

companies that may come in, let the amendment go through and then see about it later.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Who thought of this one?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The registrar, who discussed it with the Under Secretary for Mines. I feel there is something in it.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Very little.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I hope the clause will be agreed to.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 and 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Section 368 amended:

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

That at the end of paragraph (c), the following words be added:—"but it shall be lawful for a prospectus to be issued printed in letters of less than eight point face measurement where the Registrar, before the issue of the prospectus, certifies in writing that the type and size of letters are legible and satisfactory."

This is a counterpart of a previous amendment accepted by the Committee. It has particular reference to foreign companies as distinct from Western Australian companies. There is a slight difference in the wording and I am indebted to the Minister for making this wording available to me as it is an improvement on what I had intended to move at this stage.

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

Clauses 10, 11 and 12—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

*House adjourned at 10 p.m.*

# Legislative Council

Wednesday, 14th October, 1953.

## CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Royal visit, as to transport of northern children .....	1016
Department of Agriculture, as to loss of officers .....	1016
Medical Board, as to registration of migrant doctors .....	1017
Address-in-reply, sixteenth day, conclusion .....	1017
As to presentation of Address .....	1017
Speakers on Address—	
Hon. N. E. Baxter .....	1017
Hon. R. J. Boylen .....	1019
The Chief Secretary .....	1026
Bills : Hospitals Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1035
Western Australian Government Tramways and Ferries Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1035
Bee Industry Compensation, 2r. ....	1035
Industries Assistance Act Amendment (Continuance), 2r. ....	1036
Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment, 2r. ....	1036
Industrial Development (Kwinana Area) Act Amendment, 2r. ....	1038

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

## QUESTIONS.

### ROYAL VISIT.

*As to Transport of Northern Children.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) As Geraldton is not included in the itinerary of Her Majesty the Queen during her visit next year, has the Government evolved a plan whereby the children of the northern areas may be brought to Perth for that occasion?

(2) If not, will the Government give immediate consideration to such a plan?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) and (2) Consideration will be given to the suggestion but it is hardly likely to be found practicable, as all areas of the State not to be visited by Her Majesty the Queen would have to be included.

### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

*As to Loss of Officers.*

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is he aware that three valuable officers have left the Agriculture Department during the last six months, that two others have given notice, and that several others are looking for positions elsewhere, all of them graduates?

(2) Is Western Australia in a position to lose these qualified officers?

(3) Will he undertake to investigate the reasons for these officers leaving the department?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Three graduates have resigned and it is possible that others are looking for position elsewhere.

(2) No.

(3) Yes.

#### MEDICAL BOARD.

*As to Registration of Migrant Doctors.*

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is he aware that a number of migrant doctors have applied to the Medical Board for examination, with a view to being registered under the Medical Act?

(2) Does he realise that several months after the submission of applications, no advice has been received as to when such examination will take place and what matter it will cover?

(3) Does he realise that anyone, particularly a doctor, requires a minimum of six months' notice for an examination, as besides the tremendous field which their studies cover, they are at the same time engaged on very arduous professional duties?

(4) Will he inform the House whether some action can be taken to notify these migrant doctors of the full position regarding their applications?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) and (2) Three of the 14 doctors registered under regional or auxiliary service conditions have applied to the Medical Board for examination to test their qualifications for registration as medical practitioners. There has been some delay in arranging the examination because the board has sought examiners from universities in the Eastern States. Applicants have been advised there may be considerable delay. Replies so far received indicate inability by some universities to assist. Reminders have been forwarded to the non-replying universities.

(3) This depends upon the preparedness of the applicant.

(4) It is expected that finality will be reached at an early stage.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### *Sixteenth Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, as amended.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [4.36]: I would like to congratulate Messrs. Fraser and Strickland on their elevation to Ministerial rank. I am sure they will carry out their duties in an efficient and able manner, and I hope that they will keep ahead of the other Ministers in the Cabinet. I also wish to congratulate Mr. Hall on his election to the office of Chairman of Committees. I am sure he will perform his duties capably. I welcome Mr.

Griffith and congratulate him on his election to this House. He is a young man, who showed great promise in another place and proved himself a diligent worker. It was rather unfortunate he lost the seat he held but I think that the Assembly's loss will be our gain.

The Governor's Speech appears to be mainly a recital of things already known to everyone. There was very little in it of which the public was not aware through statements published in the Press or broadcast. My view is that such a Speech should be compiled for the benefit of the taxpayers. The document should be one accounting for the stewardship of a Government over the period in which it has been in office. It should outline the manner in which Government funds have been expended, and should set forth the anticipated expenditure and give a complete picture of the financial position of the State at the beginning of the financial year.

Liabilities taken over from the previous year should be set out and an estimate of the future income and expenditure given. The Speech contains the following:—

The State continues to make substantial progress. Business confidence is strong. Employment is high and rapid population growth has continued.

I admit that such a state of affairs exists, but it could easily be altered by the implementation of Government policy. I appeal to the Government, therefore, to do everything possible to ensure that the situation outlined in the Speech continues and not to take any steps that will retard the substantial progress that has been made and impose a brake on business confidence. The next paragraph states—

Major industrial developments are proceeding or projected, and the demand is firm for the output of our primary industries.

There is no mention of what these major industrial projects are, or how they are proceeding, but just one short sentence telling everyone completely nothing. It goes on—

The control of prices wherever warranted is regarded by Ministers as an important factor in the protection of consumers and you will be asked to approve of a measure to continue price-control.

This was to be expected. I do not think any member of either House thought anything else but that a Bill would be introduced this year for the control of prices. It is a meaningless sentence. The Speech then goes off at a tangent—

Owing to excessive rainfall in the agricultural areas a slightly reduced acreage has been put under crop this year . . .

I do not know whether the parties who composed the Speech knew what did happen as a result of the excessive rainfall in the agricultural areas. Perhaps their statistical records were not up to date. The acreage under crop was not slightly reduced, but greatly reduced. In many places in the territory I represent less than one-third of the usual crop was put in. This paragraph again tells nobody anything more than is generally known. Further on we find—

The heavy rains this season have caused widespread soil washing in farm paddocks. The value of contour methods advised by the Soil Conservation Service and adopted by some farmers has been demonstrated.

The general run of farmers know that this has occurred—particularly those who have suffered from it. They do not care two hoots about the sentence here. It is a silly sentence, prepared by people who should have known better. I come now to the expansion of land settlement. The Speech states—

A decision by the Commonwealth is awaited regarding the State's request for financial assistance to establish 1,000 additional dairy farms.

If instead of establishing 1,000 additional dairy farms, the money were used to improve some of the existing substandard dairy farms, it would be better spent. In the South-West there are farms that are crying out for development—Government and private money has been sunk in them already—but the financial position of the owners is such that they cannot finance further development. It is a foolish policy to establish additional dairy farms if this means the opening up of new country, and that is the only meaning we can give to the statement. Quite a lot of farms in the South-West could be developed beyond their present substandard state, and I would like to press for something closer to the metropolitan area—the development of some of our hills country. There is no better country in the State. Some of the land there, within 50 miles of Perth, can grow the best feed that can be produced in Western Australia.

Hon. G. Bennetts: What about what can be grown at Esperance?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I am talking about dairy farms to supply milk and butter to the metropolitan area, and Mr. Bennetts has the temerity to suggest that we should go to Esperance. I am surprised at him! I do not know whether he would freeze the milk into milk blocks and send it here in refrigerated vans, but surely he realises that the cost of freight—especially with the present freight rates—would make the proposition impossible from a place as far distant as Esperance. The next item in the Speech is this—

To date nearly £10,030,000 has been expended under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme. The number of farms provided from repurchased estates and Crown land has reached 1,023 and 858 ex-servicemen have been allocated farms.

There is no information as the future programme of war service land settlement, apart from what is contained in the previous paragraph. It does not mention what is going to be done in the main producing areas of the State—the wheat belt and the sheep farming districts—but there is just the bare statement of what has happened.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Labour will carry on with the good foundation laid down by the previous Government.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Since the present Government has been in office we have seen very little mention in the Press of the allocation of further farms. I hope the position does not go into the doldrums as it was in 1947, when nothing was done. The next little line in the Speech is one of the most informative—

Since July 1947, 71,000 migrants have arrived in this State.

That tells us a lot! It does not show the effect on population or what the population is. Like some of the other sentences in the Speech, it tells us almost nothing. Several of the following paragraphs are in much the same vein. They tell us nothing that is not known to the public generally. Then we find mention of a proposed Royal Commission—

A Royal Commission will be appointed to inquire into the contract covering imported Austrian prefabricated houses.

A statement like that in the Governor's Speech is to be deplored. What good would such a Royal Commission do today? Maybe the damage is done, but I cannot say because I am not conversant with the position. The only result of the commission would be the useless expenditure of public money, and the pigeon-holing of the report, which would be produced at great cost. That is another useless and silly statement in the Speech that His Excellency had to read. It goes on—

The large production of sawn timber last year made possible a substantial increase in the export of timber.

It omits any details of the timber position. We might as well be on the moon as down here in regard to getting that little bit of information. The Speech continues—

The planting of 2,543 acres of pines last year increased the total area under pines to nearly 18,000 acres.

There is nothing about the future of the pine plantations—what they are expected to return to the State, or what their value is thought to be.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Only the other day you said what a good Speech it was.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The hon. member will excuse himself! If he can find where I made that remark, I will humbly apologise to him. In the next two paragraphs we almost get a little bit of information. Then we come to a paragraph about the North-West shipping service and the statement that five vessels are now being used for that service. There is also mention of the fact that another vessel of the "Kahbarli" type will be provided. That is a little more information, but it is only a sketchy outline of the position. The next six sentences give us a little more information, but not very much. Then there is the following sentence:—

There is a steady expansion in the State's secondary industries, which now employ over 45,000 persons.

It is just a mention about employment in industry, but nothing about the industries themselves.

Now we come to something which astounds me. It reads—

The proceeds from 1,187 whales taken last season was approximately £1,200,000. The value of nearly 2½ million lb. of crayfish tails exported was approximately 2,000,000 dollars.

Why those details were included in the speech amazes me. There is a reference to two small semi-primary industries which return a small financial result to the State, especially when compared with the huge sums received from wheat, wool, meat, dairy produce, fruit, etc. Why not have a sub-heading of "production" and then give us something about the State's overall production?

Then follows a fairly lengthy paragraph dealing with gold production. Now we are getting places because the Government is giving us a little more information. The next paragraph deals with drilling operations on the iron and pyrites ore bodies, but very little information is given. The next short line and a half state—

Drilling for oil will commence at an early date on the site of the first deep bore in the North-West Cape area.

