

tion of knowing that what is done will be on the basis authorised and in respect of which they will have a word to say. Mr. Nicholson did not say much about Clause 9, but that provides that the employees will be required to contribute their quota. I feel sure it will be recognised generally that where large bodies of men are employed, some proposal of this description is required. From my experience as a member of the City Council and as a result of discussions I have had with councillors since I ceased to be a member of that body, I know it is generally appreciated that there is necessity for the scheme for which the employees themselves have fought, and the advisability of which councillors themselves have been aware for years past. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 8.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 7th November, 1934.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—CANNING DAM WORKERS' CONDITIONS.

Attitude of Acting Minister for Works.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Acting Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that on the 9th October last a request was made by me, as member for the district, to the Minister for Works and Labour to receive a deputation, representative of the Canning Dam workers, to discuss cubicles and extensions thereto? 2, Does he support the reply as forwarded by the Under Secretary for Labour under date the 12th October, in which it was stated that "by direction of the Minister, all matters relating to the working conditions, including that of accommodation of employees at the Canning Dam construction, are covered by an industrial award, and, in the circumstances, it was essential that all negotiations should be conducted strictly between the union and the Minister"? 3, Is he prepared to extend to the member for the district for usual courtesy in respect of receiving deputations? 4, If so, will he advise a date and time when he will be prepared to receive a deputation?

The ACTING MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, Yes, but it has never been the practice for members of Parliament to interfere in industrial conditions, especially those which are part of a contract of employment between an industrial union and the Government unless at the request of the union concerned. 4, A deputation from the union on the subject has already been received.

Attitude of Minister for Health.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Health: 1, Does he recall that on the 9th October last a request was made to him by me, as member for the district, to receive a deputation to discuss matters relating to the medical welfare of workers and families on the Canning Dam? 2, Is he aware that, in reply to a request for a deputation to the Minister for Works on a related subject, the Under Secretary for Labour forwarded a reply, dated the 12th October, that "by direction of the Minister, all matters relating to the working conditions, including that of accommodation of employees at the Canning Dam construction, are covered by an industrial award, and, in the circumstances, it was

essential that all negotiations should be conducted strictly between the union and the Minister"? 3, If so, does he support that reply, or is he prepared to extend to the member for the district the usual courtesy in respect to receiving deputations?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. I was not informed either of the request or the reply, which did not concern my departments. 3, The courtesy of receiving deputations is always extended to members of Parliament when requests are made. It is preferable that they should be in writing, and it is essential that they contain sufficient information to enlighten the Minister on the subject matter for discussion.

Mr. Sampson: Full details were supplied in writing at the time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There can be no discussion on an answer to a question.

MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PRECEDENCE.

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.33]: I move—

That on Wednesday, the 14th November, and each alternate Wednesday thereafter, Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays as well as on all other days.

This is the usual motion moved at this stage of the session, but it is more liberal than the customary proposal, because we suggest that Government business shall take precedence over private members' business on alternate Wednesdays instead of every Wednesday. We give our assurance to members who have business on the Notice Paper that ample time will be provided to discuss those matters.

Mr. Stubbs: After Christmas?

The ACTING PREMIER: I hope it will be before Christmas. The motion is a little late in submission this year, but members will agree that the Government are liberal in their request.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.34]: I shall not raise any objection to the motion, but the Acting Premier was very careful in giving his assurance to refer only to private members' business that already appears on the Notice Paper. Members may have other business they may desire to have dis-

cussed by the House, and, provided Government business is not unnecessarily delayed, I think the Acting Premier should give members his assurance that they will have an opportunity to place those matters before Parliament and have them dealt with.

The Acting Premier: I have no hesitation whatever in giving that assurance. At the same time, it is not usual for private members' business to be given precedence over Government business.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, I do not ask for that. We know that towards the end of a session, private members' business is dealt with when time is available after Government business has been transacted.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.35]: I shall not attempt to interfere with the transaction of Government business, which ought to take precedence. I agree that the Acting Premier has been liberal in asking for precedence on alternate Wednesdays, instead of every Wednesday. In fact, I would have preferred had the motion provided for precedence of Government business every Wednesday, so long as the Government gave members an assurance that they would not be hampered with regard to any business they might desire to bring forward. I contemplate introducing a small Bill, at the request of the Meekatharra Road Board, to deal with a matter of some importance to them. That does not appear on the Notice Paper, nor does the motion of which I gave notice this afternoon. I do not think the Acting Premier will be so unkind as to prevent such business being dealt with.

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle—in reply, [4.36]: I readily give members the assurance they desire. It seems to me that the more liberal one is, the more suspicion one is likely to create. Had I moved the motion so that Government business would take precedence every Wednesday, members would have accepted my assurance that provision would be made for consideration of any business they might bring forward.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There are about two Wednesdays only that will be at the disposal of private members.

The ACTING PREMIER: The Government will follow the usual procedure, and time will be provided to deal with any busi-

ness that private members may desire to bring before the House.

Question put and passed.

BILL—PURCHASERS' PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. Wilson, and read a first time.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act Amendment.

2, Financial Emergency Tax.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.37]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [4.38]: I desire to draw the attention of the Government to the position of a section of the employees of a certain board. Yesterday I was informed by a member of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board that legal men had expressed the opinion that the Bill will not affect that board, and that quite a number of other boards and State instrumentalities similarly, would not be affected. This means that these employees, whose wages or salaries were cut in accordance with the financial emergency legislation, will not receive any benefit next year, nor did they receive any benefit this year. I hope the Acting Premier will look into the matter and ensure that the position of these men is made definitely clear. It does not apply only to officers but to certain employees of other boards. The employees of the Western Australian Fire Brigades Board had an invidious experience when the financial emergency legislation was first introduced. Under the Act, the Fire Brigades Board is definitely a grantee body, and because the source of its income, it is in a peculiar position, entirely different from that of any other board, because the balance of its revenue is

controlled by the grant made by the Treasury. Members may recall that when the emergency legislation was introduced, it was not intended that the fire brigade employees would be subject to wage cuts except with the express sanction of the Arbitration Court. However, extraordinary steps were taken by the previous Government to ensure that the wages and salaries of their employees were cut. That action was strongly resented by the men and a case was fought through three courts. Because of the slipshod manner in which the legislation had been drafted, the men lost their case. Every advantage was taken of loose definition clauses to override subsequent provisions of certain sections of the Act. The Fire Brigades Board was defined as a State instrumentality. Let me quote the dragnet clause.

“State instrumentality,” except as herein after mentioned, means and includes any department, public institution, trust, board, commission, association, body corporate or incorporate, or person created, established or appointed under the authority of any Act of Parliament.

The Fire Brigades Board is controlled by legislation, the Act of 1916. Further, another dragnet provision was found to apply to officers. For the information of members I will read it—

“Officer,” except as hereinafter mentioned, means every person whomsoever employed by or performing personal service for the State, or employed by or performing personal service for any State instrumentality, whether as a member, servant or agent thereof.

Thus every member of the Fire Brigades Board suffered the full cut in salary. The amending Act of 1934 definitely placed firemen generally outside the scope of the Financial Emergency Act, as it did all other workers who were subject to Arbitration Court awards or agreements. To-day, however, the officers of the fire service are alarmed at the legal opinions, and they have direct knowledge that though they have been exempted from the emergency legislation, they are penalised as compared with other classes of workers. When the drastic amending Bill becomes law, all workers who earn up to £500 a year will receive the same margin over the basic wage as they received previous to the introduction of financial emergency legislation, the sole exceptions being the firemen. Fire-

men, who give more hours of service per week than do any other units of the community, are affected differently. Before the introduction of the financial emergency legislation, the margins over the basic wage were as follows:—First-class firemen, £1 per week; second-class firemen, 15s. per week; third-class firemen, 10s. per week. Now that the emergency legislation no longer applies, the margins paid are:—first-class firemen, 16s. per week; second-class firemen, 12s. per week; and third-class firemen, 7s. per week. Unfortunately—I use that word advisedly in view of the sequence of events—previous to the passing of the original emergency legislation and just when the depression began, officers and firemen, in order to assist the board to tide over a period of financial stringency, voluntarily agreed to a reduction of wages amounting to several shillings per week. That naturally reduced their margins over the basic wage. They are in receipt of a lower margin to-day than in 1929, and to my mind that is a glaring injustice. Even now steps are being taken to have the matter adjusted and, seeing that we have a fair-minded board, I believe the anomaly will be corrected, because when the board were in trouble, not only the men but the officers showed a readiness to assist. If, as legal opinion states, the effect of the Bill will be not to give relief to officers, who obtained no relief last year, I feel justified in asking the Minister to have the matter carefully examined. I do not agree with the legal opinions that have been given. I consider they are entirely wrong.

Mr. Sleeman: Then you should change your lawyer.

Mr. CROSS: The firemen have had a sad experience under the emergency legislation and have been involved in considerable expense, and it is only right that their position should be made clear before the Bill leaves this Chamber, so that the officers will not be further penalised. The reason why I believe the opinion of legal luminaries is wrong is that paragraph (e) of Clause 3 definitely states that in the case of an officer employed in any position in respect of which the rate of salary as fixed on the 30th June, 1930, exceeded £500 per annum, the salary of such officer shall be reduced only in accordance with the following provisions. Then follow the provisions. I wish

to make quite certain that similar reductions are not made and that those men do not find their position reversed. I fail to see why men who were treated as officers previously should not be treated as officers now. I would be glad if the Minister would have the point investigated to ensure that not only officers of the Fire Brigades Board, but that officers of other boards, are not subjected to a gross injustice.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [4.54]: If what the member for Canning has told us is correct, there is a rather glaring anomaly, because those men to my knowledge have not known for a considerable time when they stood. Whenever emergency cuts are made they are invariably affected, but when there is a question of long-service leave involved, every effort is made by the board to show that firemen are not Government servants or employees of a State instrumentality. I should like to hear the views of the Acting Premier. I cannot credit that the statements of the member for Canning are correct. The hon. member said that legal advice had been obtained, but it might be advisable for the hon. member, as secretary of the Fire Brigades Employees' Union, to try some other legal firm.

Mr. Cross: That was the statement of a member of the board.

Mr. SLEEMAN: A member of the board stated that a legal opinion had been given to that effect? If legal advice had been obtained from the Crown Law Department, it might have been more satisfactory. It will be a gross injustice if the cut is not restored to the men concerned and if they are deprived of long-service leave on the ground that they are not employees of the Government or of a State instrumentality.

