of the park because these organisations have not the required finance. They will not have £250,000 to build, say, a cycle track. Such huge sums of money are not available to sporting organisations. Here we are given the opportunity to provide some much needed amenity for the State. With the view that the aquatic centre will not spoil any section of the park, for which I personally have a great deal of admiration, I support the second reading.

**HON. J. B. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [9.28]: I would not have spoken on this measure had it not been for the intrusion of the so-called pressure groups. I do not think that I should allow the pressure groups to get away with that. I have never been afraid to say or do what I think is right. The pressure groups are trying to force us into the position of doing something which we have no right to do.

We have received all sorts of letters, and stupid letters at that, where two or three men have got together and signed their names as the committee of certain organisations, representing that they were expressing the views of their 1,000 or 2,000 members. One organisation said that it not only represented the views of its few thousand members, but also those of the spouses and dependants of those members. That is all too stupid to accept.

Even in the last few days, I have been speaking to a couple within this particular lodge. They are within a few hundred yards of me. I asked them if they had heard anything about their views being represented, and they said "No." So these people who have sent us letters are claiming that they represent the views of all their members and dependants!

I would refer to the following article that appeared in the Press:—

Another group, the Associated Sporting Committee of Western Australia, has joined in the fight over the King's Park site for Perth City Council's proposed £200,000 aquatic centre.

The committee has sent a message—called An Open Letter to 30 from 30,000—to the members of Parliament who petitioned Premier Hawke against the park site.

The letter says the committee wrote, in the name of 35 sports organisations, to all members of Parliament in May, asking them to support the plan for an aquatic and recreation centre in King's Park.

No Answer.

No answer was received from any of the members who signed the petition to the Premier.

The committee wants these members to give their reasons for opposing the scheme in open debate in Parliament.

It also suggests a referendum over the King's Park site.

Then the article goes on to refer to an expression of opinion by Miss Patricia Howard, the secretary of the committee, who said—

The open letter was not the opinion of the committee's senior body—the National Fitness Council—which had clearly indicated support for an aquatic centre but was not prepared to indicate any particular site.

If it had not been for Miss Patricia Howard, who blew the gaff, we would have thought that those 30,000 people were all pledged to the pool being established in King's Park. That is the sort of letter we have received; and if pressure groups counted for anything, this Bill would certainly have gone through. But the pressure groups have made it too hot, and the Bill is sure to go where it belongs—out through the window!

I think I have a genuine complaint on this question of an aquatic pool because on the 23rd October, 1954, when there was general talk about the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park I said to two or three members that they had nothing to be afraid of because King's Park was a Class "A" reserve and the matter would have to come before Parliament before anything could be done. I put this question to the Minister for Lands—

Is King's Park a Class "A" reserve, and if so, will it be necessary for a Bill to be passed by Parliament before any portion of the park can be handed over as a site for an olympic swimming pool?

The Minister replied—

My information is that it will be necessary to pass legislation for that purpose.

I was a bit misled by that and did not worry any more about it. I said, "I think it is a Class "A" reserve and the matter must come before Parliament. The Minister has assured me of that fact; so why argue about it?"

But the member for North Perth was not quite as believing as I was, or else he had heard a whisper somewhere, because on the 17th November he introduced a Bill to ensure that the matter would have to come to Parliament. I say, "Hats off to the member for North Perth." He has earned the undying gratitude of the people of Western Australia for preventing something which would have taken place if he had not brought down his Bill. My complaint is that the Minister—perhaps unknowingly—made me believe that the matter had to come to Parliament. But the member

for North Perth said, "We will make doubly sure," and brought down his Bill on the 17th November.

Then the Minister for Lands came to light and opposed the Bill because it would take away from the board the power it already had and which I had been led to believe it did not have. So thanks are due to the member for North Perth, because he is the man who saved the situation for the people of Western Australia. Hats off to him! And I wish him every success and a big majority! Let me quote from the remarks of the Minister when introducing this Bill. He said—

But there is a great deal more to it than that. Never have I, since I have been in Parliament, known so many people to spend so much of their time trying to condition other people's minds for a certain purpose. I feel that this state of affairs has been brought about largely as a result of the Act of Parliament which was passed in this House in 1954. I well remember warning members on that occasion that should such legislation become law, and should we, in our wisdom or otherwise, take away from competent and honest men, occupying their respected positions on the King's Park Board, their power and place it in the hands of two Houses of Parliament, totalling 80 members in all, we could not expect very much progress in future so far as King's Park was concerned because all members were subject, from time to time, to all kinds of pressure groups.

I think we have proved to the public that we are not subject to pressure groups. All the pressure groups have done in this instance is to make members dig their toes in and go on with their job on behalf of the people of this country. The Minister went on to say—

After all is said and done, when we examine the so-called reasons for objection, we find that they are not reasons at all, but only excuses based on a blind, unreasoning prejudice . . .

I say that unless members can give sensible and valid reasons and can substantiate their views by reasoned argument, their attitude must be based on prejudice and nothing else.

I want to say that the Minister did not go the right way about getting the Bill passed by using that language, because the members who are opposing it have as much commonsense in their attitude as the Minister and people who are supporting it possess. The Minister later said—

If one could hover over Perth on a fine Sunday in a helicopter, one would see all our arterial roads leading away from Perth filled with motorcars, travelling to Canning Dam, Mundaring Weir, National Park, Araluen or other

places in the hills and beyond. They would all be getting as far away from King's Park as they possibly could.

Does the Minister mean to tell us that if there were a pool in King's Park the roads would not be crowded with motorists; that people would flock to King's Park? Nothing of the sort! That is just too ridiculous. This is the age of motorcars. I can well remember the time when Point Walter was the most popular place in the metropolitan area and people crowded there in their thousands in the week-ends. Tramlines were built to take them there, because in those days not so many folk had cars. But when motorcars came in people started to go away from the metropolitan area. They travelled to Mandurah, Bunbury and Geraldton—as far as they reasonably could. So it is no use the Minister telling us that because we have not a pool in King's Park the roads are crowded. There is no sense in that statement.

Since I have been in this Parliament there have been many attempts to secure portions of King's Park. Every few years there is a suggestion from somebody wanting to nibble at the park. They have not succeeded. In 1927 a committee was appointed to report on a site for a hospital and that committee recommended that 35 acres of King's Park should be utilised for the purpose. The then Premier, Mr. Collier, was in the East at the time; and I remember that when he came back, he was very annoyed about the attempt to pinch some of King's Park. He said—

I was very surprised during my absence from the State to learn that the committee appointed to inquire into the hospital needs of the metropolitan area, had recommended that 35 acres of the King's Park be set aside for hospital purposes.

I want to make it clear that the Government will not allow any further infringement of the park area.

It cannot be pleaded in a new city such as ours that land conveniently situated cannot be found on which to build our public institutions, and that we are forced to utilise our open spaces. What we want in fact is not only to preserve our available parks and reserves, but to make greater provision as opportunity offers for the greater—eminently greater—population which our metropolitan area must carry in the future.

King's Park is for the people and must be preserved intact. The policy of the Government is—hands off, and no further encroachment will be permitted.

I think that was a very fine pronouncement—the pronouncement of a statesman. I remember that when the argument took place, he was disgusted when he found that someone was out to pinch a bit of

the park. The city council assisted him in his opposition. It said, about the same time—

In the opinion of this council it is of the highest importance in the interests of the people of this city, and in fact of the State of Western Australia, that King's Park shall be retained intact for the use of the people for ever. That an emphatic protest be made by this council against the proposals of the hospital committee to alienate 35 acres of the people's park for hospital purposes.