That was widely advertised in the Press. I should say that everybody, including schoolchildren over the age of 10 years, knew about it. The papers played it up for months and it is beyond my comprehension why such a statement should appear in the Governor's Speech.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It is a very important statement.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Perhaps it is, but everybody knew about it, and it was really unnecessary for it to be included in the Governor's Speech. We want to know what the Government anticipates doing in the future. That is the sort of information that should be included in the Speech.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: If oil is discovered in the North-West, it will effect the future of the whole State.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Perhaps the hon. member has been using a little oil on his tonsils! The next paragraph states that public support given to the two loans floated by the State Electricity Commission was very gratifying and that over £2,500,000 was raised. Why not state the correct sum received from the loans and the anticipated expenditure of the department? Why not give us an idea of what this money will be used for instead of merely a bald statement? The Speech goes along in much the same way; just a few short, disjointed sentences in many places and it is about as informative as a "Deadwood Dick" novel. That is the Speech that was prepared for His Excellency.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It depends upon who reads it.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Perhaps the Chief Secretary would have the temerity to suggest, as he did in 1935, that the document be bound and distributed to every schoolchild. I am sure that schoolchildren would know a good deal more after reading the Press or listening to broadcasts than they would if they read the Governor's Speech. In my opinion schoolchildren of today are much more advanced than their counterparts were in 1935.

Why not have a clear-cut document setting out the anticipated policy in each department, the anticipated expenditure and the progress it is hoped will be achieved in the following year? Why not segregate each department and co-ordinate the speech properly instead of putting up a document like this? Although I have to support the motion, I appeal to the Government to put up something worth while for His Excellency next year.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South-East) [4.56]: At this late stage it is not my intention to keep the House for any length of time, but after having listened to the speeches that have been made, I do desire to say a few words. A number of good suggestions have been put forward. On many occasions members were sincere in expressing their opinions as to what would be of advantage to their electorates, and they tried to impress the Government to do something for them. However, I am inclined to subscribe to the suggestion made in another Chamber—that it would be of advantage to the electors of Western Australia if speeches in this House, and in another place, were broadcast over the air instead of the electors of Western Australia having to rely on reports in the Press.

While on many occasions members are not reported wrongly, portions of the speeches are left out which, if they had been included, would have placed an entirely different interpretation upon the remarks. I think the sin is not one of

commission, but one of omission; and because certain details are left out, the reports in the Press give a wrong impression and convey an erroneous idea. This causes many people to place a wrong interpretation on what has been said by different members. Whether we will ever be able to have our speeches broadcast I do not know; but if such a scheme could be introduced into this House, we would have more honest expressions of opinions from members and the voting would, on occasion, be different from what it is now. In fact, the composition of the House would probably be slightly different.

However, so far as Press reporting is concerned, I do not think there would be much alteration because it appears that there has been an amalgamation between "The West Australian" and the "Daily News". This amalgamation is now an accomplished fact, although such a position has really been in existence for some time. Rumour has it that there will also be a further amalgamation in the near future, and I think there is some degree of truth in the statement that the "Sunday Times" will also amalgamate with "The West Australian" and the "Daily News". If that happens we will probably get a less honest interpretation of what has been said in this House.

If speeches could be broadcast over the air people would become more interested in politics. I can remember, many years ago, when the "Daily News" went to considerable trouble to report the proceedings of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly in this State. Many columns in the paper were used for the purpose, in some instances more than a page. That was prior to the last war, and because of those reports people were definitely interested in what their members were doing. I am certain if they were able to listen to their members talking, they would take more interest in politics. After all, people listen to the broadcasts of the debates from the Federal Parliament, and if they do not want to listen they can turn the knob and tune in to some other programme. On the present basis there is little opportunity of knowing exactly what has happened in Parliament.

In a leading article in "The West Australian" on the 19th August, Mr. Johnson was severely criticised for having made a suggestion that parliamentary speeches be broadcast. That was probably the opinion of the leader-writer concerned. He is entitled to that opinion, but I believe that the people of Western Australia should be given an opportunity of hearing what their own members have to say instead of being forced to read what is in the Press. The leader-writer can criticise a member who writes to the paper but the member has little opportunity of reply. Mr. Johnson wrote a letter to the Press criticising the leader-writer's decision. The writer of the leader adopted the attitude of the old type of washer-

woman by wanting to have the last word and adding a footnote to the letter published.

Another leader was written which said that members of Parliament had lost prestige. If that is so, I say it is because of the fact that members in this House have been misrepresented to the public, and the only way that members can regain their prestige is by the people knowing what members are doing for them in this Parliament. We are often criticised for statements made in the House. This session drastic statements have been made, and some people have said that members take advantage of their position here to make irresponsible statements. Some of the papers have taken full advantage of their license and have used it unfairly and mercilessly; and, of course, this cannot be denied them.

It is of no use saying that the Press is not big or large enough. What we want is accuracy. There is a certain scurrilous paper which gives a very accurate account of affairs that occur in Perth. I refer to the "Mirror". It is a paper that reports all the filth in the town and gives publicity to the proceedings in the divorce courts. Average people are not interested in those reports, and very often will not have the paper in the house because of the manner in which it is written. But that paper does give an accurate report, and there is little reason to doubt that we could also get an accurate report of what members say and do in the Parliament of Western Australia if we had a system of broadcasting speeches. I wish now to turn to a matter which is dear to the hearts of Goldfields people and to the hearts of members representing those people in Parliament.

Hon. H. L. Roche: I thought you were going to say the railways.

Hon. J. R. BOYLEN: That would be dear only to the hearts of Country Party people. From all the Country Party members of this House have had to say, it would appear that the farming people are the only ones who are carrying the burden of the freight charges on the railways. However, I do not intend to elaborate on that at present.

In his remarks during the debate, Mr. Simpson said that in the Governor's Speech very little reference was made to the wheat and wool industry. That may be so. But I would like him to remember that in the Speech of last year a lot less was said about the goldmining industry. I would also like to remind him that the goldmining industry has not been neglected by the present Government. I think he could take heed of the old adage that actions speak louder than words. The present Government had not been in office very long before it took action conducive to the interests of the goldmining industry. I refer to the finding of new mines to replace some of the old and worn-out mines

in Western Australia. The only way to re-establish the industry is to give some inducement to the prospectors and encourage them to go about their calling without being impeded by reasons of finance.

We hear a good deal about Kwinana. I have nothing to say against Kwinana, or how the industry is likely to turn out, but the oil-refining industry in Western Australia will never mean as much to this State or to our nation as the goldmining industry has meant. We have only to cast our minds back to the years of the depression. Had it not been for the goldmining industry, Western Australia would probably never have recovered from the doldrums.

I would like to draw attention to something which the Minister for Mines has done, and which was requested by members both in this House and another place. He increased the allowance to prospectors from £2 10s. to £4 10s. a week, and in the northern part of Australia it was increased in many instances to £5 10s. a week. He also instituted a system by which, instead of having a delay in receiving their money for sands treated, they were given the opportunity to obtain reasonable payment. Very little was withdrawn and they were able to pursue their calling.

Very few prospectors have ever become wealthy. The prospector is not given the finance to develop a particular area. But when he does find anything, financial interests generally come in and make something out of it. I do not berude them what they make out of it, because there is a risk involved and they take it. But there is no doubt that Australia has become wealthy as a nation as a result of the efforts of the prospectors, and I suggest to the Government that some consideration be given to this matter. Many of the prospectors are dependent on old-age or invalid pensions, and I would recommend that applications be made to the Commonwealth Government to waive the means test so that they can be paid the £4 10s. or £5 10s. a week, in addition to receiving the old-age and invalid pension. If that were done, it would give them an opportunity of doing some good for themselves and for the industry which has been the economic back-bone of Western Australia.

If we could improve some of the mines, we could create employment for many men who are at present unemployed. Only recently, 400 or 500 men were thrown out of employment as a result of the Lake-wood wood line having closed down. If something could be done to establish new mines, those 400 or 500 men who are at present out of work would be able to find employment. At the moment they are walking the streets of Kalgoorlie and Boulder, but they could get employment if what I have suggested were done. They

had reasonably good homes, of a type which has probably been seen by few people down here. When they move to a new area, their houses are put on a railway truck and shifted.

But those homes cannot be brought into Kalgoorlie or Boulder; and even if they were shifted, it would be difficult for them to be erected. So they find themselves without homes, despite the fact that something could be done with the houses in which they live, and the fact that they are kept clean. They would not, however, be tolerated under the by-laws of the municipality or the road board. So members can imagine the plight in which these people find themselves; and if something could be done to provide employment for them, a great deal would be achieved for folk who live on the Goldfields for the greater part of their lives.

We have heard a good many complaints in this House concerning high freights. If the Government could give some consideration to having goods carried from the Eastern States to Esperance by ship to serve the people who are in the goldmining industry—approximately 35,000—via Esperance, Norseman, Kalgoorlie and Wiluna, it would probably help to make those railway lines a paying proposition.

Hon. H. L. Roche: It is possible.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: It could happen. It is a suggestion I make, and I hope the Government will give it some consideration.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: How would Kalgoorlie merchants view the buying of goods from the Eastern States?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: They are purchasing goods from the Eastern States all the time; they are buying thousands of pounds' worth of goods from those States; and we have had requests on many occasions, both from the Chamber of Mines and the Chamber of Commerce, asking us to do something which would help to establish a more regular shipping service to Esperance. Those goods could be conveyed to the whole area. I do not suggest that it is the fault of the Government, but I think it could play some part by attempting to solve the problem with some of the shipping companies. The shipping companies are mainly to blame, and with some help and organisation I feel sure something could be done to lower the freights to the mines in Kalgoorlie. It would help the purchasing public, the retailers, and everybody else concerned.

We have sufficient goods to ship from Kalgoorlie and Norseman to make the project pay. If we started from Esperance through to the Goldfields, it would be a matter of only a few miles before goods could be delivered. I feel sure something would come of it. I am also convinced that something could be done about carrying pyrites from Norseman to Esperance, and by ship to Fremantle. I do not know

whether it is practicable, but I offer it as a suggestion. If the proposal made last year had been accepted, and if the super works had been erected at Esperance instead of at Albany, there would have been a considerable saving to farmers in Western Australia. Pyrites has now to be carted from 500 to 600 miles, as against 130 miles. That is a great consideration.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: To send super from Fremantle by ship is cheaper than to send it by rail.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: I offer this only as a suggestion. If super were made in Esperance, it could be delivered to Albany, Bunbury and the different ports, and the distance would be comparatively short. However, I do not know whether or not it is practicable.

