Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 22nd September, 1966

CONTENTS

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

GRAIN POOL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Assent

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

QUESTIONS (20): ON NOTICE

HOUSING

Single Units for Women: Outstanding Applications

1. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

   What is the total current number of applications outstanding for single-unit accommodation for women.

   Mr. O'NEIL replied:

   The number is 1,113.

Carnarvon: Number of Houses Built, Future Programme, and Outstanding Applications

2. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

   (1) How many houses were built by his department in Carnarvon during 1963-64, 1964-65, 1965-66 for—
   (a) State rental homes, and
   (b) for State departments?

   (2) When is it intended to call tenders for the building of more State rental homes at Carnarvon?

   (3) How many outstanding applications were at Carnarvon for State rental homes at the 1st September, 1966?

   Mr. O'NEIL replied:

   (1) —

Year	S.H.C. S.H.A.	C/S H.A. Rental	W.S.H.	Other Departments	Total
1963/1964	....	12	2	39 (including 34 for N.A.S.A.)	53
1964/1965	....	9	....	9 (including 5 for N.A.S.A.)	18
1965/1966	2	15	2	24 (including 15 for N.A.S.A.)	43

   (2) As soon as recently acquired Crown land can be developed.

   (3) 81.

SWIMMING POOLS

Government Financial Assistance to Local Authorities

3. Mr. NORTON asked the Premier:

   (1) As the State Government is assisting the Shire of Exmouth to build a swimming pool on a $1 for $2 basis with the Commonwealth, will it assist local shires on the same basis?

   (2) If "No," why should one shire be given more assistance by the State than another to build a swimming pool?

   Mr. BRAND replied:

   (1) and (2) The only difference between the treatment given by the State to Exmouth and other shires is a higher total Government contribution. The $1 for $2 basis applies throughout, but in the case of other shires there is a limit to the Government contribution of $20,000, except in the north where the amount is $25,000.

   Exmouth is a new town being developed in partnership with the Commonwealth Government and in the early stages will not have the resources normally available to a shire. A higher than normal total State contribution is therefore considered to be justified.

STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Land at Yokine: Availability for Church Building

4. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has the State Housing Commission any land in the Yokine locality with at least 99 feet frontage and which could be allotted for church building purposes?

(2) If so, where?

(3) What would be the basis of sale, particularly in respect of purchase price and payment?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(1) and (2) While the commission holds three residential sites of 99 feet and greater frontage in Hannaby Street, Yokine, their suitability for church purposes could not be determined until church building plans were available for assessment as to local authority requirements, such as off-street parking.

(3) Church sites are sold by the commission at value assessed by the chief valuer, for cash or terms, as arranged.

If the honourable member has a specific request for a church site, it is suggested he confer with the general manager of the commission.

Mr. R. PAVICIC

Balcatta Property: Tabling of Papers

5. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Will he lay on the Table of this House for one week all papers relating to the property of Mr. R. Pavicic of Lot 10 of Perthshire Location Au in Bryan Road, Balcatta?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Yes. I will table Public Health Department file 188/65 part 2 for one week.

The file was tabled for one week.

DREDGE D.9 AND TUG "WYOLA"

Survey

6. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Was the sunken dredge D.9 last on the slipway at Fremantle during the period the 16th to the 26th March, 1964?

(2) Was the dredge surveyed at that time and given a certificate covering a period of two years?

(3) If "Yes," will he explain how it is that the dredge in question has remained in use after the expiry of the certificate without undergoing survey?

(4) How often is the tug *Wyola* required to be surveyed?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The vessel was surveyed then and given a certificate covering 12 months. Being a non-propel vessel she is only required to be seen out of the water every two years. A further certificate was issued in 1965.

(3) The dredge has never been in use without a current certificate. The vessel is currently under survey and is to be slipped to complete survey. Lack of slip accommodation has prevented this to date.

(4) Annually.

MARGARINE

Consumption, Exports, and Imports

7. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What quantity of table margarine has been manufactured in this State during each of the last five years—

(a) for consumption within Australia;

(b) for export beyond the Commonwealth of Australia?

(2) What quantity of margarine, other than table margarine, has been manufactured in this State during each of the last five years?

(3) What quantity of—

(a) table margarine;

(b) margarine other than table margarine,

has been imported into this State for each of the last five years?

Mr. NALDER replied:

						Tons
(1) (a)	1st July,	1961,	to	30th June,	1962	584
	,,	1962,	to	,,	1963	601
	,,	1963,	to	,,	1964	601
	,,	1964,	to	,,	1965	597
	,,	1965,	to	,,	1966	598
(b) None.						
(2) None.						
(3) (a)			Table			
	1st July,	1961,	to	30th June,	1962	1,188
	,,	1962,	to	,,	1963	1,196
	,,	1963,	to	,,	1964	1,214
	,,	1964,	to	,,	1965	1,477
	,,	1965,	to	,,	1966	1,256
(b)			Other			
	1st July,	1961,	to	30th June,	1962	862
	,,	1962,	to	,,	1963	1,172
	,,	1963,	to	,,	1964	1,367
	,,	1964,	to	,,	1965	1,148
	,,	1965,	to	,,	1966	1,468

APPRENTICES

Overtime: Policy of Public Works Department

8. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is the working of overtime by apprentice tradesmen forbidden or

restricted in any sections of the Public Works Department?

(2) If so, what is the reason?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by (1).

RAILWAY CROSSING AT RIVERVALE

Tunnel

9. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What progress has been made in regard to a tunnel to take the road under the railway in the vicinity of the present Rivervale crossing?

(2) When is it proposed that work on the project will be commenced?

Mr. CRAIG (for Mr. Court) replied:

(1) Agreement has been reached between the Perth City Council, the Railways Department, and the Main Roads Department on a preliminary design plan for a subway under the railway in the vicinity of the Rivervale crossing.

The Main Roads Department is now preparing detailed road plans and the Railways Department has commenced the design of the bridge structure.

(2) Subject to financial agreement between the parties concerned it is hoped to commence the project next financial year.

ONE-TEACHER SCHOOLS

Pupils: Minimum Number

10. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What is the minimum number of pupils required to keep a country one-teacher school open?

(2) How many schools in this State are still open with less pupils than the normal minimum?

(3) What are the ten schools with the lowest pupil enrolment and what are their respective numbers?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

(1) (a) Average attendance 10 pupils.

(b) Average attendance eight pupils, if a suitable room is available and no other school within three miles.

(c) In remote areas where there is a reasonable prospect of a minimum average of eight within 12 months and where settlement is expanding and parents make a room available.

(2) Three.

(3)

Payne's Find	6
Kookynie	7
Argyle Downs	8
Bibra Lake	8
Badgingarra	10
Hopelands	10
Doodarding	10
Bornholm	10
Jerdacuttup	11
Jurien Bay	11
Kononggorring	11
Kweda	11
Widgiemooltha	11

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Shire of Carnarvon, and Town of Melville: Electors

11. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) How many electors are enrolled on the North Plantation Ward of the Shire of Carnarvon?

(2) How many electors are enrolled on Babbage Island (East Ward) of the Shire of Carnarvon?

(3) How many electors are enrolled on Country Ward of the Town of Melville?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1) to (3) The number of electors is not recorded on election returns received from municipal councils, but the total number of votes shown is as follows:—

North Plantation Ward, Shire of Carnarvon	78
Babbage and East Ward	98
Country Ward, Town of Melville	7705

If required the number of electors will be obtained from the councils. This will take some time.

CHEQUES

Legal Tender

12. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Treasurer:

(1) Is payment by cheque, providing sufficient funds are available to meet payment in the account on which it is drawn, legal tender in Western Australia?

(2) If not, how is the Government able to tax a non-legal tender?

(3) If legal, under what circumstances can such payment be legally refused?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) No.

(2) On the assumption that the tax referred to is stamp duty on a cheque, such tax is charged on the cheque as an instrument, being a bill of exchange payable on demand, not on the tender.

(3) Answered by (1).

HEARING AIDS

Availability to Pensioners and Indigent Persons

13. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it possible for social service pensioners or indigent persons to obtain hearing aids free, or at reduced cost, through any Government department or agency?

(2) If so, under what conditions are these instruments available?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) No; but it is understood that for qualified war pensioners and other persons eligible under social services rehabilitation arrangements, certain benefits are available through the Commonwealth.

AGED PERSONS HOMES

Mt. Henry: Increased Charges

14. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) Have new charges been assessed for inmates of the Mt. Henry Home for aged ladies?

(2) If so, what are the new charges and from when will they apply?

(3) What are the reasons for any alterations?

(4) What is the extent of any increases?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) New charges are—

	per day $
(a) Nursing Home Patients:	
(i) Pensioners without income .... (\$2 per day from Federal Government, \$1.60 per day from the pension)	3.60
(ii) Other residents ... (\$2 per day from Federal Government, \$3.60 per day from the patient) (There are a few in this category.)	5.60
	per week $
(b) Frail Aged or Ambulant Residents: (Approximately 12 residents involved)	10.00

which will be paid from the pension.