That was a credit to the city council which was determined to see that nothing was filched from the park. Later on, in 1946, there was another statement—and this is about the best of the lot. It is as follows:—

The fame of King's Park rested largely in natural bush so close to the heart of the city. The policy of the board is based to a large extent on the following principles:—

I want members to listen to this—

1. The preservation of the existing area against any type of alienation.

2. The preservation of all the remainder of the bush portion of the park in its natural state, except in certain portions that lend themselves to such treatment to introduce other Western Australian flora for an effective bushland reserve which is to be permanent. The area should be as large as possible so that individual species of plants can maintain themselves and so that an atmosphere of quiet peace and bushland policy can be preserved.

Those, I think, are very good quotations. There is one of a much later period which I wish to mention. It is from the official report of the proceedings of the General Council of the Australian Labour Party from the 23rd to the 27th July, 1956. There was a discussion at that gathering and recommendations were made. There was an item submitted for the agenda and the following recommendation was agreed to—

That the item be redrafted to read as follows:—

In the event of large areas of land being developed for settlement, provision be made for the setting aside or reserving of suitable areas in order to retain the flora and fauna of the area.

That is pretty distinct. There is no doubt about it. If it is desired to set aside or preserve suitable areas to retain the flora and fauna of the area, then the party cannot be in favour of pulling up the flora and getting rid of the fauna.

Mr. Potter: I wrote that out myself.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The member for Subiaco should know all about it. He did not tell us anything of this. Of course, not! He hid this. He had it under the table somewhere. I think I have given four good illustrations in this matter: There were the quotations from the Premier of the State in 1927; the city council; the gentleman in charge of the King's Park Board, and last, but by no means least, the resolution of my own party—the A.L.P.—showing what it stands for, and I stand for it with the party.

Hon. D. Brand: I did not seem to understand that from the bit I read in the paper the other day. They seemed to be a bit disgruntled.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The member for West Perth said that the King's Park Board had nothing for road building. He does not know, because he was only in swaddling clothes when a lot of this happened some years ago. The board in office shut everyone with a vehicle out of King's Park. They said that the gates had to be closed at 6 o'clock and nobody could go through the park unless he had a licence. But Phil Collier said, "Damned nonsense! Let the people go through. If you want a few pounds to build roads, I will give it to you." The result was that the licence was abolished and Phil Collier gave the board money to build roads, but the member for West Perth said that the board never got anything to build roads.

Mr. Heal: I didn't say that.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes, you did! You said there was nothing for the building of roads at all.

Mr. Heal: You are wrong; I have just read it.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Have another look. I think I have said sufficient on this subject, Mr. Speaker, but do not be led away by the suggestion that there should be a select committee. The member for West Perth said he would like to move for the appointment of a select committee if the Bill passed the second reading. If he could do that, he would be the chairman and he would have on the committee two men on the pool side, and two on the anti-pool side, and we would be out in the cold. It would be just too stupid. Do not let him get away with that! My advice is for the House to put the Bill where it belongs, and that is out of the window, and let us do it tonight, with a majority big enough to ensure that this question will never show its ugly head again in this House. I oppose the Bill.

MR. RODOREDA (Pilbara) [9.46]: On listening to the previous speaker I was reminded of a definition I once heard of a "statesman." According to that definition, a statesman is a man who agrees with me. We have heard, from the member for Fremantle, a lot of ancient history.



Hon. L. Thorn: Very interesting, too.

Mr. RODOREDA: It was, but it had little bearing on the subject of this debate. Much was said about a hospital, but I do not think any of us would vote for the placing of a hospital in King's Park, as that is outside the dedication and the purpose for which the park was set aside, and is therefore outside the scope of the present debate. King's Park was dedicated for the use and recreation of the people, and the Bill before us does not go outside that dedication, as far as I am able to read the meaning of the words "recreation and use of the people."

I support the Bill and I regret that I will have to repeat much of what has been said by earlier speakers. That is unavoidable when so many members take part in a debate of this nature. I regret, firstly, that the Bill which gave rise to this measure was ever introduced into or passed by this Parliament. I do not think we gave sufficient thought to that measure and the consequences which its passing would entail. That measure has brought us into this debate, and the question before us has assumed a prominence far out of proportion to its proper relationship in the scheme of things.

After all, this is a trivial matter, but I suppose there have been more leading articles written on it than on any other subject that has been reviewed since I have been in Parliament. Here we have the member for Fremantle, the member for North Perth and various others, presuming to speak for the people of the State. They have no more right to do that than I have.

Mr. Lapham: Make your own speech in that regard.

Mr. RODOREDA: I am entitled to do so, and to say that those who vote against this measure will be ashamed of themselves if they live long enough to see the results of doing so.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Bunkum!

Mr. RODOREDA: I am just as right in saying that, as are the people who oppose the Bill—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Why not get down to the contents of the Bill?

Mr. RODOREDA: No member has yet dealt with them.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Why don't you do so? You told me to get on with it, when I was speaking.

Mr. Heal: But you didn't have a clue.

Mr. RODOREDA: The hon. member did not do it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I dealt more with the Bill than you have so far.

Mr. RODOREDA: As I have said, I regret that the previous measure was passed because now the King's Park Board is redundant. Its members have been twitted

about having no policy, but what policy could they have? They cannot do anything of importance now.

Mr. Heal: If we pull down a sign, we get into trouble.

Mr. Lapham: Of course, you do.

Mr. RODOREDA: They can only plant a tree or pull a couple down. We might as well put King's Park under the control of the National Parks Board now.

Hon. L. Thorn: No, the board has all the power under the sun, except to excise land.

Mr. RODOREDA: But this is not excising land.

Hon. L. Thorn: Of course, it is.

Mr. RODOREDA: It is using the park for the purpose for which it was dedicated. If I had been a member of the King's Park Board when the earlier Bill was passed, I would have resigned the following week.

Hon. L. Thorn: We could have got another member soon enough.

Mr. RODOREDA: I wish the hon. member would stay out of the House now as he has done for the last two or three hours. I will now try to do what the member for Cottesloe wants me to, and will deal first with something that has been touched on by four or five speakers tonight, and here: I refer to the little document that was presented to the Premier. It was not a petition; we must be careful about calling it that—it was only a statement of intention. That is how I would phrase it, and some of the members who signed it and who are sorry for themselves now, have been most vehement in trying to prove that it had no effect whatever.

Mr. Bovell: Let me make my position quite clear in that regard.

Mr. RODOREDA: I can't get on with the game if I am interrupted all the time. The hon. member made his position quite clear. He was vehement about it and got worked up in trying to prove that he had not been foolish, which he knows in his heart he was, when he signed the petition or whatever it was. What was the idea of that document? It was trying to prevent the Bill from coming before Parliament; otherwise it was futile.

Mr. Bovell: In the party room you stop a lot of Bills coming into Parliament.

Mr. RODOREDA: It was just an endeavour to prevent the Bill coming before Parliament.

Hon. L. Thorn: That would have saved a lot of time.

Mr. RODOREDA: Undoubtedly, but the King's Park Board, which we must agree has a certain sense of responsibility, had fallen in with the proposal—not of the Lord Mayor but of the Perth City Council. I do not know why members refer so much to the Lord Mayor in this regard.

when it was the scheme of the city council. Once the board had agreed the Bill had to come here, in order to clarify the position, and 30 members of this Parliament tried to prevent it coming here.

Mr. Bovell: But that is the democratic majority.

Mr. RODOREDA: And we talk about pressure groups! Where is there a stronger pressure group than this? We have spent 10 or 15 hours debating this measure and the fate of the Bill is already known. What a position in which to put Parliament!

Mr. Bovell: That applies to every Bill introduced into this House.

The Premier: You have had it.

Mr. RODOREDA: This is a different position than we were placed in on other occasions—

Mr. Bovell: There should be more of it.

Mr. RODOREDA: That is a matter of opinion, and this debate shows how impossible Government would be without parties.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Private Bills have been canvassed many times before they have been introduced.

Mr. RODOREDA: We are all proud of King's Park—

Mr. Lapham: Some of us are.