Another matter to which I wish to refer is price-control. The Government has been criticised, outside and inside this House, for having continued the control of prices. It is very easy to criticise, and I would like to quote some instances where price-control has been approved by private enterprise. Only the other day I was speaking to a business man. He is doing business in a big way, though not as big as Boan's and Myers'. He said to me, "For God's sake, don't get rid of price-control!" He pointed out that there were many reasons why we should have price-control, particularly for the types of goods sold by drapers and mercers. A mercer would sooner sell 100 shirts for £50, than 50 shirts for £100, because he would know that his business was more stable by selling the greater number. It has been said by previous speakers that controls strike at the quality of the goods. That is an admission I would not like to make. Honest price-control—and I do not think members can say that price-control has not been honest—does not strike at the quality of the goods. People who think it does, are those who want more than they are entitled to. That is what price-control amounts to in this State.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Is it not a cost-plus business?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: To an extent, but those responsible for administering the department have to take into consideration many factors. They have to consider the cost of production and price levels and, where possible, impose a check on costs from the manufacturer, through the wholesaler and retailer, until the article reaches the consumer. The committee that advises was not appointed by the Labour Party, by the workers or by the consumers. It includes representatives of the manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers.

Hon. H. Hearn: And they have no control over the processing side.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: There can be no control unless we have a control system.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Would not competition control prices?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: Let us have competition in the matter of quality rather than of prices. Only recently, the Press published an article about canned foods prepared in Australia that were exported to other countries and left on the shelves of retailers. This was due to the experience that people had had of the quality, but if manufacturers turned out a decent article, they would be able to find an export market for it.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: How can there be competition if prices are fixed?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: The price is fixed only in relation to quality. It is of no use the hon. member's trying to pull the wool over my eyes in that way. It may be possible to have half a dozen different qualities.

Hon. H. Hearn: Does that apply to bread?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: Yes, and also to tables, chairs and other goods subject to price-control. I was astounded to read a leading article in "The West Australian" of the 15th May last—a paper that does not favour price-control. The article was a sling-off at the prosecution of a certain business firm in Perth which had been overcharging for children's school books, and the writer almost attempted to justify the fact that the firm had flouted the law. The law set forth that there was price control and the firm said, in effect, "To the devil with the law!" A penalty was imposed by the court, and "The West Australian" remarked how hardly the firm had been dealt with.

What greater price-control could one imagine than that exercised by the Swan Brewery? Each month every hotelkeeper has to fill in a form stating the price at which he sells not only beer but also every brand of whisky and soft drink, and the price for soft drink is higher than would have to be paid if the purchase were made at a shop. Some members are justices of the peace and doubtless have been asked to sign those forms. Is that a form of price-control? Yet I have not heard any member stating that that type of price-control should not be permitted. That is private enterprise and private enterprise can get away with it.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: You generally uphold price-control.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: I uphold any control instituted by Parliament, irrespective of whether I agree with it or not. Having been sanctioned by Parliament, it becomes the law of the land, and I for one do abide by the law. Of course, regardless of whether I agree with the law or not, I have to abide by it.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: What we object to is the law of the Prices Commissioner, not of Parliament.

**Hon. R. J. BOYLEN:** It was the law of the commissioner under a previous Government. We have heard a good deal from Mr. Griffith about the election promises made by the present Government, and this is one of them. We gave the people a guarantee that, if returned to office, we would give them price-control, and they did not resent it. It is all very well to criticise the Government about its election promises, but I maintain that the Government has not broken that promise. The people had experience of price-control under a previous Labour Government and of a lack of it under the recent regime. We promised control if we were returned, and we were returned. I am always prepared to abide by the decision of the majority.

Now I wish to congratulate Mr. Griffith on certain remarks he made about housing. I compliment him upon some of those remarks, and there will be an opportunity to test his sincerity shortly when certain legislation is introduced. One of the points he advocated, which I admired and with which I agree, was the moral situation that should exist. Before the session is over, he will have an opportunity to substantiate his statement and show whether he was dinkum in making those remarks.

I am not one who advocates the erection of flats; nor do I think many members of my party believe in flats, for various reasons, but when we find ourselves in a difficult situation and have to choose between two evils it is better to choose the lesser evil and not allow the present conditions to continue. Yesterday, "The West Australian" published the most pathetic pictures one is ever likely to see, depicting the home of the child that was lost at Scarborough. There was a shack in the bush occupied by six people, including three kiddies, and another child was expected shortly. Something must be done for those people, and done quickly. I believe the Government has decided that it will give at least some sort of relief. We cannot build houses at the rate required or desired, and so relief must be provided in the interim, and I regard the building of flats as merely a temporary solution of the problem.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** You would not expect that family to be put on the seventh floor of a building, would you?

**Hon. R. J. BOYLEN:** I am not suggesting that at all. Such a family should be accommodated on the ground floor. In a way, blocks of flats are unsuitable, but it is better to have people living in them than occupying camps such as the one I have mentioned, or garages, or living with relatives. Some of us have knowledge of people having to live with relatives, if not from personal experience, then from the experience of others. I would not say that people could be expected to have decent-sized families in flats, but if they

were accommodated in flats, they would have present comfort, and that would be a move in the right direction. I repeat, however, that I think this is only the lesser of two evils. People living in a shack such as the one I have mentioned must suffer in health, and if we cannot give them decent accommodation in a house, they would be better off in a flat.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Why not use some of the land that is available rather than build a big block of flats in Subiaco?

**Hon. R. J. BOYLEN:** The Government that the hon. member supported did little about building such houses during its six years term of office. Had it done so, it would have given some effect to its election promise to promote decentralisation.

**Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Look at the record number of houses built last year as stated in the Governor's Speech!

**Hon. R. J. BOYLEN:** That is not to say that the number was sufficient. Probably next year another record will be established and that will be something to the credit of the Labour Government.

Another matter mentioned in the Speech was that of health in industry to obviate the loss of man-hours. A good deal has been done to prevent accidents in industry by the various safeguards that have been introduced; and by the prevention of employees could be increased, and I think that the Health Department is adopting the right attitude in that respect.

I do not know whether I shall be in order in referring to the entertainments tax; I have no desire to refer to legislation that has already been dealt with by the House. We have heard much about the Commonwealth Government's attitude to this tax, but members should not lose sight of the fact that that Government will be facing an election next year and doubtless has offered relief by way of abolishing its entertainments tax in order to gain an advantage over Labour. I doubt whether the Commonwealth Government would have adopted that course had there not been a desire to embarrass the Labour Party in the various States governed by Labour.

Of course we must have revenue, not only to finance the affairs of the State, but also to meet some of the bills that Labour inherited as a legacy from the Liberal Government. A debt of some £6,000,000 was left behind although, during the six years of that regime, the Government spent £190,000,000. It would be very interesting indeed to have an accurate account of the manner in which that money was spent and as to what extent the State has profited by the expenditure.

Members have spoken about the effect the entertainments tax would have on the worker—the poor chap that goes to the pictures for amusement. Last year a Bill

was introduced to tax people who patronise a certain form of sport. I refer to the Winning Bets Tax Bill, which imposed a tax on people who patronise horse racing in their thousands. What did the friends of the then Government have to say about that tax? Virtually nothing.

Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: Now, if a punter wins £10 at the races, he has to pay the Government a tax of 5s. Is that fair or is it sectional legislation? It does not affect the whole of the community. I consider that that is a fair comparison to draw between the attitude of the present Government and that of its predecessors.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Would you say that the average person attending a racecourse would be in the lower-income bracket?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: A man who goes to the racecourse does so of his own free-will and we cannot do anything about it.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: What is the average price of admission to a racecourse?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: That depends on where the racecourse is situated, but it has nothing to do with the question I am discussing. Horse-racing is said to be the sport of kings and one would need the income of a king in order to follow it up. Of course, if an individual is keen on it, that is his own concern.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: It is not the working man who patronises the races.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: As I have said, it is the concern of the individual whether he goes to the races or not. I read an article in the newspaper today—I mention that because otherwise Mr. Griffith would doubtless ask where it appeared—dealing with the establishment of an integrated iron and steel industry, about which we heard so much last year. I was amazed to read that there is no prospect of an integrated iron and steel industry being established in this State. As was pointed out when the B.H.P. legislation was before us last year, there was no guarantee in the measure that such an industry would be established here.

Apparently this is something that happens elsewhere than in this State, because that article dealt with a similar attempt by a member of the South Australian Government. Eventually the proposition was turned down by Mr. Playford after this member had suggested an attempt by the Commonwealth, the State and the company concerned to establish the industry there. I do not think there is any possibility of our getting an integrated iron and steel industry in Western Australia while one company controls £150,000,000 worth of the iron-ore that is available here. If any other company desired to start such an industry at present it

would have to go cap in hand to the B.H.P. In my view our iron-ore deposits belong to the people of the State and should never have been given into the hands of one company.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: How long have the deposits been there?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: How old is Western Australia?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Who has tried to develop those deposits?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: The hon. member's Government did not develop them but gave them away instead. The sensible thing for the Government to have done would have been to tell the company that if it desired to exploit our iron-ore resources and the people of the State in this way, it would have to undertake to establish here an integrated iron and steel industry. Who has the first claim on any benefits that may be gained by the use of this iron-ore?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The State, according to you.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: Who constitutes the State, if not our people? It sickens me to hear the arguments that are put forward from time to time about the national debt, and so on. All such factors are absolutely secondary to the interests of the people who constitute this State and this nation. What does it matter if no company makes a profit, provided the interests of the workers are safeguarded and maintained? We hear too much of finance, and certainly the interests of the people were not being safeguarded by the Government that handed £150,000,000 worth of our iron-ore to a company that is going to establish nothing in this State except a tinpot rolling mill that will cater only for local requirements.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: In 14 years of office your Government did nothing about it.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: The people of the State were awake to the hon. member's Government and did not give it 14 years in office.

The PRESIDENT: Order! These arguments must cease and the hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: I have one or two suggestions to make with regard to medical and hospital benefits for pensioners. I put them forward because there are in existence certain anomalies which I believe could be rectified. Pharmaceutical benefits are available to every Australian citizen, irrespective of his status in life.

Hon. A. R. Jones: We will listen to you now as you should know something about this subject.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: Pharmaceutical benefits, as I have said, are available to all in this country. The other day I made up a prescription for a person said to be

suffering from virus pneumonia. The medicine for which he paid cost him 11s. 4d. and he asked me what he would have had to pay for the 36 capsules that were included in the prescription, had they not been on the free list. I did not know at the time what the cost would have been, but on looking it up I found that, had he been required to pay for those capsules, they would have cost him £7 16s. While on this subject, I would remind members that these pharmaceutical benefits were instituted by a Labour Government.

We read recently in the Press something about chemists not being paid a fair price for certain prescriptions, and that was quite correct; but "The West Australian" said that the chemists voted against continuing the service to pensioners 99 to 1 while, in fact, the voting was 7 to 1. That, however, has nothing to do with the matters with which I am dealing. If a pensioner brings a prescription to a chemist in order to have it dispensed, it must come under certain of the regulations. If the doctor writing the prescription prescribes perhaps six or seven BP preparations only, the pensioner receives the medicine free of cost, but if the medical practitioner includes one preparation that is not mentioned in the list, the pensioner has to pay for the whole prescription; and I think that most unfair. Surely, in such a case, he should be made to pay only for the ingredient that is not on the free list. If a pensioner's prescription is written containing some drug or preparation under its proprietary name instead of under its BP name, it is not free. I would suggest to the Minister for Health that something might be done in that regard.

