

have each case examined, after which Cabinet will deal with each claim on its merits.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

#### Clause 4—Repeal of Part V.:

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	26
Noes	..	..	..	..	16

Majority for . . . 10

#### AYES.

Mr. Clothier	Mr. Munroe
Mr. Cross	Mr. Needham
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Rodoreda
Miss Holman	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wise
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Moloney	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Brockman	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Seward
Mr. Latham	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Thorn
Mr. North	Mr. Warner
Mr. Patrick	Mr. Welsh
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

#### PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collier	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Coverley	Mr. J. I. Mann

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 5, 6, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

#### BILLS (3)—RETURNED.

- 1, Public Works Act Amendment.
- 2, Government Railways Act Amendment. Without amendment.
- 3, Health Act Amendment (No. 2). With amendments.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 13th December, 1933.

	PAGE
Question: Public Service, goldfields allowances	2457
Bills: Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment (No. 2), Assembly's message	2457
Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment, 1R.	2469
Fire Brigades Act Amendment, Assembly's message	2469
State Transport Co-ordination, 2R.	2472

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

### QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE, GOLDFIELDS ALLOWANCES.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to restore to goldfields civil servants and teachers the goldfields allowance for married men. 2, Will the Government consider the question of restoring the annual railway pass to goldfields teachers and civil servants?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, These allowances are fixed pursuant to a decision of the Arbitration Court with regard to goldfields allowances generally, and it is not within the province of the Government to interfere with any such award of the Court. 2, The matter is already under consideration.

### BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2.)

#### Assembly's Message.

A message having been received from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to Nos. 1 and 2 of the Council's amendments made in the Bill and had disagreed to Nos. 3, 4, and 5, the message was now considered.

#### In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the message.

No. 3: Clause 4—Delete the words "thirty-six" in line 3, and substitute the words "thirty-four."

Assembly's reason for disagreeing to the Council's amendment:—The principle of the Bill has been agreed to by both Houses.

It is past the experimental stage. There is, therefore, no valid reason for limiting its continuance to one year.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted upon.

My reason for moving in that direction is that given by the Legislative Assembly for disagreeing to the Council's amendment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: After all the discussion that took place on this amendment, the effect of which would be to limit the operations of the Act to one year instead of three, as suggested in the Bill, the Council should insist upon it. I do not think it is right to say that the legislation has passed the experimental stage. Complaints have been made regarding the manner in which the lotteries are conducted. I understand that elsewhere a fixed number of tickets is sold in connection with lotteries and the subscribers know that their tickets are in competition with a fixed number. In this State, with an unlimited number of tickets allowed to be sold with the object of securing as much money as possible, the effect is that the chance of the individual is decreased to a much greater extent. In my opinion, the legislation is still in the experimental stage. Surely there can be no objection to limiting the operations of the Act to the end of 1934 and, in the event of everything continuing satisfactorily, a one clause Bill can be introduced to continue the legislation for another year. Should anything wrong be disclosed in connection with the lotteries, the Bill to continue the operation of the Act will enable members to deal with the position.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot accept the point of view of Mr. Holmes that the Act is still in the experimental stage. The lotteries have been run for 12 months, and their popularity should be proof positive that the general public regard them as beyond the experimental stage. Mr. Holmes referred to a complaint regarding the unlimited number of tickets sold in connection with lotteries. I do not know that there is anything in that complaint. Certainly there has been some reference to the fact that certain sweeps have been over-subscribed. There is a very good reason for that. Conditions here differ from those prevailing in the more populous States as regards the

receipt of money for tickets. The commission authorise a sweep for, say, 100,000 tickets and endeavour to secure that number before closing the sweep. To do that, more than 100,000 tickets must be issued. When the commission see that there is no danger of the sweep being under-subscribed, they announce the closing date. During the last few days there is usually a huge influx of applications, and it is impossible to say just when the 100,000 tickets have been subscribed. Tickets are sold in all parts of the State and a large number are sold outside the State. To get a ticket in Tattersall's, one has to submit an application accompanied by the money, and if the applications exceed the total, the excess ones are automatically placed in the next sweep. When one applies for a ticket in Tattersall's there is no guarantee that a ticket will be issued for a particular sweep. Here the applicant gets a ticket in the particular consultation open at the time, but it is impossible for the commission to say when the total number of tickets have been sold. Possibly on some occasions the authorised number will not be reached. In that event the prize money would be reduced.

Hon. H. Seddon: In the event of a sweep being over-subscribed, are the prizes increased correspondingly?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, they are increased proportionately. Another 100 prizes of £10 each might be given. If we had to adopt Tattersall's methods, the cost of administration would be increased and applicants for tickets would be inconvenienced. Instead of an applicant being able to purchase a ticket at once, he would have to submit an application form to be forwarded to head office and the ticket would have to be posted to him. Probably 25 or 30 per cent. of the money is received in the last two or three days. If the number of tickets were strictly limited to 100,000, subscribers would have to pay the cost of postages, etc.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Act came into force only a year ago. There was much criticism as to the desirableness of the Government authorising sweeps, and the opposition to the proposal was pronounced. There is no justification for saying that the scheme has passed the experimental stage. Parliament would be wise to retain control over the continuance of lotteries legislation, and the only way that can be done is by extend-

ing the Act year by year. Therefore we should adhere to our decision to renew the Act for one year only.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We would be wise for the present to support an extension till 1934 only, particularly as the Bill may go to a conference. If the Act has to be renewed each year, it will have a wholesome effect on the conduct of lotteries.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I fail to see why the Government should object to the Act coming up for review each year. The Honorary Minister's explanation does not satisfy me. It would be simple for the commission to issue 100,000 tickets, and when they were sold, that would be the end of it.

Member: You are obviously not an authority on that matter.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Perhaps not, but it seems simple enough to me. If I wanted to sell 100,000 articles to agents, there is no reason why I should be called upon to distribute more than that number.

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: What if some of the tickets were returned unsold when the time expired?

Hon. W. J. MANN: The prizes would be allotted pro rata. If the commission arrange a consultation of 100,000 tickets, the contract should be adhered to, though from a printer's point of view, I should like to see 200,000 tickets printed. I have heard complaints regarding the price of the tickets. Some people are still subscribing to lotteries outside the State, and I should like to know whether the commission have considered running a consultation for 5s. tickets. It might be quite desirable to conduct consultations other than the half-crown ones now being run.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The commission are limited to 15 sweeps a year.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is so, but I am not aware of any limitation on the price that may be charged for tickets. The Golden Casket is running a consultation for £1 tickets and filling it. Money is being sent out of the State to such consultations, and it might be desirable for the commission to consider that aspect. I am not disposed to give way on the amendment.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: I do not think there is anything in the Minister's contention that would justify us in departing from the date fixed by the Council. There are definite reasons why it is desirable to

limit the duration of the Act to 12 months. In spite of what the Minister says, this legislation is experimental. Twelve months has not proved a sufficient period to enable us to say definitely that the lotteries should be continued on the present lines.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I intend to support the insistence of the amendment because I believe that the experimental stages of the lotteries have not been passed. I am still satisfied that the lotteries will require a good deal of watching. I regret to find that they have been so successful because I am not enamoured of gambling in any form. I have noticed that in one or two shops in the city it is possible to buy quarter tickets and even eighths from people who advertise themselves as authorised agents. This is only done for the purpose of inducing gambling on the part of sustenance workers and others who are unable to invest in a full ticket. It is simply encouraging gambling amongst those who cannot afford it and also amongst children. My desire is that while the consultations are being conducted they should be kept well under control with the ultimate view of our being able to suppress the gambling spirit of the people.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It is desirable that we should retain within our powers the means of checking for another twelve months the conduct of the lotteries and just to see in what direction the money is distributed. For that reason it is desirable that we should limit the period of the operation of the Act to the end of next year. If we permit the lotteries to be conducted until 1936 as the Government desire, variations might be made which might not be satisfactory from our point of view. By limiting the period of the Act to 12 months we can effectively control the lotteries.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If everything has gone along satisfactorily there is no reason why the Act should not be permanently placed on the statute-book, but we are not at that stage yet when we can say that we are quite satisfied with the manner in which the lotteries have been conducted, and to limit the period of operation for 12 months will not do any harm. We should insist on the amendment, and at the end of next year we should be in a better position to judge whether the statute should be made permanent or not. I hope the House will stand by its amendment.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I am also of the opinion that we should stand by our amendment, principally for the reasons given by Mr. Macfarlane. When the matter comes up for consideration again next session, possibly some members may change their views, and it might be possible to throw out the Act altogether. I want the Act to come up for review in the hope of its being possible to reject it altogether.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Why do we want to waste time next session churning over and over again all the arguments that have been used.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is going dangerously close to reflecting on the House.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Will there not be more important matters to discuss than the Lotteries Act which we know will be passed again next year? We know that the former opponents of gambling, those people from whom we might have expected strong opposition, have not lately been so pronounced in their views against the conduct of the lotteries. They are aware that the lotteries have been conducted very satisfactorily, and that they have benefited many institutions that otherwise might not have received the financial assistance they require. Why do members desire to raise false hopes in the hearts of those people who do object to gambling, when we know that this legislation has come to stay because of the good it is doing. I am convinced that as time goes on the work of the Lotteries Commission will be increasingly successful, and that instead of charitable institutions scratching round for funds, there will be plenty of money available for them. We shall have quite enough work to do next session amending the Transport Act without worrying about lotteries.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: The lotteries are now beyond the experimental stage, and we should agree to the proposal to permit them to carry on till 1936. If some of the members who are opposed to this form of gambling had anything to do with the financing of our hospitals and charitable institutions, they would not hesitate to support the continuance of the Lotteries Act until 1936. I have no wish to encourage gambling to the extent of splitting the tickets into fourths, and I would go so far as to support legislation to prevent that kind of thing taking place. Quite

enough time is taken up in amending laws that we have passed, and therefore when the opportunity occurs to make a statute permanent, as in this case, we should seize it. If we made the right laws first there would not be the need to amend them as frequently as we do.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Some members appear to be under the impression that if we agree to extend the operation of the Act until 1936 there will not be an opportunity to amend or repeal it if it is so desired. It will be open to any hon. member to introduce a measure to amend or repeal the Lotteries Act.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is too shallow.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not, it is the actual position. If members think the time is ripe for an alteration to be made in the Act, there is nothing to stop them from exercising that right. To suggest that this argument is shallow, is beyond my understanding.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: A member could introduce an amending Bill, but that is about as far as it would get.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If he could get sufficient support he would succeed with it.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: In this House perhaps.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In either House. There is nothing logical in the argument that by limiting the operation of the Bill until 1934, the House will have an opportunity of passing judgment again as to whether the lotteries are being satisfactorily conducted. With regard to the price of tickets mentioned by Mr. Mann, are we going to come down to the stage of determining the course that shall be followed by the Lotteries Commission? What are the commission appointed for? Are they not appointed to conduct the lotteries in the best possible way? I make no doubt they have given consideration to the possibilities of running a sweep with a higher priced ticket, but have determined against it. I feel that if they thought they could successfully run such a sweep, they would not hesitate to do so. Mr. Macfarlane was scarcely correct when he said he had noticed that certain business people in the city were advertising that they were authorised agents.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: No, I said agents.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member said "authorised agents." I am glad he has corrected that, because the commission are not prepared to authorise such agents.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: I was using a wrong term.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no such thing as an authorised agent to sell portions of these lottery tickets. Then there is the complaint that money is still being sent out of the State. We cannot help that. When members of the Chamber still continue to send money out of the State for lotteries in the hope of winning a £25,000 prize, we cannot control it.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Not many members do that.

