he will find that it does not deal with all of the phases of workers' compensation, but relates to the schedules, which are very important to the workers; and to that famous provision which has been called the "cradle-to-the-grave" clause. Those are matters that do not need investigation by a select committee, but are points with which we have dealt for years.

I notice that during the debate most members asked why we should have such a Bill as this every year. They said it was a hardy annual. The reason is obvious. Members know that each year, when the Bill finally emerges from the conference of managers, the amounts provided in it are very low, and not sufficient to compensate workers for the injuries they receive. While we have an Act that does not give justice to the workers, is it not natural to assume that each year an attempt will be made to bring the compensation payments more into line with what they should be? Until such time as the Council agrees to a Bill which provides for payments suitable to the times, we will, irrespective of what Government is in power, have to consider amending legislation.

I emphasise that the figures I have quoted will stand investigation. They must give members some food for thought, because an increase in payment from £2,150 to £2,800 appears to be a large jump; but investigations show that although the jump is large, the overall cost to industry is very low. Having that in view, I hope that Mr. Hearn will not go on with his move for a select committee. He is over-optimistic, I think, if he believes we can appoint a select committee to delve into the phases that have been mentioned during the debate, and then have the Bill back here and passed before Parliament rises.

Hon. L. A. Logan: When do you hope to rise?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Somewhere towards the end of this month—I will not say how far this side or the other side of it. If members persist in the appointment of a select committee, we might be lucky if we finish by Christmas Day.

Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Can I speak on the second reading?

The PRESIDENT: No.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

To Refer to Select Committee.

Hon. H. HEARN: For the purposes outlined in my second reading speech, I move—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till tomorrow at 2.15 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 3rd November, 1954.

CONTENTS.

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

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Section "A", 1954.

The TREASURER: I have here a copy of Section "A" of the report of the Auditor General on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1954. It will be laid on the Table of the House.

QUESTIONS.

ALBANY HARBOUR.

As to Use of No. 1 Berth.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it a fact that the No. 1 Berth at Albany cannot be used until the grab-hopper dredge is returned to remove existing rocks?

(2) How long will it be before ships can tie up at this berth?

The MINISTER replied:

The berth is capable of limited use now. Dredging should be completed not later than the end of March to a stage that will allow berthing of vessels of draft up to 28ft.

COLLIE COAL.

As to Coking.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) What progress can he report on the coking of Collie coal?

(2) Is he in possession of any information from Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. as to their experiments and investigations on this subject?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A process has been developed on laboratory scale, and some successful trials have been made in cupolas. Only Collie coal is being used in the process.

A pilot plant capable of producing about three-quarters of a ton of coke per day is being erected for the Bureau of Research and Development at Welshpool. The purpose of this plant is to establish technical details for the erection of a commercial plant, and to gather information bearing on production costs.

(2) Yes. Two research reports have been received from Broken Hill Pty. Ltd., covering investigations into the production of coke from Collie coal with the addition of portion of recognised coking coal, i.e., the production of coke on the lines of the Baum process, as proposed by Brassert & Co. in their report. Two research officers of the Broken Hill Co. have recently visited the bureau, when views and information were exchanged.

EDUCATION.

(a) As to Erection of School, Innaloo.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Education:

In reply to a question by me on the 19th November, 1953, regarding the Innaloo school, he said:

> It is hoped to commence the erection of a new school during the latter half of 1954.

Can he give any indication when this school will be commenced, as all indications point to the fact that there will be no room in the new school at North Scarborough owing to the large number of homes being erected in this district?

The MINISTER replied:

Plans and specifications for the new school at Innaloo have been prepared and it is hoped that a start will be made in the course of the next few weeks.

(b) As to Teacher's Quarters, Borden.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Education:

Will he state when erection is expected to commence of the teacher's quarters at Borden for which approval was given some months ago?

The MINISTER replied:

Representations have been made to the State Housing Commission for the erection of quarters at Borden. The commission has agreed to erect a home and has acquired land for this purpose, but is experiencing difficulty in securing the services of a builder.

(c) As to Recreation Area, Swanbourne School.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Education:

Referring to my question of the 23rd June and his answer, "that it was hoped to implement plans to improve the recreation area at Swanbourne school during the coming financial year," does this promise still hold good?

The MINISTER replied:

All grounds improvements had to be deferred as sufficient finance was not available to carry out the urgent building programme.

RADIO INTERFERENCE.

As to Regulations for Suppression.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Are regulations in existence under the electricity Acts providing for suppressors to prevent radio interference from electric motors?

(2) If so, does he think such regulations are being taken full advantage of for the suppression of such interference?

(3) If there are no such regulations, is he of the opinion that the Acts contain powers sufficient to enable such regulations to be made?

(4) If the answer to No. (3) is in the affirmative, will he take steps to have such regulations prepared promptly and gazetted?

(5) If the answer to No. (3) is in the negative, will he give early consideration to necessary amendments to the Acts?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) See answer to No. (1).

(3) Yes.

(4) There is much more involved in this than the gazettal of regulations, and co-operation between Commonwealth and State Departments is essential. Steps will be taken to see if this can be achieved.

(5) See answer to No. (3).

RAILWAYS.

As to Derailments, Bellevue-Mt. Helena.

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) How many derailments causing traffic hold-ups have occurred on the section of main line between Bellevue and Mount Helena during the past 10 years?

(2) As a result of these derailments, was it ever necessary to carry on an emergency service over the Mundaring branch line? If so, on how many occasions?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Sixteen.

(2) Yes. Once only in each of the following years:—1945, 1946, 1947, 1951 and 1954.

OIL EXPLORATION.

(a) As to Commonwealth and State Exependiture.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Mines:

What was the amount spent in aerial photography, geological and geophysical survey and survey for oil generally in Western Australia during the last 10 years.

(a) by the Commonwealth Government.

(b) by the State Government?

The MINISTER replied:

The State Government has no actual figure of expenditure by the Commonwealth Government on aerial, geophysical and geological survey for oil in this State. The Commonwealth Government in agreement with the State, and because it possesses aerial and geophysical equipment, has, however, carried out a very considerable programme of recent years. The State has, at times, technically joined in this work, and has also carried out very considerable general geological work itself in the State.

(b) As to Conditions of Permits, etc.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Under what conditions will he consent to the transfer of permits to explore, licences to prospect or oil leases?

(2) Are permit holders or licensees permitted to grant licences over their areas to other persons or companies, or to transfer any portions of a permit area?

(3) Is there any limit of time between the discovery of oil by a licensee and the commencement of production under an oil lease?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) As the Act stands at present, transfers are governed by Section 19, which provides that every title while subsisting, may, subject to the Act, be transferred. No transfer is effectual until registered in the manner prescribed, and no transfer to any person or corporation not being a person domiciled within, or a corporation formed and registered within, the Commonwealth of Australia, shall be registered unless the Minister is satisfied that there are exceptional reasons which justify such registration.

(2) I do not propose to permit action of this nature.

(3) The holder of a licence to prospect is entitled within six months of a discovery of petroleum, or such further time as the Minister may in his discretion allow, to select leasehold. As a lessee he is required to work the land continuously and bona fide for the purposes for which it was granted, unless prevented by circumstances beyond his power and control.

(c) As to Source of Capital.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Mines:

Will he insist that in future companies searching for oil in Western Australia must have a large proportion of their capital subscribed by Western Australian or Australian shareholders?

The MINISTER replied:

All aspects, financial and otherwise, are considered before titles are granted. The overall benefit to the States development is the primary objective.

(d) As to Supervision of Drilling.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Mines:

Does the Government make any provision for supervision by geologists or experts at drilling operations? If not, will he institute such supervision?

The MINISTER replied:

The department's present technical staff closely follows all operations. Action has also been commenced to appoint a petroleum engineering branch, whose duties will be to supervise all petroleum drilling operations.

(e) As to Information on Discoveries.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What are the obligations of companies drilling for oil to supply information as to the discovery of oil?

(2) What would the reaction of the Department of Mines be if any company or individual suppressed information or gave information which was wilfully misleading?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No company can undertake drilling operations without the consent in writing of the Minister. While the Act at present does not specifically provide for immediate notification to the Minister of oil discovery, companies when authorised to drill have been instructed accordingly.

(2) A very serious view would be taken of any such action. Amending legislation affecting several of the matters referred to in these questions is shortly to be introduced.

STATE BRICK WORKS.

As to Fulfilment of Order.

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Housing:

If an order were placed with the State Brick Works in May, 1954, for 12,000 pressed bricks for erection of a house in a country district, when should such order be fulfilled?

The MINISTER replied:

On present indications, not later than March, 1955.

MIDLAND JUNCTION ABATTOIR.

As to Industrial Disputes and Stoppages.

Hon. A. F. WATTS (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Will he state the actual cause or reason for the industrial disputes which are still taking place at Midland Junction abattoir?

(2) Is it a fact that butchers in order to maintain supplies have been compelled to seek other means of slaughtering stock?

(3) What progress has recently been made towards setting up the promised inquiry?

(4) Is it a fact that the stoppages which took place today and last Wednesday, or either of them, came about because a man was withdrawn from the chain to work elsewhere?

The PREMIER replied:

A few moments ago the hon. member made a copy of the questions available to me, and consequently I have not had an opportunity to check them for the purpose of ascertaining the answers to them.

(1) As far as I have been able to find out, there seems to be a tendency on the part of the board, or some members of it, to blame the manager. For all I know, there might be a tendency on the part of the manager to blame the board. I understand the Minister for Agriculture is searching into that situation for the purpose of finding out exactly where the truth lies. It might be that as a result of his investigations, an attempt will be made in the very near future to amend the Act for the purpose of changing somewhat the constitution of the existing board; mainly, I would suggest, by adding to the number on the board, but there is no certainty that that course will be followed.

(2), (3) and (4). I will have inquiries made with respect to these three questions and will make the information available as soon as possible.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Agriculture).

2, Betting Control.
Introduced by the Minister for Police.

3, Fremantle Railway Bridge Restriction.
Introduced by Hon. J. B. Sleeman.

BILL—MARRIED WOMEN'S PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—AIR BEEF PTY. LTD.

As to Continuance of Government Subsidy.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [4.48]: I move—

> That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should continue the assistance to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. by relieving the company of charges from the Wyndham Meat Works in excess of 1.2 pence per lb. (or the adjusted charge under the formula) or at least enter into an arrangement to taper off assistance over an agreed period of years.

In submitting the motion, I shall do my best to make the presentation of the facts as brief and as interesting as I can, but, of necessity, there is certain statistical data which has to be submitted in support of the proposition. Furthermore, it is important to cover the full history, or a reasonably full history of the company, in order to give the House an indication of what has been aimed at and achieved by the company, because I understand that many members of this Chamber have not actually been to the Glenroy killing centre.

When I first heard that the Government had decided to discontinue its assistance to the scheme I was very surprised;

and I was even more surprised and, indeed, disappointed when I found that, as a result of representations by the company, it had further considered the matter and decided to confirm its previous decision. I feel that the decision is a severe blow to something which I have come to look on as the development of an ideal—something which is an outstanding example of initiative, foresight, energy, courage and ability. I will go further and say that it is one of the few bright spots in the post-war history of the Kimberleys.

In my opinion, the closer settlement of the Kimberleys will not be achieved by legislation or by members of any political party or other body bemoaning the fact that the present station areas are too large. In my view, closer settlement will be achieved only by the courage, resource, initiative and capacity of people who are prepared, in a well-known Australian expression, to "give it a go." The decision of the Government is all the more amazing to me in view of the fact that the period of assistance originally agreed upon has been interrupted to a serious degree by an unpredicted two years of severe drought.

In submitting this motion I would like to give some brief details of the location of the Glenroy inland killing centre. It is important that members should appreciate the peculiar problems concerning Glenroy and Mt. House stations and other properties in close proximity to them. By surface route the distance is approximately 260 miles to Derby and 300 miles to Wyndham. The difference by air is remarkable inasmuch as it is only 156 miles, approximately, to Derby and about 186 miles to Wyndham. Those who have visited these areas will realise just how difficult of access are the Glenroy and neighbouring areas. The stock route to Wyndham is poor and on the other route to Derby the first 100 miles through the Leopold Ranges is extremely difficult. Access to the road running east from Derby to Fitzroy Crossing and beyond is extremely difficult, and the prospects of a road connection to Glenroy, in the foreseeable future, appears to be completely impracticable.

With this topographical information in mind, it will be easy for members to appreciate why Mt. House, Glenroy and other stations in the area were languishing and could not achieve reasonable turn-offs even when they were not subject to drought conditions. In other words, had normal conditions continued right through they would have been able to make little advance in the number of cattle that could have been marketed from their properties, thus leaving an ever-increasing number of beasts to die on those properties and become a complete economic waste.

The Kimberleys Development Committee, in a report under date the 1st November, 1951, makes some interesting observations regarding the location of air beef. I will not read the full report because it is too lengthy, but I will read a brief comment from it. With respect to the Glonroy project the report states—

> Air Beef Pty. Ltd., which has now completed its third year of operations, serves a group of properties situated in rugged country between Derby and Wyndham. This is generally regarded as sound cattle breeding, but not particularly good fattening country.
>
> The properties are relatively inaccessible even for the region. Glenroy itself is approximately 180 miles in a direct line from Wyndham, 160 miles from Derby and 260 miles from Broome. There is a relatively poor stock route of 250 odd miles to Wyndham. The first 100 miles of the stock route to Derby, which crosses the Leopold Ranges, is difficult and frequently closed through water shortages from July onwards.

Then it goes on to explain about the difficulties of creating a road to connect with the one from Derby to Fitzroy Crossing. In considering this problem, I would ask members not to lose sight of the fact that droving to Wyndham or any other meatworks has severe limitations. The approximate times involved in droving are, first of all, the mustering period of, say, four weeks, then the period on the road, a further three weeks, and the return of the plant, a further two weeks, making nine weeks in all for a turn-round.

In view of the severe limitations in the availability of labour and plant, and the restricted time during which the meatworks operate each year, it is usual for only two mobs per annum to be taken to Wyndham. Quite apart from the lack of men and plant to undertake the task on a greater scale, there is the physical problem in connection with the fatigue of the horses doing the work on these particular journeys.

Next I would like to deal briefly with the origin of this particular scheme because it is relevant to the matter under discussion. In 1947 the possibility of slaughtering on remote stations and flying the beef from places too distant for normal droving was tested and Mt. House station was selected for the test. On that occasion only four bullocks were slaughtered and the carcasses were flown to Perth, a distance of some 1,700 miles. The MacRobertson-Miller Aviation Co. Pty. Ltd. supplied the aircraft free of cost and the proceeds from the bullocks went in aid of the Red Cross. The experience gained and the enthusiasm created from this experiment led to the plan of building an inland killing centre in this remote area where the beef could be killed and flown to the nearest meatworks.

At the time, the economics of the venture were based primarily on the fact that stations in this particular area, and for that matter in other parts of the Kimberleys, were suffering from several grave disabilities. Firstly, there was the shortage of staff and the inability to secure experienced drovers and stockmen; the war years had taken away from the industry many experienced and trained men. Secondly, there was the problem of limited markets. Owing to the limited space in ships carrying beef to the southern market —that is, the metropolitan area—due to the time factor in getting the cattle to the port, it was difficult to get cattle away in reasonable quantities. For instance, from this station there was one month droving and three weeks for the return of the droving plant before a second mob could be taken.

Thirdly, another disability was the fact that only top quality bullocks could stand up to the ravages of the droving trip. Those who know the country will appreciate that there are ravages. There was no market for the lower grade cattle accumulating on the stations and they, in fact, hampered the breeding of the better quality beasts. A further disability was the difficulty of getting rid of a sufficient turn-off of all types of cattle. It was appreciated that a larger turn-off of all types of cattle was preferable to a lesser number of the selected type quality bullocks. This is demonstrated by figures for Mt. House and Glenroy in particular, which I propose to give later.

The economics of the scheme, as envisaged then, are very important because even at that early stage they had appreciated the fact that whilst the return per individual head of cattle might be less than could be obtained at the meatworks after droving, the overall return from the turn-off for a given year would be greater from an inland killing centre such as Glenroy. It was because of that fact that the sponsors of the scheme were prepared to accept the lower return per head of cattle in anticipation of a greater overall return from their property; a return which is not only measured in the money received from the sale of cattle, but which has to be measured also in the degree of development and the improvement of the herd.

Mr. Hutchinson: You mean because of the larger number that would be marketed.

Mr. COURT: They have a greater market because instead of having to select only the bullocks that can stand the ravages of the journey to the meatworks, they are able to kill all grades on the property because the droving problem is immediately removed. If one gets something per head of cattle for which one would otherwise get nothing, that is, in effect, clear profit.

The Minister for Railways: It must have been pretty poor quality beef.

Mr. COURT: In addition, not only does one get some return from the poor quality cattle, which they were, but one also improves one's herd and gives the herd generally a better chance to develop. At this stage I would like to quote some further comment from the report of the Kimberleys Development Committee. Those members who have not had an opportunity of studying the report would obtain a good deal of information from it. I do not propose to weary the House with a complete reading of the report because members can read it at their leisure.

There are certain aspects, however, which I have previously brought forward that I would like to touch on. It is an authoritative document prepared by a very responsible committee of Western Australian Government officers as well as Commonwealth Government officers; it represents their considered views on this problem. On page 47 of their report, under the heading "Inland Killing Centres", we find the following:—

> It is well established that slaughter works for export can operate more efficiently and with a higher net return to growers per head treated; if located at the port of shipment rather than inland. This is because operating costs are normally lower, returns on by-products are higher, double handling of meat is avoided and, in the event of shipping hold-up, the meat is under the direct control of the works until actually loaded. These factors normally more than compensate for loss of condition and bruising of cattle in transit to the works and the cost of droving, as against transport of the meat and by-products.
>
> Inland killing, on the other hand, has an important advantage because, as it will be shown, it enables a greater turn-off to be obtained from the areas served. Furthermore, from an increase in beef production, it is considered that under certain conditions overall property returns will be higher in spite of the lower returns per head.

I might interpolate that that brings out the point I made before, namely, that we must regard this problem from the point of overall return, as distinct from the return per head. The report continues—

> When the top lines of bullocks can be walked to the coastal works and the remainder killed at the inland works, the station benefits both ways.

