

someone. If this line is to be disposed of, then we should get something near its value including the value of the rolling-stock and motive power that will go with it.

I intend to support the motion, but I do so with the greatest reluctance, and I feel that before any steps are taken to carry out the rest of the recommendation, a searching inquiry should be held into the whole of our railway system and its management.

On motion by Mr. Cornell, debate adjourned.

BILL—BETTING CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council notifying that it insisted on its amendments Nos. 1 and 2 but did not insist on its amendment No. 3, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Sewell in the Chair; the Treasurer in charge of the Bill.

The TREASURER: In this message the Legislative Council notifies that it insists upon two amendments. The two amendments insisted upon are the same in principle. They have to do with the question of whether a bet laid by a bookmaker is to be regarded as part of his turnover, and therefore whether he has to pay tax on a bet which he himself personally makes on a racehorse. We argued this out previously, and there is not much to be gained by arguing it out again here. I move—

That the Assembly continues to disagree to the amendments made by the Council.

Mr. COURT: Without prolonging the discussion on this matter, I reiterate that I still hold to my previous views that we should concur in the Legislative Council's amendments. There are very good reasons why, in my opinion, the bookmakers should be subject to this tax.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

The TREASURER: I move—

That the Council be requested to grant a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council and that the managers for the Assembly be Mr. Court, Mr. Lapham and the mover.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

*House adjourned at 12.38 a.m.
(Wednesday).*

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 12th December, 1956.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Industrial Arbitration Bill, incorrect Press report	3201
Questions : Northam timber yard, stock shortage	3201
Discontinued railway lines, (a) concessions and considerations	3202
(b) handling of bulk wheat at sidings	3202
War Service Land Settlement Select Committee, extension of time	3203
Bills : Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment, 1r., 2r.	3202
Betting Control Act Amendment, Assembly's request for conference	3203
Vermin Act Amendment (No. 1), report, 3r.	3208
Freemasons' Property, 2r., remaining stages	3203
Mines Regulation Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3204
Returned	3223
Marriage Act Amendment, 2r.	3207
Liquid Petroleum Gas, 1r.	3208
Public Works Act Amendment, 1r.	3208
Land Tax Act Amendment, 2r.	3208
Land Act Amendment (No. 3), 2r., remaining stages	3223
Church of England Diocesan Trustees and Lands Act Amendment, 1r.	3232
Bread Act Amendment, Com.	3232
Marketing of Onions Act Amendment, 1r.	3241
Fire Brigades Act Amendment, 1r.	3241
Traffic Act Amendment (No. 3), 2r.	3241
Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3241
Adjournment, special	3242

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

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION BILL.

Incorrect Press Report.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Seeing that the report in this morning's Press could be interpreted to mean that one Labour member of this Chamber voted against the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment measure, would you, Mr. President, take steps to see that the correct voting is published?

The PRESIDENT: I have received an assurance from "The West Australian" that the correction will be made.

QUESTIONS.

NORTHAM TIMBER YARD.

Stock Shortage.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

As stocktaking at the Northam timber yard, operated by the Wood Distillation and Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry disclosed at the 4th March, 1956, a net stock

shortage valued on selling prices at £2,309 6s. 6d., will he inform the House whether any action has been taken to discover who was responsible for the shortage, and where the timber was disposed of?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Yes. As reported by the Auditor General in his 66th report (Appendix 2)—“Full investigation by the C.I.B. resulted in restitution of £237 4s. 1d. and conviction of the yard manager for theft of this amount. Further timber valued at £91 12s. 10d. has since been located and debited, but it is impossible to sustain further action.”

DISCONTINUED RAILWAY LINES.

(a) Concessions and Considerations.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. L. C. Diver) asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is it the intention of the Government to give to residents of those areas where rail services are discontinued, concessions and considerations similar to those contained in Clause 18 of the agreement between the Government of Western Australia on the one part and the Esperance Plains Co. on the other?

(2) If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied:

The requirement in the terms of the agreement is to administer the State Transport Co-ordination Act so as not unduly to interfere with or hamper the transporting of goods to or from the said land. Where railways are closed, adequate road facilities will be provided. Therefore in both cases these should be reasonable transport services.

(b) Handling of Bulk Wheat at Sidings.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. L. C. Diver) asked the Minister for Railways:

As to the arrangements for the handling of bulk wheat at those sidings to be affected by the discontinuance of rail service—

(1) To what stage has the discussion between the Government and Co-operative Bulk Handling progressed?

(2) Will he furnish the House with a detailed report of how it is proposed to solve this problem?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) No discussions have yet taken place.
(2) Details are not yet available.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.

First Reading.

Introduced by the Chief Secretary and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [4.35] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to enable employees of the Lotteries Commission to enjoy the benefits of either superannuation or a contributory pension scheme through an assurance company.

Members will recall that, prior to 1954, the commission operated under the authority of temporary legislation only, and was therefore prevented from sponsoring any scheme designed to provide its employees with pension benefits upon retirement.

Now that the commission has been placed on a permanent basis it is only reasonable that its staff should be covered by superannuation or insurance. The Bill proposes that the commission's employees shall have the option, as a group, of contributing to the State Superannuation Fund, or to an approved scheme of endowment assurance available through leading life assurance societies.

Under such a scheme policies are issued on the lives of participating employees, maturing with bonuses at retirement age or on death prior to retirement. Premiums on such policies are met from the combined contributions of employer and employee, and the sum assured plus bonuses is payable on retirement either in a lump sum or in the form of a weekly pension as prescribed by the trust deed.

Pure endowment policies, which do not share in bonuses and carry no death risk, are available to those employees not eligible for endowment assurance by reason of age or health. These policies are payable in full on the maturity date, or all payments are refunded with compound interest on prior death.

It is likely that such a scheme would be favoured by the commission as well as by its staff which is comprised largely of female employees few of whom would elect to contribute for State Superannuation Fund benefits.

The commission has been assured by the secretary of the State Superannuation Board that its contributions to an insurance fund would be no greater than would be its subsidy under Government superannuation. Nor would a precedent be created by the introduction of endowment assurance by the commission, since several other semi-Government bodies already operate similar schemes for the benefit of their employees.

It is felt that the commission's staff should now be given the opportunity to contribute to a pension scheme that will give to each employee who elects to participate that feeling of security which comes from the knowledge that provision has been made for his or her retirement,

and that protection will be given to dependants in the event of the contributor's death prior to retirement. I commend the proposal to members and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

BILL—BETTING CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Request for Conference.

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting a conference on the amendments insisted on by the Council, and notifying that at such conference the Assembly would be represented by three managers.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extension of Time.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move—

That the time for bringing up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into War Service Land Settlement be extended to Thursday, the 28th March, 1957.

The select committee undertook the job of inquiring into the question of war service land settlement; but with so much legislation to be considered at the end of the session, we have been unable to apply our minds to the settlers' claims or to give both sides fair consideration in order to bring in a fair report. We therefore ask that the time be extended.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have no objection.

Question put and passed.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Report, etc.

Report of Committee adopted.

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

BILL—FREEMASONS' PROPERTY.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [4.42] in moving the second reading said: As its long title indicates this Bill seeks to enable the trustees of certain bodies of freemasons to acquire, hold, dispose of and deal in property as corporate bodies. Under the law at present these trustees operate only during their lifetime or during such time as they might be available to act. There is, therefore, no perpetual operation of the organisation to which they belong.

Should any trustee die or move his domicile from Western Australia a considerable amount of procedure is required in making the necessary transfers so that

the new body of trustees will be in a position to deal with the property of that particular grand lodge or constituent lodge. Under the Bill, where a lodge passes a resolution adopting this legislation the trustees of the lodge will become a body corporate, having perpetual succession, with a common seal. They will be given power in the corporate name to acquire, hold, or dispose of, or otherwise deal with property in such manner as they shall be authorised to.

The Bill aims at giving such bodies corporate power not only in respect of land which might come under their jurisdiction after the passing of the measure, but also in respect of any land which has been acquired by the lodge prior to the coming into operation of the Bill. Provision is made for any land vested in the body corporate to be recorded in the normal legal way.

There is also provision for the master and the secretary of a lodge to operate under certificates so that the power which will be given to any body corporate set up under the proposed law will be capable of being used in a proper and legal manner.

Instead of complications being set up in regard to the management of the property and the affairs of such organisations when a trustee dies or goes to another part of the world, the Bill, when it becomes law, will offer to those organisations the opportunity of carrying a motion in appropriate form and becoming bodies corporate. When that event takes place, they will be able to acquire and deal in property without any risk or danger in regard to the trustees being individual trustees. They will then be able to proceed the same as any other body corporate, and the administration of such organisations will be much more convenient and sensible and less expensive in future, should the Bill become law, than has been the case. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [4.45]: I commend this Bill to the House as being not only a simple one in itself but also as meeting a simple need. It falls into the same category as those Bills we are called upon to consider from time to time dealing with certain trustees of diocesan property which the trustees may require to sell. This measure has been rendered necessary because small lodges acquire property and elect trustees, and then the whole transaction is forgotten until some years later when action is necessary and it is found that one or both of the two trustees have died or possibly that the remaining trustee has moved elsewhere and is not available to carry out the legal duties required.

On many occasions it has been necessary for legal action to be taken so that a fresh trustee can be appointed. That has caused

a great deal of bother legally and has occasioned delay, and the unnecessary payment of fees. This Bill will enable the controlling body to pass a resolution at its annual meeting so that the necessary action may be taken to comply with this legislation. Once that is done the small lodges, by a resolution passed, will be able to elect new trustees or fill vacancies as set out in the Bill, according to the story that has been told very clearly by the Chief Secretary.

It is obvious that some lodges do not possess any property and therefore there is no need for trustees to be appointed, but when the time comes that a lodge acquires property in the shape of a hall or some other building, it is necessary for trustees to be appointed and to exercise the necessary authority. In Queensland and in New Zealand somewhat similar Acts have been passed and the result has been a great improvement in simplifying procedure and avoiding unnecessary charges.

If I may do so, I congratulate the Parliamentary draftsman in this instance for having drawn a very simple Bill which adequately meets the position. It is a measure which is exactly what these bodies require, and I hope the House will accept it as presented.

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—MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [4.51] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has as its objective the removal of a provision in Section 8 which prohibits aliens from voting for the election of a workmen's inspector.

Under the regulations, the Governor may appoint three classes of inspectors, the first being the district inspector; the second, the inspector for special investigations; and the third, the workmen's inspector, who is elected by the unionists working in the mines. Before the workmen's inspector can become eligible to be a candidate in an election he must be a natural-born or naturalised British subject.

In these days in the mines quite a large percentage of the labour force consists of new Australians who are desirous of having a vote in the election of the workmen's

inspector. So that members will understand the position more clearly I shall read what Section 8 says—

(3) workmen's inspector, who shall in accordance with the regulations be elected by the majority of persons bona fide employed in the mines in the several mining districts; but no person shall be eligible for such appointment unless he has been engaged in general practical underground mining work as a working miner for at least five years and is the holder of a Commonwealth Health Laboratory Certificate, and of a certificate of competency or service as an underground supervisor under this Act, and until his election has been approved by the Minister.

Provided that no person shall be eligible to vote in any election for a workmen's inspector who is not a natural-born or naturalised British subject.

The purpose of the Bill is to remove the proviso so that every miner who is a member of the union will have the right to vote.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Although he may have been working underground for only a week?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is so. Whether it was for a week, for four years, or for 10 years the worker will be entitled to vote.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He would require to possess some qualifications.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The object of the Bill is to remove the bar to the right to vote. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [4.55]: I was extended the courtesy of being provided with a copy of the Bill in advance by the Minister and I have had an opportunity of examining it and comparing it with the Act, and also of making inquiries in the various quarters, including the Chamber of Mines, which is quite happy with the amendment. The Minister has told us a very full story of the position. The provision really concerns the right to vote for the position of workmen's inspector, one of the three inspectors engaged in mines. That is the only provision affected. Up till now, if a worker was not a naturalised British subject, he had no say in the election of the workmen's inspector in any particular zone.

Members will realise that in these days, with migrants coming to our shores very freely, they have to wait five years before they can become naturalised British subjects. Many of them are well-educated men. In many centres—Wittenoom Gorge is one of such centres—there are many migrants congregated. They consider that

if they are working and carrying out their tasks properly, they should have the right, the same as other workers in the mine, to vote for the election of their inspector.

It is also laid down in the Act very clearly that the inspector must be a qualified person, and he must have held a responsible position in the mines for five years. There is no question of the applicant for the position of workmen's inspector not being qualified. The only provision sought to be amended is the proviso in Section 8 of the Act which says that anyone who is not a naturalised British subject should not have a say in such an election.

As I explained, the parties concerned are quite happy that the migrants, who in many cases are good workers, should have a vote for the selection of the person to represent their interests in the mining industry. I pass this information on to the House. I can assure members that the Mines Department, the Chamber of Mines and the other parties I have been in touch with are quite happy with the amending Bill. I support the second reading.

HON. J. D. TEAHAN (North-East) [4.58]: Mr. Simpson said that the managements of the mining companies were satisfied with the provisions contained in the Bill. From the inquiries I have made of the unions and unionists, I find that they are also satisfied. In reply to the objection that a migrant could have been in the country for only a week and could be working underground in the mines, I would point out that such a position would not arise unless that person had a good knowledge of the English language. That is one of the requirements for working underground. Every underground worker must have a good knowledge of English to understand the danger signals and safety measures adopted underground.

I should say that in mines like Gwalia, half the work force consists of new Australians. The same applies to the Mt. Ida mine, and at Mt. Magnet there would be quite a number of new Australians working in the mine. It would not seem fair if 100 new Australians working in the mine, out of a total work force of 140, were not given a say as to who should be the workmen's inspector. From what I know, they are very interested in underground conditions, and in those who represent them.

This inspector's job is an important one. He has the control of safety measures, and it is he who sees that the men do not work in positions where they can meet with danger. In giving these new Australians—who are, after all, expected to have a good knowledge of the English language—the right to vote for their inspector, we are giving them something to which they are entitled.

HON. J. J. GARRIGAN (South-East) [5.1]: This is only a small measure and is non-contentious. All it proposes to do is to give to new Australians—whose services we were happy to have three or four years ago when there was a shortage of labour, and who have to be unionists—the right to say who shall be their workmen's inspector. That inspector must be a highly qualified man with five years' mining and underground supervisor's experience. He is the underground boss of mine employees, and tells them whether they are doing right or wrong from a safety point of view. He has to educate the new Australians in the matter of safety precautions. This being a non-contentious measure, there is no reason why it should not be passed.

HON. G. C. MACKINNON (South-West) [5.2]: There is one matter to which I would like to draw attention and which is exemplified in this Bill, and that is the increasing tendency to grant to migrants, whether they are naturalised or not, voting facilities in connection with matters other than the franchise for the legislature of the State and the Commonwealth. More and more it is becoming noticeable that the advantages of naturalisation are growing less and less, and this Bill presents another facet of that tendency. Here a provision that has applied only to natural-born Australian subjects or naturalised citizens is being extended to people who are not naturalised.

That is being done with a certain amount of logic behind it. It is said that these people work in the industry and are therefore entitled to vote, but I contend that it still cuts down the advantages of naturalisation. In a country with a migration policy of such a magnitude as ours, there is a great risk in decreasing the advantages of naturalisation. I mention that word of warning in relation to this measure. The particular area in which I am interested is not affected, but the tendency to which I have drawn attention is one which should be stressed—namely, that the advantages of naturalisation are being whittled away.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [5.4]: I support the Bill. Only recently one of these persons came to me and said he could not understand why he could not have a vote the same as his fellow-workers in connection with the election of the last mines inspector, though he could vote for the selection ballot and had the right to vote for officers of his union. It is hard to make these folk understand why that should be so. They are accepted as good citizens, and pay for their tickets, and are on the job every day, and they desire to vote for the man they think would give them the best service in relation to their working conditions underground. This Bill will provide them with that opportunity.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [5.5]: I support the measure, which will enable these new Australians to vote for workmen's inspectors. As has already been indicated, there are a large number of migrants in the North-Eastern Goldfields and the passage of this Bill would certainly tend to create a better feeling of friendship and a greater fraternisation between them and their fellow-workers. It is rather hard that, working as they do with natural-born Australians, they have not similar rights with regard to voting. At Gwalia and such places, there is a large percentage of these men, and their vote would have a great bearing on the appointments made. I consider this measure in the best interests of all concerned; and, seeing that neither the Chamber of Mines, nor the A.W.U., and other unions involved are opposed to it, the measure is worthy of support.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [5.7]: The Minister was good enough to pass me a copy of the Mines Regulation Act, and I have glanced through the relevant provision. I was very fearful that as soon as a man had the right to vote he would have the right to become an inspector. But I realise that there are certain qualifications needed in that connection. However, I could not help feeling that the proviso must have been inserted in the first place for a reason, and I was wondering what effect its removal would have.

I do not know what the position is today, but formerly nearly all these miners were new Australians; and I wondered whether, with their tendency to club together and support one another, they might elect one of their own number to a position of this kind. Such a man might have the qualifications required but might not be the type who could work harmoniously with others; and that is essential.

Hon. W. R. Hall: There are Italian shift bosses.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would not think that would be so at Gwalia, though I have not been there for some years. I frequently went there formerly. I sat outside on the lawn of the Gwalia hotel and chatted with these people, and I found them very good fellows. However, I wanted to prevent them from appointing one of their own people to these positions, though I do not suppose there would be any harm in it. I do know that these new Australians have a vote for a Labour candidate.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Not unless they are naturalised subjects.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is a most extraordinary position. They can vote for a man, but when it comes to a vital issue—

Hon. W. R. Hall: Not unless they are naturalised.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: They can vote for a candidate.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Not in a selection ballot.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: They used to be able to. Perhaps they were not as careful as they should have been. I know some who did. There must have been a reason for this proviso; otherwise it would not be there. However, I presume the Minister knows that things will be all right, and there is no reason why I should oppose the measure.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [5.10]: The provision has been in the Act for many years. Probably it was inserted in the early days for a specific reason. In those times, particularly on the Golden Mile, there were some differences of opinion between new Australians and our own natural-born citizens and the provision could have had something to do with that.

