

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 23 October 1980

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., and read prayers.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARINE AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Deputy Premier), and transmitted to the Council.

RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS BILL

Third Reading

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Deputy Premier) [11.02 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

During debate on the Bill last night the member for Mt. Hawthorn had a query with respect to definitions in the Bill. He wanted to know why the Supreme Court was not listed. In view of the great co-operation I received last night, I raced around to get the details for him before we finally dealt with the Bill.

The position is as I indicated last night. I am advised by the Crown Law Department it is not necessary for the definition of Supreme Court to be mentioned in the Bill as this is covered in section 4 of the Interpretation Act. The Family and District Courts are not mentioned in that Act. That is the reason the Family and District Courts only are mentioned in this Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

LOAN BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [11.05 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Each year through a measure such as this, authority is sought for the raising of loans to finance certain works and services as detailed in the Estimates of Expenditure from the General Loan Fund as tabled on Thursday, 2 October.

The Bill seeks to provide authority for the raising of loans not exceeding \$70 million for the purposes listed in the first schedule.

It may be noted by members that the borrowing authority sought for each of the several works and services listed in the schedule will not necessarily coincide with the estimated expenditure on that item in the current year. This situation arises due to the fact that account is taken of the unexpended balance of previous Loan Act authorisations and of the need to provide a sufficiently high level of new borrowing to enable works of a continuing nature to be maintained for a period of about six months after the close of the financial year. This action ensures continuity of works in progress pending the passage of next year's Loan Bill and is in accordance with usual practice.

Details of the condition of the various loan authorities are set out in pages 42 to 45 of the Loan Estimates. These pages also detail information relating to the appropriation of loan repayments received in 1979-80; the allocation of Commonwealth general purpose capital grants; and the distribution of \$9.416 million transferred from the balance of earnings on the investment of cash balances to 30 June 1979.

The main purpose of this Bill is to provide the necessary authority to raise loans to help finance the State's capital works programme.

As usual the required borrowings will be undertaken by the Commonwealth Government which acts for all States in arranging new borrowings, conversions, renewals, and redemptions of existing loans.

This function of the Commonwealth Government is exercised under the terms of the 1927 financial agreement and within the total borrowings programme for all States as determined by the Australian Loan Council. The Loan Council also prescribes the terms and conditions for each loan.

There is a long standing arrangement whereby the Commonwealth Government, from its own resources, will subscribe any shortfall to complete the financing of the overall borrowing programme of the States.

These special loans are made on similar terms and conditions to those prevailing for the previous Commonwealth public loans raised in Australia and are allocated to the States as part of their normal borrowing parcel. With the current tight money market it appears likely that the Commonwealth Government will have to provide this form of support in the current financial year. Such support is of great benefit to the States as it enables us to proceed with a planned programme of works secure in the knowledge that the full

allocation from the Loan Council will be forthcoming.

In addition, the Commonwealth Government provides by way of a capital grant a proportion of the total programme for State Governments agreed to by Loan Council. These grants now constitute one third of each State's total programme and are intended to assist in financing capital works such as schools and institutions from which debt charges are not normally recoverable.

At its June 1980 meeting the Australian Loan Council approved a total State Government programme of \$1 307 million for 1980-81 made up of two thirds borrowings, or \$871 million, and one third, or \$436 million, capital grant.

This year Western Australia has a borrowing allocation of \$80.6 million with a capital grant of \$40.3 million, a 5 per cent increase on the 1979 allocation. Members will recall that the allocation for last year was reduced by 13.2 per cent on the 1978 provision.

In real terms the allocation for this financial year is a reduction of 35 per cent on the funds provided in 1976-77. The severe impact of this reduction on the State's works programme has been covered in some detail when speaking to the Appropriation Bill (General Loan Fund) and I do not wish to press the point further.

Under a "gentlemen's agreement" originating in 1936 Loan Council approves an aggregate annual borrowing programme for those semi-government and local authorities wishing to raise in excess of \$1.2 million in new borrowings during the financial year.

The Loan Council has set a total borrowing programme of \$1 307 million for these larger authorities in 1980-81 of which Western Australia has been allocated \$117.4 million.

The basic programme remains at the same level as in 1978-79 and 1979-80—namely, \$75 million—but is supplemented by temporary additions totalling \$42.3 million for the following purposes—

\$16 million for further electric power development at Muja;

\$26.3 million for rehabilitation and upgrading of the railway between Kwinana and Koolyanobbing.

A further \$46.9 million will be available to the State in 1980-81 under the special programme of borrowing for infrastructure.

Of this amount \$30.2 million will be applied by the State Energy Commission largely in works associated with the Pilbara region power

integration project and the Dampier to Perth gas pipeline. Other commission projects to be financed from this source are conversion of the Kwinana power station to dual firing, and Muja stage "C". A sum of \$8 340 000 of infrastructure borrowings will go to country areas and town water supplies to provide water for the Worsley alumina project and West Pilbara water supply headworks to meet the demands of the North-West Shelf gas project. The Western Australian Government Railways Commission has been allocated \$2 143 000 for railway works to serve the Worsley project and the Industrial Lands Development Authority \$6 250 000 for infrastructure works at Jervoise Bay to support North-West Shelf gas engineering developments.

Details of the borrowing programmes of larger authorities in 1980-81, including infrastructure borrowings, are set out on page 46 of the Loan Estimates.

There is no overall limit on borrowings by authorities seeking less than \$1.2 million though the terms and conditions of the "gentlemen's agreement" apply to such borrowings. The programme for State authorities in this category are detailed on page 47 of the Loan Estimates.

In view of the tight money market it is evident that both larger and smaller authorities will again experience difficulty in filling the loan programmes for this year.

This situation has arisen not only as a result of the growing needs of State authorities, but has been compounded with the entry of several Commonwealth authorities into the limited domestic capital market.

With all authorities being subject to identical terms and conditions, as specified by Loan Council, there is little room for manoeuvring; and the smaller States such as Western Australia find themselves at the end of the line.

When it comes to obtaining a share of available loan funds, as in the past, every effort will be made to raise the proposed new borrowings to ensure that the planned programme of work can be undertaken.

The Bill also makes provision for an appropriation from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to meet interest and sinking funds on loans raised under this and previous Loan Acts.

In addition, authority is sought to allow the balances of previous authorisations to be applied to other items. The second schedule sets out the amounts to be reappropriated and the Loan Act which authorised the original appropriations. The amount of \$13 548 366 shown on page 45 on the Loan Estimates includes \$250 000 allocated from

loan repayments. As loan repayments are not authorised under a Loan Bill, the transfer of this sum has to be arranged by administrative action. The amount to be reappropriated is, therefore, reduced to \$13 298 366. The items to which it is to be applied are set out in the third schedule.

Members will appreciate that this is a machinery Bill to give effect to more detailed papers with which we will deal in the General Loan Estimate papers and Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

ROAD TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 14 October.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [11.15 a.m.]: This Bill gives effect to the Budget announcement that a number of charges would be increased. These charges are imposed on motorists in this State.

The Bill is made up of seven clauses and contains increases to seven charges. The Opposition is not happy that this extra burden is being placed on motorists and the public generally in Western Australia.

The Opposition holds the view that motorists are already feeling the effect of high petrol prices. They are also bearing the burden of further increases applied this year to which I shall refer in detail later in my remarks. As a consequence, we feel the motoring public should not have the extra burden of additional charges placed on them at this stage.

While some of the increases may be considered to be minor, others are, to say the least, rather harsh. In some instances the charges are increased by 100 per cent.