That is a fact which has been realised by some of the station-owners in close proximity to Glenroy; the fact that they can use the inland killing centre when it suits them, and discontinue it when it does not suit them. They can use it for part of their turn-off—that is, the portion that

would not be safe to drove over long distances—and they could use the Wyndham Meat Works for their good quality turn-off. The report then continues—

> Additional beef can be produced at inland works for the following reasons:—
>
> (i) Cattle which could not walk to coastal works can be killed. These in the main comprise old cows and cull heifers; also a proportion of old, lame or too fat bullocks. The old cattle are otherwise run until they die. By killing them they can be replaced by additional effective breeders, and calvings increased. In favoured areas, the old cows and cull heifers can be spayed and walked to coastal works two years later. With inland works, it is usually more payable to kill them without spaying as an effective breeder carried in their place would produce an average of 1.5 calves during the two years.
>
> (ii) Bullocks can be killed earlier, thus increasing the carrying capacity for breeders. (Beef quality is also improved.)
>
> (iii) Beasts can be killed with a minimum bruising and without the loss of weight and quality experienced through droving long distances.
>
> (iv) Under open range conditions, inland killing permits more complete mustering for slaughter cattle and branding.

There is much more comment explaining the advantages of the inland killing centres for certain of the stations such as the Glenroy and Mt. House type of station. At another stage the report had some rather caustic comments to make concerning the attitude of the Wyndham Meat Works to the killing centre. But I do not propose to bring that forward at this juncture. I feel I should explain to the House the constitution of Air Beef Pty. Ltd. and explain its operations, aims and objects. I have here a list of the shareholders and the directors of which I think the House should be informed. The total issued shares numbered 14,753 £1 shares. These are held by the following:—

	No. of shares.
Mr. H. R. C. Adkins, secretary, Pastoralists' Association	1
Airlines (W.A.) Ltd.	2,000
A.N.A. Ltd.	5,499
Mt. House Pastoral Co.	1,200
L. G. Blythe	1
C. H. Evans, chartered accountant	100
E. C. Gare	100
I. H. Grabowsky	1
M.M.A. Pty. Ltd.	5,499
C. K. Blair, pastoralist	250
F. Russ, pastoralist	200
I. N. Holyman, director	1

The constitution of the larger shareholdings and of the directorate has from time to time brought forward some uninformed criticism, and I propose to explain my point as I go. The directorate comprises representatives of the interests that I have enumerated, and it will be seen that there are three airline companies holding the majority of the 14,753 shares issued. The objectives of this company were to establish an inland abattoir to kill, chill and then fly the beef to freezer for export. It was felt that this was the only means of treating a large number of cattle in such a remote area. Otherwise all but the strongest of the cattle—that is, those that could not walk through the ranges—would continue to be unmarketable and die on the land as has been the case for many years.

The slaughtering figures by Air Beef Pty. Ltd. from 1949 onwards are interesting in comparison with those for Wyndham, because it is the variation in these figures which demonstrates to my mind rather conclusively the merit of having these inland killing centres. In 1949, Air Beef put through 1,805 head of cattle; the same year Wyndham had 31,734 head of cattle through the works. In 1950, Air Beef went up to 3,676, whilst Wyndham went up to 33,410. In 1951, the figures for Air Beef increased to 4,079, whilst those for Wyndham fell back to 30,437. In the year 1952—which was the first of the drought years—Air Beef's figures—and I would like members to note this particularly—jumped from 4,079 to 5,185; but in that year the Wyndham Meat Works dropped very severely from 30,437 down to 19,449.

During that year there was a drought both in the East and the West Kimberleys, but it was worse in the east. That had the effect of increasing the local demand on Glenroy inland killing centre, and of very seriously reducing the demand on Wyndham. That is not the end of the story. When Wyndham dropped from 30,000 odd head of cattle in one year to 19,500 in the next, it immediately had the effect of sky-rocketing the cost of treating meat at the Wyndham Meat Works. As in any business venture, the volume of through-put does materially affect the unit cost, and Wyndham is no exception. The result was that the charge to be made against Air Beef Pty. Ltd. to protect them against the excess costs in the Wyndham Meat Works—or rather as their proportion of the cost to Wyndham Meat Works—also suffered per lb. by the reduced number of cattle that went through Wyndham.

In 1953—another drought year—the Glenroy figures dropped to 3,523 and those for Wyndham recovered and stood at 26,065. During that year, although there was a drought in the Kimberleys, the west was very bad but the east route remained open. Hence the improved figures for Wyndham. In 1954, which was a more normal year, Air Beef went up to 4,050

and Wyndham remained almost static at 26,756, doubtless feeling the after effects of the drought.

This company has developed its plant by the installation of a modern type of abattoir. It is capable of treating between 4,500 and 5,000 head of cattle between the last week of April and about the first week in September, a period of approximately 20 weeks. The time of operations is strictly governed by the seasons, and this period is the cooler part of the year. Approximately 60 head of cattle can be handled per day in a five-day working week. The meat is cooled to a bone temperature of 34 deg. Fahr. and then flown to Wyndham where it is received, frozen and wrapped, and shipped from the Wyndham Meat Works. All the edible offal and hides are also exported from the Glenroy killing centre. It is interesting to note that a proportion, although not all, of the inedible offal is fed to pigs which, in turn, are exported and further increase the attractiveness of this inland killing centre.

In dealing with the operations of this company, I would like to give some further figures regarding the poundage of meat achieved at Glenroy from 1949 to 1954. I have already quoted the numbers of head of cattle killed, so I shall not go over those again. The poundage of meat tells a very interesting story. In 1949, it was 1,056,974; in 1950, it was 1,998,634; in 1951, it jumped to 2,139,847; in 1952, it further increased to 2,710,151; in 1953, it came back to 1,756,886. But there is a significant feature: In 1954, it jumped to 2,229,068 lb. Members will find on reflection that these figures show a very pleasing increase in the poundage per head of cattle put through, which demonstrates the point that this system of handling cattle by inland killing centres has the advantage of developing the properties and, through that, of developing the quality of the herds.

The increased poundage in 1954 compared with 1952 demonstrates the point and indicates the improvement in the general quality, despite the drought of 1952. Had there been no drought in 1952 and 1953, there is no doubt that the improvement in return per head would have been even more remarkable. The method of contracting for the flying out of the products of the inland killing centres is to call tenders from air lines for a season. The successful tenderer for the years 1949 and 1954, was M.M.A., using a DC3 freighter in each season. In the years 1950 to 1953 inclusive, it was A.N.A., using a Bristol freighter.

The presence of Air Beef in this district has made it possible for stations to muster and deliver their top bullocks with a minimum of staff and a minimum amount of droving. These are vital considerations. During mustering, stations can do their branding during the more favourable period of the year; furthermore, they can cull their herds and make room for the better-quality cattle. The drought years of 1952 and 1953 proved a remarkable justification for the existence of Air Beef. During those two years, the company provided an income which would otherwise have been completely lost. The roads to Wyndham and Derby were both devoid of feed.

I have already demonstrated to the House the effect on the number of cattle handled by Wyndham. In normal years, the cattle, as a result of culling and total marketing, would be of better quality, more weight and in greater numbers. The average frozen weight per head in 1953, for instance, was 519 lb., but in 1954 it jumped to 562 lb. Mount House and Glenroy stations have consistently used the installation from its inception for their total output, and have availed themselves of the facility to the fullest extent. Because of their isolation, these two stations were limited, before the introduction of Air Beef, to marketing small numbers, and the effect of the introduction of Air Beef on them is rather dramatic.

As at 1948, we can accept as a base figure that the average turn-off from these stations was in the vicinity of 800. I suppose by the normal effluxion of time, the number would have increased to slightly over 1,000, but not very much more, by 1954. With the advent of this inland killing station, the figures were as follows:—

1949	1,090 head.
1950	2,133 head.
1951	2,341 head.
1952	1,718 head.
1953	1,816 head.
1954	2,131 head.

I would like to make some comment on the figures for the drought years of 1952 and 1953. When I first had these figures extracted, I felt it was rather odd that the two stations located right in the facility should drop their figures during the drought years when one would expect them to have used the facility to a greater extent to get rid of their herds. The explanation was this: Due to the limited capacity of the works and because of the prices crisis, these two stations voluntarily reduced their numbers to permit other stations, which during those years had no other outlet, to use some of the space.

Members will appreciate that there is a capacity limit to the existing plant. When it reaches 5,000 head, it is really working at the fullest capacity for which it was designed. The whole programme must be based on killing that number within the 20-week period. Therefore, the home stations, if they can be called such, where the installation is operating, voluntarily agreed to reduce their own numbers. In 1953, as distinct from 1952, the number from Glenroy and Mount House was not

substantially increased, as this was the second year of drought and the cattle had to be handled as little as possible. In 1954, we saw a recovery, due to the return to a better season, brought about by improved rains, and the out-turn from these two stations rose to 2,131 head.

It is also shown by these figures that the heavy culling of the lower grades during the initial years of the operation of Air Beef greatly assisted in minimising the losses in the herd. The branding of calves on Glenroy and Mount House stations this year is expected to be a record, and is a direct result of the benefits brought about by this scheme. This has been achieved despite the increased turn-off from the properties as distinct from the periods prior to 1948. Other stations have participated in this benefit. While one hears various comments that they have not participated as much as would be expected of them, and so on, the fact is that the facility was available to them and a very interesting case occurred in the drought period when one station, which normally does not patronise Glenroy, leaned very heavily on this inland killing centre and obtained a revenue which it would not otherwise have derived.

Stations which regularly use this facility are Mount House, Glenroy, Gibb River, Mt. Elizabeth, Mornington and Tableland. Others which use it according to seasonal conditions are Bedford Downs, Springvale, Landsdowne, Fossil Downs, Louisa Downs, Margaret Downs, Christmas Creek, Cherrubim, Mt. Hart, Napier, Kimberley Downs and Elgie Cliffs. I have inquired from the company whether this intermittent use of the facility worries it. The company claims it does not. It accepts the fact that, because of its very nature, this is a service given to the surrounding district. It accepts the fact that the installation is merely a service station, as it were, for the other stations around it.

Of course, there is a great advantage in having two large home stations contributing to the scheme because they can assist by balancing the numbers, whether they be upward or downward, to materially facilitate the most economic use of the plant. I have asked myself a question which no doubt many other members have asked themselves. What is Air Beef getting out of this scheme? Contrary to the popular belief, the object of Air Beef is not to make dividends for its shareholders. This statement probably surprises some members of this House. From my investigations, I have satisfied myself that it is not the company's object to make dividends for its shareholders or from its investment. For all practical purposes, the operation of Air Beef Pty. Ltd. is a co-operative concern for the benefit of the users of the scheme, and not for the benefit of the operators of the scheme.

Those who provided the capital and loan money took the risk of losing their investment, but the producers have no capital at stake, except the one or two minor instances that I quoted when I read the list of shareholders. Because the airways companies are interested, there seems to be a feeling abroad that the Air Beef is run for their benefit. I have examined very closely the accounts of Air Beef Pty. Ltd. and I say definitely that it is not correct that the company is being run for the benefit of the airline companies that fly the freight from the inland killing centre to the port and backloading to the killing centre and to other stations.

The form of accounts used by Air Beef Pty. Ltd., which were readily made available to me in their complete and not in a condensed form and were duly audited, give a very clear picture, and I do not doubt that the company would make the same information available to any other member who was sufficiently interested to examine it. The accounts are in a good model and clearly stated form, well dissected under different headings of operating expenses, and one can easily answer any queries one may have.

I have gone further. It could be argued that probably these accounts of Air Beef Pty. Ltd. are used as a means of hiding something else. There is a general suspicion about accounts of this type of concern, so I have examined the freight charges made by the several successful tenderers from the years 1949 to 1954, and have come to the conclusion that the freight charges are aimed mainly at a cost recovery and not at profit-making.

For instance, A.N.A. used a Bristol freighter which is a modern and successful type of air freighter. The approximate capital cost of a Bristol freighter today is about £100,000 and once it is committed to this trade, it is there for 20 weeks. It has to be flown to the area and has to operate more or less exclusively in that area. The figures made available to me for the four seasons show that there was an average net profit of £750. On a machine worth £100,000, apart from all the operational costs, that can be regarded as only a very poor return. One has to realise that the machine was withdrawn from a very profitable trade. The demand for air freight service in the Eastern States was terrific, and it was possible to keep a plane such as this fully employed almost 24 hours per day and completely loaded.

The nature of the venture in the North is such that the plane could not be fully committed to its total economic loading and there was a definite loss in earning capacity to the company concerned. I have not the same detailed information regarding the M.M.A. plane during the seasons in which it, as the successful tenderer, supplied the plane, but from the

figures I have been able to obtain, the venture was not a profitable one for that company. In fact, it lost on this air freight transaction compared with other freight offering.

In view of that information, members should give airlines credit for public-spiritedness in conducting a venture like this because it was accompanied by a great degree of risk. Not only have these people put in capital as shareholders, but they have also advanced considerable sums of money to the company. Furthermore, no dividends have been paid during the history of the company, and in fact, when we look at the accounts and realise the commitments that the company has for its final distribution to the producers this year in respect of the season just terminated, there is very little prospect of a dividend being paid by way of return on the capital for the several years' operations. I make this point because it is only fair to remove any suggestion that the company is being operated as a front, as it were, for some third party to receive a profit from the venture.

I have carried my investigations further and have asked what benefits have been received from the scheme by the Mt. House and Glenroy stations which are the two stations where the inland killing centre of Glenroy is based. I have asked this question in case somebody suggests that they have received some rake-off. I find that, other than wages—and this information can be verified by any member who desires—the three partners in the two stations have withdrawn only £750 each over the whole of the postwar period, and members will admit that that is not a very princely sum.

It is not denied that the stations have done better in this period than they did before. If not, the scheme would have been a failure and would have defeated the original purpose for which the company was formed, but the important point is that the gains made have been treated in a manner that Governments advocate, namely, they have been ploughed back into the venture to make it a more stable and profitable concern. A considerable proportion of the Income Tax Assessment Act is devoted to allowing special deductions for primary producers to enable them to spend money which by strict accounting, would be treated as capital, but for taxation purposes it can be treated as a deduction to encourage the development of such properties. This company, in my opinion, has followed that procedure to the full and has set a commendable example.

I am not going to deny that the Mt. House and Glenroy stations have made considerable development during this period. Anyone who has visited the properties on several occasions during the last few years could not fail to be gratified at the progress that has been made. One can see for oneself the development that has taken place. Let us be quite clear on this: The killing centre is a fine establishment with sound, modern buildings and good plant. The conditions provided for the employees are good, as also are the amenities.

I have not heard of any industrial trouble occurring there. On the occasion of my last visit to Glenroy, I was advised that the average period of service for those men, who have returned each season, was three years. They have a picture show provided for them; they have a canteen, and, in short, every effort has been made to establish the place on a sound and worth-while basis and not just as a shandygaff or ad hoc arrangement to meet a temporary situation; and none of us would have it otherwise

One startling development that impressed me more than any other the last time I was there was the fact that, unlike so many other properties in the Kimberleys, the art of animal husbandry has reappeared and is being practised to an ever-increasing degree. With greater care of cattle and greater attention to animal husbandry generally, it is only natural to expect those properties to develop in value with advantage to the proprietors. I do not wish it to be suggested that the Mt. House and Glenroy stations have not profited by the venture. That is not the point at issue, but I repeat that the venture would have been a total failure if those two stations, as well as others, had not gained an advantage.

Another great advantage has been achieved by the stations using this facility and that is the matter of backloading. We all know that the greatest problem of a transport agency is to get an adequate loading both ways. The prime function of the freighters in this area is to remove the meat, offal and hides from the inland killing centre to the port, and to seek some back-loading. The result is that they give the stations a very attractive back-loading rate. This has been estimated as varying from 25 to 50 per cent. less than the cost of road haulage, and it is available for many purposes, including the transport of ordinary station stores and materials for improvements that otherwise could not be obtained even at a price.

In the Kimberley areas it is by no means easy to get people to undertake the transport of goods, but here is a medium whereby the plane can be back-loaded with plant, equipment and material for effecting improvements at a cost much lower than road haulage would be. This is a great advantage to those people—an advantage that will be felt more so over a long period of years than it is at this particular moment. The fact of people

being able to have goods consigned to a port and back-loaded direct to a station is of inestimable value to them.

This is a facility that I would like to see used to a greater extent because, if the planes were back-loaded to a greater degree than they are at present, it would in turn help to reduce the overall freight that is charged on the meat itself. I think we should examine the effect on stations serviced by Air Beef Pty. Ltd. First and foremost, a new market has been opened up, and no longer are the stations that use the facility at the mercy of the very country in which they operate because of the nature of the terrain—a terrain that has held back their development for very many years. Previously the cattle had to be driven from the vicinity of Glenroy to Wyndham, a distance of 300 miles, over a track that was stony and where the feed was very light; and from this we can imagine what an arduous task it was to market the cattle—a task which you, Mr. Speaker, know very well, and of course you, personally, know this particular installation, because of your visits to it during the operating season.

The percentage of cattle treated at Glenroy and Mt. House stations is another direct effect of Air Beef, inasmuch as the increased turn-off has been at least 100 per cent., even if we allow for the fact that there would have been some natural increase in the numbers that existed before 1948. Further, dealing with the effect of Air Beef on stations, I am given to understand that there is one group of stations alone in the Kimberleys which, if it had an inland killing centre, on or near its property, would be able to market 10,000 cattle which are now destined to die on the properties as not being a commercial or economic proposition. In anyone's language, that is a lot of cattle.

The fact that there are 10,000 head of irrecoverable cattle in that area, which with the present road system could be dealt with only through an installation such as this inland killing centre, is significant. Further, dealing with the effect of Air Beef on stations, the comment from the Rural & Industries Bank annual report for the year ended September, 1953, is pertinent. At page 27 it says—

> The Kimberleys Air Beef scheme which began five years ago has just had the worst drought ever experienced in the Kimberleys. The carcasses of 3,523 cattle were flown from Glenroy station abattoirs to Wyndham as compared with 5,186 last season, 4,080 in 1951, 3,676 in 1950, and 1,805 in 1949, the initial year.
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> The inland cattle stations covering an area of 15,000 square miles this year relied solely on the Air Beef lift. Under the adverse effects of the drought it is considered that had there been no air lift scheme in operation, not more than 200 head would have been strong enough to make the gruelling overland trip to Wyndham and Broome meat works.
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> During the year under review the Air Beef scheme air freighted 1,643,502 lb. of beef, 158,387 lb. of hides and 8,123 lb. of pork. Backloading of machinery, tractors and the like considerably assisted the air lift scheme.

There is the question of payment for cattle marketed through the Glenroy killing station. This subject is a controversial one in the Kimberleys and elsewhere, and I feel it is also the subject of a lot of misinterpretation. It is the old story that figures can be made to tell several tales when in the hands of people who want them to do so. Basically, the gross proceeds from this meat are the same whether it is marketed through Wyndham or Glenroy. Further, there are fundamental differences in the net return to the producer, and this will be obvious to members because the Wyndham cattle are of necessity the top grades only, whereas the inland killing centre handles all grades. Furthermore, there is a double handling, referred to in the Commonwealth-State 1951 report, which has to be suffered in the case of inland killing centres as distinct from meatworks at the port. Then there is the still further disability of the air freight.