I would like to comment on the point made by Mr. MacKinnon concerning the removal of provisions such as these tending to discourage naturalisation. There is a total difference between these days and prewar years. I know that new Australians entering this country often remained here for 20 to 30 years and never dreamed of becoming naturalised.

However, the introduction of the Commonwealth social service scheme made naturalisation very attractive. There have been old men living in the North-West most of their lives, probably having run away from sailing ships in the early days. When they have reached 65 they have not been eligible for a pension, although they have paid income tax each year they have been taxable. When such circumstances have become known, they have influenced other new Australians to seek naturalisation, and that has been occurring over the past few years.

The removal of this provision would have an effect upon those working in the mines. But after all, there is a fairly big turnover in the mines. Some work for a number of years, save their money, and then enter business enterprises. This Bill is designed to put new Australians in the same position as other miners and give them the right to vote for the one they think most fit to look after their safety underground.

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 Assembly.

BILL—MARRIAGE ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [5.15] in moving the second reading said: This Bill seeks to provide—

- (1) For a legal minimum marriage age of 16 years for females and 18 years for males
- (2) For a magistrate to hear and determine applications from persons of lower age seeking to marry because of the certified pregnancy of the intended bride;
- (3) That no marriage, otherwise properly contracted, shall be voided if one of the parties is under the minimum age.

At present the position is that our legislation does not prescribe a minimum marriageable age. We are bound, therefore, in this State by the Common Law of England which provides that a valid and binding marriage may be contracted when the male is 14 years and the female 12 years old.

Section 9 of the principal Act, however, provides that no person under 21 years of age, unless married previously, may marry without parental or guardian's consent. In the absence or incapability of a parent or guardian the consent of a justice of the peace may be obtained. If a parent, guardian or justice refuses consent an appeal may be made to a judge or a magistrate sitting in chambers. An appeal, however, cannot be allowed if the consent was refused by both parents when the parents were living together.

In England the law relating to marriage was governed originally by the Ecclesiastical Law as administered by the Ecclesiastical Courts. Under that law the age at which persons could give consent and marry was the age at which they reached puberty, which was 14 years for males and 12 years for females. When the Ecclesiastical Courts were merged in the High Court of Justice in England, the Ecclesiastical law became part of the Common Law.

In 1929 the British Parliament passed the Age of Marriage Act which provided that a legal marriage could not be contracted when the parties were under 16 years of age. This Act, however, has effect in the United Kingdom only. The Common Law of England still applies in any part of the British Commonwealth where it has not been altered by any local statutory enactment. The only statutory enactment in this State which affects the Common Law is in Section 9 of the principal Act which provides that persons under 21 years of age cannot marry without parental or guardian's consent.

The position in Western Australia is, therefore, that if this consent is obtained a marriage can be celebrated between persons of any age. If the male is under 14 years or the female under 12 years the

marriage is voidable only, and can be affirmed or disaffirmed by the parties as and when they reach the age of 14 in the case of the male, or 12 in the case of the female.

This applies in all the other Australian States with the exception of Tasmania where since 1942 the minimum age has been the same as that proposed in this Bill, namely, 18 for males and 16 for females, except where an order to the contrary is issued by the Registrar General or a police magistrate. Information from Tasmania indicates that these provisions have been satisfactory and have provided for the occasional exceptional case. During the past three years the number of brides under 17 years of age has been about 2.6 per cent. of the total and those under 18 years about 4.6 per cent. Bridegrooms under 17 have been about 0.05 per cent. of the total and those under 18 about 0.09 per cent.

The Registrar General in Tasmania exercises his discretion regarding under-age marriages very carefully. He requires the husband to be economically independent and the marriage to have a reasonable prospect of stability. He seldom permits an under-age marriage where it appears the male's motive is to escape prosecution.

In New Zealand the minimum age since 1933 has been 16, the law there providing that a registrar may not issue a certificate and no marriage may be solemnized by a registrar or minister if a person is under that age, but that a marriage is not deemed unduly solemnized if this provision is infringed. There has not been any substantial agitation in New Zealand to raise the male minimum to 18. This may be because of the small number of bridegrooms who were under 18.

The latest figures available in this connection were 28 in 1952 and 35 in 1953. I understand there is a body of opinion in New Zealand who are in favour of increasing the minimum age for both sexes to 17 or 18. I have no details of the law in other countries but I understand that most European countries prescribe a minimum age of at least 16 years.

Turning to the Bill it will be noted that as from the coming into operation of the Bill, unless a stipendiary magistrate issues the necessary order, no marriage can be solemnized if the male is under 18 or the female is under 16. The magistrate may authorise the marriage of persons under these ages if he is satisfied the female is pregnant, and that marriage would be in the interests of the parties and of the expected infant. The magistrate may conduct his hearing in camera and may accept a medical certificate as evidence of pregnancy.

Members will note that the Bill provides that if any marriage is celebrated between under-age persons, without the

magistrate's approval, the marriage is not invalid as a result only of this breach. This provision appears in the legislation of New Zealand and other countries and is prompted by the realization that mistakes as to age do occur and that when this is so there is no justification for penalizing the children of the marriage by making them illegitimate.

In all cases of marriages of minors the registrar or minister would require evidence of age, permission of parents or guardians when either party is under 21, and the order of the magistrate if the Bill is agreed to and the intended husband is under 18 or the bride is under 16.

The ages of 18 years for males and 16 years for females have been selected not so much because they are the ages operating in Tasmania, but because according to statistics in Western Australia they are the "critical" ages. I say "critical" in the sense that below those ages the marriages that occur are so few as to be negligible, while above the ages the numbers of marriages increase very markedly. They are in fact the ages which our community customs show to be the general minima for marriages.

In regard to the ages at which marriages take place in Western Australia, the latest statistics readily available are for 1953. If we take the three years, 1951, 1952 and 1953, the average number of brides per year for those three years were two of 14 years of age and 12 of 15 years. The average number of brides under 16 years for those three years was thus only 14 per year.

For 16 years and over, the average numbers were 66 at 16 years, 186 at 17 years, 367 at 18 years, 512 at 19 years and 528 at 20 years. The average number of bridegrooms per year for the three years were one at 16 years, eight at 17 years, 42 at 18 years, 108 at 19 years and 212 at 20 years.

The annual average of 14 brides under the age of 16 years for the three years was about .0025 of the average number of brides. The average of nine bridegrooms under 18 would be about .0015 of the total average number of bridegrooms. The proposals in the Bill have been carefully considered by and agreed to by the Director of Child Welfare and the Registrar General. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Liquid Petroleum Gas.
- 2, Public Works Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [5.26]: When I turned over my office desk calendar this morning I was confronted with this injunction—

If you do not stand up for something you will fall for anything.

I trust that the House will not fall for the proposals which are contained in this Bill.

Briefly this measure proposes that the land tax on properties in the city proper should be increased by from three to five times; it proposes that the land tax on rent-producing property owned by churches shall be doubled; it proposes that the tax on land owned by clubs and associations, the R.S.L. and other organisations, shall be doubled; it proposes that house owners will pay at the increased rates shown in the Bill and it proposes also that farm lands which have hitherto been exempt from land tax will now pay at the rate prescribed in this legislation.

There is one thing which astonishes me; and that is that, notwithstanding all these proposed vicious increases many drones in the community are to get off scot-free and their properties will suffer no increases in tax. By "drones", I mean those who hold unimproved land without attempting to do anything with it. Notwithstanding the heavy increases I have mentioned, which are proposed to be inflicted upon the owners of improved land, the position is that the holders of unimproved land up to a value of £5,000 will pay no more than they do at present. Even where the unimproved holding is worth £20,000 the percentage of increase of tax payable by such owner is only 15 per cent., as against a 50 per cent increase which will be imposed on the holder of improved land of the same unimproved value.

When one considers those facts one is inclined, if not to express amazement, at least to smile at the remarks made by the Chief Secretary, when introducing this Bill, to the effect that it was the opinion of the Government that persons in rural areas holding land out of production should pay a higher rate of tax than is imposed on improved properties. The same opinion applies to people holding unimproved town lots.

We could subscribe to the sentiments expressed by the Chief Secretary when moving the second reading of the Bill but, as I have just indicated, the facts are that the owner of unimproved land has to pay no increase at all on a holding of up to £5,000 in value, and on a holding up to £20,000 he pays an increase of only 15 per cent. as against a 20 per cent. increase which is being imposed on owners

of improved land. Although I have hardly commenced my remarks I feel I have already said enough to convince the Chief Secretary, and the House, that there is something radically wrong, and grossly inequitable, in the reconsidered proposals in this Bill.

That is not an invitation to the Government to increase the rates on unimproved land which are in this Bill. But it is the expression of an emphatic opinion that, to say the least, the proposed rates on improved land should be greatly reduced. The introduction of this measure is accompanied by a proposal to bring farm lands within the taxable field—they have been exempt for 25 years or so. But the manner in which they are to be brought into the field is extraordinary. They are to be brought in for a period of three years. That seems to me to be nothing but jiggery pokery. If they are to be brought in they should be brought in permanently; if they are to be excluded, they should be excluded permanently. But to bring them in for the years ended June, 1957, 1958 and 1959 only does seem to be an extraordinary proposition, based on no logical principle at all.

The Chief Secretary: I do not know that they were Government proposals.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am not concerned whether they were Government proposals or not. I address myself to them as I always do, and I ask the question: As proposals, are they sound or unsound—regardless of the source from which they came?

The Chief Secretary: It is one of the times that the Government desired to co-operate; and having done so, it is pulled to pieces.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: It seems to me that it is a proposal without any logical principle behind it. For 50 years in this State our system of land tax has been based on the principle that here has been a flat rate of tax imposed by the taxing Act, and under the assessment Act the rate as so imposed is rebated by 50 per cent. if the land is improved. In other words, there has been a flat rate; and the rate on improved land has always been half the rate payable on unimproved land. I do feel that that system should not be departed from.

The Chief Secretary: You would support it if I moved an amendment along those lines?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: In this Bill, however, that whole system is being cut out, and improved lands are to be taxed virtually at the same rate as unimproved lands; the only difference now between them is to be a flat 1d. all the way through.

I do feel that is a retrograde proposal. The taxing Bill should strike a rate, and whatever that rate is we should not depart from the principle which has existed

for 50 years, that improved lands—whether farm or city lands—should bear half the rate as set out in the taxing measure. A fortnight or so ago I addressed some questions to the Chief Secretary, one of which was as follows:—

Since it appears that the last annual report of the State Commissioner of Taxation with respect to land tax was the 34th annual report tabled in this House on the 21st of September, 1943, will the Government make arrangements for the tabling without delay of an up-to-date report?

My object in asking for that report was that there would be available to this House, and to the community in general, information of sufficient authenticity and comprehensiveness to enable this Chamber to give a considered opinion on the proposals before us now. The reply I received to that question was as follows:—

A report is not required under the Act.

As one who has been working with the Income Tax Act and the Land Tax Act for probably the best part of 30 years, I was fully aware of that fact. I was fully aware that the Act did not in express terms say the commissioner should furnish a report; but as a matter of common sense a report was necessary; and for 34 years, from 1907 to 1943, reports were tabled annually.

The Act did not say a report had to be tabled, but the fact remains that the commissioner did furnish an annual report and it was one of considerable interest, and one which furnished considerable information. I was told in reply to that question that with the introduction by the Commonwealth of uniform income tax in 1942 and the pegging of land values, the necessity for an annual report by the State Commissioner of Taxation disappeared. I disagree with that. But even if the necessity ceased to exist in 1942, I suggest that the necessity was certainly revived in 1948 with the unpegging of land values.

I may remind the House that the reports which it was customary for the State Commissioner of Taxation to furnish to this House under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907, were very useful reports. For example, it was quite customary for each report dealing with land tax to furnish tables showing, in respect to each municipality and road board within the metropolitan area, the unimproved value of the land in each district, as at the last preceding 30th of June; also the valuation as at the valuation before that date; and also the valuation as at the valuation before the second date.

Similarly, in respect to country lands, information was furnished to the effect that district valuers inspected and classified the soil in various country towns and areas. Again information was furnished as to the areas of country lands which

were liable to land tax; the unimproved value of those lands as at the 30th June, preceding the report; the unimproved value at the previous valuation; and the unimproved value at the valuation before that. With information such as that before us it would, in my opinion, have assisted the House very materially in looking at the proposals with which we are now dealing. Although it has been suggested that the tax to be imposed under this Bill will in a full year produce £1,500,000, I would not be at all surprised if it produced nearer £2,500,000 or £3,000,000.

On the same day as I asked the previous question which I have mentioned, I also requested information regarding the valuations of the city and the metropolitan municipalities, and of country road board districts with respect to various areas. Again I was informed that the statistical data required in regard to those questions was not compiled annually, nor was it readily available. I was told that this information would take a considerable time, and cost a good deal, to obtain; and that due to wartime economies—and we all know that the war has been over a few years—all work of a statistical nature not considered essential was discontinued. I was also told that the necessity for the information had not arisen, nor was the cost of maintaining such data considered to be justified.

Whoever prepared that reply has been rather careless with the truth, because the fact remains that the Land Tax Department in this State does keep very extensive data. One has only to look at the tables that appear in the report of the Federal Commissioner of Taxation with respect to land tax in Western Australia to see that extensive records are kept. I will go on to that question again in a few moments.

I called for that information because I think we have to bear in mind that land tax revenue depends on two bases. It depends not merely on the rate of tax, but just as profoundly on the valuation on which the rate of tax is levied; and it does seem to me that, since 1949, the Taxation Department has been valuation happy—certainly with respect to the city and metropolitan area and, so far as I can gather, in respect to country lands as well.

The increased values which the taxation valuers have placed upon land in various districts have had a double-barrelled effect because these days the fact remains that most of the road boards adopt the values of the taxation valuers. Here it is interesting to remember that the Act of 1907—the Act which is still in operation, our Land Tax Act—says this—

From the returns lodged by the taxpayer and from the values fixed by the local authorities and from any

other information in his possession the commissioner shall value the land.

It can be noticed that in those days it was a descending scale—first of all the taxpayer's return, then the local authority and, finally, such information as came into the commissioner's possession. Since those days we have gone the full circle, and now the citizen is taxed, not on the basis of his return; not on the basis of the local authority's valuation; but on the basis of the valuer's valuation—that is, the valuer who is employed by the Taxation Department.

With the adoption by road boards of land tax values, we find that road board rates have skyrocketed. We only have to read this morning's issue of "The West Australian" to see that there has been a protest meeting in the Osborne Park ward of the Perth Road Board because their rates have gone up 300 per cent. in consequence of the adoption of taxation values. South Perth, I understand, is in exactly the same category. It has been suggested to me that in South Perth, municipal rates have gone up so high that persons are being compelled, by force of circumstances, to sell their premises.

We find also that the owners of many private homes have had their land tax increased from £3 to £18. So the citizen is being caught on both prongs of the fork. He is being caught for greatly increased road board rates on the one hand, and greatly increased land tax rates on the other hand, simply because of increased valuations.

It is interesting to see what revenue has been produced in consequence of these increased valuations; because I need hardly remind the House that, for the past seven or eight years, there has been no increase in the rate of land tax, yet the land tax collected by the Treasury has risen from £111,000 in 1947-48 to £209,000 in 1951-52, and to £529,000 in 1955-56.

That does give a quick idea as to the manner in which people have been subjected to increased road board rates on the one hand, and increased land tax on the other hand, by the simple expedient of greatly increasing the valuation of their properties, which also brings about great inequality between residents of different districts. This is because the Taxation Department revalues about eight suburbs a year, with the result that we may find one suburb being rated for road board purposes and for land tax purposes at say the 1955 valuation, whereas others are still being rated at 1952 valuations. So that even between districts there is inequality, according to the rotation of the land tax valuations.

For the information of members, I would like to read just how the valuations of some districts have risen in recent years. I will not burden the House with

details of the whole of the suburbs in the metropolitan area, but I find these figures are of considerable interest. In Fremantle, the valuation in 1951-52 was approximately £2,500,000—that was the unimproved value of the district—and it was revalued in 1955-56 at £6,500,000. In Nedlands the value in 1950-51 was £2,000,000, in round figures; and it was increased in 1955-56 to £7,000,000. In the City of Perth, the 1951-52 value was £22,000,000, which was increased in 1954-55 to £32,000,000. In Melville, in 1949-50, it was under £1,000,000; but in 1954-55, it was increased to £4,000,000.

In the Perth Road Board district, the 1953-1954 value was £4,000,000, which increased in 1955-1956 to £8,500,000. The Rockingham figure in 1950-1951 was £350,000; but in 1954-1955, it increased to £1,300,000; and I also understand that notwithstanding the increase which has taken place in Melville, that district, with Claremont, Cottesloe, Gosnells, Midland Junction, Mosman Park, North Fremantle and Victoria Park is due for a further revaluation during this current year. They are official figures; and as I indicated earlier, when figures like that are available, I think I may have expected in reply to the question I asked a fortnight ago an answer a little more illuminating and a little more helpful than the one I received.

On this question of valuation, I think all of us should be greatly concerned. The system has been developed by a group of theorists; and, if anyone is sufficiently interested, he will find the principles—or the so-called principles—of valuation set forth pretty thoroughly and comprehensively on pages 87 to 89 of the Federal Commissioner of Taxation's Thirty-Third Annual Report.

A point which I desire to make with respect to these valuations of land is that in suburbs which are more or less built up the valuation is based on a scarcity value, which is not a fair value within the meaning of the Act. There may be only one vacant block lying in a street or 20 vacant blocks left in a district and because a block of that nature is purchased by someone who is prepared to pay any price for it, it does not follow that that price automatically becomes the unimproved value of every other property in the district.

Similarly, in South Perth, for example, a prospective buyer could see a block of land on which a weatherboard house was built and decide it would be a good spot for a block of flats. He decides to pay a couple of thousand pounds for the block of land, but that does not mean to say that the land next door on which a £500 weatherboard house is built, should be assessed on an unimproved value of £2,000. However, generally that is the case and that is the reason why we have these extraordinary increases which I have just read.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What about the excessive prices paid by the oil companies?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes. A businessman may have to shift his premises. Take the people in Wellington-st. who have been given notice by the Railway Department. They have been given six months' notice and have to go somewhere; and from sheer force of circumstances they will pay any price. But because they pay a high price to get land for special purposes, it does not necessarily follow that a whole district is, in consequence of that, to have its values jacked up by 100 per cent. and pay land tax on that top valuation. Some 2,000 years ago a wise man said, "I know not whether the way of a bird in the air; the way of a serpent on a rock or the way of a man with a maid." Had he lived in less primitive times I think he would also have included the calculation of the "C" series index and the way of the valuers of the Taxation Department.

