Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 16th November, 1948.

CONTENTS.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

1, Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act Amendment (Continuance).

2, Land Alienation Restriction Act Amendment (Continuance).

3, Interpretation Act Amendment.

4, Hospitals Act Amendment.

5, Fisheries Act Amendment.

6, Railway (Brown Hill Loop Kalgoorlie-Gnumballa Lake) Discontinuance.

7, Constitution Acts Amendment (No. 1).

QUESTIONS.

ROADS.

As to Allocation of Commonwealth Grant.

Mr. RODOREDA asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What amount of money has been expended from the special Commonwealth road grant of £60,000?

(2) How many local authorities have been given grants, and what amount has each received?

(3) How many local authorities have applied for grants?

(4) If no grants have been allocated, what is the reason?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Presuming that the £60,000 refers to the allocation from funds provided under Section 6 (5) of the Commonwealth Aid Roads and Works Act for plant—no expenditure.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) Approximately 74.

(4) Delays in deciding policy with regard to proposed formation of plant pools. Policy has now been determined. Road boards will be advised.

HOUSING.

As to Size of Foundation Stumps.

Mr. MURRAY asked the Minister for Housing:

As large numbers of wood and asbestos houses are being built in the metropolitan area on stumps smaller than 4in. x 4in. under contract for State Housing Commission, will he inform the House—

(1) When were specifications altered to permit this?

(2) Does his adviser consider timber under 4in. x 4in. suitable for this purpose?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

(1) November, 1947—in respect of one area only.

(2) Yes—in respect of the area selected, where stumps are not more than 2ft. 6in. above ground level.

SUPERPHOSPHATE AND WHEAT.

As to Transport by Road and Rail.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What quantities of—

(a) superphosphate,

(b) wheat,

were hauled by road and rail, respectively, during the years ended the 30th June, 1946, 1947 and 1948?

(2) When was it decided that the cheap manure rate on the railways would be offered to farmers the year round instead of for a specified period in the year only?

(3) When was this concession first applied, and what was the cost involved for the years ended the 30th June, 1947 and 1948?

(4) Is this concession to be continued this year?

(5) When was it decided to pay a subsidy on superphosphate carried by rail when loaded out in October, November or December of each year?

(6) When was this subsidy first applied, and what was the cost involved for the years ended the 30th June, 1947 and 1948?

(7) What quantities of superphosphate were carried by rail for each of the months of October, November and December, 1946 and 1947?

(8) Taking into account the concession rate and the subsidy, what haulage rates were farmers actually obliged to pay for superphosphate loaded out in October, November and December, 1947?

The MINISTER replied:

		By Rail.	By Road (other normal road haulage).
(1) (a)	1946 ..	230,040	Nil.
	1947 ..	201,644	60,199
	1948 ..	250,866	49,362
(b)	1946 ..	571,272	64,799
	1947 ..	449,093	Nil.
	1948 ..	583,911	216,771

In both cases the road haulage figures are supplied by the super. companies and Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., respectively.

(2) 11/8/1947.

(3) Previously the cheap manure rate applied to other than potato and northern tomato growing areas during the months December to May, inclusive, with extension beyond May on Government lines, at the Government's discretion. In 1946, November consignments were brought under the cheap rate.

All the year round cheap rate did not apply until the year ended 30/6/1948, and from date of inception, 11/8/1947, until 31/10/1947, when the cheaper rate would normally apply, 15,574 tons were railed.

Whilst detailed particulars are not available, the bulk of this tonnage would be for the potato growing districts to which the cheap rate has always been available the year round.

The cost of application of all the year round cheap rate would be negligible, as had the higher rate been charged, the superphosphate for the wheat areas would have been held until such times as the cheap rate did apply.

(4) Yes.

(5) 1/10/1947. (As advised by the Department of Agriculture.)

(6) 1/10/47 (£35,063 0s. 9d. for 1948 only). (As advised by the Department of Agriculture.)

(7) 1946—October, 946; November, 2,357; December, 16,450. (Loco. industrial trouble in November, 1946.) 1947—October, 12,270; November, 19,375; December, 22,502.

(8) On an average haul of 150 miles the rail freight then would have been 5s. 8d. per ton. The subsidy, which was a rebate payment for early ordering, was 15s. per ton for October delivery, 10s. for November, and 7s. 6d. for December.

HOSPITALS.

As to St. John of God, Kalgoorlie.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL (without notice), asked the Minister for Housing:

Is the statement correct, which was contained in a telegram sent by the mayor of Geraldton to the mayors of Albany, Bunbury and Northam, reading as follows:—

Reference newspaper report building permit private hospital Kalgoorlie suggest mayors country centres concerned meet Perth Monday

twenty-second inst. protest against private hospital being granted permit before essential regional hospitals constructed. Please wire reply.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Nice chap!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: During the day the hon. member communicated with me and stated he would be asking this question. This enabled me to secure the details regarding the matter.

The maternity ward at the St. John of God Hospital, Kalgoorlie, has been condemned. Plans were submitted for a complete new building to cost £100,000, but the Government has approved only of the building of a new maternity ward. The architects for the institution will lodge plans for a modest maternity block, which will be examined by the Housing Commission with regard to cost. The bricks will be supplied from Coolgardie and the timber will be wandoo, which does not interfere with the present pool of materials.

The difficulty in obtaining nurses for maternity hospitals is causing grave concern in Kalgoorlie and, provided accommodation is made available, the St. John of God Hospital at Kalgoorlie has qualified midwifery nurses to start it. The Government called for tenders for a maternity ward at the Kalgoorlie Public Hospital and none of a satisfactory nature was received.

BILL—LOAN, £2,315,000.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The PREMIER: I move—

That during the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be introduced without notice and to be passed through all their remaining stages on the same day, all messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the same day they are received, and to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees.

This is the usual motion introduced at about this stage of the session.

Mr. Marshall: You are a bit early this year.

The PREMIER: I do not think so.

Mr. Marshall: You may not think so, but you are a bit earlier.

The PREMIER: It is hoped that this session will end on the 9th December. As members will see, I am going to ask the House to agree that on and after Thursday next we meet at 3 p.m. instead of 4.30 p.m. That will give us an extra hour and a half. If we find we are being rushed with business, I will also ask members to agree to sit on Fridays as well, but I do not want to do that if we can get through the business by meeting at 3 o'clock. I think we shall get through the legislation in the time I have mentioned. A few more Bills have to be introduced; but the Government has given consideration to the time when Parliament should conclude the session and I think we can get the legislation through. It is not the intention of the Government to curtail members in any way in what they wish to say; the desire is to give them ample opportunity for the fullest possible discussion of Bills, Estimates, etc., which are now and will be brought before the House. I hope members will agree to the motion.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I do not propose to offer any objection to the motion. I take it for granted that the Premier will, as far as possible, consult with members on occasions when it becomes necessary to do things urgently. If he does so, as I am sure he will, we will not necessarily be taken on the hop and left at some considerable disadvantage. The target date for finishing, the 9th December, is a practicable date, although it must be remembered that this House is quite unpredictable as regards the time it might take to adopt and decide any particular matter. Sometimes a subject which it is thought might take a couple of hours occupies ten minutes; on another occasion a subject which it is thought might take ten minutes occupies ten hours. I was pleased to hear the Premier say that no attempt would be made to curtail the rights of members. That is a commonsense assurance to give, because my experience in this Chamber leads me to believe that the more

it is attempted to curtail members the greater the time taken in the long run. We have had one or two such instances in recent weeks. I offer the Premier reasonable co-operation by members of the Opposition in his desire to complete the session on or before the 9th December.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PRECEDENCE.

The PREMIER: I move—

That on and after Wednesday, the 17th November, Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day on Wednesdays, as on all other days.

This again is the usual motion introduced at this time of the session. I give an assurance to members that any proposed legislation they have on the notice paper will be dealt with, and that time will be given in order that it should receive the consideration of the House.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: In view of the assurance given by the Premier, I support the motion.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: As long as we have the Premier's assurance that private members' business will be dealt with—there is a possibility that this week Fremantle members will introduce a small Bill—I have no objection to the motion.

The PREMIER: I give the member for Fremantle an assurance that any legislation brought in by members will be dealt with, but I hope they will put it on the notice paper as quickly as possible.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE.

Returned from the Council with an amendment.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—COUNTRY TOWNS SEWERAGE.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. V. Doney—Williams-Narrogin) [4.50] in moving the second reading said: The Bill, with its 50 pages, certainly looks bulky, but looks in this case are deceptive. I am glad to inform members that it is largely made up—to the extent of 75 per cent. perhaps—of borrowings from certain other statutes that have a bearing of some kind or other upon the question of sewerage. My reference there is to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act, the Water Boards Act, the Country Areas Water Supply Act, and the Health Act. The title of the Bill expresses its purposes pretty accurately, but amplification is necessary so that the machinery of the measure may be properly made known to members, and also so that the associated conditions such as those of health, water supply and finance may be mentioned.

Broadly, the method to be adopted will be that now in use in the metropolitan area, but of course the actual treatment in this or that town must vary according to the geographical features. Thus, a town at or near the sea boundary would not have the same disposal treatment as would a town further inland. It will be realised that no town can have a sewerage system without an adequate water supply—and not only an adequate supply, but a dependable one which means a constant supply. It is known that with the raising of the Mundaring and the Canning Weirs, and the consequent heavily increased supplies of water in different parts of the State, more and more towns will be anxious, in the interests of health and civic convenience, to have up-to-date sewerage works, thus ministering in a major way to the better health of the people and establishing, probably, the best known defence against epidemic diseases.

I do not claim that the measure is likely to have any effect in arresting poliomyelitis and other epidemic diseases of that kind, but it can at least be claimed that if it will have any effect at all, it will be a beneficial one. Sewerage works are a very expensive convenience which lead, in due course, to a pretty substantial increase in the rates that bear upon the members of any municipality or other local authority. It is partly for that reason—that is the cost angle—but mainly because of health considerations that demands for sewerage systems are not generally pressed until the population tends towards congestion, that is, somewhere near the 3,000 mark. Members interested in this matter will reflect that no town seems to

have any interest in sewerage until its population has at least passed the two thousand mark and is reasonably close to the figure I have just mentioned. It would seem desirable, therefore, to restrict sewerage systems to what I might call sizeable towns.

The Government thinks that 600 houses in one group should be the minimum qualification. Members will realise that 600 houses would mean a population of between 2,250 and 2,700. That limitation is not mentioned in the Bill, and intentionally so, the idea being to enable successive Governments to vary it in whatever way seems fit to them. The towns likely to be provided with sewerage systems, within a reasonable period—within, say, 2 to 6 years' time—are those of Albany, Boulder, Bunbury, Busselton, Collie, Geraldton—

The Premier: Katanning.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am trying to give the towns in alphabetical order so that there will be no misunderstanding, and so that no member will think that I am intending to push the claims forward in the order in which I mention the towns. The other towns I have in mind are, Kalgoorlie, Katanning, Manjimup, Narrogin and Northam. It was not with any thought at all for the feelings of the Acting Leader of the Opposition that I made that explanation.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Northam is already sewered.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is partly sewered.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: It is almost completely sewered.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Then I need not have made any explanation in regard to Northam. I admit that some towns—Kalgoorlie and Northam, for instance—are already sewered. Kalgoorlie is not entirely sewered but it has a system which serves the core of the town.

Mr. Styants: If we had had Government assistance we would have had the town completely sewered by now.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Had there been Government assistance 14 years ago or in any subsequent year, Kalgoorlie would already have what it is asking for now. There are partial schemes also at Geraldton and Narrogin. I might, perhaps, here raise the question as to whether sewerage schemes or independent septic tank installations at each house are the more desirable in country areas. I incline to the idea that sewerage of the kind envisaged in the Bill is the more acceptable method. To my way of thinking there are quite a number of disadvantages attaching to the private tank installations. The principal one would be on account of the unsuitability of the ground. It can readily be understood that if the country is of a clayey nature it is not absorptive enough to take to itself the sullage it has to deal with. Obviously the best site for a septic tank system would be on relatively high ground of loose, porous soil. Just as obviously, of course, the type of ground most unsuited to septic tanks would be low, sandy foreshore or swampy country where, as to swamps particularly, the upsurge of water in flood time would take with it the sullage and spread it with disastrous effects over the countryside. With sewerage systems, provision is made for a complete removal of the wastes. As well as that, there is after-treatment which completely disposes of anything that may be left. Members, I think, will agree that the septic tank system is inferior in all ways to a sewerage system.

In the Municipal Corporations Act there is provision for the installation of sewerage schemes by local authorities. If my memory serves me rightly Section 290 of that statute is the one which gives them the necessary authority. However, local authorities under the Road Districts Act have no such power but there is power for them to have their own sewerage systems under the Health Act provided they become health boards. They would, of course, have to maintain the system and levy rates in the same way as would be necessary under the Municipal Corporations Act.

I believe there are similar statutes operating in Victoria and also in New South Wales, and in those cases provision is made for the schemes to be conducted and financed by local authorities. We are not so favourably circumstanced in this State because the local authorities in the two States I have mentioned are financially sound to a degree which we cannot hope to attain for some years. In view of that, the local authorities in both Victoria and New South Wales are competent to stand up to the heavy costs involved.

It will have been noted that existing schemes in country towns in Western Aus-

tralia are all in the large centres. The smaller local authorities have naturally hesitated to embark on sewerage schemes because of the expense of constructing and operating them and the difficulty on the part of ratepayers to finance installations. As well as that there is the drawback of not having the necessary technical staff available for the adequate and constant supervision and the policing of the scheme. A case in point would be known to the member for Geraldton. In that instance a municipality finds it necessary to extend its sewerage system, but as yet is unable to face up to the costs involved. Consequently it has asked the Government to take over. The Government would raise no objection, I should say, where the circumstances permit, but the provisions of the Health Act and the Municipal Corporations Act do not go far enough to enable it to intervene in the way the municipality desires. Apropos of that, I think it can be seen that, with the probable expenditure of large sums of money from State funds on installations, it is highly desirable that full control of all aspects of such schemes should be under the Minister for Water Supply.

In the case of schemes that are begotten under the Bill, the idea is that the State shall meet the initial costs, thereafter rating the properties in precisely the same way as is now being done in the metropolitan area. In general, all the machinery now in operation in the metropolitan area will be duplicated in the case of sewerage schemes for country towns, unless there be special circumstances. I have intimated that as far as possible the country towns scheme will be similar to that which operates in the metropolitan area and has been operating successfully since about the year 1909. The advice tendered to me is that it can safely and beneficially be followed in the cases under review.

I have also stated that an ample and dependable water supply is a prerequisite to the successful handling of any sewerage scheme. Water supply and sewerage, in cases such as these, must go hand in hand for the obvious reason that the failure of a water supply would have disastrous effects upon the operation of a sewerage scheme and upon public health. In towns such as Merredin, Collie, Bunbury, the Goldfields areas, and to a lesser degree Albany, there is already an ample water supply. However, the towns on the Great Southern at the moment are not favoured with an adequate water supply but, when the comprehensive water scheme is installed, it will ensure sufficient water for sewerage purposes in any Great Southern town that qualifies for a sewerage scheme in respect of its population.