The HONORARY MINISTER: One has admitted it. The Lotteries Commission have already stated publicly, and it has been stated on their behalf in this House, that each consultation sees an increasing number of tickets applied for by people outside the State. Also I believe the information we have from the agents for the so-called foreign lotteries is to the effect that there has been a considerable diminution in the number of tickets in those lotteries applied for since the Lotteries Commission have been in operation. In view of all the facts, I do not think we would be justified in insisting upon restricting the operations of the Act to one year, till the end of 1934. Personally, I would not mind if the date were struck out altogether, for there is no good reason why we should limit the operations of the Act in point of time.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I hope the Committee will insist on 1934 being included in the Bill, because if the Act has to come up for renewal, we shall have opportunity to discuss it. As the Honorary Minister has pointed out, it would be within the province of any member of the House to bring in an amending Bill: but if the Act were extended till 1936 the Government, with their majority in another place, would see to it that the amending Bill did not go through.

The Honorary Minister: It is not a party measure.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yet it could be made a party measure. While the Act has to come up for review each year, any Government will hesitate about flouting the

wishes of even a small section of Parliament. In that way Parliament will retain control over the Act.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I cannot sit down and let the Honorary Minister get away with what he has been putting over the Committee.

The Honorary Minister: Is the hon. member in order in making such a suggestion?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Let me withdraw that and say that when the original Bill was here last year, the Honorary Minister voted that the Bill be read that day six months. Yet he now wants the Act to be extended for three years. He really should not try to make a point like that. To suggest that the commission cannot control its lotteries by limiting them to 100,000 tickets, is absurd. Sir Charles Nathan said that statement was unanswerable. Coming from Sir Charles, that is the most astounding thing I have heard in the House. If he were to put such a proposal before any one of his staff and be told that it could not be done, there would be an immediate vacancy on that staff. The Honorary Minister said the running of the lotteries was now past the experimental stage, whereas his very statements go to prove that it is still in the experimental stage. As to the complaint about the additional number of tickets having the effect of sending money out of the State, the Honorary Minister tells us the prizes are increased pro rata. But what each applicant is after is the £1,000 prize. The commission sell an additional 10,000 tickets, thus bringing in an additional 10,000 competitors, but they do not add anything to the first prize. As to agents, I saw in a Hay-street window the legend "Lottery tickets sold here," and if I read it all correctly, it was stated that an extra £5 prize would be paid to anybody who bought a winning ticket from that agent. Surely that should not be allowed.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do not the commission do the same themselves?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: This was an inducement to buy a ticket from that agent; for if you won a prize with that ticket, you would get from the agent an extra prize of £5. I do not think it right. Mr. Bolton said he could not understand members opposing the continuation of the lotteries. We are not opposing their continuation, but are merely stipulating that the Act shall come

up for review next session, when we shall have an opportunity of considering it.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	8
Noes	..	..	..	..	15

Majority against	..	..	7
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Hon. L. B. Bolton  
Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. J. T. Franklin  
Hon. W. H. Kitson

AYES.

Hon. T. Moore  
Hon. H. V. Piesse  
Hon. C. B. Williams  
Hon. E. H. Gray  
(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter  
Hon. E. H. H. Hall  
Hon. V. Hamersley  
Hon. J. J. Holmes  
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane  
Hon. W. J. Mann  
Hon. G. W. Miles  
Hon. R. G. Moore

Hon. Sir C. Nathan  
Hon. J. Nicholson  
Hon. H. Seddon  
Hon. A. Thomson  
Hon. C. H. Wittenoom  
Hon. H. J. Yelland  
Hon. E. Rose  
(Teller.)

Question thus negatived; the Council's amendment insisted upon.

No. 4. New Clause: After Clause 2, insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 3, as follows:—

3. Section three of the principal Act is hereby amended by the addition to paragraph (e) thereof of a proviso, as follows:—

Provided that the first appointed members of the Commission shall hold office until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-four.

Assembly's reason for not agreeing to the Council's amendment—"This amendment seeks to establish a new principle which cannot be agreed to."

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted upon.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is claimed that Parliament is a law unto itself. Parliament intervened—I hope not successfully—to prevent an action at law properly listed before the Supreme Court. When Parliament can do that, surely in the case of a paltry Lotteries Commission we can do the same thing. To say that Parliament cannot control a situation of this sort is straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. The amendment merely seeks to re-appoint a commission which it is generally agreed has done its job well. It also carries with it the right to work, and to

qualify for these positions irrespective of the political creed of the aspirants. It was Parliament that gave the Government power to appoint the Commission and limited its life in the first place. It would be absurd to say that Parliament should not have an equal right to re-appoint those commissioners. When the amendment was carried in this Chamber, it was carried by an absolute majority of members 14 to eight being the vote. Members, therefore, knew what they were facing. I intend to divide the Committee on this question.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I hope the Committee will not insist upon this amendment. We should not dictate to the Government as to whom they should appoint. I am not prepared to hit below the belt to prevent them from having a free hand.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Mr. Moore's reference to hitting below the belt was an unfortunate one. I voted against this amendment when it was first moved, and will be consistent now. Most of us are convinced that the people are not in favour of the personnel of this Commission. I want to give the Government the right to comply with the requests of the public, and alter the personnel of the board if they think fit. I am not in favour of a member of Parliament holding a position on this Commission.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I voted for the amendment on the ground that the Government had brought down a Bill to protect a certain member of this Chamber. I thought in the circumstances that Mr. Holmes was logical in his endeavour to protect the other members of the Commission. Parliament has a right to impose its will in certain directions, but it is generally left to the Minister concerned to appoint the members of the particular organisation for whose existence Parliament has given its approval. I now have to desert the flag of "no surrender," and will support the Honorary Minister.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I make no apology for having voted against Mr Holmes's amendment, and intend to side with the Honorary Minister in this case. We should not dictate to the Government as to whom they should appoint on a commission of this kind.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: I am in the same position as Mr. Macfarlane. I too voted for the amendment, but I think in this matter the Government were right in

taking the stand they did. Numerous important amendments have been made here, and have been accepted by the Government. This one they refuse, as a matter of principle, to accept. No one denies the right of this Chamber to make such amendments as we think desirable. I am guided in my present attitude by the recent division, which insisted upon limiting the continuance of the Act to one year only. Thus the measure will come up for review in 12 months' time.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I, too, regard Mr. R. G. Moore's remark as somewhat unfortunate. I voted for Mr. Holmes's amendment because the operation of the Act is restricted to the end of 1934, instead of extending to the end of 1936. This Chamber's decision on that point has just been re-affirmed. The experience gained by the present members of the Lotteries Commission within the last 12 months justifies us in asking for their continuance in office for another year.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Hon. members seem afraid of partisan appointments, or seem to fear that some members of the Lotteries Commission will get the sack. This Chamber apparently is becoming the Government of the State. Every now and then it says, "So-and-so is to get the position." Such an attitude is both audacious and dangerous, and may have a boomerang effect on this Chamber when some other Government are in power. I strenuously object to the attitude. One member of the Lotteries Commission who should not hold the appointment is the representative of the "Daily News." If the Press is to have representation on the commission, it should be a joint representation. To insist on the amendment means holding a bludgeon over the head of the Government for the next 12 months.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is a vital weakness in Mr. Holmes's argument. He says Parliament has a right to do as it likes. I have yet to learn that the Legislative Council is the Parliament of Western Australia. There is another Chamber associated with the Legislative Council, and we must have some regard for what another place has to say. Having regard to that aspect, and to Section 3 of the Act, it seems to me that we are over-stepping the bounds of decency when we say that irrespective of what the Government and another Chamber may think, this Chamber shall determine the personnel of the Lotteries Commission. In the first place an amendment was moved and

met with the approval of only one-half of members, consequently passing in the negative. But before the next meeting of the Chamber there was apparently a caucus meeting.

Members: No.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are not speaking the truth.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I went to Dr. Stow, as I had a right to do, on my own. Without consulting anybody, I told him the amendment I wanted; and he drafted it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member stated that he had not consulted anybody with regard to this amendment. I say definitely that there was a meeting of members of this Chamber.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I say I am right.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Honorary Minister is absolutely wrong, and is not speaking the truth when he makes that statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Mr. Miles is perfectly in order in asking for a statement to be withdrawn.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I do ask that.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I say that there was a meeting of some members of this Chamber.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You said there was a caucus meeting. If there was a caucus meeting, I was in it.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the Honorary Minister that it is highly improper to impute motives. When any member, whether a Minister or not, makes an assertion imputing motives and another member objects and asks for a withdrawal, the practice is to make the withdrawal.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think I have already said that I understand the position to be as I stated. It does not matter now whether the Chamber carries the motion or not.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Chairman, have you not asked, or has not Mr. Miles asked, for the withdrawal of a certain statement, and are we not entitled to the withdrawal?

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the Honorary Minister is not pursuing what is, after all, creating a delicate situation. I understand that he is letting the matter go.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: You have had a definite statement from me, Mr. Chairman, that I acted on my own, that I went to Dr. Stow on my own, and that he prepared the

amendment for me. We have the statement of the Honorary Minister that a caucus meeting was held, and that I was, in effect, acting for the caucus. Either I am strangling the truth and am a scoundrel, or else the Honorary Minister is the only truthful man in the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: The Honorary Minister was perfectly within his rights in saying that he assumed—

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Honorary Minister said it was a fact.

The CHAIRMAN: The Honorary Minister said he was of the opinion that members—

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: He did not qualify it in that way. You cannot qualify it for the Honorary Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: The Honorary Minister was perfectly in order in exercising his right to give expression to his personal opinion, just as Mr. Holmes was within his rights in emphatically denying the Honorary Minister's statement. The Honorary Minister said it had been suggested, but other members have denied the statement. I think it is due to the Honorary Minister, either to qualify his statement or, if he thinks it is right, to substantiate it with facts. Failing that, he should withdraw the statement.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Withdraw and proceed!

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am sorry members do not like what I said about the caucus meeting.

Many members interjected.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We have been accused on many occasions of holding caucus meetings, but if the term is so objectionable to hon. members when it is applied to them, I will withdraw it. I was perfectly in order in saying that there was a meeting—

Hon. J. Nicholson: I knew nothing about it.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Honorary Minister's statement was not right.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There was an understanding arrived at.

Several members: No there was not.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have a perfect right to say what I know to be the truth.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are quite wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Members may deny it if they like.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Honorary Minister is now going further than he did a little while ago. He now says that members got together for a certain purpose and that he knows it to be true. If that is so, it is up to the Honorary Minister—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: To prove his statement.

The CHAIRMAN: It is up to the Honorary Minister to give members the source of his information, or else withdraw his statement.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: He should substantiate his statement.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I said that I am aware that a meeting was held.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Then substantiate that statement.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am also aware that at that meeting members decided on a certain course of action, and having arrived at that decision, proceeded to give effect to it. I have a perfect right to make that statement, believing it to be true.

Hon. A. Thomson: It is wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Objection was taken by Mr. Holmes when I described that gathering as a caucus meeting, and I withdrew the expression.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: On a point of order, obviously the Honorary Minister is seeking to make the position much more aggravated by repeating the procedure he adopted previously. I protest most vehemently against the suggestion levelled by the Honorary Minister at members of this House that they attended a caucus meeting and determined on a certain course of action. I attended no such meeting regarding this matter. I acted and voted as I thought proper. The first occasion when the amendment was moved, I voted with the Government. I saw another point with reference to the second amendment and then I voted as I thought proper. I reserve to myself the right to act according to my conscience and not as anyone may dictate. I protest against this continued harangue about some meeting. The Honorary Minister would show more discretion if he were to adopt the suggestion that you, Mr. Chairman, made to him. The procedure adopted by the Honorary Minister is quite useless, and merely serves to irritate members when he continues to beat the same old drum all the time.



The CHAIRMAN: Standing Order 394 reads as follows:—

No member shall use offensive words against either House of Parliament or any member of such House or against any statute, unless for the purpose of moving for its repeal, and all imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections on members shall be withdrawn forthwith.