I would like to give an illustration to show how these things happen. On town lots 89 and 90 in Fremantle, which is at 13 Henry-st., Fremantle, in the warehouse district, a substantial stone building worth probably £5,000—certainly not less—is erected. For quite a few years up to 1955, the unimproved value of the land was assessed at £4,615, which was a pretty fair valuation. On the 30th June, 1955, the taxation valuer was in the district and he increased the unimproved value of the land to £13,050.

The accuracy of this valuation may be gathered from the fact that a couple of months later the property—the land and building—was sold at public auction and it brought—the whole shooting box—£10,000. So, the improved value of the property was £10,000, and surely there is no better way than a public auction of testing the maximum value of property. If we take from £10,000, the value of the buildings at, say £5,000, we get pretty close to the original unimproved value of £4,600. Yet, the unimproved value is assessed at £13,000. In these circumstances it is not surprising to see that the total valuation for Fremantle has increased, as I have said, from £2,500,000 to £6,000,000. Of course, the tax collected on the increased value is treble, or more than treble what it was.

Then, too, there has been brought to my notice the valuation of a farm. At the 30th June, 1951, the unimproved value was assessed at £19,000. At the 30th June, 1953, it was assessed at £75,000. The prospective land tax on this property—it has been exempt from land tax up to date—will be £1,264. In addition the road board adopted that valuation with the result that the rates went up from £297 to £1,052.

Turning to the effect of the proposals in the Bill on city property—or country property for that matter because I am

conscious of the fact that although there are not many properties in the country of the same high value as we find in the city block, an organisation such as the Chase syndicate could have property coming within the category of the figures I am about to present—we find that a city property which is now paying £3,700 in land tax will be required to pay £15,000. These are actual cases that have been brought to my notice.

The existing tax on another property is £2,240 and this will be increased to £9,465. Another one is proposed to be increased from £1,546 to £7,811; and another from £300 to £900. This last property—the one that is to go from £300 to £900—was purchased a couple of years ago by a company which took into account the then existing land tax when considering whether it was a good proposition to buy the place. The municipal rates on the property are £260, and the water rates £461. In 1951, the land tax was £204, increased in 1954 to £311, and it is now to be £900. This particular concern is still not making a profit—that is, before the imposition of the treble land tax.

I would like to give the House another illustration. In the city there is a company employing shareholders' funds of £330,000, and in addition to those funds it has mortgages on the property for £104,000 and on top of that it owes the bank and other creditors £42,000. So, it has £476,000 of shareholders' funds mortgages, bank overdraft and so on tied up in the business. In 1948, this company's land was valued at £49,000. In 1950, the value was increased to £92,000; in 1952, it was increased again to £120,000 and, in 1955, to £147,000. What it will be next year, goodness only knows. All that is known is that the property could not be sold for anything like that figure.

The land tax over the period has been similarly increased from £260 in 1948, to £630 in 1952, and £760 in 1955. Notwithstanding the fact that the tax has trebled during the past seven years, it is now proposed that it shall be increased from £760 to £3,454. That company has the funds that I have mentioned, tied up, and its profit last year was £16,000, yet it is now asked to pay away one-fifth of its total net profit in land tax. This company has a turnover of £500,000 and is paying £40,000 in salaries. It is a competitive business where this impost cannot be passed on. The company is faced with this alternative that it has to save in some way, and how else can it save than by sacking a few employees. We will find that this will be the inevitable and inescapable approach of many businesses.

The additional cost will be passed on wherever possible, but there are many instances where this tax cannot be passed on, and then some other means will have to be taken to counteract it, and the most ready

means will be the dismissal of employees. I am concerned when I look at figures such as these. I think, too, that the figures I have just mentioned will support this proposition which I would like to make, that if the Bill is given a second reading—I hope it will not—the House should make a serious endeavour to stop the futility and the injustice of hitting the business man and the farmer by these fantastic valuations.

I do feel that the whole question of values has got right out of hand and that the time has come for us to say, "The value which the department assessed in 1951 was a pretty high one; it had been jacked up once or twice after the war, and we ought to take it as a fair and reasonable base, and hold the line until Parliament otherwise decides."

The Chief Secretary: It is not the only instance where values have got out of hand in recent years.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: In recent years, values have, generally, been pretty steady. Not only have values been steady, but I would go further and say that house values in any district in the metropolitan area have dropped. Today houses are not fetching what they could have fetched in 1951. I know that in my own district there are several houses which were sold in 1951 for £7,000, and for which the owners would be very lucky to get £5,000 today; and I think that is typical. It applies to the country towns no less than to the city.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Before tea I was discussing the great desirability, in my opinion, of stabilising values as at the 30th June, 1951, because that was a boom year when wool and all other prices were up; and when, in the metropolitan area, it was customary for cottages or ordinary residences to be sold for about £7,000—whereas, today, one would have difficulty in getting £5,000 for them, as I think any land agent would agree.

So it was with farms. Five years ago farms brought the highest prices ever recorded, but today that market has receded considerably; and so I suggest that in view of the way in which valuations have got out of hand, and the serious effect they have had on the amount which a person has to pay, we should fix the rate on the basis of the 1951 values.

The Bill also proposes for the first time to impose a graduated tax starting at 1d. on the first £5,000, 2d. on the excess over £5,000 and up to £20,000 and then 3d., 4d., 5d., 6d. and eventually 7d. on the highest range. I suggest that there is no justification for increasing graduations in the land tax. A person who owns a block of land worth £40,000 pays a certain amount of tax on the flat rate and the owner of a block worth £80,000 pays on the same flat

rate double the amount of tax, and surely that is sufficient! If a man owns land of twice the value of the other person's property and pays tax of twice the amount, I believe the equities are preserved and that there is no justification for increasing the rate of tax according to the value of the land.

If we do increase the rate of tax in that way we also strike an anomaly inasmuch as, assuming that a person owns a block of land of an unimproved value of £5,000, he pays on that at the rate of 14d., and if 12 persons owned a block of land, each having a 1-12th interest, worth £60,000, they would each pay double the amount of tax, which I do not think is fair. If a person has a £5,000 interest in that block of land worth £60,000 he should not have to pay any more tax than if he owned a separate block of land worth £5,000.

The Bill also proposes that even church property shall not escape these excessive increases. There is one group of church property which in 1949 was taxed £660, but which through increased valuations paid £1,151 in 1950 and is today paying £1,550. In respect of that land the Bill proposes to increase the land tax now to £3,300. Another denomination is paying the existing land tax of £1,036 which the Bill proposes should be increased to £2,281. When we realise that the revenue from church property is devoted entirely to church maintenance, interest on mortgages, religious or social welfare work, and so on, I think it is unjust that the churches should be subjected to this increase in taxation because their existing revenue is all too small for the charitable and other calls made on it.

I come back now to a point I mentioned earlier. If there is to be no increase in tax on the holder of unimproved land up to £5,000 in value why should the churches be called upon to pay any increase? Similarly, there is further evidence that little or no consideration has been shown to the manifold effects of this Bill, because mutual life insurance companies are given no consideration in it. Those companies have no shareholders and all their funds are owned by policy-holders, the companies being, in fact, nothing more than an aggregation of individuals saving for their old age. I feel that properties owned by mutual life insurance societies should be at least partially exempt, or taxed at concessional rates.

We had explained to us what the position was some five years ago when the Federal land tax was in operation, but I would remind members that under both the Federal Land Tax Act and the New South Wales Land Tax Act, which was passed last month, mutual life insurance companies are given special treatment and I hope that if this Bill is passed they will be accorded similar treatment under it. At present the measure proposes to increase the tax on friendly societies, the

R.S.L., the trades hall, sporting clubs and a lot of similar institutions, all of which are exempt under both the Federal and New South Wales Acts and which, if these vicious rates are to be put into operation here, should, I submit, be exempt from taxation of this nature.

The churches are completely exempt from this tax under the Federal and New South Wales Acts and I would recommend to the Minister that he carefully study the exempting provisions of the New South Wales Act. If he has not a copy of that Act or the exemptions which it contains I will be happy to furnish the details to him. Briefly, the exemptions provided by that Act are any property owned by a public authority, and land owned by any marketing board, land owned by or in trust for any incorporated hospital—they are all already included under our Act—land owned by any charitable or educational institution, land owned or in trust for any religious society where the land is held solely for or the proceeds of the land are devoted solely to religious, charitable or educational purposes, including the support of the aged or infirm clergy or the wives, widows or children, land owned in trust for any association of employees or employers, land owned by any friendly society and land owned by virtually any society, club or association which is not carried on for the pecuniary benefit of the individual members thereof.

The list of exemptions is nearly as long as the alphabet and I commend it to the Government because it was with that intention that I suggested, two or three weeks ago, that the Government should consider bringing down a completely new Land Tax Act in Western Australia. I recall that when I first entered this House I suggested to the then Leader of the House, the Hon. Hubert Parker, that the taxation legislation of the State was in such a condition that the remnants of the land tax legislation, contained in the Land and Income Tax Act of 1907, should be cleaned up by scrapping that Act altogether and bringing down a new Land Tax Act more in keeping with modern times and conditions. I still consider that unless something of that nature is done, this proposed legislation as it stands at the moment is going to create chaos and hardship.

I understand that the extra amount which this tax is expected to produce in the year 1957-58—that is, the year following this current financial year—is £1,000,000. The Treasurer has budgeted for an extra £471,000 during the current year. Let us assume for a moment that it is necessary to raise that comparatively small amount—that is, comparatively small in the whole State budget scheme of things—of £471,000 by increasing the land tax rate. Let us assume that there is no other method available of saving £471,000 in any other direction and that we want to raise the amount for which the Treasurer has

budgeted this year. I submit that that can readily be done without implementing the drastic proposals contained in this Bill. It can be done simply by increasing, by 50 per cent. the existing rates of land tax.

The collections last year were £529,000 and 50 per cent. of that amounts to £264,000 in round figures. That will produce £793,000. That is to say, a 50 per cent. increase would produce, from the existing land tax payers, £793,000. From the calculations I have made, it is fairly reasonable to assume that if the farmers were brought into the taxation field and were taxed at a rate of 50 per cent. above those now existing, it would produce another £200,000 which would give the Treasurer his estimated £1,000,000 revenue from land tax for the current year.

It does not require any of the drastic alterations which are proposed in this Bill; it requires nothing but to adhere to the existing formula of striking the rate of, say, 4d. instead of 2d. on unimproved land and 2d. instead of 1½d. on improved land. That would give the Treasurer the amount for which he has budgeted during this current year. Incidentally, it is worth bearing in the mind the coincidence of the similarity between the increases which I have mentioned and the increase which was effected in the s.p. bookmakers' tax. That tax was increased from 1½ per cent. to 2 per cent. which, as will be noticed is, virtually the same increase as I suggest, namely, increasing the land tax from 2½d. to 4d. on unimproved land and from 1½d. to 2d. on improved land.

I would again emphasise the importance of a stable valuation for the calculation of this tax because even the amount of £1,000,000 would be greatly increased if the valuations which have taken place during the past 12 months are taken into account. However, the question arises: Could this amount of £471,000, which the Treasurer requires during the current year from one source or another, be made up by some other means? It has been more than suggested that if this Bill is not passed rail freights will be increased. I hope that there is not any member in the House who will fall for that. This Bill stands on its own merits and must be considered without any threats about rail freights being increased.

Hon. H. L. Roche: It could be a promise.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes, it could be, because I feel that if this Bill is or is not passed the result will have no bearing on rail freights. Other than for the consideration we are discussing tonight, rail freights will or will not be increased. However, if it does come to a question of squaring up to the extent of this £471,000, I would mention a couple of points which I think are worthy of consideration. Take the price the Railways Commission is paying for coal today. How much could be saved

if that coal were purchased at the best competitive price? I should say it would be a tidy sum. How much could be saved by the commission if it cut out the expenditure of £1,000,000 on overtime or even a substantial part of it?

The Minister for Railways: All of that amount was not spent on overtime.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We should cut out part of the administrative staff.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Well, either way would do. How much could be saved by the Railways Commission, if it offset the loss of £1,500,000 on metropolitan railway lines by justifiably increasing the metropolitan railway fares? It could quite easily save a large part of that amount on passenger traffic.

The Minister for Railways: And drive its customers away.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I would submit this point also. During the past 12 months the Treasurer has been giving away £10,000 here, £20,000 there and £30,000 somewhere else. I admit that he has given those sums away, in most cases, to deserving causes. But my submission is that generosity should not exceed ability; and if one cannot afford it, one has no right to give such amounts away. I think there are many directions in which saving could be effected to the total of this £471,000; that is, by other means than increasing the land tax. To me, this tax is the most illogical form of taxation that one can imagine so far as the State Treasury is concerned.

It is imposed on land regardless of whether there is a mortgage on it; regardless of the term on which it is let and regardless of everything except the hypothetical value which some valuer has placed on it. One could, with equal logic, say, "We will tax what a man has in the bank; we will tax every bank balance 6d. in the £ on the first £1,000; 1s. in the £ on the next £5,000; 2s. in the £ on the next £10,000, and so on," or we could say, "We will tax a man's sheep. We will tax him 5s. a head on the first 1,000, and 10s. a head on the second 1,000, and so on."

There is no logic in this tax whatsoever when it is imposed by our State Treasury. There is logic in its imposition if it is collected by our local authorities. That brings me to another point. Land has always been the traditional taxing subject for local authorities. In so far as we are going to increase land tax by this Bill, it will still further jeopardise the prospects of local authorities collecting their revenue. So far as they are concerned it is logical to have regard to the value whether it be the unimproved value or the rateable value of the land since the services which are rendered by local authorities have a direct bearing on the land because they build roads and so on. It is commonsense to levy a rate on land in those circumstances.

However, the implementation of these proposals by the Government means that it is a sectional tax without any logic. It is without regard to the businessman's ability to pay it; it is without regard to the fact that the land is owned by a landlord and let to a tenant; it is without regard to the fact that the owner may have leased the property for five or ten years on conditions as they existed a year or two ago which means that he has no chance of passing the tax on during the currency of the lease. Again, the land may be subject to a heavy mortgage which is eating up all the return that is being obtained from the leasing of it. There are 101 instances which could be cited against the imposition of this tax.

Another consideration is that the total tax which is levied in Western Australia by the State Parliament represents only 8 per cent. of our State revenue. We know that our State revenue is not all that it ought to be, but when one remembers that probate duties, licences, land tax and the vermin rate, etc., represent only 8 per cent. of our State revenue, I submit that if we are going to deal with the State budget as such we have to look around for wider fields than the land tax field. We have to look to other causes and considerations.

I suggest that now is not the time to put more burdens on the citizens of this State, but it is the time to lighten them. Therefore, on wider consideration we must look elsewhere for the real solution to the real difficulties which are facing Western Australia in so far as its finances are concerned. That brings me back to the point that was mentioned recently both by Mr. Wise and myself—namely, that the real solution to Western Australia's problems is to obtain a larger share of the income tax which is collected in this State by the Commonwealth Government.

The position is that last year—I would remind the House of the figures which I quoted a week or so ago—throughout Australia, the Commonwealth income tax collections amounted to £574,000,000, of which only £157,000,000 was returned to the States. To Western Australia only £12,000,000 was returned out of £30,000,000 collected. By the restoration to this State of its income tax rights the real solution to the problem will be found. Failing that, we are entitled to expect by some other means a greater share of the income tax collected. If £30,000,000 has been collected in this State from income tax, we should be entitled to the return of a larger amount than £12,000,000.

Then there is the incidental question of payroll tax amounting to £1,000,000 which was paid by the State Government to the Commonwealth Government. It was not so many years ago when the Commonwealth Government was collecting flour

tax, but decided to exempt Tasmania in that regard. It could not make a direct exemption because that was unconstitutional, so it collected the flour tax through one window and paid it back to Tasmania through the other window. I suggest the same thing can be done here. I am one who subscribes to the view that payroll tax should be abolished completely. Failing that I submit that the strongest representations ought to be made to the Commonwealth Government for the immediate and direct remission to the State of that tax of £1,000,000.

Those are the fundamentals of the case. I am encouraged by the fact that in the views which I have just expressed there is not very much difference of opinion between Mr. Wise and myself. The Premier has virtually conceded that this is the real problem. I submit that he should devote himself with greater energy to solving our affairs in that manner. If I can be of any assistance at all, for my part I am prepared to render whatever assistance I can in achieving the rectification of the position which I have just described.

In common with other members I have received a circular from a group which urges the rejection of these measures. The group consists of the Taxpayers' Association, Perth Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Manufacturers, Real Estate Institute of W.A., Retail Traders' Association, Farmers' Union of W.A., and the Pastoralists' Association. The views which have been expressed by that group as to why this legislation should be rejected are very sound.

In conclusion, the only point I wish to make is this: This Bill is not concerned primarily with the Budget of this year, but with that of the next year, 1957-58. Therefore I submit that we should deal with this Bill next year. The amount that is expected to be derived from this tax during the present financial year is approximately £400,000 additional to the amount derived from this source last year. I have indicated that, in my opinion, the rejection of this Bill will not wreck the Budget nor will it result in increased rail freights for country areas.

There is a paucity of information in the speech made by the Chief Secretary. I submit that between now and the next year we should get from the Commissioner of Taxation a report for which I asked a fortnight ago, and which it was customary for him to submit to this House year by year for 30 years. Let him furnish us with the particulars of values and the districts, for both the metropolitan as well as the country areas. When that is done the Government and ourselves can study the report. We can see whether the rates should be increased at all.