Provision is made in the Bill for the taking over of schemes such as those at Bunbury and Busselton, if the local authorities concerned wish the Government to do so and provided, of course, that the Government is agreeable. I assure the House, in case some question may crop up later, that there is no intention of taking such a step unless failure to do so would completely jeopardise the working of a system. By that I mean that it is desirable in most cases, allowing a few exceptions, not to use compulsion if we can ensure the same or better results by private treaty.

There is ample authority at present under the Public Works Act for the construction by a local authority of a sewerage scheme in any part of the State. I say this so that I may explain why a start is now being made with a sewerage scheme at Albany. This scheme is being constructed under the authority of the Public Works Act. The provision of sewerage schemes in country towns will involve expenditure on property owners if installations are made to their properties. This expense is admittedly heavy—very heavy to some people I suppose—for in the case of a modest home the cost would be no less than say £50.

Hon. A. H. Panton: It will be a lot more than £50.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I should say that in the average home in country towns £50 would be sufficient, and if it did cost more such people would be living in a house which could not be regarded as modest. The cost will really depend on the size of the house and the consumption of water for the sewerage service. There is provision in the Bill to help owners by a system of deferred payments, such as is at present provided in the metropolitan area under the Act in operation.

Mr. Hoar: What interest are you going to charge?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am a little uncertain as to the interest chargeable, but I think it will be comparable to that

charged in the metropolitan area. It may be 3¾ or 4 or 5 per cent., but to state any figure at the moment would be hazarding a guess.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You had better see to it that it is not 5 per cent., or you will have trouble.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I presume that had it been 5 per cent. or more in the metropolitan area trouble would already have ensued. The hon. member may depend upon it that what is successfully operating in the metropolitan area will be acceptable to the country schemes. The aim of the Government, in the operation of the Bill, is to be helpful and co-operative to municipalities and road boards at all times. I wish to make it plain that the bodies I have mentioned retain to the full the powers they now have. That is to say they still may, if they wish, instal their own systems quite independent of the Government. However, I wish to mention that the design, construction and maintenance of sewerage schemes require expert and experienced technical knowledge which local authorities, generally speaking, cannot make available. They would also find difficulty in financing such projects, and because of this it is felt that the State must step in and provide schemes that will improve the health of the community as well as supply an undoubted convenience. This aid is regarded as only the normal need of any substantial town in the State. There is much more that might be said upon this Bill which, to country centres, is an important one. However, I hope I have said sufficient to coax members into that frame of mind when they will vote, without exception, for the second reading of the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, debate adjourned.

BILL—LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 11th November.

HON. E. NULSEN (Kanowna) [5.16]: I have read the Bill carefully and compared it with the Act, and find that there is nothing objectionable in it as far as the general community of this State is concerned. Actually, it is more of a domestic Bill as it concerns the legal practitioners of the State to a greater extent than it affects the general community. With regard to the admission of legal practitioners to the bar of Western Australia, the Bill is only asking that practitioners from all the Australian States be placed on the same basis and have qualifications similar to those in this State. That is, they must all be solicitors. There is a great difference between the qualifications of a solicitor and those of a barrister. Whereas a solicitor has to serve five years before qualifying, a barrister has to study only three years, and their work is also entirely different.

The Bill seeks to secure uniformity with the rest of the Commonwealth and also reciprocity with the High Court of Justice in England and Northern Ireland. But why are not the practitioners of Eire, Wales, Scotland and New Zealand, put on the same basis as those that practice in the High Court of Justice in England and Northern Ireland? They all belong to the British Empire. If they have the necessary qualifications to practice as solicitors at the bar in this State then I do not know why Eire, particularly, and the other countries I have mentioned, should be debarred. For instance, I have learned that they speak very good English in Eire.

The Attorney General: It is not the official language recognised in the courts.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I thought it was, but that does not really appertain to the Bill.

The Attorney General: It is rather hard on our practitioners.

Hon. E. NULSEN: If the subjects of Eire do not take the oath of allegiance it would not matter then whether they spoke English or otherwise, as they would not be admitted to the Western Australian bar. However, that is by the way and I only wish to bring the point to the attention of the Minister. I have noted from the Bill that the legal practioners must be naturalised British subjects and 21 years of age or over. Those in Wales would naturally be British subjects and I was wondering why they were not included provided they had the necessary qualifications to practice as solicitors in Western Australia.

The Attorney General: They are included.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Welsh subjects?

The Attorney General: Yes.

Hon. E. NULSEN: If that is so I am perfectly satisfied on that point. There is a distinction between a solicitor and a barrister and the latter will not be allowed to practice in Western Australia. I have been informed that in Queensland, New South Wales and England a barrister and a solicitor work separately in their respective professions according to their training, so I can quite understand why a barrister of those two States and England is not admitted to the Western Australian bar. I believe the Queensland rules have been altered for the purpose of obtaining uniformity within the Commonwealth. In Queensland they have to serve three years in articles, and in Victoria only one year, but in Western Australia it is necessary, after they have qualified by examination, to serve for two years.

To achieve uniformity Queensland has altered its rules and now Western Australia will alter its also for the same reason. A Writer of the Signet in Scotland or a Scottish law agent not possessing the qualifications of a solicitor will not be included in the Bill and thus will not be eligible to practice in Western Australia. The same thing applies to a degree in jurisprudence. I remember when the member for Nedlands put the amendment through which was to affect only one person, but according to the Minister others have since made application from a different University altogether. I understand this is the University of Prague which is the capital of Czechoslovakia and that that city has three universities of high repute. Prague has a population of between 800,000 and 1,000,000. I can quite understand that although a degree of jurisprudence would be highly academic and those holding it would probably be highly learned in regard to the laws of the world, they would not have the necessary qualifications to practice in this State.

I think the provisions of the Bill are necessary to safeguard the practitioners in this State and I can see no objection to them. It will also give the Barristers' Board a greater measure of control over members of the profession in Western Australia. The Board will not only deal with unprofessional conduct but will have control over neglect and undue delay by solicitors. I feel that that is a very necessary amendment and will, to a great extent, help to obtain better service from the legal fraternity of the State. I might explain that, generally speaking, the legal practitioners of Western Australia are particularly attentive and learned, and perform their work to the satisfaction of not only their own profession but that of their clients. However, there are always one or two who will take advantage of their profession, and there are always a few who are guilty of neglect and undue delays.

This Bill will give the Barristers' Board the right to strike such practitioners off the roll, fine them £100, suspend them for two years, or reprimand them according to the nature of the offence. Also, I feel that clients will have some means of redress by approaching the Board and, after the Board has investigated the matter, if it is a serious charge, it can refer it to the Full Court of this State. I have no objection whatever to that portion of the Bill. In regard to country articled clerks, I feel this is a necessary amendment because where clerks are articled in the country there are no means in the Act whereby they can be transferred to a city practitioner for the purpose of obtaining wider experience. That is necessary, and it should be helpful to the profession generally and also to the young students.

I was also very pleased that the amendment in regard to the officers of the Crown Law Department was brought down. This will allow any legal aspirant, after passing his examination or qualifying through the University, to be articled to a Crown Law officer if he so desires. That will help the Public Service and public servants, and generally assist the department and the State. I have noticed that the Public Service Commissioner highly commends that amendment and it has his support. I am pleased that an opportunity is to be given to those young fellows who are exceptionally able and desirous of bettering themselves in the Crown Law Department. I notice that the student who suggested this amendment is rather brilliant. His name is R. Wilson. Out of eight subjects he has obtained six distinctions and two major passes. There is brillance there and this Bill will give him an opportunity of becoming a qualified practioner to practice in the Crown Law Department only. However, if he should desire to become a private practitioner he will then have to serve his articles for 12 months with a practising legal practi-

tioner in the city or in the country. I think this is only right in order that he may obtain the necessary experience.

With regard to the person who does legal work, in conjunction with other work for which a legitimate charge can be made, when I was Minister for Justice I knew of many instances where people charged more for the routine work than they would if they had not given legal advice. As with trade unionists, I feel that each profession should have protection in that regard because a lawyer has to study and qualify by passing severe examinations and obtain a further qualification by serving his articles, whereas others in another profession, not subject to such a severe examination can sometimes give legal advice on account of the work they perform and receive payment for it. That should be left to the legal profession and I therefore have to agree to that amendment. Generally speaking the amendments will be helpful to the profession and to the community. They will give aggrieved clients an opportunity of reporting their complaints to the Barristers' Board and the board will have power to act—considerably more power than is given it under the existing Act. I feel that the amendments have received thorough consideration and I approve of the Bill.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.31]: I consider the Bill to be a step in the right direction. There is one thing that I have been trying to get altered for years and at last it has come—we are told that everything comes to those that wait. I refer to the proposal to put local men on a more equal footing with the man who is able to go to the Old Country, become a barrister there, and then practise here. No-one knows better than yourself, Mr. Speaker, how the son of a wealthy man was able to go to the Old Country, attend a university and eat dinners at the Inns of Court and then practise as a barrister and, without having obtained any experience as a solicitor, could come here and practise.

When I made a move some years ago to alter this state of affairs, I was accused of introducing legislation to prevent the son of a particular person from being called to the bar. It is hardly necessary for me to say that I had no such intention, but was acting in the interests of those boys who had to battle in order to make their way. I remember the great Chief Justice, Sir Isaac Isaacs, telling me that, when he was a lad and was serving his articles, he had to finance himself by carrying groceries around in a basket because his mother was poor.

Such a thing could not be done in this State owing to the bar in Section 13 of the Act. That is another provision I was up against, but I am satisfied that the few words I had to say on legislation of this sort in the past has brought about the change. I have been assured that nobody will now be deprived of an opportunity to earn while serving his articles. Some years ago, I had a few words to say about Mr. T. J. Hughes, who could not become articled. Eventually he was articled on the condition, as the Attorney General of the day told me, that he took down his brass-plate.

However, I understand that there will be no trouble in future if anyone has to earn in order to finance himself whilst serving his articles. I am satisfied that the bad old days have gone for ever and that the conditions that operated and denied people the right to become solicitors will not be revived. The son of the poor man will now have an opportunity, equally with the son of the rich man, to become articled.

The other portions of the Bill deal with barristers who have been able to come here from England, satisfy the residential qualification and be called to the bar. In future they will have to pass an examination similar to that passed by local candidates or show that they have already passed an equivalent examination. I cannot see anything wrong with the provision dealing with articled clerks in the Crown Law Department and have no wish to oppose it. Greater power is proposed for the Barristers Board, of which I approve. The board will be able to discipline practitioners without being under the necessity of sending them to the Supreme Court. I consider that the Bill represents a good step in the right direction and am prepared to support it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FAIRBRIDGE FARM SCHOOL.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 11th November.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.38]: Members are familiar with the Fairbridge Farm School at Pinjarra, which has been operating in this State for a considerable time. The establishment of the school was the result of a very fine effort on the part of the late Kingsley Fairbridge, a Rhodes Scholar, who, in his early youth, became possessed of a consuming idea and, in pursuance of that idea, was able to arouse sufficient enthusiasm in Great Britain to obtain a small sum of money and a batch of children to permit of a commencement being made in this State with a farm school.

Kingsley Fairbridge was a most remarkable man—a man who has left an imperishable memory because of what he achieved in a very short space of time. He was in South Africa and noticed the wide open spaces without settlers, and the idea came to him that settlers ought to be obtained and that they ought to be children—underprivileged children. So he kept thinking and working towards the object of rescuing children whom a blind fate had marked out for a stunted existence in the cramped spaces and slums of London and elsewhere, and for whom he hoped arrangements might be made for their transfer to our wide open spaces where they could be given an opportunity to become useful citizens.

First of all, Kingsley Fairbridge had to reach a position that would enable him to make his idea known to influential people, and he deliberately set himself out to win a Rhodes Scholarship. The remarkable fact is that he was able to achieve it and, because he succeeded, he proceeded to England. A course in forestry offered him the best means of progressing and that was the course he took. In 1909, he addressed a meeting of the Oxford Colonial Club and was able to fire his 50 listeners with his own flaming enthusiasm. The result was that the people gathered at the meeting immediately determined to form what was known as the Child Emigration Society. That was the commencement of a scheme for getting children from the slum areas and sending them to this State for the purpose of giving them an opportunity in life.

But Fairbridge had to overcome numerous difficulties before he was able to embark upon his scheme. Not until 1912 was he able to get it going. With a capital of £2,000 and a small batch of children, he set out to start on a small farm which had been purchased and prepared for him near Pinjarra. Shortly afterwards World War I. occurred and well-nigh destroyed all the results that Fairbridge had so painfully built up. With his indomitable spirit, however, he carried on in the face of very great difficulties, a number of which were caused by the lack of support from the London committee. However, he carried on and was able to keep the scheme in operation.

After the war he visited England, the visit being financed by funds raised by the Western Australian society. He told the English people and the committee that they had not been playing the game and had actually added to his difficulties where they might have lightened them, and he succeeded in so placing his case before the British people as to be able to return with a considerable accession of strength and to purchase the property at Pinjarra now known as Fairbridge Farm—a property of 3,200 acres. From that time, the venture went from success to success. Unfortunate children who had never had a chance in England, because of their environment and of their being orphans, were brought to this State and cared for in ideal surroundings by cottage mothers, who became very fond of their charges.

The children received their schooling and were able to develop in the free life of this State and later to go out and take their places in the world. I will admit that they were not immediately successful, because one of the weaknesses of the scheme was that the children did not in the school gain experience of those difficulties they would inevitably meet in the world. It is very much like the position that prevails when a man raises plants in a hot-house and then puts them into the open air. The plants immediately have to withstand the rigours of the climate, unprotected. That was very much the position with regard to the children as soon as they left the protection of the farm school, and quite a lot of them found in the early period that they were up against problems which were entirely new to them, and which caused

them considerable difficulty. But that was no fault of the system. It was something that had to be learned by experience and which could subsequently be remedied.

So popular did the idea become that in 1932-33 there were 1,000 applications on behalf of children in England to come to this school in Western Australia, and in 1934 there were 1,800 applications. So, in the space of one year, the number of children offering almost doubled. That makes the present situation all the more remarkable when we consider that there are fewer than one dozen children at Pinjarra at present, a circumstance for which I place the blame on the London society. In 1934, the Child Emigration Society launched an appeal in England with the idea of extending the work of the farm schools to other places besides Western Australia. The idea caught on immediately and was very well patronised indeed. It was under the patronage of the King; and in a short time, although the objective was only £100,000, £71,000 was raised in a matter of months.

A property of 1,000 acres was acquired in Canada, and a second school was opened there in July, 1935. That was to be followed by a school in Molong, New South Wales; and by a school, which was not a Fairbridge Farm School, at Northcote in Victoria, for which the Emigration Society was under an obligation to find children, but the school was established as a result of a large sum of money left by Lady Northcote, the wife of, I believe, an Australian Governor General, or Governor. These additional schools meant that the Child Emigration Society had to recruit sufficient children to maintain the full complement at the schools. An undertaking was given to the W.A. society that the establishment of the other schools would not deprive the society of its requisite numbers.