Each case is assessed on its merit.

No inmate will be left with less than \$2 per week for private spending.

These charges applied from the 1st July, 1966, for new inmates but an adjustment period of three months to the 28th September, 1966, has been allowed in respect of those already there.

(3) Mt. Henry's status changed from a benevolent home to a public hospital as from the 1st July, 1966. Mt. Henry was originally a home for aged ladies but is now a hospital as patients receive full nursing care and attention as occurs at other hospitals.

(4) The majority of patients are pensioners without other income, and prior to the 30th June, there was no charge against the patient. The Social Services Department paid maintenance to the home to the extent of a maximum of \$8.80 per week in respect of ambulant cases only.

The maximum charge to a patient in a nursing home bed was \$26 per week, but this applied only to a very few patients in receipt of income.

The maximum charge in the case of the very few ambulant cases with other income was \$12 per week.

Subsidy: Payment and Eligibility

15. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

(1) How will payment of the \$1 a day subsidy for frail old people, as announced by the Government some months ago, be applied?

(2) Which institutions will be eligible for such subsidy?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) To institutions in respect of patients approved by the geriatric service of the department.

(2) Non-profit making institutions providing accommodation facilities approved by the department.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Trading Policy

16. Mr. MAY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Can co-operative societies trade only with shareholders or may they trade with other than actual shareholders?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

There does not appear to be any provision in the Companies (Co-operative) Act, 1943-1959 or the Co-operative and Provident Societies Act, 1903, to prohibit a co-operative concern from trading with persons other than its shareholders or members.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

Overways between Northam and Southern Cross

17. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) How many railway overways have been constructed between Northam and Southern Cross to enable the 3 ft. 6 in. railway line to cross the standard gauge railway line?

(2) Where have the overways been constructed and what has been the cost of each?

(3) When is it considered the standard gauge railway line between Kalgoorlie and the metropolitan area will come into operation?

(4) Will the overways be then no longer used?

(5) What effect will each overway have on the engine loads in relation to each type of engine which will be used on the narrow gauge track?

(6) What are or were the alternatives to the construction of the expensive overways in question, and what was the estimated annual cost of operating each of those alternatives?

(7) From what source has the construction of the overways been financed?

(8) Were the overways constructed departmentally or by contract?

(9) If by contract, who were the contractors in each instance?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Court) replied:

(1) Six.

(2) Overways are being constructed at Meenaar, Bungulla, Yerbillon, Bodallin, Walgoolan, and Moorine Rock.

Final costs are not yet available but to date expenditure has been—

	$
Meenaar	30,034
Bungulla	19,191
Yerbillon	60,048
Bodallin	53,058
Walgoolan	53,836
Moorine Rock	48,126

The total estimated cost for the six overways is $350,000.

(3) The standardisation agreement provides for completion of the project by December, 1968. Every endeavour is being made to meet this target.

(4) The overways are planned to be used during the period of simultaneous operation of standard and narrow gauge trains between Northam and Kalgoorlie and they will be removed in conjunction with the lifting of the narrow gauge line.

(5) Some minor reduction in load for each class of engine hauling freight trains over the flyovers has been necessary, but the overall advantages of this working more than compensates for this loss of capacity.

(6) The provision of overways was considered essential in the interests of safety, to avoid conflict of heavy wheat and iron ore trains on standard gauge with normal traffic on the narrow gauge line, including passenger trains.

The alternatives were deferment of standard gauge operations or acceptance of crossings at common grade with automatic protective signalling. This signalling would have cost an estimated $50,000 at each crossing to install, but would not have entirely removed the hazard of an intersection accident.

The cost of constructing the overways is considered to be well justified in the light of possible loss of life and/or heavy material damage which could occur if this protection was not provided.

(7) As the overways are of a temporary nature and are necessary primarily to achieve operating economy earlier than would otherwise be the case the bulk of the cost will be charged to Consolidated Revenue Fund.

(8) By contract.

(9)

	Earthworks	Steelwork fabrication and erection
Meenaar, Bungulla	Waroona Contracting Services	F. Baguley & Co.
Yerbillon, Bodallin, Walgoolan, Moorine Rock	Thiess Bros.	Jackson & Cameron

All tracklaying is being performed departmentally.

WEST NORTHAM RAILWAY STATION

Completion and Opening

18. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) When was the new West Northam railway station completed and ready for service?

(2) Has it been used at all since that date?

(3) Why have Northam people wishing to join the *Albany Express* been left to travel to Spring Hill by any method they can organise, instead of being catered for by the

Railways Department at the West Northam railway station?

(4) When will the facilities at the new West Northam railway station be made available to local people in need of those facilities?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Court) replied:

(1) The platform was completed prior to inauguration of the service on the 13th February, 1966: The buildings were completed on the 9th June, 1966.

(2) On two occasions only.

(3) A bus service is provided between the old Northam station and Spring Hill to connect with all passenger trains to and from Albany.

(4) These facilities are already available, but their use is not encouraged at the present juncture. West Northam station is located between Avon yard and the Northam locomotive steam depot, a section of line which is fully occupied by main line services and movement of locomotives. To stop Albany passenger trains at this station for 10 or 15 minutes instead of Spring Hill, as at present, would seriously affect other train schedules.

When all steam locomotives have been replaced by diesels, full use will be made of West Northam station.

19. and 20. *These questions were postponed.*

QUESTIONS (7): WITHOUT NOTICE

HOUSING

Lockyer Area, Albany: Survey of Damage

1. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Housing:

As there are many reports as to roofs leaking and damage to State Housing Commission homes in the Lockyer area, Albany, would the commission undertake to carry out a survey with a view to rectification?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

I wish to thank the honourable member for giving me prior notice of this question. The answer is—

A survey has been completed and the report is now being considered by the commission.

AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOLS

Accommodation

2. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education:

(1) What number of applications were received for admission to the agricultural wings of the—

(a) Narrogin;

(b) Cunderdin;

(c) Harvey;

(d) Denmark;

schools for the 1967 school year?

(2) How many applicants were successful?

(3) What number of applications were received for admission to the agricultural wing of the Narrogin Senior High School for the 1967 school year?

(4) What were the number of available vacancies at this school?

(5) What will be the number of students enrolled in the agricultural wing at the Narrogin Senior High School at the commencement of the 1967 school year?

(6) Is it intended to build another dormitory at Narrogin during the current financial year?

(7) Is it intended to increase dormitory accommodation at any of the three other schools in this financial year; if so, where?

(8) If the answers to (6) and (7) are both in the negative, is it intended to increase dormitory accommodation at any of the four schools with agricultural wings in the foreseeable future; if so, where and at what school(s)?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The answers are as follows:—

(1) Applications received for the 1967 school year for admission to agricultural wings were as follows:—

(a) Narrogin	117
(b) Cunderdin	49
(c) Harvey	23
(d) Denmark	9
	198

(2) 132.

(3) See (1) (a).

(4) 46.

(5) The answer given to me was 48, allowing for possibly 2 withdrawals, but this is obviously incorrect. I believe it to be 110.

(6) No.

(7) Yes, Harvey.

(8) A new dormitory is urgently needed at Narrogin and will be provided as soon as finance permits.

DARRYL BEAMISH CASE

Action by Government

3. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

Has the examination of Professor Brett's book in connection with the Beamish case yet been completed? If so, has the Government yet finalised its consideration of whatever report might have been submitted?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I have not yet received any advice that the examination has been completed. I can refer this question to the Minister for Justice.

4. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

Referring to the same matter, could the Premier indicate who was carrying out the examination of the book for the Government?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I can only assume that the examination was being carried out by Crown Law officers.

HOUSING

Carnarvon: Number of Houses Built

5. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Housing:

When replying to question 2 on today's notice paper the Minister stated that in 1963-64, 34 houses were built by his department for N.A.S.A.; five in 1964-65; and 15 in 1965-66. Should not the Minister have said that the houses were supervised by his department, as I understand they were built by the Carnarvon Shire?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

In the tabular form in which question 2 was answered, the figures were given as the number of houses undertaken by the Housing Commission for other departments. I understand that the commission did, in fact, supervise the construction of the houses mentioned by the member for Gascoyne, just as it does supervise the construction of houses financed by other Government departments.

ORDERS OF THE DAY Nos. 6 AND 9

Postponement

6. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Transport:

My question refers to the Bills which are subject to Orders of the Day 6 and 9. Would the Minister endeavour to have these two Bills not proceeded with today? The Bills are complementary and require a great deal more study than has been possible since the Bills were introduced.

The SPEAKER: This is a matter for the conduct of the House and will be dealt with by the Premier.

AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOLS

Accommodation

7. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education:

I appreciate that this question may not be within the ambit of the Minister's department. It is obvious from the answers he gave to my previous question that the agricultural high schools are in the position of being forced to turn away prospective pupils. However, at Muresk the opposite is the case. Would the Minister ask his advisers to go into the aspect of considering whether the facilities at Muresk may not be used to cater for some of the pupils who cannot be accommodated at the junior agricultural high schools?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

I understand that the question of accommodation at Muresk—and other factors concerning instruction given at Muresk—are the subject of an investigation by the Tertiary Education Committee which was recently set up. Regarding accommodation at the department's residential schools, I do not know that we were ever in a position to accommodate all the applicants. We have been able to accommodate somewhere in the vicinity of 95 per cent., and this has enabled the department to be a little selective which, I think, is in the best interests of the farming industry generally.

This year, for some reason not yet explained to me, we have had more applicants for residential agricultural education than has been the case in the past. No doubt, the department will give consideration to extending accommodation which is available at the schools.

BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. O'Connor (Minister for Transport), and returned to the Council with an amendment.

METROPOLITAN REGION IMPROVEMENT TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [2.39 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This short—and, I suggest—simple Bill proposes an increase in the rate of the metropolitan region improvement tax from 0.15625c in the dollar to 0.25c in the dollar. For those members who would like the calculation in the old currency, the tax equalled 3s. 1½d. per £100, or 1/640th. The new figure will represent 5s. in the £100, or 1/400th.

It will be recalled that when the tax was introduced in 1959 the rate was ½d. in the pound, or about 0.28c in the dollar. Subsequently the rate was reduced to the present ⅜d. in the pound, or 0.15625c in the dollar.

The revenue derived from the tax is the only significant source of income to the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority for buying property reserved under the Metropolitan Region Scheme from revenue or by means of long-term loans. For some time there has been concern at the widening gap between the financial resources of the authority and its commitments for land purchase and compensation due mainly to rising land values. Although there have been consequential increases in tax income these have not been sufficient to prevent a decrease in the purchase rate.

The authority has borrowed each year since 1961-62 as part of the semi-government allocation by the Loan Council; currently it is allocated about $800,000 a year. This sum, together with the balance of revenue not taken up in interest and sinking fund payments, permits an annual expenditure of about $1,000,000 for land purchase and compensation. More significant is that if the borrowing rate is increased to $1,000,000 a year, which will be imperative if the vital land needs of the community are to be met within a reasonable period, all of the tax income will be taken up in loan charges by 1971. The increase proposed is sufficient to ensure continued borrowing at that rate.

It is calculated that by increasing the tax rate to 0.25c in the dollar, the annual increase will be sufficient to service a loan of $1,000,000. For several years there would be a reducing excess of revenue over service charges, which would give the authority some flexibility in its purchases and permit more expeditious handling of requests from owners.

So far the authority has not been called upon to pay compensation other than that connected with land purchase. It is, however, considering a number of claims lodged as a result of the making of the scheme, and expects to have to meet others arising from its statutory obligations. If the authority is to meet the financial obligations inherent in the scheme, the authority must have an income commensurate with its commitments.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 21st September.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Mt. Hawthorn) [2.44 p.m.]: The measure introduced by the Minister for Education yesterday does not contain exceptionally important provisions but, in the main, they seek to clear up a number of anomalies which have arisen since the Act was amended on the last occasion.

The first amendment deals with the discretion of the Minister regarding the minimum school-leaving age for children. In 1962 the provision was that any child of the age of 14 years could be given permission to leave school if it were thought to be in his or her interests and the Minister was satisfied that he or she had a suitable position to occupy. In 1964 the Act was altered to provide for the leaving age to be increased to 15 years; and, personally, I can understand the circumstances which would naturally arise as a result of that alteration.

I do not propose to quote instances, as the Minister has done so, but I can understand the circumstances which prompted the Director-General of Education to advise the Minister to introduce the amendment. In effect, the provision which obtained in 1962 will be reinserted in the Act, and this means the Minister will have power to exempt a child, having reached the age of 14 years, from further attendance at school, if it is thought to be in the interests of the child and that such child has a suitable position to occupy.

The Minister did mention that the Act provides the Minister may refuse a child attendance at any school other than the one nearest to his or her residence. That provision has been in the Act for a number of years but, like everything else, over a period of time circumstances change and now there is actually a reversal of the position and it will mean that if the Minister, on behalf of the Government, finds it necessary he can preclude the attendance of certain children from the nearest school.

I know of instances which occurred some years ago when districts were suffering from growing pains and the responsible officers in the Education Department—and I give them full credit for the great job they did in this connection—had a very difficult job to do in drawing lines of demarcation so that children beyond a particular line would be required to attend a school other than the one nearest to their residence. I know of the problems involved; and I suppose the present Minister knows of similar cases where problems arise owing to lines of demarcation being drawn. If one draws a line of demarcation it will often be found that the people on one side of the line want

the boundary extended one street in some direction, and so it goes on.

When the Tuart Hill Primary School was feeling the effects of the increased number of children attending the school owing to the large number of houses being built in the area north of the school, the children on the Perth side—and some of them lived comparatively near to the school—were obliged to be transferred to the Coolbinia School. This school was being built about that time, but the children who had been attending the Tuart Hill School, who were transferred to the other school, and who lived in Joondanna, had to travel further than had previously been the case. Some of the parents whose children were diverted to the new school were prominent in the parents and citizens' association and naturally they were very dissatisfied.

Apparently the position is still arising in other areas, and no doubt the department finds it a very difficult problem. The only question is: How long will the problem continue? I agree with the amendment in the Bill, because I know the superintendents and others responsible for arranging the boundaries do their best under difficult circumstances.

The Bill contains a provision relating to children who wish to attend a Government secondary school but who did not attend a Government school during the year in which they completed their primary education. I presume the Minister will explain the clause in the Bill which reads—

> Where a child who wishes to attend a Government secondary school—
>
> (a) did not attend a Government school during the year in which he completed his primary education; or
>
> (b) has since his last attendance at school prior to his commencing his secondary education changed his place of residence,
>
> the Minister may refuse admission of that child to any Government secondary school other than that determined by the Minister.

I suppose the same position would apply in this instance as applies with the provision covering children who have been attending Government primary schools. The children covered by the provision in the Bill will no doubt be diverted to schools which will suit the convenience of the department, having regard for the overtaxing of classrooms.

Mr. Lewis: You are quoting from paragraph (a)?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am quoting from proposed new subsection (3) (a) and (b) of the Bill, on page 3.

Mr. Lewis: This would also deal with migrant children.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: That is so. I know the department would endeavour to arrange for a child to be sent to the nearest school where appropriate accommodation is available. I can appreciate the position of the department, and of the welfare office, in the matter of welfare officers. I think it is a very appropriate name indeed. It is quite different from the olden days when they were called truant inspectors. I know that we used to call them something else besides that! The designation of welfare officer is much more human, and conveys a great deal more understanding than the previous title. I appreciate that at times it is difficult for departmental officers to carry out all the necessary duties in the country courts, and the proposal in the Bill is to delegate this authority to members of the Police Force.

Another matter of interest deals with the functions of the parents and citizens' associations. I will not read all the provisions that have been set out in the Act over the years; suffice it to say that the added provisions are in accordance with the desires of both the parents and citizens' associations and the teaching profession, generally, and I have no objection to them.

For many years the members of the teaching profession have had their salaries determined by the Minister. When I say that, I mean, of course, that the Minister is the ministerial head of the department, and he must accept complete responsibility for the administration of the Act. Naturally, however, the Director-General of Education would recommend to the Minister over a period of five years that a classification be made of the teaching profession.

In 1961, however, when the Teachers' Tribunal was inaugurated, the members of the Teachers Union had a right of appeal from the Minister's classification to a judge of the Supreme Court. As a matter of interest I would point out that for quite a few years the previous Government more or less adopted the classifications made by the New South Wales arbitrator; but now that the Teachers' Tribunal has been in operation for a few years the appeal may be made from the Minister to the teachers' tribunal.

Firstly, the Government has agreed with the Teachers Union that the classification will be effected every three years—or a maximum of three years—and I am very pleased that the Government has agreed to that. Secondly, the provision in the Bill will make it quite clear that the Teachers' Tribunal has the authority to hear and determine such appeals.

When the Minister was referring to the proposed change of date from the 17th April to the 7th May for the election of the

Teachers Union member to the tribunal, the member for Victoria Park interjected and asked the reason. The Minister did not say what the reason was, and I take no umbrage at that. I have made inquiries, and, although it is only a small matter, I would point out that the alteration is due to the fact that the schools do not resume until about the 9th February, and the election of the Teachers Union delegate is effected by a State-wide ballot of the members of the Teachers Union.

It takes some time for teachers, particularly new teachers, to become accustomed to their surroundings, especially in out-of-the-way places, and it takes time for the union to conduct a State-wide ballot. The union considers that if these extra few weeks were given it would be more convenient, and I am glad the Minister has agreed to amend the date.

The only other thing I wish to do is clear up the point in connection with the payment of expenses in connection with appeals against promotions. The Bill will make it clear that both the appellant and the respondent will be entitled, in certain circumstances, to reimbursement of these expenses.