With more information in our hands we can decide whether farm lands should continue to be exempt as they are today,

or whether they are to be brought within the taxing net. Those things can be done next year. Meanwhile let us say that we are against bringing farm lands into the taxable field, and against further increases of the land tax which, by stealth—that is, by a variation of valuations—has already been doubled or trebled since 1951.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [8.6]: I have always been under the impression that when the land tax was introduced in this State it was not mainly for the purpose of raising revenue, but to force people to develop and improve their land. But over the years it seems that this tax has been used to build up the funds of the Treasury. I admit that in the 19th century similar taxation measures were used in England principally for the purpose of enabling the shire councils to operate. However, that did not apply in this State. This Bill imposes very heavy increases, not only on unimproved and virgin land, but also on improved land, and to a very marked degree. The same now applies to the principle of rating as applied in 1890. I want to quote from a book published by Boyle & Davies on the principles of rating in 1890. The introductory portion states—

There is, perhaps, no branch of the laws upon which our social institutions are founded in which an English citizen has more direct and personal interest than that which regulates the incidence of the burden of local taxation; and yet it is hardly too much to say there is no other branch of law of which the average Englishman exhibits less knowledge and even apparent indifference. The latter may be born of a despairing idea that it is hopeless for the lay mind to attempt to comprehend a system so complex, and, at first sight in many respects, so anomalous. Many men will fight à l'outrance in the County Court over a disputed claim of a few pounds, but submit with resignation to what they feel to be an excessive assessment of their property, although it entails an annual contribution of a large sum beyond the amount they ought fairly to be called upon to pay.

I believe those words still apply today.

We should first consider the principles on which lands liable for taxation should be valued. As far as values are concerned the law today appears to be in a pretty chaotic state. If one goes to the Taxation Department to find out how the method of valuation is arrived at, one discovers all sorts of methods being used. In this respect some principle should have been laid down years ago. As a matter of fact the principal Act of 1932 provided in Section 30 as follows:—

The value of any interest or estate subject or liable to contribution to land tax under this Act shall be determined

so far as practicable by reference to the tables for calculation of values provided by the regulations.

I have made inquiries in regard to that aspect from the Taxation Department, but it cannot trace any regulations that have been framed at any time relating to the table of calculation of values. Apparently, as Mr. Watson said, that department is working on the Commonwealth principles of taxation, which can be as far apart as the poles in assessing the tax on unimproved values in this State. At present we have one system used by the Taxation Department, and another by the Water Supply Department. One wonders whether all these systems are equitable. I am very much afraid that in many cases they are far from equitable.

I know that in one portion of my electorate the properties are in a gazetted town site. That particular town site is not built where the properties are located, but in another place. Those properties are rated on townsite values, yet the actual town-site area is rated on values that apply to agricultural lands. I believe the Chief Secretary is aware of this. I am certain he is. But no move has been made to clear up the anomaly. The people in the gazetted town site are subject to high values. Under the Town Planning Act they are not allowed to subdivide land. That is another one of the anomalies which exist today.

I have come to the conclusion that, as these valuers do not seem to have any defined principle to work on, the final assessment is like that of a land agent who assesses the value of a property. It is only a matter of opinion, and is based on what another property in the same street, or half a mile away, might have been sold at. The valuation is not based on the original value of the virgin land, plus any devaluation of the £.

There is no doubt that any person who seeks to value property on an unimproved basis, particularly in these days, must be very thoroughly acquainted with the subject. As I intimated before, he should be guided by a definite principle, particularly when taxation of the nature proposed in the Bill is applied.

In this regard should we start from any particular point in arriving at the valuation? Do we start from the original price of the virgin land and base the valuation from that point, by considering it in proportion to the devaluation of the £, and so arrive at the unimproved value in that manner? Or do we, as the Chief Secretary said in his introductory remarks, have to consider the improvements on the property such as buildings, clearing, fencing, water, etc., and deduct that amount from the estimated market price of the property to arrive at the unimproved value?

When working on a basis such as that we will finish up, in many instances, particularly in regard to farm properties, with a minus valuation. That shows that the suggestion that the Chief Secretary had in his notes would not produce anything that would suit this Government, or an equitable valuation. I firmly believe that to arrive at the unimproved value of the property we should get back to the original purchase price and work upwards in accordance with the devaluation of our currency. Then we would have a definite, sound, unimproved value of land.

But today we have a value based on the sale price of a property on the east and another on the west. If excessive prices were paid for those properties, then the person owning the centre property would have to suffer under this system of valuation. There is no doubt that the method I suggested would give a lower value; but it would also be a truer one. Naturally it would not suit the Government, and that shows how vicious this system is on the basis on which it is applied today.

There are some who would say that the unearned increment on a property, brought about by what has been spent by Governments and local authorities on roads and general improvements and public utilities, increases the value of a property. But, after all is said and done, who provides the wherewithal to build roads and lay down railways and provide all the other facilities? It is provided by the people who are being taxed under this measure. Over the years they have paid more than 10 times the value of their properties by way of rates and taxes in return for the facilities received, and sometimes those facilities have not even been provided. Yet the Government proposes to increase this tax to the extent provided in the Bill.

It is interesting to read the remarks of the present Premier, Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, when a similar measure was introduced in 1948, because it shows how inconsistent he is. I propose to quote from the Parliamentary Debates of 1948, volume 2, pages 2642 and 2643. I shall read the remarks made by Mr. Hawke when the McLarty-Watts Government brought down a Bill to increase land tax by 25 per cent., or approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the £, with a view to raising the massive sum of £10,000. Today Mr. Hawke is budgeting to raise from this increased taxation the sum of £1,000,000 per annum. As Mr. Watson intimated, and I say also, the sum raised annually—particularly after the end of 1957—will be nearer £2,000,000 in excess of what the Government is getting today. In 1948, Mr. Hawke said—

As far as I have been able to ascertain, the Government has no mandate for the bringing down of this Bill. Had it been suggested during the election campaign that the parties which now

constitute the Government would increase the land tax in the event of their becoming the Government, I think there would have been an uproar, especially in the agricultural districts. I am sure, too, that the then Leader of the Liberal Party (now the Premier) and the then Leader of the Country and Democratic League (now the Deputy Premier) would have hotly repudiated any charge made against them of an intention on their part, in the event of becoming the Government, to raise the land tax. However, the fact is that the Government has introduced this measure for the purpose of increasing that tax by 25 per cent., by the method of increasing the rate of the tax from 2d. to $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the pound. By this increase the Premier hopes to receive additional revenue to the extent of £10,000 per annum.

It has been said that it is possible for a Government to tax the shirt off a taxpayer's back by indirect methods of taxation without his raising any serious complaint; but the imposition of even the slightest amount of increased taxation by way of a direct tax brings from him a great amount of protest and wrath. I am not sure whether the Treasurer has heard of that saying before, and of course I cannot say whether he gave it serious consideration when he and his colleagues were deciding to increase the land tax. It seems to me that since the Government has been in office it has increased the burdens upon the people on several occasions, but mostly by way of indirect imposition, such as raising railway freights and fares, increasing water rates and matters of that description.

The Premier: I should say that those are direct charges. There is nothing indirect about them.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: They are direct to an extent, but not to the same extent as is the land tax.

On pages 2643, Mr. Hawke continued—

The Government will have to answer to the land taxpayers for this increase in the land tax.

Mr. Yates: Does it amount to much per individual?

The Premier: No.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The question is not whether it amounts to much for each individual taxpayer; the fact is that it is an increase in taxation amounting to £10,000 per year. I have not met anyone who appreciates the privilege, if it be so, of paying more taxation this year than he paid last year.

The Premier: It will bring in a bit more than £10,000. That is the minimum. Land values are on the up-grade.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: It may be that the Premier has been far more cunning, speaking in the financial sense, in connection with this measure than he has led us to believe. It may very well be that the increase in the tax by virtue of this Bill will be twice £10,000 a year.

Mr. Hawke went on to say quite a bit more in that strain. I do not want to weary the House by quoting all of it; any member can read it for himself. The point is that the words of Mr. Hawke at that time were in direct contrast to what he proposes under this Bill. This tax which it is proposed to inflict is 100 times as great as what the McLarty-Watts Government proposed in 1948. Yet Mr. Hawke and his Cabinet have the effrontery to bring this measure before Parliament and ask us to accept it!

In his introductory remarks, the Chief Secretary told us that costs to the Government were increasing each year. And don't we know it! There is little apparent effort to reduce those costs. There is a constant building up of Government departments, and people are expected to pay for it. If members look at the Estimates they will see that there is a proposed increased expenditure for the next financial year of £4,000,000 over last year. The same thing happened the year before, and the year before that, and the year before that again.

Can we continue to increase costs at the rate of £4,000,000 a year without bumping our heads against a brick wall? How much more taxation will people stand before they really start to kick or before they go broke? That is what will happen in this State if the Government continues to increase its taxes, particularly those with which it is burdening the State this year. Business people will be going to the wall, and then the worker will be in a sorry plight—the worker that the Government professes to want to do so much for! The proposals in this Bill will mean a complete discouragement to workers in their efforts to buy homes, because they will be so hard hit with taxation that they will not be able to keep their homes going.

When one looks at the Estimates of expenditure for the coming 12 months, one wonders what is going on. There is an estimated total expenditure of nearly £55,000,000. Look at the estimated increased costs for each of the Government departments! They are really astounding. I do not want to weary the House, but I will quote the estimated increased expenditure for each of the departments. Here, in round figures, are the totals—

Department.	£
Premier and Treasurer	614,000
Child Welfare	76,000
Works and Water Supplies	30,000
Housing and Forests	47,000
Chief Secretary	35,000
Local Government	8,000
Lands and Agriculture	211,000

	£
Health and Justice	345,000
Education and Labour	326,000
Mines	70,000
North-West and Shipping	255,000
Native Welfare and Police	77,000

In those circumstances, can we wonder that there is a necessity for the Government to budget for higher amounts and get money out of the public by taxation and in any possible manner? We have had a threat aimed at our heads—particularly in this Chamber—in respect of this legislation, that if we do not agree to the increased taxation there will be increased railway freights. The Premier stated through one newspaper that a rise in railway freights was not intended unless this means of obtaining revenue was not agreed to. I am not going to be intimidated by Mr. Hawke and his Government. I am not going to be influenced by these threats or promises—whichever the Chief Secretary or the members of Cabinet like to call them.

The Chief Secretary: Neither.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: If they are not threats and they are not promises, they are an attempt at intimidation, which is the same thing.

The Chief Secretary: Just a statement of facts.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Chief Secretary cannot deny that that intimation in this article is a threat that if we do not agree to these taxing measures the people in the country will have to pay additional railway freights.

But even if they do, I think that would be much better than their putting up with the injustice of some of these taxes the Government is trying to force on them. After all, who will pay the bulk of this increased land tax? The primary producers! They pay by the direct tax on land and they also pay through the resultant increase in prices on account of the heavy tax imposed on city properties, because the people who are taxed in the city—particularly the business people from whom the farmers buy a big volume of goods—will pass costs on.

Costs will be passed on to the homeowner also, in the form of rent. Again, costs incurred through basic-wage increases will be passed on; and the farmers pay in that direction, too, because each time there is a rise in the basic wage, up go the prices of goods. So that is where the greater part of the burden will fall.

I wonder whether the Government is deliberately over-estimating its expenditure for this year in order to build up its finances regardless of the burden it places on the people of this State. Surely the Government must realise that the more it taxes the more it increases the inflationary spiral. Yet it professes to want to do everything to stop that spiral in this State.

The two points do not dovetail. Already in this State we have seen one increase in prices as a result of one of the Government's taxing measures, and that is an increase in liquor prices. The Government has the fruits of its enterprise there and it will reap some further fruits from this measure.

Even if we had a promise from the Government that it would not increase rail freights for a period of 12 months, I feel certain that at the end of that period, regardless of any other factors, an increase in those freights would come about. The costs to the primary producer and business people have risen to such an extent that they cannot stand too much more, and if the Government is prepared to put up the taxes and increase the burden on the primary producer it will find that we will be taxed out of our overseas markets; costs will be so high that we will not be able to compete. As a result of that we will be in a very bad way.

I think it is beyond the pale that the Government should introduce so many taxing measures in the one session and then introduce a motion to Parliament asking us to agree to discontinuing one-fifth of the railway lines in this State. The Government has given us no concrete proposals as to what the people in the country would receive in replacement of those discontinued railway services. All these things are related to one another and are all tied up in the estimated deficit for the State.

Like Mr. Watson and other members, I believe that if the Government set out to reduce costs and practise economies itself these taxes would not be necessary and the State would be in a much better financial position. On that note I oppose the measure.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [8.33]: I rise to speak against this unjust tax which the Government proposes to place on the land-owners of Western Australia. To my mind there is no adjective I could use properly to describe this tax, because I think it is a frightful one.

The Chief Secretary: You are not allowed to use adjectives.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I think it is the worst tax that could possibly be levied, because it is a capital tax and one which is levied upon assets gained by money which has already borne a tax. If any person can tell me that there is any justice in that I would not agree to it; I would never be convinced on that point.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Gained by money which has borne tax or been borrowed.

Hon. A. R. JONES: But it is still necessary to have earned something and to have paid a tax on that in order to have a borrowing strength; so in actual fact it

is having something which has been gained by money and labour and which has already been taxed and taxed heavily.

I cannot see any difference in the principle of applying land tax to the farm lands of this State, or to the business premises of a manufacturer and applying a similar tax to the tools of a tradesman. To me it is the same thing. If the Government agrees to this sort of tax on farm lands, we should apply the same principle; and the Government should go to the plumber, the carpenter or any tradesman and, if his tools of trade are assessed at a value of £100, it should say, "We will impose a tax of 5 per cent. per annum on your tools of trade and therefore you are assessed at £5." It is as just to do that to a tradesman as it is to apply a tax to farm lands or factory land.

This is not only an unfair tax, but it is also a purely sectional tax, wherein one section of the community bears a tax and the other section does not. That section of the community, which has been frugal and built something up for itself is to be taxed very heavily, simply because, in this instance, the people who comprise that section own land. Because they own land, they have left themselves open to this irresponsible Government to come along and raise money in this way. Is that always to be the case? Are those who are doing something for the benefit of this State; who have saved money and invested it in property; and who are making a worthwhile contribution to the economy of this State, to be taxed and taxed at every turn they take? It seems like it. Are we going to let off the fellow who has no ambition—whether he has the ability or not—but who is just content to drift along in a job for ever and spend his money in a ne'er-do-well fashion? Are we to let him be exempt from a share of tax, for he cannot be burdened under this particular method of taxing?

The Minister for Railways: How could a wage earner ever buy land?

Hon. A. R. JONES: I wonder at the Minister asking a question like that. I thought he was an intelligent man.

The Minister for Railways: I mean a basic-wage earner.

Hon. A. R. JONES: After that stupid remark—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must not use the word "stupid" in reply to the Minister.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I said a "stupid remark". I did not say that the Minister was stupid, Mr. President; but I bow to your ruling and I shall not use the word again.

The Minister for Railways: Tell us how a wage earner could buy land.

Hon. A. R. JONES: The Minister knows that there are very few men on the basic wage today.

The Minister for Railways: But tell us how he could own a block of land.

Hon. A. R. JONES: If it will please the Minister I will give him an example. I have a brother who began work at the usual age at which a boy leaves school. He earned no more than the other fellows who were working alongside him at his clerk's desk. But in a very few years he saved enough money to pay a deposit on a house, and he was not earning the basic wage. He did not go around spending his money in the carefree fashion that some people do. I am not saying that people should not spend as they wish, but I do say that the person who, in my opinion, makes a contribution to the economy of the State and tries to better himself, and perhaps do better than the other fellow who does not worry about saving, should not be taxed at every turn. What incentive is there for any of us to accumulate money or do anything which will improve our economic situation or which will produce the type of goods which can be sold overseas? There is no incentive at all.

If the Government wants to be reasonable—even though in the opinion of many of us it has overspent and over-budgeted—and wants to extricate itself from what will be an unfortunate position when it comes to the end of the financial year, it should at least tax all the people and not just a section of them, as this legislation will do. In 1932, when things were really bad, the Government of the State was faced with a crisis. Things were bad in those days, whereas today we are on top of the world so far as the earning capacity of our people is concerned.

The reason why our Government is in the red is because of mismanagement and waste of money in Government departments. In 1932 two forms of taxation were imposed upon the people. I remember that from my wages a tax was collected which was known as the financial emergency tax, and I paid 9d. in the £. I do not know whether the tax was on a sliding scale, and the greater the wage the greater the tax, or whether it was just a straight-out 9d. per £. But I remember paying it, and at the same time we all paid a hospital tax.

The Government says we must have hospitals in the country; so what is wrong with reintroducing the hospital tax so that everybody in Western Australia, and not just one section of the community, will be able to pay for those hospitals? That is only reasonable, because in that way we would all pay instead of just a few of us doing so.

We are indebted to Mr. Watson for his quite lengthy explanation of the different phases in the measure and their effect on

the various types of business generally, and land owners in this State. He has covered the ground which none of us wants to cover any further because it would only be repetition. But I certainly ask members to consider all the views he expressed. I want each member to let his conscience be his guide as to whether this capital tax is an unjust one. As I said previously, it will be a tax on an asset which has already been paid for by money or earnings which have been taxed once before, and taxed heavily. Where will the position end if we are to keep on paying taxes of one type or another?

There is one aspect which should be considered. Possibly some members know about it and do not need to be reminded, but I will mention the fact because it crops up with every land-owner. I refer to the tax levied by local authorities.

The tax on their land has increased considerably over the last six or seven years; and to give members some idea as to how much they have increased on a farming property, I will illustrate my own case. I have a farm in the Moora district. I do not suggest that my property is rated at a higher or lower figure than anyone else's; but it would be about the average in this State. In 1939 I paid road, vermin and health rates to the extent of £37 to the local authority; but today, for the same taxes on the same property, I pay £211. Is not that a fair amount of money to pay on the land without the imposition of this further land tax which the Government proposes to levy?

As explained by Mr. Baxter, there is a limit to how far these taxes can go, and I believe that limit has been reached. As a member of a farming community I can only reiterate that we have no possibility of handing any costs on. We are unfortunate in that we have to accept what the buyers will give us for our produce; not like the shopkeeper who, if one wants a tin of jam will tell one that it costs 2s. 6d. or 2s. 10d., or whatever the price may be. If there is an increase in his overhead, that article, or any accumulation of articles, will bear that increased cost and the shopkeeper can easily fix that. We in the country, however, have no chance of doing that, and the Minister knows that is so.