When producers survey their returns from the respective sources of Wyndham and the inland killing centre they should have due regard for several factors. First of all, they should not overlook the fact that they now have a choice of markets which was not the case previously. Obviously, they are free to choose their market and will not use Glenroy if the season and their type of cattle are such that they can do better by sending them overland to the Wyndham Meat Works. They are completely free in making their decision. They can go further and say, "We will use Wyndham for some of our cattle, but will use the inland killing centre as a convenience for the balance." It is therefore easy to imagine the attitude in a bad season of the person who has no prospect of sending his cattle to Wyndham and who says, "Let me fall back on the inland killing centre."

The method of paying for cattle at Glenroy is no secret and is a simple formula which is clearly set out, without any reservation, in the accounts of the company. Up till now, before the trader-to-trader basis was reinstated, the formula was that the gross proceeds were the British Ministry of Food prices, from which had to be deducted the cost of handling at the Wyndham Meat Works, the cost of air transport to Wyndham and the cost of treatment and of operating the Air Beef

establishment, bearing in mind that the producers received the balance of the proceeds.

The policy in the past has been for the inland killing centre to make a first payment to the producers and then, later, a final payment. Incidentally, this final payment includes the subsidy and that gives the lie to any suggestion that the subsidy is going to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. as such. It finds its way, through that company, to the producer in the final payment. There is one important method that is used in calculating the final payment. The final payment only goes pro rata to the producers or station-owners who put through export quality cattle. That is a commonsense provision because naturally the object of the scheme is to develop properties and improve the standard of herds, and it is no use making these final payments, which include a proportion of the subsidy, to people who just want to send their rubbish through. We want to encourage them to improve the standard of their herds and the quality of the beef that they put through this inland killing centre.

The Glenroy establishment made its first payment for this season and will shortly make a further payment of approximately 25s. per head of cattle, which is the surplus expected after allowing for operating costs and making provision for the subsidy to be received. I have here a detailed statement of the break-up of payments made for the cattle put through the Glenroy killing centre for the 1954 season. It is at the disposal of any member who wishes to study it.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: What was the average payment per head?

Mr. COURT: The average overall first payment was £12 11s. 6d., but there were payments up to £27. The average for rubbish and all thrown in—some of it was pretty grim—was £12 11s. 6d.

Mr. Nalder: Have you any comparable prices of like types of beef at Wyndham and Glenroy?

Mr. COURT: I have tried to make that comparison, but at this stage I have not been able to get any truly related figures. If one took a beast of similar quality and weight, the net returns to the producer through Wyndham and Glenroy would be in favour of Wyndham, but, taking the whole turn-off of a particular property, including the income that would otherwise just be a dead loss, the return to the producer is infinitely better from the inland killing centre.

Mr. Brady: Will you have that statement incorporated in "Hansard?"

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: To achieve that it will have to be read out.

Mr. COURT: The proportions for the 1954 season were as follows: —

25.2 per cent., 1st ox average frozen weight, 616lb., £19 17s. 8d.;
22.00 per cent., 2nd ox average frozen weight, 575lb., £14 19s. 8d.;
44 per cent., 3rd ox and reject ox, 553lb., £8 1s. 5d.;
3.6 per cent., 1st cow average frozen weight, 526lb., £14 5s. 3d.;
4.6 per cent., 2nd cow average frozen weight, 491lb., £10 14s. 10d.;
4.6 per cent., 3rd cow average frozen weight, 457lb., £6 4s. 4d.;
1.6 per cent., 3rd bull average frozen weight, 614lb., £8 16s. 1d.
Average overall 1st payment, £12 11s. 6d.

There is a final payment to come on top of that, amounting to approximately 25s. per head, for the export quality cattle.

In my approach to this project, I have tried to examine who are the prospective users of this scheme and what are its limitations. I find that it is only meant to service the stations within a close range; otherwise it defeats its object. By "within close range" I mean nothing in excess of 100 miles, and preferably less. There is no reason why the installation cannot be expanded from its present capacity if and when an increased demand is made by nearby stations, as the result of the development made possible by the centre.

I had in mind that if the Air Beef centre achieves its true purpose, the stations using it should naturally develop, both in their carrying capacity and the quality of their herds, and therefore while 5,000 might be adequate to service the existing stations, with their present capacity, and capabilities, it is conceivable that at the end of a decade it may be necessary to have servicing facilities for 10,000. As I see it, this installation could be expanded so as to service 10,000 by the mere addition of suitable plant and buildings. I would not like to give a false impression that one could expand this place to service 10,000 head straight away and bring them in from a greater range, because that defeats its object. It is to service a comparatively compact area.

A further question is whether additional inland killing centres are a possibility, and I feel that they are both conceivable and in some cases desirable. There are several suitable locations. Fitzroy Crossing and Hall's Creek come quickly to mind, and I would say that, in the light of experience gained by the Glenroy people, if and when these places could be developed in advance of improved road systems, it should be possible to develop such new inland killing centres without any heavy commitment on the part of the Government by way of subsidy and, in fact, possibly without any subsidy at all.

Up to this stage I have dealt, as quickly as I could, with the general background of this company and its operations. I would now like to touch on the history that has been given by the Government. As

a result of the first season in 1949, the Government made a straight-out grant of £3,000. This was not directly related to any particular formula although it did average something like .6262d. per lb. For 1950 the amount was £5,077. In 1951 the joint committee of officers from both State and Commonwealth Governments recommended that the Commonwealth Government should subsidise the project to the extent of 1d. per lb. provided the State Government accepted the responsibility of any charge raised by Wyndham Meat Works in excess of 1.2d. per lb.

This subsidy was to be for a period of four years, including 1951, and was to be reviewed in 1954—that is, this year—for a further extension of two years. A quotation from this report on the particular point at issue is as follows:—

> The 1950 charge 1.78d. per lb. beef and offal—

That is referring to the Wyndham Meat Works charges. Continuing—

> The accountant of the Wyndham works told the committee that 1950 costs had been estimated at 1.5d. plus 25d. per lb. for unloading the plane and transport from the drome. The actual cost was said to have worked out to 1.9d. per lb. plus .23d. handling charge or 2.4d. plus .23d. if interest were charged. The basis of costing was that Glenroy carcasses had used the works and were charged all direct costs and their full share on a per head basis with all cattle through the works, of overheads and maintenance costs of all departments except slaughtering and other minor departments not used.
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> They were also charged with their full share of 12½ per cent. of working profit by the works (about 35s. per head). The works manager estimated that the average cost for cattle slaughtered at Wyndham in 1951 would be 2.5d. per lb. plus .7d. works retention and that the costs had risen from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. above the 1950 season. If so, the 1950 cost would have been less than 2.7d. per lb. as compared to the above charges to Air Beef for services of checking, grading, wrapping, storage and shipment.
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> The transport charge of .23d. covers unloading aircraft into two insulated trucks, road transport six miles and delivery to chill rooms. It is equivalent to nearly 12s. for an average carcass and appears high by any standards.
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> It has been accepted by the committee that the works management is unsympathetic to the Air Beef venture, has made no real effort to assist the company and has assessed costs on an inequitable basis.
>
> Since the works are State operated, it would be reasonable for the Commonwealth to make it a condition to any subsidy that the State should maintain by subsidy or other means the Wyndham charge to Air Beef of 1.2d. per lb. plus subsequate proportionate increase in overall operating costs at the works.

That was the basis of their report and I understand it was also the basis on which assistance was eventually given and which has been continued up to and including this year. As I understand the position—and the Premier would know better on this point—the subsidy for 1954, or the final of the four-year subsidy, has yet to be calculated and paid. The subsidy is actually being discontinued in respect of the 1955 season. The word "subsidy" is used, but actually it amounts to guaranteeing the company that it will not be charged a figure by the Wyndham Meat Works in excess of 1.2d. per lb., regardless of what the costs at Wyndham Meat Works might be, but that sum can be adjusted under a formula that has been agreed to, to allow for some cost increase in the basic wage and the like since the charge of 1.2d. per lb. was struck.

That is the main point at issue in this motion. I acknowledge that a claim of this kind cannot be expected to be supported indefinitely by a Government or any other instrumentality. But because of its very nature, it must have an assurance of Government support for a reasonable period. My own view is that 10 years is the period that this particular venture, regardless of who is interested in it, should have been guaranteed support, with the proviso that the last half of the period at least—in this case, say, five years—should be on a basis of reducing support.

For instance, it would be unreasonable for the company to expect a complete protection for the whole 10 years. But, if, say, in the last five years of the 10 the assistance was gradually tapered off, it would be a fair proposition. However, when one sees this country and knows the problems that have been confronted by the people in the outback areas, it must be realised that we must take a long-term view once commitments have been made on a venture such as this. It will take some years before the full benefit of the scheme is realised by the people in the areas and they, in turn, can then subsidise the scheme themselves.

Let us not run away from the fact that when the Government pulls out of this scheme, the people themselves will, in effect, replace the Government, but by that time the benefits of the scheme will be realised by them and they will cheerfully take the Government's place because of the more profitable return they will get from their properties. In its future operations, this company, or any of its kind,

has one prime requirement, regardless of whether it is receiving a subsidy or not. That prime requirement is to be protected in respect of the amount of charges it will have levied against it by the port meat works, whether it be Wyndham or any other concern. It would be grossly unfair for a scheme such as this to be left at the mercy of any port installation, whether it be a Government or a private enterprise that conducts it.

So, in view of the complementary nature of this particular type of installation, until such time as road development and the general opening up of the area replaces it, the company needs protecttion against excessive charges from the port installation. My understanding of the arrangement—in this I may be wrong—from my reading of the Commonwealth-State officers' report, is that the subsidy was on an agreed basis for four years with a provision that it would continue for another two years on a reviewed basis. That is why I found it difficult to understand why the Government has said, "This guarantee ceases with the close of this particular season."

In giving this notice to the company, it has been made apparent that the Commonwealth subsidy has been jeopardised. It was a condition of the Commonwealth-State Kimberley report made in November, 1951, and the basis of the assistance that has been given by the Commonwealth as a straightout subsidy, that the payment of 1d. per lb. as against the freight was contingent on assistance from the State by fixing a maximum level of charges in respect of the Government meat works.

I understand that the company submitted a proposition to the Government something along these lines: That for 1955, the company—that is, Air Beef Pty. Ltd.—and, of course, through it the people who use the facility—that is what it amounts to—would bear 25 per cent. of the burden that would normally be accepted by the State Government. For 1956 they would increase their proportion to 30 per cent.; in 1957 to 35 per cent.; in 1958 to 40 per cent. and in 1959 to 50 per cent. with a review in that last year. Subsequently, an alternative suggestion was made to the effect that the company would stand 25 per cent. of the cost normally borne by the Government for the years 1955 and 1956, thus keeping the assistance current during the remaining two years of the original proposition and committing the Commonwealth Government to continue with its 1d. per lb. subsidy against the freight.

The Government's sudden cessation of this assistance is all the more distressing when one realises that in the four years in which the scheme operated, two of them were the subject of unpredicted and very severe droughts. In the formulation of a scheme such as this where weather hazards are always at stake, I would prefer to see a proposition spread over 10 years, with the drought years excluded. In other words, if there were a drought in the eighth year, the seventh year conditions would continue and when the drought ended, the eighth year would start and so on until the full 10 years had passed.

Therefore, the sudden cessation of the Government's assistance at this particular time, after a very severe drought in this area is, I feel, very unfair to those concerned. Furthermore, at the moment there is an investigating panel, which has been appointed by the Commonwealth Government, examining the question of developing the northern part of Australia by air transport. That panel, of course, is not concerned only with our Kimberleys; it is concerned about the whole of the northern part of Australia. I feel it would be logical to allow that panel to finish its work and it would be reasonable to expect it then to make its findings to the respective Governments so that they could make their decision before this additional two-year period had expired.

There is a further issue that makes the cessation of the assistance more critical and that is the fact that we are now entering the first of the trader-to-trader years instead of the market being confined to the British Ministry of Food prices. This will be a transitory period until the new system settles down and the market is clearly defined so that both the producer and the merchant knows what he can expect from the markets of the world under the trader-to-trader system. That is a further reason why the Government should have deferred the cessation of its assistance.

There are very few points I want to deal with in conclusion. They are of a general nature, but I feel they are necessary to round off the story. The first one concerns a visit to the area by those who have the responsibility of making this decision. Just as we received a great deal of benefit and education from our visit to the Exmouth Gulf oilfield, so it is being found that visits to this area, and the type of area that is related to Glenroy, are of immense value in trying to appreciate the problem and knowing what the installation does.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. COURT: Before tea I had nearly reached the end of my remarks on this motion, and I had just commented on the importance of people seeing this installation in order to really appreciate the good that it does, and the progress that has been made by those stations directly serviced by it. I instanced the fact that we had received a lot of benefit in the broadening of our knowledge by actually seeing the work being done at Exmouth Gulf in connection with oil exploration. I feel there is an equally

important lesson to be learnt from seeing the Air Beef installation at work. I would like to know that at some stage in the near future several members will make it convenient to visit Glenroy, particularly while the installation is actually working, and appraise the show for themselves.

It is not an ad hoc arrangement of a temporary nature, but a well-planned engineering achievement with suitable amenities. I do not know whether the Premier, or the Minister for Works in particular, have actually seen the installation operating; but they will be duly impressed if they do so in the future. I say that because there is some impression in the Terrace—and by that I mean in Perth generally—that this installation is just some temporary contraption in the form of a minor experiment, whereas, in fact, it is a major industry, planned on a proper technical basis. Over the years a lot of improvements have been made as a result of practical experience. Apart from anything else, the company has been at some pains to ensure that the industrial conditions on the job are as good as circumstances will permit.

Another point I would like to stress is that the inspection of the meat at this installation is carried out by Commonwealth inspectors. I would not like people to get the idea that this is just an abattoir out in the bush somewhere, and that no one is interested in the normal standard of hygiene and methods of slaughtering. On the contrary, the installation is subject to strict supervision. Furthermore, when the meat reaches Wyndham, it is subject to another inspection and grading by Commonwealth inspectors there.

One interesting point is that in the Commonwealth-State officers' report for 1951, it was mentioned that they had made an estimate of the cost of establishing a dry-weather road from Wyndham to Glenroy—not an all-weather road but just a dry-weather road—and the estimated cost was a mere £620,000! A simple calculation of a 4 per cent. charge against that amount gives a figure of £24,800 per annum, if the road were practicable and its construction was undertaken, always realising that it would be a dry-weather and not an all-weather road.

On a previous occasion when this proposition was before the House, much play was made on the fact that a form of subsidy of this kind is, in fact, pandering to socialism. I have thought over that reference which has been made on several occasions, and I find it extremely difficult to follow the line of argument. In America, which is noted for its capacity to experiment and to give things a go and find out what makes them work or whether they will work at all, we find that ventures of this sort are undertaken very considerably; and there is sound logic for it. It is better for a Government to be prepared to enter into a fixed, known commitment to see that some development takes place or that some particular scheme or theory is tried out than for it to commit itself to an unknown expenditure in establishing the wherewithal itself.

The total amount paid out by the State Government on the whole of this venture over the years is only about £42,000; and when one considers the magnitude of the task undertaken, and the wealth of evidence accumulated to demonstrate whether this sort of scheme will or will not work, one is impressed by the fact that the expenditure is comparatively minor when allocated at so much per annum. I am sorry I have had to take so long to tell my story. I have done my best not to weary members with too many figures, though the whole argument really develops around the economic statistics of the venture.

Mr. Ackland: It has been a pretty good best at that.

Mr. COURT: I thank the hon member. I exhort members not to prejudice a venture that has shown all the characteristics of the pioneering spirit. If this venture comes to a successful conclusion—which I think it can and will do—we will have made a major step forward in experimenting with a method of developing closer settlement in the Kimberleys. I can see that, if this venture is brought to its logical conclusion, we can have the position where, regardless of any legislation that might be passed to restrict areas, a property such as Glenroy or Mt. House could, and would, voluntarily make do with a lesser area than is allocated at the moment. No one wants 1,000,000 acres if he can make a good, solid, reliable living off 250,000 acres.

This venture is really aimed at testing out one group's theory as to how closer settlement can, in fact, be achieved. If it can be proved that these two stations can go part of the way to demonstrate a method of closer settlement in the Kimberleys, any money that this Government has put into the scheme, or is likely to put into it in the next two years, would be unimportant compared with the greatness of the advance made. I would not like to see us discourage people who have had the foresight to attack something of this nature, even if it had proved a failure, which it has not. It has been a very cheap experiment, and there is no doubt that the information gained has been invaluable to the Government of this State and to the Government of Australia.

Hon. D. Brand: And it has created interest elsewhere.

Mr. COURT: Yes, the interest created in other parts has been amazing. This is something of a tangible nature which

people can talk about. They can talk about inland killing centres and air transport of beef, not as a theory but as something that has been actually tried.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke —Northam) [7.40]: From his own point of view, the hon. member has presented a comprehensive case in support of his motion. During the remarks I propose to make, I will endeavour to fill up some of the yawning chasms that he left behind him. The hon. member emphasised a claim that this scheme, from the point of view of the State Government's participation as a payer of subsidies, was being brought to a sudden cessation. He used the words "sudden cessation" a few times.

That claim is in no way correct. I am sure he knows that in 1950 the Commonwealth Government agreed to come in on a scheme to pay a subsidy from Commonwealth funds to Air Beef Pty Ltd., provided the State Government also agreed to pay a subsidy to the company. When the State Government did at that time agree, it was clearly understood that the scheme would operate for a period of five years. That period concluded with the completion of this year's season. Therefore it is clear that the agreement has run its course, and consequently there has been no sudden cessation whatever in regard to the matter.

The agreement having run its course, is finished. The only way the scheme which operated under the agreement could be operated again would be by the development of a new agreement to which both Governments were prepared to give support. As a matter of fact, I am sure it is well known to the hon. member that the Commonwealth Government and the State Government have been in consultation with each other for some time past on the question whether a new agreement should be prepared and finalised.

Mr. Court: Was not the agreement for four years with a further two-year review period?

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. Court: According to their report, it was.

The PREMIER: According to official information made available to me—and I would rely absolutely on this—the agreement arrived at in 1950 between the State Government and the Commonwealth Government was that the scheme of Commonwealth and State subsidies to the company would operate for a period of five years, and that period came to end end at the completion of the recent killing season at Glenroy. The basis upon which the Commonwealth agreed to pay a subsidy was that the State Government should limit the charges at the Wyndham Meat Works to 1.2d. per lb. of beef brought into Wyndham Meat Works by Air Beef from Glenroy. The Commonwealth subsidy was 1d. per lb. on all beef and offal transported by air from the Glenroy abbattoir to the coast. It is true that the 1.2d. per lb., which the State agreed to pay as a subsidy, could be increased if the operating costs at the Wyndham Meat Works rose from time to time because of increases in the basic wage or other happenings of that description.