MR. WISE (Gascoyne) [4.56]: I should like some information regarding an anomaly existing in the Public Service, particularly as it affects female employees. All female employees subject to the basic wage are affected in the same ratio as are male employees. Is it intended to have that anomaly rectified? I can realise that to rectify it would involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, but a large number of employees are affected, particularly employees on the lower rungs of the ladder. Has any arrangement been made to correct the anomaly?

THE ACTING PREMIER (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle—in reply) [4.57]: The relationship existing between the Fire Brigades Board and the Government is that the Government pay 25 per cent. of the expenses of the board, while the municipalities and insurance companies pay the balance. Last year the wages men received their increases, the same as did the wages men throughout the Public Service, and the Government provided 25 per cent. of the additional expenditure. That principle will be applied this year. The officers of the Fire Brigades Board who come within the range of the restoration of cuts, as provided for in this Bill, will receive the same consideration as civil servants get, and the Government will meet 25 per cent. of the cost. The other parties will have to meet their share of the expense. The matter is being investigated by the Treasury. Regarding females in the Public Service, there has been dissatisfaction during the year as to the relationship between the amounts paid to female and to male employees, and the relationship of the basic wage prescribed for females and for males. The difficulty arises from the fact that whereas the female basic wage fixed by the Arbitration Court represents 54 per cent. of the male basic wage, the female basic wage in the Government service is something over 70 per cent. of the male basic wage. That difference has thrown everything out of gear. I am not at all satisfied that justice was done by the adjustments made last year. I have asked for a special investigation to be undertaken and for a report to be submitted to me. The investigation is being made now. The House will realise that we could not adjust wages on the basis of the female basic wage in relation to the male basic wage when there was such a difference in the rates fixed by the court as compared with those fixed in the Government service. All sorts of anomalies and difficulties would have crept in had that been followed. The result was that very few, if any, of the female employees received any benefit. If the decision that operated last year applied this year, there would be very little improvement with regard to the cuts that were made. I will ask the committee who looked into the matter last year to examine the situation and give me a report, not only with regard to the Civil Service, but with regard to the railways. I have had deputa-

tions on the matter both from the railways officers and from the Civil Service Association. The hon. member may rest assured that some relief will be given. I want to do something to improve the position of the females. If the male employees are entitled to some improvement in their position, and we all admit they are and they are getting it, it is not justice that we should sit by and decline to do anything to improve the position of the females employed. I am having the situation carefully examined. It is not easy owing to the difference between the decision of the court and the position that has been created in the public service, because there is far less in the difference between the male and the female in the service than has been set out by the court.

The Minister for Railways: The same thing applies in the railways.

The **ACTING PREMIER**: Yes. The Public Service Commissioner has acted in respect of the service, and the Railway Classification Board has acted in respect of the railways. They have not followed the basis laid down by the Arbitration Court. When we find that the women have not been put upon any basis at all by the Arbitration Court, it is not easy to overcome the situation without creating all sorts of anomalies. Until I receive a report from the committee I am unable to say what the decision of the Government will be. The hon. member may rest assured that the Government will not take the view that we can effect some improvement for the male and not do anything for the female section.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FORREST AVENUE CLOSURE.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

MOTION—LIQUOR LAWS, TRADING HOURS ON GOLDFIELDS AND NORTH-WEST.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.5]: I move—

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should take the necessary steps so to

amend the Licensing Act as to permit of certain trading hours on Sundays in all recognised goldfields towns and in all towns situated in that portion of the State North of the 27th degree, South parallel.

In submitting this motion I suggest there is nothing novel about it. Those who dwell on the goldfields and in the North-West, and have done so for the last two or three decades, would welcome this suggested alteration. Almost everyone who lives in the somewhat isolated and remote parts of the goldfields and the North-West fully appreciates the necessity for a distinction between the liquor laws as they apply to the metropolitan area and other capital cities, and as they apply to inland towns. The reason why the alteration advocated in the motion was left in abeyance or not proceeded with was to an extent owing to the fact that the law was not strictly enforced in those other parts of the State. I am not telling tales out of school when I say that. It was pretty well established that on the goldfields, bearing in mind the nature of the occupations followed by most of the residents, and the heat and dust which aggravated the situation, a loosening of a very watertight law was warranted. Even Parliament has agreed that in those places the law which applies to the metropolis and seaside towns should not apply with equal force on the goldfields and in the more remote parts of the State. That has been done by legislation. Longer trading hours are allowed in those parts. That is due in the main to the vote that was taken on the subject several years ago. If Parliament had thought otherwise it could have ignored the decision when given, and made the trading hours the same in those parts as it has done in the metropolis, the country districts and the seaside towns. Parliament, however, realised that a law that was applicable to and probably good for the city could not always be applied as equitably and fairly in the more remote parts of the State. I do not wish it to be thought that I would not be prepared to alter the law as it applies to the city. As I progress in my arguments I shall be able to show that the steps taken by those who desired not only a reduction in the trading hours in which spirituous liquors could be sold, but to bring about total abstinence, have led actually to increased consumption. I respect the

opinions of the minority section of the community which has been able to influence the State and Commonwealth Parliaments to such an extent that Governments have carried out at least part of their desires. The desire of the minority has been to restrict trading hours in intoxicating liquor so that ultimately they might achieve their ambition of effecting the total abolition of the trade. This is advocated as a reform. I do not know exactly what a reform is. It is really a matter of opinion. What one organisation might regard as a proper reform might on the other hand be regarded as a reform in the wrong direction. If a person can get a few citizens around him, hold a few meetings, obtain publicity in the Press, and advocate the abolition of lawn tennis on Sundays, that could be called a reform. Those who desire total silence and strict observance of religious duties on the Sabbath would be entitled to call that a reform, but the majority of the community might call it a reform in the wrong direction.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It would be an achievement.

Mr. MARSHALL: Like many achievements of the hon. member, in the wrong direction. A good wholesome recreation hurts no one irrespective of when it is indulged in. Some people would not permit us even to speak loudly on Sunday, and the thought of indulging in good healthy recreation on that day is abhorrent to them. Their idea is that one should do nothing but worship, pray and pay on Sunday. They have every right to think as they please, and I have my right to differ from them. I can see no harm to society or the individual if people indulge in healthy recreation on a Sunday, provided that in carrying out their desires they do not annoy or inconvenience anyone else. Let us see what the influence of those who are opposed to the consumption of narcotics has been upon Governments, and the extent to which the law has been altered to meet their wishes. I have here some figures taken from the Year Book, and compiled by the Federal Statistician. They should be reliable. They deal with the last 20 years. No one will deny that Governments in their desire to give effect to the wishes of the minority have restricted the trading hours in practically every State. In Western

Australia that has applied only during the last 15 years. The Act was last amended in this direction in about 1921-22. In the other States the trading hours were reduced materially long before that. If we examine the figures and the percentage of intoxicants consumed per head of the population in Australia, we find that over the last 32 years the fluctuations have been very small. In some years the consumption increased, while in others it decreased. If we take the average over the years we find that the fluctuations have been infinitesimal, notwithstanding that the trading hours have been reduced everywhere to an enormous extent. This proves conclusively that the theory of restricted trade hours ultimately achieving the objective of total abolition of the liquor trade is dismally wrong. The official figures for the 20 years from 1901 to 1920 disclose the remarkable fact that wines retained their normal standard of consumption per head per annum, whilst spirits fluctuated only in a small degree. The consumption of ale and beer per head per annum in the whole of the Commonwealth during the same period of 20 years amounted to 13.39 gallons, a fairly large quantity of liquor to be consumed per head even over a period of 12 months. Coming to 1922, we find that the annual consumption of ale and beer has declined by scarcely one gallon per head of population. From 1922 onwards trading hours have been reduced in this State; they were reduced in other States previously. Consumption, however, remained fairly normal, declining by only about one gallon per head of the population per annum. In 1930 everyone was talking depression, with the result that people who happened to have wealth stored away were frightened and refused to invest it. Unemployment was rampant, governmental and private operations might be said to have practically ceased, and the consumption of liquor declined. In 1930 it was 10.22 gallons per head of population, in 1931 it was 8.12 gallons, and in 1932 it was 7.32. Those are the latest figures. Unquestionably, during the first three years of depression the consumption of alcoholic liquor did decline.

Mr. Patrick: But not only in Australia.

Mr. MARSHALL: No. It was a natural corollary of the depression. The unemployed could not even find money for meals, far less for alcoholic indulgence. That was a world-wide feature. Probably the local consump-

tion is still declining, because it cannot for a moment be asserted that we are free of the depression. Many of our workers are on half-time, which affords merely sustenance and does not allow anything for pleasure.

Mr. Patrick: The consumption of alcoholic liquors is a good barometer of prosperity.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. I want to be fair to those who do not see eye to eye with me as regards this motion, and therefore I state that undoubtedly during the last three or four years the consumption of liquor has declined owing to the reduction of the standard of living, and owing to the fact that people with money, being scared, have held on to it tightly. Although the desire to amend the law as to Sunday trading on the goldfields was rampant in the early days and for a lengthy period afterwards, the agitation fell by the wayside because of the fact that the Sunday trading law was not strictly enforced. It was not an impossibility to be served with alcoholic beverages during prohibited hours. In saying that, I am not telling any tales out of school; the fact is well known. The environment of men working underground is such as to make alcoholic beverages, in moderation, a positive necessity. Those who have lived on the fields for any length of time will realise that alcoholic beverages did more to prolong the lives of men dying on their feet from disease contracted through their employment, than all that the doctors were able to achieve. Sickly men, dying on their feet, looked upon the alcoholic beverage as an appetiser, which to them undoubtedly it was. These men felt revolted by food unless they had an appetiser. Residents of the metropolitan area should, moreover, be mindful of the fact that dwellers on mining fields have not the same opportunities for social intercourse, relaxation and recreation as are available to people living in cities. Even in cities like Boulder and Kalgoorlie—and they can be termed cities—the lack of amusement is evident. In isolated goldfields towns amusements are extremely limited, and in outlying parts of the State they are practically non-existent. Heat, dust and flies make life almost intolerable, and it takes a long time to become accustomed to such conditions. That is quite apart from the unhealthy and unattractive nature of underground employment—burrowing like a rabbit, scratching, scraping and boring for a third of one's

life practically, among fracture fumes, machine dust and objectionable smells. Men working under such conditions are entitled to more in the way of concession than can be claimed for the residents of more favoured parts of the State. Let us analyse what has happened as regards restrictions placed upon hours of trading in the liquor industry. I think most members will agree that instead of reduced consumption having resulted from restricted hours, there has, on the contrary, been increased consumption. Where the consumption has not actually increased, some highly objectionable features have resulted from the restricted hours. One is what is called the bottle trade. A few short years ago, when sale was permitted up to 11 p.m., it was seldom indeed that the purchase of a bottle of beer was to be observed, and the purchaser to some extent hid the bottle while conveying it to his home or room. But of recent years the practice has reached the stage of being carried on openly, and bottled beer is consumed on the highway, in dance halls, and in recreation resorts of all kinds. The habit has grown because of the restricted trading hours. Instead of having lessened the consumption, it has increased it. On the goldfields whole assemblages of men, finding the closing hour is approaching, will drink more rapidly and then carry away a number of bottles in order to provide for the long period before the hotels will again open. Quite a lot of the vice that is rightly ascribed to the consumption of alcoholic liquor has been brought about in this way, and has been accentuated by the advent of the motor car. At one time one could go for a joy ride, knowing that on return he could have a drink before the hotel closed; but with the early hours of closing, that can no longer be done, and so the liquor is carried in the car, which leads to immorality, and also to increased consumption of drink. It is not good for the country that this should be so; far better would it be to allow the people to have their alcoholic beverage in moderation on licensed premises. I hope to see a provision embodied in the Act to impose a heavy penalty on anyone found consuming intoxicating liquors in public highways and byways, or at recreation resorts or in dance halls.