Through the Overseas Settlement Committee, the Imperial authorities make a grant of 5s. per child per week for a period of five years from the date of admission. The State Government of Western Australia and the Commonwealth Government each makes a contribution of 3s. 6d. per child per week until the child reaches the age of 14. All the money is not provided by the London society, as the Attorney General would have this House believe. Quite a substantial contribution is made by Australian Governments, and the combined contributions by those Governments is greater than the contribution of the Imperial Government; so we should have some say in what is happening with regard to the school. When the Minister was speaking on this Bill, not once did he give the impression that there had existed in Western Australia, with regard to this farm school, a partnership. All through his speech he gave the impression that there was a parent London organisation which was finding all the money and all the children, and that it had a perfect right to do what it liked and demand what it liked. But that is not the position at all.

The London society was actually incorporated in September, 1921. The W.A. society was incorporated in 1919. They were two separate and distinct entities, each with responsibilities; so it was really a partnership agreement between them. The London society was to collect funds and select children, equip them and send them to Pinjarra. The W.A. society was to get such assistance as it could from the public and the Governments of Australia, and to give effect to the policy of Fairbridge by having the children educated, by caring for them and by subsequently finding them employment. So a little reflection will show that there were two distinct organisations, each with a job to do; each a partner with regard to the central idea; and each determined to work towards giving effect to the scheme which had been conceived in the mind of Kingsley Fairbridge.

What is this proposition of the Minister? It is completely to efface the W.A. society, to put it out of existence, to determine the life of the Western Australian council, to hand over all the assets and moneys to the Fairbridge Society of Great Britain and to establish here a board of governors which will be subject in everything it does to the control of the Fairbridge Society in England. I want to know whether that is a fair reward for the work that has been done by the W.A. society since its incorporation over all these years, when it has been working with one object in view—that of carrying out the ideas originally pronounced by Kingsley Fairbridge. Difficulties have arisen from time to time between the W.A. society and the London society because of the high-handed attitude

adopted by the London society on various matters.

Members will appreciate that one of the most important things with regard to a school, especially a farm school, is the appointment of a suitable principal. If the man in charge of the school is unsuitable and unsatisfactory, the whole thing must fall to the ground and be a failure. We can spend as much money as we like, we can have as fine buildings as we like; but if the man in charge does not know his job and is unsuitable, the enterprise will fail. Yet the London society has all along insisted on appointing the principal, and, on one occasion, sent out a man it had not even seen. That man, as was to be expected, was most unsatisfactory, and his services were finally dispensed with. No wonder friction arose between the W.A. society and the London society, and it will arise again, in the same circumstances!

Who are better judges of the ability and efficiency of a principal than the persons on the spot, who know the conditions and the requirements? We might just as well say that headmasters for our high schools should be selected by the British Government. They have to be selected by people who know the requirements of the country and the ability of the men concerned, and that was a matter entirely overlooked by the London society in the choice of principals; and, because it foisted unsuitable principals upon the Western Australian society, no end of trouble arose. There has been very little attempt on the part of the London society to justify the demands it has made for this revolutionary change in control.

The agreement signed between the Western Australian society and the London society—an agreement signed under duress; the Minister will not have that, but I say it very deliberately—is supposed to state that there is a merging of interests. It is a strange type of merger when one party is to be completely effaced, as I will show. This agreement was obtained only when a delegation came from London and told the Western Australian society that it had to sign this agreement or there would be no children and no money. That was a fine proposition to put before a society that had been a member of this partnership and had done such a good job over all those years! The members of the Western Australian society were told, "Unless you agree to this changeover, and get out of the picture completely, and give us all the assets, there will be no children and no money."

The Attorney General: How many were in the society out here?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I cannot tell the Minister. Does he know?

The Attorney General: There were 11, I think.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That cannot be right, because the agreement provides that within six years, or when the number of members falls to fewer than 11, the Western Australian society will cease to exist.

The Attorney General: Exactly.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The reason for that is plain. It is because the English society desires to get rid of the Western Australian society as quickly as possible. That is a very poor recompense for what has been done. In endeavouring to excuse themselves for their very serious omissions, the members of the London society have given untruthful explanations. I have already stated that the society in London guaranteed the Western Australian society that the establishment of new schools would not deprive it of the requisite number of children. They promised to keep up the number of children and made that statement not only once but several times. They said they would send forward the requisite number of children for the school but, from the very inception, that undertaking was violated.

The Attorney General: Do you think they should get preferential treatment over Fairbridge Farm Schools in other parts of the world?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: They were entitled to priority because the Western Australian school was the first of its kind established and was established by Kingsley Fairbridge himself. That cannot be said of any of the other schools, and therefore I think the Western Australian school had a prior right, more especially as the Government and people of this State had given the scheme considerable support. Instead of receiving treatment even comparable to that given the other schools the Western Australian establishment did not receive even fair treatment. The numbers of children sent forward were allowed to fall away. I can give the Minister the figures.

Mr. Marshall: Why did not the Minister give the House the figures?

Mr. Graham: Most of us would like to know that.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: From the time of the establishment of the Prince of Wales School in British Columbia, the Molong School in New South Wales, and the Northcote School—which was not a true Fairbridge Farm School—in Victoria, Western Australia received only 94 children as against 281 to the British Columbia School, 156 to Molong and 161 to Northcote. It can be seen that the London society fell down badly on its undertaking given to the school in this State. How can we place any greater reliance on what it now promises, when it fell down so badly on its earlier promise? Not only did it not send out children, but after 1942 it sent no money, either. As its reason for not sending children it gave war causes—that it was due to the war—though it failed to send the requisite number of children even before the war commenced, so that explanation is exploded. The society said it could not send money out owing to the difficulty of having the funds transmitted, yet the banks here have stated that no such difficulties existed. Obviously the excuses made by the London society for its failure to honour its promise would not hold water.

The Attorney General: Do you know whether the British Government would have permitted the transfer of these funds? Do you know that the consent of the Bank of England has to be obtained for funds to be transmitted.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I assume that anyone putting up a proposal to the British Government that money was required to meet obligations and maintain British children would not meet with refusal.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Especially if the request was supported by the State and Commonwealth Governments of Australia.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not think there is much in the Attorney General's suggestion. The fact is that the London society let the W.A. society down with regard to both children and money, and forced the body in this State to expend about £18,000 of legacies that had been left to it for its sole use in this State. In spite of this we are asked to agree immediately to a proposition which would completely efface the W.A. society and allow the London society to go right to the top in complete control. I do not like the idea of it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Premier does not look very pleased about it at the moment.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: In order to bring about this change so strongly desired by the London society and not desired by the W.A. society, a delegation came from London and met a sub-committee here and took up this attitude; they said their idea was that they should be in the position of the parent and should not give their responsibility to anybody else. I think that is all eyewash, because the parent should be on the spot and the W.A. society is in a much better position to act as parent than is the London society situated in Great Britain.

Being in close touch with local developments and requirements, the W.A. society would certainly be able to act in the best interests of the children to an extent greater than would the London society, owing to its remoteness from the scene of operations. So it ought plainly to be seen that the true proposition is not that which the Minister put before the House, in the terms of which we were asked to give the London society, which is supposed to raise all the money and provide the children, permission to do what is within its rights. That is not the position at all. It is a question of whether we are to agree that, after all the W.A. society has done as a partner in this scheme, it should be completely effaced. The agreement provides that there shall be a board of 11 governors. The British society is to nominate four of them, one of whom shall be chairman. The Rhodes Fellowship in Australia is to nominate two, the Treasurer of the State is to nominate two and the W.A. society, while it exists—which is not likely to be for longer than six years at the outside—is to nominate three.

When the W.A. society goes out of existence—as is contemplated and expected—this board of governors will nominate the three persons who normally would be nominated by the W.A. society. The position that will ultimately be reached is that there will be a board of governors of whom four shall be representatives of the British society—one of them being chairman. When the W.A. society no longer exists, having gone out in accordance with the agreement, the three persons representing that society on the board will be replaced by others elected by the board of governors. On that

board half of the members will then represent the British society, one of them being chairman.

I have not seen the rules of the society but I would not be surprised to find that they contain provision for the chairman to have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote. That will mean that when the three representatives of the W.A. society are no longer on the board and there is a board of only eight, of that eight four will represent the British society, one of them being chairman and possibly having two votes. The position will then be that there will be four straightout representatives of the British society with an additional three, who under the circumstances I have mentioned could conceivably be the choice of the representatives of the British society and in fact the direct choice of the society. There could then be a board of governors consisting of eleven members, seven of whom would be the direct choice of the London society. Clearly the scheme is to get rid completely of the W.A. society as a separate entity and establish a board under the control of the London society, as to both personnel and policy. That is plain, because the line of policy of the board of governors will have to be submitted to London for approval.

The appointment of the principal of the school—which is all-important—is to be made after consultation with the board of governors, for what that is worth. The London society will choose the principal in consultation with the board of governors. What will happen under those circumstances, after the consultation has taken place, if the local board of governors does not approve of the choice of the British society? The board of governors will then have to take the man chosen in England and the fact that they had a consultation about it will not make the slightest difference. If the British society makes up its mind that a certain man in England is to be appointed as principal, whether suitable for the position or not, it can consult the board of governors, but if agreement is not reached the British society will be in a position still to say "That is the principal you must have." That caused trouble in the past and doubtless will cause it again.

It is all very well to say that under the new set-up of the board of governors there will be better relationships between the persons concerned in W.A. and those in England, but how are we to know that that will be the case? The British society has often fallen down on its undertakings and has given untruthful answers and explanations of difficulties that have arisen. For example, in 1944 a representative of the British High Commissioner in Australia was asked to make reports on the various farm schools in the Commonwealth. He made a report on the Fairbridge school and I understand it is one of the most comprehensive and informative reports of its kind in existence. That report was made to the British Government, at its request, and a copy was furnished to the London Fairbridge Society. That was in 1944, yet despite urgent requests by the W.A. society to the London society for a copy of that report, the society in this State could not get it.

It was only in September, 1947, when the Premier made a request to Great Britain, that a copy of that report was obtained and the W.A. society was able to see what it contained. The report was laudatory and not condemnatory of the W.A. society. Possibly that was the reason why the London society was not anxious to let the local body see what the report contained with regard to its activities. That showed a shameful lack of candour on the part of the London society.

The Minister for Works: You said the London society was untruthful and now you say it showed a lack of candour.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I say it showed a lack of candour with regard to that particular action. It was untruthful with regard to the explanations given for not sending children and money to Western Australia.

The Minister for Works: Have you all the facts before you?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have given the House the facts.

The Minister for Works: Were they all the facts?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: How am I to know that?

The Minister for Works: You seemed sure enough of the facts to say the explanations given were untruthful.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Prior to the tea suspension, the Minister for Works was curious about the statement I made when I said the London society had been untruthful with regard to a certain report obtained at the request of the British High Commissioner in Australia. That document is the Garnett report. In view of the Minister's query, I propose to say a little more in explanation of the statement I made. Prior to the report being received in Western Australia as a result of the Premier's request, it had been the subject of conferences between the executive of the London society and the Dominions Office. Those conferences were followed by a memorandum from the Dominions Office to the executive of the London society, which used that memorandum as a reason for its insistence upon the demands it was making on the Perth society. Because of that insistence, the local society decided to communicate with London to secure some clarification, and so the following cablegram was sent to the Agent-General for Western Australia:—

> Please ascertain and cable urgently will Dominions Office refuse sanction children to Western Australia unless Western Australian society relinquishes incorporation, transfers its assets to London society, and places new London society in complete control of Pinjarra school.

To that cable the following reply was received:—

> Referring to cable received direct from Fairbridge Farm School authorities, please advise have discussed with Commonwealth Relations Office. Their position is that they hope that agreement will be reached between Perth committee and the London society on the general basis outlined in Garnett report. In that case, they would gladly co-operate with Government of Western Australia and Commonwealth of Australia Government for resumption of movement of children to Pinjarra. Failing such agreement, Commonwealth Relations Office would have to consider the position further in consultation with the other two Governments.

The Perth council of the Western Australian society having perused the Garnett report and recognising its value, unanimously resolved, and have indicated to London their willingness, to abide by the Garnett report. This was the resolution carried and conveyed to Sir Charles Hambro—

> It is resolved that the Garnett report and the recommendations contained therein be adopted in principle by this committee and that any agreement arrived at between the London society and ours must embody the conditions set out in the Garnett report.

One would have imagined in view of what Sir Charles Hambro had said previously about the Garnett report being the basis of the demands upon the Perth society, that this intimation from the Western Australian body was all that was required, and that an agreement could have been reached on the basis of the Garnett report. But immediately Sir Charles Hambro shifted his ground and wrote this—

> You will appreciate that this document—

He was referring to the Garnett report.

> —was only a report, and not a decision of His Majesty's Government. Moreover the report was made three years ago and has been superseded by the Curtis report, which was adopted by His Majesty's Government, and the resulting Home Office memorandum on which our future policy has been based.

So, immediately Sir Charles Hambro felt obliged to shift his ground in order to extricate himself from the position in which he was placed, because of the earlier statement he made with regard to the demands by the London society. In view of that reply from Sir Charles Hambro, the Western Australian society decided to communicate again with London, and therefore sent the following cablegram to the Agent-General:—

> Further to your cablegram, Perth committee anxious to arrange settlement on basis Garnett report but are informed by the London delegation that the Home Office is the department concerned. Will you please refer our inquiry to Home Office and cable us urgently?

The following reply was received to that cable:—

> Referring to urgent cable received from Fairbridge Farm School, please advise them that Dominions Office cannot reply immediately as they do not understand reason for reference to Home Office. Am urging early decision.

That cablegram is suggestive of some lack of candour on the part of Sir Charles Hambro. What is the London society offering the Government and the local society under the new arrangement? These two things: Firstly,

> The Fairbridge Society will use its best endeavours to build up and maintain the numbers of English children at not less than 200.

Let us analyse that proposition. As this same society has on numerous occasions previously undertaken to maintain the numbers

at the school, how can we now place any greater reliance upon this proposal than events have shown could be placed on their previous promises? What guarantee have we that this undertaking will be lived up to, when their others were not? I remind members that a definite assurance was given by the London society before the establishment of the Prince of Wales school in Canada and the farm school at Molong in New South Wales, that the Western Australian numbers would be kept up. Our numbers were not kept up. How can we be sure that the numbers will be maintained if we agree to this proposed transfer of assets and the supercession of the local society? The other desideratum is this:

> The Fairbridge Society will undertake as far as its funds will allow to provide the balance of the capital and maintenance funds required in excess of the moneys subscribed by the Governments concerned and the public of Western Australia.

So, they are looking to the Western Australian Government and the Commonwealth Government to continue subscribing, and to the public of Western Australia, despite the fact that there is to be no Western Australian society, to make further contributions, while the London society undertakes, as far as its funds allow, to make good any deficiency. How much is that undertaking worth, in view of the fact that in 1942 that society ceased to make any funds available to the local body? I regard the position as most unsatisfactory, and it irks me considerably to be required to vote for a Bill that will sanction the transfer of property and the complete effacement of the Western Australian society in the interests of the London society, which has not acted in the past as might be expected of it and as it should have acted.