I would help anybody to pass legislation through this House to impose a greater tax on land which has been held for any length of time and on which there has been no appreciable effort made to affect improvements. It is wrong for anybody to buy land for speculative purposes, particularly if that land is in close proximity to the railways or to an area served by an all-weather sealed road—whether it is in the area of the city or the suburbs or the country. It is most definitely wrong for people to buy land for speculative purposes and be allowed to hold it away from development. I would be only too happy to help any Govern-

ment increase the tax on that type of land, tenfold if needs be, so that the people will either improve the land or sell it so that someone else can improve it.

I have already made brief reference to the need for greater economy in Government departments. We cannot see any sign, however, of that occurring. I have raised the issue many times with regard to the railways and the expenditure in that department. I do not intend to cover the ground again because on several occasions I have shown the waste that occurs. But something else has come to my notice today of which I shall certainly make mention. I refer to a station-house that was removed from Pithara on the Wongan Hills-Mullewa line, and which was re-erected, I think, at Kulin.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Is that a bunk-house?

Hon. A. R. JONES: No, it is the station-house itself; the railway station. I made enquiries as to the interpretation of railway station and I was told it included all that portion that was enclosed by fences, etc. Nevertheless I am sure all will know what I mean when I say it was the railway station that was removed from Pithara and re-erected, I think, at Kulin. The building was approximately 35 years old; and I venture to suggest that by the time it was pulled down, put on trucks, transferred to Kulin, and rebuilt, half of the material would have been ruined and required replacement. The cost would have been terrific in the first place.

Secondly, it was 12 months ago that I was told the building was to be pulled down and transferred. Since that time when it was known it was going to be taken away, the tank-stand which holds the rainwater tank was completely removed and reconstructed in wood. Weeks after that was done, it was decided that wood was no good. So it was again pulled down and steel rails were concreted into the ground, and the tank-stand platform was placed on that. Weeks after that, the whole thing was pulled down and transferred to Kulin. Is it any wonder, therefore, that we criticise the Railway Department, and all that goes on there?

I hope the Minister will check what I say, because I know it to be true. I reiterate what I said a few weeks ago. That we should start at the top of the Railway Department and get rid of the commissioner, if not all three commissioners. I do not know sufficient about two of them to suggest that they should be sacked or demoted or anything like that; but in my opinion three commissioners are far too many, and the one who calls himself "the Commissioner" is not worth the money he is paid. It would be a very pleasing gesture if he were retired on £10,000 a year, because he is doing the railways no good at all.

The Minister for Railways: I thought you mentioned economy.

Hon. A. R. JONES: In my opinion that would be an economy, because the longer he stays there, so many more millions will we lose on our railways. He does not know that this sort of thing goes on.

The Minister for Railways: He will now.

Hon. G. Bennetts: He will have a dim opinion of you by the time you have finished.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I am not in the least concerned about that. The points that I have mentioned are those that have been brought to my notice. What goes on inside nobody will ever know. I have been criticised in the Midland Junction Workshops, and I have been criticised by the union leaders for what I have said; but I still maintain that big savings can be made. I repeat I am not blaming the men because, to my mind, it is the administration that is at fault.

So, rather than go to one section of the people and ask them to pay a capital tax—one which should not be levied—let us get down to the real business and economise in the Government departments. Let us bring people over here from other parts of the world to show us our mistakes and how they can be remedied.

The Minister for Railways: Don't you think anybody in Western Australia is capable of doing the job?

Hon. A. R. JONES: I wish I were permitted to go to the Railway Department and select one man to do the job; I am sure he would do a far better job than is being done by the three commissioners. It has been said by previous speakers that a threat has been made. I do not know whether it was meant to be a threat; but both the Premier and the Minister in charge of the Bill in this House said that if the Government did not get money by taxation methods it would be necessary to raise freights on the railways. I do not know what would happen if we raised the freights any more. I worked out what an increase of 25 per cent. would mean on what was carted to and from my place over a year; and as an average farmer, I find it would cost me an additional £400.

The Minister for Railways: It is not a button off your vest.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I did not pay tax last year because I never made a profit; nor did I pay tax the year before, because I never made a profit. So where will this land tax come from? It will come from capital.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What did you pay in land tax?

Hon. A. R. JONES: The amount would be £37.

The Minister for Railways: You mentioned £200.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I was referring to road rates in that case. I will most vigorously oppose the second reading of this Bill; and if and when it gets to the Committee stage, I will oppose every clause for the reasons I have given.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [8.55]: I cannot help feeling that we are in a very difficult position, because we seem to have reached the stage where taxation is surely at the extreme limit. To add this burden to the country, and what appears to be a still bigger burden to the city, must surely start a spiral of inflation once again. I wonder if the Government when framing taxation legislation gives any thought as to what the rest of the circle is likely to be. This is the beginning. Where will the end be?

With the very considerable amounts which businesses in the heart of the city will have to pay, I cannot imagine that they will be able to carry the entire burden themselves. It means therefore that it must be distributed amongst the goods that are purchased and the moment that happens the cost of living must rise. When the cost of living rises, there is the question of automatic adjustments which naturally follows and this results in greater Government expenditure and the cry for further taxation.

Not once do we hear of any attempt at economy, or of any attempt to halt expenditure. All it means is that this goes full circle every time some change takes place in either taxation or in the cost of living. Where will we finish with this sort of thing? There does not appear to be any method in our economy by which this can be brought to an end. One other serious aspect as far as the city is concerned is that there must be a considerable rise in rents.

With the increased valuation of city property and the increase in the rate of taxation upon that already increased valuation the amounts that will be required from many of the office-owners will be such that it will be necessary to pass it on in increased rents. These rents will not only apply to those people who hold offices, but it will spread into the smaller retail shops. It will certainly greatly affect the retail emporiums. When that happens there must again be an inevitable rise in the cost of goods.

I could give numbers of instances of the same sort of things as were referred to by Mr. Watson this afternoon, because they were mentioned to me. I cannot, for instance, imagine that somebody whose land tax is going to rise from £800 to £4,000 is capable of meeting that cost without some sort of adjustment in business, or in charges to the public for goods supplied. From figures we have already been given during the debate it would appear that if this measure is accepted as it has come

to us, the increase in revenue since 1948 from land in this State will be nearly 20 times as great.

Yet the inflation of our money is not anything nearly like 20 times. So that which is to be taken in the form of land tax is out of all proportion even to inflation itself. Therefore, there must be something wrong with the method of imposition of this tax. A few months ago the man in the street considered we had reached a stage at which inflation had been halted, but this session of Parliament has made it quite clear to everybody that a new inflationary period is due to start.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It has taken place already.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have just been casting my mind over the increases that have taken place since this Parliament met this session; and I should think that already well over £1,000,000 has been taken in taxation. What has been taken out in the last three-year period must be nearly double that amount. On the figures that have been supplied by those in the city who have looked at this measure, it is made to appear that at least £2,000,000 to £2,500,000 will be taken. With what is proposed to be taken under this measure, it will mean that within a period of about three years £5,000,000 has been taken out of the State's income. In other words, about 600,000 people are paying £5,000,000 more in taxation per annum than they were three years ago.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The deficit increased over £5,000,000 last year.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Something must stop somewhere; and I just wonder, from the inequitable character of this measure, whether any thought was given to its effect, or whether it was simply decided that a lump sum of money was required and this was the tax to achieve that sum. Because on the figures supplied by Mr. Watson, it is quite obvious that the imposition is, in many cases, more than unjust.

All of us must be worried—all of us who have responsibilities here of seeing the State's economy maintained—not so much by the fact that taxation is being placed on the people yesterday or today, but as to what is to happen when this taxation is imposed. Where does the next thought on taxation go to? There is no doubt whatever in my mind that the equality, which was a feature of the war period, is being introduced into this country by taxation and by the nationalisation of certain undertakings which has taken place.

The biggest leveller of all is certainly taxation; and it looks as if there is socialism ahead of us in some form or other, purely on the basis that this taxation will reduce us all to a common level of income. For those who believe a country can progress like that, this measure is perfectly in order; but I do not believe that state of

affairs could exist more than 24 hours if introduced as a definite and fixed plan. We are heading for disaster unless we meet as a body of people and say, "Where does this stop?" This method of extracting more taxation whenever expenditure arises is to be condemned.

I doubt very much whether we have been wise in expending moneys, some of it in attempting to increase the welfare State, as we have done in the past few years when our economy was in such a difficult position. One factor alone which always seemed to me to be unnecessary in a community such as ours, and certainly unjustified from an economic point of view, was the £100,000 spent in providing school writing material, and school books, etc. Some of the things we have already attempted in this field might well have to be looked at before we make any further demands to extract more taxation. What is the good of the Government supplying a man with 15s. worth of material as a gift from the Government and then charging him 25s. for that 15s.? That is what this State is doing.

The whole position as revealed by this Bill is extremely serious and warrants at least some alteration to the measure; in fact, it might warrant a complete meeting of both Houses of Parliament to discuss the whole political and economic situation of the State to see what measures can be taken to halt the spiral. This measure will do nothing to assist the economy of the State; all it will do is to set in train those years which terrified every one of us. I have been through an inflationary period and know the difficulties and disasters it can bring, and rather than see this measure accepted as a necessity, I consider the time has arrived for thinking—thinking that is beyond politics; thinking with a nationalist outlook; and thinking with a desire to see this present method of economy altered.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

BILL—MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [9.9] This Bill has received such spontaneous support and so much has been said of the Esperance district, it is with some hesitation I take up further time in discussing it. However, the Bill and the Government's agreement with the Chase

syndicate will assuredly mean the commencement of a new era at Esperance, a town which holds a strong place in my affections.

I would like to add a few comments to those already made. I feel that the opportunity should not be lost to pay some tribute to the gallant band of pioneers who played an unforgettable part in laying the foundations on which the agreement will be built. In that regard I would like to say that I approve entirely of the remarks made by Mr. Bennetts last night, and I join with him in paying tribute to the men whose names he mentioned.

But Mr. Bennetts spoke of comparatively recent years, and his remarks might imply that the destiny of Esperance has been forged within recent times. I want to congratulate Mr. Bennetts, Mr. Garrigan and Mr. Cunningham, who are the representatives in this Chamber of that district. Year after year they have spoken and worked in the interests of the Esperance district and have never let an opportunity go by without pressing its claims to this House and to the public of this State. In recent years also, the late Bob Boylen did his share; and if his name were not mentioned, it would be a serious omission.

Esperance—when I say Esperance I refer to the Esperance district—has been very fortunate over the years in its parliamentary representatives. In 1905 the late Mr. Thomas Walker was elected as member for that district, which he represented continuously up to 1932, a period of 27 years. Since 1932 up to the present time, it has been represented by Mr. Emil Nulsen, whose reputation and character are well known to all of us. Mr. Nulsen has represented that district for 24 years, prior to which the late Mr. Walker represented it for 27 years. Immediately prior to that it was represented by the late Mr. Robert Hastie from 1901 to 1905; and on looking up the records, I find there is a coincidence which is rather striking. The late Mr. Robert Hastie became leader of the Labour Party after he was elected, and subsequently became Minister for Justice. The late Mr. Thomas Walker became Attorney General; and the present member, Mr. Nulsen, as most members are aware, is Minister for Justice in the present Government. Each of those men contributed a great deal, and bore the battle during the days when the going in that area was the toughest.

Nowadays there tends to be an outlook that Esperance and the sandplain area have only recently been discovered. But such is not the case. The potentialities of the area have been appreciated, although perhaps not to fullest extent, over a long period, but the district for many years was hampered in many ways, chiefly by not having a railway from Norseman. Eventually a railway was built from Esperance

for a distance of 60 miles north, and years later the link between Salmon Gums and Norseman was completed.

I recall the completion of this link very clearly because in the winter of 1918 I enlisted at Esperance and at the time there was no communication between Esperance and Norseman, except by coach, and it took two long days to travel the distance. We left Esperance about 5 o'clock in the morning and arrived at Salmon Gums barely in time for tea, after having had three changes of horses. The following day we left for Norseman—again about 5 o'clock in the morning—and, with three changes of horses we arrived there in time for tea. The roads were practically non-existent, and it can well be imagined that the settlers—the hardy people who populated the district in those days—had a great deal to contend with.

Now that this remarkable achievement has come about, a new era dawns not only for that district, but for the whole of the State because we have it on the authority of Mr. Ackland, who is well known as a successful farmer and a man who understands land and the potentialities of land, that in the years to come this area will, in his opinion, carry a population of 10,000,000 sheep, whereas at the present time the total sheep population of the State is only 14,000,000. If these figures are in any way approximate they conjure up a remarkable vision of what lies ahead.

Before proceeding further, therefore, I feel that in this moment of triumph and at a time when the future is rosy, it is fitting that what the late Mr. Thomas Walker said on behalf of Esperance, many years ago, should be repeated. I have here a speech—one of dozens which he made in this Parliament as representative for the district. In looking up these old Hansards, my respect for this man has been enhanced a great deal because I was only young when I knew him. The people in the district, however, had the greatest respect for him and they realised that in him they had a valiant and capable advocate. Mr. Walker was a gifted man, capable of rising to great heights when speaking. When one reads these old debates, his colourful character and his advocacy for the district stand out clearly.

I shall be fairly brief, but I think the few extracts that I am about to read will cause people to realise that it is not only the people who have gone into the district in recent times who deserve all the credit. I have no desire to detract from them in any way because as I pointed out in my opening remarks, I agree with what Mr. Bennetts has said.

In justice to the memory of the late Mr. Thomas Walker, however, I shall read an extract from what he said in 1911 when advocating the construction of a

railway to Esperance and the opening up of the district. At page 1200 of the 1911 Parliamentary Debates, Mr. Walker said—

There in the district to be served by this railway help is required, and there it is help should be given; and they have been asking for it long enough. Now, the very fact that great pastoralists have lived there for so many years in prosperity and accumulated enormous fortunes north of Esperance is in itself a testimony that the same areas will, if cut up into smaller holdings, support a very large population indeed; and it is my dream to see this country, not held by a few, not occupied for cattle and sheep alone, but peopled by human beings with all the hopes and all the thrilling joys that lives of industry can give them. That is surely the aim of an enlightened Government; surely the aim of a wise people, to neglect no part of the State; and I submit that to refuse this railway shows a want of confidence in this great State of ours. We have not got even on to the threshold of the possibilities of development this State has yet in store for it. Not only are there these lands that are comprised in the debate this afternoon, but I venture to think that on all those immense areas where now we resort only for mineral exploitation, we have some of the richest land upon the surface of our globe; and given the application of scientific farming, on dry farming we could support populations as big as those that flourished once in the valley of the Euphrates and built Babylon.

We have rich wheat growing areas not yet touched and not tested, and not even suspected as to their possibilities, and lying too long neglected or ignored because of local jealousies that will insist on developing this part of the country to the utter neglect of the other parts of the State. I submit this line is justifiable for agricultural reasons, justifiable for commercial reasons, justifiable as a reward for the people of the goldfields, for the service they have rendered to the State in its past development, justifiable as a health resort to the people of the goldfields, justifiable for mineral purposes, justifiable for mining purposes, justifiable, in fact, for all those purposes that make any railway in this State justifiable.

Again in the Parliamentary debates of 1912 at page 4494 when talking of Esperance, Mr. Walker said—

Here is an enormous belt of country, almost a new State; in fact I venture to say that if all the rest of Australia were to be buried and this part alone could be left above the ocean and settlement taken there we could build a

nation within the area of land waiting for settlement, east, west, north and south of this line we are now proposing.

At page 4496 of the same Hansard he said—

I say that to leave that natural wealth ignored, to leave it idle, to deliberately waste it, to blot out this agricultural future as a desert is a national wrong and a positive crime to the whole of the State, an injury to every citizen, for I care not from what place a member may come, whether he represents Fremantle, with its magnificent developments, Bunbury with its expanding trade, Albany with its growing facilities for commerce, or the north, Geraldton or any of our ports, still further to the eastward the line of settlement must have further growth and broader expansion to awaken kindred sentiments and fraternal feelings, and the State growing in magnitude and comradeship and oneness of purpose, and the wealth growing, as it may, beyond all computation, must shed its lustre and spread its greatness and extend its benefits to every port and every harbour and every inland town in the whole of this State.

I am sure that if the late Mr. Walker is in heaven, where I am confident he is, he will get a lot of satisfaction from the knowledge that his advocacy and words of wisdom uttered so long ago are now about to bear fruit. Whatever happens to Esperance in the years to come, I hope there will always be people there who will recall how much Mr. Walker accomplished; how valiantly he fought; how eventually he got the railway built; and how he got the people and the Governments of the day interested in the district.

He was followed, fortunately for Esperance, by another great man in Mr. Emil Nulsen, who was elected to Parliament in 1932 and who, by the grace of God, is still with us—and I hope he will continue to represent the district for many years to come. I have here an extract from a speech—one of the first he made—delivered on the 30th August, 1932, some 24 years ago. It is at page 266 of Hansard, 1932, and it is as follows:—

The Esperance sandplain is truly prolific. This has been proved conclusively on all the holdings on the sandplain that have been worked to advantage. The pine forest holding proved beyond doubt that lupins, Tangler peas and clovers will grow in abundance. Mr. Helms, the former manager of the pine forest, has implicit faith in the sandplain. The people of Esperance and of the Mallee were very disappointed indeed that the Government did not give the company a small advance to help them to carry on their

experimental work for the benefit of the State. The country is not hard or expensive to clear; it is a matter of establishing experimental farms to determine the best methods, and the pine forest was of great advantage to the district. All the holdings on the sandplain that are being worked are proving very satisfactory. Mr. Spedding Smith's farm on the sandplain is doing wonderfully well. Two sons are working it and they can grow practically anything—clovers, lupins, Tangler peas, potatoes, onions and tomatoes. Mr. Fleming, Mr. Bow and others are also doing really good work on the sandplain. I do not know why that land has been called sandplain. The term seems to imply land that will not grow anything, but the Esperance sandplain is really prolific and gives returns beyond the conception of people who have not seen for themselves what it can grow.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He supported a Labour Government which for 10 years did nothing for that country.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: That statement is hardly true, because Mr. Nulsen supported a Labour Government which built the new jetty at Esperance and gave finance to the farmers in the Mallee and improved the roads and made a wonderful contribution to the advancement of that area. It would be unfair to omit from any reference to Esperance the name of the late Phillip Collier.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Agriculture went back throughout that period.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: It went back simply because the price of wheat went down, the depression came on us, and the farmers in the Mallee were forced off the land, many of them going to the Goldfields, where there was a mining revival, after they had had to abandon their farms. But away back in 1932, Mr. Nulsen advocated the establishment of an experimental farm on the Sandplain, as it was called.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: But the Government did nothing about it during the 10 years he supported it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: As I said, the Government did a great deal in other directions, but did not establish the experimental farm, although Mr. Nulsen strongly advocated such a course. The experimental farm was not established until the late Mr. Garnett Wood visited Esperance and was so impressed that he persuaded his Government to establish it.