I should like to refer briefly to the increases which will apply. From 1 January 1981 the recording fee will be increased from \$4 to \$6. In relation to this matter the Minister made the following statement in the second reading speech on the Bill—

Currently when a vehicle licence is cancelled a fee of \$1 is charged on the refund of the unused portion of the cancelled vehicle licence. It is considered that the cost involved in processing refunds should be covered by the vehicle recording fee and it is therefore proposed to abolish the vehicle refund cancellation fee.

The next increase concerns permits for drivers' licences. Those taking out a learner's permit,

which is valid initially for three months only, are able to apply for a driving licence, the charge for which, as indicated by the Minister, could vary from \$7 upwards, depending upon the length of time and the number of tests taken.

The Minister indicated research has shown that 88 per cent of applicants obtain their driver's licence on either the first or second test, with the remaining 12 per cent requiring three or more tests. As a consequence, this charge will be increased to \$10 for each subsequent test. That is a rather sharp increase.

The Minister indicated that, in future cases, changes will be made by way of regulation. There may be good reasons for this, but the Opposition always feels it is preferable for Parliament to know what is occurring so that it can be involved in any changes made. From the point of view of the Government, this may impose unnecessary pressures on departments if they are required to introduce legislation to the House from time to time when charges are increased or reduced.

The fee charged for the issue of licence plates is to be increased from \$3 to \$5. The Minister then indicated problems had arisen in relation to revenue being divided between the accounting sections of two Government departments; that is, between Consolidated Revenue and Main Roads Trust Account.

The Minister indicated the cost of administering motor drivers' licensing and the cost of the actual licence fee. He then pointed out to the Parliament the new method which will apply in connection with the funding of both these Government departments.

Of course, we can only accept the figures given by the Minister. We do not dispute them; but the Opposition does not have access to Treasury information and can only accept the Minister's advice in relation to the costs of collection and charges generally.

So, it will be seen that the charges are being levied against motorists generally and also those who are taking out learner permits to obtain a driver's licence. I mentioned when commencing my speech that we consider that the motorists and other people already have been hit hard enough by the Court Government.

What increases have been applied during this year? They are rather considerable when one looks at them in total. I will go through them. We know that electricity charges already have increased by 18 per cent; gas charges by 24 per cent; metropolitan water charges, domestic and industrial, by 38 per cent; metropolitan sewerage charges by 15 per cent; metropolitan drainage

charges by 9 per cent; and motor vehicle third party insurance premiums by 50 per cent, which is a very sharp and heavy increase, with little explanation given for it. State Housing Commission rents have increased by 14 per cent; the fuel tax—fuel franchise levy—on petrol by 44 per cent; vehicle registration fees—heavy trucks only—by 25 per cent; Metropolitan Transport Trust bus and train fares by 24 per cent; Westrail freight charges by between 20 per cent and 30 per cent; and State Shipping Service freight charges by 10 per cent.

Port authority charges have increased with, in particular, wharfage charges increasing by an average of 82 per cent; pilotage charges by between 3 per cent and 10 per cent; and cargo handling charges by between 10 per cent and 20 per cent. Country water charges have increased by 20 per cent; country drainage charges by 20 per cent; and irrigation charges in the districts of Carnarvon, the south-west, and Preston River by 20 per cent.

I have given a comprehensive list of increased charges. Of course, associated with them are the increased costs of running a vehicle today. We all know them. Even members of Parliament are subject to these heavy increases. Once upon a time we could fill our petrol tanks for a reasonable charge, but now we are involved in a totally different game.

When we fill our tanks we notice the heavy increased charges that apply. In this regard it is clearly demonstrated in the Federal scene that the search for oil by the Fraser Government is not as great as the search that was undertaken by the Labor Government. The figures which I will quote show that between the years 1972 and 1975 the total Labor Government expenditure on exploration based on constant prices was \$223 million. During the first three years of the Fraser Government the amount spent was down to \$193 million.

In other words, there has been a dramatic decline in the amount of money outlaid for exploration during the first three years of the Fraser Government. According to the Australian Statistician, 146 wells were drilled during the first three years of the Labor Government, but in the first three years of the Liberal Government, 94 wells were drilled; and last year total exploration expenditure was \$190 million, which is \$70 million less than the amount spent by the Labor Government.

What I am attempting to demonstrate is that something must be done to assist Australia in its effort to become self-supporting in its petrol

requirements. The figures I indicated show the reduction of activity in this area by the Fraser Government and the little interest it has in this area.

We often hear the Ministers on the Government side saying that the reason for the reduction in the expenditure by Government departments was brought about by the loss of revenue received from the Fraser Government. This decrease in expenditure is reflected in so many areas, main roads being an example. I could go on to list others, but I do not have to because members are aware of them.

The Opposition believes that the State Government should make strong representations to the Fraser Government to take more initiative in trying to locate more oil in order that the Australian people might receive a general reduction in the price of petroleum products.

For those reasons the Opposition has no alternative but to oppose the proposed legislation. We feel that the average taxpayer in Western Australia already has been hit hard enough by the Court Government. We have a duty here to indicate especially the feelings of low income and pensioner groups. The Bill currently before the House will have an impact across the board, and therefore the Opposition opposes it.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [11.25 a.m.]: We support the measure before the House. This is one of the rare occasions on which there can be some justification given for an increase in Government charges. For a long time there has been agitation by country shire councils, which handle licensing as agents for the Road Traffic Authority, to have the recording fee increased.

We are pleased that this increase is provided for in the proposed legislation before the House. Similarly, we believe that all of the other increased charges are fully justifiable. There is no question that some of the matters that the member for Collie raised are ones which we would dispute a great deal. In fact, that would apply to the fuel levy and matters of that nature, but in this instance we are in full accord with the measures in the Bill.

We support the Bill before the House.

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Minister for Police and Traffic) [11.26 a.m.]: I thank the member for Collie and the member for Merredin for their contributions to this debate. I am sorry that the Opposition does not see fit to support these measures because they are part of the Budget and the revenue raising required under it. I seem to recall that it was only last night that one of the colleagues of the member for Collie was

complaining because the Government had not at a certain stage increased charges levied by the Metropolitan Water Board. He said he was complaining because the charges had not been increased to meet expenditure. I will not debate that now. What I will do is point out to the member for Collie that the increases proposed in this measure are not taxes, they are charges to offset expenditure for the provision of services.

Mr Pearce: What do taxes provide?

Mr HASSELL: They provide general revenue to meet the expenditures of the community.

Mr Davies: I do not think the man in the street agrees with what you call them.

Mr HASSELL: They can be distinguished and usually are distinguished.

Mr Pearce: They usually are distinguished only by the Premier because he claims he is not putting up taxes.

Mr HASSELL: There is a distinction between taxation measures which raise general revenue and charges which are to recoup the costs incurred in providing services.

Mr Pearce: Is the fuel levy a tax or a charge?

Mr HASSELL: Sometimes there is a fine line of distinction, but nevertheless there is a distinction which has been long used. I will instance a case that we have in front of us which is the case of the recording fee. The member for Collie said he can rely only on the advice we give him about the costs incurred. I am in a similar position. I have not been able to work out personally every aspect of the cost of performing the recording and the work involved.

Mr T. H. Jones: You should know, being a Minister.

Mr HASSELL: I can say this: My experience tells me that the cost of administrative work and administration in any office system is incredibly high and that the amount of it is often not realised by people. One of the examples to which I can refer from my days of running an office, is the cost of writing a letter. If people work out the cost of writing a letter they get quite a shock when they see the result. One cannot write a letter in an office context for an amount of much under \$10, however short that letter may be.

Mr Skidmore: Letters written by solicitors hit the hip pocket nerve.