Mr. RODOREDA: —and we are told we should keep it for the children of a thousand years hence. I would say that King's Park, which is supposed to be famous throughout the world, would be about the thousandth on the list of parks famed throughout the world. I am told that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but I do not know how some people find this park beautiful in its natural state. The member for Leederville said there was a real sentiment about keeping the park sacrosanct, a sort of "hands off the park" attitude, and the Minister for Education stated that only over his dead body would anything be done with it.

The Minister for Education: I said nothing of the sort. It will be done only over my live body.

Mr. RODOREDA: It is a sloppy sentimentality, and that is all. No case has been put up against the Bill except that we must preserve this area in its natural state, but why, goodness only knows. It was good enough for grandpa, and so, presumably, it must be good enough for us. I do not care whether grandpa was Lord Forrest or anyone else who in the early days had a say in regard to the park, but if those early statesmen would have agreed with the member for Fremantle at that time, I believe their ideas would probably be vastly changed now, in view of the different conditions obtaining.

The Minister for Education: I do not think so.

Mr. Lapham: Of course, they would not.

Mr. RODOREDA: I believe the attitude of opponents of the Bill would be the same if the area of the park was 3,000 to 4,000 acres. They would still not agree to one inch of it being taken away. I would think that if one were in the middle of 100 acres of natural bushland, the view would be the same as if one were in the middle of 1,000 or 2,000 acres of it, and I would be prepared to go a lot further than the Bill goes.

Personally, I make no apology for it, but I would be prepared to suggest that a select committee or a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire not into the Bill before us but into the question of what should be the future policy of the King's Park Board in relation to the whole area. I would like to see the May Drive made the boundary of the park. If members who are so familiar with the park know where that is, they will know what I am talking about. I believe the land enclosed between May Drive and its extension and the river frontage would be roughly 700 acres and I, like the member for Nedlands, would like to see some development along King's Park-rd. and Thomas-st. to the end of the park. There we have from two to two and a half miles of useless, dirty, unkempt scrub, which could be made into most magnificent playing fields for the whole way.

There we would have about three times the area of playing fields now existing along Riverside Drive, and it must be remembered that we have to make provision for the use of our community now. All members know that there are insufficient playing fields available today in the City of Perth and suburbs. If the area I have referred to could be properly developed, it would be a magnificent conception. The park, as a park, would still be untouched inside the May Drive, and the development would tend to keep the veldt grass and other non-indigenous flora out of the park. We already have playing fields down around Onslow-rd., and so I think this question could well be given consideration.

I listened the other evening to the Leader of the Country Party and he was at some pains to try to inform the House that the park was not central. That is one of the reasons he gave for opposing the establishment of an aquatic centre in the park. If we look at his remarks on the 1954 legislation, however, we find that he said the park was very central and that he could understand people wanting to put something or other there. It is amazing how we change our opinions in differing circumstances. I do not want to emulate the member for Fremantle by quoting extensively, but I remember the Leader of

the Country Party making that statement. Anyway, the Leader of the Country Party does not deny it, so he must have said it.

The member for North Perth said he was grateful that the Bill had been introduced because it gave him a chance to reply to various statements that had been made; yet prior to that we find that he did his best to prevent the Bill coming here by getting a petition signed.

Mr. Lapham: Nothing of the kind. I indicated to my Leader what would happen if a Bill came forward, and I can do that at any time.

Mr. RODORED: We have had a lot of discussion about alternative sites for the aquatic centre but it is not our province to discuss those aspects under this Bill. All this legislation says is that the Perth City Council is prepared to spend an enormous amount of money to place an aquatic centre in King's Park. If we do not give it that right, it has been indicated that it will not be put anywhere else. I do not think the reference was to an olympic pool but to the aquatic centre not being put anywhere else.

The olympic pool at Melbourne was mentioned, but I am sure that nobody would want to walk two feet to see that. It is most unattractive. This aquatic centre which we are now considering is, however, for the benefit of the public. The site on which we are seeking to establish it is a most attractive one. Indeed, I do not think it would have its equal anywhere else in Australia, and accordingly we should not lightly discard a proposition such as that put up by the Perth City Council which, after all, is a responsible body. Surely we do not claim that it is constituted of irresponsible people!

If this proposition had emanated from any body other than the Perth City Council, I daresay it would have been given a different reception. It beats me, and I am at a loss to fathom the hostility that exists in the minds of some members towards the Perth City Council. We saw this same attitude displayed when the scheme for the creation of a car park was before the House, and now we have it on the aquatic centre. It is entirely unwarranted. I would say that the level of intelligence of members of the Perth City Council is at least equal to that which exists in our Parliament; I would say that the same would apply to the King's Park Board. These two responsible bodies have agreed that it is all right to establish this aquatic centre in the park—one of these bodies is responsible for the care and general tending of the park, while the other is representative of the people of the City of Perth and is probably just as representative as is this Parliament.

Mr. Lapham: Members of this Parliament have their rights and opinions in regard to parking.

Mr. Potter: You would not think so.

Mr. RODORED: Great play has been made in an attempt to ridicule what have been called pressure groups from outside—representations made by sporting bodies, etc., who have written to members of Parliament.

Mr. Lapham: What about our local newspaper?

Mr. RODORED: There has been just as much pressure exercised in here. Some members have brought pressure to bear during the last 18 months on newly-elected members.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: On this?

Mr. RODORED: On the question of King's Park. If the hon. member did not know that, he has been asleep. I keep my eyes and ears open and I have a fair idea of what is going on around me. It is noticeable that nearly all the new members of this Assembly signed the petition.

Mr. Lapham: It shows how wise they were.

Mr. RODORED: This is getting us nowhere. The only reason why I spoke was that I did not wish to record a silent vote on this matter. While I know the Bill will be defeated, I want my views recorded.

MR. ROBERTS (Bunbury) [10.7]: What has amazed me more than anything else about this measure is the proportions it has reached as regards public interest—they far exceed the importance the measure deserves. Parties for and against the legislation have had statements printed in the various newspapers ever since the member for North Perth introduced his legislation in 1954. I was surprised this morning to see the leading article in the paper which said—

What does Parliament intend to do with King's Park? Under the 1954 legislation it deliberately took upon itself the responsibility for policy in the future control of development and the use of the park.

Hon. A. F. Watts: That is not correct.

Mr. ROBERTS: That is far from correct. When I read that, I asked for the principal Act and I find that under the side heading "Certain Powers Included in the General Powers," Section 5 reads as follows:—

(1) In the exercise of its general powers in respect of the parks and reserves committed to them, a Board of control and management may, among other things, do as follows:—

(a) Fence in or otherwise enclose, clear, level, drain, plant, and form walks and carriage drives through and over such parks or reserves, or any part thereof;

- (b) Construct dams and reservoirs for the retention and formation of sheets of water thereon;
- (c) Otherwise improve or ornament such parks or reserves, and do all such things as are calculated to adapt such parks and reserves to the purposes of public recreation, health, and enjoyment;
- (d) Establish and maintain zoological gardens therein.
- (e) Grant licences for the depasturing of animals on such park lands and reserves, and take for the same such fees as the Board may, by any by-law, from time to time appoint; and
- (f) Grant licences for the removal of any sand, gravel, or other earth or mineral, and for cutting and removing wood under such restrictions, and at such reasonable price, or such weekly, monthly, or yearly sum as the Board may think fit.

(2) Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to limit the general powers of a Board.

The 1954 legislation adds another subsection, namely Subsection (3), and I wish to quote this because I would like it recorded in Hansard. It reads as follows:—

Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections (1) and (2) of this section a Board shall not, after the coming into operation of the Parks and Reserves Act Amendment Act, 1954, so far as concerns Reserve No. A1720, known as King's Park, the boundaries of which are gazetted in the "Government Gazette" dated the twenty-seventh day of November, one thousand nine hundred and forty-two—

- (a) effect or construct, or permit to be effected or constructed, to, in or on any such park or reserve any improvements for the purposes of the establishment of an aquatic centre, or orchestral shell; or
- (b) lease the whole or any part of any such park or reserve, unless the consent of both Houses of Parliament has first been obtained; or
- (c) effect or construct, or permit to be effected or constructed, to, in or on King's Park any other structure, device, or fixture for the purposes of public recreation, and from which members of the public may be excluded except upon payment of a fee,

unless the consent of the Governor in Executive Council has first been obtained but such consent shall not be given if native flora is to be despoiled

Provided that the provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any additions or alterations to any structure device or fixture lawfully on or in any such park or reserve at the commencement of the Parks and Reserves Act Amendment Act, 1954, if such additions and alterations are in furtherance of the purpose for which the structure device or fixture is then being used.