Before I resume my seat I would like to say a few words about the powers we propose to confer upon the Minister to determine specified areas in which children will be required to attend certain schools. The Minister referred to the method of effecting this alteration; and the manner in which it is to be done is embodied in the Bill.

I think every member will agree that while it is necessary for the Minister to have these powers, it is also necessary from time to time for him to publish specified areas in the *Government Gazette*. On the other hand, I would not like to see families separated. We could have the case of two children aged 10 and 11 attending a school, with two younger children coming on. I would not like to see the younger children diverted to another school which is further away.

I feel that would be most undesirable, and I am sure the parents and citizens' associations, members of Parliament, and others interested in education would agree that the Minister's publication in regard to specified areas could be modified to the extent of keeping families together at one school. I think this arose as a result of the Minister's refusal to allow a child to go to a certain school in the Midland area.

I do not disagree with the Minister on that point, because I know the difficulties that confront him and the Director-General of Education. I would like the Minister to give us an assurance that families will not be separated. I am grateful to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for mentioning this point, because like him I think it is most desirable to keep families together at one school.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [2.58 p.m.]: I would like to say a few words on the points mentioned by the member for Mt. Hawthorn, in connection with the Minister being able to prescribe areas and for them to be proclaimed by order in the *Government Gazette*.

I am not too happy with the present set-up of the Education Department on this aspect. The department is not at all receptive to representations in cases of hardship. In some cases the department sets a boundary right alongside a school fence, and children are sent considerable distances away from a school which is quite close to them.

The cases mentioned by the member for Mt. Hawthorn are occurring in newly-developing areas. We find that the younger age group are being sent further away from their homes, while the older children are attending a school alongside their homes. It is unreasonable that this situation should remain.

If it is necessary to transfer school children, then consideration should be given to the family position, and it should not be made more difficult for parents to send their children to school. This situation prevails among the infant groups in particular. As the infants grow older, perhaps it does not matter as much if they are transferred to another school, because they can look after themselves; but it is a great worry to parents if school children are sent to a school further away than is necessary.

If the department finds that the facilities and accommodation for the younger school children are inadequate and overcrowded in a particular district, then the ones to be transferred should be those in the older age group. The present practice is ridiculous.

The Minister would not have practical experience of this type of problem, because he is a country member. In nearly all country towns there is only the one school, and naturally the parents in such centres send their children to the school on the most convenient school bus service. In those cases no problem arises, but in the metropolitan area it has been a sore point for a long time. As the member for Mt. Hawthorn indicated, often older children in a family have been cut off from the younger children by being sent to a different school.

There is no reason why the department cannot be a little more flexible in its attitude. Up to date it has adopted a harsh and inconsiderate attitude, and I defy anyone to prove to me otherwise. I am sure other members can relate instances similar to those I have experienced in regard to this matter. It is not an insurmountable problem; it can be overcome by a little tolerance on the part of the department.

As I indicated, I do not think the transference of pupils to other schools is as important to older children, although some high school students have had a pretty raw deal from the department. They have been directed by the department to attend schools all over the place, and been conveyed by the buses which were provided; and then they may have been allocated to a high school which did not exist—as was the case at the Kewdale High School where the pupils were sent to other schools, because the accommodation was not completed on time. By comparison with the pupils at the Cannington High School, the Bentley High School, and others, the pupils of the Kewdale High School were getting a second-class education.

It is preferable to accommodate the pupils in conditions which are somewhat cramped, until extra classrooms are available, so that the children can enjoy all the facilities that are associated with high school life. To push some students to Midland or Victoria Park, because the accommodation in a certain school is inadequate, is a move in the wrong direction. This is unfair, because all taxpayers are on an even footing, and the children should receive the same education facilities as are provided for other children. They should not be pushed around here, there, and everywhere. To that extent I am critical of the department, and of its action, so far as high school pupils are concerned.

I think that to extend the activities of the parents and citizens' associations is a move in the right direction. Most of these bodies are ever-willing to take on more than they are expected to take on, but the limitation of Government finance is always an obstacle to them in endeavouring to supply all the niceties which are their responsibility to provide. If these associations wish to spread their wings when funds are available, then it is desirable that the Government should sanction their moves. To that extent I am quite happy with the provision in the Bill.

I might indicate to the Minister that during the Committee stage I will move an amendment to the effect that prescribed areas shall not apply to children who reside within a half-mile radius of any point of the grounds of a school. That is a reasonable proposition. Although the department might find it more difficult to work under the amendment which I propose, the problem is not insurmountable. It is the responsibility of the department, rather than the parents, to solve the problem.

MR. MAY (Collie) [3.6 p.m.]: This Bill appears to have been brought down for the purpose of adjusting certain anomalies. I do not want to reiterate what has been said by the member for Mt. Hawthorn, but I seek some information in regard to the first portion of the Bill. The position is not quite clear, in view of what I had been given to understand before the Bill was introduced.

I think I can best outline the position by reading the following letter from one, Mrs. Thelma O'Brien:—

> Dear Mr. May,
>
> Just a note to see if you can help me. The problem is Joy has now reached the age of fourteen. I have planned and saved for her to attend business college next year. Now I have been told she will have to stop at school until the end of the year she turns fifteen.
>
> If this is so it might take away her chance of going, as Andy goes on the miners' pension in December. That is the reason I want her to go next year, so we can get her settled. If we have to send her to school next year I will have to use some of the money I have saved, then may not have enough to send her to college the following year. I would enrol her as a full-time student. City Commercial College is where I would like her to attend.

I have examined the section of the Act which gives the Minister the authority to permit a child to leave school at 14 years of age, but it does not specifically cover the case I have just mentioned. This girl is 14 years of age, and her results in the examinations she last took were—

Algebra and geometry	71
Arithmetic	85
English	60
Typing	92

It is the ambition of her parents to send her to a commercial school to receive training.

The particular section in the Act which covers this point does not imply that this girl is able to appeal to the Minister so that she can leave school at 14 years of age for the purpose of attending another school on a full-time basis. I hope the Minister will be in a position to give me some information on this point when he replies to this second reading debate.

The member for Mt. Hawthorn and the member for Beeloo have dealt with the other matters contained in the Bill, therefore I need not go over the same ground. I trust the Minister will give me the information I am seeking on the particular section I mentioned. I propose to support the measure.

MR. GUTHRIE (Subiaco) [3.9 p.m.]: I wish to add a few remarks to those made on the amendment to section 21 of the Act. I can appreciate the difficulties of the department in regard to this matter, and I realise they are not easy of solution. The department plans secondary schools, based on attendance or population in

the primary schools, and the statistics are available to the department in respect of the various grades. By taking the number of children in, say, grade 5 in each of the primary schools that contribute to a high school, the department is able to work out the approximate influx into that particular high school two or three years hence.

I can sympathise with the department in that sometimes it has to be somewhat rigid and inflexible, otherwise an avalanche will develop and children will drift away from one high school to another and completely upset the departmental plan.

By the same token I can sympathise with the parents in some instances, and I feel that maybe the department could be a little less rigid when its over-all plan will not be affected. I run into this problem quite a bit each year on the western end of my electorate in what is known as the Hackett estate. Some of the children there attend the Floreat School, some the Jolimont School; and the primary school a child attends governs which high school he will be sent to. This year a family in which there are three children of high-school age, have one attending the Hollywood High School and one the Churchlands High School, and the third was directed to go to the City Beach High School. That is when the parents face difficulties. It is not merely a matter of having to get those three children to three different centres in the morning; it is also a question of cold, hard economics.

If parents have all girls they hope that the uniform they buy for the oldest girl in the first year will be suitable for the second girl, and, perhaps, the third, as the years go by; and they take it a little harshly when they find they have the expenditure of initially outfitting the three children in a short space of time. In the case of the City Beach High School this year, some children had been outfitted and were then directed, after about a fortnight, to go elsewhere.

Nevertheless, I do appreciate that the department has difficulties, too; but there is another aspect which arises in my electorate in connection with this particular provision; and I feel that the department could be lenient in this matter. It also involves the Jolimont Primary School. Children who attend that school fall into three categories. The vast majority of them are children who rightly attend that school: a small proportion should have attended the Floreat School; and a still smaller proportion should have attended the West Leederville School. It is the children who attend the Jolimont School from the West Leederville area who are hit the hardest. They are subsequently required to attend the Hollywood High School, which is a great distance from them and has no proper transport facilities. In some instances these children have been refused admission to the Perth Modern School, which is the natural school for them to attend.

I suggest that a survey of the figures of the children attending the Hollywood High School and the Perth Modern School would indicate that both schools could accommodate the few children affected, and I believe that a little leniency in those instances would certainly win a lot of popularity for the department from the community.

I do, as I have said, appreciate the economic problems of the parents when they are required to buy different sets of uniforms for three children attending a high school. There could be some merit in the suggestion of the member for Mt. Hawthorn that, as far as is humanly possible, all members of the same family should be permitted to attend the one school.

Again, as I said earlier, the department has real problems, but a little give-and-take on both sides would help quite a lot in solving these problems which arise every February, and quite often at short notice.