The charges of the Wyndham Meat Works against Air Beef Pty. Ltd., are the actual costs of handling the products of the company at the Wyndham Meat Works. The services given at those works include the carriage from the aerodrome to the works, a distance of about six miles; cutting the beef in quarters; weighing it; freezing it; bagging it; storing it; and, later, transferring it to the ship and placing it in the ship's freezers. In the 1953 season, these costs amounted to 3.2671d. per lb. Under the agreement between the State and the Commonwealth, or under the formula, the State Government paid 1.4658d. per lb.; the Commonwealth Government paid 1d. per lb., which, in 1950, it had agreed to do; and Air Beef Pty. Ltd. paid .8013d. per lb.

The contributions from these three sources made up the total cost per lb. to the Wyndham Meat Works of 3.2671d. The average returns to producers who either had cattle killed at the Wyndham Meat Works or, in the case of Air Beef Pty. Ltd., had the beef stored at the meat works, were, in the case of the cattle producers who took their cattle to the works for slaughtering and treatment, £20 13s. 1d. per head, and for Air Beef cattle £10 15s. per head. I want now to give the figures covering the total value of the subsidies paid to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. for the five-year period 1949-53, because those are the years in which the State Government paid subsidies.

I shall also give the figures of the subsidies paid by the Commonwealth Government in 1951, 1952 and 1953. In addition, a subsidy was paid by the Australian Meat Board in 1949. Some other figures, covering interest not charged to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. on loans made to the company, will be included. The figures of the State Government subsidies are as follows:—

	£
1949	3,000
1950	5,077
1951	8,910
1952	15,641
1953	9,810
Total	42,438

The following figures appear under the heading "Interest not charged on loans made to Air Beef Pty. Ltd.":—

	£
1949-1950	225
1950-1951	248
1951-1952	278
1953-1954	240
Total	991

The total subsidy paid by the State Government to the company amounted, therefore, to £43,429. The subsidy from the Australian Meat Board in 1949 was £5,436. The Commonwealth Government paid the following subsidies:—

	£
1951	9,121
1952	10,876
1953	6,894
Total	26,891

The total subsidy from all sources was £75,756. In addition, assistance was made available to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. by the State Government in the form of free-of-interest loans by way of bank guarantees. In 1948, such a free-of-interest loan was made available to the extent of £10,000, and in August, 1950, a similar loan of £8,000 was provided, making a total of £18,000 that was made available in the form of interest-free loans to the company. The airline companies have loaned to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. the sum of £26,000, and three airline companies have contributed £12,000 of the total paid up capital of the company of £14,753.

During the period 1949-1953, the outward freight charges from Glenroy, paid by Air Beef Pty. Ltd., totalled £122,569. In other words, Air Beef Pty. Ltd. paid to the airline companies concerned, in outward freights on the transport of beef in that period, no less than £122,569, or an average, over the five-year period, of £24,500 a year. The subsidies received by Air Beef Pty. Ltd. per year from both Governments averaged £15,350. So it is clear that the subsidies from the Government were being more than absorbed by the freights that were paid each year to the airline companies for the transport services which they gave to Air Beef Pty. Ltd. for the cartage of beef from the Glenroy abattoir.

The member for Nedlands read a list of shareholders, so it is not necessary for me to read the same list, but I want to emphasise the point, which he did not refer to at all, that of the 14,753 shares which have been issued, 12,000 are held by three airline companies. I think it becomes clear, does it not, that Air Beef Pty. Ltd. is not so much an enterprise set up and operated by the comparatively few cattle-producers in the area, as an enterprise set up and operated by airline companies? They have provided nearly all the capital; they hold nearly all the shares; they have loaned money to the company; and they have, over the five-year period, obtained in freights the rather staggering sum of £125,000!

Mr. Court: That is payment for services rendered, is it not?

The PREMIER: I am not questioning that. I frankly admit that the enterprise could not operate unless these air transport services were available. The point I emphasise at this stage is that this enterprise is almost completely owned, and therefore in essence I should say, completely operated by the airline companies. If the enterprise has done all the things which the member for Nedlands would lead us to believe it has done, then surely those people who have such an overwhelming practical and financial interest in it, both in regard to its set-up and its operations, should be the ones to ensure, out of their substantial financial resources, that the enterprise is carried on.

Mr. Court: Do you not think they have made a fair contribution up to date? They have had no dividend, and have been on an unprofitable run.

The PREMIER: I would think that, in fact, the situation is not as bad as that from their point of view.

Mr. Court: Have you had it examined by your officers?

The PREMIER: In any event, the Government of Western Australia, and therefore the people of the State, have heavily subsidised this undertaking for a period of five years. Surely to goodness that is a reasonable period to subsidise an enterprise which, when all is said and done, benefits only a very small number of cattle-producers in the Kimberleys!

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You would say that would have general application to all such enterprises, would you not?

The PREMIER: No, I would not.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Only this one!

The PREMIER: I am anxious to discuss this situation on its own merits, and I should hope that the member for Mt. Lawley will, if at some later stage he takes part in the debate, follow that example.

Mr. Yates: Has this scheme been of benefit to the North-West generally?

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. Court: Has it not attempted to prove something really worth while as far as the Government is concerned?

The PREMIER: I very much doubt that, and I think that as I go along I shall be able to prove that it has not benefited the North-West generally. It has not benefited the cattle industry generally, but has very substantially benefited a small number of cattle-producers in a given area.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: An area of 15,000 square miles.

The PREMIER: We know that 15,000 square miles, spoken glibly off the tongue, impresses as being a great area, but when we consider the total area of the Kimberleys, then 15,000 square miles is a comparatively small area. If those directly and vitally concerned think that this enterprise is a good one for themselves, surely to goodness they should be capable of prevailing upon the chief shareholders who, for all practical purposes, are the total shareholders, to show some further interest in the enterprise and to back it further to the extent to which additional backing might be required to enable the enterprise to carry on!

Mr. Court: Why would they want to put more money in it? They have made a contribution.

The PREMIER: I cannot be convinced that when these airline companies provided almost the total capital for this enterprise, they provided it entirely for the benefit of the men who produce the cattle. I should think that the controllers of these airline companies are commercially wide-awake and I am prepared to give them the credit of saying that they felt that this was something new, something which in the long run might be of great assistance to more and more cattle-growers in the North-West. But I am also convinced that they were looking to the day when the transport of beef by their airlines would reach a stage where it would be profitable to them. No criticism could be offered in that regard; that is perfectly legitimate—perfectly good and sensible commercial thought and working.

Mr. Bovell: Did not the late Mr. Coverley, who was the member for Kimberley, support this matter when it was first introduced?

The PREMIER: I would not know at this stage. In any event, I think we will leave the late member for Kimberley out of the discussion. These airline companies not only transport beef from Glenroy to the coast; they also transport back to the stations concerned whatever freight is available. We all know that two-way loading is the thing in the transport business. I am not saying that their planes, when they return to Glenroy, are full on each occasion; but from time to time those planes would take back freight of varying quantities and of differing values, and I imagine that the airline companies would charge the cattle-producers concerned for the freight which they take back to them from the coastal towns.

Mr. Court: They charged them a heavily reduced concession rate to encourage them to use the service.

The PREMIER: That might be so.

Mr. Court: That is so in fact.

The PREMIER: If it is so, it could be an additional argument as to why the whole of the taxpayers of Western Australia should not be called upon to pay large sums of money, under a scheme of this description, to provide substantial freights for airline companies.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Is not the accumulated interest for the Wyndham Meat Works a sum of £1,400,000?

The PREMIER: I would not know at this moment. Even if it were so, it has no relationship to this discussion.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Do not you think so? I think it would be comparable.

The PREMIER: As I suggested to the member for Mt. Lawley earlier, I hope that he will try to keep this discussion within logical and reasonably confined limits. We do not want to roam over the whole area of this, that and the other thing, in an attempt to see the picture clearly in relation to whether the State should, or should not, continue to provide substantial subsidies to this company.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: But you will admit that you must use comparable examples?

The PREMIER: The example which the member for Mt. Lawley throws up is not at all comparable. The Wyndham Meat Works is an undertaking owned and operated completely by the Government.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: At a cost to the people.

The PREMIER: Of course, there is a cost to the people! It could not be established for nothing.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: No.

The PREMIER: It cannot be operated for nothing. The hon. member was a Minister in the previous Government for six years; that Government operated the Wyndham Meat Works on a full-scale basis and the hon. member knows, as well as anyone else, that all the financial affairs of the Wyndham Meat Works have to be attended to by the Government. If there are losses in one year, they have to be met by the Government; if there are profits in another year, they are set aside and used to meet the losses of previous years.

During his speech the member for Nedlands mentioned that one of the reasons why the Government and the people of Western Australia should continue to subsidise this company was that droving was difficult in the area concerned, because of the nature of the country and because the roads which exist—if they could be called roads—are difficult to traverse. I have no doubt that is true, completely or to a very substantial extent. But is any member of this House foolish enough to think that the particular area of country concerned is the only one in the Kimberleys, or in the cattle country, where the roads are difficult? I should say that nearly every cattleman in the Kimberleys has to face up to indifferent roads. Some of them, no doubt, in addition to those people around

Glenroy have to face up to extremely difficult roads; but they do it and, surprisingly enough, very few of the cattle-producers within a reasonable distance of Glenroy, particularly in recent years, have taken their cattle to that station.

Mr. Court: Eighteen of them use it.

The PREMIER: They have taken their cattle by road, if it can be called a road, to Wyndham in order that the cattle can be slaughtered and treated at the Wyndham Meat Works, which is a State enterprise, a socialistic enterpise as I have heard it described by members opposite on more than one occasion. These cattlemen in the Kimberleys are not socialists. They do not go to the Wyndham Meat Works with their cattle because they want to support a socialistic meatworks; they are hard-headed businessmen and they know the value of every £ which they receive. I should say that they are modern capitalists, and consequently they are out to obtain for their cattle the best price possible. The fact that they could take their cattle to a privately-run industry, as against taking them to a State-run concern, does not seem to weight at all with them when there is a question of price weighing heavily in favour of the Wyndham Meat Works.

Mr. Court: I think you have missed the important point, that they could not all go to Air Beef. It will take only 5,000 a year.

The PREMIER: I know that some of those who patronised Air Beef Pty. Ltd. at one stage do not patronise it now. I know that some who could patronise it now, do not do so and I know, too, that those who take their cattle to Wyndham get a much better price than do those who have their cattle slaughtered at Glenroy.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: About the same, I think.

The PREMIER: Nowhere near the same.

Mr. Nalder: They are graded. The ones who go to Wyndham are a good type of beef.

The PREMIER: They may be graded, and I have no doubt it pays to grade them. But why should the Government and the people of the State go on, year after year, subsidising the Air Beef Pty. Ltd. enterprise for the purpose of assisting the airline companies, if that be one result, and for the further purpose of assisting a small number—a very small number indeed—of the cattle-producers in the Kimberleys? Surely to goodness, if a Government and the people are to support an industry they ought to support it as a whole and not support a very small group in one part of the cattle country.

Mr. Court: How are they going to get their cattle into the market if you do not do something like this? Do you want to let the cattle die there?

The PREMIER: I would say that cattle were taken out of these particular properties long before Air Beef Pty. Ltd. established an inland abattoir at Glenroy. I do not think the cattlemen in this particular area, before the Glenroy abattoir was established, just produced cattle and allowed them to die on their properties.

Mr. Court: But they did precisely that, and the figures prove it.

The PREMIER: I am sure that they drove, or had taken to Wyndham, quite a percentage of the cattle they produced. It is a nice thing for the cattlemen concerned, and I do not blame them for putting up the toughest fight in the world to try to get the system continued and to receive subsidies from the Commonwealth and the State to carry on this enterprise at Glenroy. If I were a cattle-producer in their situation, I might do exactly the same as they are doing. But we in this House have a responsibility to other people in the cattle industry in the Kimberleys, and we have a responsibility to the people of the State as a whole.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You are constantly subsidising transport. You do it every day in the week, and you think nothing of it.

The PREMIER: What has that to do with it?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: This is transport, is it not? It is a very important form of transport.

The PREMIER: The view of the Government, crystallised, is that it is not prepared to continue paying money to a very small number of cattlemen in the Kimberleys and, at the same time, paying no money at all to the overwhelming majority of cattle-producers in that area.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You cannot say that because you have done it in the past. You are £1,500,000 down for interest on one of them.

The PREMIER: A deputation from the company waited upon the Minister for the North-West and myself recently and they put forward their case. They put it forward in a sensible, calm and reasonable way, but they admitted, when they were questioned, that, as a result of the operations of those subsidies, they had been able, very substantially, to improve their station properties.

Mr. Court: I made that statement, too.

The PREMIER: At the moment I am dealing with the important deputation which waited upon me and which made that statement to me because some of the members of the deputation were cattle-producers themselves. They said, in answer to questions, that they had been able, as a result of the operations of this scheme, very substantially to improve their cattle stations. Good luck to them!

Mr. Yates: We want that.

The PREMIER: Yes, we do. But we do not want it for the benefit of only a small favoured minority. That is the point.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: But you are doing it every day of the week. What about Wundowie? A small favoured minority at the expense of the rest of the community!

The PREMIER: It has never been possible to discuss a matter logically with the member for Mt. Lawley.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You want to sever one from everything else.

The PREMIER: I do not. I repeat—and I am sure every other member except the member for Mt. Lawley knew what I was saying—that the Government is not prepared to go on paying out State money to benefit a very small minority of cattle-producers when, at the same time, all the other cattle-producers in the industry have to battle on as best they may.

Mr. Yates: Are the other producers complaining about this Air Beef scheme?

The PREMIER: Yes; they are complaining very bitterly indeed; and if I were a cattle-producer in the Kimberleys, I would be complaining too. There is no means test applied to the cattle-men who have their beef slaughtered at Glenroy. They could be worth any amount of money, and yet the State comes along and shovels out this subsidy to them in great wads year after year.

Mr. Court: But if they prove that you could achieve closer settlement, what does it matter?

The PREMIER: It does matter, because there are in the Kimberley cattle industry small men; the battlers; men who are having considerable difficulty from year to year to keep moving, men who could qualify for State assistance under a means test. Yet we give them no help, at least nothing to compare with the assistance handed out to the cattle-producers who have benefited under the Air Beef scheme during the last five years.

Mr. Yates: They would benefit if they were near Glenroy. It is only because of the distance that they do not.

The PREMIER: I am afraid the member for South Perth is making a statement that is as obvious as anything can be. That is not the point. The State Government has been paying out, over the last five years, large sums of money to the very few cattle-producers covered by this scheme, and it has been paying out nothing to the large number of other cattle-producers in the Kimberleys, some of whom could qualify if a means test were applied to them.

Mr. Nalder: Has not the State gained through it extra meat for export?

The PREMIER: Judging by what the member for Nedlands told us this afternoon, I would say that most of the meat we are gaining should perhaps be called by some other name. But, as far as I am concerned, that is on the side. I say the Government will expend from its income upon the cattle industry in the Kimberleys in the future not only the amount it has been paying out under the Glenroy Air Beef scheme to the producers in that area, but a much greater sum, which will be paid to the cattle industry as a whole. We will not permit a scheme to continue which, specially and substantially, benefits three or four men and leaves unaffected, from the point of view of State help, all the rest of the cattle-men in the Kimberleys.

Mr. Court: How would you propose to do that?

The PREMIER: In a variety of ways. Where it can be shown to us that cattle-producers individually are up against substantial difficulties of one kind or another; where it can be shown they need financial help to do this, that or something else, then we will be prepared to look at the case sympathetically as it is presented to us and make financial assistance available to help men in the cattle industry to carry on. We feel there is no justification whatever for the Government to continue paying out large sums of money each year to benefit less than a handful of cattle-producers. If they were the only cattle-producers in the Kimberleys or the State, it would be different, but in view of the fact that they are only three or four among a large number, the answer is definitely "No"; and it will have to continue to be "No".

Mr. Court: Do I understand that the Government has decided that this venture is not a successful experiment as a means of closer settlement?

The PREMIER: We have not made any decision at all on that point. We have made a decision which is that we are not prepared any longer to make State moneys available to this company to enable it to continue on the same basis as previously. That is what we have decided. We feel the company has been fortunate, and those cattle-producers who have benefited under its operations have been very fortunate indeed, to have enjoyed this very large income of State money.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Hardly very large.

The PREMIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, they are very large.

Mr. Yates: I think the State has something to be grateful for.

The PREMIER: We feel the company has had a reasonable opportunity to get solidly established, and we feel that the individual cattle-producers concerned with the company have had a good chance to

get well and truly on their feet. As I said a few moments ago, they admitted quite frankly to me that they have been able to improve their stations very substantially —ever so much more than the less financially strong cattle-men in other parts of the Kimberleys have been able to do.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: They have not got excess prices for their meat.

The PREMIER: We have not to argue whether they have got an excess price for their cattle or othewise. If they wanted to receive a better price, then they could have done as other cattle producers further away from Wyndham have done, but they naturally stuck to their own concern, and we would all have done likewise.

Mr. Court: They could not have got their cattle away! You do not remember that.

The PREMIER: We do remember it. They could have got a large number of their cattle away.

Mr. Court: Eight hundred out of 2,000!

The PREMIER: I will not argue as to that. As I have said before, the Government is not prepared to go on making any further payments to the company. We feel that the money which was used to pay subsidies to this company, and to the few cattle-men concerned, should be utilised to benefit the cattle industry generally; it should be used to help the cattle-men who are battling; the smaller men.

Mr. Court: You know that prior to the introduction of the Air Beef scheme, probably the biggest battlers were Glenroy and Mt. House.

The PREMIER: The member for Nedlands is now making out a very good case for me.

Mr. Court: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has said that prior to the introduction of the Air Beef scheme, the biggest battlers were Glenroy and Mt. House stations, and that they had received a benefit from the scheme. That is all right. Good luck to them! But there is no reason in the world why the Government should continue to build them up. But there is every reason why the Government should do what it has done, that is, to say that no more State money will be paid to this company, and therefore no more money will be paid through it to the three or four cattle-producers concerned. They have had a good spin and I think they are reasonably minded, enough, and good sports enough, to admit it. They have, in fact, admitted it.

Mr. Yates: They are business men.

The PREMIER: Naturally, and they are very wide-awake men. I should say that a man would need to be very wide awake to exist in the Kimberleys.

Mr. Yates: You must admit they have improved their properties and made them an asset to the State generally.

The PREMIER: Yes, but every cattleman in the Kimberleys would fall over himself if the State gave him the same opportunity to do so.

Mr. Yates: The State should extend the scheme.

The PREMIER: What the Government proposes to do is to treat the cattle industry in the Kimberleys as a whole. Where there are small producers who are battling and need financial help, we will give it to them.