I take it that by the very demeanour of members the Honorary Minister must see that what he has said has been offensive to them. I hope, therefore, that the Honorary Minister, will, in continuing his remarks, maintain the high standard that has always been followed by those who have led the proceedings in this Chamber. If exception has been taken to anything that a Leader of the House has said, he has always withdrawn it straight away. If he were to adopt that course, the Honorary Minister would merely be doing what so many other Ministers and members have done before him.

Hon. G. W. MILES: His behaviour this afternoon has been a disgrace to the House.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I intend to follow your advice, Mr. Chairman, but apparently some members have not done so and yet are not content.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You keep on repeating the statement, and that makes it worse.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not repeating the statement at all. In pursuance of your suggestion, Mr. Chairman, I shall withdraw the statement. Had it not been for the desire expressed by one or two members who prompted me to adopt the course, the matter would have dropped long ago. The argument submitted by Mr. Holmes has no merit at all. There is no intention whatever on the part of the Government to accept the Council's amendment. The Government regard it as dictation on the part of this House and, therefore, a matter of principle is involved. No matter how members may endeavour to get round the point, that is the attitude of the Government, and I cannot say more than that I must oppose the Council's amendment as strongly as I can.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I was one of the chief movers in securing the passage of the amendment. Mr. Harris first mentioned the idea during the course of his second reading speech, and I also referred to the matter during my speech at that stage. I pointed out that members of the Lotteries

Commission had carried out their work effectively, and that it would be a good idea if they were re-appointed. Mr. Holmes followed the matter up and moved his first amendment, on which the voting was 11 for and 11 against. I knew nothing whatever about the later amendment until I came to the House.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That matter has been cleared up.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Yes, and we were all in the same position.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I wanted to make that explanation because the action of the Honorary Minister has been uncalled for.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. G. W. MILES: Very well; I will not pursue that subject. Members have recorded their decision on this matter, and we have noted how the Premier and Ministers have made statements in the Press and in public indicating their righteous indignation. This House has a perfect right to express its opinion, and to insist upon the amendment.

Hon. T. Moore: And make ourselves look ridiculous.

Hon. G. W. MILES: That is the hon. member's opinion.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And the leading newspaper in the State says we would make ourselves ridiculous, and surely that paper knows.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am proud of the vote I cast in favour of the re-appointment of the members of the Lotteries Commission. However, having achieved my objective, I shall not insist on the amendment.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The original mistake was made when—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Are you going to put things right?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No, but I am going to express my opinion. Ever since I have been a member of this Chamber, it has been traditional that, with ordinary business, a vote was taken and it was never interfered with.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is entirely incorrect.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: This is not a matter of great importance. When we took the vote, a decision was arrived at, and I do not think it should have been interfered with. I am glad that a majority of members recognise that fact.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How do you know that?

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	..	..	7

Majority for .. .. 10

## AYES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. R. G. Moore
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. Sir C. Nathan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. V. Piessé
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. G. W. Miles	(Teller.)

## NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. W. J. Mann	(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment not insisted upon.

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

No. 5. New Clause.—After Clause 3, insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 4, as follows:—4. Section fifteen of the principal Act is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a paragraph, as follows:—“(f) A copy of every account furnished by the commission to the Minister under paragraph (d), together with a copy of the certificate of the auditor in regard thereto, shall be laid before each House of Parliament within thirty days after the receipt of such account and certificate by the Minister, if Parliament is in session, and, if not, then within thirty days after the commencement of the next session of Parliament.”

Assembly's reason for disagreeing to the amendment: As a yearly balance sheet will be published and Section 15 of the Act is being complied with, the amendment is unnecessary.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted upon.

I move that motion for the reason read by the Chairman.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I hope the Committee will insist on the amendment. It is desirable that the fullest possible information, especially on the financial side, be placed before Parliament. No harm could be done

by making available the information as is done by Government departments and semi-governmental activities.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I cannot understand why the Government should object to the amendment. It does not conflict with the practice followed by State instrumentalities. Many reports of State activities are presented each session and the amendment is quite reasonable. The information would be of considerable value to Parliament. The publication of a yearly balance sheet would not fill the bill. It might be like other balance sheets we have seen that require a couple of K's.C. and Philadelphia lawyers to understand them.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: To table the information would not put the Government to any inconvenience, and it is important that Parliament should have the information. Its preparation would entail little or no expense.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The amendment should be insisted on. One might have something to say about the respect due by one House to the other as regards the reason given, which the Honorary Minister, presumably, was ashamed to read, because it was so paltry.

The Honorary Minister: It was read by the Chairman.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The reason states that a yearly balance sheet will be published, but published when, how or where? We do not want to have to go to some newspaper to ascertain what the commission are doing. We want the information presented to Parliament and are entitled to have it. Assuming that, as stated, the amendment is unnecessary, what can be the objection to it? Its adoption would involve the printing of only a few extra lines.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not the practice of State instrumentalities or Government departments to submit monthly returns to Parliament.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The amendment does not say monthly.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It has been pointed out many times that the average period for each consultation is one month, and the amendment demands that a copy of every document submitted to the Minister should be tabled. We say that is absolutely unnecessary. It is intended to table the yearly balance sheet, which is in

accordance with the practice adopted by other governmental concerns. If a member desired information regarding any particular consultation, he could obtain it for the asking. It is coming to a pretty pass if the commission are to be required each month to table copies of documents submitted to the Minister.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The commission must clean up each consultation and must keep separate accounts for each, and it would be merely a matter of making a carbon copy of the statements. A large sum of public money is being invested in the sweeps and people should not have to wait until the end of the year for the information. As this legislation is still on trial, there is no reason why such a reasonable amendment should not have been accepted by another place.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: This is a concern which makes up its accounts after the drawing of each lottery. To furnish an account in connection with lotteries at the end of each year would mean banking up practically a lump sum or giving the results of each lottery without the details. The details would be given in the account rendered after each lottery but could not be furnished in a yearly return. There would be difficulty in doing it. The Minister will see there is nothing unreasonable in the request for a copy to be laid on the Table of the House.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The Minister is under a misapprehension. It would be absurd to ask for every document to be laid on the Table. Really all that is wanted is a copy of the financial statement furnished by the commission to the Minister. If it were going to entail the bringing down of a pile of books, one would not have it on his mind.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The amendment should be read in conjunction with paragraph (d) of Section 15 of the principal Act.

The CHAIRMAN: Actually the amendment should be a proviso to that section.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I told Dr. Stow what I wanted and the form in which he drew up the amendment was, in his opinion, the way in which I desired to achieve that which I wanted, namely to get a copy of the accounts furnished to the Minister.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: I cannot see that any vital principle is involved which will necessitate our insisting upon

this amendment. The placing of a record such as is asked for on the Table of the House every month might lead to constant debates because perhaps a particular charity had not received what someone thought it was entitled to get and because others had received more than it was thought they should have had. At the risk of being considered inconsistent and of having changed my views, I propose to support the Minister.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The moment these particulars are laid on the Table of the House, we shall probably have some members dissatisfied at the action of the commission in possibly a certain direction. This will lead to wrangling on the actions of the commission, a body we have appointed to carry out this particular work. There has been very little complaint in regard to the work performed by the commission. The information that is required is published in the Press and if anything further is needed there is nothing to prevent a member asking a question in the House.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It may be that when Parliament meets possibly six or eight sets of accounts may have to be laid on the Table with what is most important of all, the comments of the auditor as to whether the lotteries have been run in accordance with the Act, or whether the money has been distributed as it should have been. The custom in connection with accounts is for an auditor to inquire how many are needed. Usually he is told that one is wanted for the bank, one for the station and one for the office file. In this instance there can be no objection to a carbon copy being supplied for presentation to Parliament when it meets. It may be that we shall get six or eight balance sheets at the opening of Parliament and then, at the end of the session, we shall get the remainder.

The Honorary Minister: That is not the amendment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The amendment is that we shall have a copy of the accounts laid on the Table. Not only do we want to see the accounts, but we want to see also the auditor's report. The Minister says we shall be provided with a balance sheet at the end of the year. But probably there will be no auditor's report attached thereto, and that is not sufficient when so large a sum of money is being handled.

**The HONORARY MINISTER:** The hon. member has no right to suggest that the auditor's certificate will not be attached. He has already had an assurance on that point.

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** What is the use of the Minister's assurance, when he might be gone before that time arrives?

**The HONORARY MINISTER:** Under the amendment it will be necessary to lay these papers on the Table within 30 days after each lottery. The discussion we have already had is fairly indicative of what is likely to take place when these accounts are laid on the Table; those who take exception to any act whatever of the commission will want to discuss it, and so much time will be wasted.

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** You say members can get the reports through the Press.

**The HONORARY MINISTER:** So they can. It ought not to be necessary to lay the accounts on the Table of the House after each lottery.

**Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN:** In the event of this amendment not being insisted upon, or being defeated, will it be open to any member of Parliament from his place in the House to move that certain papers be laid on the Table?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Yes, at any time when the House is sitting a member may move a motion disagreeing with any action of the Lotteries Commission.

**Hon. H. SEDDON:** But why should not the accounts be laid on the Table of the House?

**The CHAIRMAN:** A discussion could be initiated even if the accounts were not laid on the Table.

**Hon. W. J. Mann:** Anyhow, the hon. member can see the reports in the Press.

**Hon. H. SEDDON:** The reports in the Press may be condensed, or even summarised, whereas a parliamentary paper laid on the Table of the House is always authentic. I cannot see why there should be any objection to the amendment.

**Hon. J. J. HOLMES:** On the question of Press reports: Had the report of the Royal Commission on the Peel Estate not been heavily condensed in the metropolitan Press, and had not certain newspapers written leading articles on that condensed report, at least a million of money would have been saved to the State. At the time I said it was not decent journalism, and I asked the

editor of a leading newspaper to publish the whole of the report. When he learnt that it would take about four columns of space, he said he would see what could be done. Before leaving him I reminded him that he was prepared to give half-a-dozen columns to a description of women's apparel at race meetings. That is what we get when we depend on the Press. What we require is that an auditor's report shall be laid on the Table of the House.

**Hon. W. J. MANN:** Mr. Holmes wants the Committee to believe that because some newspaper published an abbreviated version of the report of the Royal Commission on the Peel Estate, the State was mulet in a large sum of money. If so, it was because the Government did not act on that report, not because the Press abbreviated it.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** The amendment is not in keeping with the encomiums members have passed upon the work of the commission.

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** But you will refuse to re-appointment them.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** Nothing of the sort. I shall be surprised if the Government do not re-appoint them. The commission have been doing their work for 12 months, and if members had felt any dissatisfaction with that work, they could have asked that the papers be laid on the Table. After having said so many nice things about the commission, it is ill-fitting that members should now declare that they must have the accounts of the commission every 30 days.

**Hon. J. J. Holmes:** We do not know whom the new board will consist of.

**Hon. T. MOORE:** It is not likely that there will be any new appointments, but whoever the Government may appoint will, I am sure, do the correct thing, just as the present commission have done. To ask for accounts and reports every 30 days, is carrying the thing to an absurdity. I hope we shall soon finish with this business and get on to some more serious subject for discussion.

**Hon. H. SEDDON:** I do not think there has been any wrangling, but I believe we cannot have too much information in Parliament. Since that information has to be prepared for the Minister, I cannot see why it should not be supplied to the House.

**The Honorary Minister:** It is proposed to do so.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We should have the same information as is made available to the Minister.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	..	14
					—
Majority against	..	..	..	..	5
					—

## AYES.

Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. E. H. Gray  
Hon. W. H. Kitchin  
Hon. T. Moore  
Hon. Sir C. Nathan

Hon. H. V. Piesse  
Hon. E. Rose  
Hon. C. B. Williams  
Hon. G. Fraser  
(Teller.)

## NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter  
Hon. E. H. Hall  
Hon. V. Hamersley  
Hon. J. J. Holmes  
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane  
Hon. W. J. Mann  
Hon. G. W. Miles

Hon. R. G. Moore  
Hon. J. Nicholson  
Hon. H. Seddon  
Hon. A. Thomson  
Hon. C. H. Wittenoom  
Hon. H. J. Yelland  
Hon. L. B. Bolton  
(Teller.)

Question thus negatived; the Council's amendment insisted upon.

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

### BILL—FARMERS' DEBTS ADJUSTMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

### BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Assembly's Message.*

A message having been received from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to Nos. 1, 6 and 8 of the Council's amendments made in the Bill, and had disagreed to Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 for the reasons set forth, the message was now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

No. 2, Clause 3—Delete paragraph (a):

Assembly's reasons for disagreeing to the amendment: Nos. 2 and 3 prevent the extension of the principle that firemen shall have representation on the board.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—  
That the amendment be not insisted upon.

This matter has been thoroughly discussed, and I do not think I can add anything to what I have already said.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I hope this amendment will be insisted upon. The principle involved is a vital one. It would be wrong to appoint a member of the Union to the Fire Brigades Board, and would be subversive to discipline.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If a member of the permanent firemen had a seat on the board he would not be sitting over the chief officer, as was suggested, but as a member of the board to deal with any question that might come before it.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He would have a voting power which the chief officer does not possess. The matter under discussion might easily be the dismissal of the chief officer.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The union member would be only one in ten on the board, and if he was able to convince his colleagues to his way of thinking, his argument would necessarily be a sound one.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Only the three parties who find the money with which to finance the board are entitled to representation on it.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The member of the union who happened to be appointed to this board would occupy a position that is not in accord with the principles contained in the Act. No man can hold an office of profit under the board, and be a member of the board at the same time, because the fact of his holding an office of profit would disqualify him from becoming a member. That is clearly shown in Section 17 of the Act which states, amongst other things, that if a member of the board at any time subsequent to his appointment accepts or continues to hold any office of profit under the board, he shall cease to be a member of it, and his office shall become vacant. If a member of the union were appointed to the board, he would have to cease occupying his position as an employee of the board. If he continued to be a fireman for a moment after being appointed to the board, he would be deprived of his right to sit on the board. In the circumstances our only course is to insist upon the deletion of the clause.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: Do you consider, Mr. Chairman, that the clause is in order?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the amendment is agreed to, would not legislative authority be thereby given to a member of the Fire Brigades Union to sit as a member of the board?

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is nothing to provide for that. It would be unconstitutional for him to be on the board.

The HONORARY MINISTER: A constitutional point is now being raised which has not been raised previously.

The CHAIRMAN: The time has gone by to test the constitutionality of the provision.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot agree that there is anything invidious in the proposed dual position. In connection with far more important boards, workers employed by the boards have representation.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: During the discussion on the Bill, attention was drawn to the fact that the firemen's representative need not necessarily be a member of the firemen's craft, though he would have to be a member of the union. Rumour—and where there is smoke there is fire—has given the name of the person to be appointed to this job if Parliament agrees to the amendment. The constitutional question of an office of profit will not enter into the matter. According to rumour, the proposed member will be a union secretary.

Hon. A. Thomson: We were told the intention was to appoint a practical fireman.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I would be much obliged if Mr. Holmes would not impute motives every time he rises to speak.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I am not imputing motives, but merely stating what I have heard.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the hon. member wants to put his own construction on the clause, irrespective of any assurance given—

Hon. J. Nicholson: You have already given an assurance on this point.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. It is just a question of draftsmanship. If members are not satisfied with the wording of the clause, then, in view of what has been stated by Mr. Holmes. I have no objection to its being altered to read that the proposed member of the board shall be a member of the fire brigade.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	16
Majority against				10

AYES.	
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. G. Fraser
(Teller.)	

NOES.	
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. R. G. Moore	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. Sir C. Nathan	Hon. V. Hamersley
(Teller.)	

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment insisted upon.

No. 3. Clause 3.—Delete paragraph (e).

The CHAIRMAN: The same reason is advanced by the Assembly in this case as in connection with the amendment just insisted on. Therefore this amendment will be consequentially insisted on.

No. 4. Clause 3.—Delete paragraph (f). The Assembly's reason for disagreeing to the Council's amendment:—This clause is in conformity with the principle of direct representation of the interests which finance the board, and therefore it is essential to retain it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted upon.

This matter was the subject of a referendum of the local authorities concerned, who, by 25 votes against 15, decided that it was advisable to have a provision of this kind in the Act. A fairly considerable sum is annually contributed by the local authorities to the Fire Brigades Board. According to the decisions of the board, the local authorities levy fire rates. Consequently it is highly desirable that whoever represents the local authorities on the Fire Brigades Board should be a member of one or other of the local governing bodies concerned. I have already stated the circumstances of the case of a representative of local authorities on the board who was defeated as a member of a local governing body while so representing the local authorities.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: A member of the Fire Brigades Board must in the first place be elected by the local governing bodies. Before he ceased to be a member of a local governing body, he would have a fair experience of the work of the Fire Brigades Board. The fact of his being no longer a member of a local governing body should not disqualify him from retaining his seat on the board. He might retire from the local governing body and simply retain his seat on the board. In those circumstances, he should be allowed to serve out his term, which is only two years, on the board. It is wrong to place local authorities in the position of having to say that their representative must retire from the Fire Brigades Board, should he lose his seat on a local governing body. That individual may lose his seat on one body, although 16 or 17 other bodies that also elected him may be perfectly satisfied with his services on the Fire Brigades Board.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I think the difficulty would be overcome if we inserted a few words that would leave it optional and not mandatory. I suggest that the difficulty would be overcome by adding at the end of paragraph (f) the words: "if the local bodies concerned so desire."

The CHAIRMAN: What does the hon. member mean by "local bodies concerned"?

Hon. R. G. MOORE: That refers to the local bodies in the fire board district affected. My amendment would allow the local authorities concerned in the electing of a representative on the Fire Brigades Board, to require him to retire should he lose his seat on a road board, or to continue his services despite the loss of that seat.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not think any difficulty would be experienced if the clause were amended as suggested by Mr. R. G. Moore. It would leave it optional for the local authorities concerned to continue the services of their representatives, should they desire to do so. I see no objection to such an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I am at a loss to understand how to put the amendment if it is moved. It is a modification of our original decision. It would be necessary to draft something that would separate the position regarding the Perth City Council, which body can appoint its own representative, and local

governing bodies, a large number of whom are concerned in the election of one representative.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: The Honorary Minister is prepared to accept the amendment suggested by Mr. R. G. Moore, but there may be an objection to it. I think a precedent was established in the Act relating to the Fremantle municipal tramways in which provision was made that the Mayor of Fremantle should vacate his seat on the Fremantle Tramways Board if he lost his mayoral position.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That was a different matter altogether.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: The same principle is involved.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Not at all.

The CHAIRMAN: It would be better if the Honorary Minister were to report progress and, seeing that he is agreeable to Mr. R. G. Moore's proposal, have a proper amendment drafted in the meantime.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The position referred to by Sir Charles Nathan in connection with the Fremantle Tramways Board is totally different. It has no bearing on the point at issue. This is a small matter and I do not know why the best man cannot be selected for the position, irrespective of whether or not he is a member of a road board. We should leave it to the parties concerned to make their own selection.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If Mr. R. G. Moore's proposal be agreed to, it will enable local authorities referred to in the schedules, as well as the City Council, to retain the services of men best qualified to represent them on the Fire Brigades Board.

The CHAIRMAN: The Bill reverses the position that was set up in the Act regarding the election of representatives to the Fire Brigades Board, and Mr. Moore's amendment seeks to steer a middle course. My difficulty will be to know how to state his question because it cannot go forward to the Legislative Assembly in the form he has indicated.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In view of the discussion on this amendment, I ask leave to report progress.

Progress reported.

# **BILL—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION.**

## *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. E. H. GRAY** (West) [9.4]: I do not desire to give a long address on the Bill, but the importance of it necessitates my saying a few words. In my opinion the Bill is a fairly good one. It could be modified in various ways, but I consider it a credit to the work of another place. The passing of the measure should result in a big improvement in the management of the railways, and unless such an improvement can be effected, it will be of little use. When I refer to the management of the railways, I have in mind their keeping pace with what is recognised as modern transport methods. The Railway Department will have to be given more money and more freedom to bring the service up to date. To attach any blame to the Commissioner or to his staff for having failed to meet the onslaught of motor competition would be unfair. If the railway officials had been granted the necessary money and freedom, the railways would not have been in their present position, because the officials were eager to meet the new conditions. I agree with those speakers who have said that our railway system is obsolete. When I came to the State many years ago, what astonished me more than anything else was that the railway coaches were obsolete when they were landed here. Whoever was responsible for the specifications for building the passenger rolling stock made a very grave mistake, because it was old-fashioned when it was brought here. Many of the old coaches are still in use, and the management of the railways have been compelled year after year to spend money on the repair and maintenance of such dog boxes that should have been scrapped years ago. The characteristics of progressive motor transport were a leading feature of the railways in the Old Country many years ago. I had the good fortune to be born in a railway family, and I remember from my youthful days the pride of achievement exhibited by the thousands of men connected with the railway system on which my father worked. That was the Great Western Railway whose workshops were at Swindon. I remember thousands of schoolboys going there to see the

first non-stop flying Dutchman from Paddington to the west of England starting on its maiden run. It was a red-letter day in the history of those works. The 15,000 men employed there were given a half holiday, and lined the track for miles to see the train go through and to witness the engine picking up the water under the then new system as it went along. That seems a very long time ago. I am satisfied that many of the methods employed in the Old Country could be adopted here. The enormous expense to which the railway companies of England have gone, to make people comfortable—I refer to third-class passengers—would be an eye-opener to Western to be a fact, the common saying in the Old Country. The late Mr. Justice Burnside, who spent many years of his life close to my old home, used to relate with gusto his experiences of the Great Western Railway passenger traffic. He repeated, what I knew to be a fact, the common saying in the Old Country 40 years ago, that sensible people rode third-class, snobs travelled second-class and damned fools travelled first-class. It was tantamount to saying that the comfort provided for third-class passengers was good enough for anybody.

**Hon. H. Seddon:** Their third-class was better than our first-class accommodation 20 years ago.

**Hon. E. H. GRAY:** I remember one of the achievements of the Great Western Railway. It was a broad gauge line and the company were handicapped in their operations through inability to use their rolling stock on the lines of other companies. They decided to adopt the uniform gauge. To do this thousands of men were brought into action, a complete and efficient organisation was laid down and only two nights were required to effect the change. Those were the only two nights in my recollection that my father was ever away from home. The traffic was suspended at midnight on Saturday while one of the rails was laid and the work was completed by midnight on Sunday, so that the new gauge was in operation at 1 a.m. on Monday.