Mr HASSELL: If the member for Swan is referring to the matter to which I guess he is referring, I indicate my concern has always been that we would not charge for it and that is the case in many respects. However, those matters are

not directly relevant to the legislation we have before us.

The member for Collie was complaining about the increase in charges, but he did not mention that a fee has been cancelled altogether. It is obvious that the fee is not worth collecting because it costs more to collect than that fee is worth.

Mr T. H. Jones: When are you going to apply that to the learner's licence as well?

Mr HASSELL: With regard to obtaining a driver's licence and permit, whilst the fee has been consolidated for the convenience of the public and administration, it does not represent a substantial increase and it does not cover costs. Furthermore, it has been offset by an increase in the validity time of a permit.

What has been happening, resulting in the introduction of the fee for subsequent tests, is that motoring schools have been training their students to a certain stage and then telling them to have a test and if they do not pass the test the first time it does not matter because it can be thought of as another lesson and the test can be taken again. That occurrence may be rare, but when it does happen, the taxpayer is bearing the burden of the policeman's time. The member for Collie would know only too well that the policeman's time is of value and that it is lost when people are being tested when they are not really ready for the test.

Mr Skidmore: That would be the worst argument I have ever heard. Because someone might do something, legislation is enacted.

Mr HASSELL: That is not quite so; we believe this is occurring quite frequently.

Mr Skidmore: You are determining with the attitude of a lawyer.

Mr HASSELL: I am not saying this happens in all cases, but it does happen in quite a number of cases. Two tests to obtain a licence—these are provided for by the composite fee—is a fair number. If a person wishes to have more than two tests then he would have to pay for the subsequent tests. I am surprised that the cost is only \$10, because the cost of manpower would be much more.

Mr Skidmore: Your many valuations are made upon your income.

Mr HASSELL: I am talking about costs, I am not talking about income at all. I am talking about the cost of paying policemen. The amount adds up when one considers the three-quarters of an hour required for a test and then the costs of administration and the other people involved are

added to that. To have a motorcar repaired would cost approximately \$16 to \$20 an hour.

I wish to refer to another point which was raised by the member for Collie and that is the issue of the fees being in the regulations. As I said before, I am not generally in agreement with the proposition of having taxes and provisions, which are purely revenue-raising, included in Acts. However, so far as it is possible it has been shown that it is reasonable for this provision to be included in the regulations so that there can be increases as the costs increase. That is why I did not hesitate to bring this provision forward. I queried this matter before it was submitted to Parliament.

In conclusion, I thank the member for Merredin for his support of the measure. I hope that it will provide the assistance for the shire councils on whose behalf he expressed some concern.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 25

Mr Clarko	Mr Nanovich
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Connor
Mr Cowan	Mr Old
Mr Coyne	Mr Rushton
Mr Crane	Mr Sibson
Mr Grayden	Mr Sodeman
Mr Grewar	Mr Spriggs
Mr Hassell	Mr Trethowan
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Tubby
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Williams
Mr Laurance	Mr Young
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Blaikie
Mr Mensaros	

(Teller)

Noes 18

Mr Barnett	Mr Hodge
Mr Bertram	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Bridge	Mr Melver
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Parker
Mr Carr	Mr Pearce
Mr Davies	Mr Skidmore
Mr E. T. Evans	Mr Taylor
Mr Grill	Mr Tonkin
Mr Harman	Mr Bateman

(Teller)

Pairs

Noes

Mr Watt	Mr Bryce
Mrs Craig	Mr Jamieson
Dr Dadour	Mr B. T. Burke
Mr Shalders	Mr H. D. Evans

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Mr Hassell (Minister for Police and Traffic) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8 put and passed.

Clause 9: Section 52 amended—

Mr COWAN: I wonder whether the Minister would agree to furnish further information, if it is available. This section provides that the moneys which are payable on the issue of a motor driver's licence will be paid into Consolidated Revenue.

In the past part of this money was paid into the Main Roads trust account. Provision will be made for one-third of the money collected this financial year to go into the trust account, but after that there will be no provision at all. I understand this has been done on the basis that Government departments are paying the State fuel levy all of which goes into the Main Roads trust account.

Could the Minister advise just how much money Government departments are paying by way of the State fuel levy into the trust account so that we will have some idea of the compensating factor that sum of money will have on the trust account?

Mr HASSELL: I am not able to provide the member for Merredin with the figure he seeks—the amount of revenue which is paid by State Government departments into the Main Roads trust account—because it is not in my hands. He might appreciate this is not a matter which usually falls within my responsibility. It was given to me in this context because it affects the Road Traffic Act.

I will obtain the details and provide them at the third reading stage.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

LOAN BILL

Message: Appropriations

Message from the Administrator received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the Bill.

COUNTRY AREAS WATER SUPPLY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR MENSAROS (Floreat—Minister for Water Resources) [11.44 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The amendments contained in this Bill relate to the need to improve the statutory provisions of the principal Act relating to the administration of clearing controls.

The amendment of the Country Areas Water Supply Act in 1976 to impose clearing controls on the Wellington Dam catchment was the first attempt in Australia to introduce statutory controls of this type. That amendment was quite well received and, generally, those affected observed its requirements in the spirit in which it was intended.

Following advice from the Western Australian Water Resources Council that further fresh water catchments were vulnerable and in need of protection as far as practicable from increasing salinity, a further amendment was introduced in 1978 to expand the area affected by the 1976 clearing controls to include the Mundaring Weir and Denmark River catchment areas, and the water reserves of the Kent and Warren Rivers.

As most members present would be aware, the 1978 amendment was the subject of considerable controversy with farmers in the lower south-west and lower great southern districts. As a result, the Act has been submitted to very close scrutiny, both by the farming community and within those areas of government associated with its administration.

While the Government believes there is no requirement to amend, in any way, the basic philosophy of the clearing controls, it has been considered necessary to redraft some of the provisions which are critical to their effective management.

The purpose of this Bill, then, is to clarify certain provisions of the present Act to ensure the proper and fair management of the controls. It does not seek to extend the area of the existing controls in any way.

Firstly, the Bill proposes to provide powers for the Minister to exchange, lease, or sell land acquired as part of the catchment clearing control activities. The present Act, as amended, regarding the clearing controls does empower the Minister to acquire—by negotiated purchase of resumption—the land, but Crown Law's advice is that it does not empower him to dispose of the land so acquired. That places the Minister, and

indeed the public, in the impossible position that the Minister accumulates land without being able to put it to further good use. Such use could include reforestation by the Forests Department or, more importantly, it could be used to consolidate and put to viable use by farmers the already cleared parts of the land by exchange or other allocation in kind by the Rural Adjustment Authority.

These desirable aims can be achieved only if the Minister is able to dispose of the acquired land to, for example, the Rural Adjustment Authority or the Forests Department. The ability of the Minister to deal in such a manner with land acquired by negotiated agreement as part of the compensation procedures is essential if the planned involvement of the Rural Adjustment Authority is to be successful.

Secondly, the Bill contains amendments to ensure that clearing conditions and obligations are transferred to future owners. The uncertainty which currently exists regarding the transfer to future owners of the clearing conditions which have been approved for a property and for which, in some cases, compensation has been paid, is undesirable both from the point of view of the original and subsequent owners and that of the Government agency or department charged with the administration of the controls.

The Bill also contains an amendment to authorise approved officers to enter onto properties to carry out work or inspections associated with land-clearing controls.

The principal Act provides power to enter a property, after giving notice, in order to carry out work associated with the investigation, construction, and maintenance of an authorised water scheme. No provision was included in the 1976 or 1978 amendments for right of entry in respect of activities associated with clearing controls.