Mr. Yates: The amount the State has subsidised Chamberlains would keep the scheme going for 50 years.

The PREMIER: That could quite easily be so. One could pick on a hundred and one instances where the State has been committed, and must continue to remain committed, in order to keep certain industries moving. But here is an enterprise which has had five years of substantial financial assistance from the State Government; a long period of financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government, and the cattle-men concerned have been able to build up their properties and have benefited very considerably. As a Government we feel that they have no further legitimate claim upon the funds of the State.

As I pointed out earlier, the company really belongs to three airline companies. They provide all the capital and other assistance and are the owners of the enterprise. I should say that they also virtually operate it. There is no reason why they should not continue to help the enterprise —none whatever. They have the resources to do it, and, in the circumstances, I think they should be the people to continue to help the small number of cattle-men concerned. For the Government's part we propose not to help a small pocket of cattle-men in any one particular part of the Kimberleys at the expense of all the other cattle-men in the Kimberleys.

We propose to look at the cattle industry as a whole; to look at all the producers individually, and where a cattle producer in the Kimberleys can show he needs help, and can indicate and prove he will be able to do much better, this way or that, then we would weight the claims and needs of one producer against those of the others. We would not have a small favoured group being granted comparatively large sums of State money from year to year. Accordingly there is no possible chance of the Government altering the decision it made recently, and which it confirmed again this week. It is possible to build up in the public mind the conviction that an undertaking of this kind is deserving of special assistance. If enough publicity is given to an undertaking, it can be glamourised in

the public eye, and the public can be easily led to believe that such a concern should continue to receive considerable monetary assistance from the State Government.

Mr. Yates: As an experimental scheme, has it not been successful up to date? It is not a profit-making venture.

The PREMIER: More than one answer can be given to that question. Technically and physically it has, as far as I know, been successful, but financially it has not been anywhere near as successful, except for the cattle-men concerned in the undertaking. The scheme has been very successful from their point of view. It has enabled them to improve their station properties vastly. As I have said two or three times, good luck to them. I hold nothing against them, but everyone will agree that they have had more than their fair share of assistance compared with that received by other cattle-producers in the North.

The time has come, and I think it might even be overdue, when other cattle-producers in the Kimberleys, who have had in some instances to face up to difficulties probably greater than those which confronted the two stations initially, should be considered and helped in a practical way. This is the policy which the Government intends to follow regarding the industry of cattle raising as a whole in the North.

On motion by Mr. Rhatigan, debate adjourned.

BILL—PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th October.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. H. Styants—Kalgoorlie) [8.32]: This Bill was introduced in another place, and after amendment was transmitted to this House for consideration. In the original form, the Minister in the Legislative Council strongly opposed the provisions. But I do not intend to oppose the Bill.

In case members should have the impression that any of the three persons concerned have been victimised or have received a raw deal, I propose to outline the history of this legislation. Many years ago massage treatment of injuries was found to be very beneficial, especially in cases of fracture. Masseurs were trained to apply massage treatment. With the development of medical science, there evolved medical and electrical aids. These have been produced and are operated by very highly trained and fully qualified physiotherapists.

I would point out that what is known as a "rubber-down" or masseur is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a physiotherapist as prescribed under the Act. If a person is not trained in physiotherapy, but is merely a masseur, he can in many instances do more harm than good to a patient. Three cases have been quoted of applicants who were ineligible under the Act passed in 1951 to be registered as physiotherapists. The board considered that none of the applicants had a sufficiently high standard of training to be qualified as physiotherapists in this State.

Section 10 (a) and (b) of the Physiotherapists Act deals with the qualifications. Under Subsection (a) the board is empowered to issue a licence authorising a person to practice physiotherapy—

> If he has completed the prescribed course of training and passed the prescribed examinations, or holds qualifications of any university, board, association, society or body prescribed by the regulations, or, in the case of a blind person, he has completed the prescribed special course of training and passed the prescribed special examinations.

The prescribed examinations recognised are:—

> The Diploma of Physiotherapy of the University of Adelaide;
>
> the Diploma of Physiotherapy of the University of Queensland;
>
> completion of course and success in examination prescribed by the Masseurs Registration Board of Victoria;
>
> completion of course and success in examination prescribed by the Physiotherapists Association of N.S.W.; or
>
> membership of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists of the United Kingdom.

It will be seen that for the purpose of obtaining registration in Western Australia, the qualifications accepted by many nations of the British Commonwealth, are accepted here. There is reciprocity of qualifications. None of the three persons concerned hold any of the qualifications I mentioned.

Under paragraph (b) of Section 10, registration can be granted by the board to a person if—

> he establishes to the satisfaction of the board that he was bona fide engaged and is competent in the practice of physiotherapy in the State for at least 24 months during the period of three years immediately preceding the commencement of this Act.

None of the three applicants could obtain registration under that provision.

The first applicant, whom I happen to know, took a course at the S.M.A.E. Institute in England. I have not obtained from the Public Health Department what these letters stand for, but it is an institute where certain training can be obtained in the science of physiotherapy. The

course taken by this applicant was by correspondence and lasted for three months. He had neither hospital nor practical experience in his training, and the diploma was issued after a correspondence course of three months. That was not considered to be high enough qualification to obtain registration in this State.

The S.M.A.E. Institute has been investigated by the British Ministry of Health, and is not approved under the national health scheme of Great Britain. The standard of training given by that institute is not considered sufficiently high to warrant recognition under that health scheme. This applicant purchased his business from a registered physiotherapist in September, 1952, and, according to his statement, started work in this State as an employee of the person from whom he purchased the Fremantle branch of the business.

The parent Act was proclaimed in January 1951. This person purchased the business and operated it for 21 months illegally. He knew when he bought the Fremantle business that he could not be registered as a physiotherapist. He bought it with his eyes wide open and flagrantly broke the law. He knew there was an Act of Parliament governing the registration of physiotherapists, which prevented him from getting registration because of his lack of qualifications. Despite warnings sent to him at different times over the 21 months, during which he conducted his business as a physiotherapist in defiance of the board, he continued to treat patients.

Eventually the board sent him an ultimatum to cease practice otherwise he would be threatened with prosecution. I understand that he subsequently discontinued the business. Now this House is being asked to alter an Act of Parliament to enable this person to obtain registration.

The second applicant concerned holds the same qualification from the S.M.A.E. Institute of England and his diploma was obtained after a correspondence course lasting three months. He was also ineligible under Section 10 (a) and (b) to be registered. The third applicant was refused registration because he is only qualified as a remedial gymnast.

I would like to outline the course of study required of a physiotherapist registered under the Act. It is a comprehensive course lasting three years. The subjects covered include chemistry, physics, anatomy, physiology, zoology, pathology, medical psychology, theory and practice of medical gymnastics, theory and practice of medical electricity, theory and practice of massage, theory and practice of muscle re-education, and two years part time practical experience at hospitals.

Those are the subjects that have to be passed by examination before one may be registered under Section 10 (a) of the Act. This man, who is a qualified remedial gymnast, is working in a metropolitan hospital under the direction of a qualified physiotherapist, and from all accounts is doing good work, but he certainly does not hold the qualifications required under the statute.

Early this year the board notified the Minister for Health that it did not wish to exclude anyone possessing the necessary knowledge, even though he might be debarred by the statue, and for the purpose of giving men such as these an opportunity to pass the examination, the board amended its rules. Therefore it would be quite competent for any of these persons to sit for the examination at present if he so desired. The board altered its rules to provide that any mature student practising physiotherapy could undergo an examination by the board. That operates today. The board has directed attention to this amendment of its rules and notified the three men to submit themselves for examination, but so far none of them has done so.

Because of my friendship with a Perth physiotherapist, and as a private member, I took some interest in endeavouring to obtain registration for the first person I mentioned. I believe that my representations perhaps had some influence on the board in deciding to amend its rules to give these men—I did not know the others and do not know them now—an opportunity to sit for the examination so that he could obtain registration and legally carry on his business at Fremantle. I was astonished that he did not take the opportunity to sit for the examination, and I think one might be excused if he felt suspicious that these people would not sit because they doubted their competency and ability to pass the examination.

I have a brief for the Minister for Health and the Health Department on this occasion, but, speaking personally, I think it wrong to legislate or amend Acts of Parliament in the interests of individuals. True, these men hold some very high testimonials from doctors under whom they have worked, but, speaking with some knowledge of physiotherapy gained through the St. John Ambulance and home nursing organisations, I am satisfied, as I believe members realise, that some doctors know very little about physiotherapy. In saying this I do not wish to reflect upon their ability as surgeons and physicians, but it is common knowledge that many people have been cured of ailments by physiotherapists through their treatment, manipulation of bones, muscles and tissues and massage that have defied the skill of physicians and

surgeons for years. Many doctors—I know a couple of them—have admitted quite candidly that a physiotherapist in his class of work knows much more about the human body and its treatment than do physicians and surgeons.

Following the introduction of this Bill in another place, and the Minister's strong opposition to it along the lines I have indicated tonight—most of my information has been gleaned from the notes of the Commissioner of Public Health and the Minister in another place—steps were taken between the sponsor of the Bill in the Council, the Minister, Dr. Hislop and the Physiotherapists Board to see whether amendments could be made to the measure that would be acceptable to the board and the Health Department. A compromise was reached and has been embodied in the Bill.

I have not much objection to the measure because in my opinion it means nothing. These men will obtain registration only when they have satisfied the board of their competency as physiotherapists.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: They will have to act very quickly, will they not?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Section 10 (b) has lost its value for the purpose for which it was inserted in the Act and has been amended by the sponsor of the Bill in another place in order to meet the position of these three men. There might be more than the three of whom we know, but the provision will lapse completely on the 31st December next.

The board will still be in a position to judge the competency of these people. In my opinion, the Bill will not provide for any more than the Act at present permits, following the amendment of the rules made by the board at the beginning of this year. The rules now provide that these persons, if they sit for an examination and establish their competency, will be registered. If studied closely, the proposal in the Bill will be found to delete certain words in paragraph (b), but there will still be the redeeming feature that these men must establish their competency to the satisfaction of the board before they can obtain registration.

For this reason, the Commissioner of Public Health and the Minister for Health have asked me not to oppose the measure. They consider that, under the Bill as amended in another place, there will be no chance of these people being registered as physiotherapists unless they are able to establish to the satisfaction of the board that they possess the requisite qualifications. I hope that the board will maintain its stand as regards efficiency and competency in the interests of the welfare of the people who may have to avail themselves of the services of these men.

Consequently, I shall not oppose the Bill. I cannot see that the measure as amended in another place will make the Act much different. But for the fact that the competency of these persons must be vouched for by the board before registration is granted them, I would not be in favour of the Bill, but as that provision will stand and the board must be satisfied of their competency, I do not intend to oppose the second reading.

HON. DAME FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [8.55]: I have very few words to say on this measure. To be quite honest, I have not studied it. Members will appreciate how vital the Bill appears to me because of the considerable trouble I took when Minister for Health to introduce the original legislation.

I went to the Eastern States and examined the measures operating there and, on my return, found it very difficult to get girls or youths to undertake the requisite course. I wrote to all the schools here requesting the teachers to endeavour to get students to study certain subjects that would permit of their going forward for training as physiotherapists. This move proved to be very successful. A large number of youths and girls undertook the course, and only quite recently the Minister attended the opening when some of these girls had finished their three-years course. Unfortunately, I could not be present on that occasion.

While listening to the Minister tonight—he presented the case very well indeed; it is not often I say nice things about him—he gave me some hope. I thought his intention was to oppose the Bill, and I said to myself, "Thank God for an honest man." I thought the measure would come up for discussion tonight, so during the day I rang the Health Department and had a talk with the Commissioner of Public Health, Dr. Henzell, who told me almost exactly what the Minister has stated tonight.

I do not intend to traverse the Minister's remarks. Dr. Henzell said that these men could have registered had they been here in time. There was a time limit previously up to which these men could register. A few of them did not do so, and I believe that one of the three endeavoured after the original measure had become an Act to engage in practice as a physiotherapist. I had to say that it was not possible for him to do so; he had had an opportunity and had not taken advantage of it. Once more we are giving these men an opportunity, but is the Minister sure that there are not others who will also ask for the opportunity?

The Minister for Health: All of them have an equal opportunity.

The Minister for Railways: That is so; anyone may come in.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I think that is going too far. I would not have approved at all of the proposals in the Bill, but after Dr. Henzell had told me of the arrangement that, after the 31st December, no more would be allowed to sit for the examination under the conditions now contemplated, I decided to support the Bill. The Minister told us that these men have not submitted themselves for examination so far.

The Minister for Railways: They have not sat for the examination.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: If they do not present themselves before the 31st December, what will happen?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They will be out.

The Minister for Railways: They will have to establish their competency to the saisfaction of the board. That is the redeeming feature of the Bill.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I hope that the board is not feeling very hurt. After my talk with Dr. Henzell, and in view of the Minister's explanation, I shall not oppose the second reading, but I think we are adopting a very wrong course, because we shall be making students feel discontented. Therefore I do not think it is a bad thing to give way to something like this. When I was a member of the Government, there were two or three occasions on which we discussed a position similar to this, and doctors who wanted to have certain examinations were prevented by law from doing so. In this instance, I think the Act is a good one, and now the nurses are fully qualified many of them will be dissatisfied to think we have passed this legislation. Nevertheless I will not oppose the Bill.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [9.1]: I feel that the Minister almost damned this Bill with faint praise; so much so that I felt constrained to get the Act and examine it because it appeared to me that what the member for Fremantle had told us might have been at least a misinterpretation of the intention of his own measure. For the life of me, having spent a few minutes on it and having looked up what the hon. member had to say last week, I confess that I can find no reason why the Bill should not be passed; in fact, to the contrary.

It seems to me perfectly clear, not only from the remarks of the member for Fremantle but also from some outline of the history of these people that the Minister gave, that, had it not been for the fact that the parent Act was proclaimed in 1951, whereas the board did not commence to operate until 1953, these persons, or at least two of them—I have not had time to refer to the antecedents of the third—would have been registered without any question whatever under the provisions of paragraph (b) of Section 10 of the parent Act, which says—

> Establishes to the satisfaction of the board that he was bona fide engaged in and was competent to practise physiotherapy in the State for at least 24 months during the period of three years immediately preceding the commencement of this Act.

On the evidence that has been presented to us, had the Act been proclaimed in 1953 at or about the time when the board was going to come into operation, the first obstacle of these persons would have been removed entirely.

The Minister for Railways: The person I have in mind was not in the country then.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: They would have been able to claim that they had been in practice for more than two years out of the three immediately preceding 1953, and the only other thing they would have to do, apparently, would have been to satisfy the board that they were competent to practise physiotherapy, which I have no doubt they would have been readily able to do, on the testimony of other physiotherapists and of medical practitioners. I did not like to hear the Minister say something derogatory about one of the medical practitioners who had subscribed his name to a reference—in the person of Dr. McKellar Hall—for I venture to suggest that he is one that does know something about the duties, obligations and science of physiotherapists.

The Minister for Railways: I said nothing about him.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I know, but the Minister referred to the references given and proceeded to criticise fairly strongly the absence of knowledge on the part of the medical practitioners in regard to physiotherapy and therefore, although he did not mention Dr. McKellar Hall, as he was one of the persons referred to by the member for Fremantle and one whose reference that member read out, in my opinion the Minister, by inference at least, obviously referred to Dr. McKellar Hall, and I do not think he can deny it.

The Minister for Railways: I do.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I suggest that the Minister should be more careful in the remarks he makes and weigh his language more carefully than he has in recent times—

The Minister for Railways: The member for Stirling should do that, also.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: —because I think it would be quite incorrect to refer to that particular medical practitioner as having little or no knowledge of this particular science.

The Minister for Railways: I think it would, too.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I do not know the others sufficiently well to express an opinion on them, good or bad, but I venture to suggest that their references were not given without a considerable background of information on the subject such as to warrant them, as reputable men, giving references to these gentlemen. It seems to me that this Bill is so moderate in its terms that there should be no necessity whatever to offer opposition to it in the circumstances, but there is one other point on which I would like someone to advise me.

Paragraph (b) is not being repealed, but amended, and we are being asked to add the words, "This paragraph shall remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-four, and no longer." I would like to know the purport of that. Is it going to prevent a person, after the 31st December next, who can comply with the qualifications expressed in paragraph (b) and who hitherto has not applied for registration, from coming forward and doing so, or has it some legal meaning which I have not yet grasped and, if that is the case, has the Crown Law Department expresed any opinion as to the exact effect of this wording on paragraph (b) of Section 10 when the 31st December is reached?

It is very unusual to insert such terminology in a paragraph of a Bill. We frequently have it in regard to the whole measure, but I do not think I have previously met it in relation to a paragraph, and particularly in these circumstances, when it occurs to me that there are certain vested interests already created by persons who would, under this paragraph (b), be entitled to apply after the 31st December, but who, if this measure is passed and has the effect that presumably it is intended to have—although I am not very clear on that—would not be able to apply after that date. We are in effect, therefore, taking away from some persons, if I am right in this belief—persons unknown to us at present, who may have the right to make this application under paragraph (b) of Section 10—what is their present right. I support the general principles of the Bill whole-heartedly, but would like to have that aspect explained to me by the sponsor of the Bill.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle—in reply) [9.10]: I do not think it is necessary to say much more on this measure because, as a couple of speakers said, it does not mean very much except that these people will have the right, on or before the last day of December of this year, to prove to the board that they are competent physiotherapists, and that if they cannot do so before that date, they are out. I think it will be agreed that I would be the last to try to thrust on the public anyone in a capacity such as that of a physiotherapist if I thought he was not capable.

Here we have as refernces for one aplicant Dr. McKellar Hall, Mr. Dawkins, Dr. Pannell, Dr. Hill, Dr. Daly Smith, Dr. Moss, Dr. Ferguson Stewart, Dr. Gilmore, and Dr. Bedbrook. That is a formidable list of doctors, and I do not think any member of the profession would place his name on such a reference unless he was satisfied that the man concerned was up to the required standard. In the next instance, the doctors concerned are Dr. McKellar Hall, Dr. Dunkley, Dr. White, Dr. Hallion, and Mr. Ivor Monthen who, I think, is a very capable physiotherapist himself. I am certain this is evidence that the people concerned know what they are doing.

All the measure does is to say that these three people, or any others, may be registered if on or before the 31st December, 1954, they can prove to the satisfaction of the board that they are competetnt physiotherapists. I would draw attention to the fact that there are on the list which I have about 44 persons, and of them 15 were admitted under Section 10, simply because they had practised physiotherapy for the 24 months preceding the prescribed date. Had it not been for the fact that when the legislation was brought in it was back-dated two years, there would have been no argument.