**Hon. H. Seddon:** Over a distance of 130 miles.

**Hon. E. H. GRAY:** That is so. That was an achievement which will live long in railway history as an outstanding feat of engineering organisation and efficient work. Everybody was very proud of the feat, even



I as a little boy. Similar characteristics have been noticeable in the development of motor transport. In Perth the major companies operating motor passenger services have been blessed with men of outstanding experience, men who have been to the Old Country and have had the brains to assimilate the latest developments there. They have been given a free hand to provide the public with first-class accommodation. To-day we are faced with the fact that third-class passengers on the railways are not made even fairly comfortable and do not get the accommodation that they are reasonably entitled to have in these advanced times.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Where do the third-class passengers come in?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I should have said second-class. On the trains in the metropolitan area we find a fine up-to-date coach hitched on to one or two other coaches that are probably 60 or 70 years old—decrepit, uncomfortable and dirty-looking, though not actually dirty. To travel in those carriages has a very depressing effect on anyone who appreciates comfort and cleanliness. The same thing applies to the country trains. Our country people do not get fair treatment on the railways. They pay reasonable fares and deserve better accommodation.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They get good tucker.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I would not say that the tucker is good. Whatever else we do with this Bill, we should make provision for all the people to enjoy the most up-to-date means of motor transport, which is equivalent to saying that provision must be made to give the motor transport services security of tenure. If it is determined that motor transport is here to stay—and it would be a very serious mistake seriously to interfere with it—we should ensure that the companies operating on the various routes are given security of tenure, so that we can insist upon the public at all times receiving up-to-date service. If we hamper the buses, or leave their proprietaries in a position of insecurity, the effect will be that the buses will run all the time on the edge of the regulations imposed by the board. We want to encourage the bus proprietaries to give an up to date service, such as now obtains. Any unbiased traveller must recognise the courtesy of the bus drivers and the efficiency of the conductors to be a credit to the companies.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It ought to be a lesson to you as to what private enterprise can do as compared with the State.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The State can do the job all right. The State would do it if hard-up Governments did not step in and take so much money away from the people, and saddled them with new railways that have no chance of being financially successful for years to come.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The trouble is political interference, and that is an argument for private enterprise.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is no argument against State enterprise.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is the argument against State enterprise. The Government collar any cash they can.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: If the Railway Department were given the opportunity, they would supply the necessary services. So far, the opportunity has not been given. Now as regards the personnel of the board. We are asked to say that three members are sufficient to deal with this big problem which has baffled authorities all over the world. To-night we have learnt that the Fire Brigade Board consists of ten members. Again there are five members of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. It has been considered necessary to appoint four members to the Lotteries Commission. Therefore I question the sufficiency of a board of three to control the big question of transport. The limitation to 15 miles in the metropolitan area I consider hardly wide enough. It would be a serious handicap to many small people close to the metropolitan area. The limit should be somewhat greater. I am strongly against the provision forbidding unlicensed vehicles to carry other persons. That would work great hardship to many people in the bush. The principle underlying the provision has existed in America for many years, but there is no reason why we should adopt it. Those of us who have country experience know the position of the farmer. He is often able to help his neighbours in times of emergency or necessity by saving them through the medium of his motor truck, the fatigues and difficulties of a long journey on foot or by horse or sulky. Therefore I am against that provision. The maximum fees proposed by the Bill strike me as too high. The fees actually imposed will depend on the personnel of the board. Undoubtedly there is

unfair competition by motor trucks in the country, but we have to remember that many men were driven into that business by the depression. I have personal knowledge of such cases. There was one man with three sons, two of them unemployed, joined another man, who was also in difficulties, in launching a motor truck service to Meekatharra. That is a typical case. But for that venture the people in question would have been on the dole. Although an intricate problem is involved, compensation should be provided in such cases if the men are put out of business. I know it is difficult to evolve a formula for this purpose, but the task of devising one should not be beyond members of this Chamber. I trust that in Committee the Bill will be so amended as to remedy the injustice entailed. With these reservations, I consider that in Committee we shall be able to make a start on dealing effectively with the transport problem. May I say that I have never heard in this House a better debate than that on the present Bill? If the same energy and thought were expended on other measures, we should make greater progress. With the reservations mentioned, which can be discussed during the Committee stage, I support the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [9.22]:

After all, the second reading stage of any measure is merely an affirmation of its principle. Hon. members have to ask themselves whether at present there is need for the appointment of a transport board, and for legislation under which such a board may act. The Government of the day are of the opinion that there is need not only for a transport board but also for action, and that within the next six months the proposal should assume proper shape and working order. Generally speaking, since the Bill was drafted every latitude has been allowed for amending it. The only phase which has been disallowed is an inquiry into the necessity for such legislation; and that question, after all, is a matter for the Government of the day to decide. By no stretch of imagination could anyone assert that every opportunity has not been given in another place to lick the original measure into shape. This is not a party Bill, but purely an open Bill. Supporters of the Government have succeeded with numerous amendments. The

Bill now being before us, we have to make up our minds whether it is necessary. My personal view is that the Bill is required! Some hon. members consider that a Royal Commission of inquiry should precede the legislation. The Government think otherwise. They hold that sufficient data are available for the shaping of the measure. On that, I presume, the Government will stand. They are not worth their salt if they do not. If this House agrees that the time has arrived for such legislation, the Bill is one for Committee discussion. On the other hand, if the House is of opinion, on the ground of insufficiency of information, that the time has not arrived for legislative action, it is our duty to reject the Bill and express our reason for rejecting it. We should state plainly in that case, that there is not sufficient information to justify us in passing the second reading of the Bill and taking it into Committee. Some hon. members have said that the only part of the Bill acceptable to them is the part relating to the board. It has been mooted that the Bill be so chopped up and mutilated that all that will be left of it will be the board proposal. For the life of me I cannot see any self-respecting Government delaying this legislation for the sake of outside inquiry. If the House is going to adopt the unique course proposed by some hon. members of accepting a mere portion of the Bill as machinery for the purpose of making inquiry I consider that would be going too far. By doing so this Chamber would, I hold, place itself in an entirely false position. Let us assume for the sake of argument that the Bill passes the second reading and then is so emasculated in Committee that all that is left of it is the part relating to the proposed board. The functions of the board would then consist of stickybeaking expeditions. What would happen next? The Bill would be returned from this Chamber to the place whence it came. There would be only two courses open to another place. The first course would be to say "If that is the way another place treats our legislation we will drop the Bill altogether." The alternative course would be to return the Bill to this Chamber disagreeing with all the amendments made here—that is to say the emasculation of all the active portions of the Bill. Then we should be in the position of having to insist on our amendments. If

we took that course and again returned the Bill we could not go into conference with another place because we should have rejected all the important clauses of the measure without giving them consideration, or at all events without amending them so as to bring them into line with our ideas. The course indicated would be entirely new and most extraordinary. I suggest that if hon. members hold that they have not sufficient information upon which to legislate at present, they should say so right out, and indicate to the Government that that is the reason for the rejection of the Bill here.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Not necessarily so at all.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is the straightforward way.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is your opinion.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The other method is to accept just so much of the Bill as suits our purpose, and convert the board into a sort of commission of inquiry. I cannot contemplate any self-respecting Government tolerating such a position. I would be against them if they did.

Hon. A. Thomson: Would not the board do good work?

Hon. J. CORNELL: After mature consideration, the Government have decided that legislation is necessary for the co-ordination and regulation of transport facilities. They have submitted a Bill for consideration and have not burked discussion or amendment. They stand fast on the point that sufficient information is available to enable Parliament to deal with the legislation.

Hon. H. Seddon: Your argument would be sound if we had time to go into the matter thoroughly.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Then we should be straightforward and inform the Government that we have not sufficient time within which to deal with the Bill properly.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We say we have not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Then that is a reason for the straightout rejection of the Bill.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do you not think the board could get the necessary information?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It would be impertinence on our part to ask the Government to agree to what has been suggested.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is a matter of opinion.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member and those who support him will find that

the Government regard it in that light. It is the function of the Government to introduce legislation, and it is ours to pass or reject it.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What nonsense!

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is not the function of this House to take the legislation received from another place and turn the board that is suggested for certain purposes into what is totally different—a commission of inquiry. It would be more honest and candid for this House to decide that the information at our disposal is not sufficient to warrant us agreeing to the principle, or to legislation for the co-ordination of transport facilities, and urge the Government to withdraw the Bill, respectfully suggest that they make further inquiries and submit another Bill later on. That would be more honest than to support a proposal to turn the board into a commission of inquiry, a proposition to which many members have not given two minutes' consideration.

Hon. W. J. Mann: For how long have you been a paragon of honesty?

Hon. J. CORNELL: All my life.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Then do not accuse others of not being honest. You are not infallible.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The suggestion is merely a subterfuge to get rid of the Bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You ought to talk like that after your action last night!

Hon. J. CORNELL: The course suggested would mean that we were not game to stand square in face of the issue. It would merely mean that we would filch from the Bill so much as suited our purpose. On top of that, we would agree to the financial parts of the Bill. We would reject what the Government propose, convert the board into a commission of inquiry and at the same time agree to the financial provisions of the Bill. If the Government are satisfied that they have sufficient information at their disposal to warrant them introducing the legislation, it would be a piece of impertinence on our part to convert the commission into a board of inquiry, and allow the legislation to be passed in a form that would enable the Government to raise money. That would not be the proper course to pursue.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you suggest that this House has no right to amend the Bill?

Hon. J. CORNELL: But this House does not propose to amend the Bill at all, in the sense that other Bills are amended. There is no necessity to emasculate the Bill in the fashion suggested, seeing that a simple resolution would suffice to indicate what is desired by the Council. If we pursued that course we would give the Government the option to act upon, or refuse to follow, the course we suggested. To do what has been favoured by some members would provide the Government with no option beyond accepting the dictates of this House or dropping the Bill altogether. That would be a suicidal policy for this House to pursue, and would inevitably mean that the Bill would be dropped.

**HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [9.37]:** The Bill has been introduced in the last days of the session and we have not had the opportunity to make the inquiries necessary in the interests of many of those who will be seriously affected. We realise the importance of the transport problem, which affects everyone throughout the community. We know the work the railways have performed in opening up the State. It has been claimed that too many railways have been constructed at too great a cost to the State, in consequence of which it is impossible for them to provide interest and sinking fund and, at the same time, meet working costs. It is patent that the new form of transport has meant serious competition with the railways, and Parliament has been asked to pass a Bill that will tend to ease that competition. Many of those interested in motor transport have invested their all in plant. Some have mortgaged their homes to acquire vehicles, but have been successful in their efforts to build up a remunerative business. They have been able to attract freight from the railways, and their interests must be conserved by Government and Parliament. One large section of the community has not been afforded any adequate opportunity to consider the effect of the Bill. I refer to the road boards throughout the State. There is an impression that the Government may make use of registration fees collected under the Traffic Act, for the purposes of the Bill now before us. From that fund under the Traffic Act, the various country road boards draw their revenue for the maintenance of roads and feeder tracks that

are not covered by the Commissioner of Main Roads. It is feared that a large proportion of that fund will be diverted from the Traffic Act and utilised for the purposes covered by the Bill. I am sure that the road boards will be glad to have an opportunity to consider the Bill and its effect upon their funds. Motor transport would not have secured so much business from the railways had not the newer form of conveyances rendered wonderful service to the country people. We should pause before we permit anyone to interfere with such services.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They are doing the railways a lot of harm.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: That may be so. For many years past I have been on deputations that have urged improved facilities on the part of the railways. For instance, we have urged that better arrangements should be made for the conveyance of stock to the Midland Junction market. The Railway Department have not responded to the requests. Stock are bumped about and damaged during shunting operations, and the owners have suffered great loss through delays in getting to market. On one section of the railway system five hours were lost in bringing stock from Broomehill to Midland Junction. That is necessitated by various changes required along the line involving shunting operations and changing over of hands. There trucks are shunted aside daily for trains to be made up.