I wish to emphasise, however, that entry onto property can be undertaken only after notice has been given and either the occupier consents or, if he does not, a warrant is taken out.

Another area which experience has shown requires amendment concerns the provisions relating to compensation. It is intended that a claim for compensation now will be accepted up to 12 months after a licence has been refused. Assessment of the claim will be based on values at the date of lodgement.

Provision has been made also for the payment of interest on outstanding compensation payments from the date the claim is received until it is discharged.

The Bill seeks also to modify the position in regard to adjudication on compensation claims and to model these on the provisions of the Public Works Act which are well understood by the many individuals and agencies involved in this area.

The Bill contains amendments to strengthen the powers dealing with the restoration following conviction for an offence against the clearing control provisions. The main purpose of the earlier amendments relating to the control of clearing in salinity-prone catchment areas was to preserve the quality of the scarce fresh water resources of the State.

At present, the Act provides a maximum penalty of \$1 000 for unlicensed clearing, and, in addition, gives a magistrate unqualified discretionary power to order the reforestation of the area. Reforestation is essential if damage to the water resources is to be avoided and, also, to prevent landowners from gaining an advantage from an illegal action. Therefore, unless in the view of the court there are special circumstances, the court shall order restoration of the area cleared without a licence or an equivalent area of land in the same ownership.

The Bill contains new provisions which cover default under a restoration order, particularly if the offender is not the owner of the land. Because the restoration must attach to the land, it has been necessary to place the obligations for restoration with the owner. However, such an owner has the power to recover expenses against the offender should this be necessary. As a warning to future purchasers of land which is subject to a restoration order, the amendments include powers for the Minister to lodge memorials with the Registrar of Titles.

Amendments have been included to provide authority to obtain a Supreme Court injunction in certain circumstances. Further amendments seek to provide authority for property which has been acquired as part of the clearing control activities, and which is later disposed of, to be subject to restrictive covenants as to future development and use of the land without compensation, such covenants to be made binding on subsequent purchasers.

It is considered desirable also to include provision for penalties for persons who make false or misleading statements, of importance, in connection with an application or appeal relating to a licence to clear under the Act.

Other amendments included in this Bill relate to the removal of the current restrictions which necessitate obtaining a licence for minor essential

clearing, such as the removal of poison bush; the rephrasing of the sections dealing with the obligation to reject an application for clearing licences when 90 per cent of the holding is already cleared; to provide the authority to approve of part of an application to clear; and, finally, to clarify the provisions dealing with appeals to take into account the effect of other amendments within this Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr H. D. Evans (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

BANANA INDUSTRY COMPENSATION TRUST FUND AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 14 October.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.55 a.m.]: I would like to summarise briefly the five provisions in this amending Bill. At the present time compensation is \$1.30 a carton and it is to be raised to \$1.75 a carton. The levy payable by banana growers is to increase from 14c to 20c a carton. This forms the basis of the fund to which the Government contribution—which is to be raised from 7c to 10c a carton—will be added.

The mechanics and the intention of this amendment are fairly straightforward. It is also a fairly important change to the operation of the fund that the first 10 per cent of any claim is not refundable. Previously the first 20 per cent of the claim was met by the affected grower. However, now there is to be an assessment of damage to more than 10 per cent of the crop before the fund takes effect.

In the event of damage which would exhaust the fund, by the present amendment the Treasury will meet 80 per cent of the excess. It is noted that these provisions will apply only in the Carnarvon area.

The terms of the Bill are fairly straightforward, but several aspects of the situation should be recorded in *Hansard* and perhaps the Minister can elaborate further.

For quite some time the issue of a compensation fund at Carnarvon has been very contentious. Indeed, growers in that area have reacted to the publicity indicating their concern and perhaps hostility towards the scheme. The *Northern Times* of 14 August 1980 and the *News of the North* of 21 August 1980 both carried articles indicating the feeling of a section of the growers.

The front page of those editions carried a fair-sized advertisement advising banana growers of the referendum on this matter and it set out four conditions. The question was asked, "Is this fair?" and a "No" vote was advised. That must have been a reasonably successful campaign because in the reply I received from the Minister on this matter I was told that of the 96 growers who voted on the referendum, 55 voted in the affirmative and 41 voted in the negative. So it would appear that the campaign carried out in opposition to the amendments to the provisions of the fund was to some degree successful.

I have, however, been in touch with the Market Gardeners Association of WA and it would appear that the majority of the members of that association endorse the new proposals. The comment made was that the members of the association would be pleased to see some benefits flow to the banana growers through a viable fund. It must be remembered that a number of claims have been made on that fund over the years, and it is essential that it maintains viability. Any improvement would be beneficial to the growers.

There is a feeling in the area that the growers had no say in the administration of the fund because the two grower representatives on the committee were outvoted nine times out of 10. I have not been able to check the validity of the claim, but I should like the Minister to take note of the feeling which is abroad. The Minister would be aware there has been great contention in the manner the fund has been applied.

The association hopes to see the new system work. It is prepared to give it a trial to see just what will happen. Probably, this will not be known until after the first disaster.

Mr Laurance: I hope that is a long time in the future.

Mr H. D. EVANS: So do they as, no doubt, do we all.

The Carnarvon Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association also favours the new amendment to the legislation. The main area of contention in the past has been the imposition of the 20 per cent damage limit. However, I understand that after consultations in the area, the Minister has agreed to lower this figure to 10 per cent. In other words, the fund will apply when over 10 per cent damage to the crop has been established. This action appears to have healed the point of contention felt by growers.

Some concern has been expressed as to the way Treasury interprets the conditions laid down in the regulations, and in the Act. I do not know whether that concern is well-founded. As far as I

can see, the situation is clearly spelt out. I draw the conclusion only that the growers are being over-apprehensive in this case.

However, there is one area of concern which needs examination; I refer to the period after the payment of compensation has been made. Cyclones normally occur in the February-March period, and that is when damage is done to crops. Obviously, there is of necessity a period between the time the damage is done and the time payment is made, because damage assessment must be carried out.

It would seem that when payment is made in May, there is a good chance that money becomes part of the growers' taxable income in the current financial year. Therefore, in a year when damage has been done to crops, and incomes are down, growers face the additional impost of taxation on their compensation money. This will make it difficult for growers to recover the situation. I believe it is desirable that payment be stood over until the following financial year.

I do not know whether this matter lies with the Minister for Agriculture. However, an examination of this area should be made to ensure growers are not disadvantaged.

The notes provided by the Minister were quite extensive in terms of defining precisely what is intended by the amendment. However, I think it would be desirable if the Minister would indicate from his point of view the situation in the industry as he sees it. We would like to know the extent to which disharmony exists, and whether this will be rectified by this legislation. It is regrettable that disharmony should exist in such a small industry. I would say the Minister's salesmanship was not terribly good if 41 out of 99 growers were not convinced in the referendum.

Mr Old: Steady on!

Mr H. D. EVANS: We should like to hear the Minister comment on the situation as he sees it.

Mr Old: You are drawing a long bow now.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The Opposition raises no objection to this legislation. Like the growers, we will be interested to see how these changes work once they become effective. While on the matter of the Minister's salesmanship, perhaps the Minister* might like to review his overall contribution to bringing about this change.

MR OLD (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [12.06 p.m.]: I thank the honourable member for his general support of the Bill, and for the few pertinent comments he made. It is indeed a fact that the referendum was reasonably close. I made a point of calling a meeting in

Carnarvon to talk to the grower organisations. I was accompanied on that occasion by the local member (Mr Ian Laurance).

Mr H. D. Evans: Perhaps that was why the vote was down!

Mr OLD: After we met with association members, we heard the point of view of the dissident group. Quite frankly, I do not believe it put forward any valid points.