Mr. Warner: You cannot do that.

Mr. MARSHALL: But I would do it. To-day some of the scenes at such places are disgraceful.

Mr. Patrick: Is the law being enforced on the goldfields now?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes; that is the unfortunate part of it; hence my motion. I would not suggest that the bottle trade should be abolished, because many people like to take a bottle home where it will be consumed in private, as they are entitled to do. But I do not think liquor should be drunk on public highways or at recreation resorts. That is where the penalty ought to be imposed. To bring about reform, we adopt restrictions that prove to be more prejudicial than beneficial to the community. I am moving the motion in order to get an expression of opinion from members as to whether or not we should enjoy this concession, at least on the goldfields and in the North-West, where the climate is particularly hot and where there is little opportunity for recreation. It is remarkable that in Australia the minority has been successful in persuading various Governments to restrict the trading hours; yet in countries where opportunities for indulgence in other forms of relaxation and recreation are in abundance, and where the climate is distinctly cool, the minority has not been so successful. In England, for instance, trading is permissible on Sundays during specified hours, when those requiring alcohol can secure it.

The Acting Premier: In England the hours vary in various districts, and you might have to travel far before you could get a drink.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is true, but consider the distances between hotels in outlying parts of this State. Yet our restrictions are more stringent than those in England. Temperance advocates say it is objectionable to see public houses open during church hours, and they influence the Government to restrict even the showing of pictures during church hours. Yet in England the recognised hours of amusement and Sunday trading are the very hours during which church services are being conducted.

The Acting Premier: In what part of England is that?

Mr. MARSHALL: I admit the law in England differs in various districts, but I have here the latest amending Act, dated

the 17th August, 1921. Section 2 provides that the hours during which intoxicants may be sold or supplied on Sundays, Christmas Day, and Good Friday, for consumption on or off the premises, shall be five hours, of which not more than two shall be between 12 noon and 3 p.m. and not more than three between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. I do not know the exact boundaries of the districts where that part of the law prevails. It must be remembered that the climate and the environment of English life are much more favourable than are to be found on our goldfields.

The Acting Premier: I would not change our goldfields climate for the English climate.

Mr. MARSHALL: But the Minister will admit that in any country the heat has some effect on one's thirst. A man on the goldfields would have a sharper thirst than if he were in the moist, cool climate of England. This English Act goes on to prescribe the hours during which hotels may remain open on Sundays in various parts of Britain. If one likes to take an alcoholic drink on week-days, it suggests that he would like one on Sunday also. The day makes no difference to his thirst, nor to the temperature or the dust. So I say a man on the goldfields is entitled to some consideration such as my motion expresses. Our liquor trade has always been controlled, and I agree that certain happenings have rendered necessary some degree of control; but if the police were to enforce the whole of the liquor law with the same impartiality as they enforce the closing hours, half the trouble all over the State would be avoided. There is a section in our Act which provides that no one under the influence of liquor shall be served, and it is left to the discretion of the proprietor of the hotel, or the barman, to refuse to supply such a person with liquor. That particular section is ignored by the police.

The Minister for Police: It is always arguable.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not arguable. If the Minister were the proprietor of an hotel, he could say to any individual, "You are visibly under the influence of liquor and I refuse to serve you."

Mr. Cross: He would not last long as a proprietor.

Mr. Lambert: Thank goodness sometimes a man is invisibly under the influence.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is nothing about the question that calls for humour. As I said, that part of the Act is entirely ignored.

Mr. Cross: Not entirely.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, it is not enforced on the goldfields as strictly as are the closing hours.

Hon. C. G. Latham: One is in the hands of the police, I suppose, and the other is a matter for the hotelkeepers.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is all in the hands of the police; the police can do anything. Just because a few larrikins, so to speak, or a rough element take a few more drinks than is good for them, and create a disturbance, the whole population is to be penalised. There would never have been any trouble on the goldfields if the section of the Licensing Act to which I have referred had been strictly enforced. Let me instance what is taking place at Wiluna. I give every credit to the sergeant of police there, who is a most efficient and particularly watchful officer, yet he is unable to suppress sly-grog selling. No sooner does he catch one offender than another bobs up. Is it right, knowing what we know, to close our eyes to facts and say, rather than alter the law and allow people to spend £15,000 or £20,000 in beautiful buildings, provide big staffs, pay high fees for the privileges of selling liquor, and generally have to meet heavy obligations, that we will permit the sly-grog sellers to carry on their business and persecute the legitimate trader? It is ridiculous in the extreme. The fixing of the closing hour at a certain time is responsible for more liquor being consumed than would otherwise be the case. It is purchased just before the hotels close ostensibly for consumption perhaps on the Sunday, but it is not permitted to last until the following day and then recourse is had to the sly grog shops. These premises exist within a very short distance of beautiful hotels and are permitted to defy the law.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You say they are permitted to carry on.

Mr. MARSHALL: You cannot prevent them. They sell only to those people they think they know, but sometimes they are caught.

Mr. Thorn: What do they sell mostly?

Mr. MARSHALL: A lot of things.

The Minister for Police: They are not open on Sunday.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is after hours that they do the bulk of their trade. A man perhaps goes to a hotel on Saturday night and buys three or four bottles of liquor for the next day. Then he meets a friend and perhaps they consume the whole of that liquor, and so nothing is left for the Sunday. Having had more than is good for them, they need some on the next day and proceed to get it from the sly grog shops. Any person who is broad-minded cannot possibly object to conceding to the people on the goldfields, and in the north-west part of the State, the right to trade on Sunday during certain hours only. I do not for a moment suggest that hotels should be thrown wide open during the whole of Sunday but they might be permitted to open their doors for about three hours. The restrictions that are at present imposed are against the welfare of the community and therefore we should try some other method. In other countries where the liquor laws are more liberal, greater sobriety is evident. Go to France, where the best of wines are manufactured, and you will not see many people under the influence of liquor. It is the same at Asiatic ports, where the hotels are open at all hours.

Mr. Thorn: At those places the people are brought up on liquor.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, they are practically abstainers. The only way to accomplish what we desire is to begin in the State schools and teach the children the evils of alcohol. Then, on having grown up, they will probably have an abhorrence of it. The goldfields, ever since they have been discovered, have had a comparatively free run in respect of the liquor trade, and nobody has been the worse for it. By virtue of concessions having been granted to licensed people, seldom, if ever, has anything been sheeted home to them in consequence. I submit the motion and hope it will meet with the approval of members.

On motion by the Minister for Police, debate adjourned.

MOTION—BULK HANDLING SITES.

Departmental Committee's Report.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.55]: I move—

That the report of the recent departmental committee, appointed to inquire into railway sites for bulk handling, be laid upon the Table of the House.

Although a considerable amount of interest is taken in the question of the bulk handling of wheat, it is not my intention to detain the House for long.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is there not a case before the court dealing with bulk handling?

Mr. SLEEMAN: If I begin to speak on the subject of bulk handling, I may be responsible for a contentious debate. I have no desire to do that. All I wish is to have the report of the departmental committee laid on the Table of the House so that we may see what the recommendations were.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Probably for the benefit of the case now before the court.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I did not even know there was a case before the court. Anyway, the Leader of the Opposition need not throw insinuations across the floor of the House, otherwise he may force me to say something about political sopas, in the form of bulk handling sites, having been thrown out on the eve of an election, which any Government ought to be ashamed to do. I hope he will permit me to complete my few remarks without further interjections. My only desire in submitting the motion is that people of all shades of opinion may know something of the nature of the report. We have had statements by Mr. Poynton, the general manager of the Midland Railway Company, who was not sympathetic towards the granting of sites, whilst only in this morning's paper there appeared the report of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, which made caustic comments on the question of bulk handling. I do not desire to provoke any argument; all I want is to see the report so that we know what the departmental committee recommended. I submit the motion.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [6.0]: I support the motion. The bulk handling system was introduced in Western Australia with the idea of installing a method that would handle wheat economically. In Western Australia it was thought that a special system could be economically installed and could be applied effectively in handling the special wheats under the special conditions that obtain within the State. There has been some controversy as to the wisdom or otherwise of the introduction of this special bulk handling system. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) holds one view; I hold a totally different view.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You have had practical experience.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the member for Guildford-Midland can indulge in a discussion of bulk handling on the present motion.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I think it is permissible.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not, seeing that the motion refers merely to the tabling of certain papers.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The point I want to emphasise is that matters of State importance, and all investigations having a bearing on any State activity affecting a large section of the community, should be made public. There should be no private investigations and if it is worth while the Government setting up a committee, even though it be confined to public servants, it is wise that the conclusions of such a committee be made available to everyone. There is a feeling that the Government are too closely associated with those who are not favourable to a continuance of the bulk handling system. I am very disappointed to find that in regard to this system that was supposed to be so economical, another investigation has been requested, but I will welcome the appointment of a Royal Commission again to go into what this particular committee has already done. For the Acting Premier to have a private discussion with the opponents of the co-operative concern, owned, controlled and administered by the people, is, in my opinion, wrong.

The Acting Premier: I have done nothing of the sort, and if I desired to do so, I would without consulting you.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Undoubtedly. According to the newspapers—

The Acting Premier: The newspapers said nothing of the sort; it is what you are reading into the statement that appeared in the Press.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I still think that was not the proper course to pursue and that it was unwise for the Acting Premier—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

The Acting Premier: I will do what I like.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know you will.

The Acting Premier: You are entering a special plea as the mouthpiece for the Western Australian Farmers Ltd.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Unquestionably I have a brief for the co-operative movement as I always have since I belonged to the Labour movement.