Hon. H. V. Piessé: They have special stock trains running from Broomehill now.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: They would not have had them but for the competition of the motor trucks. I am glad to learn from Mr. Piessé that the department is now running more direct trains in consequence of that competition. Fruit-growers have had the same experience and have learnt that their fruit does not get the same kindly handling on the railway as it gets from the truck drivers. I have had a number of letters regarding the proposed radius of 15 miles provided in the Bill, which the writers of those letters assure me will drive them out of business. To put this measure on the statute-book without first giving opportunity to the various interests concerned to be heard, would be rushing headlong into trouble. I agree with those members who have suggested that a

board should be appointed to make inquiries to see whether co-ordination could be brought about. I see very little of co-ordination in the Bill, for there is running right through it the one idea of putting down this new form of transport with a view to helping the railways. In my opinion the railways will never get back the passenger traffic they have lost, but the time is not ripe for us in a wholesale way to curtail motor services which are helping many people to build up their respective industries. Clearly, the Bill is for Committee consideration rather than for second reading speeches, but I do hope the suggestion to appoint a board will appeal to the Government. I had thought we might have a select committee to deal with it, but there is not time for that, and so it would be as well to have a board appointed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: As a Royal Commission?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It could act as a Royal Commission and take evidence from various sections of the community who would show how the Bill would affect them respectively. We require to guard jealously those funds which I say should be left in the hands of country road boards. To be sure that those funds will be left to the local authorities we should insert certain safeguarding clauses in the Bill. I will support the second reading but in Committee I hope to see a number of amendments made.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [9.51]: It has been said during the course of the debate that in my second reading speech on this Bill I showed a bias towards the railways. I have no desire to repudiate such a charge. I have a bias towards the railways to the same extent as I would have towards some person or thing that needed protection and that it was my duty to protect. My duty would be all the more imperative if my case had already been prejudiced by specious propaganda which gave a colourful presentation of one side of the question and distorted the other side without any regard to the principles of justice. I may be wrong, but I conceive that the first duty of a member of Parliament is to defend the interests of the people as a whole. It seems to me that, while he may have minor obligations to his constituency, he should not permit sectional influences to

deter him from taking any necessary action to shelter the State from aggression.

In my opening speech, I pointed out what the railways had done towards the development of the resources of Western Australia; I referred to the fact that they had instituted a system under which goods of low value were carried at low freights—some at a loss—while goods of high value were called upon to bear higher freights in order to avoid a financial deficiency. I stated that a rival to the railways had entered the field, that it was not a competitor in the true sense of the term, that it was an unfair competitor, that it picked the eyes out of the traffic, that it confined itself to highly remunerative goods and left the unprofitable goods to the railways. Those were the lines on which my speech was cast.

Not a member who has spoken was brave enough to dispute my contentions. We have heard from the opponents of the Bill a lot about "the public convenience," "the necessities of the people," "vested interests," "confiscation," "the right of everyone to go to the cheapest shop to buy his goods," and similar sophistries that could deceive only the unthinking. But we have heard little from those opponents about the State's greatest asset, which is being injured in a contest which lacks all the elements of fair fighting, in a contest in which all the handicaps are borne by one party, and freedom of action is given to the other. And the party which has to bear the unequal burden is the party whose interests members of the House have been commissioned to protect.

Let me pursue the matter further. In expounding the tangled problem, some unit of measure must be taken the use of which will enable us to judge the extent of the problem; some background must be erected against which we can film the different aspects of the case. The science of geometry is built up on certain axioms and postulates. The axioms are self-evident truths; the postulates must be accepted because they cannot be proved or disproved. In my speech I accepted the existence and operations of the railways as axiomatic, and this acceptance has been endorsed by members of this House. For instance, Sir Charles Nathan stated that "transport is the life-blood of the community." I agree with the hon. gentleman. But how would he define

"Transport?" Would he define it as a service which is spasmodic and sporadic, or would he limit the meaning to a service which is a permanent one, ministering to the full wants of the community? If he agrees to the latter definition he immediately accepts our railway system as being the only one coming within the meaning of the term.

Rightly or wrongly, I hold the view that railways are indispensable to the welfare of this State, and, judging from the tenor of the debate, the majority of members of this House agree with me. The next logical step, then, is to consider how this indispensable system of transport is affected by the problem we are all so anxious to solve. In this way I had no other recourse but to analyse the operations of the railways in recent years and measure the effect of motor operations on railway working. I accepted certain facts which I believed would be universally endorsed by members of the House. Apparently I was wrong. I accepted the fact that the railways were common carriers; I accepted the fact that they were owned by, and operated for the benefit of, the State; I accepted the fact that they had been the prime factor in the State's development, and I accepted the fact that their scale of charges was designed in such a way that the profit earned on a small percentage of the goods carried enabled them to carry a far greater percentage of goods at a loss.

As common carriers the railways are bound, under law, to carry all passengers and goods which conform to the conditions of carrying as published under the railway by-laws or their tariffs. This is as it should be if the definition I have set up is to be conformed to. But do the other transport agencies conform in like manner? They do not. Their business is to make a profit for their owners. In this respect many of them have been very successful, and no sane person would blame them for taking full advantage of any opportunity that presented itself. Still, the fact remains that they are not common carriers but only specialists dealing in traffic that shows them a handsome return. No one would cavil at their attitude, provided it could be shown that no harmful consequences ensued. But very harmful consequences have ensued and it was with the intention of remedying them that the Government brought down this Bill.

I wish to show how serious those consequences are. I pointed out in my opening speech that railway rates were not based on tonnage alone. For instance, wheat, coal and potatoes are carried at roughly 1d. per ton per mile, while tinned fruit, starch and groceries are charged from 4d. to 6d. per ton per mile. In this way the inexpensive use of all commodities is made possible. I also pointed out that, so far as goods services were concerned, the railways could operate at a profit if a flat rate of approximately 1¾d. per ton mile were charged. But the imposition of this rate would at once prohibit the inexpensive use of nearly all our low-priced commodities and thus automatically stifle industry—particularly our primary industries.

It is this real danger, then, that the Bill seeks to avert. The inroads made by motor trucks into the profitable traffic of the railways has brought about a position from which there are only two avenues of relief—a reasonable protection for the railways to enable them to carry on as they have been doing, or a reconstruction of the railway tariff to permit of their meeting the present competition on a commercial basis. Since the second avenue is almost debarred because of the burden it would impose on industry, there seems to be no remedy other than to give the railways that measure of protection which will guarantee the present desirable scale of charges. Members should not beguile themselves into believing that the existing state of affairs can be permitted to continue indefinitely. It cannot. The problem must be tackled without delay.

These were some of the principal reasons that actuated me in framing my opening speech. In what other way could I have effectively shown the extent and danger of the present crisis? I hold the belief that transportation is the life-blood of the country, and I am firm in the belief that our railways are the only system which at present conform to the real principle of an effective system of transport. At the same time, I recognise the immense value of motor transport, and the great service it can render to the community in a hundred ways, without engaging in activities which could only be sanctioned by a people dead to all sense of the disastrous results which threaten them now. Volumes could be written on the benefits conferred by motor transport, and those benefits will still remain, and may even be

amplified, under a system which will direct its pursuits into legitimate channels. The problem, I admit, is a complex one, but it is not one beyond the capacity of members to solve. I would urge them to approach the consideration of the question with open minds. I am not unaware of the amount of attempted lobbying that has taken place since the Bill was first presented. One member has been frank enough to refer to the number of communications and applications he had received from individuals seeking amendments to the measure. Who are those people who seek to gain their ends by surreptitious means? If they had logical grounds for their requests, why did not they approach the Government with their requests?

Hon. A. Thomson: They did approach the Government.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Only one organisation, the Pastoralists' Association, have taken that honourable course, and the Government agreed to the request because it was a reasonable one.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: The Government were approached by others, including the motor transport bodies.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would again remind members that the question is not a party one.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think every member is desirous of endeavouring to assist the railways as far as possible.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: During the passage of the Bill through another place, the Government accepted many amendments vital to the measure, because they were convinced that the welfare of the State would be best served by adopting such a course. But it is too much to expect the Government to accept any amendment that would have the effect of hamstringing the Bill. No such amendment will be accepted by the Government. There are, however, a number of members who are keenly alive to the position. Among these is Mr. Holmes. I value the support he has given to the main principles of the Bill, while at the same time I recognise he is of opinion that the measure calls for amendment. The hon. member is in doubt whether the Bill conforms to the title—whether it co-ordinates transport. As a matter of fact, the Bill does not, in a direct way, co-ordinate transport. It makes provision, however, for such co-ordination.

The powers of co-ordination are conferred on the Board. This fact is evidently grasped by members, inasmuch as several speakers have referred to the Board as the essence of the Bill. In a sense, that is true.

In Clause 10 the powers and duties of the Board are fully outlined. The Board may of its own volition:—

Inquire into and report on transport matters generally, having in mind:—

The services performed for the benefit of the community as a whole;

The needs of the State for transport for its economic development; and

The impartial and equitable treatment of all those engaged in transport.

Further, it may supplement the existing forms of transport with others, where it is found that the existing services are not adequate to the position. What is this but co-ordination? While on the subject of the board, perhaps it would be as well if I commented on the question of providing some avenue of appeal against the decision of the Board in refusing a license. It is unlikely that the board would come to a decision regarding a license until it had weighed all the evidence and circumstances surrounding the application. As already pointed out, the board will be charged with "the impartial and equitable treatment of all conflicting interests." It is extremely unlikely to arrive at hasty conclusions. Why, then, should a reasoned decision of such a responsible body be subject to appeal? Hon. members have sufficient experience to know that a clever lawyer may present a case to a magistrate in such a way that the real issues are either clouded or evaded. In such an event an erroneous and harmful decision might easily be given. The magistrate might not fully appreciate the effect of the license on other services as the board did. It is to be hoped that members will not impose an over-riding authority on a statutory body, whose sole responsibility it will be to see that the present measure is administered with justice.

In the matter of suburban passenger business, Mr. Holmes is justified in saying that smaller unit trains would be more economical, during certain parts of the day. Their absence from suburban railway lines is not due to any lack of appreciation, by the Commissioner or his officers, of the use-

fulness of such vehicles. The real cause is that the Government are in the same position as their predecessors; they cannot find the money for such small unit trains.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The money was spent on railways that should never have been built.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The electrification of suburban lines, as Mr. Holmes suggests, would be a desirable thing. Unfortunately, however, our population is not nearly large enough to warrant the innovation. The cost of the installation of such a scheme would be so great that the interest bill might easily swamp the greater part of the suburban passenger earnings. I am assured that when the number of people residing in our suburban area is more than trebled, the question of electrification of the lines might come within the range of possibility. Regarding the result achieved by the reduction of suburban passenger fares, it must be admitted that the action taken by the Commissioner was fully justified. In his last annual report, he pointed out that the reductions brought about an increase of 1,196,945 journeys, although the earnings decreased by £926. This is a clear indication that the drift of trade towards the road vehicles has been effectively arrested. The cost of advertising the reductions in fares was nothing like the amount stated by Mr. Holmes's informant. The full cost of giving publicity to the matter was £130.

The running of "mixed" trains is a phase of railway working which has always been resorted to. This is borne out by the fact that the mileage of "mixed" trains represents roughly 1/5th of the total mileage run. From the debate on this Bill there appears to be an idea in the minds of members that the board will impose exceptionally heavy fees on any licenses granted. May I again refer to the specific direction to the board regarding the "impartial and equitable treatment" of those engaged in transport? Since the earning power under different licenses will vary considerably, there is no other course open but to leave to the judgment and fairness of the board the fees to be charged.

So far as the Government are concerned, there is no thought of trying to suppress motor transport by means of heavy license fees. If, in the opinion of the board, a pas-

senger or goods motor service is not justified, the Government expect the board to proclaim their view openly by refusing to grant the license, and not hide behind a subterfuge by making the operation of the vehicle impossible through the imposition of a harsh and an unjust fee. The idea is that buses will pay the ordinary license fees under the Traffic Act, but the seating fee of £3 per seat, imposed under that Act, will disappear. In its place the license fee imposed by the board will operate. Similarly, with commercial goods vehicles the "red plate" fee imposed under Section 10a of the Traffic Act will automatically drop out, and the license fee of the board be substituted.