I should like to make it clear that the aspersion on my salesmanship did not go unnoticed. I went up there with the objective of selling to the banana growers the necessity to have a banana industry compensation trust fund. However, I made it clear that, having met with the growers, and having told them of my attitude, and that of the Government, I did not intend to take the matter any further. If they wished to promote a case either for or against, obviously that was within their prerogative.

When the ballot forms were sent out, they were accompanied by a precis of what the scheme offered to the growers. However, as for my trying to sell the scheme any further than that, it simply is not true. We took it no further because I believe the industry is responsible enough to be able to make its own assessment of the proposal.

It was not entirely unexpected that the people who opposed the scheme conducted what the member for Warren described as a fairly intensive campaign to encourage people to vote against it. Quite frankly, with the type of campaign which was conducted, and some of the statements which were made during the campaign, I was quite pleased with the result. I believe that those people with a responsible attitude to their own industry saw that, without a compensation fund, they could run into some dangerous waters.

Mr H. D. Evans: How many growers did not vote?

Mr OLD: There are about 130 growers in all, of whom 99 voted. Three votes were informal. The figures I gave the honourable member yesterday related only to formal votes.

The banana industry in Carnarvon contains many different ethnic groups. A percentage of growers would find it difficult to grasp the implications of the compensation trust fund. We made every endeavour to get the message over to those people. However, I believe that in many cases there was intimidation, and that many of those people did not vote in the referendum because they felt it was in their interests not to vote, rather than to vote for the option the Government put to them.

The member for Warren has pointed out the advantages which will accrue to the industry from this new concept of funding. I believe the provision that growers must bear the first 10 per cent of any crop damage is very reasonable. As the honourable member pointed out, the previous limit was 20 per cent, which many growers believed was unacceptable. Not only was the limit set at 20 per cent, but it also carried right through the whole compensation system. A man who had a 60 per cent claim was actually paid 40 per cent.

Mr Barnett: Do you think these amendments will straighten out all the bananas?

Mr OLD: That is the sort of intelligent observation I would expect the member for Rockingham to make. He has no idea of anything that goes on outside Rockingham.

Mr P. V. Jones: And there is not much in it.

Mr OLD: Admittedly there is not much in it. However, if the member has the ability, he may lift his sights one day and look beyond Cockburn Sound. He will see that there are other things going on in the wide world.

Mr Barnett: I will take your advice.

Mr OLD: I will continue addressing my remarks to you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Crane), because I know you have the intelligence to absorb what I am talking about.

Nowadays a man who has a 60 per cent claim is paid 60 per cent. Previously a man with a 70 per cent claim was paid 50 per cent, and a man with an 80 per cent claim was paid 80 per cent because that was considered to be a total claim. That is where the injustice lay; and that is why we went to the growers with the idea that we should give them a better deal.

As the member for Warren has pointed out, there are some growers in the area who are not prepared to accept the umpire's decision. Unfortunately there is a small section of the growers in Carnarvon who are trying to "stir the pot" a little, and trying to create dissension within the organisations. They are endeavouring to wreck this scheme. They are doing this on the false premise that people in the rural industry in the southern part of the State are being treated far more leniently than the people in the Carnarvon area; but that is not so.

Those growers look at the measures brought in when natural disasters have struck. They hark back to cyclone "Alby". The fruitgrowers in the southern part of the State received no better treatment than did the people in the drought areas. They received immediate relief from personal hardship, which is always given to the

people in the Gascoyne area when there is a cyclone or flood. Under the natural disaster relief arrangements with the Commonwealth Government, the people down here were given access to concessional loans, if they qualified.

Mr H. D. Evans: A slight diversion: the claim that because the river has been diverted and flooding occurs in a particular area—

Mr Herzfeld: I cannot hear the member.

Mr OLD: If other members would quieten down, the member for Mundaring might be able to hear.

Mr H. D. Evans: The claim does seem to have some validity. Because of the changes in the river, additional flooding occurs. Has anything been done to rectify that?

Mr Young: You could speak up.

Mr OLD: That is a matter of contention between some people in the area. I am not very knowledgeable on that matter; but I did speak to some people about it whilst I was in Carnarvon. I am afraid I would have to refer back to the Minister for Works.

Mr H. D. Evans: You were doing fairly well, and I thought you might be able to answer it.

Mr OLD: In relation to the natural disaster matter, unfortunately that was canvassed by those people as a reason for there not being a compensation fund. Certainly if the compensation fund were dropped, those people would be treated the same as is anybody else when natural disaster strikes; but they would not receive any compensation.

I think the majority of the growers in the Carnarvon area, and certainly the responsible ones, realise that they are vulnerable to cyclones and floods, and therefore they must take out some type of insurance. They are being treated generously by the Government, which is contributing to the fund. Not only that, but the Government has undertaken that, if the fund runs out of money following successive cyclones, the Government will pay enough money into the fund to meet 80 per cent of the compensation due.

The member for Warren raised the matter of taxable income being brought forward a year. This is a problem indeed. I can say only that there are avenues open. In the drought years, when income equalisation deposits were introduced the Commonwealth Government created a precedent, when a natural disaster occurred, by allowing people to invest in income equalisation deposits, and then take the money out straight after 30 June in order to bring it into the income for the next year. I am assuming that this applies to all

natural disasters; but certainly I cannot make any commitment on behalf of the Commonwealth. However, that would be a fairly sensible thing for the Commonwealth Government to do.

I thank the member for Warren for his support of this measure. Like him, I will be keen to see the reaction after the next cyclone; and like the member for Gascoyne and the member for Warren, I hope we do not see that for some time. However, see it we shall; and then we will be able to assess the worth of the fund.

As far as the administration of the fund is concerned, I can see no problem there. As the member for Warren is well aware, when disaster strikes, a grower is elected onto the assessing body. That grower and one of our officers assess the damage. The representative is elected by the growers. We have had very little bother as far as assessments go.

We are dealing currently with a couple of problems in relation to the lack of communication or the difficulty in communication. After the last flood, some growers failed to lodge an application. They have now discovered that they should have done so. We are assessing those at the moment; and I will be giving sympathetic consideration to those claims. When all is said and done, that is what the fund is all about.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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.

COLLEGES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 14 October.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [12.20 p.m.]: I say at the outset the Opposition intends to support the Bill which has as its purpose the insertion of a qualifying section into the Colleges Act to make it clear that the WA Post-Secondary Education Superannuation Scheme is not open to academic staff members who are either part time or on a contract basis of employment. That is to say, the superannuation scheme is to be open only to staff members of colleges who are full time and permanent—in fact, the same sort of criteria which apply to the State superannuation scheme.

We accept the Minister's statement that the intention in drafting the original Act which

referred to a superannuation scheme was carried over in exactly the same form as superannuation scheme entitlements that used to exist under legislation which covered the old WA Teacher Education Authority. The practice of that scheme had been strictly to give superannuation for full-time members of the staff.

One does not have to be an Einstein to understand that some specific incident has provoked this legislation. However, although we are prepared to support it, the Minister and the Government will have to take upon themselves very soon the responsibility of determining the extent of permanent part-time employment in the education system and, indeed, in some way encourage it.

If part-time employment is to be encouraged on a permanent basis on all levels of the education system, it will be necessary to adjust the superannuation schemes and the like in order to accommodate people who take on permanent part-time employment.

I note in passing that the Education Department is now considering permanent part-time employment in its own teaching ranks. I am pleased the department, in 1980, is following the initiative I gave in this House in 1977. I hope we can speed up the three-year delay on my invitation which is apparent in the department. However, we are not taking up those issues under this Bill.