The Acting Premier: With Mr. Monger at its head—a nice sort of Labour movement that is.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Mr. Monger, of course, is not head of the Labour movement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Guildford-Midland will resume his seat. We are not discussing Mr. Monger but a motion moved by the member for Fremantle to secure the tabling of certain papers. That is all that can be discussed and I will not allow a general debate on bulk handling.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not desire to misrepresent the Acting Premier.

The Acting Premier: You can do as you like.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is quite all right.

The Acting Premier: I will not consult you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Acting Premier will keep order.

The Acting Premier: And the member for Guildford-Midland should keep straight too.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The leading newspaper of the State reported that there had been a private discussion between the Minister and the deputation representing the Wheatgrowers Union concerning the co-operative movements in connection with bulk handling. All I say is that if there is to be any discussion, let

it be done publicly. If there is to be any investigation, let it be a public inquiry. Do not let influences be brought to bear that are not in the best interests of the State and certainly not calculated to elevate either the industry or the Government. I do not want to lecture the Government.

The Acting Premier: Of course not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But I have a right to take exception when I consider a wrong course is followed in connection with persons whose reputations are not so high that they should be allowed a private audience with the representative of the Government.

The Acting Premier: You have not asked for any, I suppose; you and the Westralian Farmers?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: None.

The Acting Premier: You deny that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have had no private audience.

The Acting Premier: You have had more than one.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have had some interviews with the hon. member.

The Acting Premier: And I suppose you will want more.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Surely a member of Parliament, in the ordinary course, can discuss matters with the Acting Premier.

The Acting Premier: Talk sense.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: All I say is this: The Acting Premier denies the statement, so that is quite all right, but the newspaper report disclosed that at the conclusion of the deputation, certain people remained behind and enjoyed a private audience with the Minister on a matter of public importance. I think that is wrong. I want all inquiries and such discussions to be open to the world, so that everyone will know what is going on.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, debate adjourned.

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

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate on the second reading from the 31st October.

Question put and passed.

In Committee.

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

BILL—METROPOLITAN WHOLE MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 31st October.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [6.10]: The principal Act was passed in 1932 and amended in 1933. When the measure was originally before the House, the constitution of the board gave rise to a long discussion and in the end its personnel was recast by this Chamber. The proposal sponsored by the then Minister for Agriculture was completely altered. Therefore it can be said that the present constitution of the board was evolved in this Chamber, and was not a matter of Government policy. At the time it was stated that the distributors were not represented on the board, which comprises two representatives of the producers, two of the consumers and an independent chairman. Finally the House decided the producers and consumers only should have representation on the board. It is now proposed to alter that composition and to add two representatives of the retailers, making a board of seven members instead of one of five members. There is one feature of the amending Bill with which I may be inclined to agree. I do not know if it was intended to be such by the mover, but the effect of the proposal is to grant preference to unionists. It completely closes the door, because it amounts to compulsory unionism. No one other than a member of the Metropolitan Retail Dairy-men's Industrial Union of Employers can be elected to the board to represent the retailers.

Mr. Lambert: That is merely a sop.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am loth to oppose such an advanced legislative proposal and I congratulate the hon. member upon having introduced possibly the most advanced legislation ever introduced in this Chamber.

Mr. Lambert: It amounts to Communism.

The Minister for Justice: No, to Syndicalism.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Act will terminate at the end of December next year, but during the time it has been in operation, it has been found necessary not only to amend the measure in order to make for better working, but also on several occasions to recast the regulations under the Act. The board have experienced difficulty in doing what Parliament desired, principally because it meant setting up an artificial price for whole milk in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Lambert: Have we had a balance sheet from the Whole Milk Board?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, it was tabled yesterday. The Act was not only an experimental measure, but the administration of the measure has proved a matter of great difficulty to the board. Much of that difficulty has arisen from the retail section of the trade. The retailers have asked for proper representation on the board and have gone considerably further than that because they took an opportunity to test the legislation in the courts.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I was referring to the difficulties encountered by the board in an endeavour to build up an organisation and administer the Act. The Act was agreed to in 1932 solely because the industry had reached such a condition that the producers could not carry on. Although the retailer and depot keeper were also affected, the fact remains that but for the condition of the producers, there would have been no Act. The main object was to protect the interests of the producers in order to keep the industry alive. Whatever merit there may be in the Bill, which seeks to give the distributors direct representation on the board, I should like to point out what that would involve. Actually there are 866 licensees who amongst them hold 1,158 licenses. The number of persons licensed can be divided into the following classes:—

Owners of rounds, the ones chiefly affected by the Bill	278
Other vendors to be given no consideration—	
Shops other than those governed by Section 26B	148
Shops under Section 26B	440

Licenses under Section 26B of the 1933 Act are issued to shopkeepers who sell less than 1,000 gallons of milk a year. The 278 owners of rounds hold between them 570 licenses. That is accounted for by the fact that quite a number are licensed for more than one district.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Are not a lot of them dairymen, too?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I will explain that. If the Bill be passed in its present form, the retailers would be given equal representation with the producers on the board. In No. 1 area, Perth, there are 207 dairymen licensed. In No. 2 area, outside the metropolitan area, there are 291 dairymen licensed, a total of 498 owners of dairies who are licensed. I have already pointed out that there are only 278 owners of rounds. Of the 307 dairymen in the metropolitan area, half of them also hold a vendor's license. It has been asserted that the vendors have no representation on the board, but the fact is the dairymen's representative has also been representative of retailers. The dairymen's representative is interested in the retail business.

Mr. Thorn: He is a producer-retailer.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. Actually the retailers are represented, and I cannot conceive of anything being done to the detriment of the retailers. Although direct representation of the retailers has been asked for, the Bill provides for only a section of the retailers being represented, namely those who have rounds. I presume that those who are shopkeepers and who far outnumber those with rounds would also demand representation, and if we were guided by the number of licensees, they would outnumber the retailers with rounds.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: But it is only a sideline with them.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so, but it is not proposed to give them consideration. Let us now consider the preponderating asset — that owned by the 500 dairymen, or that owned by the 278 retailers. Between the two there is no comparison, but the Bill, as it stands, proposes to give the 278 retailers equal representation with the dairymen who own a very valuable asset in their land and stock. So there can be no comparison from the point of view of numbers

or of vested interests. When the board were first constituted, the right of the retailers to direct representation was not acknowledged. Only the producers and consumers were given direct representation. I believe it would have made for the better working of the board had the retailers been given representation at that time, because the main difficulties encountered since the board have been in existence have come from the retailers, who appear to think they have a grievance. Still, the representation proposed by the Bill is out of proportion.

Hon. N. Keenan: What is your idea of a proper proportion?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a difficult question. The duration of the Act extends to the end of next year. The present is a critical stage. There have been frequent amendments of the regulations. It has been a matter of the utmost difficulty to build up the organisation, and yet, while that work is still in progress, it is proposed to reconstitute the board. I consider that a board of seven members would be unwieldy. Some better method than merely adding to the strength of the board would have to be devised, and my view is that any alteration should be deferred until we consider the question of extending the duration of the Act. The New South Wales Act of 1931 provides in Section 7 for a board of three members, one of whom shall be appointed as chairman, one representative of dairymen, and one representative of consumers. The members there are appointed by the Governor for a term of five years, receive such remuneration as may be determined by the Governor, and are eligible for re-appointment. Thus New South Wales manages with a board of three. The number on our board was multiplied because we have two dairying districts with distinct interests. In the past they have been to an extent antagonistic. The metropolitan dairymen have always contended that those outside have had an advantage over them. They referred to the group settlers, and there was violent dissension on that account. When we came to constitute the board, we decided that in order that the metropolitan and the outside districts should have direct representation, there should be one representative of each of those interests. That

meant that there would be two representatives of the producers, and the House decided that there should be an equal representation of consumers. With the chairman, that made a board of five.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The House was unanimous on that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. There is no advantage in having a large board. To manage the business it would be advantageous if we could limit the board to three members. Certainly we shall have to devise methods to avoid increasing the number. It is inadvisable to make the alteration during the present stage when the organisation is being developed. We have a long way to go before the administration will be satisfactory, and if we increased the board at this stage, so far from solving existing problems, it would create new problems. Increasing difficulty would arise. The present board should run its course with a membership of five. The time to see about other representation is when the legislation comes up for renewal. A good deal of difficulty hinges around the question of levy. We are unable to levy on the gallon basis, as that would conflict with the Commonwealth excise regulations. We have had to devise methods of levying on a capitalised basis, so much in every 5s. worth of milk sold. The present position is that dairymen who hold no license other than a dairyman's license pay 1d. in every 5s. worth of milk. A dairyman who holds a milk vendor's license as well as a dairyman's license also pays 1d. in every 5s. worth of milk sold. A dairyman holding a license to treat milk, as well as a dairyman's license and no other from the board pays 1d., a milk vendor who does not hold any license other than a vendor's license pays 1d.; a milk vendor who holds a license to treat milk as well as a vendor's license pays ½d., and persons licensed to treat milk who do not hold any other license pay ⅔d. Although the distributors are not directly represented, they have had representation through the member representing the metropolitan districts. One representative was a man who distributed over 70 gallons of milk a day, representing his milk round, in addition to which he was a producer. The interests of the distributor were taken into account. In addition, there are two representatives of the con-

sumers, both commonsense and capable men. It is their business to hold the scales evenly and fairly, and to see that distributors are not imposed upon. The chairman of the board has made a special study of the position with a view to a fair apportionment of the levy, so that sufficient funds will be available with which to finance the board, and so that each section is fairly dealt with. The position is an extremely difficult one. Control boards are necessarily expensive. They upset an existing order of things. They have to start from nothing, so to speak, set up an organisation, and take over control from those already engaged in the industry. No end of difficulty has been created. That has been the experience of this board. The contributors who are all keen business men, are watching to see that the various sections gain no advantage over any other. I have been associated with the board for the past 18 months. My impression is that they are endeavouring to conduct fairly all the affairs of that tribunal. What some people engaged in the industry cannot understand is the amount of money involved in financing the board. This is mainly due to the difficulty, first of all, of collecting information, setting up the necessary records, and policing the Act. There are people who endeavour to circumvent the law. They consider they are justified if they can manage to dodge it or the regulations. There has been difficulty in policing the Act. The board is earnestly undertaking the task, also, of improving the quality of the milk. We have, by negotiation with the Health Department avoided any friction between the two departments. An earnest attempt has been made to improve the quality of milk. I do not refer to the butter fat contents or to the solids. I am not blaming the previous or the existing health authorities. To do this work properly requires an organisation with a staff. In addition, the board have set up a laboratory in conjunction with the Agricultural Department, where bacteriological tests are made. This is not done for the purpose of prosecuting the producer, or of unduly worrying him. The idea is to determine whether milk is as good as it ought to be and by this means indicate to the dairyman what is wrong with his methods, so that they may be corrected. As the board continues, so will the various phases of its work