These men were practising the profession in their own country, and they wrote here and were informed that there was nothing to prevent them from practising in this State; but, just after they landed here, the authorities concerned decided to bring down a measure and back-date it two years. I would not say that was done deliberately, but it seemed almost putting it over these people, in the circumstances. However, I am satisfied that the Bill was not brought down with any bad intent.

In reply to the Leader of the Country Party, I think paragraph (b) was put in to provide for the people who were practising physiotherapy in the State at the time when the legislation was brought down. Under paragraph (a), these people would have to take a two-year course and then pass the prescribed examination, but this was brought in to establish to the satisfaction of the board that the person concerned was bona fide engaged in the practise of physiotherapy in the State for at least 24 months preceding the prescribed date, and that he was competent. That has been considerably altered, and the wording will now be—

> establishes to the satisfaction of the board that he is competent in the practise of physiotherapy and was resident in this State—

There is no need for that, because that was brought down only for the people who were practising the profession here.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Are you satisfied that they are all now registered except these three?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes. Everybody who wants to be registered in future will have to be registered under paragraph (a), and I do not think there is much danger attached to the Bill. All the persons concerned are required to do is to satisfy the board before the end of December, that they are competent and if they cannot do that, they are out and must come in under paragraph (a).

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—BUSH FIRES.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2.)

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. E. Nulsen—Eyre) [9.18] in moving the second reading said: This Bill was introduced in another place. It does not concern this House in any way, but only the Legislative Council. It has as its object the placing of the President of the Legislative Council on the same footing as your good self, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Orders Committee has considered the measure and hopes that it will be passed. At present the President of the Legislative Council has no deputy and if the President is absent from the Chamber someone has to be appointed in his stead by resolution. If the House is not sitting and anything should happen to the President, there is no provision to appoint a deputy. The Bill seeks to appoint a deputy to avoid an awkward situation should circumstances, such as I have outlined, occur. The Bill provides that the President's deputy shall be the Chairman of Committees.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [9.19]: In my view this is a domestic matter for the Legislative Council. The provision contained in it has been fully explained by the Minister. I cannot see any objection to it, and I propose to support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 2, page 2—In paragraph (b) add after the word "inspector" in line 9 the words "with the consent of the Medical Officer for Health."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

I have had this amendment reviewed by the Parliamentary Draftsman and the Deputy Commissioner of Public Health. To me it does not seem necessary to provide that the consent of the medical officer shall be obtained.

The Minister for Railways: What about in an outlying centre where an inspector might instruct that some facility should be installed and there is no medical officer available?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: There is always a medical officer for health in every district although he may not be on the spot at the time. This provision would not apply to an inspector if there were any objection to any instruction that was given by him. The question would have to be referred back to the local authority because the inspector has power only when there is no objection. The local authority itself supersedes the inspector and the Legislative Council has probably given that aspect its consideration when the amendment was moved.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 10, page 6—In Subsection (4) of proposed new Section 235A, insert after the word "compensation" in line 20 the words, "either from the Crown or the Commissioner of Public Health."

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Again I consider that this amendment is not really necessary. However, it also has been considered by the Parliamentary Draftsman and the Deputy Commissioner of Public Health and they can see no objection to it.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3.—Clause 13—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move—

That the Council's amendment be not agreed to.

As the Act stands now, anybody who has been sold goods that are not up to standard has no redress after six months. The Bill, as printed, provides for the extension of that period to twelve months. This would give the retailer an opportunity of obtaining some redress with regard to any goods that were not up to standard. Twelve months is a short enough time. I think that manufacturers should accept some responsibility, and give retailers an opportunity of finding out whether their stock is sound from a health point of view. That is what the clause provided for; but another place desires to have it deleted so that the present period of six months will continue to operate. Take the position with regard to the coconut that was not up to standard.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I do not think this has anything to do with what you are saying.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It has. It relates to food not up to standard. It might not have a direct bearing, as the hon. member sees it, from the compensation point of view; but it has something to do with it. Six months is not a long enough period and 12 months is a fairer time.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Read the Act and try to point out to me that what you have said is correct. You have been misinformed.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No. Let the hon. member read the Act. I have not been misinformed. If food were substandard or dangerous to the public, who would be responsible under the Health Act? The retailer would be responsible if he had the food in his shop for more than six months or was found disposing of it. Clause 13 increased the period from six months to 12 months, so that if the food were there for over 12 months, the person in possession would be responsible. The retailer has to take full responsibility if goods have been kept in his store for six months, because he has no redress against the manufacturer.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That is absolutely incorrect.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is not.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It is.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I will hear what the hon. member has to say later on. I oppose the amendment because six months is not a long enough period, and 12 months is more reasonable.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The ordinary period for which a prosecution can be launched under the Justices Act by summary jurisdiction is six months, and it is that period that now applies to the Health Act. The proposal is to alter the provision in the Health Act by extending the period for a prosecution for a further six months. Of course, a storekeeper has redress; because if he is sold food which is not up to standard, he can launch a civil action against the vendor. Products have to be of merchantable quality; and if goods were of the quality described by the Minister, a man would have a civil claim.

The Minister for Health: Only up to six months.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: For six years, to be exact. He has a claim against the manufacturer. All this means is that the department could not prosecute a merchant after six months. It could prosecute the retailer if he sold goods that were not up to standard and could prosecute the other man, too, if it wanted to do so, within six months; but it could not prosecute either, as the law stands, after six months from the time the offence was committed or from the time of the sale of the product by one party or the other.

Why is it desired to extend the period? There are plenty of offences under this Act for which a man could be prosecuted. What chance would he have of obtaining evidence for his defence after six months and up to 12 months? It is not the custom to give summary jurisdiction for a longer period than six months. There are a hundred and one offences in respect of which prosecutions could be launched. Does the Minister want the period to be extended in all those cases from six months to 12 months? It is no help whatever to the retailer, who always has a civil claim for damages.

All this does is to help the department prosecute a manufacturer up to 12 months after he has sold the goods, instead of six months. What chance has a manufacturer? Twelve months after he has sold the goods, he finds himself suddenly prosecuted. Does he know what has been done with the goods? All he knows is that they are said to be under-standard at the time the prosecution takes place.

The Minister for Health: Suppose the goods came from overseas?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: There cannot be prosecutions in relation to overseas goods.

The Minister for Health: What if they are sold here?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes; then there would be some jurisdiction, but what chance would a wholesaler have when he was called upon 12 months after the alleged offence? Surely six months is a sufficient period in which to lanuch a prosecution. I object to our making sudden exceptions in the law. We are dealing with an amendment to the Limitation

Act under which we propose to bring 40 or 50 different Acts into conformity. At the same time we are adopting the reverse procedure in connection with this measure. Other prosecutions under the Justices Act must be launched within six months; in this instance it is desired to make the period 12 months. I consider that the Council's amendment should be agreed to.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: It is not considered that six months is a long enough period so far as dangerous or substandard foods are concerned. We all want to have a healthy country. We have infant health centres so that we will have healthy babies, but now the hon. member does not want to give the department the opportunity—

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: —to prosecute people after 12 months.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: —to prosecute people who should be prosecuted. It will not take any advantages, but where there has been flagrant neglect, an opportunity will be given to correct the position. I suppose the department has in many instances found that prosecutions should have been taken, but the position did not become manifest until after six months. We should disagree with this amendment and let the other place give further consideration to it.

If the Council's amendment is returned here again, we can deal with it further, and in the meantime I will find out exactly what the department did mean by the amendment in the Bill. I feel that the department wants more time in which to seek redress in connection with anything that is going to be detrimental to the health of our people. We are spending thousands of pounds on hospitals and other means of ensuring the health of the community, yet here it is proposed that we should reduce the power of the department to prosecute people who have been neglectful.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Have you any examples?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: There must be some, otherwise the department would not have thought about making these amendments.

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

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, Mr. Brady and the Minister for Health drew up reasons for not agreeing to Council's amendment No. (3).

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

Clause 7. Delete Subsection (4) of proposed new Section 241F.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I have carefully considered the Council's amendment, and I intend to agree to it. The therapeutic substances which will be prescribed are those the purity or potency of which cannot be adequately determined by chemical means and will be mostly substances which normally would not be prepared by a chemist at his own establishment. The position will now be that chemists will be able to carry on their businesses as they have hitherto except that, in relation to prescribed therapeutic substances, a licence to manufacture them will be necessary, but this in practice will have very little effect, if any, on the chemist. I have discussed this matter with the Parliamentary Draftsman and also with the Commissioner of Public Health, and they agree to the deletion of this provision. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

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

BILL—DENTISTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 26th October.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [9.59]: When the Minister for Railways, on behalf of the Minister for Health, introduced the Bill, he said it was non-controversial, and I agree with him in that respect. The measure contains two amendments, the first of which proposes that dentists who leave the State of Western Australia for extended periods on post-graduate courses or for study to gain further knowledge of their profession, will no longer be required to pay subscriptions for the years they are absent undertaking such studies.

The second provision proposes to increase the fees from the existing figure of £2 2s. to a maximum of £6 6s. I understand that the existing fee has been in operation since the last century, somewhere about 1899, and in this respect the £6 6s. would apply to a fully-qualified dentist and £3 3s. to an assistant. With these fees, it is intended to provide a fund to be used for educational purposes in the

profession—say, the building up of a modern dental library for use by those engaged in the profession. I understand that those participating in this work have no objection to the provisions contained in the Bill, and I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—LIMITATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 26th October.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [10.5]: As members are probably aware, before actions of tort can be brought against many authorities—most of them statutory authorities and many of them representing the Government, as, for instance, the Commissioner of Railways—notice must be given within the period prescribed by the Act, otherwise the action cannot be brought. This Bill will bring all the various periods provided for by the specific Acts into uniformity, and uniformity of the law is a good thing. Therefore, I propose to support the second reading.

However, I have never been able to see any reason why special protection, which the ordinary citizen cannot get, should be given to statutory bodies. If a person has an action of tort against an ordinary citizen, he can bring that action at any time within a period of six years and he does not have to give any notice within the prescribed or fixed period of the particulars out of which the cause of action arises. Why the Crown should always claim this additional protection, I do not know. It has always done so, and it has on this occasion. If members look at the long list of statutes in the Second Schedule, they will realise how this protection has been claimed by the Crown.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Does not that schedule amend all those Acts?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

Hon. A. F. Watts: Do you approve of that?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, because instead of providing a fixed period, an indefinite period is provided for. I might add that this Bill does not apply to the Crown as such, and it says—

> Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this Act but subject to the provisions of subsections (2) and (3) of this section no action shall be brought against any person (excluding the Crown) for any act done in pursuance or execution or intended execution of any Act, or of any public duty or authority, or in respect of any neglect or default in the execution of the Act, duty or authority, unless—
>
> (a) the prospective plaintiff gives to the prospective defendant—

which is the authority or the person representing the authority against whom action is to be attempted—

> —as soon as practicable after the cause of action accrues, notice in writing giving reasonable information of the circumstances upon which the proposed action will be based and his name and address and that of his solicitor or agent, if any.

So instead of having a fixed period of one, three or six months, within which a person has to serve this notice, he now has to serve it only as soon as practicable.

Hon. A. F. Watts: What does that mean?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That will be left to the court to decide in each particular case. This provision has been adopted from the English Act. It goes on to provide that—

> (b) the action is commenced before the expiration of one year from the date on which the cause of action accrued.

I would have thought that it would be wiser to have said, say, one year, or a time within which it was reasonably practicable for the person wishing to take action to give notice. In other words, he gives the notice as soon as reasonable, and he should have one year to bring his action. Then the Bill goes on to provide that any particular person or authority may consent to waive this notice so long as the action is taken within six years from the time the cause of action occurred. That is the usual time provided for an action against any ordinary citizen. A person can claim damages for a tort, or most torts, within the six years.

Then there is one further provision, and it is an important one, which states—

> Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, application may be made to the court which would but for the provisions of this section have jurisdiction to hear the action, for leave to bring an action at any time before the expiration of six years from the date on which the cause of action accrued, whether or not notice as required by Subsection (1) of this section has been given to the prospective defendant.

So a person can make application to the court whether he has given notice or not. It goes on—

> Where the court considers that the failure to give the required notice or the delay in bringing the action as the case may be, was occasioned by mistake or by any other reasonable cause or that the prospective defendant is not materially prejudiced in his defence or otherwise by the failure or delay, the court may if it thinks it is just to do so, grant leave to bring the action, subject to such conditions as it thinks it is just to impose.

That is better than having an inflexible time which the court has no jurisdiction to extend. Although the Bill does not go as far as I would wish—I would not give the Crown any protection additional to that enjoyed by the ordinary citizen—I think it is a big advance on the existing procedure. Therefore I propose to support the second reading.

The Minister for Justice: It should be helpful to the legal practitioners.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Section 47A added:

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I move an amendment—

> That after the word "which" in line 29, page 2, the words "the notice of" be inserted.

I think it would be more reasonable if it were one year after the notice was given. The notice must be given as soon as practicable after the cause of action accrues. Action would then have to be brought within six months after notice had been given, whereas if notice were given the day after it accrued, one would have 12 months. The right should be given to bring an action 12 months after notice was given.

The PREMIER: I have no serious objection to the amendment but would ask the hon. member whether we should allow the words "one year" to remain in this part of the clause if his amendment is carried. It could be a long time to allow a person to have one year after notice is served. If we were to alter the Bill, as suggested by the hon. member, I think we should start earlier and alter the one year period to perhaps six months. That would mean that once notice was served only six months would remain for the action to be commenced. I do not claim to have much knowledge of this kind of procedure but, on the spur of the moment, it seems to me that if 12 months is allowed to elapse after notice has been served for the action to commence, it could be too long a period. I would like to have the matter looked at by the Crown Law Department so that we might have the benefit of its advice.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not like the Premier's suggestion, although I do not think it is particularly unreasonable. I understand this was considered by the Solicitor General. I do not like altering the period of one year. Although it is a fairly long time, there may, in certain circumstances, be long negotiations before the action is commenced. Perhaps the Premier would like to report progress.

The Premier: I would prefer you to withdraw your amendment. The Minister could then discuss the matter with the Solicitor General and take the necessary action in another place.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: In the circumstances, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clauses 5 to 8, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

As to Committee Stage.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move—

> That you do now leave the Chair, Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of the Bill being considered in Committee.

Mr. MANNING: I oppose the motion. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that you should leave the Chair at this stage. By constituting a milk board of four persons, this Bill will create an impossible position. The measure is one that needs amending, but it does not lend itself satisfactorily to amendment.

In the circumstances, I wish to take this opportunity to appeal to the Minister to withdraw the Bill before it goes any further and have it redrafted. It could then be drafted to provide that when the term of one of the present members expires by the effluxion of time, steps could be taken to replace such member with a nominee of the Farmers' Union who will represent the dairymen licensed under the Act. I have had a close look at the Bill with a view to suggesting amendments to achieve this object, but I find it is not possible to make satisfactory amendments. Accordingly, I appeal to the Minister to withdraw the Bill before it goes any further and redraft it to preserve a three-man board, with one member representing the dairymen.

During the second reading stage, I endeavoured to impress on the House just how serious a mistake it would be to constitute the Milk Board with four members. I view this more seriously because I am certain that it would create untold difficulties within the board and make its already difficult task an impossible one. If this Bill is the cause of a deadlock in the Milk Board, it could bring chaos to the industry and the Minister could be doing the State a serious disservice. It appears to me that very little thought was given to this matter before the Bill was introduced.

The Minister seems suddenly to have decided he would put a producers' representative on the existing board with no thought whatever to the possibility of any difficulty being created by having four persons on the board. Three is the logical and sensible number to have on a board. The Milk Boards in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales are all three-men boards, and that is a number that can quickly and easily get down to business. The Milk Board here, by its record since 1948, has demonstrated that it can function satisfactorily with three men; certainly, far more satisfactorily than it did with the greater number previously. At present, the Milk Board arrives at its decisions by a round-table discussion or by a two to one majority.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member is not going to make another second reading speech on the motion. Most of what he is saying could very easily be said in Committee.

Mr. MANNING: I am endeavouring to indicate to the Minister just how necessary it is that before the Bill goes any further, it should be withrdrawn and redrafted to provide for a board of three. The wise course is to retain a board of three with the nominee of the Farmers' Union included. By that means the Minister will achieve his objective to give wholemilk dairymen representation on the board. It would also satisfy the Farmers' Union whose policy is equal representation on the Milk Board. It would satisfy me because I am anxious that the board shall be kept down to three members. I hope the Minister can see his way clear to meet my wishes and withdraw the Bill, have it redrafted and retain the board of three, one being the representative of licensed dairymen.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (in reply): The matters raised by the member for Harvey were fully considered before the Bill was submitted to Cabinet. It is not true to say that the board will become unwieldy if it consisted of four representatives, or that it will create difficulty regarding voting. In introducing the Bill I enumerated the other marketing boards in the State and for the benefit of the hon. member I would point out again that two of these boards consist of five members, four consist of six members, and two consist of seven members. Like the member for Harvey, I am not in agreement with large boards. At the same time adding another member to the Milk Board will not necessarily create all the harm envisaged.

Mr. Bovell: With a perishable commodity like milk, quick decisions must be made by the board. The larger the board, the more protracted will be the discussions.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This matter has been given full consideration. To give effect to its decision to increase the membership of the board, the Government wanted to cause the least disturbance to the present set-up. What the hon. member has suggested is to reduce the board by one and then to add to it the nominee of the Farmers' Union. That seems to be his own idea because when speaking to the president of the Dairy section of the Farmers' Union last week-end he gave his blessing to the Bill and hoped that the House would pass it in its present form.

Question put and passed.

In Committee.

Mr. J. Hegney in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 11 amended:

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move—

> That the word "three" in line 5, page 2, be struck out with a view to inserting the word "four."

There are two reasons for this amendment. Firstly, I am against the principle of a board of four because of the even number. Secondly, I consider that the consumer should be represented on the board because if there is no consumer then there is no need for dairymen. It is the consumer who keeps the dairyman going.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot see any objection to this amendment. It could create some balance without disturbing the power of the board. No harm would be done. At the same time the consumer would be given representation.

Hon. L. THORN: The Minister has been supporting a board of four with all the force at his command, but now he calmly agrees to increase it to five. There is already a consumer's representative on the board and there is no need to put another consumer on it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Who is the consumer?

Hon. L. THORN: The chairman. We are all consumers. The Government is making a great mistake in agreeing to the amendment in view of all the trouble the board experienced some years ago. To alter the board which has been functioning smoothly and to the satisfaction of everyone is a step in the wrong direction.

The Minister for Agriculture: That shows how reasonable I am in agreeing to increase the board.

Hon. L. THORN: When it suits the Minister. He is being most unreasonable. The member for Harvey is a milk producer who understands the industry thoroughly. The Minister would not listen to him, but now he agrees to the amendment of the member for Fremantle. By so doing, the Government will bring a great deal of trouble to the Milk Board.