Thus we find that because the delegation came with a stand-and-deliver attitude, of "no money and no children unless you agree to our terms," we are to disregard the past and agree to the Western Australian society being voted out of existence. That is a proposition that does not appeal to me, yet I have to consider the alternatives. I have no doubt that if the Bill should be defeated, for the time being the whole undertaking will flop. There will be no children and no money. It will become somebody's business to get busy in an endeavour to effect an alteration. We should not have reached the present position at all. Instead of agreeing to introduce this legislation, the Government should immediately have got in touch with the Agent General and suggested some pretty straight talk with the Dominions Office and the Home Office about the unfairness of this proposition. It should have explored the possibility of reaching an agreement between the British authorities and the society in Australia so that we could have continued on the basis of the continued existence of the Western Australian society. No attempt was made to do that.

The Attorney General: You are wrong there.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I hope the Minister will indicate to what extent I am wrong. I shall be glad to hear from him that some effort was made to prevent what has occurred. I suggest that it could not have been any very strong effort; I can say no more than that in the absence of any knowledge as to what has been done. It should have been possible to have achieved an arrangement much more satisfactory than the one indicated in the Bill. I cannot imagine that this proposition will give much pleasure to those persons who have belonged to the Western Australian society or have been contributors to it in the past. There may have been some persons—I do not know how many—who left legacies or made donations to the Fairbridge Farm School, scarcely knowing of the existence of the English society and being aware only of the Western Australia society and the school at Fairbridge. Therefore, it seems to me to be wrong that the Western Australian society should completely lose its identity and go out of existence, and that the London society—so far away—should be placed in complete control.

It must be remembered that this society is not the same society as was in existence in England when the school was established. Consequently, what right has that society to expect the school and the fund to be handed over to it? I cannot see that it has any right. Not only has it expected this, but it has successfully demanded it by stating that, unless its demands were complied with, there would be no children and no money. Children are being sent to Northcote, which is not a Fairbridge farm school, nor was it established by money raised in the same way as money was raised to establish other Fair-

bridge farm schools. Yet Northcote has been able to get children through the Child Emigration Society. Therefore it seems to me that it would have been possible—despite the present London society—to make an arrangement under which British children, who would have benefited by emigration to Australia, could be obtained. The Minister says that an attempt was made to do that. Well, he should have told the House of that attempt when he introduced the Bill and my attitude might then have been somewhat different.

So far as I can see there was a ready acquiescence to the British demand, a demand made possible through the Home Office or the Dominions Office, without a full knowledge of the facts and without representations having been made on behalf of the Western Australian society. The position is a most unsatisfactory one and it causes me considerable concern. I know that on the board of governors there are very worthy men, but a number of them have not had any experience before of the attitude of the London society.

The Premier: Four of the old members are still on the board.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, four out of 11. The majority, then, are without previous experience of what happened as a result of the attitude of the London society. These new men are filled with enthusiasm and are without any doubts, because they are without the experience of what happened before. They are keen to go ahead. They feel that if the Bill is defeated they will not have that opportunity and there will be no child migration to Western Australia. The Premier no doubt feels that, because he interjected the other night, "We must get the children. That is the important thing." The Premier therefore feels that if the Bill is not passed, Western Australia will not get the children. I am not so sure on that point. If the Premier were able to place the true story before the British authorities, surely they would not withhold children simply because a group of persons in Britain could not get complete control of this school. It would be possible to get children, but it is pretty certain that a considerable time would elapse before a new arrangement could be arrived at if the Bill were defeated. I repeat, I am in a most unhappy position.

I have spoken in this way because I felt the real situation should be placed on record in order to show why it became necessary to introduce this Bill. Having done so, I think I have gone as far as I can. I am very reluctant indeed to do anything which will result in the London society's obtaining its way and putting an end to the Western Australian society. Surely members must know some of the members of the Western Australian society who from time to time have resigned because of the treatment meted out by the London society. They have to forget all that, apparently, disregard entirely what the Western Australian society did, and agree to the demands of the London society, because it said, "No children and no money unless you do." I would like the Minister to tell the House what action the Government took to try to bring about a different state of affairs from that which now exists and which has resulted in the presentation of this Bill to Parliament.

I am exceedingly reluctant strongly to urge members to defeat the Bill without knowing fully the consequences of such an action, as I am just as keen as anyone else to see the school rehabilitated and filled to capacity with English children who need the opportunities which can be provided for them in this State. It would be a matter of recurring dissatisfaction to me—and sorrow, too—if any action of mine resulted in children being prevented from coming to this State and the school being left idle. However, I am not entirely convinced that that would be the position if we defeated the Bill. I am hoping that it will be possible for the Government to take the matter up with Great Britain again and come to some arrangement such as that which must be operating in connection with Northcote. I do not know whether the London society is trying to impose upon the Northcote institution a similar agreement to that which is being imposed on us. I cannot imagine that the London society is in a position to do so. If it is prepared to send children to Northcote without having the same control there as it wants here, then I think it ought to be possible to make arrangements with Great Britain for us to be treated similarly. I would like the Minister, when he is replying to the debate, to resolve the doubts I have raised and to tell the House what action the Governmnt took to prevent this agreement from being made.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. V. R. Abbott—North Perth—in reply) [7.54]: I suggest the member for North-East Fremantle has an entirely wrong conception of the position. I cannot understand his attitude at all. He gave me the impression that this was a negotiation between Government and Government for one Government to acquire children. There are a number of schemes under which child migration takes place, and it is open for this Government at any time to negotiate with the Home Office, or with any organisation in Great Britain, to send British children to this State. Let us have a clear perspective of what happened in the past and what has happened lately. Here we have a scheme that was not even started by an Australian, but by a Rhodes scholar in England. The object of the scheme was not to benefit any particular country at all. It was not to give any advantage to Western Australia; that had no place in the conception of the scheme.

The object of the scheme was to help British orphans, who were unlikely to have a reasonable opportunity in life in England, to get that opportunity elsewhere. That is what was in the mind of the founder of the scheme, the late Kingsley Fairbridge, and also in the minds of those associated with him. For reasons best known to Kingsley Fairbridge, he decided that the children would have the best opportunity in Western Australia and so his scheme was commenced here. During its foundation years, Western Australia had little to do with the scheme. During the years 1921 to 1929, when the school was being established, British people subscribed £44,000 for the purchase of properties and the maintenance of the school. During the same period the Western Australian public were so interested in the scheme that they contributed £860. The scheme is not something conceived by the Western Australian people and put into operation by them; it is a scheme conceived by British people to assist British people. Members are aware that during the war years it was not possible to continue the scheme on the same scale.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: What about the years immediately prior to the war?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Or immediately prior to the war. It was well known that Britain was then re-arming, but that has little to do with the position. When the war ended, the desire of the present Government was that the fine school and buildings should not be allowed to remain vacant, but should be put to proper use for children, not necessarily under the Fairbridge farm scheme. That is what was the subject of negotiation between the two societies. The Government certainly, in my opinion, exercised—in the language of the hon. member—duress on the English society, because it told that society plainly through the Agent General, that if the school were not occupied and utilised by the society, the Government would take steps to see that it was. If there was any duress that is what I suggest it was; because the London society had actually little power whereas the Government had full power, as the hon. member well knows, to intervene. That is what was told the society in plain language. Then we had the conferences between the two organisations.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: If I may interrupt the Attorney General, what was the society's answer to that threat?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The society's answer was Sir Charles Hambro's coming out here.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: And saying, "We will let you have the children provided you hand the whole thing over."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There has never been any question about the children at all. That is not the point. If the Western Australian Government wishes to bring children out, there is not the slightest doubt that it could bring out large numbers. It should be prepared to make provision for them. There is no doubt about that. Children are coming, as the hon. member knows, through a number of organisations. That is not the question at all. It is purely a matter of a charitable organisation wishing to carry on its charitable intentions in the way it thinks best for children of its own country. That is the whole conception. If the Western Australian Government, or any other Government, wishes to set up a child migration scheme I am sure the British Government will be only too willing to render every assistance.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Is it not a fact that the English society will dictate the policy?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Of course it will, and it has every right to do so. It is the organisation which is carrying out the charitable intentions.

Mr. Hoar: Do you not think we would have a better idea in this country?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Do we want to interfere with other child migration societies? There is one at Geraldton and others nearer Perth. Should the Government interfere with them?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You will interfere if this organisation does not go the way the Government believes it should.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is so. If these children, who will be future citizens of Western Australia, do not get the attention or education that a child, resident in Western Australia, should get, this Government will interfere, and quickly too!

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What would the Government do?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It would take possession of the children. There is the Child Welfare Department and the Education Department. The hon. member knows quite well what would be done.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What would you do with the children?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Any contribution made by either the Commonwealth or the State Government, is very much less than the average amount contributed to any Western Australian orphan. That again, the hon. member knows, is correct. The Government is not making any special effort in connection with these children. It is providing less funds than it does to the average orphanage in this State. I cannot understand the hon. member's conception of the situation. Admittedly, the final control is vested in the London society, but let us look at the persons who are exercising control. I do not think members will suggest that any of these persons is unsuitable for the position he occupies. We have as chairman, Professor Currie.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: He and the others are not in control. You are talking of the board of governors.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I said, the control is exercised through them. In addition to Professor Currie, there is Mr. Brownlee, Mr. Justice Walker, Mr. Murray Little, Dr. Fairbridge, Mr. A. H. Christian, Mr. Tindal, Professor Cameron, Professor Bayliss, Mr. Walter Harper and Mrs. Jones.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Does the Attorney General think these people are capable of appointing a principal?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think so.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Well, the London society does not.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It does not matter what the London society thinks.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, it does.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, it does not. It is the London society's organisation, and the whole scheme was conceived and introduced by it, and it is being carried out by that society.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: These worthy men, whose names you have read out, are not to be trusted with the appointment of a principal. All they can do is to consult with the London society, and they have to take whatever man the London society sends them.

The Premier: They recommended the name of the present principal to the London society, and he was appointed.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, but there is no guarantee that he will remain there.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Why should there be any guarantee? This organisation is controlled from London, and it should be controlled from there. After all, it is a charity that was commenced and put into effect from there. The London society has at all times provided far larger funds than has the Western Australian Government, and whatever assistance has been given by the Government of this State has been, I suggest, less than has been made available to any child orphan born and resident in Western Australia. Both the Commonwealth and the State Governments are highly desirous that British child migrants should come to this State. We feel, and so does the hon. member, that that is the best form of immigration we can have. But beyond that and the fact that we should see that these children, when they do arrive in Western Australia, receive conditions equal to those that apply to our own orphans, I

suggest we have no right to interfere with this charitable organisation any more than we have with other such organisations conducting child migration schemes. I do not intend to prolong the debate.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Do not sit down before you tell us of the action the Government took to prevent the agreement.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have already informed the hon. member that the Government said that if the Fairbridge farm was not utilised for a proper purpose, the Government would take possession of it and use it for its own purposes.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is not action to prevent the agreement.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I suggest it was very strong duress against the powers in London to see that some arrangement was made to ensure that this farm school was used in the proper way.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: So, instead of preventing the London society from making these attempts, the Government actually aided and abetted it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes.

The Premier: The Government did not come into it at all. There was a visit from the London committee, which met the local committee, and an agreement was arranged.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is not what the Minister just said.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Whatever the final control, Western Australia has certainly received advantage from this agreement because, since the 1st June last, £14,000 has been sent out from London, and, in addition, it is expected that the first batch of children will arrive during the next month.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Are they on the way?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I understand they are. So, a good deal has been achieved from the State's point of view. If the hon. member is voicing the disgruntled opinion of some former member of the committee, as appears likely, I do not think his mind has been applied in the way it usually works. I think he has been rather too close to someone who is not satisfied and feels that some small authority has been tak from him. I may be wrong in that, but suggest it appears very likely.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Attorn General in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Preamble:

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I wish to kn where the Government got all this fro and whether it believes it. The preamb states—

> Whereas in order to conform to the requi ments in the United Kingdom in regard to t emigration and welfare of underprivileg children—

The Attorney General told us the Gover ment could get any number of children u der migration schemes, but not under th scheme unless it endorsed the proposals the agreement.

The Attorney General: The Governme has nothing to do with the scheme.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The preamble go on—

> —to the Fairbridge Farm School at Pinjar in the State of Western Australia, and to sure a policy of unbroken responsibility wards the children, it is desirable to effect ultimate merging of the interests—

It is a lot of eye-wash to talk of a mergi of interests when one party is complete effaced—

> —of Fairbridge Farm Schools (Incorporate and the Kingsley Farm School Society of We ern Australia (Incorporated).

Will the Minister give some explanation f the use of that jargon?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Th "jargon," as the hon. member calls it, is t jargon of the draftsman who saw the agre ment that had to be validated, and it is l conception of how it should be done.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I would like know whose requirements are referred Are they the requirements of the Gover ment of the United Kingdom, or are th the requirements of the London society?

The Attorney General: It has nothing do with the operative portion of the Bill.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Then let us strike it out, because I do not like it.

Preamble put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1948-49.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 11th November; Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

Vote—Departmental, £193,000 (partly considered):

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam) [8.18]: The Treasurer, when introducing the Loan Estimates, said he felt he had a grave responsibility in the matter of the spending of loan moneys because, in effect, his action represented an investment of the State's capital. I think the Treasurer was right in the observation he made because, according to the wisdom used in spending the State's loan funds, there develops in the future a type of debt that is fully productive, partly productive or completely non-productive. To the extent that the expenditure in the future is only partly productive, or completely unproductive in the financial sense, does the general financial burden upon the people of the State increase. I know there is a solidly held opinion amongst many people that the financial return on the expenditure of loan money is not the most important consideration. Those who hold that opinion argue that the indirect returns to the State can easily outweigh the financial losses involved in the expenditure of loan money. There is some truth in the contention that indirect returns can be very valuable to the State as a whole.

It is well known that a great amount of loan money has been expended in the South-West districts of Western Australia where the financial return, in a direct way, to the Government has been very small. The return in wealth production, however, has been substantial. On balance, I should say that the State has benefited to a far greater extent than it has lost in the financial sense with the expenditure of that money. However, the main benefits arising from a situation of that kind go to private individuals, and the poor financial return becomes the continuing problem of Treasurers as they come and go. Therefore, the fact that there is frequently a substantial indirect return in the form of wealth production does not reduce in any way the concern and worry of Treasurers when they are struggling with their financial problems from year to year. Whether more should be obtained and could be obtained by the Government in return for the services which are given to these people who produce more wealth and obtain more income, is, of course, a matter entirely for the decision of the Government of the day.

I take it for granted that over the last year, at any rate, the Treasurer and his officers have given close consideration to every avenue from which it might be possible fairly to obtain additional income for the Government by way of increasing the charges made to individuals for the varying services which the Government makes available to them. I do not know whether the Treasurer feels that he has, up to the present, increased every charge which he considers could and should fairly be increased or whether, on the other hand, the Treasurer still believes that increases in certain charges should be made where they have not already been effected. I am not suggesting that the Treasurer, in replying to this debate, should take us into his confidence in that regard, because I know that matters of this kind are not easy to consider and decide. I know that quite often it is not advisable to make early announcements in anticipation of increases which the Treasurer may still intend to levy. However, I am sure that every member of the Committee would be grateful to have from the Treasurer any information he feels he could fairly make available along those lines.