develop. It has proved of advantage to the industry and, as a result of its operations, better milk is distributed to the metropolitan public. It is inevitable that this work should cost money. When it comes to paying, I do not know that either the producer, the depot-keeper, or the distributor is satisfied. It is from them that the revenue is obtained. I am positive that the board has endeavoured to hold the scales fairly. Now that the board is in full swing, and the Act and regulations are being policed, it would be inadvisable to make a change. Furthermore, the board may be said to be in the middle of its operations. It is not yet satisfied that it has a completely efficient organisation. Seeing that the Act expires next year, and that the Bill before us proposes some time in March or April of next year to add two new members to the board, I think it would be wrong to make a change. Apart from the merits of the case put forward by the hon. member, it would not be the right time at which to effect a change. The method by which it is proposed to accomplish that object is also wrong. I have an idea that only one section of those involved have stated their case to the hon. member. I do not think that in framing the measure he was in possession of the full information necessary. He cannot be aware of the difficulties that have been encountered by the board, nor can he have given consideration to the fact that in the short time in which it has been in existence it has not been able to perfect its organisation. I hope he will not do anything to increase the difficulties of the situation. Everyone just now is asking for control. Great difficulty is experienced in setting up an organisation that is new in the State. It would not be in the interests either of the producer, the depot-keeper or the retailer to interfere with things at this stage. The hon. member, and those who may agree with him, should possess their souls in patience. When the new Bill comes down for consideration attention will be paid to the question of recasting the representation on the board. I hope some means can be found to limit the number and I certainly do not agree that it should be increased. To do that would not make for improvement in the operations of the board. It would, in fact, make their task increasingly difficult. I shall vote against the second reading, and that is the view of the Government.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [7.56]: I am in sympathy with the principles contained in the Bill, and intend to support the second reading. I do this without any feeling of hostility towards the board, which has done very fine work in the course of its administration. If the Bill becomes law, I think it will do even better work. As is the case with all new machinery, the bearings sometimes run hot. As the machinery of this board is comparatively new, there is still a little friction. I believe that if the retailers had been represented on the board, a considerable amount of that friction would have disappeared, if not entirely eliminated. The original suggestion made by the Royal Commission was that a board should be appointed consisting of a representative of the consumers, as chairman, one of the producers, one of the vendors, a medical officer, and the Chief Veterinary Officer of the State. That would have been an ideal board. Unfortunately the representation has been confined entirely to producers and consumers. I have never yet been able to discover why retailers were not originally included. They are certainly vitally interested. It is their living, their money is invested in the industry, and the decisions of the board frequently cause them a considerable amount of worry and inconvenience. If they had been represented on the board, some of the errors into which it has fallen might never have occurred. Even the board's greatest admirers will not claim that it has been entirely free from blame. The Minister referred to overloading it and making it top-heavy. I admit there is that danger. Probably that could be overcome by adopting as nearly as possible the suggestion of the Royal Commission. The commission did not suggest two representatives of the consumers, retailers or producers. If the producers were reduced to one representative, and the consumers to one representative, and the retailers had a representative on the board, that body could not by any stretch of imagination be considered unwieldy. I realise, with the Minister, the difficulties which the board have had to overcome and may still have to overcome. I realise that the milk industry is an extremely difficult one to handle and control. It was rather a courageous action to attempt to control that industry when the original Act was passed and the board established. It has to be conceded by even those who are op-

posed to such control, that the board have tackled their task manfully and, certainly, on the whole successfully. The path lying ahead of them when they were appointed was by no means rosy. Certainly it was not rose-strewn, but mostly rock-strewn. Notwithstanding all those obstacles, the members of the board have proved themselves capable of handling the position. I venture to say their task would be rendered much easier if a representative of the retailers were sitting on the board. The Minister referred to what he considers the inadvisableness of interfering with the position at this juncture, because of the fact that next year the Act will come up for reconsideration. If I thought the Ministry, when reviewing the composition of the board at the end of the term, would include a representative of the retailers, even on reduced numbers, I would probably alter my attitude towards this second reading. However, I think the Government themselves, as well as the board, have now had sufficient experience to enable them to say definitely whether or not the retailers should be represented on the board. The Minister for Agriculture himself has during the past 15 months or so had experience of the working of the board, and should be in a position to state definitely whether the Government would give representation to the retailers if the Act was continued and the board reconstituted. The Minister himself is an authority on the milk industry. The speech he delivered in this Chamber in discussing the original Act proved that he had an intimate knowledge of the industry, thanks to experience gained by him as member of a former Cabinet. I cannot altogether agree with the Minister that it is now inadvisable to alter the composition of the board. Over two years have elapsed since that body was constituted. The Minister has been in charge for some time, and I think there is now sufficient information in the department to enable the Government to reply yes or no to the request which has been made for representation of the retailers. The Bill is not the first attempt made to secure such representation. I believe the additional representation proposed would help the board to do even better work than in the past. I agree that the question whether or not there should be one representative or two representatives of the retailers, in view of the figures adduced by

the Minister, may be open to argument; but that the retailers should be represented I am perfectly convinced. I hope that the Bill will pass the second reading, and that eventually this important section of the milk industry will receive the representation to which it is entitled.

HON. P. D. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [8.5]: I oppose the second reading of the Bill for the good and sufficient reason that it is distinctly unfair to the main section of the people engaged in the milk industry, namely the dairymen. The member for Claremont (Mr. North), in moving the second reading, mentioned that when the original Act was introduced here, it provided for a board of seven. That is quite true, but the hon. member would have been fairer had he pointed out that that board was constituted on lines which gave the producers a majority representation on a board of seven. He did not tell the House that a board of seven was to be composed of four producer representatives, two distributor representatives, and one consumer representative. The board of seven proposed by the hon. member, consisting of two producer representatives, two consumer representatives, two retailer representatives, and one independent chairman, would entirely remove from the board the majority representation of producers. Therefore I regard the proposal as unfair to those who produce the whole of the commodity controlled by the board, men who are the most important section concerned. The board proposed by the hon. member would give the producers representation of only two, instead of four, on a board of seven. It is easily seen how impossible the position of the producers might be under those conditions. The Bill provides for a board of seven, and then creates what, in my opinion, is a most extraordinary position. If my reading of the Bill is correct, it provides for two retailer representatives after providing for the producer and the consumer representatives and the chairman, and goes on to say that two shall be elected by the retailers and two shall be nominated by the Minister. The member for Claremont provides for a board of seven, and then sets up machinery to constitute a board of nine.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think that is how it works out.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: I do not know what it would be like in actual practice. If the second reading is carried, the member for Claremont or someone else will have to alter the election machinery. It would be palpably absurd to provide for the constitution of a board of seven, and then provide machinery for the election of a board of nine.

Mr. North: A few words have been omitted there.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: The gem of the Bill is the qualification of electors to elect the representatives of the retailers. Those electors have to be members of the Metropolitan Dairymen's Association. I do not know why the Metropolitan Dairymen's Association should be granted the sole prerogative of electing the representatives of the retailers on the board. I could wish that only those of my electors who are members of the Primary Producers' Association should have the right to vote in my electorate. That would be just as fair as to give the members of the Metropolitan Dairymen's Association the sole right to elect the representative of the retailers on the board.

The Minister for Agriculture: Many of the distributors would be disfranchised.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: That is so. The only persons entitled to vote for the representatives of the retailers would be those holding the board's license. There can be no shadow of doubt about that. The board have done good work since their constitution, and I was glad to hear what the Minister had to say regarding that work. The board's task has been a more or less thankless one, but general satisfaction has been given to producers and consumers. The only disaffected ones are the retailers. Possibly that is quite natural, but there can be no doubt that the extra amount which has been coming the way of the producers since the board came into existence has been the means of enabling them to carry on and to maintain a standard of living that they would not have been able to attain to had there been no board in existence. The only other milk board I know of operating in Australia and controlled is the board in Sydney. One can realise its magnitude in comparison with the work the board has to do here in Perth. Yet that board consists of only three representatives, namely one independent chairman, one pro-

ducers' representative and one consumers' representative. Again, the relative importance of the different sections engaged in this industry needs to be taken into consideration when deciding the representation they are entitled to on the board. As the Minister has pointed out, there are some 270 retailers or roundsmen. They are outside the shops that are licensed by the board to vend milk. I should imagine those shopkeepers would not be very much interested one way or the other, and would not consider they were entitled to a vote for the retailers' representative. So the only people who could really claim the privilege of exercising a vote for a member of the board would be the 270 vendors, and over half of those vendors already have representation on the board because they hold also dairymen's licenses. As a matter of fact they are in the majority in the metropolitan area, and at every election they have placed on the board their representatives. So in effect they have had just as much representation as the producers, who are licensed by the board. But if we take the whole of those 270 retailers and compare them with the 500 dairymen who are licensed by the board, and then take into consideration the amount of money each section has invested in the industry, it will be apparent that the dairymen easily constitute the most important section. If we exclude those 20 odd licensees who have treatment plants—and they are not vitally interested in the constitution of the board, for it is only the actual vendors who are so interested—if we exclude those 20 odd it will be seen that to become a milk vendor does not require a very great deal of capital; probably with the purchase of a horse and cart and a few cans and utensils costing in all £50 or £60 a man could set up as a milk vendor, provided he was able to secure a license. So the 270 milk vendors have probably something under £20,000 invested in the industry outside their interests as dairymen. On the other side, if we take the 500 dairymen who are licensed by the board we can fairly say they have anything from £1,000 to £2,000 sunk in each of their farms. If we take it at £1,000, which I regard as the absolute minimum, there would be over half a million of capital invested in their industry. The Bill proposes to give to the section which probably has about £20,000 invested, the same representation

as that enjoyed by the section which has half a million pounds invested.