It is reasonable that this superannuation scheme should be in line with this idea. When we move to establish permanent part-time superannuation schemes, we would seek to do it on an across-the-board basis. With those few remarks I indicate the Opposition's support of the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Coyne) in the Chair; Mr Grayden (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title and citation—

Mr GRAYDEN: I did not take the opportunity previously to thank the member for Gosnells for expressing the Opposition's support of the Bill, and so I do so now. The Education Department is placing an emphasis on part-time workers and it wants them introduced as widely as possible.

Mr PEARCE: Does that mean the Education Department, in considering the problem of part-time employment, is considering the possibility of

giving eligibility to superannuation schemes to people who would be in permanent part-time employment? Conversely, the Minister himself may be considering superannuation eligibility for people in permanent part-time employment in colleges.

Mr GRAYDEN: In a number of schools it would suit the principal concerned to put this emphasis on part-time employment. We would naturally be looking at the question of superannuation for such employees.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

CEMETERIES AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 14 October.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [12.27 p.m.]: The Bill before the House is a very simple measure, but it has quite a deal of importance to the Trustees of the Karrakatta Cemetery Board who are seeking to have amended a section of the Act under which the administration is given certain powers to develop the cemetery. This particular section is very restrictive and does not allow the trustees to carry out certain changes they wish to make.

The existing kiosk at the cemetery is a very old building, and whilst the lessee provides an excellent service he has done so under conditions which are not good and the board desires to erect a new kiosk. When I was a member of the board it had been suggested that this should be done. It is indeed pleasing to me that some six or seven years later the board has decided to go ahead and change the entrance to the Karrakatta Cemetery and incorporate into the change a new kiosk.

The Crown Law Department advice is that section 12 of the Act does not allow the trustees to provide a building which can be leased to other people; it provides only the authority for office accommodation for the administration of the cemetery. So the amendment is to add words which will allow the board to erect a building and, further on, power to lease the building to someone whom I hope will be the same lessee.

Members may recall the old entrance to the cemetery which has been changed considerably; they might recall the old hedges on either side of

the driveway. I want to congratulate the trustees and the cemetery board on the progress made. I am quite sure that all members on this side of the House wholeheartedly join with members of the Government in supporting this 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.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

In Committee

Resumed from 14 October. The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Sir Charles Court (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Progress was reported after the Vote—Legislative Council, \$170 000—had been agreed to.

Vote: Legislative Assembly, \$260 000—

Item No. 4: Printing and Stationery—Government Printer, \$95 000—

Mr DAVIES: I notice the estimate for this item this year is almost double the amount spent last year. In fact, the difference is \$42 000. That seems to be a substantial increase. The amount is not split up in any way; therefore, could the Treasurer explain the reason for the substantial increase in the estimate for this item compared with last year's figure?

Sir CHARLES COURT: The reason for the difference, which is quite substantial, is as follows: In round terms, it is a provision to reflect the cost of rebinding Standing Orders, etc, in 1980-81, for which an allocation of \$27 000 is made. The increased expenditure is accounted for also, as a result of an additional parliamentary session in 1980-81 which is estimated to cost \$15 000. Those two sums amount to \$42 300 which is approximately the difference between the figure for last year and that estimated for this year.

Treasury normally takes a fairly relaxed view in regard to matters coming forward in connection with the Estimates for Parliament, on the basis that they are supervised here. There is a degree of sensitivity when Treasury tries to interfere in these items; but having regard for the relationship which exists between the Government

Printer and the Treasury, as well as between the Government Printer and the Parliament, we can assume the costs are policed well.

When the Estimates were looked at initially, this figure seemed to me to be rather formidable. I have given members the breakdown of the increase of \$42 300 as supplied to me and, if the Leader of the Opposition desires, I will try to obtain a further breakdown of the figure of \$27 300 which seemed to me to be rather excessive.

Mr DAVIES: I am satisfied with the Treasurer's explanation and, unless he wants to obtain a breakdown of the figure for his own purposes, he need not bother because I will not press for one.

Mr PEARCE: I should like further clarification of the item of \$27 300 for rebinding Standing Orders. This Chamber has 55 members; therefore, there would be approximately 70 or 80 books. In round figures the cost of rebinding each book would amount to \$300. I realise a certain amount of gold printing appears on the covers of the books, but it is difficult to accept a figure of \$300 a book as being reasonable.

If the Treasurer is shelling out money in this manner, let me tell him I will take an electric typewriter for my office instead, and I would be quite happy to use my 1977 copy of Standing Orders.

Sir CHARLES COURT: The member apparently was not listening when I said that was only one of the items mentioned in the figure of \$27 300. In framing the Estimates, Treasury does not have the same kind of contact with the detail of items which affect Parliament, as it does when dealing with departments. Parliament is seen as being something separate.

As I have said to the Leader of the Opposition, I am quite happy to have the figure of \$27 300 examined further. I do not expect that amount would be spent on rebinding Standing Orders. It is possible the figure could cover a multitude of sins. I am quite happy to have it examined further, because members are entitled to know the details of it.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Joint House Committee, \$1 978 000; Joint Printing Committee, \$430 000; Joint Library Committee, \$113 000; Parliamentary Commission for Administrative Investigations, \$212 000—put and passed.

Part 2: Premier and Treasurer—

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [12.41 p.m.]: Part 2 covers, among other things, the general allocation from the Treasurer to various charitable bodies. I have become a little worried about some of the allocations the Government seems to make. One could pick on grants that came on stream this year, like the grant to the Cat Welfare Society Inc., the grant to the Westminster Abbey Trust Appeal, and grants to other organisations like those. The amounts do not seem to be small, and I would suggest that it is high time we had a very good look at these grants.

For instance, I do not know what the Cat Welfare Society will do with its \$20 000. The other day we saw a good recommendation by a well-known naturalist about what should be done with cats. I wonder whether we should be having a look at the overall picture and not just sponsoring the protection of all wayward cats or whatever is associated with this amount of \$20 000. In addition, I refer to the Westminster Abbey Trust Appeal. It is all very well for the Treasurer, because of his heritage and other matters that tie him to the United Kingdom, to support this appeal. We have some sort of an ethnic background tie with the United Kingdom, but I must keep reminding the Premier that we are in a different country.

If such abbeys like Westminster Abbey or cathedrals like Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna need repairs, I think these repairs must be carried out in a similar way to the situation which prevails here. For instance, when our St George's Cathedral needed doing up, the organisers had to conduct local fund raising. If there were enough locally interested people in the area of certain structures then those people should contribute; the organisers should not look all over the world for subscriptions.

I would be interested to see how many other Australian States involve themselves to the extent of a \$10 000 subscription to this appeal. I would suggest that they might not have been so generous. I would not blame them for not being so generous.

It is the responsibility of the United Kingdom to maintain its historic features. We have to do that for Australia at no small cost. This State has a great history so far as European settlement is concerned. We seem to support everything that crops up. We assist with the National Trust and that sort of thing, at considerable cost to the public of this State. We do not go outside the

State to look for people to sponsor or assist us with historic dwellings.

I have been to Westminster Abbey, and for what it is worth I suppose it is a place of historic value, but it is connected particularly with the United Kingdom and to a lesser degree with the British Commonwealth of Nations. I could not become very excited about it. The building is not the type—

Mr Laurance: A couple of years ago you had lunch with me at Westminster. You seemed to be enjoying yourself then.

Mr JAMIESON: That was not at Westminster Abbey. We were at the Palace of Westminster which is quite a different place and which involves a different situation.

Mr T. H. Jones: He does not know his way round England; that is his problem.