I would point out to the Minister also that in Subiaco proper there has never been any checking done as to whether children attend the right primary school, for the simple reason that the three primary schools which serve the area—Thomas Street, Subiaco Central, and Rosalie—are all well under capacity, and as far as I can see, the children are allowed to attend whichever school they choose. It is very difficult for the department to check on them because with some of the long roads in Subiaco, such as Heytesbury Road, and Nicholson Road, it would be difficult to ascertain from which end of the particular street a child came, and therefore it would be difficult to ascertain in which area the child lived. That in itself governs the high school which a child must attend.

However, that does not produce the problems that arise at the Jolimont end of my electorate, because when a child in Subiaco is directed to attend the Hollywood High School, or the Perth Modern School, he can get to either of those schools on ordinary public transport.

With those observations, I support the Bill, and hope a little more leniency will be shown in this regard by the department. It may be of interest to the Minister to know that in one case recently I was told by the Director of Secondary Education that he could only agree to a change if a medical certificate were produced. This medical certificate was obtained but, quite frankly, the strength of the case did not rest on that certificate. The whole situation arose because the other children went to Perth Modern School, and this particular child was directed to the Hollywood High School.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [3.16 p.m.]: I briefly want to support the majority of amendments in this Bill. As the member for Subiaco has just pointed out, section 21, which is to be amended, does create a great amount of difficulty.

Members will recall that on several occasions, either on the Address-in-Reply or at other appropriate opportunities, I have drawn attention to the farcical situation that exists in the electorate of Bayswater that I represent, and particularly at the Hillcrest School. The boundary in this particular instance is the centre of the road, with the school on one side. The ridiculous position exists whereby parents are able to look across from the other side of the road at the school and yet have to send their children to the Embleton Primary School, a half a mile away. I know the position is difficult, because I think the next closest primary school is at Normanby Street, apart from the old Bayswater Primary School. However, it does seem to me to be a ridiculous position when children can walk out their front gate past one school and then must travel half a mile to another one.

In 1964 I was promised that this matter would be kept under review and an alteration made as soon as possible, but to date nothing has been done in that regard. I hope the Minister will ensure that his department does make another investigation to ascertain whether it is possible to alleviate the position. I know it is difficult to try to place children in the school closest to them, particularly, as the member for Subiaco has indicated, when a high school is involved.

In my territory the farcical position exists that children from Maylands attend the high school in Bayswater—the John Forrest High School—and children from Bayswater have to travel to the Ashfield High School in Bassendean. I do not know how this position can be overcome, because, again, the river forms a natural boundary and the next high school is the Mount Lawley High School at the top of Second Avenue, which is well away.

I am very interested in the primary schools and particularly in the Hillcrest Primary School, and I would ask the Minister to agree to the amendment proposed by the member for Beeloo. I have conversed with him and I suggest that instead of the amendment stating half a mile, which is a little far, it should provide for a quarter of a mile, which would be much more in keeping with modern trends. I support the measure at this stage and hope the Minister will direct his department once again to give attention to this rather vexed problem in my electorate.

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [3.20 p.m.]: I want to thank those members who have contributed to this debate for their understanding of the problem facing the department, and particularly in regard to the boundaries. Although I represent a country area, I can appreciate the problems, particularly the ones facing the parents in the metropolitan area.

Since I have been Minister for Education, I have had some cases that have been particularly difficult. Members have quoted some such instances. I know of a case where four children in the one family attend four different schools. As so often happens, and this is fortunate, the parents want to take an interest in their schools through the parents and citizens' associations. However, the parents of the children who are attending four different schools find themselves morally obliged to support four parents and citizens' associations.

One mother told me she started out in the morning in her car and drove her children to four different points of the compass in order that her children could attend the four schools. I was able to do something in this case. However, members will appreciate that if one gives a concession to Mrs. Jones, then Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Brown, and Mrs. Hill will hear about it within a short space of time. The problem then is not that of placing one youngster but perhaps 30 or 40.

Mr. Hawke: The husband should not talk so much.

Mr. LEWIS: That is correct. The husbands should talk about other matters in addition to taking an interest in the education of their children and telling their wives what they should do. I could not agree more with the Leader of the Opposition.

While we are dealing with this question, I refer to the suggestion that has been made today—and I can appreciate the feelings behind this suggestion—that we should not separate families. Of course, it is very desirable that families should not be separated.

Often we get a request that little Johnnie, who is now in his first year of school, could be safely escorted to his school by his elder brother or sister. This is very desirable, but it is not possible if we are going to direct the younger child to a school other than the one attended by his older brother or sister.

I can go along with those who say that we should keep families together. On the other hand, the member for Beeloo has suggested that, where we have a school situation in which we have to draw boundaries, we should direct the elder children rather than the younger ones. Unless we are going to agree to separate families, this would mean that we would have to look at each child and say, "Have you a younger brother, a younger sister, an older brother, or an older sister attending this school?" If the answer was, "Yes," we

would have to say, "Then we will not separate you." We would also have to look at the lone wolves and see how this principle would affect them.

Here again, Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Brown who are living alongside each other might have some rather hard comment to make to the department. What the boy or girl next door is doing could be constantly tossed at the department. These are the real problems.

The member for Subiaco suggested that sometimes the department might be a little hard and not quite as understanding as it should be. I suppose in a rather large family, such as we have in the Education Department, this sometimes occurs. The department sets down a policy and this policy is made known to the officers of the department. There are many responsible officers in the department and sometimes they say, "Well, what is the policy?" Once they have learned what it is, they are very reluctant to depart from it because, if they do so, probably some sort of censure will come from their superiors.

If any honourable member who knows of some case where it is working rather harshly, makes representations to the department, or to the Minister, the matter can be looked at particularly. I am sure, too, they would be given as much sympathetic consideration as is possible. I have yet to find the department puts up the shutters against representations made to it; and, indeed, I hope that this will never be the case. In my office as Minister, I meet these requests every day. Of course, the department cannot say, "Yes" to all of them, but at least they can be looked at.

I well recall the representations made by the member for Bayswater over the years in regard to the Hillcrest situation; and, in reply to what he has said today, all I can say at this moment is that I was unaware of the boundary being so close to the school as the street alongside. However, I will have a look at the position and advise him of the result. I will take steps to establish what consideration the department has given to this problem and whether it is possible to alleviate the situation there.

I know the department would much prefer not having to draw boundaries. Of course, with the population explosion in the metropolitan area, particularly in the suburbs, we find there is a demand for schools right, left, and centre. There just is not the finance to erect as many new schools as we would like, and we have to ensure that the accommodation available in the existing schools is used to full capacity.

There is yet another angle to this problem and this could affect the drawing of boundaries. In some of the older suburbs, we find that the school accommodation is rather more than the enrolment needs and that there are empty seats and spaces in the schools. In such a situation the department would be well justified in directing children from the more populated suburbs into those schools in order to obtain full use from them.

Mr. W. Hegney: Some of the classrooms are used for the students from the outer suburbs who are brought in by bus.

Mr. LEWIS: Yes, that is so. If we were not able to draw boundaries, we would not be able to do this. Just where these boundaries should be drawn—whether 100 yards, half a mile, or a quarter of a mile—is not something in respect of which one reasonably can lay down hard and fast rules. This has to be governed by the particular situation. In some cases it might be possible to make a boundary a mile away but, in other cases, a quarter of a mile would be too far.

The aim is to gazette these boundaries at the beginning of every year and to revise them annually so that they are not redundant in any way. They are kept right up to date and what might be a harsh situation this year could, perhaps, with some rebuilding, become an easier situation next year and the boundaries could be adjusted accordingly.

I thank the member for Mt. Hawthorn in regard to his comments about the teachers' salaries, and the Teachers Union representatives. I did not enlarge upon the date of the union representatives' elections, in my comments. However, this merely makes it three weeks later. I did not look at this matter very closely because I was assured the Teachers Union had requested this. The department could not see anything wrong with it because it merely represented a postponement of three weeks. This seemed to be a domestic affair, and I approved of it.

Mr. W. Hegney: The Deputy Speaker asked the question yesterday in his capacity as a private member—as the member for Victoria Park.

Mr. LEWIS: I did not hear him yesterday in his capacity as the member for Victoria Park. The member for Beeloo referred to some of the schools being half built and said that some children were, comparatively, receiving a substandard high school education. I suppose it is very difficult—in fact, almost impossible—for any Government, at any time, to say that all children are receiving the same level of education or the same level of facilities for education. This is just not possible. It is not possible to say that the children who are out in Woop Woop are getting the same standard of education as is being given in the metropolitan area. Indeed, it is not possible to say that all parts of the metropolitan area have the same educational facilities. We have to continue to build the standard up and do what we can. We find that where a high school

is needed in a new suburb, we have to draw boundaries for a while. This will be done progressively over a period; and for a time during the building-up stages a parent could justifiably say that his child did not have the same access to educational facilities as his more fortunate cousins who lived nearer to an established high school. This is a situation we have to accept, and it is not peculiar to education alone.