Mr. North: Excluding the treatment plants.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON: Yes, and there are only 20 odd of those. They would have only one vote each, and they are not as vitally concerned in the constitution of the board as are the roundsmen. But apart from that, in effect the owners of that £20,000 of capital would have more representation on the board than the owners of the half a million pounds capital, because of the 270 roundsmen, half of whom are dairymen, more than 50 per cent. of their interest is sunk in their dairies and less than 50 per cent. has been put into the vending side of their industry. So they already have a vote for the election of the producers' representative in the metropolitan area, where most of them reside. It seems to me those reasons are sufficient to indicate that it would be unwise at this juncture to attempt to interfere with the constitution of the board. And if it is considered necessary to do so, may I point out there is another way of doing it and a more satisfactory way, a way that would not interfere with the representation of those 500 dairymen, whose interests should be paramount. I understand that one of the two consumers' representatives on the board has been elected to the Federal Parliament and so has resigned from the board. I suggest to the Minister that he might as a Government measure give consideration to the amending of the Metropolitan Whole Milk Act by changing over from two consumer representatives to one consumer and one distributor representative. Whilst the vacancy exists it would be an opportune time, and it would give to the distributors that measure of representation to which some people consider they are entitled. The member for Claremont in moving the second reading made one or two statements which I think he would not have made had he given more serious consideration to the matter. First of all he said the chairman of the board, whom I had the privilege of appointing, was a shareholder in Westralian Farmers, and that it is well known that a subsidiary company of the Westralian Farmers is interested in the vending of milk. But to-day I have been told on the best authority that that statement is not in accordance with fact, and in the interests

of the chairman of the board, I wish here and now to deny it. The hon. member also said the producers are able to compel the retailers to pay some of the money they collect from the industry direct to the Primary Producers' Association. There is no foundation of fact in that statement. The retailers, so far as I know, and so far as the secretary of the Primary Producers' Association knows, do not contribute anything directly or indirectly, except it may be in a voluntary way, to the Primary Producers' Association. Certainly there is no power by which the retailers are compelled to contribute to the Primary Producers' Association.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [8.19]: I think the Minister is justified in opposing the Bill, particularly as the Act is limited to the end of 1935, and so if we re-enact it, as I hope we shall, it will have to come before the House again next session. The member for Claremont, when dealing with the constitution of the board, referred to the position of the chairman, and I was glad to hear the member for Irwin-Moore make that explanation regarding the chairman. I understand that when the chairman was appointed he was a small shareholder in Westralian Farmers, as a great many other farmers are, and the Westralian Farmers absorbed the Pasconi Milk Company. But the chairman now is not interested in that company at all. I am convinced that even if the chairman did hold a few shares in Westralian Farmers, Limited, he would not be influenced in any way at all.

Mr. North interjected.

Mr. Thorn: It was not said for nothing.

Mr. McLARTY: The hon. member seemed to make a point of it. Even the member for Claremont admits that the Act has benefited the producers and is working satisfactorily. The member for Perth, in supporting the second reading, agreed that the measure was working satisfactorily. As has been pointed out, the retailers already have representation on the board. That has been the position ever since the board was constituted. Since the Act came into operation, three different men have been elected to the board from the metropolitan area, and each of them has been vitally interested in the retail side of the business.

I do not think there is a retailer in the metropolitan area who would not agree that those gentlemen served them well and looked after their interests. If at this stage we alter the constitution of the board we shall upset the balance of representation, and we do not want to do that. The Minister stated—and I think it was a strong point—that the board recently formed in Sydney, though not so recently as ours was formed, has functioned successfully, and it consists of only three members—a representative of the producers, a representative of the consumers, and an independent chairman. The consumers have two representatives on our board, one from Perth and one from Fremantle. As indicated by the member for Irwin-Moore, the one from Perth has been returned to the Federal Parliament, and I hope the Minister will not be long in filling the vacancy. If a retailer had a grievance I am sure he would have no difficulty in discussing the matter with representatives of the consumers, and would receive all possible consideration. I am glad that the member for Irwin-Moore replied to the member for Claremont regarding the levy which, he said, retailers were compelled to pay to the Primary Producers' Association. The statement was misleading and incorrect. If a producer wishes to contribute to the Primary Producers' Association, it is purely a matter between himself and the depot-keeper or retailer whom he supplies. The board does nothing to assist the association to collect the levy, and has nothing whatever to do with it. The member for Claremont also referred to the expenses of the board. The financial report tabled last night and signed by the Auditor General contains no reference to extravagance, and I not think the board could be charged with extravagance. When such legislation was being put into operation, it was only to be expected that extra expense would be incurred, and there have been one or two law suits, which are usually costly. Having met the worst of the expense inevitable during the preliminary stages, many of the items are not likely to recur. The House has already refused to give the retailer direct representation on the board. The previous Minister, when introducing the Bill, proposed that the retailers should have representation, but the House decided

sensation their income has been reduced by £20,000 a year.

Mr. Thorn: I also claim they are already represented.

Mr. McDONALD: It is an excellent and valid reason why they should have some representation, namely, that the board has transferred £20,000 of their income to the income of those who are producers. I am in no sense opposed to the interests of the producers. I agree that they should have a fair price for their product. I also agree that the board has done good work in ensuring fairer conditions for the producers. This issue is a short one, and is just as old as constitutional institutions, "Should there be taxation without representation?" I do not think anyone can oppose the principle that a large section of the industry, which is called upon to pay levies for its upkeep, should not be deprived of a voice on the controlling body. That appears to me to be fundamental in all our ideas of establishing representative boards. If it be representative of the producers and the consumers that very fact supplies the argument that there should be a representative from a very considerable class of people, who form the third branch of the industry, namely, the distributors and the retailers.

Mr. Thorn: The producer produces the article, but the others only distribute it at a big profit.

Mr. McDONALD: The cost of the article is made up of the value of the work of a number of people. Possibly the producer incurs the least part of the costs. In many cases possibly the first cost of a manufactured article is the smallest cost. I am prepared to believe the producers' cost represents the major part of the price. It has been suggested that the retailer is already represented through the producer who also distributes his own product. That is fallacious. From the point of view of the real representation of the retailer, the man who produces milk and also retails it, does not care how much cost falls upon him as a producer, or how much falls upon him as a retailer in the way of levies, because it is all the one thing. If he pays less as a retailer, he knows he will pay more as a producer. The depot-keeper contributes only a comparatively small amount to the cost of the

board. The suggestion that the retailer-producer represents the body of retailers proper is not correct. That man does not care how the cost of the board is distributed as between the retail and the producing trade. He pays the same amount in the end. It does not matter if it comes out of the retail pocket or the producer pocket, for it comes out of his pocket in the end. The New South Wales board has been cited. The last New South Wales paper I picked up contained an article on that board showing that things were not entirely satisfactory. It may well be that the absence of the retail representation has something to do with the position with regard to the New South Wales board. The broad principle is that a large section of the trade has no representation on our board. I am not wedded to the idea of two representatives, and think there is a good deal in what the Minister says. The suggestion of the member for Irwin-Moore that the vacancy on the board should be filled by a representative of the retailers has some merit, but I am not wedded to the idea of the election. There is a good deal in what the Minister said when he pointed out that the election of any representative of the retailers and depot-keepers should be on lines that enabled all who hold these licenses to take part in the election of their representative.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: They do that at present.

Mr. McDONALD: Not in the case of retailers and depot-keepers, because they are not represented by anyone. But the principle remains, and I regard the principle as important. The machinery can be attended to in Committee. The principle of fair representation is not to be assailed. If it is a good thing, as some members have said, to bring this matter up next year and put it into next year's Bill, then it appears to me a good thing to bring the matter up now and put it in this year's Bill. If it is good next year, I should think it is good to-day. The measure does not represent anything adverse to the board, but is an attempt to help the board, an attempt by the retailers to throw their weight behind the board. For that reason I consider their endeavour to participate in the board's activities and assist towards its smooth running should receive sympathetic consideration from the House.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [8.41]: There is something to be said for the principle that the retailers should have representation on the board. I am not wedded to the Bill as regards the number of representatives proposed to be given to the retailers. However, the retailers being an indispensable portion of the milk industry, I consider they should have at least one representative on the board. As every metropolitan member knows, ever since the board came into existence the retailers have been extremely dissatisfied by reason of want of representation on the board, thus being deprived of an opportunity to put their views directly before the board. I am of opinion that if they were given representation, it would tend not only towards smooth working of the board but also towards co-operation with the producers. At the present time certain city retailers are receiving from outside the confines of the metropolitan area cheaper milk than they should obtain, milk that has been sold at cut rates. Thus there is an attempt by certain unscrupulous retailers to defeat the object of the board. With representation on the board, genuine men would assist towards policing the unscrupulous vendors. The board was originally constituted with the idea of giving an improved price to the producers. The retailers have gained material benefit from the operations of the board. To my knowledge, milk rounds have changed hands at greatly enhanced prices since the board came into existence—a definite proof that prices have improved. I shall support the second reading as an indication that I consider the retailers should have some representation on the board, and I hope the House will support that principle. I do not agree with the proposal of the Bill for enacting representation of the retailers. However, that can be altered in Committee. I trust the Bill will be enacted so that satisfaction may be given to a now disgruntled section of the community.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.44]: I have been surprised to note suggestions the effect of which would be to deprive the retailers of any direct representation on the board. I know I do not represent any considerable number of retailers, but I feel that the principle of representation of the various elements is essential and should be supported.

At the same time I appreciate what the Minister has said as to the present Act coming to an end next year, when there would be a better opportunity of making any alterations required. I do not agree with one or two of the principles contained in the Bill; but the big principle, representation of each section, has my support. I shall vote for the second reading; and I hope the hon. member in charge of the Bill will endeavour to report progress in the Committee stage, with a view to securing amendment of one or two clauses. If he does not do so, I shall make the attempt. However, I feel sure that after what has been said the hon. member will do that.

Mr. Raphael: Especially after your eloquent speech! He is bound to agree with you.

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member in charge of the Bill put up a speech in a way which is regarded favourably by Mr. Speaker, and not by way of irrelevant interjections. That is a good thing, and one which I am sure the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael), on reflection, will support. While in favour of the principle of representation, I realise that up to the passing of the principal Act the producers had a rough time, receiving little if any mercy at the hands of the retailers. That fact, however, would be no justification for our denying the retailers some representation on the board.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	..	22

Majority against 6

AYES.

Mr. Clotbier	Mr. Needham
Mr. Coverley	Mr. North
Mr. Cross	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Moloney	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Seward
Mr. Hegney	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Lambert	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Thorn
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Warner
Mr. Mann	Mr. Welsh
Mr. Millington	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Munie	Mr. Wise
Mr. Patrick	Mr. Withers
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

AYE.	PAIR.	NO.
Mr. Tonkin	| Mr. Brockman	

Question thus negatived; the Bill defeated.

MOTION—HORSE-RACING, BETTING CONTROL.

Debate resumed from the 24th October on the following motion moved by Mr. Marshall:—

That, in the opinion of this House, immediate steps should be taken to introduce legislation for the purpose of legalising and controlling betting on horse-racing, along the lines of the South Australian Act.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [8.51]: It is a far cry from considering the regulation of the supply of whole milk in the metropolitan area to that of horse racing.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is all a question of control.