Hon. H. L. Roche: The State could do nothing about it.

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: The State could draw the attention of the Commonwealth to the anomaly that I have pointed out. Why should the Act state that a man may receive certain medicine for nothing and then make him pay for it because a doctor adds an additional ingredient which is not specified in the free list? I understand that in this State the great majority of our people have made some provision to cover themselves with regard to hospital benefits, and wisely so, as otherwise the average worker could easily be made bankrupt by illness.

I believe that when a hospital has treated a person who is entitled to these benefits, it presents him with his account, when he is ready to leave, and requests him to make payment. I feel that provision should be made for the patient to take the account to the people responsible for reimbursing him, and that the hospital should be able to charge him only with the portion of the account for which he is personally responsible. Many people go into Government hospitals and I am therefore making my request to the Health

Department. Whether a similar system could be applied in the case of private hospitals I do not know.

It is high time that pensioners were given some explanation of their responsibilities in the matter of hospital treatment. If a pensioner is prepared to go into a Government hospital he cannot be charged, but unfortunately he can be presented with the bill. No matter how often he receives the bill, however, he cannot be forced to pay. I think that when he is discharged from hospital, some inquiry should be made as to his financial position, and, if he is able to prove that he cannot pay, he should not be embarrassed by the presentation of these accounts.

On the other hand, a pensioner must realise that he has certain responsibilities. If he makes up his mind that, on becoming ill, he will not go to a Government hospital but to a private hospital, he should have pointed out to him the provision he must make in order to take advantage of the privileges that are available. The medical profession should be advised similarly. The pensioner should not be told that he need make no provision but can go into any hospital free of charge, because that is not so.

When speaking to the debate, Mr. Hearn stated that the employers of Western Australia abide by arbitration. I agree, but I would tell him that the employees and unions in this State also abide by arbitration. Why was arbitration instituted? It was done to protect the employee, in the first instance. Mr. Hearn states that arbitration gives the employee the privilege of facing his employer, but that is his right. Of course, it is the right of every man, woman and child in this country to face the employer and come to some agreement through arbitration. Perhaps my reference to children was not applicable in this country, but I would remind members that in England years ago children used to work underground in the coal-mines for a few shillings a week, and perhaps England could still take a leaf out of our book in the matter of arbitration. Mr. Hearn said that the employers had been generous to the workers, and at times that has been so; but it must be remembered that the great majority of employees are honest and have been generous to the employers.

I come next to the question of liberalisation of the franchise for this Chamber. I believe that if speeches in this House were broadcast, many members would alter their attitude. There was a letter in the Press, on the 25th September, dealing with this matter, and written by what I was almost about to describe as an irresponsible journalist. I believe that many journalists today are irresponsible. However, there was in the Press yesterday a letter written by two ladies whom I do not think anyone could accuse of being members of the Labour Party, as they

would be more likely to be represented by members opposite. They expressed their opinion on the question of whether the mothers and wives of electors should have a vote to determine who should represent them in this House. I support the motion.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [5.44]: I desire first to thank members for having congratulated my colleague and me on our promotion, from the rank and file of members in this House, to ministerial office. I think it was Mr. Roche who, when offering his congratulations on our attainment of office, said he hoped it would not be for long. I do not know whether he was speaking from a political or health point of view in relation to my colleague and me.

Hon. H. L. Roche: I said I regretted that it might not be for long.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY**: That is very nice. Obviously I did not hear the word "regretted". Those remarks remind me of something I heard said in my boyhood days.

Hon. A. L. Loton: That must have been a very long while ago.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY**: It was said by a man who had been working for an individual and had been sacked. He said to his employer, "If you do not know when you have a good man, I know when I have a good boss, and I am not taking the sack." Notwithstanding the fact that members who are politically opposed to my colleague and me would sack us very often, and particularly during the last week or two, I am sure that the public of this State, after our three years are up, will say, "We know when we have a good Ministry and we are going to keep you."

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Well done, thou good and faithful servant!

**The CHIEF SECRETARY**: Before going on with my general remarks, I want to extend my congratulations to Mr. Hall on being appointed as Chairman of Committees. I am sure that, having given long and excellent service as chairman of a road board, he will give similar service in the position he is now occupying. I am confident that he will be an impartial Chairman of Committees and, after this session is over and he has served his apprenticeship, we will be able to say to him, "Well done; you have carried on remarkably well."

I also congratulate Mr. Royce on his appointment as Chief "Hansard" Reporter. Of course, when one extends congratulations to Mr. Royce, one must also express regret at the demise of his predecessor, Mr. Reid. I feel sure that Mr. Royce will carry on in a very able manner and in the same way as various preceding "Hansard" Chiefs have done, at least during the years I have been here. They all

set a good example and, as Mr. Royce has served many years on the "Hansard" staff, I feel sure he will occupy his present office with distinction. I sincerely regret the passing of Mr. Reid, but the march of time overtakes all of us. I am quite sure all members agree that Mr. Reid carried out his duties well and truly.

Referring now to the speeches made by members, I would like to mention that I may be a little lengthy in my reply to the debate, but I do not want any member to think I am slighting him.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I think we could forgive you if you forgot us for a little while.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY**: I would like to do that, but some of the remarks passed by members were incorrect and, being a good schoolmaster, I must, of course, correct them.

Hon. L. A. Logan: You did not miss too many of them last night.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY**: Nevertheless, I wish to say that I was impressed by the general standard of the debate. I do not propose to reply to, or even refer to, all the subjects that were discussed, as this obviously would be too difficult. Several members referred to the fact that their comments or advice could be construed as being a waste of time on their part. I do not agree, and I wish to place on record that any criticism or suggestion of a practical nature made by members during this debate has been forwarded to the appropriate Minister or department. So although I may not refer to some of the suggestions that have been made, I can assure members that their remarks have not gone unheeded because they have been forwarded to the department concerned in order that it may consider and assess their value.

Dealing now with points raised by various members, Mr. Cunningham provided some rather misleading information in connection with the risks taken by police officers in the execution of their duties. The hon. member averred that if a policeman lost his life while on duty his family received no compensation. This is incorrect. The Police Department pays to the State Insurance Office an annual premium for each member of the Force, and compensation, in the event of death, is paid at the ruling rate applicable to all workers.

However, no payment under the Workers' Compensation Act is made to a policeman for injuries received by him while on duty, but instead, the Police Regulations provide that a member of the Force so injured receives free medical and hospital treatment and is granted sick leave on full pay. The free medical attention includes treatment by specialists where recommended by the district medical officer. Sick leave is granted for periods of up to six months in any one calendar year, and

the Minister may approve of any further extension on such terms as may be decided.

If it becomes apparent after a reasonable period of sick leave that an officer will never be fit for further active service, he may be required to submit himself for examination by a board of three medical officers. Should the board decide that he is permanently unfit for duty he should be retired on superannuation.

With regard to the hon. member's complaint that successful Junior Certificate examination students were required to pay an additional fee to obtain particulars of their marks, Mr. Cunningham's facts were again a little incorrect. The hon. member described this as an imposition. He stated that he thought the examination fee was 25s. and that a further payment of £3 had to be made by the candidate if he wished to obtain the examination marks. The actual facts are that the Junior Certificate examination fee is £2 2s. 0d. for seven subjects, and £2 12s. 0d. for eight subjects. If a candidate indicates in his application to sit for the examination that he desires to know his marks an additional fee of 1s. per subject is charged. If, however, he does not do this and subsequently desires to be advised of his marks a charge at the rate of 5s. per subject is made.

By interjection, Mr. Parker mentioned that these fees were levied by the University, and not by the Education Department. This is so as the Junior Certificate examination is conducted by the Public Examinations Board of the University. Another matter on which Mr. Cunningham desired some information was in regard to the extent of the control the Government had over the quality of petrol distributed in Western Australia. The hon. member stated he and others considered that petrol had deteriorated recently, and as a result they were obtaining reduced milages from their vehicles. He said it appeared that if it so desired the distributing company could dilute petrol.

The position is this: When a tanker arrives from overseas the chemists attached to the distributing company test the spirit to check whether it conforms to specification. If so, it is pumped into bonded tanks. As the company requires spirit it pays the necessary amount of duty to the Commonwealth Trade and Customs Department, which releases the quantity desired. This spirit is then pumped from the bonded tanks into road or rail tankers, and conveyed to retailers.

By interjection, Mr. Lavery mentioned that the Customs Department takes the specific gravity of the spirit before it is released to the public. This is done for two reasons. Firstly, to ensure that it is motor spirit; and, secondly, to obtain the gallonage, as details of the spirit are given

to the Customs in tonnage. This test does not indicate the quality of the spirit. The member will therefore realise that Government control is negligible. However, I am assured that the distributing companies are not prepared to accept cargoes that do not measure up to specification.

In the course of his interesting speech Mr. Thomson mentioned he had received a number of complaints regarding inadequate and misleading information supplied by the Agent General's office. He suggested this might be overcome if members of the Agent General's staff could visit Western Australia periodically. As Mr. Thomson himself stated, this would be a costly procedure. However, the fact that the Agent General is appointed for three years and the official secretary for five years ensures that there is usually at Savoy House a person reasonably conversant with the latest developments in the State.

The Agent General, of course, may be reappointed for a further term, but in such cases it is usual for him to return to the State for a visit. This was done by the late Hon. W. H. Kitson who accepted an additional term in London. In order to keep the agency staff au fait with State developments, the latest information from all departments is regularly sent to London. I might add that very favourable comments have been received concerning details provided by Savoy House to interested persons.

If Mr. Thomson could supply the names of the complainants and the details of their complaints I would ensure that thorough investigations were made and, if necessary, steps taken to rectify any errors that might have occurred.

Several members referred to the War Service Land Settlement Scheme, their remarks being both complimentary and critical. Mr. Cunningham, one of the enthusiastic advocates in this Chamber for the Esperance district, expressed surprise that no War Service Land Settlement activities had been seen in that region. As the hon. member no doubt knows, agricultural problems relating to the development of Crown land in the Esperance district have been investigated during the past three years at the research station. The results suggest that the main agricultural problems concerning cultivation, growth of crops and establishment of pasture are known sufficiently well to ensure sound prospects.

On the debit side a large-scale settlement project in the area would be costly because of the distance from the source of supply of materials such as machinery, fencing, timber, etc., which are needed for development purposes. The areas that have been accepted by the Commonwealth for war service land settlement—subject, of course, to suitability of soil and climatic conditions—are those nearer the source of

supply of materials and fertiliser, also nearer to essential facilities for the handling of produce. At Esperance the cost of superphosphate and of other commodities is high. It would be necessary also to provide facilities at Esperance for the handling of produce. Meat killing and freezing works would be needed as the cost of sending fat lambs and other produce to Fremantle or to other markets or ports could be prohibitive.