It is strange that Sir Charles should have made that interjection, because I have here a note reminding me to pay tribute to the late Mr. Garnett Wood, whose name fits admirably into the august company which I am mentioning. No name will stand higher in that list than that of the late Garnett Wood; and although it may be embarrassing to Sir

Charles Latham, I must mention also that, over the years, he has been an ardent advocate of that area; and in every sphere in which he has been able to do so, he has furthered the claims of that district, making many positive steps towards its betterment.

The reference would not be complete if I failed to mention a number of other names that I will run through briefly. If I omit from my list any worthy names it will be only by inadvertence. The Dempster family went to the Esperance district away back in 1863 and the home which the late Andrew Dempster built is still standing, a good and stout building. The stables and wool-shed which he built on the seafront are in excellent order and have now been converted into flats. They were built of limestone and have weathered all those years.

Hon. L. C. Diver: The Dempster family took 1,000 wethers across from the Arthur River and lost only two sheep.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Yes; they pioneered that unknown area in 1863 and remained in the district for about 70 years. They employed people on shearing and fencing and their cheques were always honoured. For many years they were the only source of employment there and they kept the place going. But unfortunately, they do not own an acre of land in that area now. That was the fate of many of the pioneers. They were there until recent years, but bad times and falling prices eventually forced them off the land. However, they have left behind names that should linger in the annals of Esperance for all time.

Another family which was early in the district is the Doust family. Then there were the Jenkins family at Gibson's Soak. There was an old pioneer named Andrew Dunn who took up land a little to the east about where the Kirwan brothers now are. He was there for many years, from before 1900 onwards and reared a large family. He built a home and carved an existence out of the wilderness, in the area where the Chase syndicate is about to commence operations.

The Moir family pioneered Fanny's Cove, the area where Mr. Noel White has now taken over. Like the Dunn family, the Moirs have not an acre of land in the area now, but they carried the day when the going was very hard indeed. The late Mr. Spedding Smith, who has already been mentioned, was one of the first to go on to the sandplain, and another was an old man named Fleming. There is a place just beyond the experimental farm, named Fleming Grove. This old man had a remittance and used to grow wonderful vegetables and fruit. I will always remember his birds, as he used to excel in teaching them to talk.

Fred Bow is still alive; but his two brothers, Bob and Arthur, unfortunately, are dead. They were about the first men to take up land and farm on the sandplain in any large way. Another man who is still alive and who always had faith in the land there and put his money into it is Cecil Hancock. There is also the Douglas family, some of whom are still there. Captain Douglas built a fine home at the end of the town not long after the Dempsters went there. He used to sail those uncharted seas in his schooner, the "Grace Darling," to carry away wool and other produce.

There was a family named Gilmour at Scaddan and they farmed the sandplain. There was also a market gardener down there named Bill Feross, who was well known in the district and is still alive. He usually had a garden on the sandplain and for years earned a living by growing fruit and vegetables and hawking them around the town. He always claimed that the sandplain had vast potentialities. There were also in that area the Orrs and the Stows and the late E. J. MacCarthy and his family.

They were there before the turn of the century. Mr. MacCarthy was an able man, being chairman of the road board and of various committees. He strongly advocated the building of the railway and he died only a few years ago. Then there was the late Harry Sims and his daughter, Thelma Chadwick. He was secretary of the road board and when he died his daughter carried on. They were there during the tough years. For a long period they played their part in holding the town together and sponsored many movements which eventually led towards success.

While on this note, I see no reason why I should not mention my own father who went there in 1900 and was one of the first settlers at Grass Patch. On many occasions he walked the 50 miles from Grass Patch to Esperance and back, and he cleared 500 acres for himself over the years. He was also mayor of the town, and my late brother Esmond was subsequently chairman of the road board for some years.

Now, of course, a great change has come about with the aid of science. Science has been applied by the officers of the Department of Agriculture: men such as Dr. Dunn, Mr. Shier and others, whose research and knowledge has resulted in the introduction of trace elements. They have done wonderful work in gearing in to success the latent capacity of that wonderful area. No mention of the place is complete without that.

Finally, this introduction of American capital, amounting to approximately £15,000,000, which we are assured will be spent over the years, did not come about without someone doing something. Here, at this stage, I want to pay a tribute to a man who is still with us, who is well

known and greatly admired by everyone. I refer to our present member, Hon. F. J. S. Wise, M.L.C. We know what Mr. Wise did for this State during his period in office as Premier. We also know something of what he accomplished for the Northern Territory during the years he laboured under great difficulties in that region.

However, this introduction of American capital was largely brought about by the intervention of Mr. Wise when he was in America and as a result of the respect that was held for him and his knowledge of this State. I think that on this occasion his name should be mentioned, and I hope it will always be associated with this remarkable project. Also, Hon. L. F. Kelly, M.L.A., our present Minister for Mines, apparently cemented the negotiations that Mr. Wise had put in train. Our present Premier, Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, and his Ministers gave their backing to the proposal and now all is set for this new era which I am convinced will begin not only for the Esperance district but also for the whole of the State.

That is about all I can say. I wish the Government every success with this undertaking. I am sure that nothing but good will eventuate from it. I am sure that that area, which has been forgotten for so long, which has had such a struggle for over half a century, will now come into its own and that the name of Esperance—which is a French word meaning “hope”—will, in the years to come, vindicate itself as hope fulfilled.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South) [9.49]: I think all of us have the interests of Western Australia at heart and consequently this State and everyone connected directly or indirectly with this project can feel assured that they have the support of every one of us. I think those people who have been directly responsible for interesting the Chase syndicate in this area have performed a great service to this State. I doubt very much, however, whether we serve the best interests of Esperance or the State by making wildly exaggerated claims about the prospects and possibilities of that area.

We are fortunate that the people who are primarily responsible for the proposed development of the Esperance district have not been associated with this sort of claim. There is no doubt that there have been exaggerated statements made in regard to what we can expect. There have been criticisms of the agreement that has been entered into between the Government and the Chase syndicate. To my mind, it is nothing more than a memorandum of an honourable understanding made between two parties. I do not know what more one could expect.

These people have interested themselves in this project for some purpose. It may be with the idea of making money out of it, but there is no doubt that it is some-

thing out of the blue as far as Western Australia is concerned. In fact, I think it will be almost an Alice-in-Wonderland development. I do not claim to know Esperance, but one must assess its potentiality as being fairly high.

Nevertheless, I find difficulty in believing that the Chase syndicate is going to make all these millions of pounds that some people seem to think it will make. If the Chase syndicate enters into possession before it is ready to sell various allotments, the improvements are going to cost £20 an acre. I understand that when all improvements are effected, it will mean that a property of 1,500 acres is going to cost approximately £30,000. If to that amount is added the cost of plant, etc., I should say that the terms of repayment would have to be extremely easy and the Chase syndicate will be extremely fortunate if it disposes of all these properties as quickly as some people think.

So it seems almost fantastic that the syndicate has entered into this project with the idea that it is going to make any great amount of money out of it. In my opinion it is also unfortunate that Australian capital was not available to develop that area; and, failing the availability of Australian capital, that British capital was not forthcoming. I am not likely to become hysterical over the idea of dollar investment in this country to the extent that we may become subject to dollar imperialism, as other countries have been. I do not want to see us getting more and more into the position of having to float dollar loans in New York or Toronto to acquire the necessary exchange to pay dividends on dollar investments in this country or to repatriate dollar capital.

However, for the time being we have not been able to interest other overseas interests and the Western Australian Government has been fortunate in being able to obtain the money to develop Esperance and therefore we have to grasp the opportunities that are offering. Nevertheless, this will not mean all gain to the people of this State without disadvantages, as we have found in connection with the establishment of the Kwinana oil refinery. If the State is prepared to accept—as it will—the responsibility for the provision of roads, and later for the provision of schools, hospitals and harbour facilities, it will mean that other parts of the State will have to wait before their requirements are met and some may have to wait a fair time.

There is a good deal of work remaining to be done in various parts of the State, particularly in regard to the provision of roads in already-settled areas. It seems obvious that there will be a considerable road construction programme entered into by the Government if it is to continue with its proposal to close what it calls some of the uneconomic railway lines. Therefore, if Esperance is to be given priority

in regard to the provision of various amenities, other centres will have to possess themselves in patience before they obtain the public works that they seek.

I trust that there is no question of any portion of this land at Esperance being dealt with in such a way that Australian sovereignty and the control over the land is in any way impaired. I know that in one Press report it was stated that Mr. Chase was reputed to be considering the establishment of the syndicate's own air-strips for direct air communication with America. Presumably, those air-strips will still remain under the control of the Civil Aviation Department and we will not have set up in Australia air-strips that are outside Australian control of the overriding authority of the Australian Government.

I do not care for Clause 20 in the agreement which gives to the company the right of assignment. If the company possesses this right it is likely to assign its interests to other foreign companies. If so, will the State Government be able to exercise its authority and withhold its assent? Provision is made in Clause 20 for the State Government to give its consent. That is a point that greatly interested me. Whilst I am not in the least critical of the State Government entering into this agreement with the Chase syndicate—I do not want that to be thought for a moment—these people have come out of the blue and have given a promise, in effect—although there is nothing much to bind them to it—that they are going to make a start and proceed with a large developmental programme in the Esperance area.

I think any Government, perforce, has to accept the agreement acceptable to the people who have to perform all the work that is required. Even although the expenditure is in dollars, it looks as though the company will have to find anything from £10,000,000 to £15,000,000 for the development of this area in Western Australia. Provided the interests of this State and its people are protected and provided that the British people are given a fair chance and Australian sovereignty is not impaired, this may turn out to be a good deal for Australia, and Western Australia in particular.

When he is replying to the debate I would like the Minister to give us some information in connection with those portions which are delineated on the map attached to the agreement. I have heard considerable criticism of the fact that we have tied this land up under the control of an American syndicate and that our own people will be unable to obtain land.

My understanding is that there is still a considerable area which can be made available to the people in this country. I would be obliged if the Minister will in the course of his reply give us some idea of the area that is set aside, out of which the American syndicate is expected to select the 1,500,000 acres of land.

HON. J. J. GARRIGAN (South-East) [10.11]: I support this Bill and wish to make a few short remarks in reference to it. We have heard a lot about the country in Esperance and about the possibilities. It is right that I should congratulate the Government on the step it has taken in making available to the Chase syndicate this vast tract of land at Esperance. I only hope and trust that in future years what is now known as Esperance Plains will become a vast and fertile area.

I congratulate the members of Parliament who over the years have taken so keen an interest in Esperance and the surrounding districts. I shall not mention their names because I might leave out one, and that would offend somebody. To those pioneers of the district I offer congratulations, and I hope that the project at Esperance will be developed to the extent that it will become a monument to those men in the days to come.

I desire to issue a note of warning. The land at Esperance is not poor man's land. It takes something like five years to get anything off it, and it takes £20 per acre for development. In 1954 I advocated the establishment of a super works at Esperance. I do not think it will be very many years before that will be fulfilled. With the vast mineral resources in the nearby district, such as pyrites at Norseman and copper at Ravensthorpe, we have an excellent opportunity for establishing secondary industries in that area. I hope that in a few years' time the people and the pioneers of Esperance will be able to see the results of their efforts in the development of that area. I support the second reading.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [10.21]: If this Bill has done nothing else, it certainly has brought forth a lot of information relating to the history of the Esperance district. That does no harm at all. The remarks of Mr. Heenan showed quite clearly that the potentiality of that land was recognised 40 years ago, and it has taken all that time for development to be started on a large scale.

There are many other districts in the State which also took a long time to develop, and will develop more in the future. In my opinion the development of agricultural land is wrapped up with the economics of the day. The sooner the capital cities, the towns and the ports are developed and filled, the sooner will investments be forced into the outer areas. No doubt science has made the pioneering of agricultural lands much easier. With modern implements, the conversion of light virgin forestry land into productive land has become mere child's play compared with the methods used 40 years ago.

It is a good thing that such a lot of debate has been engendered in regard to the area covered by the Bill. Criticism of a mild nature has appeared in the Press protesting against such a huge area of land being alienated to what is termed foreign investment. It must be recalled that although in this Chamber; and in another place, the potentialities of that area had been expounded, talked about and advertised for a long time, Australian and local interest was slow in being aroused. It is only in recent months that attention has been drawn to that part of the State. That resulted from the experimental station established at Esperance, and from the work of the pioneers who proved the value of the land.

Twenty-odd blocks were advertised in the Eastern States some months ago, and more than 200 applications and inquiries were received. That showed that the worth of the country is recognised by people in the other States who have capital for investment. There are still huge areas of similar land between Albany and Esperance, and also east of Esperance, which can be made available for investment. There is also the 2,000,000 acres of land west of the Midland Railway line—consisting of light land with a safe and assured rainfall—that can be made available for investment.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Is it available?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; but it can be. If a British, Australian or other syndicate comes along with a similar proposition to this, that land can be made available if the Bill is passed. There are many millions of acres in the Kimberleys that can be made available if a proposition is put forward and the necessary capital is provided for investment. I am hoping that as the southern portion of the State is taken up, other syndicates—or even the Chase syndicate itself—will become interested in the Ord River area. We cannot interest the Commonwealth Government at all.

Members will recall that a delegation from this Parliament waited on the Commonwealth Government but no reply has been received and two years have passed. The interest of the Commonwealth Government is not very keen. The State Government could not possibly carry out such huge development alone; but it is prepared to go ahead on a £ for £ basis with the Commonwealth, to develop any huge area up there which no doubt has a wonderful future for cattle raising, apart from the growing of tropical crops. In these days it is difficult to market such crops, but the time will come when it will be necessary to cultivate that land and put it into production. It would be a good thing for this State and for Australia if the sparsely populated areas in the far North were investigated by syndicates with the capital necessary for development.

As I remarked during the second reading, capital invested on the development of land is subject to very generous taxation concessions. That is very good for encouraging the development of the State. I would like to see Australian, British or American syndicates investigate other lands in this State and the possibility of further investments.

It was said by Mr. Roche that from an investment point of view the Chase syndicate was not going to make any huge profit out of this land development. From the remarks I heard whilst I was in the company of Mr. Chase for a few brief minutes, I know that the syndicate's motive is not profit alone. It recognises it must be a business proposition. Everybody who invests capital is entitled to a return; but evidently this syndicate has other visions in mind. It realises that the production of food and clothing for the peoples of the world must be stepped up as they increase. That is no minor thought behind the syndicate when it decides to invest moneys in overseas countries to develop land for food production.

A query was raised by Mr. Logan as to why similar treatment could not be meted out to settlers in the area west of the Midland line. He was referring to the provision of roads. Under this agreement access roads would be built for the syndicate. They are always provided under any new settlement area. I admit that such roads are not speedways, and in the early stages they may not be trafficable at all times. Still, they are built and provide a means of access.

A criticism was raised by Mr. Jones as to the huge area which can be made available by the Minister. This Bill covers the position, and the approval of Executive Council must first be obtained. Any proposal must be ratified by Parliament before it can become valid. It must be ratified within six months of a proposal to alienate huge tracts of land.

I thought there was some merit in the suggestion of Mr. Jones that not only corporate bodies should be given large tracts of land, when he suggested that perhaps up to 20,000 acres could be made available to individuals or syndicates, other than a corporate body. Under the Act 5,000 acres is the limit which any individual is entitled to hold.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I think that is quite enough by the time a settler has developed it all.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That may be so; but then there might be people with 5,000 acres of land and money for the development of a further 5,000 acres.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They would need a family to hold them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It could be done in devious ways, and we know that it is being done. Mr. Jones

told us that people have to resort to dummyming, which is most unsatisfactory. If that is so, why not, in special cases, allow an individual to have 10,000 or 20,000 acres, provided he works the land?

Hon. H. K. Watson: And has the finance to do it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I was thinking what it would cost at £20 an acre.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I would imagine that would be over-estimating the cost; but, as Mr. Garrigan said, it takes money to develop any farm. We know the position of a lot of war service land settlers, and what it cost to develop the Peel estate and other group settlements. Of course, lack of finance meant the closure of some of those schemes. We know also what happened in the marginal areas when prices dropped.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The depression closed them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Those who pioneered the country, as Mr. Heenan said, finished because of lack of capital. They could not hang on. But this land has been highly productive for many years because somebody was able to hang on and buy up adjoining farms that had been abandoned.

