

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 12th August, 1975

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## BILLS (37): ASSENT

Messages from the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Public Trustee Act Amendment Bill.
2. Health Act Amendment Bill.
3. Agent General Act Amendment Bill.
4. Superannuation and Family Benefits Act Amendment Bill.
5. Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill.
6. Hairdressers Registration Act Amendment Bill.
7. Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act Amendment Bill.
8. Environmental Protection Act Amendment Bill.
9. Anzac Day Act Amendment Bill.
10. Education Act Amendment Bill.
11. Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act Amendment Bill.
12. Reserve (Kwinana Freeway) Bill.
13. Registration of Identity of Persons Bill.
14. Parliamentary Salaries and Allowances Act Amendment Bill.
15. Constitution Acts Amendment Bill.
16. Superannuation, Sick, Death, Insurance, Guarantee and Endowment (Local Governing Bodies' Employees) Funds Act Amendment Bill.
17. Wesply (Dardanup) Agreement Authorization Bill.
18. Police Act Amendment Bill.
19. Small Claims Tribunals Act Amendment Bill.
20. Pyramid Sales Schemes Act Amendment Bill.
21. Consumer Protection Act Amendment Bill.
22. Companies Act (Interstate Corporate Affairs Commission) Amendment Bill.
23. Fruit-growing Reconstruction Scheme Act Amendment Bill.
24. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Bill.
25. Acts Amendment (State Energy Commission) Bill.
26. Government Employees (Promotions Appeal Board) Act Amendment Bill.
27. Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Bill.
28. Beef Industry Committee Act Amendment Bill.

29. Public Service Act Amendment Bill.
30. Fisheries Act Amendment Bill.
31. Banana Industry Compensation Trust Fund Act Amendment Bill.
32. Rural Industries Assistance Bill.
33. Education Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
34. Pre-School Education Act Amendment Bill.
35. Phosphate Co-Operative (W.A.) Ltd. Act Amendment Bill.
36. Local Government Act Amendment Bill.
37. Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment Bill.

## QUESTIONS (4): ON NOTICE

1.

### POLICE

#### *Rape Victims: Aid*

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Justice:

In view of the increasing incidence of rape, will the Government take immediate steps to assist the victims by—

- (a) appointing an all-women police squad to handle cases of rape;
- (b) establishing, or assist financially to establish, a rape crisis centre; and
- (c) having the court procedure examined for the purpose of reducing the stress suffered by victims during proceedings?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (a) I have referred this proposal to the Minister for Police, and the answer given is "no".

However, this answer is qualified in that present procedures, where experienced detectives not only have the advantage of assessing the personality of the rape victim but also have all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the report, put them in a sound position to interview the offender.

In addition, experienced women police are readily available to assist the investigating police and take part in most rape investigations.

- (b) The term "rape crisis centre" referred to is not fully understood and if the Hon. member is prepared to provide me with more precise details of such a centre I am agreeable to give more consideration to it.

Following consultation with my colleague, the Minister for Health, the Government is prepared to consider assisting an existing women's centre to provide a service if sufficient evidence is produced to indicate the necessity.

- (c) Yes, the Government is giving serious consideration to this matter and, in addition, the Criminology Research Council has been asked to give priority to research into alternatives to existing interrogation and court procedures involving victims of rape.

2.

## EDUCATION

### *Commonwealth Funds*

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Were there any Schools Commission or other funds for education allocated to this State, unspent during the last financial year?
- (2) If so, what amounts were involved?
- (3) Will the Minister state which of the following categories were affected, and the respective amounts—
- Special Projects (Innovations);
  - Disadvantaged Schools;
  - Teacher Development;
  - Libraries;
  - Special Education;
  - General Recurrent; and
  - General Buildings?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) to (3) Funds for education in this State are allocated from State and Commonwealth sources. The State Government allocates Consolidated Revenue funds for salaries and operating costs and General Loan funds for capital works. Both these allocations to the Education Department for the financial year 1974-75 were over-spent.