Waxing eloquent over the shortcomings of the Mt. Many Peaks scheme, Mr. Diver was most critical of the performance of the hi-ball method of clearing. Mr. Lavery also referred to these matters. I am informed that development of the Mt. Many Peaks area for war service land settlement purposes was recommended to the Commonwealth by the land settlement board after consideration of representations made by the Albany Zone Development Committee. Dr. Teakle had soil-surveyed the area several years before; and in the light of this and the proximity to facilities for the handling of produce, the Commonwealth accepted the proposal. It was known, too, that definite plans were in train for the establishment of superphosphate works at Albany.

The hi-ball method of clearing is limited to the more heavily timbered country, so it has not been extensively used in the Manypeaks district where large tracts of country comprise treeless plain. I am informed that it was known the sucker problem would arise, but it was considered that by steady effort lessees would be able to bring it under control within a few years. The sucker difficulty has to be faced by settlers in many districts and is not peculiar to war service land settlement holdings in any particular area.

Another matter of agricultural interest referred to by Mr. Logan was the tomato industry at Geraldton. He asked: "If it is not possible to establish a tomato research station at Geraldton, could one be built in the metropolitan area?" Although the establishment of a research station to investigate tomato-growing problems at Geraldton was given serious consideration, it was refused in view of the cost and the fact that there are no problems which particularly need investigation at Geraldton and which cannot be dealt with in the metropolitan area.

Land has been acquired for the development of a vegetable research station in the metropolitan area but the problem of finance is preventing progress for the time being. Mr. Logan suggested that the fungicide known as dithane should be made available in this State. As the hon. member may be aware, comprehensive experiments have been undertaken by the Department of Agriculture during the past two years to try and obtain improved con-

trol of the serious early blight or black spot disease of tomatoes which is so damaging, particularly in the Geraldton district.

Two new fungicides, dithane Z78 and phygon XL have proved to be much better than the standard copper sprays commonly used by growers. As a result, yields of first-grade fruits have been increased by approximately 30 per cent. It is also believed that reduction of this disease in growing crops will bring about less black spot wastage in tomatoes transported from Geraldton to the Melbourne market. The same disease also attacks potatoes, and in autumn crops causes losses which are probably much more serious economically than those on tomatoes.

Dithane is the only spray which has controlled potato early blight satisfactorily, and because of its wider usefulness the department of agriculture is endeavouring to have it marketed commercially rather than phygon. Robert Bryce and Coy. of Adelaide are the Australian agents for this American chemical and they have been fully acquainted with the results of the department's experiments and the urgent need for this material to be marketed as soon as possible. Advice has been received that a French source of supply is available which will not involve dollar exchange and that supplies may be available to local growers very shortly.

The opinion was expressed by Mr. Logan that the Department of Agriculture had incorrectly interpreted Tasmanian legislation by refusing to grant a certificate that Geraldton tomatoes were from a fruit-fly-free area. The hon. member will be gratified to hear that every endeavour has been made to supply the certificates required by Tasmania and so assist the introduction of Geraldton tomatoes into that State. An inspection of the Geraldton district was recently carried out by a senior entomologist. Unfortunately, this inspection revealed the existence of fruit-fly eggs in boxthorn. This precludes even a limited export period under winter conditions when fruit-fly activity would be at its lowest ebb. As a result, the Western Australian Department of Agriculture is unable to issue the certificate required by the Tasmanian department that the tomatoes had been grown on a property not less than two miles from a fruit-fly-infested area.

A considerable portion of the speeches made by Messrs. Diver and Loton were devoted to superphosphate. Their remarks have been perused with great interest by officers of the Department of Agriculture who disagree with them on certain points. They consider Mr. Diver's statement that the question of inferior quality superphosphate is discussed more than any other problem by farmers, may have been a fact two years ago, but is not so today. The

hon. member stated that a motion was passed in another place requesting a departmental enquiry into superphosphate, also to see whether cheaper and better super could be produced in Western Australia. He felt that the departmental officers were asked for something beyond their capacity in being requested to enquire into the possibility of cheapening the cost of superphosphate. Actually the terms of the motion, which was agreed to last year in another place were not as stated by Mr. Diver. The motion was as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House a departmental enquiry should be held into the production, distribution, storage and cost of superphosphate as affecting its use and the economy of this State.

Nor were all the members of the committee associated with the Department of Agriculture as stated by Mr. Diver. Three departments were represented on the committee—the Treasury, the Government Chemical Laboratories branch of the Mines Department, and the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Diver stated departmental officers had advised farmers receiving early deliveries to shift the bags at regular intervals—every month—and the super would be usable. I am informed this statement is not correct and that appendix 3 of the committee's report suggests "slight movement of the bags will generally prevent any further setting." I am told this meant that a slight movement once would usually be sufficient.

In referring to Mr. Diver's assertion that the committee's references to the moisture content were damaging so far as farmers were concerned, particularly the committee's opinion that a maximum moisture content should not be fixed until manufacturers could meet all demands for mature super, I am informed it is difficult to see what is "damaging" in the statement. When supply was unable to keep pace with demand it was a case of taking new super or going without until next season. Enforcement of some relatively low maximum moisture content would have meant that some farmers would have had to go without superphosphate. The position was parallel to that in the timber trade with green and seasoned timber. However, I am advised that, as anticipated by the committee, the position is righting itself as supply overtakes demand.

Information given to me indicates that the hon. member is in error also in his calculations of the water in super carried by rail, in that he has applied his estimate of 5 per cent. excess moisture which might be lost during farm storage to all of the 400,000 tons of super used per annum. The department hopes that the hon. member is not seriously suggesting that every bag of super loses 10 lbs. of excess moisture, because it cannot agree that this is

a "fair supposition". It is a fact that the hon. member has himself referred to deliveries in the early part of the year and has not disagreed with the committee's reference to "super delivered early in the season" and to "deliveries late in the season".

The problem of transporting moisture in goods and loss of moisture from goods applies to many things other than super, and it is a matter of economics as to whether it is cheaper to remove the moisture before transport or to pay freight on it. Unfortunately, the hon. member's financial calculations showing that in the case of super it would be cheaper to remove the moisture are based on an incorrect application of his estimate of 5 per cent. excess moisture to all super. If farmers really believe these financial calculations then the remedy is in their own hands since—

- (1) as pointed out in paragraph 72 of the report "Over 5,000 farmers hold shares to the value of nearly half a million pounds" in the major super manufacturing company; and
- (2) paragraph 62 draws attention to the lack of enthusiasm of farmers to invest in the superphosphate industry.

The hon. member's opinions conflict with those of chemists who do not agree that P205 may be lost with the water evaporated in the drying out of super. It is of interest to know that standard methods of analysis for P205 in some materials include such things as, (1) heating in a furnace to over 700°F.; and, (2) boiling with concentrated sulphuric acid—each without loss of P205. It is no assumption that the P205 remains in the bag and does not go off with the water; it is a well-attested fact that phosphate is not volatile. I am advised that as the committee could not investigate prices in other States it could make little comment about them. Tasmanian prices would be lower than the others quoted to the extent of perhaps £2 per ton at that time, as paper bags were used instead of jute sacks.

I am also told that with regard to other forms of phosphatic fertiliser it is not possible to foretell what technical and economic developments might occur in the future in the treatment and transport of phosphatic materials. Although there seems to be no immediate possibility of triple superphosphate being able to compete with superphosphate under local conditions that may not always be so. Commonwealth and State Governments are vitally interested in this matter and will be kept up to date with developments by appropriate technical committees established for that purpose. I can tell Mr. Loton that the reasons for some immature superphosphate being sent out in the 1951-

52 season are well known. The relationship between supply and demand has changed considerably, and it is doubted whether any trouble was experienced in the 1952-53 season with "stickiness" of superphosphate and, so far as is known, "setting" gave considerably less trouble than in the previous year.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Will you refer that to the works manager of Cresco for a reply?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If it will suit the hon. member, and please him, I am prepared to do so. The samples taken in 1951-52 were not of bagged super as supplied to farmers but were from an experiment in bulk storage and are, therefore, not valid in the present connection. The average value for the moisture content of the 10 samples in 1952-53 was 6.4 per cent. Of 18 samples analysed to date in 1953-54, the maximum moisture content was 8.4 per cent. and the minimum 1.5 per cent. The average value was 3.6 per cent. Of the 18 samples, only three had a moisture content of over 4 per cent. and this is the point referred to under (1).

Hon. A. R. Jones: Do you not think that variation is a bit big?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know whether it is. That is the information supplied in connection with complaints made in this House. Members know that I am not a farmer and I would not like to intrude my personal views.

Hon. A. L. Loton: We thank you for the information.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I referred all these matters to the departments concerned, and where the answers have been supplied I am giving them to members. The samples I have mentioned were from super delivered to the research stations of the Department of Agriculture and there were no complaints of the super setting or caking in the drill.

As I have said, conditions in 1951-52 were exceptional and at the end of the season it was a case of taking immature superphosphate or doing without until the next season. However, conditions are now different. Nevertheless, the only way to ensure a very low moisture content would be for the material to be put through a drier, and the cost of doing this for 400,000 tons would considerably outweigh the freight on the water so removed.

The railways, of course, came in for their usual share of criticism. Comments from members have been forwarded to the Railway Department for consideration. The suggestions made by the ex-Minister, Mr. Simpson, have been read with much interest by the present Minister and railway officers. Mr. Bennetts was perturbed at what he considered was top-heavy administration in the railways, specially mentioning the Kalgoorlie and Northam depots.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Not only there.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think the hon. member mentioned those two depots.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I did not mention Northam, but spoke of the administrative staff in the Commissioner's office and in the M.P.E. branch.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: For the information of the hon. member, I would say that when the present Commission took office, it was impressed with the need for transferring motive power and rollingstock running maintenance from the Chief Mechanical Engineer's branch to the Chief Traffic Manager's branch, believing, as is the practice in most other countries throughout the world, that the branch utilising the equipment should be responsible for its depot repair. Accordingly, the motive power section was formed and placed under the control of the Chief Traffic Manager. Since then, there has been a marked improvement in the utilisation of locomotives.

Hon. G. Bennetts: There would need to be!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am telling the hon. member there has been. Whereas in 1949 the number of locomotives in service in any one day was about 280, it is now around 350. The incidence of failure has been appreciably reduced and the periodic inspection of locomotives has been maintained, so much so that the number awaiting a major inspection is now down to a figure comparable with British railways. The cleanliness of locomotive yards and the improvement in locomotive depots has been most marked.