Hon. H. K. Watson: This land tax will not help them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Land tax in the farming areas is not huge.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It would cost a man with 50,000 acres, at £20 an acre, £1,000,000 to develop the land.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I asked why we should not make 10,000 or 20,000 acres available if a man has the money.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He can have 5,000 acres now.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is so. There is a lot of merit in Mr. Jones's suggestion that 5,000 acres is not sufficient and that the Act should be amended so that, in special cases, an individual will be able to invest money the same as this syndicate is doing, provided the land is worked. In this case the object behind the move is closer settlement, and not just sitting down. The object of the syndicate—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Is to clear the land and sell it and put people on it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is right.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And what you are going to do is to give one man 10,000 acres and let him sit on it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No, provided it is worked. There would have to be an agreement.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: There is a long way between houses under those conditions.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Not necessarily. Although the syndicate can invest in 1,500,000 acres with a profit motive, there could be an individual who could do exactly the same thing if he could be given 10,000 or 20,000 acres. I cannot see any difference. That is the trouble with our land in the North. Why is it not being developed? It is leasehold land; and pastoralists holding leasehold land which may be showing a large net income, are not going to plough it back into leasehold land when they can buy land in the South-West Land Division, develop it, and receive exactly the same taxation concessions. In those circumstances, the drift must be from the North, from the leasehold to the freehold or conditional purchase land.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The land is cheaper there than anywhere else.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is hard to obtain one acre of land freehold in the whole of the North-West.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I know. It was never intended that it should be freehold. Your people always opposed it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No fear! Not our people.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The Labour Party.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I can remember the struggle that Mr. Frank Wise had to resume that small area from pastoral leases at Carnarvon in order to establish a plantation area of something like 50,000 acres out of 1,250,000 acres. It took him years to convince Parliament that that should be done. Where else in the North-West is there one acre available for potential market gardening?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Do you want me to reply to your Carnarvon story now?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I will do it on the third reading.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: While we close the land up in that fashion all the talk about populating the North is so much idle talk. A pastoralist came to me two years ago who has a great big pool of water on his land and he wanted to know whether it would be possible for him to cultivate some of the land alongside that permanent pool and grow lucerne. I told him the Act provided that he could select 500 acres. He did not know that.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I thought you didn't know just now.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I did know that. But he could do that because he is the leaseholder. But the individual who would attempt to select that land or any other land that a leaseholder was not prepared to develop just could not do it, unless Parliament agreed. It takes years of procedure. I explained that to the House when I tried to have that part of the Act amended in 1951. The proposition is still not attractive enough because few pastoral properties have permanent pools on them.

It takes big syndicates with big capital to develop these big areas and populate them quickly. I am hoping somebody will be sufficiently interested to tackle the Ord River scheme. Believe me, in 10 years or 15 years there would be some fine beef produced on the millions of acres that the Ord could irrigate!

Mr. Diver was critical of Clause 5 of the agreement in respect of poison and water. It is different from the ordinary conditions of selection. I would explain that Clause 5 sets out that in certain specified circumstances the State may agree, if there is poison, to excise the portion of the land on which it is found. Where there is no water, it may agree to refund the money and take the land back.

It was necessary to have that in the agreement because it was desired that the lands should be selected on a face in two huge blocks. In fact the company would not have wasted 12 months looking the land over and then having it surveyed around patches where perhaps there was poison, or sand-drift, or no water.

Hon. L. C. Diver: There are extensive areas of this land with poison on them, I understand.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. That is probably the reason this provision is in the agreement. It was a matter of time. So a blanket over the area was taken, and the State may agree to have portions excised. No doubt it will do so where it is proved these disadvantages exist.

Hon. L. A. Logan: That is not in the agreement. It is a question of reducing the purchase price.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Clause 5 of the agreement states—

Where further experience of the area shows that adequate water supplies are difficult to establish or maintain in a particular area or where poison is found in a particular area in such quantities that it is difficult to eradicate or control the State may:

- (a) Agree to exclude such areas wholly from the operations of this agreement in which

case the area shall be surrendered to the Crown and a refund made of the purchase price.

- (b) Agree to exclude such areas from the provisions of this clause.
- (c) Agree that the provisions of this clause shall be amended so as to extend the period of subdivision and development for a term not exceeding five years, or
- (d) reduce the purchase price per acre to compensate the company for the additional cost to the company for the eradication or control of the poison or the provision of adequate water supplies.

It is all a question of "may." There is no obligation on the State. I know it is different from the normal land settlement scheme; but it was necessary to meet the requirements of the company.

Hon. L. C. Diver: It was never given to the pioneers of Esperance.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No pioneer, so far as I know, asked for it, or tackled anything on such a scale.

Hon. L. C. Diver: They proved the country, though.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is so. I agree that this is totally new procedure. The point is that the State has the right to investigate the matter thoroughly; and if the company claims any of these concessions, it has to put up a good case.

Hon. L. C. Diver: Isn't there an obligation to comply?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; not unless the case is proved. The agreement is quite all right in the circumstances. Mr. Roche asked me to let him know about the area dealt with in the plan at the back of the agreement. I am afraid I did not gather exactly what he is after; but I understand he wanted to know the areas of each of these plots marked on the map. The area is not shown; and having a quick look at the agreement, I have not been able to find out what they are. However, they seem to be about the same to me, and I would say they are about 750,000 acres each.

I think Mr. Roche also wanted to know whether land out of these areas would be available for the public to invest in. I notice that west of Esperance there are some small areas which are excluded from the total area; and if it is information on those areas that the hon. member wants, I should say that they are already taken up and occupied so that a blanket has been put round the whole lot. As they

proceed with the development which has already been commenced, we will see areas which are useless excluded.

I am pleased with the reception that the Bill has received in this Chamber and I know that the passing of it will be of great advantage to the State. It will enable any Government which may be in office in the future to seize the opportunity of making agreements with companies or corporations when they are seeking to invest in our land and develop this State.

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—CHURCH OF ENGLAND
DIOCESAN TRUSTEES AND
LANDS ACT AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time (Hon. J. McI. Thomson in charge).

BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Long title amended:

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the words "and Delivery" in line 5, page 2, be struck out.

This is the crux of the Bill and the only alternative that I can see is for me to say that the measure shall operate only in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder municipal districts. It is shocking when we try by Act of Parliament to force a person to do something in respect of which he will incur a loss. The position has been fully discussed in this Chamber. The price of bread is controlled by Mr. Mathea, who is the officer appointed for the purpose, and we are going to compel people to deliver bread. I understand that there were a number of bad debts in Kalgoorlie.

Hon. G. Bennetts: It is their own fault if they allow that sort of thing.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I know it is difficult, but if the hon. member had ever been in business he would know just how difficult it is. I was in business in my young days and it is very hard when one goes along to collect a debt and a woman, with tears in her eyes, and a family of youngsters, asks to be given another week to pay. Also, one might go along on the Monday morning to find that the people had disappeared. I hope the Committee will agree to this amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I wish the distribution of prizes was on tonight instead of last night because while the hon. member was absent we dealt with this whole question.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You had no right to deal with it, because that is something that should be discussed in Committee.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It looks as though we will have to have it all over again. We might as well throw the Bill out as agree to this amendment.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That is what I want.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are going to have the same arguments.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You could have finished it last night, but you waited deliberately for me to come back.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes; because I did not want the same thing over again tonight. The hon. member is not right when he says that this is only to cover Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I want to restrict it to them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The amendment will have the effect of defeating the Bill.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I do not want anybody to be forced.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member's amendment will force everybody to go and get their own bread. Has not the public some rights?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Competition will look after that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Competition does not come into that.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It does in all but the scattered areas.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no competition as far as this industry is concerned because its members control the yeast. I dealt with that position last night. They can undermine any competition.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Who has been telling you fairy stories?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It happened at Canning Bridge in my electorate and it has happened in various country centres.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They deliver bread at Canning Bridge.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I know; but I am talking about competition and how it is controlled by the supply of yeast. If we are to have compulsion I would rather the baker was compelled to deliver than the people compelled to go and get their bread.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Even though he loses money?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member knows that he does not lose money. The price of delivery is taken into consideration by the committee.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: How much per loaf?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: According to the circumstances. Surely the hon. member does not mean to say that all the bakers in the metropolitan area are losing money because they deliver!

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Some could be.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is taken into consideration when the price is assessed.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You do not know Mr. Mathea.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A lot of bakers in the metropolitan area do not deliver but let out contracts for delivery. Yet we are told that if they deliver they will lose money.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Will you postpone this and have a referendum of the people in Kalgoorlie and Boulder?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I will not postpone anything, because it is here for a decision. This applies to people everywhere in the State. There are a number of centres where there has been trouble over bread deliveries.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: How many?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: About half a dozen. I mentioned them last night. I hope the Committee will not agree to this amendment because it will have the effect of defeating the Bill.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I am surprised at the selfishness of the hon. member. He is doing an injustice to the people, especially the women and children at Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Norseman and Merredin. Mr. Teahan and I were on a committee which investigated this matter when bread deliveries were stopped. Two people were prepared to deliver bread on a contract basis at the same price at which it was being delivered by the bakers when they ceased delivering. I have no doubt that the bakers ceased delivering bread because of the large unpaid accounts on their books. I have experienced the same thing. There were as many as five bakers delivering in my street within 100 yards of one another.

If this Bill is made law I take it that the board will go into the matter and see that the bakers are covered and that they have a fair margin. The hon. member should not deprive the people of Kalgoorlie of this facility. Members know that it is extremely hot in the summer in that district and it is a great hardship for women to have to chase around for their supplies of bread. If there were a referendum held I have no doubt the people would be in favour of bread deliveries throughout the district I represent.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And they would pay for it.

The Chief Secretary: Of course they would pay for it.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: As the Chief Secretary said, if those words were deleted it would nullify the Bill. Members opposite talk about protecting women, and yet they are prepared to make these women tramp about the streets in a temperature of 109 degrees in order to secure their bread supplies. This is a service that was withdrawn. The inconvenience was borne by women during wartime. I am just about tired of hearing all this talk about the protection of women when members are prepared to let this sort of thing happen.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: If you are tired, why don't you sit down?

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: These people should not permit their accounts to get out of hand. As soon as wages go up, the price of bread and everything else goes up. It is a disgrace that women cannot get their household goods delivered. Representations were made to me from Bunbury in matters of a similar nature. I have heard from my daughter in Kalgoorlie that it is a great hardship not having bread delivered. Mr. Cunningham said he would permit his little boy to run out and get the bread. My daughter, however, has not got a little boy and she is not at all well, either.

In spite of the talk of members that they want to protect women, they do not mind them being made the cart-horses of society. I would throw this back at Mr. Cunningham. When he goes out to vote he looks for the votes of the women, and I will certainly see that the women read what he has had to say on this matter.

Point of Order.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The hon. member has just uttered a threat. It is not the first time this has occurred. I object to the attitude she is adopting; and I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, to chastise her.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I did not utter a threat.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Surely it is a threat if someone says that unless one does something, something else will be done. I think Mrs. Hutchison should read the Parliamentary rules, and she should be asked to withdraw her remarks, in fairness to the Committee.

The Chief Secretary: Is it not the prerogative of the hon. member who complained to ask for the withdrawal of the remark?

The Chairman: I would ask Mr. Cunningham whether he desires that the remark should be withdrawn.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: On this occasion I would be content with the withdrawal of the remark.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What have I to withdraw, Mr. Chairman? I made no threat.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The hon. member certainly did utter a threat. She implied that if I insisted on my attitude, as she put it, she would see that the women in my district knew about it. If she persists in saying that she did not utter a threat, I suggest that we get a report from Hansard as to what she did say.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I never said that. This service of bread deliveries—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Are we going to permit this matter to be left there, Mr. Chairman? The hon. member has asked for a withdrawal and it has not been made.

The Chairman: I do not think Mrs. Hutchison made a threat; but to satisfy the minds of members I will get from Hansard an exact report of what she did say. I will leave the Chair till the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended from 10.55 to 11 p.m.

The Chairman: For the information of members the Hansard transcript of Mrs. Hutchison's statements reads as follows:—

I would throw this back at Mr. Cunningham. When he goes out to vote he looks for the votes of the women, and I will certainly see that the women read what he has had to say on this matter.

In my opinion that statement does not really call for a withdrawal, but if Mrs. Hutchison desires to withdraw she may do so. I do not think that it is a serious enough offence to call for a withdrawal.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: May I quote Standing Order—

The Chairman: I have read the Standing Order on this matter.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I object very strongly to the words; and, while respecting your interpretation, I find that they are more than offensive and consider them as a definite threat as to action the hon. member will take against me. The word, "vote" implies that it will be at election time, and implies the action she will take against me in regard to what I have said in this House; and that is the threat.

The Chairman: I suggest to Mrs. Hutchison that she withdraw.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I will not withdraw. I never made a threat and will not withdraw.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Despite the hon. member's attitude, I would like to prove I am something more of a gentleman than she is a lady, and will withdraw my demand for a withdrawal.

Committee Resumed.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I would like to say one or two words on this matter because of figures I have had given me and the interest that has been shown in this Bill. My endeavour is not to sway anyone but to give factual information on a particular aspect in regard to statements made that one or more persons offered to deliver bread in Kalgoorlie on what I believe is termed "round lease." It has been said they were prepared to deliver bread at the same price as that at which bread was being delivered at that time. A normal round would constitute something in the nature of 200 deliveries which, at 3d. a loaf for delivery, would be £2 10s. a day or £17 10s. a week. But out of that money for delivery would have to be taken the cost of feeding a horse, and cart maintenance and harness, etc. A horse could not be fed under £3 per week. All incidentals would have to come out of that amount, and still leave a margin for reward.

Remembering the basic wage, how could any man offer to deliver bread at the same price as at that time? Obviously these folk did not know what they were offering, and the bakers said it could not be done. Today the very latest figure on the cost of delivering bread in the metropolitan area is something slightly under 4d. per 2 lb. loaf of bread. I may be wrong; but until the people in my district who are going to be asked to pay this imposition, even if it be 3d., assure me they are prepared to pay it, I am not prepared to support any measure that will throw it upon their shoulders. I believe they are paying all they are prepared to pay now.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are not setting ourselves up as an arbitration court in regard to the cost of delivery. All we want to do is to have bread delivered. There is a special authority to say what the price will be for that delivered bread.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: You won't touch on the cost of delivery.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is not our job. There is a properly constituted authority to fix the price and the hon. member should know.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: I do.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then why should we worry?

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: People are entitled to know whether they are likely to pay that charge.

Hon. G. Bennetts: If it is too dear to have it delivered, they will go and get it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is a properly constituted authority to fix the price, and there have been no complaints in that regard.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The Chief Secretary has said there have been no complaints about the price of bread. Bakers in the South-West—

The Chief Secretary: I am speaking about Kalgoorlie.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: The Bill does not specify Kalgoorlie; it refers to a prescribed area. If Kalgoorlie were prescribed and extra were paid for delivery, bakers delivering bread in Bunbury could arrange for a group of people to complain, the area could be prescribed, and the bakers would get 2d. extra. It seems quite reasonable to suppose that would be the position if Kalgoorlie were declared a prescribed area and the Wheat Products Prices Fixation Committee allowed an increase in the price. I consider it is an unfair imposition to put on any price-fixing authority.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I doubt whether the authority fixes the delivered price of bread.

The Chief Secretary: It fixes the delivery price.

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Throughout the country districts with which I am in touch it causes a lot of unhappiness and bad feeling among those engaged in the baking of bread.

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Isn't the housewife an important part of the community?

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: Of course she is! That is a silly question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: This goes on all the time behind me, and it makes it difficult for me to hear other speeches.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is marvellous how far members will go without knowing what they are talking about. The Wheat Products Prices Fixation Committee fixes the delivery price of bread.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I entirely agree with what the Chief Secretary had to say on the last occasion he rose. We are talking about something of which we know nothing. Just prior to the war I was an inspector in the Treasury, and I acted as secretary to the Wheat Products Prices Fixation Committee. Consequently I was concerned with the fixing of the prices of all wheat products, including bread. All the different items of production and distribution in the price of bread are taken into account to the third decimal place of a penny. This price and the delivery price are worked out and a margin for profit is added, and that is the selling price. It is the maximum and the minimum selling price.

After the war, when I entered into private practice, I was for a short period a consultant to the master bakers of Perth on this point. Therefore I claim to speak with some slight knowledge of the industry. The price is the all-important question in the delivery problem in Kalgoorlie and Boulder. When the bakers there ceased to deliver they said they

would drop the price by 1d. per loaf as a result of the reduced expenditure they would have. The wheat products prices committee said, "No, you will reduce the price by a further ½d.", making a total reduction of 1½d.

It might be thought that the total delivery cost at the time was 1½d. per loaf, but one important factor is that the bakers are still maintaining a partial delivery; they are not merely selling the bread at the bake-house but are delivering it in batches to various points throughout the district. This accounts for the difference between the total figure which is allowed by the wheat products prices committee for delivery and the margin by which the price of bread was reduced.

Since then there have been increases through basic wage variations and one thing and another, and I have it on very good authority that if deliveries were resumed tomorrow and the wheat products prices committee allowed a fair price, as it has done in the past, the price of bread in Kalgoorlie and Boulder would increase by at least 2d. per loaf and perhaps 2½d.

We have to remember that if the legislation is agreed to as it stands, the bakers in Kalgoorlie will be compelled to deliver or to shut their doors. I understand the housewife there suffers a definite disability. That must be so where bread is not brought right to the door, but there is an offsetting factor in the saving of 2d. or 2½d. per 2½lb. loaf. We have to weigh the facts. If we pass the legislation the housewife in the future will have to pay 2d. or 2½d. per loaf more than she does now.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I suggest that we pass the Bill and let the housewife decide whether she wants to save the 2d., or whatever the amount is. I do not think it would be that much. It is only ½d. or something like that in the metropolitan area. I know what the answer will be: I know the hardship being caused in the country areas. I am almost ashamed to have to say this here amongst a lot of men.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: In Kalgoorlie at present there are seven bakers. Now, bakers are keen on competition; and if one of them could get a fair delivery price, and could obtain suitable labour to carry out the deliveries, I am sure he would not hesitate to jump in and try to take a lot of trade from the other bakers.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: It has been implied that the housewife is quite satisfied with the present set-up and would prefer to have it rather than pay the additional price for delivery. She does not have to have bread delivered if she does not wish it. It was also argued that an accumulation of debts makes it uneconomic to deliver bread. The Bill provides for this matter. If cash is not paid, the baker need not deliver.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I move—

That the question be now put.
Motion put and passed.

Amendment put and a division called for.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the tellers tell, I give my vote with the noes.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	.....	13
Noes	.....	14
Majority against	.....	1

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. G. MacKinnon	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
	(Teller.)

Pair.

Aye.	No.
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. G. E. Jeffery

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Section 17B added:

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

That the word "State" in line 13, page 2, be struck out and the words "Kalgoorlie and Boulder Municipality" inserted in lieu.