It may so happen, and it probably will happen, that the board, in their judgment, will impose a fee which will make the total amount payable for some buses or commercial goods vehicles less than is now paid. On the other hand, the board, after investigating all the relevant circumstances, may deem it necessary to increase the fees. If the board are to be allowed to function properly, they must necessarily be given the right to decide these questions in an untrammelled way.

In the light of this explanation, it is hoped that the House will agree to Clause 14, relating to license fees, as it is printed. No doubt the provision of a fee of 10 per cent. of the gross earnings of omnibuses may, at first glance, seem oppressive. But I would remind members that this fee is a maximum one. Since the bus companies do not publicly circulate their balance sheets, it is impossible to determine what a just maximum fee should be. Hence 10 per cent. has been suggested. It might be possible that no service could stand such an impost and still remain in business. Here again the board must be given a free hand and trusted to deal with each case in an equitable way. I would remind hon. members that the license fees actually collected by the South Australian Transport Board range from 2½ to 10 per cent. of the gross earnings. The maximum should be allowed to stand and the power to fix a reasonable fee left to the board. Mr. Holmes, in the course of his speech, asked to be supplied with figures relating to the number of the staff employed on the railways. The latest figures are for November, and the following com-



parison with the relative month of last year is given:

[Regular Staff.]

November, 1933	..	..	7,063
November, 1932	..	..	6,864

These figures disclose an increase of 199 over last year, which is accounted for principally by the engagement of 166 men in the workshops overtaking belated repairs to railway rolling-stock. On the casual staff an increase of 590 men is disclosed for November, 1933, over the same month of last year. In this instance the increase is due almost solely to relief work in the shape of regrading, relaying, etc. in numerous places to enable the locomotives to draw heavier loads.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: All that should have been done long ago.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The employment on this class of work is incidental to, rather than attendant upon, the operating side of the railways. In effect, it is the regular staff alone which provides a means of comparison, and, as I have explained, the regular staff has been increased to overtake belated repairs to rolling stock. Dealing with the closure of railways and tramways, Mr. Holmes pointed out that the board as now constituted had not the power to close a railway or tramway on their own authority. That is so. Hon. members must not forget that a railway can only be constructed under Parliamentary sanction. It follows that the closing of any such line should first be agreed to by the same authority. If Parliament refuses to close a line on the recommendation of the board, then Parliament must accept the responsibility.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Government pulled up the Kanowna line, anyhow.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so.

Hon. J. Cornell: And they wanted to pull up the Bullfinch line.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Another matter dealt with by Mr. Holmes was the hardship which may ensue to pastoralists in the Murchison district if the "nearest railway station" mentioned in the First Schedule be rigidly insisted on. He touched upon the question of transporting shearers from shed to shed. I agree with the hon. member that a certain amount of hardship and difficulty would ensue in those instances, if the Act were rigidly administered. For that reason, I shall be only

too pleased to consider any amendments designed to ease the position which the hon. member has in mind. He has my every sympathy.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We are getting on very well.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Regarding Clause 60 on which the hon. member desires information, the object of the Interpretation Act, as he knows, is to save time, ink and paper in drafting Bills. It is called the "Shortening Ordinance." In the present Bill, it is not convenient to follow the Interpretation Act which explains that a Bill shall become law when it is assented to and proclaimed.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I am not pressing that point.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I want to explain the position to members generally. This simply means that in the absence of provision in the Bill itself as to the time when it shall become law, the Interpretation Act is accepted as the authority. The Bill sets out what it is desired should take place, namely, that the Bill shall come into operation on the 1st of July next. There would be no necessity to refer to the Interpretation Act at all. The Bill could speak for itself but, in order that it might be recognised that a departure from the usual procedure was being made, the Interpretation Act is mentioned. The reasons for the departure from ordinary methods should be obvious to hon. members. Between now and the 1st July there will be an enormous amount of preliminary work to be done. It will also be necessary to consider the question of renewing the licenses now current. Therefore the Government regard the early appointment of the Board essential so that this work may be undertaken. As the clause now stands, it will be possible to appoint the Board and allow it to function before the Act becomes operative.

In the light of Mr. Holmes's experience, particularly his experience as Minister for Railways, his generous support of the Bill is greatly appreciated. I am not surprised that the burden of Mr. Thomson's plaint should be the wisdom of shifting our responsibilities on to the shoulders of a select committee. That this course would be followed has been noised abroad for weeks past. The grounds on which the hon. member depends in support of his attitude—I

do not know if he has abandoned his proposed course of action—are—

- (a) the delay in bringing the measure down by the present Government, and
- (b) the lack of knowledge of members in regard to the transport position.

Let us see just how far he is justified in censuring the Government or in casting a reflection on the knowledge of members of this House. Mr. Thomson stated that it was just 17 weeks after the assembling of Parliament that the second reading of the Bill was moved in another place. And for this grave delay, the Government are to be roundly censured. Mr. Thomson should know that when the Government were returned to power, they had to formulate their programme and then grapple with many weighty problems, chief among which were the questions of finance and unemployment. They were faced with difficult and urgent tasks. The State was going through one of the most critical periods in its history, and matters closest to its social welfare would naturally be the first to be considered. Then much preliminary investigation had to be made before the Bill was framed. Despite all these handicaps the Government have been able to produce this important measure for the consideration of Parliament, and it has been passed almost unanimously in another place. Yet the hon. member twits the Government on delay and measures that delay by the yardstick of weeks.

At any rate, the Government have done what no other Ministry ever before attempted. The Collier Government when previously in power, made effective provision for the regulation of transport under the conditions then existing, particularly in the metropolitan area. But since then the activities of motor transport have been extended to the widespread carriage of goods and its discriminations have proved a menace to the railways. That difficulty has mostly arisen since the Labour Government went out of office in 1930 and has now assumed alarming proportions.

Turning to his suggestions that a select committee should be appointed to consider the Bill—Mr. Thomson may still have that course in mind although I notice he has some other suggestions as well—there are occasions when a select committee may be justified. It is capable of good work when

it undertakes to report on a Bill containing many intricate clauses and dealing with some subject with which members are not familiar and upon which the evidence of experts is desired. But no such issue arises here. This is a major public question, which has a direct bearing on each electorate and on the State as a whole. A member is supposed to be acquainted with those major public questions. Without such knowledge, he cannot possibly serve his constituents or the State. Here is a public question relating to transport, one of the biggest we and other people have to face, and we are to be led to infer that the representatives of the people in this Chamber are unacquainted with its ramifications.

Possibly no other question has been more freely ventilated in the Press than that of transport. Protagonists of both sides have stated their views, and, in addition, those sections of the community, to whom the services minister, have added their quota. Further, members of this House are not blind. They have the evidence of their own eyes, and their personal experiences in their electorates. Backed up by all this wealth of detail, anyone with even a glimmering of commonsense should be able to grasp the significance of the problem and come to a decision.

The problem in this State is almost identical with that in England, America, South Africa, Europe and even in our Eastern States. Members, no doubt, have had an opportunity of perusing reports on the transport position in those places and, within the last few months, have had the benefit of the excellent report compiled by a statutory body in Victoria, a report which I have laid on the Table of the House. Where, then, is the need for the select committee about which the hon. member has talked so much? There is no need. The only outcome would be delay in the solution of the problem, and in the meantime the State would be plunged deeper into the financial morass from which it is trying to emerge.

Mr. Thomson goes on to extol and congratulate the officials of the department on the way they have conducted the system, and he then condemns the department as a whole. What a fine distinction indeed! The adage "Like master, like man" does not apply here. Evidently, the highly efficient staff are human automatons, who are

allowed to move only when some superior and mysterious personage behind the scenes pulls the strings. We are told by Mr. Thomson that the railways have not met the altered conditions brought about by the depression as other businesses have. It is true that the commercial concerns have endeavoured to meet this position by a rearrangement of their sales policy. They have jettisoned those lines which were unprofitable and concentrated on those which are profitable. Would the hon. member advocate the assumption of such a policy by the railways? Would he advocate the discarding of unprofitable freights, or alternatively an increase of the rates to a profitable margin? I cannot conceive that he has anything of that kind in his mind. And yet, if the railways are to be regarded as a commercial concern they should logically be given that privilege. But the hon. member knows such a policy would never have been countenanced by the Government which were in power at the time the changed conditions came about.

An instance of the hon. member's solicitous intervention on the side of the railways is to be found in his desire for that department to be credited with the cost of unremunerative work done. In Table "O" of the last annual report of the Commissioner of Railways the following entry is to be found:—

Value of Parliamentary and other services, etc., performed under instructions from the Government, exclusive of £2,000 paid by the Treasury—£22,823.

We then have a reference to school children who are attending certain State schools, and who are carried at the minimum rate of 1s. per month. The cost of performing that service, over and above the amount received, is approximately £5,000.

Next, there is an inquiry as to what was the cost of free passes granted to railwaymen. Unfortunately the amount involved in that instance is not available, since records relating to it are not kept. The reason why records are not kept is that these passes are granted under Arbitration Court awards and therefore, to all intents and purposes, the privileges form part of the department's wages bill. However, all this is irrelevant. The fact that one department of the public service gets something from the Railway Department without paying in full for it, or without paying for it all,

is no argument in favour of giving outsiders unchecked liberty to raid the Railway Department by unfair means.

If the hon. member were really desirous of seeing that the Railway Department was fully credited with its just dues, he should have asked to be informed the extent of the subsidy granted by the Railway Department to the primary producers in the shape of low freights; not that I should like any interference with that policy, but it is a matter very much apropos of the Bill. It vitally concerns the Bill and the necessity for the Bill. The total of that subsidy runs into hundreds and thousands of pounds. Yet its significance is ignored while comparatively minor matters are given prominence.

Hon. R. G. Moore: That was done to draw a red herring across the trail.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Such an attitude as the hon. member has adopted does not inspire confidence in the consistency of the hon. member. Mr. Thomson stated that the farmer was quite justified in accepting these concessions, and was quite within his rights in sending or receiving his other goods by motor truck because he saved thereby a few shillings a ton. Such a statement is unworthy of comment. An effective answer has already been given to it by other members during the debate, particularly by Mr. Holmes and Mr. Seddon. Mr. Thomson strongly resents the board being empowered to demand the production of records and statistics in reference to the operations of road motor services. What sound objection can he have to such a course? In what other way, for instance, could the Board correctly assess the license fee to be imposed on a vehicle?

Mr. Thomson also accused the Railway Department of being inactive as regards the traffic hauled by road between Fremantle and Perth. Once again he spoke without any knowledge of the facts. I am advised that strenuous efforts have been made to secure that traffic, but without much success. Some years ago the special rate applying to general goods between those two points was reduced by 25 per cent. The rate now charged for truck loads is 6s. per ton. The hon. member specially referred to general cargo ex ships and wanted to know why trucks could not be placed alongside the vessel for such cargo. The difficulty is that the goods come out of the ship biggledy-

piggledy. Cargo for Fremantle, Perth and other places and for a variety of consignees is hopelessly mixed. The aim of the ships' stevedores is to get the cargo out as quickly as possible, so anything which makes a safe sling is taken. This necessitates sorting in the wharf sheds, and once in the sheds door-to-door conditions obtain. By loading direct into trucks the consignee saves 1s. 6d. per ton in wharfage, and naturally is out to make that saving wherever possible, but he cannot dictate to the stevedores as to how the cargo shall be worked. The suggestion was explored years ago and found to be impracticable.

I appreciate the support given to the Bill by Mr. Seddon. As a gentleman with transport experience, it is only natural that the aims of the measure should appeal to him. Certain observations of his, however, call for comment. In the early part of his speech, Mr. Seddon referred to the duplication of legislation which the passing of the Bill would bring about. In my introductory speech, I mentioned that the object in retaining certain sections of the Traffic Act was to prevent the building up of a new expensive department under the Bill. The Commissioner of Police, in the metropolitan area, and local authorities elsewhere, have all the organisation for licensing and examining vehicles. If some new staff were appointed under the Transport Board it would be additional to the staff which would still be necessary to carry out the provisions of the Traffic Act. It will thus be seen that, instead of making for duplication, the Bill provides for co-ordination and the saving of unnecessary expenditure.