The member for Collie referred to a child of 14 who desires to leave school in order to attend a commercial college, but because the Act provides that a child must remain at school until the end of the year in which he turns 15 years, such child could not obtain exemption from the Minister until his fifteenth birthday. Therefore, at present, that child would not be permitted to leave school. Even under the proposed amendment in the Bill the Minister can grant exemption only if there are certain specified reasons, and these do not include a situation such as that mentioned by the member for Collie. However, I would like to discuss this case with the honourable member. If this child is fairly bright, as the member for Collie represents her to be, and she has successfully completed three years of education to obtain either the Junior Certificate or the high school certificate, then there will be no difficulty at all in granting exemption to her in order that she may attend commercial college if the amendment to the Bill, of which I have given notice, is passed.

On the other hand, if the child has not successfully completed three years of schooling then, despite the financial circumstances of the parents, I do not believe the child should be granted an exemption from attending school for the purpose of supporting her parents. In this case the welfare of the child and the benefits that will accrue to her by remaining at school should be the primary consideration. If the child will benefit by continuing at school and she does not have the scholastic ability that would enable her to obtain a Junior Certificate or a high school certificate, then I believe it is in the best interests of that child to continue at school until she turns 15, or until the end of the year in which she turns 15.

This question of granting a child exemption from attending school is a very difficult one. I can appreciate the feelings of those who make representations to me for their children's exemption. I have had a spate of such representations within the last three or four months, and I am told that at the department this morning the telephone ran hot because of parents ringing up after reading in this morning's paper that exemption will be granted to a child as from the fourteenth birthday. These are parents who are already applying for their children to be exempted from attending school. I hope no Minister will treat this right of exemption lightly. The principal purpose of education is to impart knowledge to children, and they should be obliged to attend school until the leaving age without exemption if that is possible.

Mr. May: If this child is granted exemption she will continue with her schooling.

Mr. LEWIS: At present the Education Act provides for the compulsory attendance of a child at a school which is defined as an efficient school. The department considers an efficient school to be one where a certain standard of education is taught right through all the stages until the child attains the Leaving Certificate, all other things being satisfactory, but a commercial college gives a specialised education and the department has no power at present to compel any child to attend such a school. This is an aspect we should consider.

We should not take a child from the ordinary school classes at the tender age of 14 in the belief that he will go on to obtain further schooling, unless he has already proved his ability at school either by gaining the Junior Certificate or the high school certificate. However, if there are some special cases, then I suggest to the member for Collie that he bring them to the Minister's notice.

I have also received a letter from the Australian Labor Women's Organisation—I think that is the correct name—which is protesting most vigorously about any situation in which a child is granted exemption before the statutory age, which at present is the end of the year in which the child turns 15. That organisation advocates that the leaving age be increased to 16 years or even higher. That is the viewpoint of one body; and one can appreciate the motives of those who wrote such a letter. However, we have to deal with the realities of life, and in some of the cases I have referred to we would be doing the child a disservice if we insisted that the child remain at school against its will, and if we had no regard to its ability to learn any further.

Mr. May: This section of the Act gives you the right to grant exemption to a child to leave school in order to go to work. Is it not better for a child to leave school in order to go to a higher school?

Mr. LEWIS: The department would have to be satisfied that this extra education could not be given at a State school.

Mr. May: How does the provision apply to a child who intends to go to work?

Mr. LEWIS: If exemption is granted to a child in order to take up employment, the Minister has to be satisfied that the employment is satisfactory; that it is offering a future to the child; and that it is in the child's best interests. The provision of employment for the child in itself is not sufficient. That is coupled with what is best for the child.

Mr. May: Would not the benefits of further study be in the interests of the child?

Mr. LEWIS: The question is whether that type of education is best for a child at that stage, or whether it is best for the child to continue its education in the ordinary school classes at that stage. If the member for Collie will give me further particulars, I will have this case investigated. I have covered most of the points raised, and the representations made by the members who have contributed to the debate will be considered and given effect to wherever possible.

Mr. J. Hegney: What is the position in regard to the department fixing boundaries for certain schools whereby a child of tender years has to travel a greater distance to school than an older child?

Mr. LEWIS: These are points that will be considered. The department is already sympathetic towards the younger child. I know of no instance of a child having to travel a greater distance than an older brother or sister. I think the situation is only theoretical. However, I will examine that point to ascertain whether such a situation does exist; and, if so, I will do what I can to remedy it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 13 amended—

Mr. MAY: I cannot reconcile the requirements I want with what the Minister said. Provided the parents are agreed, provision should be made whereby a brilliant child of 14 years of age can go to a higher school or business college. I think the case I am quoting is far more important than the one quoted by the Minister; and I cannot reconcile his remarks with mine. I am happy that the Minister said he will attend to the matter if I place it before him, but the fact remains that the position is not covered by the measure.

Mr. LEWIS: When the member for Collie spoke he did not use the term "brilliant child." The honourable member certainly read out the marks which the child had attained; and I would remind the member for Collie of my amendment on the notice paper which deals with a brilliant child. It is presumed that a brilliant child is one that has successfully obtained three years of education in the post-primary field, and such a child would be readily granted exemption.

Mr. Hawke: If a child had not completed three years at a secondary school, would there be no legal power the Minister could use to grant exemption?

Mr. LEWIS: There are very few children who could be regarded as brilliant children at the age of 14. The Minister, in any case, would have power to exempt at the age of 14. It would be after the fourteenth birthday, whereas now it is not until the fifteenth birthday.

Mr. Hawke: After three years at a secondary school.

Mr. MAY: In regard to the case I mentioned, I wrote a letter to Mr. Dettman of the Education Department and he told me of the amendment that now appears on the notice paper. However, he did not say anything about a child having to be brilliant. Had he done so, I could have produced the evidence. He merely said that point would be covered when the amending legislation went before Parliament. This clause makes no reference to children who reach the age of 14.

Mr. Lewis: The amendment does that.

Mr. JAMIESON: I feel the Minister's assurance that he will not view this lightly is very important. I made representations to the Minister this year and he has now found a way to overcome the problem, as indicated in his second reading speech. The case I referred to the Minister was one where the headmaster agreed the child concerned would not achieve anything more by staying at school. There could be an acute problem so far as discipline is concerned, but it is far better for all concerned if a child remains in the job which he has found for himself and which he may not obtain in competition with others if he stayed at school until the end of the school year.

As a general principle we are trying to attain a higher standard of education for children; and probably before long the school-leaving age will be 17 years, as it is in America. However, when that leaving age does apply, we will have to make provision for certain exemptions in regard to trade training and so on.

The Minister has on the notice paper an amendment which will give him the right to consider such aspects of specialised training and trade training, provided the person concerned has passed through three years' basic secondary school education.

Sitting suspended from 3.47 to 4.4 p.m.

Mr. MAY: I have now studied the amendment on the notice paper, and if I had made that study earlier I might have save myself a lot of trouble. I want to be fair and apologise to the Minister for taking up his time. At the same time, I want to thank the Minister for his explanation.

Mr. LEWIS: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 8—Delete the passage "school," and substitute the following

passage:—

school—

(a)

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. LEWIS: I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 15—Delete the passage, "employment." and substitute the following passage—

employment; or

(b) if the child has successfully completed three years of secondary education in Western Australia or a course of education that the Minister considers is of an equivalent or higher standard, and satisfies the Minister that he desires to leave school in order to undertake full-time education in a vocational course other than at a Government school or an efficient school,

but the exemption in respect of paragraph (b) of this subsection shall apply only while the child continues to receive such full-time education in a vocational course as is referred to in that paragraph.

Mr. HALL: While reading the amendment the Minister mentioned the word, "he". Why is it not, "he or she"?

The CHAIRMAN: That point is covered by the Interpretation Act. The word, "she" is understood.

Mr. BRADY: Would the Minister give me his viewpoint of what "vocational" would mean in the eyes of the Department? I know of one lad who wanted to leave school to become an apprentice in a training stable. There could be some complication as to what "vocational" means. There could be some jealousy between the department and private schools.

Mr. LEWIS: I would not like to decide whether horseracing is a vocation or a disease. I think the latter. There is no jealousy between the department and the commercial schools. My definition of a vocational course would be one not given in the usual schools. It could be a course at a technical school or a commercial college where more advanced education is received than we are able to give at the ordinary schools. We would give sympathetic consideration to an application for a child to attend such a school. However, this amendment will make the position so that such a step could not be taken as an excuse to leave school before the school-leaving age. The child must attend the new school until the school-leaving age, or go back to the original school.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 21 amended—

Mr. JAMIESON: Provided I can get an assurance from the Minister, I will not proceed with my proposed amendment, which would make a hard-and-fast rule and make the situation complex for the department. The Minister has indicated that boundaries will be prescribed for an area, and published in the *Government Gazette*. I would like the Minister to give an assurance that when the boundaries are prescribed, a formal indication will be sent to the members affected so they will know what is going on before the commencement of the next school year. Not wanting to tell members what is going on until somebody gets a whisper and asks a question seems to be a failing of the department. If the Minister for Works lays a short length of pipe, we get notification through the mail.