The establishment of this new section, which was a reorganisation of the superintendent of locomotive running section, has meant the appointment of additional administrative and supervisory staff to ensure its proper functioning, but the commission is satisfied that the appointments have been fully justified by the results that have been achieved. New locomotives have very materially contributed to this, but the present position would not have been reached had the concentrated efforts made possible by the section, not been applied.

Another of Mr. Bennett's complaints was that the new goods rates book was too complicated and confusing. This book, which was issued in 1951, is a modification and consolidation of the previous edition, the object being to simplify as far as practicable, the many complexities in the latter. For instance, the number of rate classes has been considerably reduced, and there has been a far better grouping of the various commodities. Railway goods rates books the world over, due to the need for varied treatment for various commodities, are not the easiest of documents to understand, but it is believed that the present edition, generally speaking, has effected a considerable improvement.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Not according to what the goods foreman told me.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Bennetts suggested that a great deal of handling of small parcels from the Eastern States could be avoided by the use of special containers that could be transferred from train to train. This has been investigated by the Railway Commission and the proposition has certain advantages. Unfortunately, the idea is uneconomical and has had to be discarded.

Hon. H. L. Roche: You can't win, George!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Our inter-system traffic is practically all one way, that is east to west, and it would be necessary to return empty nearly all the containers. However, the possibility of using collapsible containers is now being considered by the Commonwealth Railways. The hon. member's remarks regarding wagons becoming uncoupled was the subject of a question asked by him in Parliament early this month. He was referring to the N.C.D.A. coupler which is standard equipment on all new rolling stock being received by this department.

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

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This particular type of coupler is designed and manufactured by the A.B.C. Coupler and Engineering Company Ltd. of Wolverhampton, England, which manufactured the old couplers used on our railways and also coupling equipment in use on many other railways in the world. The company has had over 70 years' experience, and there is no doubt the design is a good one. All trains are fitted with vacuum brakes which would stop a train should it part; but, as an added precaution, trials are being carried out with the new couplers fitted with bridles. The hon. member was incorrect when he stated that the couplers did not have choppers. The chopper is an essential part, as this portion provides the connection between vehicles.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I did not say that they did not have a chopper, but that they did not have side chains or bridles.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We will endeavour to get the complete information.

Hon. L. A. Logan: There should be a bridle to keep the chopper in place.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Sir Charles Latham characterised as ridiculous a statement which appeared in the Press that a number of rails lying in store at Midland Junction could not be used as they had been bought from trust funds. The facts are that although those rails had been purchased from trust funds, no loan moneys were available for the cost of placing them on the track. Since the present Government has been in power,

the necessary funds have been found for 100 miles of track relaying to be carried out during the current year.

I was asked by Mr. Diver to see that railway-bus drivers observed the traffic regulations. He quoted a case where a driver failed to stop at a major road, with the result that the services of the hon. member were nearly lost to this Chamber. If the hon. member had reported that to the Railway Department it would have taken appropriate action. I understand that, generally speaking, the safety factor of railway buses is well regarded. The department continually impresses upon its drivers the need for road courtesy and for strictly observing the traffic regulations. Failure to observe the regulations makes the offending driver liable to prosecution in the same way as any private motorist.

The reason for equipping diesel rail cars with black and yellow stripes was sought by Mr. Diver. As the original green and cream colours of diesel cars blended too easily with the scenery in country districts, the front portions of the cars were painted in black and white stripes, so that people would not be caught unawares at level crossings. Experiments were later carried out with a car painted with black and yellow stripes, and opinions were sought from both members of the public and the railway staff as to which set of colours was the more prominent. A consensus showed that the black and yellow stripes were more easily discernible at greater distances than the black and white.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They have found that out in all the other States of Australia.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The National Safety Council also indicated its approval of black and yellow, which accordingly was adopted. Mr. Logan was concerned because, although he had heard that plans for the regional hospitals for Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton were nearly complete, he had read a statement attributed to the manager of the Royal Perth Hospital that a plan for dividing the State into regions, each with its own hospital, was in the embryonic stage. The plan mentioned by the manager of the Royal Perth Hospital is entirely different from the structural plans being prepared for the individual hospitals. What the manager was discussing was the plan for development of the hospital system throughout the State around a series of regional hospitals.

Some nine regional hospitals have been proposed and approved. It is intended to establish them at Albany, Bunbury, Collie, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Katanning, Manjimup, Merredin and Northam. The sketch plans of the Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton hospitals, which were specifically mentioned by Mr. Logan, are not far from completion, but much detailed work would be necessary before con-

struction could commence. However, there is no immediate prospect of funds being available for the building of the hospitals. Mr. Logan will be interested to know that the architects for the Geraldton hospital are Hobbs, Winning & Leighton, and that the Bunbury plans are being prepared by Marshall Clifton.

In his usual informative address on hospital matters, Dr. Hislop referred to land in Murray-st. purchased by the Commonwealth Government. When the Federal authorities purchased Macfarlane's property, which was during the time of the previous Labour Government, an approach was made to the Prime Minister urging his Government to release this property so that it could be added to the area available to the Royal Perth Hospital. The reply was unfavourable, and no progress could be made. Efforts were then concentrated on securing a much larger piece of land on the other side of Wellington-st., and these efforts were successful. Even if Macfarlane's and Vetter's properties had been acquired, the area would total only 3 roods 36 perches, or less than one acre, while the area across Wellington-st. totals 11½ acres.

As to transferring the fire brigade block to the Commonwealth in exchange for Macfarlane's and Vetter's blocks, that could be effected only after the construction of a new and adequate fire brigade headquarters, of which there is no prospect at the present time. Also the Commonwealth has immediate need for its premises. It must be remembered, too, that the fire brigade headquarters and the chest clinic and the block next door, make a continuous area which will be most valuable in the future for governmental, or perhaps hospital, purposes.

Doubtless when the nurses' homes are constructed in Wellington-st., the nurses will have to cross Wellington-st.; but it is not unusual for people to have to cross from one side of a street to the other, and the nurses are probably as well able to look after themselves as are other citizens. However, the construction of a tunnel beneath the road is a matter that can be kept under notice. It is difficult to say when a hospital for a medical school will be built near the university. The State Health Council has recommended, however, that this should be the first major hospital work in the metropolitan area. At this point I would like to apologise to Mr. Griffith. I omitted the hon. member when I was offering congratulations at the commencement of my speech. I know he will not allow me to think he is not here in the future, so I hope he will accept my apologies.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Most certainly.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do join with other members in congratulating him on winning the seat. My welcome could have been warmer if someone else had

come here. I feel sure we will hear a lot from Mr. Griffith in the future, as we have done in the past few weeks. I am hoping he will improve on what he has given us up to date, because we pride ourselves on the fact that political matters do not enter into our considerations. We are just reviewers, and we review matters without political bias. I am sure that when the hon. member has thrown off the early education he received in another place, he will fall into line with the rest of us here, so that when he sits in judgment on various matters he will forget the political affiliations he might have and carry out his work from a State point of view.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: As I told the Minister privately, when he introduces a Bill with which I agree, I shall be right behind him.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I thank the hon. member very much. What will happen when he does not agree?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Then I shall oppose you as violently as I can.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As long as the hon. member does not do it from political bias, I shall not mind. If he genuinely thinks the case he is putting up is an honest and sincere one, I shall not have any quarrels with him. The hon. member suggested it was time a redistribution of electoral district boundaries took place. As he is aware, the Chief Electoral Officer has submitted a report in this regard and the matter is receiving consideration.

From Mr. Lavery came the suggestion that there was no need for the Government to expend a large sum on dredging for the proposed wharf at Cockburn Sound for the Broken Hill Pty. Coy., as pilots have told him a suitable channel exists. Actually the Government has no intention of spending any money on a dredging scheme, as there is sufficient water at 600 feet from the shore to accommodate a 12,000-ton vessel, and also for a swinging basin.

I am not finding fault with all members and saying they are not right. On some occasions they are right. Mr. Cunningham proposed that assistance should be given to the Esperance Road Board in regard to the construction of roads. If this is necessary, I would suggest to the hon. member that he approach the Commissioner of Main Roads to see if there is any possibility of a grant for that purpose.

An unfavourable comparison between the financial results of the work of the Housing Commission in this State and the Housing Trust in South Australia was made by Mr. Thomson. He was emphatic that an independent investigation should be made into the expenditure of the State Housing Commission. He pointed out that for the financial year 1951-52, the Com-

mission's administration expenditure was £257,658, with a loss of £10,509, while the South Australian Housing Trust spent only £42,039 on administration and made a profit of £75,790. Those figures are most misleading, for several reasons. Firstly, the Western Australian administration figure of £237,658 was made up of—

	£
Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement .....	129,676
War Service Homes .....	101,490
McNess Housing .....	1,831
Building Operations and Building Materials Control .....	24,661
	<hr/> 257,658 <hr/>

The entire administration expenditure in South Australia of £42,039 related solely to that State's own building scheme. South Australia was not a party to the Commonwealth-State agreement and there the war service homes scheme is administered by the Commonwealth and not by the State as in Western Australia. In addition, the South Australian Administration figure does not include the cost of the technical services which are capitalised in their works in progress figures. In South Australia the administration costs for war service homes was £83,214 for 10,198 securities, or £8 3s. per security; while in Western Australia the cost was £48,808 for 6,795 securities, an average of £7 3s. Those figures do not include cost of technical services.

Reference was made by Mr. Thomson to the fact that the State Housing Commission's administration activities had shown a loss of £10,509 for 1951-52 and somewhat similar losses for the two previous years. That is not quite correct. Those figures relate to the losses incurred in administration in respect of war service homes, £8,678; and the McNess Housing Trust, £1,831. To overcome the losses on war service homes administration the agreement with the Commonwealth has been revised. This revision is retrospective to 1950 and provides that the Commonwealth will meet all administration costs. The losses on administration of the McNess Housing Trust scheme are unavoidable as the State Housing Commission carries out this work free of charge. The administration of the W.A. State housing scheme showed a profit in 1951-52 of £4,390.

I would suggest to Mr. Thomson that it is difficult to make a comparison between the financial statements of the South Australian Housing Trust and the W.A. State Housing Commission, as the revenue and expenditure statements of the South Australian Housing Trust include proceeds from the sale of houses and land and works in progress, which are capital items

and the profit and loss account of the State Housing Commission includes revenue items only. It is of interest to note that under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement the State Housing Commission in Western Australia has built 7,375 homes and has approximately 6,000 tenants. Since the war, 4,490 houses have been built under the War Service Homes Act and ready-built homes have been purchased, mortgages discharged, etc.

Both Mr. Lavery and Mr. Davies submitted the case of Jandakot residents in regard to the provision of electric light. I am informed that a complete and thorough survey of the district was made recently. However, the scattered distribution of population is preventing the extension of electricity to the district. I am assured that the development of the area is being watched and that power will be made available as soon as it is warranted economically.