The public debt of the State, as explained by the Treasurer, is approximately £100,000,000, which represents £194 15s. 9d. per head of our population. Considering the area of Western Australia and the unavoidably heavy expenditure which has had to be incurred in the past in providing public services of various kinds, and in view of our small population, I think the public debt per head need not be regarded as very great or very serious. Of our total public debt, I have ascertained that £59,000,000 is repayable to bondholders within Australia, £39,-

000,000 to bondholders in Great Britain and £2,000,000 to bondholders in America. Of the total debt, an amount of £12,867,000 represents revenue deficits that have occurred over the years. If a fair valuation were to be made of the works and other assets created through the years by our loan expenditure, it would be found that we have to represent that expenditure today, works and undertakings of a value of at least £100,000,000. In fact, I should say that, measured in the money terms existing today, the value of those works and undertakings would be possibly twice the value of the money invested as necessary for their creation and subsequently for their maintenance in reasonable order.

It is true that a large proportion of the loan money expended over the years has been expended on undertakings which are totally non-productive in the financial sense. The situation is not peculiar to Western Australia; it is general in all States, but perhaps more noticeable in our State because of its size in area and its comparatively small population. Probably the most worrying feature of the Loan Estimates is the fact that the Railway Department is now, for the first time, listed as an undertaking which is completely non-productive in the financial sense. The deterioration in railway finance is such as to create a serious problem not only with Loan expenditure but also with expenditure from revenue. It constitutes a double problem in the financial sense, for the Treasurer and for the taxpayers of the State generally.

This financial problem in the Railway Department seems to me to arise from two main causes; one being the yearly cost of servicing the capital debt of £27,000,000. The interest and sinking fund upon that amount is well over £1,000,000 yearly, which is a large amount to have as a financial burden upon the revenue the department is able to earn. However, the present problem of the Railway Department has undoubtedly been brought about by the sharp and heavy increase in working expenses. There is a table set out in the papers the Treasurer made available to us relating to the Budget which shows that the various items of expenditure from revenue in connection with the railways and the increase of expenditure covering the Railways Department have become, to some extent, alarming, although admittedly, quite unavoidable. For instance, in 1939-40 the railways expenditure was £2,800,000.

The Premier: Which year?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: In 1939-40. In 1942-43 it had risen to £3,490,000 and it remained about that figure until 1945-46 when it rose to £3,853,000. In 1946-47 it was £4,314,000 and the next year, 1947-48, £5,672,000. The estimate for this year, 1948-49, is £6,275,000. It will be seen, therefore, that the Railway Department expenditure has more than doubled for this current year as compared with the last year before the war. I do not know whether even the estimate for this year includes the substantial recent basic wage increase. I think that recent increase would represent an added expenditure to the Railway Department of £400,000.

The Premier: Provision was made for increases in the basic wage.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Yes, but if the Treasurer remembers, provision for the basic wage increase this year was made under an item for the Premier's Department.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am not sure whether the figure was also included in the items for the different departments. I cannot imagine that it would be.

The Premier: Yes, all the departments.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Then I am quite at a loss to know why the Treasurer would make double provision. Surely he did not make provision in his own Premier's Department Estimates and then duplicate it by making separate provision in each of the departments concerned? I am sure the Treasurer did not do that and I am satisfied that if he will give the matter further consideration he will realise that he did not. If my reasoning is correct on that point then this estimate during the current year for the Railway Department of £6,275,000 might easily be closer to £7,000,000 when the financial year has ended and the accounts have been compiled.

It is not easy to suggest what might be done about this acute financial problem in the Railway Department. All these added costs, as they come forward from time to time, have to be met and paid in full. There is no escape from that. The

Government, some few months ago, sanctioned an increase in railway freights and fares which, I think, during the current year will bring in additional revenue to the extent of £1,000,000. However, I am afraid the increased expenditure during the current year will just about absorb the whole of the increased income. Therefore, the finances position of the railways at the end of this financial year will not be any better than they were at the end of the last financial year, despite the fact that the department will, during this current year, have an additional income of roughly £1,000,000. I think the answer to this problem—although it may not be a complete answer—is largely in the hands of the Attorney General in his capacity as Minister in control of prices in this State.

I have some doubt whether the Treasurer and his Ministers are aware of the gravity of the problem of prices control. I have some doubt whether they realise what its implications are and can be. I have considerable doubt whether they have any more than the faintest conception of how critical this problem of controlling prices is and will be. I think the Ministers for Prices of the various States made a tragic mistake when they decided some months ago to decontrol so many thousands of commodities under the price-fixing system. Immediately those commodities and various classes of goods were decontrolled those trading in them had an open go as to what they would charge in the future for them. It is all very well for the president of the W. A. Chamber of Commerce to assure us from time to time that his organisation sends out appeals to traders to be careful about prices and not to increase them unduly. Those appeals are not worth the paper they are written on.

I should hope that every member of this Parliament is sufficiently practical in outlook and experience to know that when people are trading in commodities over which there is no control in regard to price or quantity and they feel that they ought to get more for the goods than they received when these goods were under price control, most of them will put the prices up. It might be said that prices have not increased on a number of decontrolled commodities. They might not have increased in some cases. But who can say whether the public is getting the same value for the same money in regard to these commodities as previously when price control did affect them? Who can say that people are getting the same quantity in the packages for which they now pay 1s. each as they got when they paid 1s. under the price control system.

The Premier: I think the people would soon tell you that.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Of course they would, but it would not register officially in the prices of the goods. One of the greatest safeguards under the price control system was that not only were prices fixed at a maximum but there was control also over the quantity of the goods at or below that maximum price. That is a very big safeguard which the Ministers for Prices of the various States surrendered when they decided so easily and quickly to decontrol thousands of commodities from the price control system.

The Attorney General: Nothing was decontrolled that was other than a luxury. You know that, don't you?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I know, Mr. Chairman, that a large number of goods were decontrolled, the prices of which have since increased and they have to be paid by the people of Australia. Also, I know that those increased prices are having their effect on the price structure of Australia and through the price structure, upon the economy system.

The Attorney General: Nothing was decontrolled that affected the basic wage.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am not arguing the basic wage.

The Attorney General: I thought that was part of the price structure.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: That is only part of the price structure; I am arguing the complete price structure. In addition, we have in tonight's "Daily News" an article on the increase in the cost of living in Western Australian towns. This particular article gives me the very greatest possible concern even though it might not mean a great deal to the Attorney General. If the Treasurer studies it closely I should think he will see an unmistakable trend and realise that not only these Loan Estimates now before us, but the Budget Estimates which are also before us, might easily be thrown completely out of balance if this movement, so obviously illustrated in this article, is to continue dur-

ing the remainder of this financial year and, indeed, go on next financial year and the one after that, and so on.

The Attorney General: There must be increases with the amounts of direct subsidies taken off and with wages going up.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I think the Attorney General would have been acting much more straight-forwardly had he told the people that when the last referendum campaign was in progress. The fact that subsidies on certain items are to cease provides another very powerful argument why the Attorney General and other State Ministers for Prices should realise more than they appear to have done so far just how great is the responsibility upon them with regard to goods still under control that affect the basic wage, and also with regard to goods which the Ministers, in their rush to ease themselves of work and responsibility, decontrolled so quickly.

I am inclined to think that, if this movement of prices is allowed to continue upward, the finances of the Railway Department will become so terrible as to be impossible of any adequate solution. The Railway Department during the last financial year went to the bad to the extent of about two million pounds including one million pounds for interest. Working expenses exceeded earnings by over one million pounds. If members care to study the financial return dealing with the railways over the years, they will find that the deterioration is indeed frightening, not so much in respect of the department itself as in respect to the revenue fund and the loan fund of the State. In 1943-44, the loss on the railways was £452,000, that is, after full provision had been made for interest, sinking fund and working expenses. In 1944-45 the loss rose to £538,000; in 1945-46 it rose to the very high total of £959,000 and in 1946-47 it reached £1,410,000, while in 1947-48, it went to the somewhat terrifying figure of £2,017,000.

From time to time we have been led to believe that the railway system mechanically has deteriorated considerably, but it is very clear that the financial position of the railways, if anything, is even worse than the mechanical side. The mechanical side has been exaggerated to some extent as regards its actual deterioration over the years. I incline to the belief that the mechanical side has been over-used by those in charge of the department as an excuse for what might, in fact, be very bad administration.

Mr. Styants: I am certain of it.

The Minister for Railways: I agree with you there.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I say this partly because of my own experience and partly because of the fact that last year the system carried a greater tonnage of freight than ever before. Is it reasonable to suppose that a system that is understood to be on the verge of complete breakdown could, during the financial year, carry many thousands of tons of additional freight as against the tonnage carried during the several years immediately preceding?

The present Minister for Railways has not, I think, taken members fully into his confidence about his experience since he took office. I should like him, during this debate or preferably on the Revenue Estimates, to tell us as clearly as possible the actual mechanical condition of the railways and also the other reasons why the department is not functioning as well as it should. I am satisfied that some of the officials charged with the actual responsibility of running the railways have hidden behind the excuse of mechanical difficulties, engine troubles and so forth when the real reasons for many of the troubles have had no relationship to the mechanical side.

The Premier: There certainly has been plenty of engine trouble.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Undoubtedly; I am not suggesting that there has not been plenty of trouble with engines, but I cannot bring myself to believe that all the trouble associated with the running of trains is due to engine difficulties. I am convinced that there are many other reasons of which we are not told because, if we were, those charged with the responsibility of running the railways would have to accept some personal blame for mistakes, deficiencies, carelessness, inefficiency and so forth. I am not saying that the management is entirely to blame, but the responsibility rests upon the management to ensure that the department is run efficiently consistent with the mechanical means available to it.

I remember when the present Minister for Railways was a private member, and how hot he used to wax upon this subject.

In my own mind I am satisfied he is convinced, as he was three, four or five years ago, that there is still plenty of room for improvement in the actual methods of running the department, apart from the mechanical side. That is why I am hoping that, when introducing the Estimates of the Railway Department, he will tell us his actual impressions of the mechanical side as well as the managerial side. If the Bill dealing with the railways now before Parliament is a confession of what he thinks of the managerial system, we may take it for granted that he feels there is great need for radical supervision by the Government.

The estimate of loan expenditure for the current financial year is £6,246,000. The Treasurer said it was probable that all of this money would not be expended. His suggestion is proved up to the hilt by the experience of last year when the estimate of expenditure from loan fund was £5,683,000, and the actual expenditure only £3,031,000, leaving £2,652,000 unexpended. It can also be said quite logically that a far larger amount of loan money would have remained unexpended last year but for the substantial increases in wages and costs of material. In fact, if the level of wages and costs of material ruling in the previous year had applied last year, the Treasurer would probably have expended a million pounds less than he actually did.

In these days a great deal of loan money has to be expended to achieve a small amount of work, as the Treasurer no doubt is coming increasingly to realise. The fact that the Treasurer last year, with much higher wages and higher prices for materials, was able to expend only slightly more than half of the loan funds available to him clearly indicates that there is still an acute shortage of labour and materials. I think this acute shortage of labour and essential materials will continue for a long time. What many people have failed to realise in recent years is the fact that a shortage of manpower prevails not only in Western Australia, but also in every State of Australia and probably in nearly every country of the world.

I hear people saying—and they have been saying this ever since the war ended—that Australia could solve its manpower shortage by bringing surplus manpower from other countries of the world. Obviously there is no country that has any very great surplus of manpower that is at all valuable. Almost every country engaged in the war suffered great damage to property and great loss of manpower and, consequently, all of those countries are themselves battling against shortages of manpower and material. The gigantic problem of re-building the destroyed and devastated areas in England, France, Belgium, Germany, Russia and other countries will take many years finally to accomplish.

The Treasurer, and also the Minister for Works, know from experience how difficult it is to obtain vital machinery from oversea for, say, the South Fremantle Power Station. I know of the great delay that occurs in the fulfilling of orders placed by the Government with oversea firms as far back as four or five years. These delays occur because those countries in which the orders were placed are up against even worse manpower and material shortages than are we in Australia. So, despite very large increases in wages and costs of materials that are available, the Treasurer will find again this financial year that he will not be able to spend very much more than half the estimated amount of loan provision. For instance, I think these Loan Estimates have been deliberately built up by the Treasurer with the certain knowledge in his mind that circumstances and conditions will combine to prevent him from carrying out more than half of the programme.

The Premier: We will get more than half done. Labour conditions are improving. We have immigrants coming here and the position generally is such that we can spend more money.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The Treasurer claims that he will expend much more than half of the estimated loan expenditure. He may do so. If he does, it will be almost entirely due to rising costs in wages and materials and not to the fact that much additional labour will be available. When we talk about the shortage of labour, we have to consider not only Government works and undertakings but also the hundred and one undertakings controlled by private individuals and companies. I think the Minister for Lands could tell us that the wheat farmers of Western Australia are going to have considerable difficulty in the next two

or three months in handling the large wheat crop during that period.

The Minister for Lands: It will be a big job.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: In fact, I do not know one activity in Western Australia that is not short of labour; and therefore it seems to me that the proportion of the total estimated loan programme that will be carried out, in regard to works at any rate, will not be much more than half. The financial expenditure might well be over half the estimate; but unfortunately the Treasurer will receive less value in terms of work for each pound of expenditure than he did last year and ever so much less than was received the year before.

The Premier: There will be more mechanisation.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am afraid the increased mechanisation the Treasurer has in mind will not help a great deal, because the percentage of undertakings to which mechanisation could be applied will not be great compared with the total undertakings. There are so many undertakings covered by the loan programme to which mechanisation cannot be applied in any shape or form. Therefore the Treasurer will be up against the very great difficulty of obtaining sufficient manpower to enable a great deal of the programme to be carried out. I was very pleased to see in the speech made by the Treasurer, when introducing the Loan Estimates, that his Government still believes very solidly in the State ownership and operation of transport. The Treasurer has provided very large sums of money both for the Railway Department and the Tramway Department to enable them to purchase a great deal of additional up-to-date road transport in the form of ordinary buses and trolleybuses.

I am not aware whether the Treasurer was out-voted by his colleagues under this heading but it is a matter for considerable pleasure to see that large sums are provided in the loan programme this year to enable the Railway Department to purchase diesel-electric rail cars and trailers and road buses, and also to enable the Tramway Department to purchase road buses and a large number of trolleybuses. I think that if the Treasurer is addressing a meeting of any portion of the Liberal Party at any time, and is being attacked by some of his friends who hate State-owned and operated transport, he might be able to offer to them the excuse that most of these vehicles were ordered by the Labour Government before it left office in March 1947.

The Premier: That is a very friendly tip.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I was very pleased to notice in these Estimates that water supplies had been given a very prominent place. In my study of the loan programme and the Treasurer's speech I gained the impression that the emphasis was on the provision of water supplies. The programme set out covers the comprehensive scheme and all of the existing large schemes in the country. It provides for improvements to the metropolitan water scheme, water supplies for country towns and also tank schemes in country districts where other sources of supply are not available. The most important work being carried out by the Water Supply Department at present is the raising of the Mundaring Weir, because when that job is completed the holding capacity of the weir will be raised from about 4,000,000,000 gallons to 16,000,000,000 gallons. The additional water impounded will be of great benefit not only to the agricultural districts in the Eastern wheatbelt but also to the eastern Goldfields; and, in addition, which is very important, to the north-eastern agricultural section of the comprehensive water supply scheme.