Mr. LEWIS: I cannot indicate that we will advise 80 members of Parliament of every little alteration. The notices will appear in the *Government Gazette*, and we expect that members of Parliament read that publication. I will examine the request but I cannot make any promises.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 10 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Minister for Police) [4.20 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Despite previous amendments to the Firearms and Guns Act, it has not been possible completely to combat the menace of indiscriminate shooting which today is costing primary producers and others thousands of dollars. This is no idle conjecture, as I have received complaints from individuals and organisations that substantiate my assertion that great damage is being caused to both property and stock by wilful shooting.

At the present time, there are some 74,417 firearm licenses held which would approximate anything up to 150,000 guns covered by licenses in this State; and I would be naive if I were to suggest that there was not a considerable number of unlicensed weapons. Added to this, there are approximately 7,000 to 10,000 firearms in the possession of members of rifle club associations for which licenses are not required. Frankly, I feel that this is a staggering total and one entirely out of proportion to the needs of the people of this State.

I think the number of firearms in the possession of the public would far exceed the number in the hands of the Army. The question of the rifle clubs does create a loophole in the control of firearms by the

issue of licenses. I think most members would know that when a person becomes a member of the rifle association he can obtain a firearm—a .303—for the sum of $6, I think it is, and he is not required to take out a firearm license. In addition, that person can obtain more than one rifle. Usually such a person keeps one rifle for competitive use and another rifle for sporting purposes. This rifle is used away from the rifle range.

The situation arises where a member of one of the clubs—and there are many of these clubs throughout the State—will go to another area and does not necessarily join another club. From my investigation of the matter, and from discussions I had with the rifle association, it appears there is a loophole in this regard. As a result of the talks I had, the association, for its part, will endeavour to tighten up its constitution, regulations, or whatever it has governing the issue of firearms to rifle club members. I think members will agree, however, that 150,000 is a staggering number of guns and one that is out of proportion to the needs of the people of the State.

In the rugged pioneer days it may have been necessary for a large percentage of the population to possess firearms, but I feel the passing of time has lessened the need. This, however, has not happened, and today we have many people possessing guns which they never use. Admittedly years ago it was much easier to obtain a firearm license. In those days it was only a matter of going to the nearest police station, making a request, and paying the requisite fee, which was then 50c, to secure a license. That is not the situation today. The police are very strict about the issuing of licenses, and have to be completely satisfied that a need does exist for a person to own and license a gun.

However, the position is even worse as many people forget that they own guns and leave them lying around where they may come into the possession of undesirables and the inexperienced. This often leads to violence and destruction; and, in many cases, it has caused death by accident.

I think members will recall having read many instances in the Press of people being injured or killed as a result of a firearm accident. In many cases it has been a result of ignorance on the part of the person in possession of the firearm. I would also remind the House that the late Eric Edgar Cooke committed many of his murders with a firearm that had been stolen. This firearm had been stored away in a cupboard and the owner had possibly forgotten about it. I would appeal to any person who possesses a weapon that he does not need, to surrender it to the authorities. This would help to eliminate any possibility of its being used illegally or accidentally.

I have discussed this matter with the Commissioner of Police and it is felt that an amnesty could be granted to those who possess firearms for which they have no use and for which they hold no licenses. I hope this appeal will not go unanswered, and that many people who have such guns in their possession will turn them over to the police. However, I am well aware that such a request will not go far in eliminating indiscriminate shooting, because the majority of persons who engage in this highly dangerous and destructive practice are most irresponsible persons who have little thought for other people's property. This consequently makes amendments to the Act necessary as it is considered essential that more stringent steps must be taken to curb these people by law.

Although this is the main reason for the Bill, opportunity is also being taken to make a number of other amendments considered necessary to have this most important measure operating efficiently. At present it is not possible to use a firearm on land belonging to another without the consent of the owner or occupier of such land, but it is very difficult to catch offenders in the actual act of firing a gun; hence the need for the legislation.

This refers particularly to the type of shooter who is known as the spotlight shooter. It is indeed difficult to catch such people in the act of discharging firearms, and that is why one amendment has been included in the Bill. In moving to legislate against the indiscriminate shooter, care has been taken to ensure that the desire to control wanton and dangerous shooting does not impose restrictions that would hinder the lawful shooter. In the first instance, a close study has been made of measures adopted in other States to control the menace, and a provision in division 7 of part VII of the Victorian Police Offences Act of 1961, appears to go a long way towards helping to eradicate the menace. The section in question makes it an offence—

> Except with the consent expressed or implied of the occupier of land for a person to carry or have in his possession any firearm while he is on such land.

The difference in area between Victoria and Western Australia made it necessary, however, to add provisos. Firstly, it was decided that no offence would take place in the carrying or having a firearm on a road open to, and used by, the public. This is an essential proviso as many such roads cut across large holdings, such as are to be found in this State. The second proviso is that the particular offence be restricted to land "used for or in connection with primary production." It would, of course, be unreasonable and unnecessary to make it applicable to land generally, as this would apply to remote areas, and this is not intended.

The first reaction may be that the amendment is a rather drastic and restrictive one, but, as I have already mentioned, it is at present an offence to use a firearm on land belonging to another without the consent of the owner or occupier of such land and, therefore, it is only inviting trouble to carry a gun on such property if permission has not been obtained.

Mr. Bickerton: Does this mean that a prospector in the north-west who is going from one job to another, or an itinerant worker, will not be allowed to carry a firearm with him through the various station properties unless he has the permission of the station lessee?

Mr. CRAIG: No, not necessarily; because we are trying to provide for that particular instance where, as the honourable member says, a prospector in an isolated area could not possibly be expected to contact the owner of the property, who might be several hundred miles away. That is why we have the clause in the Bill worded in the way it is. It is confined to land engaged in primary production.

Mr. Bickerton: Is not a station engaged in primary production if it is producing wool?

Mr. CRAIG: That could be so. There could be the instance where a property of many hundreds of thousands of acres would not be fully engaged on primary production. It was felt that the clause in the Bill would overcome the point raised by the honourable member because it specifies land engaged in primary production.

Mr. Bickerton: I still think a station is engaged in primary production.

Mr. Norton: It is definitely engaged in primary production.

Mr. Bickerton: If wool is being produced, it is.

Mr. CRAIG: In any case, we can debate that aspect further at a later stage. I was merely endeavouring to answer the query raised by the honourable member.

The real need to ban the carrying of firearms under these circumstances lies in the fact that it is very difficult to actually catch the person or persons in the act of shooting, especially in isolated areas. This amendment, it is felt, will go a long way towards combating a menace that should not exist.

In dealing with the other amendments I would point out that the first one concerns section 3 dealing with definitions. In the existing definition of "firearms" the term also includes "ammunition designed for discharge from any firearm." This definition would seem to cover only ammunition manufactured as such.

Since the inception of the Act, and increasingly so in latter years, it has been possible to purchase components in their separate forms—the powder and primers, projectiles, and cartridge cases—thus enabling any person who so desires to reload ammunition of any calibre. Such components can be purchased by any person who may be in possession of a stolen or unlicensed firearm.

The components mentioned above are stocked mainly by licensed firearm dealers who are required under the Act to record sales of complete ammunition but not the sale of components. This is considered most unsatisfactory, and the suggestion is that components designed or sold for the purpose of reloading ammunition be included.

Up until this year certain portions of the north-west were exempted from the provisions of the Act, although there has always been power under subsection (4) of section 4 to bring towns in the exempted area within the scope of the Act by means of proclamation.

Early this year, it became necessary, by virtue of the rapid expansion of our north-west, to proclaim the whole of the State as being within the scope of the Firearms and Guns Act.

By bringing the whole of the State under the Act, certain amendments to section 4 became necessary. In the first instance in subsection (1), the word "pistol" in line 2 is to be deleted and the word "firearm" inserted in lieu; and, secondly, as subsections (3) and (4) defining areas having become redundant, it is felt, they should be deleted.

The very nature of the Firearms and Guns Act makes it essential that the police have full power to deal with firearms. However, at the present time, it is felt that police powers are insufficient under section 11. Firstly, although provision is made in this section for a police officer to seize any firearm in the possession of a person who has not the requisite license under the Act, or any unlicensed firearm, it would appear that no provision has been made for the police to seize any firearm found in the possession of any person who states that he is the holder of a current license for the firearms, but who cannot immediately produce proof of same, or proof that he is exempt under the provisions of section 9 of the Act.

The seizure need only be a temporary one until the person can supply the necessary proof, but it is felt that in such circumstances, the firearm is better off in custody, and that the person should not be allowed to possess the unlicensed firearm until he can produce the proof.

The second aspect concerns the seizure of firearms deemed to be unsafe. A police officer may have reason to interview a person suspected of an offence under this Act. This suspect may produce a current license for the firearm in his possession but, on examination of the firearm, it could be deemed to be unsafe. At the

present time, the police have no power to seize the firearm in order to prevent the owner from using it.