The Minister for Agriculture: How do you know that?

Hon. L. THORN: From experience. I have been in this House ever since the Milk Act was placed on the statute book and I have taken part in all the discussions on it. I have seen all the trouble that faced the board. Over the last few years the board has held the industry together, and there has been no trouble or argument with it.

The Minister for Agriculture: It can still function smoothly.

Hon. L. THORN: That is wishful thinking.

Mr. MANNING: My objection to the amendment is that it will increase the numerical strength of the board. I have seen all the troubles experienced by the Milk Board when it was previously comprised of five members, and I do not want to see the same state of affairs creeping into the industry again. We have seen how successfully the Milk Board has functioned since it was a board of three. I cannot understand the Minister's attitude. Apparently he does not have any knowledge of the industry. The sensible thing to do is to replace one of the members when his term of office has expired by the nominee of the Farmers' Union.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you agree with what the member for Toodyay has said? You think that the extra representation will cause strife in the industry.

Mr. MANNING: To increase the board may not cause so much strife in the industry as in the functioning of the board itself. I have done my best to impress on the Minister the difficulties which will face a board of five. He seems to have the least knowledge of this industry among all those who have spoken in this debate. South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales have found that a small board of three was the most successful, and we should follow them. I must stress the fact that a board of five will cause unrest and dissatisfaction in the industry. Of late the industry has been going along smoothly but the Minister will upset it by agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. WILD: I strongly support the remarks of the member for Harvey. The Minister must remember the strife that occurred in the industry in 1948 when we had a large ill-balanced board always in trouble that culminated in a strike and a fight at Cannington which was a disgrace to the industry. In the last six years there has been peace in the industry. I represent a considerable number of milk producers and the only protest I have heard in the last six years is that they desire producer representation on the board. That is the policy of the joint Opposition as well as of the Government. As the existing small board has operated satisfactorily, is there any reason why the suggestion of the member for Harvey cannot be implemented?

At present we have a board of three. Are not they consumers? If we go on giving representation to all interests, we shall end up with a board of eight or nine. If ever there was an industry where the producer was the big man, this is it. What happens? A man must have capital with which to purchase land. Then he has to get the right type of feed and the right sort of stock, and he is like a football between the board, the Health Department and the Department of Agriculture to ensure that he produces a decent standard of milk.

Hon. L. Thorn: And he has to work seven days a week.

Mr. WILD: That is so. Is it any wonder that men are leaving the industry and devoting attention to fat stock and racehorses? By all means give the producers representation on the board, but let us retain the small board of three.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: The Minister said that the president of the whole milk section of the Farmers' Union was satisfied with the Bill. I wonder whether the Minister told him of his intention to appoint another person to the board. If he did, I would wager that the president would not have been nearly as co-operative as he has been, because the position in his mind would be entirely different. Instead of his union having one representative out of a total of four, it would have one out of five. That is not the policy of the Farmers' Union. Its policy is equal or majority representation, if that be possible. I am sure that the president did not bargain for having to fight against four other members of the board instead of three.

The producers are entitled to representation. Because of the ridiculous state into which the board and the industry had fallen some six years ago, drastic steps had to be taken to remodel the board. Since then it has operated very successfully, and it would be wise to keep the number down to what has proved to be successful, namely, three. I cannot fault the suggestion of the member for Harvey that at the first opportunity, the vacancy should be filled by a nominee of the producers.

I am opposed to the amendment of the member for Fremantle, because it would reduce representation of the producers, because the consumer section is effectively represented by the other members of the board, and because of the reasons advanced by the member for Dale. The producer is far more important relatively in the supply of milk than is anyone else, except perhaps the cow, for whose representation on the board I can make no suggestion, beyond exressing the opinion that the producer who owns and milks the cows should be represented.

The member for Fremantle should leave well alone as the consumers are well looked after at present by the chairman and the two members of the board. The producers, who are the backbone of the industry, have no representaton at present and, if the amendment were agreed to, would have only one representative in five. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I propose to move an amendment on the amendment to add after the word "milk" the words "who shall be a woman."

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment before the Chair is to strike out the word "three." When that has been dealt with, the hon. member may move her amendment.

Mr. BOVELL: I am surprised at the Minister, who represents a dairying district, agreeing readily to the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle. The board has functioned satisfactorily since the McLarty-Watts Government, in 1948, brought order out of chaos. Apparently, the Minister is trying to bring chaos out of the existing order.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is silly!

Mr. BOVELL: The proper course is to maintain the board of three. If a representative of the producers were appointed in the place of a retiring member of the board, they would have equal representation, which is the policy of the Farmers' Union; but that would not apply with a board of five. I would not mind having a woman on the board as she might easily be the representative of the producers.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I think she would better look after the consumers.

Mr. BOVELL: The Minister would be well advised to report progress now, or even to withdraw the Bill because, in its present form, it is not satisfactory to the producers. The more members on this board, the less representation the producers will have. I opposes the amendment.

Hon. D. BRAND: Why upset what has proved a satisfactory control of the milk industry? I know the measure has been brought down as the result of the Farmers' Union requesting producer representation on the board. Like the member for Harvey, I think that could be achieved by waiting till one of the present members retires and appointing in his place a producer representative.

On reading through the speeches of the late Mr. Garnet Wood when, as Minister for Agriculture, he was dealing with similar legislation in 1948, I note that he clearly stated that he and the party he represented stood for producer representation, but he said that, in view of the peculiarities of the milk industry, he felt that a board of independent members would sclve the problems and stabilise the situation which at that time was precarious and unsatisfactory to all concerned. As has been done tonight, he pointed out that, as a result of experience, New South Wales and Victoria had set up boards of three. In Victoria, there was a producer representative on the board and the other two members no doubt represented the consumers' interests, inasmuch as they were consumers. The debate tonight has indicated that once the door has been opened to sectional representation, there will be a cry for representation from every section concerned.

Since the present board was set up, there has been stability and satisfaction in the industry. I believe the Farmers' Union would be happy to know that ultimately it would have representation on a board of three, and I join with those members who have appealed to the Minister to withdraw the Bill, or amend it to enable the board to retain a membership of three. If that were done I am sure the measure would have a speedy passage through this and another Chamber. I oppose the amendment because I believe that the consumer is fully represented by those already on the board.

Mr. BRADY: I rise to support the amendment. It is only fair and equitable that if there is a producer's representative on the board he should be balanced up with a consumer's representative.

Mr. Bovell: You have a consumer's representative already.

Mr. BRADY: Members have conveniently forgotten that when the board was established in 1946, there were two consumers' representatives.

Hon. D. Brand: And what a mess they made of it.

Mr. BRADY: The McLarty-Watts Government appointed three people as the board and they are supposed to be fair and independent.

Hon. L. Thorn: There is no "supposed to be" about it.

Mr. BRADY: Like many other commodities, such as bread and milk, it seems as though vested interests—and here I refer to the wholesaler—are getting the benefit from the milk industry.

Hon. D. Brand: Do you ever open that other eye of yours?

Mr. BRADY: Yes, but I think the hon. member ought to open both eyes, too.

Hon. D. Brand: I have had them both opened.

Mr. BRADY: Apparently I have touched some members on the raw. Recently a storekeeper in my electorate discussed the milk position with me and he informed me that the board had ordered him to discontinue taking bulk milk. As a result, people who bought milk in his shop were forced to pay ½d. a pint extra or, in other words, about 2d. or 3d. a day extra because of the number of pints they bought. I wrote to the board on behalf of this retailer and asked why, although he had recently purchased a refrigerator, costing £400 or £500, in which to store wholemilk, he had been ordered to take bottled milk.

The reply I received was that the action had been taken in the interests of hygiene and health. If there had been a consumers' representative on the board, he would have wanted to know why the previously existing method of distribution had been altered. The distribution of bulk milk to shops has been in operation for the last 20 years, but because of some whim or fancy, the board now wants milk to be delivered in bottles. I do not mind the producers having a representative on the board, but we should also have a consumers' representative. The wholesaler is getting the biggest rake-off and if they are getting ½d. a bottle or even an ½d. a bottle it would amount to hundreds of pounds a week.

That is where the consumers' representative could be of benefit to the community. We, on this side, have to watch the consumers' interest more closely now that the basic wage has been pegged and the prices of bread, milk, shoes and so on are increasing. Another Chamber refused to agree to price-fixing legislation and the consumers are being filched up to 3d. a day extra for their milk. No wonder industrial workers become agitated, have stop work meetings and go on strike.

Hon. D. Brand: We have one now.

Mr. BRADY: I cannot see why the consumers' representative should not be a woman and I would support the member for Subiaco if she moved an amendment along those lines. I support the amendment.

Hon. L. THORN: When I mentioned a woman, I was only following up the debate which took place last week. I was pointing out that that would make six members on the board. Members have been flogging the question of consumer representation, but I would remind them that the consumers are well represented on the board at present.

Mr. Lapham: By other sectional interests?

Hon. L. THORN: The hon. member does not know who is on the board. There is Mr. Wade, who is a business man and a consumer, Mr. Robinson, a farmer from Wooroloo—although not engaged in milk production he has had long experience—and Mr. Stannard, who is a public servant. Members cannot say that Mr. Stannard, who has had a long experience in the Public Service, is not looking after the consumers' interests. I know him and I know that he would look after their interests.

The suggestion to allow the board to carry on for the time being and when a member's appointment expires, the Farmers' Union be asked to nominate a producers' representative, is the best way out of the difficulty. Whenever we have enlarged the representation on the Milk Board, we have struck trouble, and we will strike it again. It is our policy that the producer should be represented and he should have some say in the sale of his own commodity.

Mr. Lapham: He will have a say.

Hon. L. THORN: The consumers are already well represented.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are no sectional interests whatsoever represented on the board.

Hon. L. THORN: No, of course there are not. However, the Minister will admit that the consumer is well represented.

The Minister for Agriculture: I say the same in respect of the producers, too. I think the board has done a good job.

Hon. L. THORN: Well, why appoint an additional member?

The Minister for Agriculture: It is a question of policy of putting a consumer representative on it, which the hon. member himself agreed to.

Hon. L. THORN: The Minister says that the consumer is well represented on the board, and I agree with him.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is because the board is doing a good job, but there is no reason why the consumers should not have direct representation.

Hon. L. THORN: I oppose the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is only because you are sectional in your outlook.

Hon. L. THORN: No, I am not. The consumer is doubly represented on the board today and if another member is placed on it, there will be a total of six.

The Minister for Agriculture: It will **not** make a total of six.

Hon. L. THORN: It will make a total of five and the representation of the producers will be worth nothing.

Mr. MANNING: By this time I thought that we would have won the Minister over because at the rate we are going and with the suggestions that are coming forward, the Milk Act will become a shambles. Those in the milk industry will have no idea of what the law with respect to it means. I am surprised at the attitude adopted by Government members towards the Bill. It is a Government measure and they should not try to chop it to pieces.

I was interested to hear that the Minister had discussed this clause with the representative of the Farmers' Union and that that gentleman had said he was in agreement with the Government's intention. The Bill does not conform to the policy of the Farmers' Union nor does it meet with its wishes. I have here a statement made by the president of the wholemilk section of the Farmers' Union at the time the Bill was introduced and it reads as follows:—

> The president of the milk section of the Farmers' Union, Mr. N. L. Marsh, said yesterday that his executive had discussed the question of producer representation on the Milk Board.
>
> He said that his executive had decided to accept the Government's proposal to add to the existing Milk Board, a representative of licensed dairymen as a means towards the section's objective of equal elected producer-representation on the board.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is right. What is wrong with that?

Mr. MANNING: Unfortunately, Mr. Marsh was not aware of the difficulties a board of four would create.

The Minister for Agriculture: How do you know what he was aware of?

Mr. Bovell: He certainly was not aware that there were to be five.

Mr. MANNING: If the Minister is anxious that we should meet the wishes of the Farmers' Union on this matter, I have indicated how this could be done.

The Minister for Agriculture: I heard you the first time.

Mr. MANNING: It would give the Farmers' Union equal representation.

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not think that that is the best way of doing it.

Mr. MANNING: I certainly cannot understand the Minister's point of view. As to the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle, I would point out that the secondary side of the industry could be outlined on paper, but the primary side of the industry is the aspect that one must understand. A person who has to put up with all the difficulties associated with the industry has a knowledge that a person outside of it could not possibly possess. That is the value of placing a producer's representative on the board. It is the duty of Parliament to assist these people. However, if the Minister has made up his mind, we are just wasting our time.

Mr. BOVELL: In view of the altered position, following on what the Minister has said in regard to his discussion with the representative of the wholemilk section of the Farmers' Union, I consider it would be advisable, at this stage, especially in view of the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle to appoint an additional member to the board, if progress were reported. Therefore, I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and a division called for.

Remarks during Division.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle be agreed to.

Hon. L. Thorn: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the motion was: That progress be reported.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry. I am glad the hon. member drew my attention to the fact. The question is: That progress be reported.

Division Resumed.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	18
Noes	20
Majority against	2

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr Court	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Doney	Mr. Watts
Mr. Mann	Mr. Wild
Mr. Manning	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Graham	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Styants
Mr. Lapham	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lawrence	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Jamieson	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Hearman
Mr. Norton	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Yates

Motion thus negatived.

Amendment (to strike out word) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	19
Noes	18
Majority for	1

Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Graham	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sewell
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May
Mr. Lawrence	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Court	Mr Thorn
Mr. Doney	Mr. Watts
Mr. Mann	Mr. Wild
Mr. Manning	Mr. Bovell
	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Jamieson	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Hearman
Mr. Norton	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Yates

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

That the word "four" be inserted in lieu of the word struck out.

Mr. MANNING: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out the word "four" and the word "two" inserted in lieu.

The CHAIRMAN: I take it that the member for Harvey has suggested the insertion of the word "two" in place of the word "four" in the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle. The hon. member could accomplish his purpose by voting against the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle. If he succeeds, he could then insert the word he desires.

Hon. L. THORN: Could I at this stage support the intention of the member for Harvey?

The CHAIRMAN: The question before the Committee is the insertion of the word "four." The hon. member can oppose the insertion of that word.

Hon. L. THORN: I will definitely do so, and I strongly suggest to the Minister that he consider—

Point of Order.

Mr. Perkins: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, is not the further amendment moved by the member for Harvey before the Chair? I heard him move it.

The Chairman: I ruled that the member for Harvey could accomplish his purpose by voting against the insertion of the word "four" as moved by the member for Fremantle and, if he succeeded he could then move to insert the word "two." At present, there is no word in place of the one struck out. If the amendment of the member for Fremantle is defeated, it will then be competent for the member for Harvey or anyone else to move that the word "two" be inserted in lieu.

Mr. Perkins: The amendment on the amendment, as moved by the member for Harvey is a proper one. The member for Fremantle has moved to insert the word "four." I take it that the member for Harvey thinks the word "two" is better than the word "four." Under the Standing Orders, it is quite competent for any member to move to amend another amendment.

The Minister for Works: That would not be an amendment because the word "two" is already in the Act.

The Chairman: I rule that the amendment before the Chair is for the insertion of the word "four."

Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.

Mr. Perkins: Then I must dissent from your ruling. You have refused the further amendment because you consider that the alternative is for the member for Harvey to vote against the amendment of the member for Fremantle and if successful to move to insert the word "two."

[*The Speaker took the Chair.*]

The Chairman having stated the dissent.

Mr. Perkins: The point at issue is that the Committee has agreed to delete the word "three" and the member for Fremantle has moved to insert the word "four." The member for Harvey has moved to amend that amendment by substituting the word "two" for the word "four." The Chairman stated that this could be accomplished by voting against the motion and, if carried, the member for Harvey could then move to insert the word "two." I agree that he can do that but it must be realised that the Standing Orders provide that if any member so wishes, he can move to amend an amendment, and that is what has been done. The member for Harvey is quite within his rights under the Standing Orders. The Chairman has ruled that the member for Harvey was not entitled to move his amendment on the amendment and I entirely disagree with him. If there is any other reason for it not being a good amendment, that can be discussed at the appropriate time.

The Minister for Works: Surely this is the appropriate time when the member for Harvey is attempting to amend the amendment.

Mr. Perkins: The Minister knows the Standing Orders sufficiently well to realise that they are framed to protect all members. A certain procedure has been laid down and the member for Harvey has followed it.

Hon. A. F. Watts: I contend that the ruling given by the Chairman should be reversed. I appreciate the difficulty because only one word is dealt with in the amendment. If the member for Fremantle had sought to insert two words, there would be no question of the right of the member for Harvey to move to delete one of the words. Under those circumstances it seems to me that we cannot distinguish between the right of the member for Harvey to amend the motion on the one hand, and not on the other.

Mr. Brady: The member for Roe is entirely out of order in moving to dissent from the Chairman's ruling, because only one word is concerned in the amendment. How can one word be amended? Only a direct negative can be sought. I say this is a facetious motion to embarrass the Chairman, because the Oppositon members cannot get their own way on this matter.

The Minister for Agriculture: What the member for Harvey endeavours to achieve is already in the Act. The Committee has agreed to the deletion of the word "three,.' but the member for Harvey wants to reinsert the word "two," which is in the existing Act.

Mr. Manning: I base my amendment on Standing Order 192 which says—

> Amendments may be proposed to a proposed amendment as if such proposed amendment were an original question.

I am desirous of having my amendment on the amendment discussed before the amendment of the member for Fremantle and therefore I support the dissent from the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. Brady: On a point of order, may a member move an amendment without putting it in writing?

Mr. Speaker: We are not discussing that at the moment.

Mr. Bovell: I support the contention of the member for Roe that the ruling of the Chairman of Committees was wrong.

Several members interjected.

Mr. Speaker: I ask members to give me a chance. I was not present listening to the discussion previous to the moving of the motion of dissent, and I have to endeavour to fathom each argument that is advanced. It is unfair for members to persist in interjecting.

Mr. Bovell: The rights and privileges of private members are dealt with in our Standing Orders, and the one quoted by the member for Harvey, in my opinion, entitles him to move the amendment on the amendment. That is the view of the member for Roe, who has had considerable experience as Chairman of Committees. The member for Fremantle was Speaker for many years—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Why drag me into it?

Mr. Bovell: —and if he expressed his opinion, I believe that he would support the member for Roe.

Mr. May: I cannot see how we can amend something that is not a positive fact. The Committee had not decided whether the amendment of the member for Fremantle would be accepted, so how could it be amended?

Hon. L. Thorn: It is surprising what can be amended.

Mr. May: In spite of what has been said about the Standing Orders, I cannot see how we can amend something that is non-existent. The member for Harvey should give notice of his amendment and have it dealt with after the amendment of the member for Fremantle has been disposed of.