The section of the loan programme dealing with the generation and distribution of electric power is also a vital section, because it covers the South Fremantle power station, the Collie power station and the South-West power scheme, of which the Collie station will be the basis; and it covers, too, the decision of the Government to purchase the electricity and gas undertakings of the Perth City Council. As the Treasurer indicated, this last-mentioned matter will come before Parliament for discussion by way of a Bill; and there is therefore no necessity to deal with it further at this stage, except to say that it is an extremely important decision which in my opinion will be for the benefit of the Government and the State as a whole as the years go by.

I searched very carefully through the Loan Estimates to find anything new compared with what was covered by the loan

programme two or three years ago. I was not able to find anything of any importance that was new, except the decision of the Government to purchase the gas and electricity undertakings of the Perth City Council. The fact that there is nothing new in the loan programme this year, except that, seems to indicate that all the talk that the Treasurer and his colleagues indulged in during the election campaign 20 months ago was fairly empty. Otherwise, it would surely have produced something new that the Treasurer could have included in his loan programme 20 months after his Government took office.

The fact that his Government is following the programme laid down and commenced by the previous Government is, I think, a very great compliment to the planning and decisions that that Government made during the last two or three years it was in office. Therefore, instead of complaining strongly about the failure of the Treasurer and his colleagues to develop anything new of importance, I content myself by congratulating them upon the very great wisdom they displayed in following so surely in the footsteps of their predecessors in regard to the expenditure of loan money and thus in regard to the development of Western Australia.

Progress reported.

BILL—FOUNDATION DAY OBSERVANCE (1949 ROYAL VISIT).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 11th November.

MR. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [9.12]: I have looked over the Bill and must indicate my support of it. The measure, in effect, transfers the observance of Foundation Day in 1949 from the 6th June to a date to be proclaimed which, as has been indicated by the Minister, will be the 5th September. The suggestion that the date shall be moved forward three months will stagger the holidays somewhat, more so than would be the case if the extra holiday were proclaimed later in June.

The Bill makes no reference to the universal proclamation of a holiday on the 6th June, but from the Minister's remarks I understand that the Employers' Federation and the Government will see to it that there will be a universal holiday on the occasion of the Royal visit and that that holiday will be on the 6th June. In addition to that the ordinary holiday known as Foundation Day will be observed on the 5th September. I would like to express a word of appreciation to the members of the Employers' Federation for their gesture in connection with the holiday on the auspicious occasion of the visit of Their Majesties. I regret that the shortness of the Royal Visit will preclude Their Majesties from spending more time in places such as Northam and York, which have been mentioned by the Minister. I believe that both the Government and the private employers in such centres will see to it that as many employees as possible are released from their duties in order that they may attend the celebrations.

It is unfortunate that the duration of the visit of Their Majesties will be such as not to permit them to visit outback portions of the State and see places such as Marble Bar, Bamboo Creek, Wittenoom Gorge, Augusta, Flinders Bay, Bridgetown, Pemberton and other important centres. The majority of the people of those far-flung districts will not have the pleasure of seeing Their Majesties during their visit to this State. However, I believe that the gesture of the Government will meet with universal approval. While the observance of Foundation Day—which is one of the most important days in the calendar of Western Australia—will be transferred from June to September, I urge the Minister for Education to ensure that when the children of the State enjoy the holiday on the 5th September they will have impressed upon them the importance of that day.

The Minister for Lands: The change of date is for 1949 only.

Mr. HEGNEY: That is so. The provision in the Bill deals expressly with the year 1949. For many years past we have observed the first Monday in June as Foundation Day and the transfer of the observance of that day next year to the 5th September may minimise remembrance of its importance. I regret to say that many people in this State who each year enjoy the holiday in June do not to the fullest extent appreciate the importance of that national day which, after all, is celebrated in commemoration of the foundation of this State in 1829. I hope the Minister for Education

will see to it that our school children have impressed upon them the significance and importance of the occasion. I support the second reading and again take this opportunity, as Vice-President of the State Executive of the Australian Labour Party, to express my appreciation of the gesture of the employers in connection with the visit of Their Majesties.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall) [9.18]: I support the Bill, which gives opportunity to express disappointment at the fact that the visit of Their Majesties is to be limited to such a small portion of the State.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Do you want Their Majesties to go to Mukinbudin?

Mr. LESLIE: Whatever the member for Leederville might think, I assure the House that the people of the outback view the visit of Their Majesties no less seriously than do the people of the metropolitan area. They are just as anxious—perhaps they are even keener because of opportunities denied them in other respects—as are the people of Perth to have the privilege of paying homage to Their Majesties in person. The itinerary that has been arranged is such as to afford a double opportunity, for those who are within easy reach of the metropolitan area, to see Their Majesties the King and Queen. People of the Northam and York districts, for instance, will undoubtedly journey to Perth during the visit of Their Majesties and will again have opportunity of seeing the King and Queen when they visit those centres. The result will be that those who are sufficiently close to the metropolitan area to be able to spend a day in Perth, and then return to their homes with little inconvenience, may occupy accommodation to the exclusion of people from further outback. I understand it is the intention of the Government to endeavour to provide emergency accommodation at that time for people from country districts.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is getting away from the subject-matter of the Bill.

Mr. LESLIE: I intend to link up what I am saying with the Bill. It has relation to the holiday mentioned by the Minister during his speech. When consideration is being given to the question of making accommodation available to country visitors I hope first priority will be given to people from the far outback. I trust an attempt will be made to discourage people from distant centres from coming to Perth at that time. This could be done by some activity on the part of the Government to provide facilities for the celebration by people in their own districts. It would be entirely wrong to give the people of the outback a holiday and do nothing further for them while providing all kinds of facilities for the enjoyment of the more fortunate residents in and around the metropolitan area. We should not leave the people of the outback to devise their own means of spending the holiday.

Mr. Rodoreda: They generally manage to do it fairly well.

Mr. LESLIE: That is so, but it is time they were given a fair share in whatever extra privileges are available. The Minister for Education might well consider arranging for the entertainment of school children at that time, in the form of something beyond merely listening on the wireless to a commentary on what is occurring in Perth. Gatherings of some form should be arranged to enable the people to meet and rejoice and pay tribute indirectly to Their Majesties. That should be part of the holiday set-up. Merely to provide a holiday in country districts is not sufficient. The obligation rests on the Education Department, as far as the children are concerned, and on the Premier's Department as regards the people generally, to make it possible for those in country districts to make full use of this paid holiday that is being arranged. The Government owes that much to the people.

The responsibility for drawing up the itinerary for the Royal Visit does not rest entirely on the Government, but it is certain that the people of the outback should be able to take advantage of the holiday as far as is possible. To that end the Government should realise that other portions of the State, apart from the metropolitan area, are deserving of consideration, and should see that some of the money to be made available is spent in such areas. I hope the Premier will soon be able to tell the House that arrangements are being made to coordinate the facilities for enjoyment in the country districts with those in the city so that our people, wherever they are, may in-

dicate their pleasure at the visit of Their Majesties.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Bill read a third time and *passed.*

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 5:

Mr. STYANTS: The clause provides for reducing the age of a nurse who can commence training at a hospital where T. B. patients are treated, from 21 to 18. In 1946 we decided, on the recommendation of experts, that it was inadvisable to allow trainees to start nursing in a hospital that specialised in the treatment of tuberculosis if they were under 21 years of age. The Minister himself moved an amendment to make it quite clear that girls could not commence their training in such hospitals until they were 21 years of age. The Minister has been good enough to show me a document containing the opinion of the Commissioner of Public Health on the point. Either the Commissioner has changed his opinion considerably since 1946, or else in that year members were misled when they were told that the opinion of both Dr. Henzell and the Commissioner of Public Health favoured the proposal embodied in the 1946 legislation.

The remarkable part of the document is that which sets out that the incidence of T. B. among nurses in a hospital specialising in the treatment of T. B. was less than in a general hospital where unsuspected cases in the infective stage were nursed for other complaints. It would be interesting to get the opinion of other medical men attending such hospitals on that question, and I am inclined to think that the Commissioner of Public Health should be severely wrapped over the knuckles for expressing such an opinion. I do not think his statement could be substantiated. I regard the present proposal as one of expediency.

The Minister for Health: That is quite wrong.

Mr. STYANTS: I do not believe the Minister has changed his opinion at all, but I think the responsibilities of ministerial office and the fact that not sufficient girls can be secured to carry out this branch of nursing, represent the real incentive driving him along the road he proposes to take. If it were a matter merely of securing the opinion of medical officers on the proposal embodied in the Bill, we, as laymen, who were so certain that we were adopting the right course in 1946, would have to abide by that expert opinion. As laymen, we have not the knowledge enabling us to refute any such opinion. We now have to decide which is the right course, whether we were right in 1946 or would be right in agreeing to what is proposed now.

I am inclined to think that our attitude in 1946 was correct, because I cannot imagine that the Minister in another place would have been so definite in his statements then had he not had the opinion of the Commissioner of Public Health and of Dr. Henzell on the matter. The step we are asked to take is serious. It has been admitted by the Commissioner of Public Health that nurses between the ages of 18 and 21 years are developing their resistance to T.B. We are confronted with the necessity to decide whether we shall agree to sending girls into what is at any time a fairly dangerous occupation at 18 years of age, before they have fully developed their resistance to the disease. I do not feel disposed to support that proposition, and I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (a) the word "eighteen" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I feel that in matters requiring highly skilled technical training, plus a great deal of observation and statistical records, such as this involves, it is necessary for us to take the advice of those fully qualified to give it. We must admit that nursing, like mining and other occupations, involves certain risks, and we should do everything possible to minimise them. The mere fact that a man becomes a pilot of an aircraft immediately increases his life risk for insurance

purposes, but we do not say that there shall not be air hostesses because their risk of survival is less than the average person.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Is it?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I think so. It is an extra hazard and the hon. member would find that out if he were to take out an insurance policy. He would certainly find it loaded.

Mr. Styants: More are killed as a result of motor accidents than of aeroplane accidents.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, and, driving a motorcar constitutes an extra hazard. We have to take these risks in the ordinary way of life and, so long as they are not out of the usual, we are entitled to permit people to carry on, seeing that it is all entirely voluntary.

Mr. Styants: Will this apply to general trainees as well as to T.B. nurses?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes. Even the Nurses Registration Board considers it advisable that every trainee should, if possible, have at least some experience in a hospital specialising in the treatment of tuberculosis.

Mr. Styants: Yes, but the idea was that the trainees should gain that experience in their last 12 months of training.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I propose to read to the Committee a report I received from the Commissioner of Public Health in order that members may be quite sure that any statement I make is supported by my medical advisers.

Mr. Styants: Did you get an opinion from Dr. Henzell?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: He is attending a conference on this subject in the Eastern States. I told the Commissioner of Public Health to ring him up and confer with him on the matter before submitting this report, and he did so. The Commissioner's statement is as follows:—

The statement that the Commissioner of Public Health was definitely in favour of excluding girls from commencing training for tuberculosis nursing until they had reached the age of 21 years is not correct and must have been based on some misunderstanding.

One of the first matters which engaged my attention on assuming office in Western Australia, was the necessity of re-organising the conditions under which nurses were trained in Government hospitals and, in particular, the exclusion from Wooroloo of inexperienced girls who were mantoux negative, i.e., girls who had acquired no resistance to tuberculosis.

The Bill of 1946 which was submitted to the House with the full approval of the Commissioner of Public Health, the Director of Tuberculosis and the Nurses Registration Board, provided that girls might commence training as tuberculosis nurses at Wooroloo at 18 years of age.

The following safeguards embodied in the department's practice were considered adequate:—

(a) That the trainee must be mantoux positive.

(b) That she must be shown by radiological examination to be free from pulmonary tuberculosis.

It is established that the incidence of tuberculosis amongst nurses in properly conducted tuberculosis hospitals is less than amongst nurses in general hospitals, the explanation being that in the latter so many cases of unsuspected tuberculosis in an infective stage, are nursed without adequate precaution whilst under treatment for other conditions.

A preliminary investigation conducted during 1947 by Dr. Henzell indicated that in the years before the present system of control was instituted, the incidence of tuberculosis amongst nurses at Wooroloo was .85 per cent. per year. This figure is to be compared to an incidence of 1.3 per cent. per year in general hospitals in Canada and 2 per cent. per year at the Royal Perth Hospital.

It is my considered opinion that there will be less risk to the trainee nurse made familiar in a tuberculosis hospital with the precautions to be taken in nursing tuberculosis than to the trainee entering a general hospital for training.

The minimum age for commencing training as a tuberculosis nurse was altered by Parliament from 18 years to 21 years without the recommendation and contrary to the intention of the Commissioner of Public Health, the Director of Tuberculosis and the Nurses' Registration Board. It has since been the objective of these officers to have the Act amended to substitute the age 18 for the age 21.

The reasons for this clause are—

1. The arbitrary age of 21 is of importance only to the extent that a slightly larger proportion of girls at that age has converted from mantoux negative to mantoux positive, and these girls, therefore, are to be regarded as less susceptible. It must be realised, however, that this additional proportion of girls so converted is relatively small, being of the order of from 6 to 7 per cent. In a group of apparently healthy females tested in Sydney, the proportion of mantoux positive at age 18 was 33 per cent. and at age 21, 40 per cent. At age 21, 60 per cent. of girls are therefore still mantoux negative and the effect of arbitrarily determining admission to training in a tuberculosis hospital at that age would only involve an additional safeguard of one more protected girl in every 15.

No safeguard would then exist for the 60 per cent. of girls mantoux negative at 21. Such a competent authority as Professor Burnett has expressed the view that the age group 20-25 is the most dangerous age for conversion. If this be so, it is preferable that girls should be permitted to convert earlier and under supervision.

Here I may point out that at Wooroloo it is not intended to permit any nurse, whatever her age, to enter that hospital prior to her conversion or until she is Mantoux positive. The statement continues—

2. It is considered desirable by the department and by the Nurses Registration Board that trainees in general nursing, in the interests of their future health and for their more effective training, should serve during their nursing course a period not exceeding three months in a tuberculosis hospital. For this purpose it is necessary that the age limit of 21 be reduced, as most girls will have completed their training by the time this age is attained. Without this training before registration, they will be at risk of undertaking nursing practice at the most dangerous age without adequate instruction in the prophylaxis and care of tuberculosis.

It is intended that nurses in general hospitals shall be inoculated, if not already converted. The statement continues—

It is considered preferable that conversion should be effected at an earlier age than 21 and that this conversion should be under safeguarded conditions and supervision. It is expected that with the development of the Government's plan for tuberculosis control mantoux negative nurses will in a few months' time be artificially converted by B.C.G. vaccination. In the meantime the interests of the girls themselves and of the nursing profession generally will be best served by the proposed amendment, which will permit strict medical supervision of conversion at an earlier age and under safer conditions, and the adequate training of girls in self-protection before they are exposed to the nursing of unsuspected tuberculosis under uncontrolled conditions.

For your further information, the question of the age at which nurses should be permitted to enter tuberculosis hospitals for training was raised at the last meeting of the Tuberculosis Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council, upon which this State is represented by Dr. Henzell. The committee was unanimous in its decision that girls should be admitted to training in tuberculosis hospitals at age 18.