Mr JAMIESON: Nevertheless, I still fail to see why we have to be involved in such grants. The next grant will probably go to Canterbury Cathedral or some other place. We will be eternally involved with financial assistance to such places. The Premier always hastens to tell us how short of funds the Government is to do those things that are necessary for all the charitable institutions and other worth-while organisations in this State; therefore he should not be going further afield.

We will next have him trying to find a way to subscribe to the Bjelke-Petersen trust fund and justifying that on the basis of some mining co-operative situation. If we are to spend money on these projects and we have this sort of money available, there are national trusts and people within our own area with particular requirements who always need money for renovations to keep their buildings and projects in a degree of preservation and to save future generations a considerable amount of money.

I ask the Premier to be a little more careful when he is handing out public funds to overseas organisations. Organisations in the United Kingdom have to look after themselves and raise their own finances without expecting handouts from the colonies that the United Kingdom used to have.

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [12.47 p.m.]: I want to refer to the Premier and Treasurer's section to make a point or two about the way the Budget was laid out, particularly with regard to the miscellaneous section of the Premier's vote. A fairly significant number of cultural activities are starting to come under the purview of the Minister for Cultural Affairs, but if one looks at the Budget for that Minister one will see the only

sections under his vote are in fact the sections of education and recreation and that the cultural affairs sections are hidden away under "Miscellaneous" in either grants to charitable and other public bodies or payments to statutory authorities which list a bald amount and do not make it possible for the Parliament to see the way in which the moneys are expended by the statutory authorities or the charitable or public bodies to which this money for culture is given.

I think this point is important for a number of reasons. I will refer particularly to the Art Gallery of Western Australia which is referred to at item 128 under the heading "Statutory Authorities". The Art Gallery is in the habit of presenting its annual financial report to Parliament 18 months to two years after the report has been prepared, so it is not possible to examine the finances of the Art Gallery of Western Australia in great detail for the last two years because the figures simply are not available. That became quite an issue in many ways in this Parliament only a week or two ago when we were considering the shabby deal the deputy director of the gallery (Mr Lou Klepac) had been given.

I had a deal of information in my possession about the maladministration of the Art Gallery; in turn the Minister made some allegations about what he termed the maladministration by Mr Klepac. It is not possible to look at the cost overruns of any particular gallery project because the figures are not available.

The Premier will tell us that the reason is that the Art Gallery is a statutory body which has some degree of independence. I accept that that is true, but I cannot see why we cannot obtain a better run down of the financial position of the Western Australian Art Gallery Board and other bodies for which the Minister is responsible. If those figures were available the Parliament and the people would have a year-by-year and a blow-by-blow description of how much these people are being given for what purposes and they would enable us to contrast the amount of money we make available to the way that money was spent in the preceding years.

I realise the Premier is following a hallowed precedent, but I feel that because of the many millions of dollars these organisations receive—\$2.5 million by the Art Gallery and, overall, more than \$2 million by the Arts Council—there ought to be a greater degree of accountability by these organisations and not just an assumption by the Parliament that they will spend properly the many millions of dollars given to them.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [12.50 p.m.]: The member for Welshpool referred to the Cat Welfare Society and a number of other bodies. In fact, he was referring to what a now-deceased member used to call the "miscellaneous" section.

When the member for Welshpool and I were first in this House there were no more than 50 to 60 items in this section and now the number is a couple of hundred. The only way we could deal with a number of these items in the past and the only way we could deal with the various bodies and some of the statutory bodies to which the member for Gosnells has referred was to place them under "Miscellaneous Services".

It is a matter of judgment on the part of the Government of the day as to how much is allocated to each of these bodies. There would hardly be a member in this place who has not at some time made a forceful or plaintive request to the Government to step up the amount of assistance given to organisations such as the Surf Life Saving Association and many others. Most of them are very worth-while bodies which are struggling to raise finance of their own. However, it is a matter of judgment and this year we have had to be much tougher than we have been in other years.

Some of the items have started off in a modest way, but have ended up being very large items indeed. I refer to such organisations as the Slow Learning Children's Group and other bodies of that type. They have commitments which are becoming larger and more sophisticated and the services have become much better; therefore, they are asking for more support from the Government because of the increased difficulty they experience in raising funds from voluntary donations. These organisations are still raising a great deal of money on their own initiatives, but that amount is not increasing at the same percentage rate as their commitments.

I would like to raise the matter of the two specifics the member for Welshpool mentioned, but before I do I wish to say I am glad that the member for Gosnells has raised certain matters in the way he has because he has pre-empted some of the matters for which I was hopeful to find a place to comment on in the Budget debate. I have now been given an opportunity. The member for Welshpool referred to the Cat Welfare Society. The details of that society are that it is one which performs a useful community service. That society provides a haven for unwanted cats and 12 000 cats were collected last year. Homes were found for 2 000 and the balance were painlessly destroyed.

We might ask: Is not that someone else's business? However, this organisation has been prepared to accept this responsibility and if it did not, goodness only knows the position we would be in.

In 1973-74 the State contributed \$2 000 to the cost of a new surgery and a further \$2 000 was made available in 1976-77 to help with the construction of additional kennels and to build extensions to the office. The sum now provided is for the construction of a recovery room and crematorium.

We may laugh at all this, but the society is providing this service at a fraction of the cost it would be if the Government took it over. I would suggest also that the society would handle the problem with more sensitivity than the Government could.

Mr Tonkin: What do you think Harry Butler would think of this?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I think he would support this type of group. I repeat: There were some 12 000 cats collected and homes found for only 2 000. It was delicately explained that the balance were painlessly destroyed. We are confronted with column after column of these items under the heading of "Miscellaneous Services".

The Commonwealth and all States made a contribution to Westminster Abbey. I remind honourable members that we are very much a part of the Westminster system and although people may wish to distinguish between the abbey and the Parliament, nevertheless we are in the traditional sense very much linked with the Westminster system. A decision was made by all Premiers and the Commonwealth that a contribution be made. I think \$10 000 is a small contribution. We felt that if all States were intending to contribute, then it would look very bad if our own State did not make a contribution.

The member for Gosnells will be able to speak to the other item he raised when we are discussing the section where statutory authorities are grouped.

I would like to point out that there is a constitutional constraint on how the Budget papers will be presented. For instance, we could not present the papers showing the Honorary Ministers separately. Members will find that under the Constitution and Standing Orders the wording is very specific about that. So, we have to present the papers for each of the principal

officers, and that is how the Ministers are referred to. So, members will find that the votes for Honorary Ministers' responsibilities are incorporated in the appropriate substantive Ministers' portfolios.

We have had discussions at the Treasury about revised presentation of certain items and we almost gave this matter its preliminary airing in this Budget. There has to be some device whereby these things referred to by the member for Gosnells are set out separately so that they will be separate items and there will be an accounting for them much the same as there is for the departments. As all members know, we have a general debate and then we move to the detailed estimates which are broken out into a number of items which are fairly standard for each department. Nevertheless it does give a breakdown which permits a member to come to grips with component parts of the section instead of having a global figure.

It is our intention with the next Budget to provide a mechanism whereby some of these can be shown under the different Ministers instead of under the Treasurer in the miscellaneous section.

To enable us to put this section under the particular Ministers concerned we might have to use a device which is used in some cases where there is a very nominal vote created at the end of a particular instrumentality or item. That then permits a debate on that particular section which would not be possible otherwise.

I must admit that when I first looked at this procedure when I first entered Parliament I did wonder, but I soon worked it out. It is a device which permits a certain section to be debated when otherwise a debate may have been denied.

It is quite within the rights of a member to rise on any of these particular items and seek further information, but I hope that under the new format—if we can do it within the Standing Orders and within the Constitution—it will overcome the very point which the member for Gosnells made.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.15 p.m.