Attention was drawn by Mr. Logan to the desirability of retaining the food producing area in close proximity to the city. He suggested that much of this land is rated to an extent that compels owners to subdivide it for building purposes. It cannot be gainsaid that it would be desirable if provision could be made to supply the city with vegetables and milk produced close to the city, especially when we consider Perth's rate of expansion. This, of course, is a problem common to most metropolises, but comparatively few have managed to solve it. In areas such as Spearwood the Town Planning Board restricts subdivision to a minimum of 2½ acres, this being considered a reasonable market garden size. This does not entirely meet the position, which, however, is being borne in mind by Professor Stephenson and the Town Planning Commissioner in the preparation of the metropolitan regional plan.

During his speech, Mr. Loton asked that I ascertain whether any action had been taken by our Department of Agriculture in regard to the use of peat-dust legume inoculant. The hon. member read an article which stated that in New South Wales, this inoculum was considered superior to the usual bottle culture. The article also said the new inoculant would soon be available to farmers in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Mr. Loton will be interested to know that over the last couple of years a close watch has been kept by the Department of Agriculture on the activities in New South Wales. In addition, our department has been carrying out preliminary laboratory and greenhouse tests with this inoculant. It is planned to follow these with field tests on a larger scale.

Incidentally, it may not be known that while dry peat cultures have been used for many years in America, the results have been mixed, and for this reason there has been a cautious approach to their

use in this State. A recent letter from the New South Wales Department of Agriculture tends to support this attitude. I quote from this letter—

In view of the fact that you are able, with the help of laboratory assistance, to meet the demand for cultures, it would seem wise for you to continue distribution at least until the commercial cultures prove themselves.

However, as I have said, the potentialities of the peat culture method are realised in Western Australia. Tests are being carried out and will be continued, and results in the Eastern States are being closely watched. It is interesting to know that the necessity for inoculating seed of legume plants, such as clover, peas, beans, lucerne, lupins, etc., prior to planting has been recognised in Western Australia for many years. Since 1926 the orthodox agar cultures of nitrogen-fixing bacteria have been supplied to farmers in bottles in steadily increasing quantities each year, 10,700 bottles being despatched last year by the Department of Agriculture at a nominal cost.

I am informed that peat cultures and the locally used agar cultures are basically the same, inasmuch as they are both "loaded" with nitrogen-fixing bacteria; also that injury to the bacteria by superphosphate is just as liable in one type of culture as the other. The peat culture manufacturers issue appropriate instructions to growers in this regard. Among the advantages of the new method are said to be greater ease of handling and longer useful life compared with the older method.

Of course, some members have not received a mention in despatches, and included in that category is Mr. Watson, who made some remarks in connection with probate. As I explained earlier, I picked out of members' speeches those portions where obvious mistakes had been made, and I endeavoured to correct those mistakes.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I was hoping that we could assume that you were replying to those parts with which you disagreed and, because you did not mention them, you agreed with the other suggestions that had been made.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Not necessarily. Investigations are still being made into some of the remarks, and therefore I could not accept them *carte blanche*, and say they were all acceptable to me. But so far as the matter raised by the hon. member is concerned, I appreciate the sentiments he expressed, and I think he is on the right track in the attitude he adopted. Without having given the question full consideration, I do not know that I could agree with everything he said, because I am not such an extremist as the hon. member; but the road he suggested is a good one to follow, and I will keep

it in mind. If at any time in the future it is possible to do anything to effect an improvement, he can rely upon me to support him.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am not surprised that the Chief Secretary made no attempt to refute any of the charges I made in connection with Commonwealth rents.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I thought I had refuted them previously.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: You did not say a solitary word.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If the hon. member was not convinced by the replies I gave to questions he asked, no words of mine could convince him. However, the hon. member will have a number of opportunities, between now and Christmas—I am sure we will be here till that time—to bring up the subject.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I take it you cannot refute them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not think the hon. member ought to be so hasty. I have given him certain information about it, and possibly later on another opportunity may arise for me to deal more fully with the matter.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is quite likely that I will give you an opportunity.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: About 20 members spoke to the motion, and then took about 48 hours' speaking to do it; if I were to reply to all the matters raised, we should be here until breakfast time tomorrow.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Chief Secretary did not reply to any matter which might have embarrassed the Government.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: However, that is my reply to the speeches made. I would like to take the opportunity of informing Mr. Lavery that some suggestions he made regarding firearms in a particular area were referred to the Police Department, and the officers of that department were pleased to hear about the matter. It was not in possession of the information he produced, and is grateful to him for the suggestions he made. Steps are being taken to see that the activities he mentioned are curtailed as much as possible.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: One cow and one pig were shot last week.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has been a rather lengthy debate and has taken much longer than we anticipated. As members can see, we have a fairly long agenda; but I am hoping we will travel along the road fairly quickly, especially in the next week or so, and by that means we shall regain some of the ground we have lost. I am hoping for the co-operation of members, and, whether they agree to or throw out the measures, I hope they will not adjourn the debates for too long. We should tackle the business and decide it one way or the other as quickly as possible.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Have you anything to add about the Goldfields?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It would take too long to add anything about the Goldfields.

Question put and passed; the Address, as amended, adopted.

*As to Presentation of Address.*

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved:

That the Address, as amended, be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

**BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.**

1. Hospitals Act Amendment.
2. Western Australian Government Tramways and Ferries Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

**BILL—BEE INDUSTRY  
COMPENSATION**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [8.0] in moving the second reading said: This Bill introduces a completely new Act to provide for the establishment of a fund for the payment of compensation in certain cases to beekeepers and for purposes to be indicated. All the provisions are completely covered in the Bill so that, in effect, it is self-explanatory. The reason for its introduction is that the principal Act of 1930-50 contains power for the eradication and prevention of contagious diseases among bees, and the power to destroy them or any of their products, but under the Act no compensation is payable to any person for action which is required to be taken in order to prevent or eradicate disease.

The beekeepers' section of the Farmers' Union appointed a committee, in co-operation with the Government apiculturist, to consider a compensation scheme in connection with bee diseases. The proposals were then submitted to the Minister for Agriculture by the general secretary of the Farmers' Union with a request that they be embodied in legislation. The principles contained in the Bill were considered by the Farmers' Union at its annual conference in July and found to be acceptable. The scheme will be compulsory, and compensation will be paid from a fund created by contributions upon a per hive basis from all registered beekeepers. The compensation fund will be used solely for compensating beekeepers for losses involved in eradicating disease. The maxi-

mum amount payable as compensation will be two-thirds of the value of material required to be destroyed.

A maximum contribution of 6d. per hive has been written into the Bill. However, as the Bill provides for a maximum compensation fund of £800, annual contributions will have to be estimated to reach this figure. They will be higher the first year, but will then drop, as the maximum of £800 cannot be exceeded.

It is intended that the contribution will be paid as a license fee when beekeepers are paying their annual registration fees. Should a serious outbreak of disease occur, and the fund be insufficient for the purpose of compensation, an advance can be made from Consolidated Revenue. However, this amount will be a charge on the fund, and will have to be repaid to the Treasurer when there is sufficient money available in the fund.

Provision has been included in the Bill for the investing of money not immediately required by the fund. As the maximum is only £800, this provision may be considered unnecessary, but it has been included in case the maximum amount of the fund is, at some future date, increased as the industry grows, or the outbreak of disease becomes more frequent. Claims for compensation are required to be submitted in writing to the Committee within 21 days after the destruction of any property which is the subject of a claim.

A committee, to be known as the Beekeepers' Compensation Fund Committee will administer the fund, subject to the approval of the Minister. This Committee will consist of three members, and will be appointed by the Minister. It will comprise a departmental representative, who will be the chairman, and two producer representatives. Two members will constitute a quorum, and matters will be decided by a majority of votes. Where there is an equality of votes, the question will be determined in the negative. All members, including the chairman, will each have one vote.

Provision is made in the Bill for the Minister to appoint a deputy in respect of each member of the committee, provided that they represent the same interests as the member. In the event of a member being absent, his full powers under the Bill are to be delegated to his deputy. No remuneration will be paid to any member of the committee, but the Department of Agriculture will bear the cost of administering the fund. By this means, the full amount of contributions will be available for compensation purposes. The setting up of this committee is very necessary. The beekeepers have asked for it and it has been well considered by their section of the Farmers' Union and by everybody connected with it in the Department of Agriculture. All sections

agree with the contents of the measure and feel very reassured by its being brought down.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: How many bee-keepers are there in Western Australia?

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST:** I have not that information with me, but I could let the hon. member have it later on. Seeing that this measure has the support of all sections of the industry, and of the department controlling the industry, I feel sure that no serious objection, nor any objection at all, could be raised against it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).**

##### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [8.8] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is a continuance measure and it proposes to extend the operations of the Industries Assistance Act, 1915-1948, for a further five years. The parent Act was introduced in 1915, the main purpose being to assist farmers who had been seriously affected by the partial failure of the 1913-14 wheat crop, which was followed in the next year by a severe drought. The aid given to farmers covered practically all their farming requirements. They received considerable benefits under the Act which otherwise would have been denied them owing to the shrinkage of rural credit caused by the drought conditions. This assistance enabled many settlers to continue their activities who, otherwise, would have been forced to leave their properties.

In 1917 an amendment was passed providing that no supplies or advances should be made under the Act subsequent to the 31st March, 1918. From then until 1947 Parliament approved of legislation each year designed to prevent the restrictions imposed by the amendment being brought into effect. In 1948 a continuance Bill for five years was passed. This has been necessary to protect outstanding advances, and to ensure that machinery is available to assist settlers in the event of drought or other disasters. By 1934 requests for assistance under the Act almost ceased. The drought year of 1935, however, brought fresh applications, and in 1940 it was found necessary to amend the act to control the distribution of moneys provided by the Commonwealth to aid drought-stricken settlers.

The Rural and Industries Bank is holding a number of securities for loans advanced under the Act, and a minor amount of seasonal assistance is still

granted. In 1952 this amounted to £1,902, and in 1951 to £8,706. There is no doubt that the statute should remain in existence, both to protect outstanding loans and to provide machinery for possible eventualities. The Bill proposes to extend the life of the Act for another five years. As I said before, this is simply a continuance measure. The Act has not been used to a very large extent in recent years, but we never know when the day may come when some disability will overtake the rural community. It will do no harm, therefore, to keep this measure on the statute book for another five years. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—PIG INDUSTRY COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

##### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST** (Hon. H. C. Strickland—North) [8.12] in moving the second reading said: The reason for amending the Act is simply to extend the time in which a claim may be made for compensation by a claimant whose pigs have been destroyed or have died of certain diseases. The time provided in the Act for a claim to be lodged is 21 days. The Bill proposes to extend that to 90 days, for reasons which I will enumerate.