That measure of 1954 does not take away from the King's Park Board the real or original purpose for which the board was set up: It definitely refers to an aquatic centre, orchestral shell, or some other building from which the public can be excluded except by the payment of some fee.

The Minister for Lands: And any lease

Mr. ROBERTS: The policy of the board is very wide, particularly when we consider the provisions of Section 5 of the principal Act.

The Minister for Lands: You are wrong

Mr. ROBERTS: Quite frankly, this matter has been discussed very fully, and I do not know how often I have destroyed notes on the subject since the debate started. I would like, however, to refer to a sub-leader that appeared in "The West Australian" this morning to prove how easily a paper of such standing can alter its policy over a matter of a few years. The article reads—

What does Parliament intend to do with King's Park? Under the 1954 legislation it deliberately took unto itself the responsibility for policy in the future control of development and use of the park. This question has come to a head in the King's Park Aquatic Centre Bill.

Members of the Legislative Assembly are today approaching the vital second reading vote on this measure, which would allow the Perth City Council to finance the establishment of an olympic pool and associated facilities on a suitable park fringe site. When he introduced the Bill on August 27, Lands Minister Hoar presented a case which is logically unassailable.

The Minister for Lands: Hear, hear!

Mr. ROBERTS: To continue—

There are other reasons, including weight of public opinion, why some of those members who lightly attached their signatures to the "Lapham ultimatum" have no longer any need to regard themselves as committed. The Assembly should pass the Bill without further demur. By doing so it will record a decisive vote for better development of the park for public use. The question of an olympic pool is

merely a test case. It offers the opportunity of establishing a principle for the beautification and the landscaping of the State's magnificent park in a way which will open it to maximum public access and, at the same time, enhance the prospects of expert care of the indigenous flora.

At the moment, Parliament is merely reserving the right of veto on any action in the Park. Once the Aquatic Centre Bill is passed, a highly qualified Royal Commission could be appointed to examine the best future development of the park.

On the 26th June, 1927—

The Minister for Lands: Is that "The Naturalist" you are reading from? It is full of inaccuracies.

Mr. ROBERTS: "The West Australian" was outspoken in its editorial on the 26th June, 1927, and this is what it had to say, and it is dealing with the establishment of a hospital within King's Park.

Mr. Heal: Who was the editor?

Mr. ROBERTS: It reads as follows:—

Admittedly, the difficulty of obtaining a suitable site is not easy to overcome. Evidently the committee of investigation so found it, or its members would never have been audacious enough to recommend laying of covetous hands on 35 acres of King's Park. That recommendation does such violence to popular sentiment and so flagrantly disregards the people's frequently expressed antagonism to the alienation, no matter for what purpose, of even an acre or two of this national domain, next to the Swan River, the city's proudest natural possession, as to debar it from serious consideration.

Hon. D. Brand: Parliament would not approve of a hospital today.

Mr. ROBERTS: The member for Pilbara, who is out at the moment, made some comment in regard to his definition of a statesman. When a small boy, I learned that a politician was one who looks forward to the next election and a statesman was one who looks to the next generation. Those who have been on the King's Park Board, over the many years since it was first established, have preserved the park for the people living in this city today.

Mr. Potter: Nobody has ever developed it.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. member has had his say. The powers of the King's Park Board are defined in the Act which it administers and the members of that body should preserve for all time the area of land which, I think, is most important

to this State's future welfare. Only last night we heard that a great brain specialist had arrived in this State.

The Minister for Lands: Did you see him?

Mr. ROBERTS: I did not see him. However, his comment was quite interesting in view of this debate which is going on now. He indicated that in the years ahead town planners would have to give consideration to allotting certain areas of land for the public away from noise such as the so-called bushland in King's Park.

Hon. D. Brand: When?

Mr. ROBERTS: As a matter of fact, I was there—I think—last Tuesday week, after 9 a.m.. One only had to go in a few hundred yards to lose the sound of the city traffic, and it was a relaxation in itself.

The Premier: How many people were there at the time?

Mr. ROBERTS: It was about 10 a.m.—members who were with me will confirm this—and I would say there were about 19 people in that part of the park.

Mr. Potter: You were not there to look at the pool.

Mr. ROBERTS: We went to look at the veldt grass. It is important that not only should we have this place of quiet, but that we have a "lung in the city," if I might use that term, because industries will become more numerous, thus resulting probably in a smog menace and a thousand acres of land will be too small an area as the years roll by to combat such a nuisance. The member for Moore tonight made mention of the veldt grass. On second thoughts, I do not think I will read the article but will leave it for somebody else as I have read enough tonight. However he missed the real crux of the position on page 50 in Volume 6, No. 2 of "The Western Australian Naturalist" of the 15th August, 1957.

The Minister for Lands: You should not quote from "The Naturalist" as it is full of inaccuracies.

Mr. ROBERTS: It is in the second paragraph on page 50, and the member for Moore spoke just prior to where I was going to start reading from. I would have left his part out. However, somebody else can read it. When I was in the park the other day—I will grant we were investigating the area as indicated on the plan on the wall here—I noticed the veldt grass in that area, and do not think it could be called a problem by any stretch of imagination.

The Minister for Lands: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. ROBERTS: Yes, I do.

The Minister for Lands: How far were you from the main improved parts?

Mr. ROBERTS: The veldt grass is not all over the park and the Minister should go and have a look himself. It is not a problem in the area which is marked out for the present aquatic pool.

The Minister for Mines: Do you know what is veldt grass?

Mr. ROBERTS: Yes, I know and it is not the problem that the people make out. I was privileged to be with two practical farmers and they said that now is the time to eradicate it by using flame throwers.

The Minister for Lands: You would kill all the wildflowers.

Mr. ROBERTS: The veldt grass grows in clumps.

The Minister for Lands: Could you tell me how the flame throwers are going to pick out the veldt grass? You should have seen that brain specialist!

Mr. ROBERTS: They did not mean the type of flame thrower used in the 1939-45 war.

Mr. Oldfield: It looks as though the member for Moore was one of the practical farmers.

Mr. ROBERTS: There is a chance of eradicating it by burning it at this time of the year and it is not far in from the paths.

The Minister for Lands: I say it is.

Mr. ROBERTS: The Minister can say it is, and I can say it is not, taking charge of the land.

The Minister for Lands: The people who handle it say it is, and they ought to know.

Mr. ROBERTS: So far as I am concerned, I want to make it quite clear that I am opposed to the establishment of an aquatic centre within the precincts of King's Park.

The Premier: That is the first thing you have made clear.

Mr. ROBERTS: However, I am not opposed to the establishment of an aquatic centre or an olympic pool within the precincts of the City of Perth. I am not one of those, as mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who are opposed to anything that is done by the Perth City Council. I have the greatest admiration for members of the Perth City Council, but I am opposed to them in respect of this particular measure.

The Premier: That won't do.

Mr. ROBERTS: When one looks at the plan on the wall, it is noticeable that the area for the swimming pool is quite small but the car-parking space on the plan, as compared with the actual size of the pool, rather amazes one. I cannot see why if this Parliament should decide to grant the Perth City Council a lease of 20 acres of this particular land it should not grant to the City of Subiaco or the Municipality of

Nedlands a like area as time goes on for exactly the same purpose, if the aquatic centre established in King's Park by the City of Perth proved to be a success financially.