The debate on Clause 2 pretty well covered the reasons for this amendment which is to confine the Bill to the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Municipalities. It is obvious that the Bill was introduced at the instigation of that district. That being so, let it have the measure. I do not want to have it in any other part of the State.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. Why should we deny to any part of the State a favour, if I may put it that way, that we seek to give to Kalgoorlie and Boulder? When dealing with legislation which concerns the State, we do not confine it to just one little corner of the State. Under the measure, not every district will be declared—an investigation will be made only when a demand comes from some area. And if it is thought necessary, a decision will be made to proclaim that area.

Hon. J. Murray: The pressure came from only one portion of the State.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are other parts of the State that may require the same service. There would have to be a substantial claim before it would be granted.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: In your hands it would be granted anywhere.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not the Minister in charge of the Act.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Was there an investigation in Kalgoorlie and Boulder?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There will be if the Bill, as introduced, is agreed to.

Hon. H. K. Watson: More expense!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is only 2d. 1b. The Minister would not grant the request from Kalgoorlie and Boulder unless it was thought to be justified.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I cannot understand this measure emanating from a centre which is big enough to manage its own affairs in matters of this kind.

The Chief Secretary: How could they regulate it?

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Why should we accede to the wishes of people who cannot do something for themselves, and force this measure on all the State? I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I want the measure to apply to Kalgoorlie and Boulder, but there are other places to which it should also apply. Merredin and Norseman also want bread deliveries as the bakers in those centres had a monopoly and cut out deliveries. I will vote against the amendment because I want the Bill to apply to places other than Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Mr. Bennetts should vote for the amendment and then move to have the Bill recommitted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What Mr. Simpson says is wrong, because any move must come from the people in the area concerned, and we are not thrusting the measure down anyone's throat.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: The people of Kalgoorlie and Boulder should have fixed this for themselves.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They have no power to fix it, and that is why they asked the Government to bring down the Bill.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: We have heard a lot about the demand for bread deliveries in Kalgoorlie and Boulder—

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Don't you believe there is that demand?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: If the demand is so great, why did not the people take action in regard to bread as they did in relation to beer when they went on strike over an increase in the price? The people there have a right to have bread delivered; and if it works successfully there we can

later on agree to apply the measure to other centres. The Chief Secretary mentioned a demand from Wanneroo to Kelmscott; but neither Sir Charles Latham, Mr. Diver nor I, as representatives of that province, have heard anything about it. The main cause of the trouble is that the Wheat Products Prices Fixation Committee have cut the price of bread.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I refute that statement and I am in a position to know through the union of which I am a member. The right type of labour could not be obtained in Kalgoorlie; and notice was given to the union by the master bakers there that, as from a certain date, they would not deliver bread and would therefore have to dismiss their bread carters. Since then a change has taken place in the economic position of the State and plenty of the right type of labour is now available in Kalgoorlie to deliver bread. Many men who came from there expecting permanent positions at Kwinana are now back on the Goldfields.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Let them start a business delivering bread.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Bread deliveries were stopped on the Goldfields because the labour was not available, but there is plenty of it available now.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: If it is to cost an extra 3d. per loaf to have the bread delivered, the worker with a family will ill be able to afford it. I hope the Chief Secretary is listening.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chairman is listening, at all events, and the hon. member is addressing the Chair.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I hope the Chief Secretary is listening—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has mentioned that twice. He may proceed.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The investigator should discover what would be the additional cost of delivering bread, as it can be a costly item to a large family if the price increases by 3d. a loaf.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I thought I had made it clear that the investigator would only examine whether the demand for delivery was strong enough for him to recommend that bread be delivered. The cost of bread is a matter for the Wheat Products Prices Fixation Committee.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: From the Chief Secretary's remarks I gather that the investigator will be much the same as those who about three months ago inquired whether people were on the Legislative Council roll in the metropolitan area, and put them there. I imagine his activities at election time would be much the same, in Kalgoorlie.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I called for a division, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: My hearing is good and I did not hear a call for a division.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The voices for the noes were behind me, but I called for a division.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear a call for a division. I suggest that the Bill be recommitted on the third reading.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We do not want to go through it all again on the third reading.

The CHAIRMAN: I have made a decision. I did not hear any call for a division.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I did call for a division.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I heard the Chief Secretary call for a division whether you heard it or not, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: I do not think there is any denial, Mr. Chairman, that the Chief Secretary called for a division. The complaint is that on the question being put, and following your call for ayes and noes, there was not a voice to call "no."

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I disagree with that contention because I definitely called "no" and my colleague, Mr. Lavery, called "no" also.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the best way to overcome the difficulty is to put the question again.

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

Ayes	.....	15
Noes	.....	11
Majority for	.....	4

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. G. MacKinnon	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. G. Fraser
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	(Teller.)

Pair.

Aye.	No.
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. G. E. Jeffery

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I move an amendment—

That before the word "prescribed" in line 13, page 2, the words "Merredin and Kalgoorlie Road Boards and Norseman" be inserted.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would like some assurance before voting on this amendment that it is a fair thing to ask a baker in a town such as Norseman to deliver bread. Would not the cost of delivery be too excessive?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Investigations will be made.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have no great faith in investigators. In fact, I intend making my own investigations from now on. I doubt whether even Merredin is large enough to enable a baker to deliver bread at a reasonable price.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: If Kellerberrin is large enough to enable bakers to deliver bread, the other two places mentioned would have a population two or three times greater than Kellerberrin; therefore the bakers in those centres should be able to deliver bread also. In fact, two years ago, two bakers were delivering bread in Merredin. I cannot foresee any trouble being caused as a result of this amendment.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON: I hope the committee will not agree to the amendment because if it does we will be considering for some time various amendments to include other parts of the State. This amendment cuts across the intention of the Bill. A request has been made for deliveries in Kalgoorlie and Boulder. The Chief Secretary has said that delivery will only be compulsory where a request has been made by the residents. No request had been received from Merredin or Norseman for deliveries. If we agree to the amendment we will spend considerable time in debating the inclusion of other centres.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I have already said that requests have been made in those two places. Twelve months ago I made a request to the Premier for the delivery of bread in those two towns as the result of a deputation from the residents.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: No evidence has been placed before us that requests have been received other than from Boulder and Kalgoorlie. Those were the two centres interested in bread deliveries. I ask that the parties in the various districts be given the opportunity of exercising their good sense in a matter such as bread deliveries and bakers should not be compelled to deliver.

Hon. J. J. GARRIGAN: Recently I visited both Norseman and Kalgoorlie and received many requests for bread deliveries to take effect.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was said by Mr. Simpson that no requests had been made from those two centres; but I read out a list of places from where representations had been made, and Merredin was included.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Are you able to table the correspondence containing the request? I would like to know the persons making the request.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not the correspondence to table. The hon. member should accept this written statement from the department. I only asked for centres which have made requests, and Merredin was included.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: In the cases of Boulder and Kalgoorlie, partial delivery is in force, and for that service an extra charge is made. If delivery is compulsory in other country towns the cost of delivery will be 4d. per 2lb. loaf. I would ask members who favour this amendment to realise that by insisting on it they will force people in country towns to pay an extra 4d. for a 2 lb. loaf delivered. Naturally if a customer went to the bakehouse, that delivery charge would not be included in the price. If a baker in a country town has to run a vehicle and employ labour to make deliveries of perhaps half-a-dozen loaves, that would be beyond all reason, and the cost would be much greater than 4d.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I am not in favour of increasing the price of a 2 lb. loaf by 4d. In reply to the remarks of Mr. Mattiske, I would point out that the delivery cost will be determined by the responsible authority. Both Merredin and Norseman have a population exceeding 3,000 people, and I consider that it would pay any baker in those towns to make deliveries.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: Having made that point we can only judge this amendment by the result of the vote. Prior to the last basic wage increase, the amount allowed by the wheat products prices committee for delivery was 3.9d. per 2 lb. loaf. Since then the cost has increased because of the rise in the basic wage. In country centres that cost would be greater still because of the higher charge for petrol and repairs. If the density of population in country towns is less than that in the metropolitan area, then the distances to be travelled for delivery would be relatively greater and so would the cost.

Hon. J. MURRAY: I would be happy to support the amendment if it is confined to the road district of Kalgoorlie. By attempting to include Norseman and Merredin the whole amendment could be prejudiced.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: There has been a serious oversight. It seems that members are agreeable to extend the right to Kalgoorlie and Boulder; but unfortunately

the words "and Kalgoorlie Road Board" have been left out of the amendment. Those who know this district will realise there is an area of only three miles in radius administered by three local authorities.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I suggest that the mover withdraw his amendment with a view to inserting the words "Kalgoorlie Road Board"; otherwise the amendment will not have a chance to go through.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM: If the amendment is applied to Kalgoorlie and Boulder townships the position could be met.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I ask for leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I move an amendment—

That before the word "prescribed" in line 13, page 2, the words "and Kalgoorlie Road Board" be inserted.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I think we will have to alter the previous amendment, because there is no Kalgoorlie and Boulder municipality. It should read "Kalgoorlie and Boulder Municipalities."

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid we cannot do anything about that at the moment because we have passed that stage.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: If bakers are going to deliver according to this edict being issued by us, is it conceivable that they will cut out a little section between the two towns which would be in their normal delivery area? If bakers are going to deliver, they will get all the normal deliveries they can. To make them go into a certain area seems to me to be unnecessary, and I intend to vote against this amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I move an amendment—

That after the word "Board" inserted by the previous amendment, the words "Norseman and Merredin" be inserted.

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

Ayes	.....	11
Noes	.....	15

Majority against 4

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hlop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	(Teller.)

Pair.

Aye.	No.
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. A. F. Griffith

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

That after the figure "(3)" in line 19, page 2, the words "and the proviso" be inserted.

The rest of the amendments hinge on the inclusion of this proviso, and it will be necessary to consider whether it shall be included or not. It is as follows:—

Provided that nothing in this Section shall require a baker to deliver,

(a) outside a radius of one mile from his bake-house, and

(b) if the quantity of bread to be delivered within a radius of one mile of his bake-house is less than 300lb. of bread per normal delivery day.

The Chief Secretary told us that an investigator would be sent to the area, and I claim that some guidance should be given to him, and that there should also be some restriction in regard to the distance over which he may make the bakers deliver bread. A mile from the bakehouse is quite fair enough, and the 300 lb. of bread is the minimum.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. There might have been reason for it if the original Bill had been passed, but it applies now to Kalgoorlie and Boulder and the Kalgoorlie Road Board area. It is a fairly thickly populated district; so why insert any area at all? I think that Boulder is four miles from Kalgoorlie, yet it is proposed to insert a radius of one mile.

Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: This would not stop them delivering outside.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I know that. I do not think Mr. Logan knows how the bake-houses are situated on the Goldfields. The same problem could be encountered if the bake-houses were not situated in a suitable area—many portions could be cut out. Without having a knowledge of where they are situated, we are not competent to provide for this one-mile radius. We could have all seven bakers dotted around in the first mile of Kalgoorlie and quite a large proportion of the area we have agreed should be included could be cut out.

Hon. J. D. Teahan: And the one we want served would be missed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes; the ones who have furthest to go would be the ones to be cut out.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: As Mr. Teahan said, those on the outskirts that we want served would be cut out. For instance, the fairly thickly populated area of Victoria Heights and Lamington Heights, just over

a mile away, could be cut out. I think that the bakers would consider contract delivery on similar lines to those suggested by those other gentlemen some time ago when they made an offer to the bakers. That would save them going to the expense of procuring carts for their own deliveries.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: This amendment is one which appears to provide a reasonable basis for delivery; in other words, an economic basis. We know that inspectors are not concerned about the economic situation, and I have seen water supply inspectors in the country make reports which were not in accordance with the true position. The same thing could happen here. If we include these words it would be quite competent for the Committee to amend the proviso if members think it unreasonable.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	....	15
Noes	....	....	....	....	11

Majority for 4

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	(Teller.)

Pair.

Aye.	No.
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. G. E. Jeffery

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

That in line 21, page 2, the words "to that person" be struck out.

This and the following amendments are consequential.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Mr. Logan has twice, in the last five minutes, used the words "300 loaves," when the proviso says "300 lb."

Hon. L. A. Logan: They are 1 lb. loaves.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY:** I shall not oppose this amendment, because it is consequential; but I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the position becomes foolish by putting in the words "300 lb. within a mile."

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It is not in yet.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY:** It is useless going on with it unless that is put in. It is foolish because, by the amendment, we are compelling the baker and if he has only 300 lb. of bread he would not get a crust out of the business.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by **Hon. L. A. Logan**, clause further amended by—

Striking out the words "to that person" in line 23, page 2;

striking out the words "and within such distance of the bake-house" in lines 23 and 24, page 2;

striking out the words "in such reasonable quantities and at such reasonable intervals as may from time to time be stipulated in any usual and sufficient manner" in lines 26 to 29, page 2.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I move an amendment—

That a proviso be added at the end of the clause as follows:—

Provided that nothing in this Section shall require a baker to deliver,

(a) outside a radius of one mile from his bake-house, and

(b) if the quantity of bread to be delivered within a radius of one mile of his bake-house is less than 300 lb. of bread per normal delivery day.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY:** I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the words "one" in line 1 of paragraph (a) with a view to inserting the word "three."

That would make it three miles from the bake-house instead of one mile.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I think the amendment on the amendment would be quite good because there are some people who desire to have a different baker, and it may be in the interests of that baker to go to another area outside the mile radius. If the delivery was by a contract system, the one mile would be sufficient.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am quite willing to add to the distance of one mile, but I think the Chief Secretary is going too far.

The **Chief Secretary:** Compromise and make it two miles.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: All right.

The **CHAIRMAN:** It will be necessary for the Chief Secretary to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY:** I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the word "one" in line 1 of paragraph (a) and inserting in lieu the word "two."

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

The **CHAIRMAN:** I will instruct the Clerks to make the necessary alteration to the word "mile" to make it "miles."

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I would like to move an amendment on the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask the hon. member to resume his seat. In paragraph (b) of the proposed amendment it will be necessary to substitute the word "two" for the word "one" in line 3.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the word "one" in line 3 of paragraph (b) and inserting in lieu the word "two."

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the figure "3" in line 4 of paragraph (b) and inserting the figure "5."

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It would do no harm to leave the amendment as it is. It is a minimum. If the baker's business is successful, he will extend it beyond that point.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: We must take into consideration that this is in lbs. which would mean that a 2lb. loaf would cut the quantity in half. It is a fair distance to cover and we should make it worth the baker's while.

Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I agree with Dr. Hislop. We should not upset all that we have done by agreeing to this amendment. I think 300lb. is a fair minimum.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The distance is a 2-mile radius and would be equivalent to a distance from Parliament House to Tuart Hill. We should make it worth the baker's while and 300lb. of bread would not pay his running costs.

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

Ayes	....	....	....	....	12
Noes	....	....	....	....	14
Majority against	....	....	....	....	2

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. G. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	Hon. J. Cunningham

(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery

Pair.

Aye.

No.

Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. G. E. Jeffery
---------------------	--------------------

Amendment thus negatived.

Amendment (to insert proviso) as previously amended, put and passed, the clause, as amended, agreed to.

New clause:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 3:—

Section 13 of the principal Act is amended by substituting for the passage, "5 a.m." where it appears in line 2 of paragraph (b) and again in line 6 of paragraph (d), the passage, "4 a.m."

In effect, there are two amendments, and if agreed to delivery of bread will be permitted after 4 a.m. instead of after 5 a.m.

Hon. R. C. MATTISKE: I agree with the amendment, although the explanation given by the Chief Secretary is wrong. At present the Act provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to sell or deliver bread between the hours of 7 p.m. Friday and 5 a.m. on the following Saturday. It is intended to make it unlawful to sell bread between 7 p.m. Friday and 4 a.m. on the following Saturday, so that bread carters can commence and get through their job an hour earlier.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Marketing of Onions Act Amendment. (Hon. W. F. Willesee in charge.)
- 2, Fire Brigades Act Amendment. Received from the Assembly.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [1.2 a.m.]: I believe this Bill will pass the second reading stage, and therefore do not intend to reply to any of the debate, as the matters raised can be discussed in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND FALSE ADVERTISEMENT ACT. AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 5th December.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—S. 4C repealed.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I know this Bill is all right; but for the benefit of members, I would like the Chief Secretary to state more clearly what it does purport to do. I understand it removes from the Act some irksome restrictions, and sufficient protection is given to the public, inasmuch as brands will appear on the material and not the invoice.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What the hon. member says is correct. The brand appears on the article now, and this Bill will do away with the necessity of its having to be inserted on the invoice.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 3.30 p.m. today.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.8 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 12th December, 1956.

CONTENTS

	Page
Questions : Roads, expenditure on Denmark-Nornalup section	3244
Parliament House site reserve, expenditure on departmental buildings	3244
Lake Monger, control of midges	3244
Education, (a) consolidation and re-establishment of schools	3244
(b) amendment of junior and leaving examination system	3244
Fishing industry, marketing	3244
Narrows bridge, decision on toll	3245
Agriculture, suggestions for improving administration of department	3245
Drainage rates, increase during 1956-57	3245
Blue Cross health benefit scheme, collection of claims	3245
Liquid Fuel Prices Select Committee, report presented	3245
Warburton Range Natives Welfare Select Committee, report presented	3245
Motion : Railways, discontinuance of certain lines	3262
Bills : Parliament House Site Permanent Reserve (A/1162), 1r., 2r.	3242
Cemeteries Act Amendment, Message, 1r., 2r.	3243
Wheat Pool Act Amendment, 1r.	3245
Road Closure, 1r.	3245
Reserves, 1r.	3245
Liquid Petroleum Gas, 2r., remaining stages	3245
Vermiln Act Amendment (No. 1), Council's amendments	3246
Freemasons' Property, returned	3246
Public Works Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3246
State Transport Co-ordination Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	3247
Builders' Registration Act Amendment, Com., report	3248
Mines Regulation Act Amendment, all stages	3249
Town Planning and Development Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	3250
Bank Holidays Act Amendment, 2r.	3261
Church of England Diocesan Trustees and Lands Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3274
Marketing of Onions Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3274
Fire Brigades Act Amendment, 2r., remaining stages	3278
Land Act Amendment (No. 8), returned	3262

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

**BILL—PARLIAMENT HOUSE SITE
PERMANENT RESERVE (A/1162).**

First Reading.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.