I telephoned Dr. Henzell in Melbourne to question him regarding the statement that he expressed himself in favour of trainees being prohibited entering tuberculosis hospitals until they have attained the age of 21. Dr. Henzell informed me that some years ago he was under the impression that there was significantly greater risk to trainees aged 18 than there was to trainees aged 21. He has, however, in the light of further inquiry and consideration abandoned this view and is now in full accord with this submission which I read to him for his comments.

The Committee now has the studied and considered advice of the two highest experts in this disease in the Government service. Of my own knowledge, Dr. Henzell is today considered to be one of the ablest men in Australia specialising in tuberculosis.

Mr. Styants: We had all that in 1946, just as you have given it to us now.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I suggest that a body of laymen, who know little about this subject, should defer to the advice of these experts. It would be very ill-advised of laymen not to do so.

Mr. Styants: You must have been ill-advised in 1946 when you moved the amendment to provide for it.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I was, and so was the member for Kalgoorlie, who voted for it.

Mr. Styants: I did not speak on the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: But the hon. member voted on the amendment. We are entering into a Commonwealth scheme and it is of the utmost importance that there should be uniformity throughout the Commonwealth. Members do me an injustice when they suggest that I might be swayed to adduce arguments here which would jeopardise the health or happiness of anyone. And for what purpose? Merely to serve a department! I am not so interested in departments or in Governments as to take that action, any more than the member for Kalgoorlie is.

Mr. Styants: Not to serve a department, but to serve nurses who are tending the sick.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The nursing profession is competent to look after itself, and this amendment has the support of the Nurses Registration Board. There has been no protest from any nurses' organisation.

Mr. Styants: You were chiefly responsible for creating the doubt in my mind.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I am aware of that, and I hope I shall now be chiefly responsible for convincing the hon. member that there is no justification for

the doubt today. No nurse shall be allowed into any of these institutions until she has been immunised, no matter what her age is.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: How will a nurse be immunised?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: She will be inoculated with B.C.G., which the Commonwealth is bringing to a state of perfection. We should accept the advice of our experts.

Mr. Hoar: Not blindly.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No. We should not allow prejudice to influence our considered judgment. No good purpose can be served by rejecting the proposal. Not one statement by an expert has been put forward in opposition to what I have told the Committee. If there were anything objectionable in the matter, surely it would have been opposed by the Nurses Registration Board and the medical profession. We have the advice of our qualified men such as Drs. Henzell and Cook. All the doctors at Wooroloo have assured me that there is no greater risk at 18 than at 21 if the girls have been subjected to the Mantoux test. If an amendment were suggested that no girl should be allowed in Wooroloo until she had built up an immunity, I would accept it. There is no logic in taking the age of 21. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: A few years ago the age for trainees at the Perth Hospital was 21. It has gradually come down to 18. There were three or four different systems of training, one of which was the Government scheme whereby the trainees started at Wooroloo. Originally they did six months, then it was extended to nine months, and some girls were there for 14 months. Difficulty was found in obtaining nurses for that scheme because they went to Wooroloo to begin with. When I was Minister for Health, mothers disagreed with their daughters starting at Wooroloo. They did not wish them to go there at all. The member for Kanowna introduced a Bill in 1946 to provide for the training of nurses for tuberculosis alone and a two-year course was stipulated. It was then that the present Minister introduced his amendment to provide that girls were not to go there until they were 21.

What is the scheme for? At present girls can start at the Children's Hospital or at the Royal Perth Hospital at 18 years of age. We are told that all nurses should do at least three months in a tuberculosis hospital. Is the object here to cover the position of a nurse being trained for tuberculosis nursing only, which would make her a competent nurse for that disease at the age of 20? I understand a number of Balts are being trained at Wooroloo, some under 21. Is the Bill to overcome that difficulty, or is it intended to start a system of transferring girls from the Children's Hospital or the Royal Perth Hospital so that nurses training at either of those places shall do three months' training at Wooroloo? Is it because the girls start in those hospitals at 18 that it is desired to have the age reduced here so that they can go to Wooroloo? I would much sooner see them go to Wooroloo in their third year.

The Minister for Health: That would be their twentieth year; they would not be 21.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: If they were not quite 21, it would be better than going there to start with, because they would have had sufficient training to know what to expect in such a hospital. I hope the Minister will tell the Committee just what is intended. It is of no use the Minister saying we have had no protest from the Nurses' Union. That union is under the control of the Nurses' Registration Board which is not chosen by the union or by general trained nurses. It is composed of representatives of the mental hospital, midwifery nurses, general trained nurses and medical men. If the idea here is to put the girls straight into Wooroloo, I shall support the member for Kalgoorlie. The suggestion of immunity put forward by the Minister is new to me. If the nurses can be made immune, why not the general public?

The Minister for Health: The public probably will be later.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: If it is possible to inoculate a nurse against tuberculosis why not other people?

The Minister for Health: It is a new discovery.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: One that has not been proved.

The Minister for Health: It has.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Where?

The Minister for Health: Particularly in Sweden, and in America.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: This is where we want to prove it.

The Minister for Health: It is being tested in Australia.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: We find in regard to these things that after six or eight months the immunity is not there. I want more proof that the nurses will be immune from tuberculosis.

The Minister for Health: It does not necessarily mean they will be immune.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: It will be like the immunisation against whooping cough. Some doctors say it is no good at all and others say the patient can get whooping cough in a modified form. The Committee is entitled to know just where these girls are coming from.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is not intended that girls from general hospitals shall be sent at early ages, but at such time during their training as is most suitable. Other girls may wish to train only as tuberculosis nurses and they might commence their training at 18. Some girls cannot qualify, educationally, to be general nurses. I do not know the ages of the Balts at Wooroloo. Some who are working there are probably not being trained as nurses. There is nothing to prevent anyone working in these hospitals. They may be working as domestics and be just as subject to infection as the nurses. They could go in at any age. The nurses get more protection than anyone else, although I think everyone working at Wooroloo is periodically examined. A girl can sweep wards and make beds.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: That is not correct. The domestics have nothing to do with the wards.

Mr. Hoar: You nearly got away with that.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I did not try to get away with anything. In most hospitals a good deal of the work is done by domestics, but possibly not at Wooroloo. It is not the intention to select girls of 18 years of age to go to Wooroloo, but where it is suitable they may be permitted to go if they so desire.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Have there been nurses infected at Wooroloo?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I think so. I believe the figure is .85. That was before these precautions were taken.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Have they all been cured?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I have not that information. I know the discipline at Wooroloo is probably better than it is in a general hospital because my wife had experience and training at a Perth general hospital. I hope I have satisfied the member for Leederville on the department's intentions.

Mr. STYANTS: Dealing with the Minister's statements that the domestics at Wooroloo are used for work in the wards, I wish to quote from the remarks of the Minister for Health on a similar Bill in 1946. He was the present Minister's immediate predecessor and he had this to say—

> I have issued orders and directions that no person is to be employed at the Wooroloo Hospital until he or she attains the age of 21 years . . . .

Dr. Cook admits in that very lengthy document that at 18 years of age there is a much lesser percentage of nurses who are positive than there is at the age of 21 years. I think the percentage is about 17 or 18—

The Minister for Health: Seven per cent.

Mr. STYANTS: —immune at 18 years of age and at 21 years the natural immunity that is developed is about 40.

The Minister for Health: No.

Mr. STYANTS: So, as they get older, without any inoculation they develop a degree of immunity.

The Minister for Health: They contract infection.

Mr. STYANTS: I do not know whether they contract immunity or whether they develop it but evidently it is intended to assist them to develop it by a process of inoculation. I am not greatly concerned about the general trainees because I think they will be given time for nature to provide this immunity, or else they will be assisted over the road by the new process of inoculation, but the girls about whom I am concerned are those who go in as special T.B. nurses. Under the Bill they will be accepted at 18 years of age and straightaway taken to Wooroloo.

The Minister for Health: They will not be taken until they have acquired immunity.

Mr. STYANTS: What are they going to do until then? Is the Minister trying to state that they are going to accept them at 18 years of age and keep them for two years inoculating them and endeavouring to make them immune to T.B.?

The Minister for Health: They will not be accepted unless they are immune.

Mr. STYANTS: Are they going to keep them for two years until they become immune or are they going to be taken to Wooroloo as trainee nurses for T.B. I have a suspicion that they will be immediately taken to Wooroloo to commence their training. Possibly the member for Beverley could assist the Committee, because he once had something to say about this matter, and he was one of those who told the Chamber that at one time he was of the opinion that there was no greater danger in nursing at Wooroloo than there was at the Perth public hospitals, but after conversation with Dr. Henzell he had changed his opinion and agreed with Doctor Henzell's contentions.

The Minister for Health: I think my statement is more accurate as to what Dr. Henzell thinks than is anybody else's.

Mr. STYANTS: I would have liked to have seen a document from Dr. Henzell to ascertain what his opinion now is, because he admitted that he was at one time of the opinion that there was a greater danger to girls nursing in T.B. hospitals than in other hospitals. If there is any doubt in my mind the Minister is responsible for it because I remember that he was the mover of this particular amendment in 1946, and I thought at that time what a good thing it was that we had a member who had such definite opinions. Now I am in a quandary as to whether I should believe what I was told in 1946 or whether I should believe the Minister's statement tonight. Hon. E. H. Gray, who was the then Honorary Minister in another place, when introducing the measure in 1946 made very definite statements as to what the medical opinion on this particular subject was. What are we to believe? Has there been an alteration in the opinion of medical men since that time? Mr. Gray stated—

> No trainee shall be accepted for training at the Wooroloo Sanatorium or at any other hospital that may be opened to deal specially with tuberculosis unless she has turned 21 years of age. This age provision is strongly recommended by the Commissioner of Public Health and by Dr. Henzel, who is in charge at Wooroloo.

Is it any wonder that there is a doubt in the minds of members as to which was right? The Honorary Minister went on to say—

> They consider that persons under this age are not sufficiently mature to work in a hospital where, unless the employee takes advantage of all available precautions, there is a certain amount of risk of contracting the disease.

He went on to say that the Bill had the heartiest support of the Nurses Registration Board and this board had nine members comprising the Commissioner of Public Health, the Inspector General for the Insane, two medical practitioners, one of whom must be an obstetrician nominated by the B.M.A., two senior registered nurses and three other general nurses, one representative of and nominated by general trained nurses, one by mental nurses and one by midwifery nurses. Mr. Gray also stated that Dr. Henzell considered that the proposal not to admit persons to the hospital for training purposes in future unless they were at least 21 years of age would greatly reduce the percentage of incidence of the disease.

To send a girl when she is 18 years of age to Wooroloo as a T.B. trainee is simply exposing her to a danger. We know there is a shortage of nurses but that position will clear itself. Some three or four hundred nurses went into the Defence Forces and many of them have not returned to their profession. I understand that there is no shortage of volunteers now for general nursing training but the number is limited by the available training facilities. I think the Minister told the Committee that there were some 750 odd training at the moment, and it takes three years at least to train a nurse for general nursing. It will take some time for those trainees to complete their courses, but immediately they do the problem will be eased.

I understand from the officers of the Health Department that the greatest wastage in nurses takes place within 12 months of their becoming fully qualified, namely, when they get married. What should be done with trainees has been outlined by Dr. Hislop. He did not like the idea of a special T.B. nurse because he thought it was wrong

to commit a girl to nursing this particular type of patient for the rest of her life, unless, of course, she left the service. He said that a special T.B. training school should be instituted for nurses. He also said that we should send nurses in their last year to staff the Wooroloo sanatorium for short periods.

Another point mentioned was that we should not send nurses to Wooroloo unless they built up immunity to T.B. He was of the opinion that as girls grew older they built up greater resistance to the disease. Every member who spoke was of the opinion that the provision made in the Bill of 1946 restricting the age of special T.B. nurses was the correct one. Tonight members are in a quandary because they do not know whether they were told the correct thing in 1946 or are being told the correct version now. It is unlikely that the Honorary Minister in another place in 1946 would deliberately lead the members of that Chamber astray by saying that the Commissioner of Public Health, Dr. Henzell, and the Nurses Registration Board approved of the provisions of the Bill if he had no authority for saying that.

The Minister for Health: And it would not be likely that the Minister in this Chamber would introduce a Bill without the support of his departmental advisers, would it?

Mr. STYANTS: I would like to obtain the opinion of Dr. Henzell in black and white. He even made certain admissions that as girls become older they build up a natural immunity to T.B.

The Minister for Health: That is so.

Mr. STYANTS: That was my interpretation of certain portions of the statement. I still feel it is a great responsibility. Although not likely to affect me personally, because I have no women folk entering the profession who are near and dear to me, I do feel responsibility in regard to the daughters of other people. I am still in doubt and will therefore play safe and stick to my opposition to the clause and see what other members think about it.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: I intend to support the amendment by the member for Kalgoorlie because no girl is permitted to enter into training through the Public Health Department until she is 18 years of age. If we agree to the Bill it will give the Health Department the right to permit these girls to commence their training at a sanatorium. Like the member for Kalgoorlie, I am doubtful whether the correct thing is to permit a girl of 18 years of age to commence her training in such a dangerous occupation as tending T.B. sufferers. Medical opinion differs as to whether a girl builds up immunity from T.B. at 18 years or older. Personally, I think that the older a person is the less the risk. Also, a girl of 18 has not the experience or knowledge that befits her to take the precautions she would take after having trained for two years, or so, in a general hospital.

Like the member for Kalgoorlie, I will have a clear conscience if I vote against the Bill regardless of the percentage quoted by the Minister that the risk of girls of 18 contracting the disease is less than with girls of 21 years and over. Possibly, as laymen, we should not express an opinion at variance with that of a medical officer. I admit we are particularly fortunate in having an officer of the ability of Dr. Henzell in Western Australia. I think he is one of the world's authorities on T.B. In spite of the opinions of Dr. Henzell, expressed by the Minister, I think from a commonsense and a layman's point of view that a girl of 18, without any worldly experience and education concerning this disease, will have greater protection after two years' general training than if she were sent direct to the sanatorium. I think the Committee would be wise to agree to the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The important factor is that when a nurse goes to Wooroloo she should be Mantoux positive. That is, to be then subject to infection and be able to resist it! Her age does not matter. It is not intended to have any girl in Wooroloo who has not been subject to infection and has shown powers of resistance.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: That position applies at the moment. No one is compelled to stay there.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, that is so.

Mr. Styants: Well, how do these nurses contract it?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Because there is no absolute immunity from the disease, but there is greater immunity

for those who have been able to have a slight infection and throw it off. Anyone who is exposed to infection and whose powers of resistance are low is liable to contract the disease, but when a nurse has shown resistance to disease, good conditions, good food, x-ray examinations and recognised protective methods are the important considerations. I am satisfied that what I am proposing is the right thing.

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

Ayes	16
Noes	22
Majority against ..	6

AYES.

Mr. Brady	Mr. May
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Needham
Mr. Fox	Mr. Panton
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Reynolds
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Styants
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Graham (*Teller.*)

NOES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Murray
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Nimmo
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Doney	Mr. Seward
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Hall	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Watts
Mr. Mann	Mr. Wild
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Brand (*Teller.*)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Triat	Sir N. Keenan.
Mr. Wise	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Hill
Mr. Sleeman	Mr. Yates

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I move an amendment—

That in proposed new Subsection (5d) (i) the words "and not more than thirty-five" be struck out.