Why should not these other two local authorities whose boundaries also border King's Park be entitled to 20 acres for similar purposes. There are many aspects of sporting activities that could be provided for within the park, but I feel we should do everything we possibly can to improve the park from a tourist point of view—from the point of view of something unusual. There is no question that King's Park, in the eyes of people of other parts of the world, is unusual.

The Minister for Works: Like your idea about flame throwers.

Mr. ROBERTS: The people in control of our tourist activities have, in various pamphlets, mentioned King's Park from the tourist angle, and I feel that as the years go by, King's Park will enhance in value.

The Minister for Mines: They mention the man-made portions.

Mr. ROBERTS: I was waiting for that interjection. We have a tourist attraction which compares with any other in the world, whether it be the pyramids or the Eiffel Tower. I have a list here which is as long as one's arm.

The Premier: Whose arm?

Mr. ROBERTS: Mine is not very long. Let us look at the things which nature gave us.

The Minister for Mines: Nobody else looks at that.

Mr. ROBERTS: Does the Minister mean to say that nobody else looks at Niagara Falls or the Valley of a Thousand Hills in South Africa?

The Premier: What about the Seven Hills near Collie?

Mr. ROBERTS: They are nearer Bunbury than Collie. Also, there are the Great Barrier Reef and the geysers at Rotorua in New Zealand. The only ones laughing at what I say are those who are supporting the measure. They are treating it as a joke. Those opposed to it are serious. The Premier and the Minister for Works can sit back, laughing away and splitting their sides, because they treat the measure as something insignificant. It is not an insignificant measure but something important.

The Minister for Lands: They are not laughing at the measure.

Mr. ROBERTS: We, as parliamentarians, should endeavour to preserve the park from a tourist angle and for future generations. I am opposed to the measure. In 1954 members were opposed to it, and I will guarantee that the percentage of those who vote against it on this occasion will be greater than it was in 1954, yet, in the House, there are 10 new members since

that time. That is a pretty good indication of the feeling of the people throughout the length and breadth of the State. It is all very well saying we are going to follow the trend of 1954, but I was not here then and neither were eight or nine other members who now sit in the House. I will guarantee that on this occasion the percentage voting against the proposition that is before us will be greater than it was in 1954.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam) [10.33]: In 1954 Parliament took unto itself considerable responsibility in regard to the future of King's Park. By doing that, Parliament decided that this institution was the place in Western Australia best fitted to decide matters such as the one before us now. I raise no objection to that. What does surprise me very much is the fact that there are so many members in the House today who are prepared to trust themselves but who are not prepared, at any price, to trust any future Parliament. I suppose if they had had the power in 1954—or had it today—they would have passed a law which would have laid it down that no Parliament in the future, could ever do anything at all to alter the existing situation in King's Park.

I take the view that I am prepared to trust this Parliament to make a decision in connection with the matter, and I would be equally prepared to trust any future Parliament to do the right thing. Therefore, I see no danger in the present Parliament approving of this proposition if the majority of the members think the proposition is a good one. I am not the slightest bit impressed by the argument that Parliament would be creating a precedent from which there would be no escape in future years if Parliament today were to approve of the leasing of this small area of King's Park to the Perth City Council for the purpose of allowing that body to establish an aquatic centre on that land.

Every future Parliament is, I think, entitled to be as much trusted as this one. Every future Parliament is entitled to be left with the right to decide, on its merits, any proposition which might come before it. In my judgment, there is no strength at all in the argument that if Parliament now agrees to lease this land for the purpose for which it is required, Parliament thereby commits itself, without any possibility of escape, to granting any application which might come before it or some Parliament in the future.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Have you noticed that the Press seems to think that this is a test case?

**THE PREMIER**: I am not concerned with what the Press thinks. After all is said and done, the expression of opinion in the leading article of "The West Australian" is the opinion of one person—that is all.

He is entitled to express his opinion, but his opinion does not necessarily carry any weight with me, and it need not necessarily carry any weight with anyone else. Surely the members of this House are in a position to make up their minds on the merits of this proposition—or any other for that matter—without being guided, influenced or persuaded by a newspaper article, or anything else. There is no logic or any sense either, in the proposition that if Parliament approves of the Bill it automatically commits future Parliaments to any old propositions put before them in connection with King's Park.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There are many who would disagree with you.

**THE PREMIER**: There may be many who disagree, but that does not disprove my point. I am saying that members of Parliament, if they are worth anything, should be given sufficient credit to say that they would be able to make up their own minds upon the merits of any proposition put before them at any time. I say quite frankly that whilst I support the Bill, and support it quite strongly, I would oppose just as strongly any application from a cycling club, a racing club, a trotting club or a motorcycle club for a lease of land in King's Park. There is no comparison between the proposal to establish an aquatic centre there and a proposal to establish the other things to which I have made reference.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Do you agree with the Minister's proposition regarding 200 or 300 acres?

**THE PREMIER**: I agree with the Bill and I support it, and that is all I am asked to agree with and all I am asked to support on this occasion.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You won't express an opinion on that?

**THE PREMIER**: I have great respect for flora and fauna. I suppose I have as great a respect as anyone for natural grasses, shrubs and trees, but I have an even greater respect for children—for girls and boys—for young people and for adults, too, for that matter.

We all know enough about this particular section of King's Park to know that it is practically uninhabited from the 1st January to the 31st December in every year. No one, except perhaps someone occasionally, ever bothers to go there. Therefore this portion of the park provides nothing for the people in the practical sense of the term—nothing at all. Yet we have before us in the Bill a proposal to lease this very limited portion of unused land—land which no one ever bothers to go to and walk upon—to the Perth City Council, which body is prepared to expend a large sum of money for the purpose of establishing an aquatic centre there; and this centre will provide exercise, entertainment, good health and good cheer for tens

of thousands of children, tens of thousands of young people and for as many adults as care to go there to take advantage of the swimming facilities which will be available in the pool.

One of the best experiences in my life, from the point of view of real satisfaction, was the one I obtained at Merredin 18 months or two years ago when the swimming pool established at that centre by the local people, supported, as it happened, by the Government, was opened.

The Minister for Mines: A tremendously important centre, too.

The PREMIER: It was my privilege to officially declare the pool open; and I have never seen kids happier than they were in that pool.

Mr. Bovell: They were a long way from the seaboard.

The PREMIER: Young people enjoyed themselves mightily in the pool, and so did the adults who went into the water. I say, therefore, that we ought to look at this proposition not from the point of view of preserving grass, shrubs and trees for birds and ants, because no human being ever goes there, but from the point of view of the very great pleasure, entertainment and health-giving exercise which it will give during each swimming season to tens of thousands of children, tens of thousands of teenagers and to a great many adults as well.

If King's Park consisted of an area of only 100 acres, then I would be siding with those who oppose the Bill because I would say that the total area of the park would be so small as to warrant the maintenance of the whole of it in its natural condition. But as we all know, the present area of natural parkland there is very great. There will still be heaps of room for those who desire to worship nature; for those who desire to walk through the grasses, past the shrubs and around the trees. There will be no shortage of area for them, and they will be able to enjoy themselves to their hearts content. No one would deny them that. In return for the great privilege that they have, they should not raise any objection to this very small area of the park being made available for the highly desirable and valuable purpose for which the Bill proposes it shall be used.

So I appeal to members to look at this proposition from the point of view of the great benefits and advantages it will confer upon tens of thousands—indeed hundreds of thousands—of people in the future as against leaving the land as it is at present where it serves no one's purpose and provides nothing for anybody. In that situation, I would be at a loss to understand why any member of this House, with any sort of a progressive outlook, or with any kind of progressive ideas, could bring himself to vote against this Bill. I sincerely hope and trust that the majority of members of the House will support it.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [10.45]: What the Premier seems to have lost sight of is the fact that this park in itself is quite unique. It is true that the project envisaged in this Bill is a major one which will be of benefit to these untold thousands to whom he refers. It is also true that in other parts of the world they have such centres but, as has been proved by this debate, they have not in other parts of the world such a unique park as we have in our King's Park. The nearest approach to it, apparently, is the Stanley Park in Vancouver, in which there is a certain amount of development.