Commonwealth funds are provided by various State Grants Acts and are made available on a calendar year basis. Hence, the Schools Commission funds utilised in 1974 and 1975 were allotted for calendar years. It is not possible, therefore, to make any realistic comment on underspending in the particular programmes for the last financial year.

## 3. INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

### *Government Contribution*

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Justice representing the Premier:

- (1) What contribution does the Government claim to have made to International Women's Year?
- (2) If none, what plans does it have to recognise this important event?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) and (2)—

- (a) The Government desires to mark International Women's Year in a lasting manner rather than make a once-only contribution which would have little continuing value.

We have therefore decided to establish a permanent fellowship which, each year, will enable an outstanding Western Australian woman to travel overseas or interstate to further her study or to work in her selected field.

The assistance to be provided under the fellowship will take the form of a return air fare and, where appropriate, allowances to assist with living expenses, tuition fees, books and equipment.

Applicants will be selected from women who are working for the welfare and advancement of women or children in Western Australia and who are making a continuing contribution in those fields.

The fellowship proposes that the recipient shall study or work overseas or interstate and, on returning to Western Australia, pass on to others the specialised knowledge she has gained.

Lack of educational or professional qualifications will be no barrier to the fellowship.

No less than one in three awards is to be made to a woman whose life work was closely identified with country or remote areas.

Selection of fellows will be made by a special committee representing women's organisations.

I believe this move will stand as a permanent tribute to the women of this State and by being inaugurated during International Women's Year, will mark that occasion in a most significant way.

(b) It should also be noted that a considerable number of women have been honoured by Her Majesty The Queen, both in the New Year and Queen's Birthday Honours lists—some at a very high level.

As the honourable member will know, this has resulted from recommendations of the Government.

(c) There are many other ways in which the special significance of International Women's Year has been acknowledged by the Government, but it should be clearly understood that the important thing is to do things of a lasting and continuing nature as a matter of basic policy and progress rather than over-emphasise special occasions which might have little flow-on value.

#### 4. INFLATION

##### *Rate in 1974-75*

The Hon. Lyla ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Justice representing the Treasurer:

Can the Minister explain why for the 12 months ended June, 1975, the inflation rate for Australia was 16.9 per cent, whereas the figure for this State was 20.1 per cent?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

The main reason for the differential movement in the consumer price index for Perth and the index for the six capitals combined between June quarter 1974 and June quarter 1975, is to be found in the behaviour of the food group of the index and more particularly in the inverse movement of meat prices.

Analysis of price movements in the meat subgroup reveals that prices for mutton and beef fell more sharply in other capital cities than in Perth. Moreover, whereas price levels for lamb were 12.5 per cent higher in Perth in June, 1975 than a year earlier, the corresponding change for the six capitals combined was a fall of 10 per cent.

It is to be noted that meat prices in general have not risen exceptionally fast in Perth; the meat subgroup of the index was only 3.2 per cent higher in June 1975 than a year earlier. However, the average experience of all capitals was a fall of 8 per cent which served partly to offset price increases of other commodities.

For the information of the honourable member I table notes and tabular material prepared by the Treasury on the movement in the consumer price index over the last financial year.

*The paper was tabled (see paper No. 232).*

### METRIC CONVERSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 8th May.

**THE HON. R. THOMPSON** (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.00 p.m.]: The purpose of this Bill is to metricate references currently in imperial units in nine Acts. This measure follows other Bills—we have had three previously—which have made such group amendments to other Acts by means of a schedule. I have no argument at all with the present Bill; I think this is the right way to go about the matter. When in Government we introduced two measures of a similar nature; although from memory I think section 5 of the Metric Conversion Act states this can be done by proclamation. It would appear now that in all we have altered some 75 Acts of Parliament by this method. I support the measure.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. V. J. Ferry.

*House adjourned at 5.02 p.m.*

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## Legislative Assembly

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