The amendment would make the provision relate to persons who, at the commencement of training for mothercraft nursing, are not less than seventeen years of age. This would leave the maximum to the discretion of those employing mothercraft nurses.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I accept the amendment.

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

Clauses 6 to 8, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—WHEAT POOL ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 9th November. Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 15 (partly considered):

Mr. LESLIE: I move an amendment:—

That in line 3 after the second word "time" the words "subject to the consent of the Growers' Council" be inserted.

The object is to ensure that the trustees will be carrying out the wishes of those for whom they hold the funds in trust. The amendment is self-explanatory.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I offer no objection to the amendment, as during the debate members expressed confidence in the Growers' Council. It was suggested on several occasions that the council would meet at intervals and that it had power to direct the trustees.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The amendment improves the Bill, but it would not be of much value if a circumstance arose in which there were no pool participants and consequently no Growers' Council. That is a possibility. Under the Commonwealth wheat stabilisation plan, there will be no voluntary pool operating and therefore the trustees would not have a job to do so far as handling wheat is concerned, unless the Australain Wheat Board gave it one. The amendment meets with my approval.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I move amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—"Provided that the corporation shall in every year not later than the thirty-first day of October take out a balance sheet showing all of its assets and liabilities, making due allowance for depreciation and such other reserves as are usual in respect of undertakings similar to that carried on by the corporation, together also with a revenue account for the preceding twelve months, and shall within two months after the thirty-first day of October as aforesaid, forward the balance sheet and revenue account to the Minister for Agriculture for presentation to Parliament.

The Minister shall cause a copy of the same to be laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament on the first sitting day after receipt thereof.

It will be recalled that the Minister who introduced the Bill in another place stated definitely that the trustees would refuse to give information. The proviso will make it obligatory upon them to furnish Parliament each year with the information set out in the proviso. Thus Parliament would be fully aware of how these additional powers were being exercised by the trustees and what the position of the fund was. We shall then know whether action ought to be taken in the interests of the persons who have a claim upon the funds.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I oppose the amendment.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Do you hold a brief for the trustees?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but I have faith in them. I am not, as the hon. member is, biased against the Wheat Pool or the bulk-handling scheme.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Let us have a reason.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I trust them. We have already passed an amendment giving the Growers' Council certain powers. The trustees of the Wheat Pool issue a yearly statement as to the affairs of the fund and their activities. The amendment is unnecessary. The member for North-East Fremantle has in view that, when the proposed report is laid on the Table, he will be able to castigate the Wheat Pool and the trustees.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Do you think there will be justification for it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no justification for the statements made by the member for North-East Fremantle during the discussion of the Bill. He went from the sublime to the ridiculous in mentioning various activities in which the trustees could engage, for instance, hotel-keeping. Extra work would be thrown on the trustees by the amendment.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What extra work?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The main point is that the wheat pool fund would come up for discussion each year. The member for North-East Fremantle is definitely biased against the wheat pool trustees and the bulk-handling scheme. I know some of the reasons, too.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Let us have one of them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So far as bulk-handling is concerned, he was greatly disappointed because the policy of his Government was not carried out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister is not in order in discussing bulk-handling.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I feel that the member for North-East Fremantle is biased against the wheat pool and the trustees of the fund.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I assure you that you are wrong.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS. I hope I am. I oppose the amendment and hope the Committee will not agree to it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It is coming to a pretty sorry pass when the Minister feels constrained to argue against an amendment of this kind, because it is by no means unreasonable. It ensures that Parliament will be fully informed as to what will be done with this additional power that will enable the trustees to go outside the limits of the Trustees Act. Are we as a Parliament to say to these men, however reputable and honourable they may be, "We are giving you this additional power—a most unusual thing to do—and we are not concerned what you do with that power when you get it?" I want to emphasise that the Minister's counterpart in another place informed members there that it was no good his holding up the Bill and asking the trustees for further information, because they would not give it. Are we to leave the trustees in a position to refuse information if we require it? That statement alone justifies the inclusion of this provision. I lifted it from the Bulk Handling Act; and if it is considered fair and reasonable that Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. should be obliged to inform Parliament what it is doing, why is it unreasonable to have the same requirement with regard to the trustees of the Wheat Pool?

I submit that the Minister did not give us one single argument of any weight against a proposition of this kind, which is not unusual, and simply means that the

corporation, in the use of the extra powers, shall advise Parliament once a year of what has been done. Ministers are obliged to do that with their own departments and have to say what they have done with the money voted to those departments. Yet the Minister argues that this will be irksome to the trustees. All they have to do at present is to invest this fund; yet it is too much to ask them to give an account to Parliament of their stewardship! It is my intention to press this to a division, and those members who vote against a reasonable proposition like this will be hard put to it to justify their action. Any strong attempt to defeat the amendment will be an indication of a desire to have something covered up.

The Minister for Lands: No.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is something we should not tolerate when giving this extended power.

Mr. LESLIE: I want to be particularly clear on the necessity for this amendment. As I understand it, the Bill is not intended to provide the trustees with power outside of the Trustees Act.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, it is.

Mr. LESLIE: I differ from the hon. member; because, whatever they do, they are still subject to the Trustees Act, in that they are expected to carry out their trust as they would if they were reasonable men employing their own money.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Surely you know the Trustees Act would not permit investment in industrial shares?

Mr. LESLIE: I do not know that the Act specifically limits investment in industrial shares.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It sets out what investments can be made.

Mr. LESLIE: It sets out what certain investments may be. The parent Act sets out the limits within which the trustees can invest the money. They have in one direction, in their opinion, departed from those limits by investing in Commonwealth bonds, because that is not an investment related to the wheatgrowing industry.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Is there anything excluded from the field of investment in this Bill?

Mr. LESLIE: No, but they are still under the Trustees Act.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: How can you assert that?

Mr. LESLIE: I say they are. Regardless of the instrumentality appointing them, they are still under that Act. What I was mainly worried about was that the trustees, of their own volition, could build up a fund regardless of the growers. My amendment provided that the Growers' Council could stop them from doing that. That amendment will also safeguard the position which the member for North-East Fremantle wants safeguarded, in that the Growers' Council will require to be informed of the particulars referred to in the hon. member's amendment. He mentioned that his amendment was taken from the Bulk Handling Act. He knows as well as I do that the two concerns are entirely different.

The bulk-handling concern does not consist of a body of shareholders, or policyholders, or pool participants. It is in the nature of a public utility and is responsible to Parliament, and nobody else. The people who use the bulk-handling facilities cannot demand of the trustees a balance sheet and statement of accounts. The pool is a different thing altogether. It is composed of people somewhat similar to shareholders in a co-operative concern or a company, and the trustees are responsible to those people. In this case, they are responsible to the Growers' Council, which can demand all these particulars and say, "If we do not get them, out you go." I cannot understand, in view of the fact that my amendment has been accepted, why this one should be considered necessary. It is not necessary to bring these particulars to Parliament, though it would be if the trustees could not be called to account in any other way.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The statement made by the member for North-East Fremantle requires to be answered. He said it was possible that the Growers' Council could gradually go out of existence. I pin my faith to the Growers' Council which stands for the operations of the trustees. If the statement made by the hon. member has any substance and the Growers' Council goes out of existence, what is the position?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for North-East Fremantle is basing his argument on the fact that we shall have continued Commonwealth control of the wheat industry.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: We might, too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was said here that there was a possibility that within four or five years the control would revert to the State. Then our Growers' Council and the Wheat Pool trust fund would become very active indeed.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I think the Minister has failed to put up a case.

The Minister for Lands: That is always your argument. I have never explained a case correctly yet!

Hon. A. H. Panton: Open confession is good for the soul.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The Minister has failed to give an effective answer to the question of the member for Geraldton. The Minister's only argument against the amendment is that the submission of this report, annually, to Parliament would enable the member for North-East Fremantle, or any other member, to debate it each year. Surely that is not a legitimate argument against the amendment. I think it is a good one in favour of it. If the Minister has such faith in these trustees as he has indicated—and I think he has—he should have no objection to their report being submitted for tabling in both Houses.

How would any discussion in this Chamber on the contents of the report be in any way damaging to the trustees, the Growers' Council or the pool participants if the trustees had invested the moneys wisely? I think the growers would do that. There seems to me, therefore, every reason why we should in granting these additional powers to the trustees, require them to prepare a report each year for submission to the Minister in order that he might table it in each House of Parliament. Members might then know how the additional power was being used by the trustees, and could discuss the contents of the report if they so desired. Does the Minister think that if the amendment is not carried it will be impossible for the member for North-East Fremantle, or any other member so inclined, to discuss in Parliament the activities of these trustees? Any member could take action in this Chamber to discuss the activities of the trustees, under their Act, by moving the adjournment of the House or adopting any of the other methods available under our Standing Orders. The Minister's opposition to this reasonable amendment is based upon what he considers to be the motives causing the member for North-East Fremantle to move it. Whatever those motives might be they do not constitute any justification for the Minister's basing his opposition on them. Even if the motives of the hon. member are as bad as or worse than the Minister suggests, that does not in any way affect the amendment which has to be decided on its merits. If members judge it on what it contains they cannot do other than support it.

Mr. ACKLAND: The Acting Leader of the Opposition and the member for North-East Fremantle forget some very important factors. We have just accepted an amendment, which I believe to be unnecessary, to provide that all that the trustees do is to be subject to the members of the Growers' Council, of whom there are 20. As some members had doubts about the position, perhaps it was advisable that the amendment should have been moved. The member for Mt. Marshall has pointed out that there is no parallel between these two institutions. One is simply a public utility serving the people who grow wheat in this country, whereas the Western Australian Wheat Pool is an organisation which has funds that have been built up only by the people who have contributed their fraction of a penny, and by the investments of those fractions.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, all the people who grow wheat.

Mr. ACKLAND: No, a section of them. The member for Geraldton has asked how many pool participants there are, and has suggested that they are a dwindling number. Such is not the case. Since the inception of the Wheat Pool of Western Australia I think some 14,000 people have been pool participants. I also think that at present, 6,000 people are active pool participants. When we consider that there are only about 8,500 licensed wheatgrowers in Western Australia we realise that the pool participants are not a dwindling number, but represent a big percentage of the

growers. There is not much fear, in my opinion, that in the next five years the pool will go out of existence. What is going to happen at the end of that period, no-one knows. The amendment is unnecessary. I believe it would act as an encouragement to members to review the matter annually, and take up the time of the Chamber as has been done on this occasion. If that is done with the Wheat Pool of Western Australia, there are 100 other organisations of a co-operative nature that might equally well be dealt with by this Chamber in similar manner. I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister said adequate information was supplied in the report issued by the trustees of the pool but I do not think anyone would be satisfied with that information. It gives the figures for revenue as a certain amount, less expenditure, less reserves for taxation and then the credit balance.

The Minister for Lands: And the investments.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It gives the names of the companies but does not say how much money is invested with them. The details supplied would not satisfy anyone. I repeat, for the information of the member for Mt. Marshall, that the Trustees Act, which governs investments of this kind, states—

> A trustee may invest any funds in his hands, whether at the time in a state of investment or not, in manner following, that is to say:—
>
> (a) In any of the Parliamentary stocks, or public funds, or Government securities of the United Kingdom, or of the Commonwealth, or of any of the Australasian colonies;
>
> (b) On mortgage of real estate in Western Australia;
>
> (c) In debentures, or other securities charged on the funds or property of any municipality in Western Australia;
>
> (d) On fixed deposits in any incorporated or Joint Stock Bank carrying on business in Western Australia;
>
> (e) In any security, or manner authorised by any Act heretofore in force and not hereby repealed;
>
> (f) In the debenture or preference stock of any company now or hereafter carrying on business in Western Australia and certified by notice in the Gazette, signed by the Colonial Treasurer, as a company in the stock of which trustees may invest;
>
> (g) In any of the stocks, funds, or securities for the time being authorised for the investment of cash under the control or subject to the order of the Court, and may also from time to time vary any such investment.

There is the limit for the investment of trust funds, but the Bill proposes to go outside that and allow the trustees of these funds to do as they like with the money without any limit. It would allow them to go into all sorts of businesses, if they so wished, speculative or otherwise, completely outside the provision of the Trustees Act. If we are to give them that extended power, we should know what they are going to do with the money. The Honorary Minister, who is closely associated with these people, has told members that they would not give him the information if he asked for it. Are we to accept a situation where men are to be given extended powers to do what they like with a large sum of money while supplying as little information as they like in their reports? Is Parliament not to be concerned about what they do with the power given them? We have reached a pretty pass if a deliberative assembly such as this is to hand out powers of that kind without wishing to know what use is to be made of them.

Members know the nature of the reports issued from time to time, which contain little information of value. Although it might cost a fair bit to prepare and supply the information, that would ensure proper methods of bookkeeping, which in turn would mean that members of the Growers' Council would know what the position was. It could not hurt anyone other than those who might desire to keep to themselves what they are doing with the money. If that be the purpose of withholding the information, it is the strongest possible reason why this extended power should not be granted. We should not even consider granting the power without the reasonable safeguard provided by the amendment, and any attempt on the part of some members to prevent that safeguard going into the Bill should be sufficient reason for urging that the Bill as a whole be rejected. I will be surprised if the amendment is not agreed to.

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

Ayes	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	17
Majority for	..	..	5

Ayes.	
Mr. Brady	Mr. Murray
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Needham
Mr. Fox	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Graham	Mr. Panton
Mr. Hall	Mr. Reynolds
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Smith
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Styants
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May	Mr. Brand
	(*Teller.*)

Noes.	
Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. North
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Seward
Mr. Doney	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Watts
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Wild
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell
Mr. McLarty	(*Teller.*)

Pairs.	
Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Triat	Sir N. Keenan.
Mr. Wise	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Hill
Mr. Sleeman	Mr. Yates

Amendment thus passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and returned to the Council with amendments.

BILL—STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Requested Amendment.

Amendment requested by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The Council's requested amendment is as follows:—

Clause 3: Add at the end of the clause the following words:—"That the increase of the annual salary payable as aforesaid shall operate as from fifteenth day of October, 1947."

I draw attention to the fact that the Council's message refers to an amendment which increases the appropriation and that, of course, conflicts with the Constitution Act.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: On the ground that the amendment is unconstitutional, I move—

That the amendment be not made.

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

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

House adjourned at 11.38 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 17th November, 1948.

CONTENTS.

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

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Reports of Committee adopted.

BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South) [4.37]: I am going to support the second reading of the Bill, which proposes that three commissioners shall be appointed and they are to be under ministerial control. I have never been in favour of one commissioner with engineering qualifications only. The reason for my contention is that a constructional engineer has only about 10 per cent. of the qualifications required for such a position. Having been a railwayman for 35 years, I think that the chief commissioner should be appointed from the traffic side of the railways. By going through the traffic branch, a man acquires about 90 per cent. of the knowledge necessary for railway administration. He passes through the traffic branch, accounts and audit branch, the goods and signalling branches and, in fact, goes through all the sections. I have occupied every position in the railways from telegraph operator and cook right up through the whole service.