There has been a certain degree of development in King's Park but on looking at this evening's paper, it is hard to assess just how much ground has been taken up in the development of Stanley Park, because the map published in the paper does not show the full area of the park. Much has been said about the establishment of an aquatic centre in King's Park and the 80 members of this Parliament must consider what is best for the people as a whole. Frankly, I was against the proposal in the first place. I was one of those who was strongly opposed to the Bill introduced by the member for North Perth because I felt, and I still do, that those who are actually in charge of the park should determine matters associated with it—I refer to the King's Park Board.

However, I was told in no uncertain manner, that my attitude was wrong on that occasion because of the decision of this House. The decision was a solid one, so much so that no division was taken despite the fact that even at that time there was a good deal of feeling about King's Park. It is interesting to note that when the member for North Perth's Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council, it received even less opposition than it did in this Chamber. Of the six who voted against it then, two have since left that House and it would appear that an overall majority of both Chambers is overwhelming opposed to any further inroads being made into these parklands.

It is perfectly clear that when the member for North Perth accepted amendments during the Committee stage, certain decisions had been resolved and nobody queried his ideas on that occasion. During the course of the Committee stage, and in regard to an amendment that had been moved, the member for North Perth had this to say—

The whole point is that the principle contained in the amendment is not a departure from the general wish of the House, because members have already expressed their attitude in regard to an aquatic centre or orchestral shell to be built in the park. I am satisfied that any Government for the next 20 years will recognise



that this House has expressed itself as opposed to aquatic centres, sports grounds or anything else of a similar nature being built in the park. It was the general opinion of members that the park should be reserved as a bushland. Practically every member agreed that it should be so preserved.

That statement was never contested or queried, and he accepted the amendment to specify the degree of limitations that were to be imposed by his Bill.

Mr. Court: Was that the member for North Perth?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes.

Mr. Court: He subsequently denied that Hansard statement.

Mr. Lapham: When?

Mr. JAMIESON: I have quoted the speech of the member for North Perth. Incidentally, I was surprised the other night. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made quite a contribution to this debate, yet on that occasion he saw little need to debate the matter. As a matter of fact, his only contribution to the debate of 1954 on this matter appears on the same page from which I was quoting. He said that he was opposed to the amendment because he thought it specified in terms too direct what was to be forbidden in the park. However, he is consistent on that issue; but, on the other hand, it would appear that with regard to other issues before the House in recent times, he has become a pet caterpillar of the City of Perth.

Mr. Court: That is absolute rot.

Mr. JAMIESON: That is most noticeable when he adopts such terms as he did the other night to justify his case.

Mr. Court: Read what the member for North Perth said at page 3503.

Mr. Lapham: Is that on the second reading of the Bill?

Mr. Court: You were denying that you brought down the Bill to prevent the establishment of the aquatic centre.

Mr. Lapham: You are reading the second reading speech. Read the other section.

Mr. JAMIESON: I hope, Mr. Speaker, that you are making allowance for the time that these members are taking up. In regard to the area to which the public will or will not be admitted, reference to the Bill clearly indicates an area of about 6½ acres and that will be a fully enclosed area, as will be seen from the larger plans. That is far more than the area of the pool. As a matter of fact, it takes in the pool, the diving pool, several wading pools, tearooms and so forth. So it would appear that the pool is not to be the only part from which the public are to be specifically excluded unless a fee is paid.

Yesterday, I had some visitors from Victoria looking at this area of the park and the marking pegs clearly indicate the area affected. Previously I had been over the same area with the member for Subiaco, and had to reprimand him severely for treading on some of the kangaroo paws; they were growing so thickly that he could not walk between them. He denies that, and says that there were only 20 of them there.

Mr. Potter: I will amend that and make it 21.

Mr. JAMIESON: There were a lot more than 21 and the hon. member was guilty of a technical breach of the park rules in that he trampled on some of the flora. There are other wildflowers besides kangaroo paws in this area, all of which have maintained their relative positions in this bushland and have done so over the past 100-odd years since settlement first took place on the Swan River. No doubt the same thing was happening before this area was made into a reserve for natural flora, as has happened to all bushland around Perth.

Besides the kangaroo paws, among the wildflowers to be seen there at present are displays of donkey orchids of the purple face variety, and not the red face variety which some members experienced. They are to be seen at present. They are a well-standing type of orchid, and it is a pleasure to people who are not normally associated with our wildflowers, to see them. There is an abundance of pink myrtle, and hovea in the creeper form and standard type. There are also spider orchids, and some smoke grass unbeknown to the Premier to be found flowering there during January and February. This presents quite a pleasant relief from the other indigenous flora in King's Park and other parts of the State when wildflowers are apt to die out at this period of the year. Here the plants flower prolifically in the summer months.

There is the yellow custard orchid and the pink orchid, besides quite a number of varieties of wildflowers, other than the types that have been cultivated in that area. Geraldton wax is growing prolifically, as are certain species of gums mentioned by the member for West Perth in this House, which were planted there by the King's Park Board over a period of years. Throughout the bushland, the larger types of trees are not indigenous, but on the other hand, the sheoak and banksia types of growth are.

It is interesting to delve a little into the veldt grass problem that exists in this area, while I am mentioning the natural flora to be seen. The member for Bunbury was not far off the mark when he said that in the main the effect of veldt grass is felt along the man-made firebreaks.

which, of course, are necessary, and in other areas which to some degree have been cultivated or scarified.

Mr. Potter: I have shown you other places with veldt grass.

Mr. JAMIESON: Not to any great degree. In the main that is where the veldt grass grows. In view of the fact that veldt grass was first discovered in the park in the year 1922 in the area suggested by the Premier to be always retained as a park—that is towards the Crawley Baths end—it has not made any great inroads since. It has, however, made some inroads and it has become somewhat of a nuisance.

Mr. Heal: It is all over the park.

Mr. JAMIESON: It is very patchy. Anyone who wishes to examine the position with me, will readily understand that the problem is not as great as it is made out to be. The people who say that veldt grass presents a great problem are those who drive around King's Park-rd. and Thomas-st., but do not get out of their cars to look at the bushland.

Mr. Potter: I live next door to the park and I should know something about it.

Mr. JAMIESON: The hon. member should make more use of the park.

Mr. Potter: Nobody seems to make use of it nowadays.

Mr. JAMIESON: Although the hon. member says that, I was in the park not so long ago with a party, including the member for Fremantle and the member for Leederville. We had not been there for more than 10 minutes before eight or nine people wandered past for no other apparent reason than to see the bushland. Irrespective of whether or not people make use of the park, it is established as an indigenous flora reserve. If we are to encourage people to make use of it, then the park will become decrepit in a short time. The bushland in this State is not so strong that it can stand being trampled over. We should bear in mind that the paddocks around the metropolitan area very quickly lose their natural herbage once they have been trampled over by cattle.

This matter has become quite an emotional subject with members of this House and another place. I have not known, in the four years that I have been a member, any measure to cause so much disagreement in the lobbies. It has been very easy to create a debate in the common room of the members or in the lobbies by mentioning the possibility of handing over a section of the park for any purpose.

Mr. Potter: That was after the ultimatum.

Mr. JAMIESON: It was a long time before the ultimatum. Being a signatory to the ultimatum, I should have a little say on that matter. No member, and no one familiar with parliamentary practice, is so

unsophisticated as to be unaware that lobbying takes place on all sorts of issues, particularly those of a non-political nature. On this occasion lobbying did take place, and lobbying has been taking place on this issue for four years by various parties and by different manners and means. On this occasion, in order to let the Premier know the attitude of the majority in this House on the matter, the lobby document was presented to him. Before the Bill was introduced he knew the opinion of the House which prevailed in general in 1954 and still prevails today.