The **MINISTER FOR POLICE**: Yes, in these days everything is controlled.

Mr. Thorn: What does the member for Murchison know about this subject?

The **MINISTER FOR POLICE**: I must give him credit for the research work and study he undertook prior to moving his motion.

Mr. Thorn: He has never had a bet in his life!

The **MINISTER FOR POLICE**: The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) traversed history and dealt with past and recent Commissions of inquiry that reported on this question. I can throw my memory back for 20 years or more and recall the time when the present member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) delivered a lecture on gambling and the conclusion he came to then was that all efforts launched had not been for the abolition of gambling but rather that those concerned contented themselves with attempts to regulate it. Irrespective of whether we view the matter in the light of past history or of present experience, not even those who are wholly opposed to gambling believe it can be abolished, but all agree that it should be regulated, limited and restricted. I think that is the view held by the member for Murchison. He suggested that immediate steps should be taken to control betting on horse racing along the lines of the South Aus-

tralian Act. If the motion be carried, it will be an intimation to the Government that that step should be taken immediately and that we should follow the lead of South Australia. In reading the hon. member's speech, I noticed he admitted the South Australian Act had not been in operation long enough to enable its merits to be determined and certainly not long enough to decide whether Western Australia would be justified in replacing the existing regulations with those applying in South Australia. The position in that State and in Western Australia prior to the introduction of the South Australian legislation, was entirely different. In the sister State both those interested in betting and the Government desired, for financial reasons, that betting should be controlled. Certainly the Government in this State do not desire the introduction of the South Australian Act for financial reasons, nor have I heard of any desire on the part of those interested in horse racing here to set up the South Australian conditions in lieu of those that at present obtain in this State. Although the motion suggests that we should take immediate steps to effect the change over in control, there has been no indication whatever of any desire for that alteration. It seems to me that the case rests on that consideration. I have often thought, when reviewing the criticism levelled at betting on horse racing and gambling generally, that the evil—I think we all agree it is an evil—is given a great deal more prominence than should be accorded to it. Whatever may be said of other forms of gambling—under that heading would come, I presume, betting, gaming and lotteries—betting on horse racing represents a speculation. It cannot be regarded as a lottery, although it may have something in common with gaming. As a speculation, it would rank with the evils associated with other forms of speculation.

Mr. Raphael: Such as marriage!

The **MINISTER FOR POLICE**: It is true that in Australia the volume of money that changes hands as a result of gambling is great as compared with other forms of speculation, about which little is ever said. For instance, there is the Stock Exchange. I believe that in Western Australia and certainly in Australia, as much money changes hands on the Stock Exchange with as little information as is available in connection

with horse racing. It seems to me that people are disposed to—

Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to.

Always we have that apparent, and particularly is that so in connection with recent transactions on the Stock Exchange. To-day there is a perfect orgy of gambling in mining shares and people almost welcome it as a sign of returning prosperity. The fact is that the people who speculate on mining shares to-day have, for the most part, no reliable information and depend on what they glean from someone else. I noticed a report of a recent flotation that lends point to that remark. A mining engineer said that he had a recollection of a reef, of which he had knowledge many years ago, that was under water and he believed it would persist at depth. On the assurance of what he remembered many years ago, that mine was floated.

Mr. Wise: Under water?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Yes. I assume people consider that a legitimate speculation. Some years ago we had the Hampton Plains gamble, the worst gambling transaction that ever occurred in Western Australia. Salt bush plains were floated. Admittedly, people knew they were nothing but saltbush plains, yet very little was said against the enterprise. Indeed, some of the promoters were very, very good people, and had a lot to say against betting on horse racing. So after all it is a question of degree. If the hon. member desires further to restrict betting on races, I agree that steps to that end should be taken. But I am afraid that if we were to adopt the South Australian Act, instead of minimising gambling we should be offering facilities for the increase of gambling and off-the-course betting. To provide facilities is to make it easier, and we do that by making it legal.

Mr. Hegney: It is easy enough now.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: No, for at present you take a certain amount of risk. But under the motion, instead of its being illegal to bet, it will be perfectly legal to do so.

Mr. Marshall: Can the Minister explain why it should be legal to bet openly at Tattersall's Club?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: If that is so, what will be the effect if that is extended, and instead of there being only one place where a man can bet, other places will be legalised? If the experience of South Australia is repeated here, we shall have many betting houses, licensed premises for which, by the way, enormous rents will be paid to the landowner. We shall certainly have an extension of whatever betting is going on here now. There has been no request from anyone interested that we should make betting easier than it is now by legalising it. It is proposed that we should adopt the South Australian Act but, as I have explained, our position is entirely different from the position in South Australia. Prior to the passing of the South Australian Act there was no registration of gambling in South Australia, no registered bookmakers, but there was an enormous amount of gambling. Also, as the result of an inquiry, it was proved that there was a large amount of corruption.

Mr. Marshall: Thank God, it does not prevail here!

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: At all events, it has not been proved in this State, as it has been in South Australia. Despite the interjection, I say the police here have done their duty impartially as far as they can. We admit that under the existing law gambling cannot be entirely suppressed. I do not know that it could be entirely suppressed under any law. I should say that the existing law in this State is quite as effective as the law in South Australia which, if introduced here, would only extend the facilities for betting, particularly off-the-course betting. To-day we have the Lotteries Commission.

Mr. Stubbs: Another form of gambling.

Mr. Marshall: No, no.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Already in this State we have the means of levying toll upon gambling, upon the totalisator and the bookmaker. So, although gambling is illegal, paradoxically we have no objection to it.

Mr. Marshall: It is utter hypocrisy, for you tax the bookmakers.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I am just admitting what the hon. member is so anxious to drive home, that although gambling is illegal, we wink at it and collect taxes on it, including substantial taxes on the

totalisator. Then we have the State lotteries as a source of revenue for our charities. So in this State we certainly have regulated the evil in our own way, and the regulation is more effective than that in South Australia. The South Australian Act has not been in existence long enough to prove its effectiveness, and it would be ridiculous for this Government to adopt the South Australian Act, devised to meet conditions entirely different from our own. It certainly would be ridiculous for us to substitute the South Australian system for our own system. I suppose it can be said they are both equally bad and equally ineffective.

Mr. Stubbs: If the South Australian Act proves successful, will you introduce it here next session?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The hon. member must give notice of that question.

Mr. Marshall: You are aware that betting has been legalised in England.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Yes, I have delved into research work in respect of what is happening in other countries, and I have here information stating that in practically all civilised countries attempts have been made to regulate the evil. But that is not to say that we should substitute our control, or lack of control, for that recently instituted in South Australia. Having regard to the control that we have, and the attempt to suppress off-the-course betting, and the fact that we have organised the gambling instinct by setting up the State lottery and so derive revenue for charitable purposes, I should say this State is quite as advanced as is any other State. Our system of control has been in existence for a long time, and it would be absurd to exchange such a solid, well-tried system for the experimental system now being tried in South Australia. At any rate I believe the House will be too conservative to do that. I certainly cannot conceive of the House rushing in to adopt a recently enacted measure which the hon. member himself admitted was untried. Yet he asked that legislation be introduced immediately to implement such legislation here. The Government have no intention of rushing in immediately to comply with the hon. member's request. When it can be shown that those interested actually desire it, the matter will be considered. Those who are opposed to gambling and those who desire

to see it limited or minimised certainly do not want the South Australian system introduced here. People who are opposed to gambling have not requested an extension of the facilities for gambling. Therefore that section of the community would oppose it. The sporting section are entitled to consideration, the people who, over a period of years, have built up the racing clubs, and they have not asked for it. As a matter of fact they, too, would be violently opposed to the introduction of the South Australian system. Thus there are two sections of the community who would oppose it. The hon. member has not shown that any large section of our people desire the change.

Mr. Raphael: The working class men do.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: A lot the hon. member knows about that!

Mr. Raphael: I have not my tongue in my cheek, anyhow.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: We would be doing the working class a good turn if we did not extend the facilities for off-the-course betting on horse racing.

Mr. Marshall: Just so. Keep him with his nose to the grindstone! Give him work and no pleasure! You are a good representative of his class!

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Yes, just as good as the hon. member. The working man has plenty of opportunities to bet. I have not heard of any lack of facilities for betting. Those sections of the community who usually approach the Government on the question of betting have certainly not asked for the South Australian system to be introduced here, and therefore the Government have no intention of putting into operation the suggestions contained in the motion. I have a lot of information about the history of gambling and its effect in different countries, gambling of all descriptions, but I do not propose to refer to it to-night. The Government certainly do not approve of the suggestion that we should immediately adopt the experimental legislation of South Australia.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [9.15]: I do not propose to support the motion because I consider the hon. member was wrong in suggesting the adoption of the South Australian system. At the same time I was astonished at the remarks of the Minister for Police. I believe that this country is

crying out for legislation to deal with betting. Every member is of the opinion that something along direct lines should be done to control betting, not only on race courses but away from the courses. This applies not only to the metropolitan area, but to every area throughout the length and breadth of the State. Whenever races are held, people congregate in hundreds waiting for the results, indulging in betting, and doing it illegally. The hon. member spoke of the illegality of the whole business, and in effect suggested nationalisation. Betting is one thing that cannot be nationalised. Horse racing has been described as the sport of kings and has been a popular past-time for many years. In this State horse racing is controlled by the W.A.T.C., and bookmakers are registered. As the member for Victoria Park interjected, there should be some extension. In Victoria many years ago this was a burning question, and it is time something was done here. Every member understands that people are breaking the law daily.

Mr. Raphael: And the Government shut their eyes to it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Why did the Minister try to camouflage the position? Why did not he say that the Government would do one thing or the other? Are we going to leave the door open to bribery and corruption as it is to-day? No one has a greater respect for the police force than I have, but you, Mr. Speaker, know what is transpiring to-day.

Mr. Moloney: What is?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Men can bet openly in the streets of the town—

Mr. Marshall: And so can women.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: And if one is caught he has to go up to the court in his turn. A police magistrate said the other day, "I cannot allow these things to go on; you people must go to gaol." The member for Murchison was wrong to introduce the South Australian Act. It has raised a host of questions and exercised the minds of the public all over the State. Every member must have had many interviews on the question. Is there no chance of the Government bringing down legislation to legalise off-course betting? Could they not license certain shops in the town and place the whole thing under a board of control?

Mr. Raphael: No; they would not be game to do that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Why camouflage the situation? We must realise that the people are born gamblers.