Section 9 of the parent Act, which this Bill amends, provides that no compensation shall be payable unless application is made by the owner within 21 days after the destruction of the pig or the death of the pig from swine fever, swine erysipelas or para-typhoid, or the condemnation of the carcass or portion thereof. This Bill will increase the period for making application for compensation from 21 days to 90 days after the death or destruction of a pig, but applications received after 21 days will have to be accompanied by a written explanation why the claim was lodged after 21 days, and must receive the approval of the Minister before compensation can be paid.

Before dealing with the amendment, I will explain the portion of the Act dealing with the fund and compensation. The Act makes provision for compensation to be paid as follows:—

- (a) to the owner of any pig destroyed by or by order of a meat inspector or other authorised person pursuant to any Act or any regulation or proclamation under any Act because the pig is suffering from or is suspected of suffering from disease;
- (b) to the owner of any pig destroyed with the consent of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon or an approv-

ed person because the pig is suffering from or suspected of suffering from disease;

- (c) to the owner of any pig which is proved to the satisfaction of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon or an approved person to have died of swine fever, swine erysipelas or para-typhoid;
- (d) to the owner of any carcass or portion of a carcass which is pursuant to any Act or regulation or proclamation under any Act condemned as unfit for human consumption because of disease, by a meat inspector or other authorised person.

There is no charge on revenue for compensation paid out of the compensation fund, but provision is made in the Act for an appropriation from this source should there be insufficient money in the fund to meet its commitments. However, any money advanced by the Treasurer is a charge on the fund, and must be recouped when the money is available. The fund obtains its finance from money received by the Commissioner of Stamps in respect of pig stamp duty on statements required by the Act and from penalties recovered under the Act. I inquired whether any revenue had been obtained from penalties and I understand that there was not, though there might have been one or two small amounts.

Every person who sells pigs must provide the purchaser with a statement showing the number of pigs or carcasses sold and the amount of purchase money for each pig or carcass. To this statement must be affixed the amount of stamp duty payable under the Act, which provides that the Governor may, by proclamation, prescribe the amount to be paid for every £ or part of a £ exceeding 10s., so long as this figure does not exceed 3d. At present, the prescribed amount is 1d. in the £. The Act further provides that the total stamp duty payable in respect of the amount of purchase money on any one carcass or pig will not exceed three shillings and ninepence, irrespective of whether it is sold singly or as part of a lot.

The majority of applications for compensation are received within the prescribed period of 21 days, but it sometimes happens, through no fault of the owner, that claims are delayed and cannot be passed for payment. When pigs which have been forwarded to the metropolitan markets are condemned because of disease, the particulars are entered on an application for compensation form, which is forwarded to the owner for signature and transmission to the department. Sometimes this form is delayed in transit, and this may occur when mails are despatched to remote districts. Then

again, the owner may be absent from his home or incapacitated by illness when the form is received. In these cases, the odds are against the claim for compensation reaching the department within the prescribed period.

Recently there was a claim for as much as £545 for 76 pigs which died of para-typhoid, and a delay occurred in establishing a diagnosis. Under the Act no claim would be payable for any pigs which died more than 21 days before the nature of the disease was determined and a claim submitted on the prescribed form. In the past, difficulties of this kind have been overcome by obtaining the approval of the Minister for overdue claims. However, the Solicitor General has ruled that there is no authority under the Act for this procedure. As a result of this opinion, I have no doubt that some injustices will occur unless the Act is amended.

Overdue claims will continue to be received. No serious objection can be raised to the amendment as most claims are lodged within the 21-day period and it will ensure that no case of injustice will take place. The most prevalent reason for late claims is where the pig has died and 21 days elapse before the cause of death can be established. The amendment simply makes legal what has been happening in the past, and will ensure that people will receive their compensation in cases of delay which are outside their control. After 21 days, an explanation has to be placed before the Minister, and therefore the amendment will not in any way weaken the control of disease in pigs.

An instance was cited of what could happen. A farmer in the Margaret River area began to lose his pigs, and it was well over the prescribed period—in fact, almost eight weeks elapsed—before the cause of death from para-typhoid was definitely established. This was due to no fault of the veterinary officers on the spot. Apparently this disease took some diagnosing and was finally determined only by the assistance of the laboratories in Perth. This might happen to any farmer who sent his pigs direct to the treatment works and not to the saleyard. At the sale of pigs by auction, they could become mixed and ownership would be difficult to establish; but when they are sent direct and one is condemned, it might take longer than 21 days for the notice to reach the farmer. Though a broad overall period of 90 days is provided, the period of 21 days remains, and only in special cases approved by the Minister will the period be extended beyond 21 days. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

**BILL—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT  
(KWINANA AREA) ACT  
AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [8.24] in moving the second reading said:

As members will recollect, the parent Act was passed for the purpose of acquiring a large area of land adjacent to Cockburn Sound. One of the main reasons for this action was to obviate the possibility of unreasonable speculation in land in the area. The Act provides that any setting apart, taking or resumption of this land shall be carried out according to the Public Works Act, the only land exempted from this being that owned by the Commonwealth or land required to enable the State to carry out its obligations under the agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

It was realised when the parent Act was introduced that it might require amendment from time to time to meet changing needs in the area. Section 5 of the Act provides that until the 31st December, 1953, the Governor, on the recommendation of the Minister for Industrial Development, may set apart, take or resume any part of the land subject to the Act for the purposes of an industry, or a public work or for town planning purpose. As this provision will lapse at the end of this year, it is felt to be too restrictive in allowing land to be set apart, taken or resumed for "an industry" only.

Possibly firms or interests which have not yet approached or have not yet put a firm proposal to the Government may wish to commence activities at Kwinana. To meet such possibilities the Bill provides that up to the 31st December, 1953, land may also be taken for "industry generally". At present the parent Act is administered by the Minister for Industrial Development. That is all right so far as industrial matters are concerned, but not where land is disposed of for other purposes. As the disposal of such land comes within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Lands, the Bill places its administration under that Minister.

As it may occur that with time other Government departments may become interested in land within the area, the Bill provides that any part of the area may be changed by Order-in-Council from the control of one Minister to that of another. This will ensure against the overlapping of departmental control in the area.

The next amendment—that in Clause 4—deals with land acquired for town planning purposes. The parent Act provides that such land shall be reserved and disposed of under the Land Act. This method has been found to be unsatisfactory and too cumbersome so far as the newly developed townsite area is concerned. The land has been planned from the onset,

a great deal of Government money is being spent on it, and land will have to be allotted to philanthropic, religious and other bodies, and for public purposes such as infant health clinics, etc. It is proving difficult to carry out these proposals under the Land Act, and so the Bill proposes that the land may be disposed of in such manner as the Governor may approve upon the recommendation of the Minister for Lands.

The last amendment deals with land acquired for industrial purposes. The restrictions imposed on this land under the parent Act are considered to be unduly harsh. The Act provides that no person who purchases, leases, occupies or uses any land in the area for industrial purposes may sell, exchange, transfer, assign, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sublet or allow any other person to use the land without the approval of the Minister. The Minister is also empowered to determine the terms and conditions on which any land is disposed of. These provisions afford an ample safeguard and ensure that the land is not held idle or obtained for the purpose of making a profit by re-sale. However, under the Act as it stands, these restrictive conditions would remain on the land in perpetuity.

Where a person who has obtained land under the Act has carried out the conditions on which the land was granted to him, or has used or developed the land for the purpose for which it was obtained, he should be freed from the restrictions imposed. This would enable him to borrow on the land for the purpose of arranging finance for the conduct of his business. The Bill, therefore, gives the Minister for Industrial Development power, after consultation with the advisory committee appointed under the Act, to release persons from these restrictions if they have faithfully carried out the conditions under which they obtained their land. I am informed that financial houses will not advance money on land subject to the restrictions under the Act, even though the Minister has consented to a mortgage.

We have found difficulty, particularly in the townsites, in the allocation of land for specific purposes. Under the original Act the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company can select and purchase the sites that it requires. I am not referring to the oil refinery sites, but to those that the company needs in the township for its executive offices and so on. That is covered in the original Act, but it applies to that company only. The Broken Hill Pty. requires certain sites, but we cannot make them available to that company because the only way in which it could be done would be under the Land Act, which requires the land to be sold by public auction.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Does that apply to the hotel site, also?

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 14th October, 1953.

## CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : North-West, (a) as to plans for development of Kimberleys .....	1039
(b) as to report of survey party and port decision .....	1040
Coal Industry, (a) as to increasing powers of co-ordinator .....	1040
(b) as to reported statement by Premier .....	1040
Electricity and gas, as to charges .....	1041
Vinegrowing, (a) as to establishment of research station .....	1041
(b) as to offer of land .....	1042
Service stations, as to trading hours .....	1042
Tram service, as to Hay-st. west route timetable .....	1042
Housing, (a) as to provision of roads and services, city and country .....	1042
(b) as to Queen's Park land, clearing, etc. ....	1042
Veterinary legislation, as to introducing Motion : Defence, as to Commonwealth provision for Western Australia .....	1043
Bills : Dairy Industry Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1043
Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment, 1r. ....	1043
Wheat Marketing, 1r. ....	1043
Hospitals Act Amendment, 3r. ....	1043
Western Australian Government Tramways and Ferries Act Amendment, 8r. ....	1043
Companies Act Amendment (No. 2), report .....	1043
Jury Act Amendment, 2r., Com. ....	1056

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. I have been approached by the management of the B.H.P., which wants certain land on which to erect houses for its executives, but under the Act as it stands, although I can make land available to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co., I cannot do so for any other organisation. This townsite is the latest thing in planning, but under the present legislation we cannot say to a doctor, for instance, "There is the site for your surgery," because the Land Act, as I have said, provides that the land must be sold by public auction. Members will realise that it is necessary for us to be able to reserve sites for the infant health centres, for a doctor, for local government offices, and so on, and therefore we must have the right to allocate blocks for specific purposes.

Hon. L. Craig: In other words you want control of the area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. Unless we have complete control we cannot plan the development properly.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is good to see the Government co-operating in this way.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We always try to co-operate with anyone who is doing anything of benefit to the State. If there are any points that I have not made clear to members they can be mentioned during the debate. I repeat that we must have this power if the money that has already been spent on planning for the area is not to be wasted. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.34 p.m.*

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

## QUESTIONS.

### NORTH-WEST.

#### (a) As to Plans for Development of Kimberleys.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Works:

What progress has been made with the investigation of the rivers in the Kimberleys referred to in the report of the Government's plans for the Kimberleys in "The West Australian" of the 9th May, 1953?

The MINISTER replied:

#### Gauging of Main Rivers.

Gauging of the Ord River in the vicinity of Argyle Downs was carried out during the last wet season, and will be continued during the coming one.

Suitable arrangements have been made for assessing the flow of the Fitzroy River at Fitzroy Crossing, and of the Margaret River at Fossil Downs and in the vicinity of Margaret River Downs homestead.