Is it not reasonable to do that with a person in a responsible position who has to introduce legislation on many matters, and to let him know exactly the feelings of members, rather than to allow him to go willy-nilly into the matter and to find that, as a Government, it does not have the backing of Parliament to proceed with the measure? I agree that this is not a Government Bill, but the Government has introduced it, and the Government is entitled to a certain amount of support, or to know what support it will get. It was told that it would not get very much support.

Seeing that we are examining this proposition from the point of view of individual members, I have a responsibility to the people who will have to pay the piper if this tune is called. I have received only two letters from my constituents in regard to this Bill. One was from a lady living in East Cannington who commended my action in signing this lobby document, and another from a ratepayers' association long before the coercion of the various groups for or against the proposition was felt, and long before they got to work to pile the stationery into the hands of members.

It will be as well for me to quote from a letter which I received from an organisation known as the "Community Service Association" of the City of Perth, No. 8 ward. This seems to be an association of ratepayers. The letter, which is dated the 26th March and is signed by E. G. King as honorary secretary, states—

It is the wish of this Association that the substance of our protest to the Honourable the Premier is submitted for your appraisal and esteemed support.

This protest is directed against the selection of King's Park as a site for an aquatic recreational centre as proposed by the Perth City Council and our contentions are as follows,—

1. Local residents resent having to meet increased rates for the repayment of loans needed to finance an undertaking that will be more accessible and value to large sections of the community which, being not within the municipal area of the City, have made no contribution to the capital expenditure involved.

2. King's Park is in a relatively presentable condition and is not within the administrative boundaries of the Perth City Council. On the other hand, large areas of river flats and backwaters, north of the causeway, purportedly the responsibility of the Council remain neglected and unimproved.

If the Perth City Council is determined to apply public funds to the proposal as indicated it needs a reminder that there can be no sound technical objection to having a centre on low-lying regions. The Olympic Pool used for the 1956 Games in Melbourne is constructed on land at no great elevation above the River Yarra.

3. If it is in order to concede the contention that the Como foreshore can become either a first-class recreational reserve or a first-class highway on one hand that a pleasing combination of both is not possible on the other hand, this community deplores the lack of thought shown by the Perth City Council in selecting the King's Park site.

Their planning completely excludes some compensating amenity to offset the possible loss of a fine river beach resulting from the construction of the Kwinana Highway.

Unfortunately, the only ameliorating factor would appear to be the King's Park Pool, but this, to meet adequately the situation would have to be as capacious as the beach at Como if the residents of this side of the river are to be accommodated, irrespective of whatever patronage may be expected from the western precincts of the City and its suburbs.

4. The lavish-spending propensities and grandiose extravagance so frequently displayed by the Perth City Council in many aspects of its public administration is deplored while its readiness and capacity to deal with urgent and less costly domestic affairs leaves much to be desired. Nor does there appear to be much likelihood of any effective redress or remedy to the paucity of treatment in the civic improvement and development of this outlying district while our representation upon the City Council shows the disproportionate ratio of three to twenty-one and matters of administration would seem to be the discretionary prerogative of the Town Clerk.

That indicates the feeling that prevails. As the Leader of the Country Party implied in his speech, seeing that we are charged with the consideration of this matter, we must take into account all aspects of it. He said that it would take some 300,000 patrons at a charge of 2s. a head over a period of four months in each year when the pool would be used most,

to pay for the upkeep of the pool and the interest on the capital outlay. In that respect I feel that the Community Service Association has something to guide its contention.

I might add that, in general, I have been advised that the ratepayers of the City of Perth will have the final say in regard to the raising of the necessary finance for the project, because Section 450 of the Municipal Corporations Act says—

Within six weeks after the publication of such notice of any proposition to borrow money (not being a proposition to borrow money to liquidate any loan lawfully incurred under the provisions of any of the Acts hereby repealed or of this Act), any fifty owners or one-tenth of the total number of owners, whichever is the lesser in number of rateable land situated within the municipal district, may, in writing under their hand delivered to the town clerk, demand that the question, whether or not such loan be incurred, be submitted to the election of the owners of rateable land situated within the municipal district.

On the surface that seems to be safeguarded, but unfortunately it is not. I shall tell the House why. I would assume that before requesting the Government to take action in this matter, the Perth City Council should have obtained the guarantee of the ratepayers that they were behind the proposal.

Recently the development of a park was undertaken by a local governing body not so far away, which caused so much emotional uprising in the district that virtually a vote of no confidence in that local authority was carried at a general meeting called for the purpose no less than three times. The people involved in organising the calling of that meeting thought they would have a final say when the loan was advertised for the purpose of carrying out the work of development. However, the local authority concerned was a little too smart for the ratepayers. It did not go ahead with advertising the loan. It carried out the work from revenue.

I am not assuming that the Perth City Council has readily available some £200,000 but I presume it has available certain estates and funds. Once Parliament gives the council a mandate to go ahead to establish an aquatic centre, without reference to the ratepayers, it could go ahead with the development of the project to the stage where it would be suicidal for the ratepayers to disapprove of a loan for the completion of the project. I do not presume the Perth City Council will do that, but to a large extent people have become fanatical in their outlook on this subject, and as fanatics, nothing will stop them. The safeguard is that the ratepayers in this

case must be given a chance to be consulted before the Perth City Council makes any move for finality in respect of the project.

Mr. Court: Would you support the Bill if an amendment was moved that the ratepayers are to be consulted before finality is reached?

Mr. JAMIESON: I would not at this juncture. The guarding of parkland by the people is not peculiar to this State, because over the past six or seven months, a great controversy has been raging in South Australia in respect of the parklands which surround Adelaide and sections of which it is proposed to use for parking areas. After considerable discussion with the Adelaide City Council, the Government in South Australia regarded the matter as such a hot potato that it shelved the issue; because, with the activities of the various bodies for and against these matters, there swung into being a considerable amount of lobbying to make sure that each point of view was fully represented; and under such circumstances it was deemed very unwise to take any action to annex any of the parklands for the purpose of parking motor-vehicles thereon.

Incidentally, they are in a worse position than we are, in that they have no other reclaimed areas of which they can make use, such as we have here. So I suggest that in regard to this matter we are doing the right thing by the public of this State at this juncture in saying "No"; in pointing out that in 1954 a Bill was passed and it was specific that no such venture should be undertaken in King's Park.

The city council has a number of sites. I think the member for Wembley Beaches implied earlier that there were some thousands of acres available to it; and I suggest that if it adopted the procedure of basing some three, four or five swimming centres around its locality, it would be doing far more for the public and far more for those thousands of people the Premier mentioned earlier than it would be by putting all its eggs in one basket and placing the centre in King's Park.

I would suggest a few locations in case somebody thinks I am saying there are sites when such is not the case. One which readily comes to mind, and which would serve perhaps the eastern extremities of Perth would be in the vicinity of Haig Park and the East Perth cemetery area where parklands would probably be readily available for development. Another place that could be developed—with all due respect to the people who use it to an extent—would be Delhi Square, not far from this House. A further one would be that which the member for Leederville mentioned as being in his electorate.

So far, I have referred to only a few of the places that would be readily available to the City of Perth for this project; and

I suggest that the council examine those sites rather than request the Government—as it evidently has done, according to this morning's paper—to have a referendum on the matter, in which all the people of the State would participate.

This in itself is an interesting aspect; because, unless my memory is wrong, I—along with others members—received some correspondence not long ago from the Lord Mayor decrying the possibility of full adult franchise for local government. Yet now he is requesting that the whole State should determine how the money of the ratepayers of the City of Perth should be used. I think that that is quite an about-face. Even if it were agreed to by the Government, it would cost some £18,000 to £20,000 to conduct a referendum; and that would be further money down the drain to no avail.

Mr. Court: Was it not to be on the right to establish the centre in King's Park?