The Minister for Works: I am surprised that the Leader of the Country Party should support the contention of the member for Harvey. The proposal of that member is that for the words "two other members" in the Act, there shall be substituted the words "two other members," which is simply farcial. It is not an amendment at all, and is quite out of order. If he desires to retain the words in the Act, all he need do is to vote against the amendment of the member for Fremantle, but to suggest that we should substitute the same words as now appear in the Act is something that has not been done while I have been a member. It would be no substitution at all.

Mr. Perkins: That was not the point of order.

Mr. Manning: The point was whether I had a right to move my amendment.

The Minister for Works: The point is whether the hon. member is in order in moving his amendment, and obviously he is not because it is not an amendment.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It would be an amendment to the Bill, not to the Act.

The Minister for Works: How far would we get if we introduced a Bill to substitute something for what was already in the Act?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It could be done

The Minister for Works: The hon. member might permit it if he were Speaker.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: We are dealing with the Bill, not the Act.

The Minister for Works: I repeat that the purpose of the member for Harvey would be achieved by allowing the words to remain in the Act, and that could be done by defeating the amendment of the member for Fremantle.

Mr. Johnson: "May," at page 405, dealing with amendments on amendments, states—

> An amendment to a proposed amendment cannot be moved if it proposes to leave out all the words of such proposed amendment. In such a case, the first amendment must be negatived before the second can be offered.

Mr. J. Hegney: I had no desire to prevent the member for Harvey from moving his amendment. He wished to substitute the word "two"for the word "four." After consultation and reference to Standing Orders, I decided that it was a negative and was not in order.

Mr. O'Brien: I agree with the member for Leederville. The member for Fremantle gave notice of his amendment, and it should have been the subject of discussion before the other amendment was proposed. Therefore, I support the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. Speaker: It appears to me that there are two Standing Orders that I should accept as my guide in giving a decision on this dissent from the ruling of the Chairman of Committees. First of all, I point out that it is not my function to decide whether the proposed amendment makes sense or not. The point I have to decide is whether it is the right of the member for Harvey to propose his amendment. Whether it makes sense or not is beside the question. Any member may move an amendment, provided it is within the Standing Orders irrespective of whether it makes sense. There are two Standing Orders that enter into consideration. The first is No. 192, which has already been quoted by the member for Harvey. This states—

> Amendments may be proposed to a proposed amendment as if such proposed amendment were an original question.

On that Standing Order alone, the hon. member who moved the proposed amendment is quite in order, because it definitely is an amendment on an amendment, and as such can be moved. The further point I have to take into consideration is Standing Order No. 374 which states—

> When there comes a question between the greater and lesser sum or the longer or shorter time, the least sum and the longest time shall be first put to the question.

We have no mention of the longer or shorter time, but in relation to the point before me I am entitled to say that this is more a question of the sum, and the Standing Order states that the lesser sum shall be first decided by the Committee. I say the procedure is that the member for Harvey is entitled to move his amendment which must be taken first seeing that it is the lesser sum. If his amendment is disposed of by being negatived, the member for Fremantle can move his amendment. If the amendment moved by the member for Harvey is agreed to, the member for Fremantle cannot move his amendment as he originally proposed by altering the word "two" to the word "four."

Committee Resumed.

Mr. MANNING: The Act provides that the board shall comprise a chairman and two other members, etc. The Bill provides for three other members, one of whom is to be a representative of dairymen licensed under the Act. The member for Fremantle has successfully moved that the word "three" be struck out, and he proposes to insert in lieu the word "four." My amendment on the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle is to substitute the word "two" for the word "four."

The Minister for Agriculture: That is already in the Act.

The Minister for Education: Is what you propose the same as is in the Act now?

Mr. MANNING: Of course not. We on this side of the Chamber have endeavoured to indicate to the Government the desirability of keeping the Milk Board down to three and to have one of those three representing the dairying industry. I am attempting to achieve that by my amendment. With a board of three, apart from the chairman, one could represent the consumers or the secondary side of industry, and one could represent the dairymen licensed under the Act.

When we look at the production side of the industry, it is difficult to obtain an average of the position of the dairymen. Some farmers have farms of 1,000 acres and milk 100 cows, and others have only 50 to 100 acres and milk 25 cows. We have the testing scheme which has brought many problems to the dairymen. It has depleted their herds and put them to great expense to make replacements. We have the problem of obtaining suitable fodder for the dairy herds. The bran and pollard position has been acute. Then we have the complex problem of milk being below the required standard.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is such a big job, you will want a board of six presently.

Mr. MANNING: Many dairymen have been prosecuted for supplying milk below the required standard. These prosecutions present a major problem to the milk producers. Members on the Government side apparently fail to appreciate this problem. The Agricultural Department has herd recording units in the field, and they are

able to let the farmer know what the butterfat standard of each cow is. The method, however, of testing milk for solids-not-fat is involved and cannot be carried out by the ordinary herd recording units.

The producers feel that by having a representative on the Milk Board, they could bring to the board some knowledge of the problems of production. The amendment would keep the number of the board at three, a number which has proved successful. Such a board can arrive quickly at vital decisions on problems relating to the industry, and experience in the Eastern States has shown that a board of that size is most successful. I trust the Committee will accept the amendment on the amendment.

Mr. BOVELL: I think the amendment on the amendment is the only solution to the present impasse, and it is the one which members on this side of the Chamber have advocated throughout the debate as it would give the producer equal representation.

The Minister for Agriculture: When did you advocate that?

Mr. BOVELL: During the debate on the second reading.

The Minister for Agriculture: This amendment would not achieve that.

Mr. BOVELL: It would, because the board would consist of a chairman and two members, one of whom would represent the producer.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is not equal representation.

Mr. BOVELL: It would be, as far as the members of the board were concerned. If the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle were agreed to, the producers would have even less representation than they have now. The Minister, by interjection, said that this amendment would not give the producers equal representation, but that statement was only a red herring as he said he would support the amendment of the member for Fremantle to add another member to the board. The member for Subiaco proposes to move an amendment to put a woman on the board as the new member. As the Government has used its brutal majority to refuse to report progress, I say the amendment on the amendment is the only solution to the difficulty and I support it.

Hon. L. THORN: I support the amendment on the amendment in the interests of the Minister because it will get him out of his difficutly.

The Minister for Agriculture: I am in no difficulty.

Hon. L. THORN: This is not the Bill the Minister wanted or agreed to, because the member for Fremantle has upset its balance.

The Minister for Agriculture: Did you never accept amendments when you were a member of the Government?

Hon. L. THORN: Seldom. I know it is unusual for a Minister to oppose amendments moved by members on his side of the House, but if he accepted the amendment on the amendment he would have a workable board with producer representation. In view of what has transpired, the member for Subiaco is entitled in due course to move her proposed amendment.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	18
Majority against	1

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Court	Mr. Watts
Mr. Doney	Mr. Wild
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Manning	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Hawke	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Heal	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May
	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Oldfield	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Yates	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Perkins	Mr. Sewell

Amendment on amendment thus negatived.

Mr. MANNING: I oppose the amendment.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do not be silly.

Mr. MANNING: Did the Minister promise that he would give the Farmers' Union equal or adequate representation, because this amendment does not come into either of those categories?

Mr. May: I think you are out of touch with your union.

Mr. MANNING: I think the Minister may have completely misled the Farmers' Union.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is no harm in your thinking that—if you can think.

Mr. MANNING: The union is under the impression that the Minister is giving them adequate representation.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, it is not.

Mr. MANNING: By accepting the amendment of the member for Fremantle, the Minister is overloading the board against the union.

The Minister for Agriculture: It has nothing to do with the Farmers' Union if we decide to put a consumers' representative on the board.

Mr. MANNING: Of course it has.

The Minister for Agriculture: As long as they have their representation, that is all they can expect.

Mr. MANNING: If this amendment is agreed to, the constitution of the Milk Board will be altered, and instead of being an independent tribunal, it will be one on which sectional interests are represented.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are prepared to do that, are you not?

Mr. MANNING: The Minister does that and laughs like steam and then reckons that I am playing about and making a joke of the Bill. I am trying to watch the interests of the people whom I represent in Parliament. If this amendment is agreed to, the Milk Act will be just a shambles and there will be discontent and trouble, and probably chaos in the industry.

The Minister for Agriculture: Rubbish!

Mr. MANNING: The board has many difficult problems to deal with and has to make quick decisions. I cannot understand the Minister's accepting an amendment which will load the board with sectional representation unless it is because he lacks knowledge of the industry. If the Minister had milked cows before he went to school, like I did, and on Saturdays and Sundays as I do now, he would have some knowledge of its problems.

The Minister for Agriculture: We do not all milk cows.

Mr. MANNING: If the Minister did a bit of hard yacker like dairy-farmers and worked from early morning till late at night for 365 days of the year, and 366 days in a leap year, he would know all about it. There is no drying-off cows in this industry. In the lean period of the year the wholemilk producer is faced with the problem of keeping up supplies to the metropolitan area. The Minister has led the Farmers' Union to believe that he will give them representation on the board.

The Minister for Agriculture: They will have it if you sit down.

Mr. MANNING: I hope the Milk Board will be kept at three members and that the Minister will make a producer one of those members. That will give them something like equal representation, which they believe the Minister is trying to give them.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, they do not. Do not tell lies.

Mr. MANNING: Are they awake to the Minister?

The Minister for Agriculture: They do not believe any such thing.

Mr. MANNING: I would have a far better knowledge of what the dairymen are thinking and what they want than would the Minister.

The Minister for Agriculture: Have you had any correspondence with them in relation to it? You do not know what you are talking about.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He is leading us astray.

Mr. MANNING: It is not my intention to lead members astray, least of all the member for Fremantle. He has been here too long for me to do that.

The Minister for Works: Does your party consistently believe in the virtue of small boards?

Mr. MANNING: We are learning quickly that small boards are more efficient than large ones.

The Minister for Works: That is why they increased the members on the Commonwealth Bank board.

Mr. MANNING: A small board is more efficient, particularly when it is dealing with a perishable commodity. I doubt whether the Commonwealth Bank board deals with a perishable commodity. The experience of those in the Eastern States has been that in the milk industry it is better to have a small board. Once again I appeal to the Minister to keep the board down to three.

Mr. BOVELL: I move—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	18
Majority against	1

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Court	Mr. Watts
Mr. Doney	Mr. Wild
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Manning	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Styants
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May
	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Jamieson	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Hearman
Mr. Norton	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Perkins	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Yates
Mr. O'Brien	Mr. Hill

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. WILD: Surely it is not too late for the Minister to realise where we are heading in this matter?

The Minister for Agriculture: You are going to be funny now, are you?

Mr. WILD: No, I am not being funny. The Miinster has been funny all night. The member for Harvey put up a sensible suggestion. The Minister has admitted that the board has been a good one, but he now tells us that representations have been made to him by the wholemilk section of the Farmers' Union for further representation on the board. That is quite all right. When the member for Harvey moved an amendment so that there would still be a board of three, one of them being a nominee of the Farmers' Union, an amendment was moved to appoint a consumers' representative. Then we had Dame Florence suggesting moving to appoint a woman to the board. We have had peace in this industry and if there is anybody in this Chamber who knows something about milk, surely it is the member for Harvey.

The Minister for Agriculture: You make my heart bleed!

Mr. WILD: I know all about that. The trouble with the Minister is that once he makes up his mind about something, he cannot be shifted. We might just as well bash our heads up against a brick wall.

The Minister for Agriculture: Well, why do you not bash your head up against a brick wall?

Mr. WILD: It is all very well for the Minister to talk in that fashion, but there is no doubt once he makes up his mind, he will not deviate in any way. If the Minister wishes to prevent chaos in this industry, he should follow the suggestion made by members on this side of the Chamber, namely, report progress and think over what the Farmers' Union said to him and what he told them. The Minister did not tell the Farmers' Union that he was going to put a consumers' representative on the board.

The Minister for Agriculture: The member for Fremantle moved for that.

Mr. WILD: The Minister did not tell the Farmers' Union that he intended to do that, and instead of the proportion being one to two, it would be one to three. The Minister should have another think on the matter and agree to the suggestion put forward by the member for Harvey. I will certainly oppose this move for the appointment of four members on the board.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	17
A Tie	0

Ayes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Johnson	Mr. May
Mr. Lapham	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Court	Mr. Watts
Mr. Doney	Mr. Wild
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Manning	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Jamieson	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Hearman
Mr. Norton	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Yates
Mr. Perkins	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hill	Mr. O'Brien

The CHAIRMAN: The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the ayes.

Amendment thus passed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I promised to make certain that the person to be appointed to represent the producers should be actively engaged in the business of dairying. I propose to move an amendment to insert after the word "one" in line 5, page 2, the words "who shall be actively engaged in the business of dairyman".

Mr. MANNING: I have an amendment previous to that. May I move mine?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, if it is before that moved by the Minister. I have no notice of the amendment to be moved by the member for Harvey, but I have a copy of that proposed by the Minister.

Mr. MANNING: I move an amendment—

> That the words "one is the representative" in line 5, page 2, be struck out with a view to inserting the words "two are the representatives of the dairymen licensed under this Act."

There is no need for me to traverse the ground I have already covered concerning the milk industry.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister has an amendment to insert certain words after the word "one", and if the member for Harvey succeeds with his amendment, it will preclude the Minister from moving his. I suggest the hon. member move to strike out the word "one", and, if that is carried, he can then move his amendment. Otherwise, the Minister wishes to add after the word "one" the words "who shall be actively engaged in the business of dairyman".

Mr. MANNING: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. MANNING: I move an amendment—

That the word "one" in line 5, page 2, be struck out with a view to inserting the word "two" in lieu.

My electorate runs north of Waroona and south to Dardanup, and the bulk of the milk producers are located there. I am opposed to increasing the numerical strength of the board and to sectional interests dominating it, thus loading the board against the producers.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I oppose the amendment because it aims to deprive consumers of representation on the board. The term of office of three members are prescribed in the Act, and that cannot be altered. Of the two additional members, one should represent the consumers. The amendment seeks to fill the two vacancies with two producer representatives, and if agreed to there would be no room for even a woman to be elected on the board to represent the housewives.

Mr. BOVELL: I support the amendment. The Minister stated that the amendment would exclude representation other than from producers. That might be a good thing; but if it is agreed to, the consumers would still have representation. The chairman represents them. He has always been unbiased in his decisions. With so many amendments being made to the Bill, it has become unwieldy. I suggest that progress be reported so that further consideration may be given to the matter.

The Chamber will meet again at 2.15 p.m. today and if progress is reported, these discussions can be continued a few hours later. Because of the Minister's attitude and his fear of further discussion, he is attempting to bludgeon this Bill through. The Minister for Works is becoming hysterical because the hour is so late. For six years I listened to him when he was on this side of the Chamber, but he was not then laughing.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee is discussing the amendment, not the Minister for Works.

Mr. BOVELL: I support the amendment and again urge the Minister to report progress.

Mr. MANNING: If this clause goes through in its present form, it will cause great dismay to dairymen. I am beginning to doubt if the Minister has discussed this matter with the Milk Board, or its chairman to ascertain their views, and whether they consider it advisable to load the board against wholemilk producers. It is far better for the Bill to be lost than to go through in this form. The producers will achieve nothing by it, and their opinion will not carry any weight on the board. There will be four representatives who can be regarded as consumers and one representative of the producers. That cannot be called equal representation.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	17
A tie	0

Ayes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Brand	Mr. North
Dame F. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Court	Mr. Watts
Mr. Doney	Mr. Wild
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Manning	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. McCulloch
Mr. Graham	Mr. Moir
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Heal	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Johnson	Mr. May
Mr. Lapham	*(Teller.)*

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Sir Ross McLarty	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Oldfield	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Yates	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Perkins	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hill	Mr. O'Brien

The CHAIRMAN: The voting being equal, I give my vote with the noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That after the word "one" in line 5, page 2, the words "who shall be actively engaged in the business of dairyman" be inserted.

Mr. BOVELL: The amendment is not satisfactory. When speaking on the second reading, I requested that a producer of wholemilk should represent the industry. A dairyman might be producing butterfat and have no interest in the production of wholemilk. The Minister should stipulate a producer licensed under the Act.

The Minister for Agriculture: I was going to suggest the addition of those words.

Mr. Bovell: Well, you move it.

The CHAIRMAN: There is already an amendment before the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The panel will be submitted by the Farmers' Union and no doubt it would do the right thing. However, if the hon. member wishes to have the words inserted, I have no objection.

Mr. BOVELL: I realise that the union will see that a producer of wholemilk is appointed, but something unforeseen might occur in future and it would be better to have the fact clearly stated in the measure.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment then will read—

That the following words be added:—"who shall be actively engaged in the business of dairyman licensed under this Act."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move an amendment—

That after the word "Act" in line 7, page 2, the following words be added:—"and one is the representative of the consumers of milk."

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: I should like to add still further, "who shall be a woman."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I prefer to have no definite instruction in the Act that a woman shall be appointed.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not dealing with that yet.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: I move an amendment—

That after the word "milk" the following words be added:—"who shall be a woman."

I am sorry that the Minister made that remark because, with the additional members on the board, a woman should be the representative of the consumers. I believe that the women would be more satisfied if there were a woman on the board to represent the consumers. Woman has helped man through many hard times, and she would be in a position to give advice and be helpful.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not opposed to a woman being on the board, but we should not say specifically that a woman shall be appointed. We do not say that a man shall represent the producer. It is a good idea to leave the matter to the discretion of the Minister. I have no doubt that every consideration will be given to the names that are submitted.

Hon. Dame FLORENCE CARDELL-OLIVER: All the evening we have been on the subject of getting producers on the board. No man produces milk except he is an artificial producer like the man who has a little machine into which he puts skim milk and dehydrated butter and produces the most wonderful milk. I am sure the member for Fremantle will support me.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I propose to support the member for Subiaco. I do not want a consumer on the board, and I said so as plainly as I could, but as the position stands, we are obliged to accept one. A woman is much more likely to know what the consumer of milk requires than any man the member for Fremantle can suggest.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You have not always thought that.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I have contributed more to the placing of women on boards, by appointing several of them, than has the member for Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not think the Leader of the Country Party has always been of this opinion. When the member for Fremantle was sweating his eyeballs out on the other side of the Chamber to put women on different boards, he voted against him. He never supported a woman on a board in his life. I have always supported them. If there is any board that a woman should be on, it is the Milk Board. If the board is going to be as obstreperous as the member for Harvey has said, then the influence of a woman will do a lot of good.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by the Minister for Agriculture, clause further amended by inserting after the word "who" in line 23, page 2, the words "are actively engaged in the business of dairyman licensed under this Act," and by inserting after the word "person" in line 32, the words "actively engaged in the business of dairyman licensed under this Act."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3—Section 12 amended:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That the word "three" in line 40, page 2, be struck out and the word "four" inserted in lieu.

This will tidy up the Bill according to the requirements of the member for Fremantle.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 1.12 a.m. (Thursday).