Mr. Marshall: That is a nation-wide characteristic.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If people have a shilling or two to spend, they will always gamble on a horse race or at a two-up school, or some other game of that sort. Let us realise that this is going on and come out into the open. Gambling is going on all the time. People are doing it by subterfuge and as the result of bribery and corruption. The Government are merely blinking their eyes at what is going on. Why not legalise the whole thing? The W.A.T.C. has the right to conduct betting on its own course.

Mr. Coverley: It has no actual right to do so.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The club provides the stakes and registers the bookmakers. Under our gaming laws it has no right to do that. The Government impose a totalisator tax, take so much out of the charge for admission and also put a tax on the betting tickets. The whole thing is illegal. Why not do it on right lines? Let us have a conference with all these people. I would be quite content to attend a race meeting without putting a penny on a horse. The Minister says the Government do not propose to take any action, and that he does not believe in the South Australian Act. What is to prevent Parliament from taking action and deriving some revenue from the business? One bookmaker told me that if he could get the right to bet anywhere in the metropolitan area, he would gladly pay £1,000 a year for it, and there are 40 bookmakers who would be prepared to do that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The community would have to pay in the end.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Leader of the Opposition can get a free pass for the race-courses, and can make his bets when he gets there.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I never go to race-courses.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But if a man is found betting in the street, he can be dealt with by the police.

Mr. Marshall: You can make your bets at Tattersall's Club.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Only members can do that. Why not get the racing fraternity

together and discuss it with them? Better still, appoint a select committee to go into the question and arrive at some determination. Wherever one goes one hears complaints about the inconvenience to which people are put. Betting is legalised in one place but not in another. The Government are glad enough to collect revenue on the racecourses, but will not allow that from which they collect revenue there to be done in the street. Why should not bookmakers be registered so that they may bet anywhere with impunity? If the member for Murchison would alter his motion to a request that the Government should make a full inquiry into the matter, with a view to bringing down legislation to deal with it, I think every member of the House would support it. Up to the present no one seems to have been prepared to bring down legislation. The Minister for Police opposes the motion because he knows what is happening every day. Undoubtedly there is bribery and corruption. If the Government wanted to do their job, they could send the police around every day, in city, town or country, and catch plenty of men. The motion asks for the South Australian Act.

Mr. Marshall: No; merely for legislation along the lines of that Act.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Legislation along the lines of that Act would be useless.

Mr. Marshall: Some action must be taken along those lines.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The bookmaking fraternity of South Australia are down and out.

Mr. Marshall: I am not worrying about that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There must be some bookmakers; otherwise what is the use of investing if one cannot win? I shall support the motion if the hon. member will amend it in the manner I have suggested.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [9.32]: In my opinion, a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into gambling in Western Australia, and into the methods adopted by the police for the suppression of that gambling. The Royal Commission might also investigate the pleasure granted to the workers of Western Australia by allowing them to participate in the State lottery. That lottery—

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think there is anything in the motion about a lottery.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister for Police, when discussing the motion, was permitted to refer to the State lottery. He said what a benefit it was to the workers. Therefore I consider I have a right to discuss the State lottery, especially from the aspect of benefits to the workers. Governments of this State—not only the present Government, but all past Governments—have been only too happy to close their eyes to the evils of gambling. On Saturday afternoon in suburb, city, or country, it is hardly possible for women and children to walk along the street on account of the language used by crowds congregated outside betting shops. Those crowds, moreover, almost prevent women and children from walking on the footpath. I am in favour of control of the gambling evil by registration; and I would have it registered in such a way, especially as regards starting-price betting shops, that the bookmakers, whether men or women, would be compelled to provide facilities which would keep betting off the streets. It is a crying shame that any Government should shut their eyes to what goes on every Saturday, and even on weekdays, in that respect.

Mr. Marshall: That could be obviated by control.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The police, if they so desired, could in a month make the starting-price bookmaker extinct in Western Australia. The Minister for Justice holds the contrary opinion. However, if the Government want to carry on a vendetta against bettors who cannot afford to go to the racecourse, they could put a cordon of police around each betting establishment, and Mr. Read, a very respectable old gentleman now nearing the nineties—

Mr. Wilson: That is not so.

Opposition Members: That is not fair.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the magistrate gives effect to his intimation that he will send to Fremantle gaol men brought before him for betting, he will be sending there comparatively innocent men, unemployed youths, who are paid 10s. for calling themselves keepers of betting houses and for going to the court to be fined £20 or £30. Will the Government sit back and allow criminals to be made of these young men, who in many cases are victims of unem-

ployment? Are they to be herded in Fremantle gaol with criminals? The Government adopt many means of deriving revenue from betting. In the case of double bookmakers on the trotting grounds, many of the bets are for 1s. or 2s. The Government take 3d. tax from a shilling bet. While getting 25 per cent. of the full amount of the bet laid by the bookmaker, the Government also derive a huge revenue from the totalisator. There is another little picking in the shape of the amusement tax, though it is not much of an amusement to come home from the trots after a losing night. It is a principle of Governments to avoid, wherever possible, legislation appertaining to certain subjects. Gambling is one of the so-called dangerous materials for politicians to touch. However, there is a crying need for investigation here into the methods adopted by the police as regards picking up men. If they get a set on a man, they pick him up. In Victoria Park recently three starting-price bookmakers were betting within an area of about 50 yards. One of them was picked up twice in five minutes, and the other two were left alone. I cast no reflection on the police in performing their so-called duty, but in my opinion that case did not smell too good. The motion does not represent all that is wanted, but undoubtedly Western Australia is in urgent need of a Royal Commission to inquire into gambling. Certain people are left well alone by the police. On St. George's Terrace, in Barrack Street, and in Tattersall's Club buildings there are offices in which certain big bookmakers are allowed to carry on business without any interference by the police. They have telephones installed, and they employ two or three clerks. Because big amounts change hands in those offices, nothing is done; but the working man with a shilling or two has to be protected by the police from himself. In this afternoon's paper there is mention of a man who has done betting to the amount of £40,000 in this State during the last two years. I have never heard of that man being hauled up. The only reason his name comes forward at the present time is that he cannot pay his debts. If a Royal Commission were appointed, it could take evidence, and not only evidence from the racing clubs which certain people are here to protect if neces-

sary. The interests of people who want to have a small bet on a Saturday afternoon should also be protected. Women and children should be allowed to go about the streets on Saturday afternoons, or any day, with ample protection afforded them. The whole question should be cleaned up, and betting placed under proper control. I hope the Government will adopt a strong attitude in an endeavour to deal with the position adequately.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.41]: While I cannot support the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) to the letter of his motion, I consider the time has arrived when something should be done regarding the betting laws of the State which are the most lopsided of any in operation, both as regards the laws themselves and the manner in which they are administered. The motion indicates class distinction to an extent, inasmuch as it refers specifically to horse racing. Betting is either right or wrong. If it is right, the privilege should be accorded to every section of the community. If it is wrong, it should be prevented and the prohibition should extend to all sections. The man who follows pedestrian events has just as much right to back his fancy as has the man who follows horse racing. The cyclist and the man who follows that sport should also have the right to back their fancy.

Mr. Hegney: Then there are the whippets and tin hares.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The mention of whippets reminds me that on two occasions I visited Boulder where I saw, at the Half-Way, whippet racing in progress with the bookmakers swinging their bags. In the metropolitan area it is a common occurrence for the whippet meetings to be raided, and those who follow that sport are liable to be prosecuted, whereas the bookmaker can call the odds at Boulder and do as he likes.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: The people on the goldfields must have some form of amusement.

Mr. SLEEMAN: They have their amusements.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: We cannot go for a swim on the goldfields.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have seen people swimming there, and yachting too. If the

member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) is not aware of that fact, he should be. If he desires to pursue this matter along the lines of an inter-district argument, I do not mind, but that is not my intention. I am merely indicating the difference regarding the application of our betting laws. Personally I cannot see any harm in betting so long as the man bets within his means and does not bet with someone else's money. If he has 2s. with which to speculate, there is no more harm in his betting on a horse race or a cycling event, or on the whippets, than there is in making a bet at Tattersall's or speculating on the Stock Exchange. As an old resident of the goldfields, Mr. Speaker, you will agree with what I say, particularly when one considers the gambling that takes place with regard to mining shares. A manager may write down a mine, and the shares drop to freezing point. He rakes in as many as he can buy. Then he writes a glowing report, and up go the shares. The member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan), as an old goldfields resident, will bear out what I say regarding operations on the Stock Exchange. We regard such men as shrewd businessmen, and pat them on the back; nothing is said about them. When it comes to the poor individual who has 2s. to speculate we say that he must not gamble unless he goes to a racecourse. The working man cannot go to a racecourse unless he is prepared to neglect his work, and no one should do that for the sake of a horse race. The man who thinks he can break the bookies is foolish, but that is his own look-out. If he is prepared to take a chance with his 2s., he should have an opportunity to do so, just as much as the rich man has to lay his wager. In the clubs of Western Australia gambling can proceed without let or hindrance. Then we have John Chinaman, who plays his little game of fan tan or pi-kue for his own amusement, and he does no injury to any one: yet John Chinaman is raided every now and then, and is put in gaol. The clubman can bet and gamble without anything being said. While I cannot support the proposal to adopt the South Australian legislation because I do not know enough about it, the time has arrived when we should treat all sections of the community alike. The man who follows horse racing should have no exclusive right to bet or gamble, and that right should extend

equally to the man who likes to back his fancy in a cycling race or at a whippet meeting. I hope the Government will consider ways and means by which the difficulty can be overcome. I believe something should be done so that betting will be regarded as more respectable, so to speak, than it is at present. Crowds can be seen at various points, and they are in fear and trembling lest the police will come round the corner any minute and arrest them. The position would be improved if the Government were to register a few reputable people so that they could do business with those who desire to speculate a few shillings and cannot afford to go to the racecourse. People so registered should be required to submit a guarantee so that those who, fortunately, are in a position to collect after a sporting event, will be sure of getting their money. At present there are men operating who are likely at times, to use a sporting phrase, to "take the knock." That difficulty could be overcome. If the Government undertake an investigation regarding the gambling laws, they should also inquire regarding the proprietary racecourses. We have the W.A.T.C., which is a very fine body, and encourages the breeding of thoroughbred horses. I do not know why the proprietary racing clubs should be allowed to continue making profits out of the people. In my opinion, the W.A.T.C. should be allowed to control the whole of the racing in Western Australia. I hope an investigation will be undertaken and that as a result all sections of the community will be treated alike, irrespective of whether it is the poor man in town with 2s. to speculate, or the rich man who can afford to neglect his business and enjoy a day at the racecourse, whether it be John Chinaman in his gambling den or the European in his club. All should be treated alike. All forms of gambling should be controlled, and that includes operations on the Stock Exchange.

On motion by Mr. Hegney, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.49 p.m.