The final amendment deals with the alteration of firearms. Item 5A of the table to section 12 provides penalties for defacing or altering, without lawful excuse, any number or identification mark on a firearm, or being in possession of a firearm whereon any number or identification mark on the license has been altered or defaced, but makes no provision for circumstances under which the construction of a firearm is altered; or being in possession of such a firearm.

There have been instances where .22 rifles have been cut down to pistol size, and no action could be taken in regard to the person who altered the firearm, or the person in possession of same. To quote an instance: On one occasion a person currently licensed to possess a .22 rifle, cut the weapon down to pistol size and, when the matter was brought to the notice of the police, no action could be taken within the present scope of section 12.

The person concerned could not be charged under the provisions of section 12, subsection (1)(a) for being in possession of a firearm without holding the requisite license, and neither could the weapon be classed as an unlicensed pistol as it was currently licensed as a rifle. The only action that could be taken was to declare the firearm unfit for use and refuse to license it further.

In addition, the Crown Law Department has ruled that a rifle barrel is not a firearm within the meaning of the Act, and such can be purchased by any person wishing to change the calibre of his existing licensed firearm without advising the Police Department of his action. This would apply mainly to firearms used for sporting purposes and classified by the Police Department as high-powered firearms; and also to persons legally in possession of .303 club rifles for which no license is required, and which can be converted without difficulty to .303/25, a popular calibre amongst shooters.

The alteration of firearms in the manner described, and the present availability of the components for reloading ammunition gives persons who have been refused licenses to possess high-powered firearms an opportunity to possess and use such firearms without the knowledge of the Police Department, and makes it essential to have an amendment to prevent such action.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brady.

POISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

MR. HALL (Albany) [4.37 p.m.]: The Act which this Bill seeks to amend is rather a new one. It was first introduced into the House in 1964, when it sought to amend the Pharmacy Act and the Police Act. There is no doubt that the purpose of the Bill is to control narcotics and their addiction, and that, of course, is quite a sound objective.

We will see how important this subject is, however, if we search into the effects of the opium poppy and the narcotics that can result from various acids, particularly when we consider that the Burmese Government has taken drastic steps to practically eliminate the growing of poppies in that country. This was a tremendous industry in Burma, and it is now being controlled, and is almost eliminated. That will give members an idea as to how serious is the measure before the House.

As I have already said, the parent Act was introduced in 1964, and it is now found necessary to make certain amendments to that Act to bring it into line with modern thinking. It is first proposed to amend section 5 of the Act by inserting an interpretation of "prohibited plant."

The purpose of the amendment is not to prohibit entirely the growing of the poppy, but to introduce some form of control. We all appreciate the importance of the poppy to the manufacturers of drugs, and of the narcotics which can be extracted from the poppy, and which are used for pharmaceutical purposes.

Only recently we had the unsavoury experience, which we as members of this House would not wish to witness, of a female in a certain profession becoming a drug addict. I am sure, however, we would all be most sympathetic to the lady in question.

As I have said, the Bill seeks to introduce, in the interpretation section of the Act, an interpretation of "prohibited plant." The definition is very wide. A prohibited plant could be grown in any backyard. New South Wales recently took some action in connection with the control and elimination of marihuana. It was considered to be an offensive drug, and it has almost been eliminated from the pharmaceutical list in that State. Authorities in New South Wales have also provided a penalty of $300, or a term of imprisonment, for anyone who is found with this drug in his possession.

Our legislation does not go quite so far. We will permit people to grow poppies under restricted permits which will be issued by the Health Department. This will provide a measure of control which has not been evident in the past. The purpose of the amendment is to provide for more co-operation with the people who apply for licenses than there has been in the past. It appears that the machinery previously available was not suitable to speed up the granting of permits.

The Bill will certainly place a great deal of power in the hands of the Commissioner of Public Health, because it will be for him to decide whether or not to issue a permit. That will probably be an advantage, because he will be the man who will be dealing with the actual drug.

The Bill also seeks to iron out an anomaly which exists in the parent Act in connection with persons under 18 years of age. Apparently there is no clear definition of this aspect in the Act, and it is now being brought under the control of the Department of Public Health.

While we are on the question of drugs we must appreciate the importance of drugs like opium and marihuana. One thing that strikes me, however, is that it is possible to manufacture any type of narcotic from an acid base. While this Bill seeks to control drug addiction, there is the possibility that this aspect could expand to such an extent as to be quite dangerous. We might only be touching the fringes of the problem, particularly when we consider the fears expressed by the United Nations Organisation, and the fact that it only grants permits to certain countries.

As we all know one of our greatest adversaries is Red China, which is alleged to be flooding the market with opium from its poppy fields. When we go through the schedules to the Act we will appreciate just how great a destroyer narcotics can be, particularly if the Communists decide to use them.

As I have said, these drugs can be manufactured from any acid whatsoever. I would like to quote from a publication which lists the drugs which are under international control. It states—

> Salts of organic bases, which comprise most of the narcotic substances, are designated by combining the name of the base with the name of the appropriate acid radical. Theoretically, almost all known acids could form salts with a narcotic base. In this list, however, only those base acid combinations known to be manufactured are given. The names of the acid radicals do not in themselves indicate narcotics.
>
> Particular care has been taken regarding the names under which narcotic substances are marketed.

There is a weakness in the Bill before us, in that many chemists who stock these drugs are under the impression that they have to be marked. That is not the case, as is evident from an examination of the amendment to section 50 of the Act. The position is left wide open, when we take into account the destructive power of narcotics. I could go on quoting the chemical formulas, but I would have to seek the assistance of the member for Wembley so that I could pronounce the terms correctly. I will not do that.

I would point out to members the seriousness of the measure. The amendments are designed to rectify a fault in the legislation, and, since 1964, it has been found necessary to introduce them. I need not elaborate much more on the provisions in the Bill, because it has been passed in another place where most of the points have been raised.

Serious concern should be felt for the growth of the poppy plant, because it can be grown in any part of this State or country. Although under this Bill legislation is being introduced to bring the growth of poppies under control, the field is so wide that we are only touching the fringes of the problem. In this respect much concern is felt in other countries of the world, because as recent as the 16th September there appeared a report in *The West Australian* headed, "Plan to Rid Burma of Opium." After having grown the poppy plant and produced opium for many years, that country now finds it necessary to take steps to stamp out the growing of poppies. This shows what a destructive weapon opium can be when it is placed under the control of a country which desires to destroy, or to lower the standard of, another country. This problem should be attacked on an international basis.

In introducing the Bill the Minister expressed the opinion that this particular weakness would be overcome, but when we examine the facts we find that opium-producing poppies make up less than one-eighth of the source of the narcotics that can be produced in this country, if we take into account the acids which can be used as the base of narcotics. The measure is a commendable one, and if it is passed it will only need to come up for amendment in the future. I think it is a step in the right direction.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

JUDGES' SALARIES AND PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 21st September.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [4.51 p.m.]: This Bill proposes to amend the principal Act by making provision for the payment of higher salaries to the judges of our State Supreme Court. The proposed increases appear to have been worked out by the Government, or its officers, on the basis of carefully considering the scales of salaries which are paid to judges of the

Supreme Courts in the other States of Australia. The new scale for Western Australia seems to have a fairly close relationship to that of South Australia and Queensland.

I think it could be argued quite fairly that the degree of work and the responsibility of the judges of the Supreme Court of Western Australia would now be somewhat similar to those which apply in the other two States, even though the population of both Queensland and South Australia is somewhat higher than the population of Western Australia.

The only unusual feature about the introduction of this Bill to increase the salaries of the judges on this occasion is the fact it was not introduced by the Premier and Treasurer of the State. I have not searched back into the history of our legislation, but from my recollection I think a Bill of this description has always in the past been introduced by the Premier and Treasurer of the day. On the present occasion it was introduced by the Minister in this House who represents the Minister for Justice. I am sure the delegation of this responsibility to a junior Minister is not a reflection upon the judges of our Supreme Court.

In the circumstances, and especially in view of the fact the proposed increases have a direct relationship to what has taken place in the other States of Australia in connection with the salaries of the judges, there appears to be no option but to support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [4.55 p.m.]: I move—

> That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 4th October.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.56 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 4th October, 1966

CONTENTS

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

MAIL TO THE ARMED FORCES IN VIETNAM

Unsatisfactory Delivery

1. The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Minister for Mines:

> In view of the very unsatisfactory delivery of mail to and from members of the forces in Vietnam, will he have urgent consideration given to the problem with a view to making suggestions to the Army through the appropriate channels for the more expeditious handling of mail matter?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

> I acknowledge the fact that the honourable member kindly gave me notice of his intention to ask this question. I will take the matter up with the appropriate authorities to see what I can do to assist.

COMMONWEALTH REPATRIATION BILL

Introduction in Senate without Message

2. The Hon. H. K. WATSON asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) With reference to last week's