Mr. Seddon also touched upon the subject of commercial aviation. This, perhaps, is the fitting place to refer in general terms to the clause relating to that form of transport. The Government are quite alive to the importance of aircraft, and have no wish to do anything to hinder its development. What they do desire is that aircraft shall submit to some form of control so that it will not operate willy-nilly. The main principle of the Bill is to co-ordinate transport, not to strangle it. Had a co-ordinating measure been on the statute-book of the State 10 years ago, as Mr. Baxter suggested, the present vexed position of wasteful overlapping of services would not have occurred. It is to guard against a recurrence of

similar trouble that the provision for the regulation of air traffic within the State has been inserted in the Bill. If such provision were not made, what would be the position in a few years' time? We would hear the same old cry of the need for paying compensation and the need for refraining from interfering with services established for the convenience of the public. While aviation is still in its infancy, steps should be taken to control its operations.

Regarding the fees to be collected by the board Mr. Seddon appears to have mis-read Clause 59 which deals with the transport co-ordination fund. The clause expressly provides first for the payment of the cost of the administration of the Act, and the balance of money remaining is to be divided amongst the statutory authorities to be expended on the maintenance of the roads used. There is no suggestion that the Bill will be used to gather in additional revenue. The Treasurer is not in any way financially interested in the fund. No matter what fees are collected, he cannot look to the fund for a penny piece.

During the course of the debate many statements have been made which, unless corrected, might easily mislead the outside public as to the intentions of the Bill. I am sure that members did not consciously attempt to mislead. Mr. Bolton, in his speech, referred to the amount of £262,581 having been collected in license fees for the year 1932. Probably not more than 10 per cent. of that sum was paid by buses or commercial goods vehicles, and it is those vehicles only that the Bill seeks to control. Similar statements, however, have been made from time to time through the Press, no doubt with the intention of trying to foster the idea in the minds of the people that that amount is received by the Government in license fees from commercial motor transport. While I exonerate Mr. Bolton from any desire to mislead, I cannot so easily acquit those outside the House of a similar charge. There is no doubt that the statements have been made for propaganda purposes.

Another matter regarding licenses was referred to by Mr. Macfarlane. He need have no fears on the score of his friend in Bunbury or of commercial travellers who travel by road being forced to set

aside their cars. The Bill only deals with vehicles which "operate" as laid down in the definitions. It does not in any way seek to interfere with or control private motor cars unless—and this is the point—they ply for hire or for some consideration.

A further matter was referred to by Mr. Wittenoom with regard to the license fees paid for trailers. I want to assure the House that the combined fees for trailers under the Traffic Act and this measure will be exactly the same as are now paid. A 3-ton trailer now pays £40, made up as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Ordinary license fee .. ..	9	10	0
Carrier's fee .. ..	2	0	0
Main Road fee .. ..	28	10	0
	<hr/>		
	£40	0	0

When the Bill becomes law the Main Roads fee will disappear and an identical fee will be imposed by the Board in its place. Much has been said as to the powers with which the Board is to be invested. The consensus of opinion seems to be that wide powers must be conferred if the Board is to function properly. I agree with that. A suggestion has been made that this Bill should merely appoint a board which would inquire into the question of transport and report to Parliament. The course was followed in Victoria, where a board comprising representatives of primary producers, local authorities, main roads, railways and motor interests, with an independent chairman, took evidence over 12 months and only recently submitted its report. This report is available to members. They will see that the provisions of the Bill do not go as far as is suggested by the Victorian Board's report. Yet the position in Victoria, as indicated by the report, is almost identical with ours in this State. I commend this report especially to Sir Charles Nathan. In it he will find plenty of evidence to bear out the impartial summing up which he delivered in his speech. He said:—

In a country where transport has reached a stage when competition is absolutely unfair to the Railways, when the employees of the competitors are subject to no control, no regular rates of wages, and work all hours of the night and day, running right through with or without back loading at minimum rates of freight, it is a scandalous state of affairs and should not be permitted.

I assure the hon. gentleman that such conditions do exist in this State, just as they do in Victoria. I would regard any attempt to reduce this Bill to a measure authorising only the appointment of a board as an attempt to shelve legislation which is urgently needed in the best interests of the State. As the Bill now stands, the board will have the powers of a Royal Commission which can be put into effect for the purposes of investigation to determine any matter, especially matters trending towards the co-ordination of transport. The fact appears to have been lost sight of by some members.

Several references have been made to buses pioneering routes in the suburban area." I challenge members to name these routes. There are no bus routes running to entirely new areas. Before any route was applied for, the bus owner made certain of reaching a sparsely populated area, and that the route ran through a populated part which, at the outset, provided a payable nucleus of traffic.

Hon. A. Thomson: What about the Caning Road! There is no tram or railway on that thoroughfare.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Did motor transport pioneer the route? The same thing applies to commercial goods vehicles. Can any member name an area opened up and developed by these vehicles? I am informed there is not one.

Is it not a fact that the Agricultural Bank has had to grant carting subsidies to farmers in isolated areas, because they were at a distance from a railway? Is this an example of the "pioneering spirit" spoken of? The truth is that both the buses and motor trucks came into a ready-made business, and even then only catered for a part of the people's transport requirements: that part was the profitable passenger and goods traffic formerly hauled by the railways and tramways. One member describes these motor operators as having "built up their service without getting favours from the Government." As a matter of fact, they received immense favours from successive Governments by being allowed to pick the eyes out of the traffic offering, without any form of control being exercised.

There were two matters referred to by Mr. Nicholson on which he invited my comment. The first was the right of a firm to deliver goods to a purchaser outside the 15-mile radius without having to take

out a license. The 15-mile radius was inserted in the Bill because it was recognised that trade usage demands a free area wherein a firm's vehicles may effect delivery of goods without being fettered by licensing conditions. That area the Government consider has been fittingly provided for in the Bill. I do not think for one moment that any firm is desirous of extending its free delivery service beyond that area. Although firms engaged in kindred businesses may agree among themselves as to the limit of free delivery, there is always the possibility of "break-aways" occurring. A trader, eager for business, may privately grant free delivery to customers living outside the agreed area in order to secure their trade. When this action becomes known—as undoubtedly it will—the other firms are forced to do the same thing in order to keep their business connection. Should there be any special occasions where a firm wishes to deliver outside the area as defined, the board are empowered to issue a permit to cover the service.

Mr. Macfarlane stated he believed that "in the not very distant future the railways will only have left to them the transportation of wheat, wool and the necessaries of war." Wool, I might inform the hon. member, is one of the items which the motor truck finds profitable to haul. So it would seem that wheat—and shall we say superphosphates?—will be the only goods left for the railways. Does the hon. member seriously think that, when that day comes, wheat and super can possibly be hauled by the railways at the present low rates? If he does, then he is a very credulous person indeed. It is to avoid such an undesirable position arising that the Bill is introduced.

The question of granting compensation to motor operators who may be refused licenses under this Act has been referred to. In support of this stand, the precedent under the licensing law is quoted. In that instance, a compensation fund was established out of contributions made by licensees over a series of years. It is hardly possible to make a similar arrangement in this instance. For a start, the position is so urgent that we cannot afford to wait several years for a fund to be built up to an amount which the board may consider necessary. Again, would the metropolitan bus owners, for instance, agree to contribute to a fund out of which compensation would be paid to motor truck owners,

whose licenses were not renewed? That question might well be considered.

In any case, it must be conceded that the motor operator embarked on his business with his eyes open. He took the ordinary business risks, among which was the possibility of his license not being renewed. That risk is unavoidable. It is sheer nonsense to talk of the rights of motor operators brought about by building up a business through their energy and enterprise. As I have already shown, these vehicles came into a ready-made business and took out of it just what suited them. In doing so, they have done untold damage to a transport concern owned by the people of the State, and for doing this, it is suggested that the motor owners should be compensated by the people who have suffered by the one-sided operation of these vehicles. The motor owners knew full well that the day would come when unbridled competition and wasteful overlapping of services would be curtailed. They had the example of other countries and some of the Eastern States to go on. Yet they decided to build up equipment, trusting, no doubt, to the financial weight of the commercial interests to coerce Parliament into voting a large sum of the people's money for the purpose of compensating those who had so rashly embarked in the road carrying business.

There is a proposal to convert the board into a purely advisory body to make investigations into transport matters and to report to Parliament. I am authorised to say that the Government will not accept any such proposal. It would mean a delay of at least 18 months in tackling a problem which demands urgent attention. It would take nearly 12 months as it did in Victoria, to complete the investigations. The smaller population of Western Australia would not make the task less easy in a matter in which principles, and the effect of principles, entirely govern the calculation. After the report, if it favoured control of transport, it would take some weeks to get the Bill through both Houses of Parliament, and several months to prepare the way for carrying the measure into active operation. No such delay will be agreed to by the Government. If this legislation cannot be speedily enacted to deal with the question, other means must be resorted to for grappling with the position. I hope that without introducing any amendment which will lessen the

usefulness of the measure the House will pass the Bill, and so bring about a position which will save the State's greatest asset from the grave injury that is threatening it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 11.21 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 13th December, 1933.*

	PAGE
Questions: Butter, price stabilisation ... ..	2487
Lepers in transit ... ..	2487
Fauna for export ... ..	2487
Infant health centres ... ..	2487
Eggs for export—1, Reaction on local price; 2, London prices and standard variations ...	2487-8
Fruit fly ... ..	2488
Sleeper cutters, Karragullen ... ..	2488
Bills: Constitution Acts Amendment Act Continu- ance, 1R. ....	2488
Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment, 3R. ....	2488
Financial Emergency Act Amendment, report	2488
Legal Practitioners' Act Amendment, 2R., Com.	2492
Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment (No. 2), Council's message ... ..	2507
Motion: Railways, Commissioner's liability ... ..	2488
Adjournment, special ... ..	2507

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

### QUESTION—BUTTER PRICE STABILISATION.

Mr. McLARTY asked the Minister for Agriculture: In view of his declaration that Western Australia would not participate in the proposed Australian butter stabilisation scheme, will he consider the advisability of introducing legislation with the object of introducing butter fat prices in this State?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: The matter will receive consideration if the need arises. There is, however, a stabilisation scheme in existence in this State.

### QUESTION—LEPERS IN TRANSIT.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: In view of the fact that the Health Department can give no definite assurance that the vessel carrying lepers from this State to Darwin will be in charge of a qualified seaman, will the Aborigines Department make the necessary inquiries to insure that a certificated master has charge of the vessel?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: The Chief Protector of Aborigines is making the necessary inquiries to insure the safe transport of the aboriginal patients to Darwin.

### QUESTION—FAUNA FOR EXPORT.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that dealers trading in export fauna when applying for a permit to export birds are asked by the Fisheries Department to state what price they receive for the birds? 2, If so, which Act or regulation empowers the department to demand this information? 3, What value is this information to the department if supplied?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Section 22 of the Game Act prohibits the export of living imported or native game unless with the consent of the Minister. To assist in the consideration of applications the information mentioned has been asked for. 3, For statistical purposes.

### QUESTION—INFANT HEALTH CENTRES.

Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Health: Will he give early consideration to the question of removing the economy "cut" made by the previous Government in subsidies paid to Infant Health Centres?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: The question is being closely examined, and relief will be given as soon as the financial position permits.

### QUESTIONS (2)—EGGS FOR EXPORT.

*Reaction on local price.*

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is it a fact that because of the guarantee of 3d. per dozen for export eggs by the New South Wales Egg Market-