Mr. JAMIESON: On the future of King's Park. Irrespective of what it would be on, the issue before the public at present is an aquatic centre for King's Park.

The Minister for Works: The Government will not spend £18,000 on a referendum.

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not blame the Government for that point of view, and I am glad the Minister has given the House that guarantee. The council cannot have the thing both ways. In its arguments before the people it has organised fairly thoroughly the sporting bodies of this community to come behind it; and I think it is a matter of those bodies lining themselves with the council in an effort to get something for themselves. I do not blame them for that, because some of them have been rather shabbily treated in the past. I endeavoured to answer all the pages of correspondence that came to me from these people, but they were far too numerous; so I gave the game away after the first 15 or 16 bodies had communicated with me and asked me to support the Bill.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Did the amateur football association approach you?

Mr. JAMIESON: No; I was very careful to see to that. One letter I did reply to, and I feel I should advise the House in respect of it. My answer was to a letter received from Miss Y. F. Smith, honorary secretary of the Western Australian Women's Basketball Association, 35 Williams-rd., Nedlands. This lass had written asking for support of the project, so I wrote to her the following letter:—

I thank your Association for its letter in regard to support of the proposed Aquatic Centre in King's Park.

However, might I express my amazement that your Association should see its way clear to support this venture, when for years, the crying need for

change rooms for the members of your Association in the Langley Park area has been constantly overlooked by the Perth City Council.

This matter, together with many others requiring finance, should in my estimation, be undertaken before a lavish spending of a quarter of a million pounds on a single project can be justified.

Might I further advise that I understand the City Council has now moved to provide your Association with grounds in another part of their district, but this does not improve the position which has prevailed over the past many years, when members of your Association found it necessary to go to their homes in wet uniforms, when with the expenditure of some several thousand pounds, adequate dressing rooms could have been provided for them in the Langley Park area.

At this juncture, I would suggest that a less lavish pool could be provided to meet the requirements of those interested in actual swimming sports, and at a later date, when buoyant finances prevail, the City Council might then be in a position to go ahead with a plan of the nature they suggest.

I might draw your Association's attention to Section 450 of the Municipal Corporations Act, which gives the right to 50 owners to call a referendum once a loan has been advertised, of which they do not approve. This, together with the fact that the Loan Council of recent times refused a loan of forty thousand pounds for improvement to parking facilities, would indicate that the City Council is at present putting the cart before the horse in obtaining the support of such Associations as yours, to this venture.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Was there any reply?

Mr. JAMIESON: I have not received a reply. But my letter was not a roneod type, so I suggest it may have found its way into the wrong coffers eventually. It irked me the other evening to hear the Minister for Housing—who is, unfortunately, sick this evening—jibing at some members, and indications only too clearly that he supported the proposal for an aquatic centre in King's Park. He constantly interjected in that direction. I had hoped he would be here to listen to my criticism in that regard.

In recent days the Minister has, by medium of the "Sunday Times," stressed the fact that the Housing Commission is doing everything possible to sustain the natural flora and trees in the areas where the Housing Commission is developing its projects—to such an extent, I believe, that

action has been taken against some unruly person for chopping down a tree on Housing Commission land.

Of course, the Minister is in rather a unique position on such an issue as this. On the one hand, he is the State's leading protector of flora, in his capacity as Minister for Forests. On the other hand, he is one of the leading protagonists of the bulldozer treatment of flora in King's Park. So it is indeed a peculiar position to have him crying out to the public to take more care with the trees and shrubs indigenous to the areas which the Housing Commission is developing, while taking a different attitude with regard to King's Park.

Incidentally, at Cloverdale, as late as yesterday, I saw windrow burning of some trees that had been cut down; and the burning was out of control, with the result that all the remaining trees were burned almost to a cinder. So I do not think his policy has been put into effect as much as he would probably have liked.

Perhaps I have said enough to indicate to the House that I have been urged by all manner of persons to vote in favour of this Bill—but incidentally not until a day or so after I had visited the Lord Mayor with my colleague from Victoria Park did I receive any great deal of support for this venture; however, that was a mere coincidence as all other members at that time began to receive this paper barrage from organisations requesting support of the project.

The amount of pamphleteering and elaborate expenditure in this regard was, I think, a little unjustified when Parliament had not said yea or nay to the venture. It would have been far better left until such time as a decision was made in the House in less strained circumstances; and then the people that had this money to spare could probably have prevailed upon the ratepayers to give earnest consideration to raising loans that would be necessary.

There is not much more I wish to say on the matter. I would again urge members of this House who have not inspected thoroughly these areas to take half-an-hour off one afternoon within the next two or three weeks while the park is at its best and see for themselves what the member for Subiaco was unfortunate enough not to see when he was trying to point out how bad the park was, for he was treading amongst crops of orchids.

Mr. Potter: I don't know that he was.

Mr. JAMIESON: I know that he was. There are none so blind as those who do not wish to see; and unfortunately the hon. member has got himself into that category at this juncture.

Mr. Potter: Oh, wad some pow'r the gifte gie us . . . !

Mr. JAMIESON: I think I have said enough. I oppose the Bill and hope the majority of members will in no small way

determine that the park is to remain as it is at present until there is greater evidence that the indigenous flora of the park will be preserved.

The **SPEAKER**: The hon. member's time has expired.

Hon. D. BRAND: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

*Point of Order.*

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member desires to say any more, I would like to move that his time be extended.

The Speaker: It is the right of any hon. member to move such a motion, but it must be done immediately. I did not receive such a motion.

Mr. Jamieson: I do not wish to say any more.

*Debate Resumed.*

Motion put and passed.

Debate adjourned.

# **BILL—ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Council and, on motion by Hon. D. Brand, read a first time.

*House adjourned at 11.32 p.m.*

## **Legislative Council**

Wednesday, 18th September, 1957.

### **CONTENTS.**

	Page
Questions: Railways, employees of dining-car and refreshment-room services	1580
Northern Highway, centre-lining at Bindoon Hill	1580
Belmont High School, attendances and accommodation	1581
Milk, board inspectors and solids-not-fat contents	1581
Motions: School children and cross-walk hazards, to inquire by select committee	1581
Charcoal iron works in South-West, export of Talling Peak iron ore	1584
Personal explanation, withdrawal and apology to Hon. F. J. S. Wise	1590
Bills: Newspaper Libel and Registration Act Amendment, 3r.	1590
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 3), 2r.	1590
Legal Practitioners Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r.	1594
Public Service, 2r.	1594
Bank Holidays Act Amendment, 2r., defeated	1595
Adjournment, special	1618

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

## **QUESTIONS.**

### **RAILWAYS.**

#### *Employees of Dining-car and Refreshment-room Services.*

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Minister for Railways:

In connection with the dining-car and refreshment-room services of the Railway Department, will the following information be supplied to the House:—

(1) What number of persons are employed at Welshpool?

(2) What are—

(a) their names;

(b) their positions;

(c) their individual salaries?

The **MINISTER** replied:

(1) Salaried staff 9; wages staff 6.

(2) (a) This information is not normally supplied but can be made available to the hon. member at my office.

(b) and (c)—

#### **Salaried Staff.**

Position.	Present Salary.
	£
Superintendent	2,000
Clerk in Charge	1,500
Providore	1,350
Inspector	1,215
Accounts Clerk	1,095
Staff Clerk	1,025
General Assistant	1,025
General Clerk	975
Typiste	334

#### **Wages Staff.**

Pastrycook	868
Van Driver	803
Labourer	729
Head Attendant	552
Junior Attendants (2) each	506

### **NORTHERN HIGHWAY.**

#### *Centre-lining at Bindoon Hill.*

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Will the Government give consideration to the necessity for widening portion of the Northern Highway, and in particular, the north and south approaches to Bindoon Hill, with a view to centre-lining those portions and so minimising the road hazard?

(2) If it is not practicable to widen the full length of these approaches immediately, could selected danger points receive attention?

(3) How soon could such work be put in hand?