Votes: Premier's Department, \$1 912 000; Executive Council, \$10; London Agency, \$1 049 000; Tokyo Agency, \$196 990; Public Service Board, \$3 627 000; Treasury, \$3 039 000; Government Computing Division, \$3 058 000; Superannuation Board, \$655 000; Government Stores, \$2 633 000—put and passed.

**Vote: Government Printing Office,
\$13 585 000—**

**Item No. 4: Paper and Consumable Materials,
\$6 430 000—**

Sir CHARLES COURT: This might be an appropriate time for me to supply information in answer to a question by the member for Gosnells. The items dealing with the Legislative Council, the Legislative Assembly, and that type of item, do not have much input from the Treasury apart from finding the cash. The Treasury adopts the attitude that the Parliament normally should be treated differently from the ordinary Government departments. However, I am advised that the information I provided previously is subject to some amendment.

I am now advised of the following costs—

(a) Parliamentary Handbook \$8 000

Members are aware of the *Parliamentary Handbook* which is published at three-yearly intervals. To continue—

(b) Increase in Sitting Days \$26 000

This being an election year, we have a full sitting to budget for between July and December, and we have another to budget for in the first half of the next calendar year. The last item is—

(c) Rebinding notices, votes and proceedings, and escalation costs \$8 300

Those are the revised figures in relation to item No. 4 under the Legislative Assembly vote.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Audit, \$1 731 000; Taxation, \$3 710 000; Valuer General, \$3 530 000—put and passed.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Treasurer).

HOUSING BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 9 October.

MR B. T. BURKE (Balcatta) [2.22 p.m.]: The Opposition does not intend to oppose this Bill, and in fact the Opposition sees much that is good in it. We believe, as was outlined by the Minister, the time for a complete overhaul of the financial operations of the State Housing Commission is long overdue, and we can see some sensible

changes incorporated in the replacement measure brought to the House.

The Opposition, however, would like to take the opportunity to make one or two points. Under the new housing legislation it will be possible to submerge the lack of willingness of the Commonwealth Government to continue to fund adequately the State Housing Commission and the avenues of finance open to the commission.

This change that is being wrought will be significant to the extent that it will be possible in the future to ignore, or at least to submerge publicly, the unwillingness of a Commonwealth Government—of whatever political colour that Government might be—to continue to fund at an adequate level the operations of the State Housing Commission. It may well be that some people will find an ideological or philosophical objection to the way in which Governments of a particular colour might use the Act that is proposed.

It is possible, of course, to say that free enterprise or Liberal Governments are in fact attempting to denude the State Housing Commission of its traditional welfare aspect or policy and instead attempting to create a creature that is more akin to private enterprise.

At the same time I would remind members and the Minister handling the Bill that of course the changes being made in regard to the Act which administers the State Housing Commission by virtue of this Bill will be changes that will be—when the Government changes—in the hands of the Opposition when it is in Government and, of course, any change that is made is a two-edged sword to that degree.

If the House is interested in our assessment of the Bill, it seems to be a case of the Government again contradicting its free enterprise philosophy because it seems that embodied in this Bill are increases in the authority, scope, and ambit of the State Housing Commission. Of course, it has not been the avowed intention at any time of this Government to increase the scope of the State Housing Commission, or to permit a Government instrumentality to become more vivid in its competition with free enterprise. Perhaps the Minister can correct me later on by pointing out that the changes being made are not really making the commission more flexible, more powerful, or more vivid in the services it is providing. That seems to me and to the Opposition to be the case in respect of this Bill.

As the Minister said, many of the changes to be made in regard to financial matters are simply a tidying up of the legislation to make more

efficient the arrangement of the commission's finances. The change to the keeping of the different accounts seems eminently sensible to the Opposition; we agree that the efficiencies should be made.

Referring to the term of tenure of the commissioners, we say that this Government will move very shortly to terminate Mr Clohessy's period as a commissioner. Perhaps the Minister might tell me that is not the intention of the Government. It seems that he chooses not to do that. Whether that is the intention, the Opposition considers that persons should not be appointed to such positions in perpetuity and that life-time tenures for positions such as commissioners of a Government instrumentality should not depend upon the length of the life of the person first appointed.

I would like to refer to the matters which are the subject of the amendments which appear in my name on the notice paper. These amendments relate generally to that part of the Minister's second reading speech which appeared on page 9 of the copy of the speech made available to the Opposition. In the second paragraph on that page the Minister had this to say—

It must be emphasised that there will be no statutory power to alter any contracts of sale or mortgages in force at the time the new legislation comes into effect. Those are valid and binding contracts which may be altered only with the consent of both borrower and Housing Commission.

It seems quite clear from the provisions of the Bill that that is not true, and it appears from that part of the Bill which refers to the imposition of a management fee on different aspects of the board's operations, that certainly existing contracts can be subject to that sort of fee. We ask the Minister to clarify that aspect of the Bill.

Apart from making those general comments about the Bill itself, the Opposition wants to make one or two comments about the situation of the home-building industry at the present time. I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not talking about the construction industry which seems to be expanding nicely and undergoing something of a revival at present. I am referring to the home-building industry itself which is in a particularly parlous state. There is no doubt from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' figures outlining approvals and commencements that the home-building industry in this State is in a particularly poor situation. I have taken the latest figures published in the Press as recently as this morning. These figures covered the loans made

available for housing, and members are aware that the threat of increasing interest rates is looming larger every day. The future of this industry requires urgent attention if it is not to subside further into an even more undesirable situation.

In respect of the bankruptcies within the home-building industry and within the small business sector which caters for so much of the home-building industry, too many unsatisfactory developments are occurring at the present time. It is time the Government realised this and attempted to put more pressure on the Commonwealth Government in an effort to persuade that Government that housing is not to be considered in the same light as motorcars or colour television sets, but rather that housing is an essential feature of everybody's life.

The Federal Government must realise that the people who face increases in the price of foodstuffs and other commodities can decide to restrict the use of a particular product they consume. However, that is not true with housing. People cannot choose to live in a half or a quarter of a house. They must choose whether they will retain the house in which they are living. We must have regard for the principles which obtained when the contract was first entered into.

In general terms the Opposition intends to support this Bill, with the three amendments that stand in my name on the notice paper and which I intend to move during the Committee debate.

MR SODEMAN (Pilbara) [2.30 p.m.]: It is my intention to make a few brief comments in support of the Bill and, in particular, to highlight two aspects of the legislation. The member for Balcatta, in leading the debate for the Opposition, foreshadowed the moving of some amendments, and lightly criticised the increased scope of the role of the State Housing Commission. In the context of his comments, perhaps there is some philosophical logic in what he says. However, I am rather pleased in this instance that the scope of the State Housing Commission is to be increased and broadened to encompass some of the special needs in places like the north of the State.

The first of the two specific matters I wish to mention in particular relates to the broadening of the limited means criteria, as provided for in clause 28 of the Bill. This provision will formalise something the commission has been doing for some time. Indeed, I am pleased the commission has been taking such action and, probably, this legislation will make the commission feel a little better about doing it in the future.

This amendment will provide the opportunity for the State Housing Commission to make a commission home available to, say, a refrigeration mechanic in places like Derby, Wyndham, and Marble Bar where perhaps there is a definite need for such a person, but where the individual would not be able to establish both a business and a house. The same provision could also be extended to doctors. However, I would hope the provision would be somewhat limited in that regard, whereby people who practise in a profession which attracts a reasonable income should be expected after a period to purchase or build their own homes. This could include accountants and solicitors, as well as doctors; it may also include a union representative. They could be provided with commission housing on an interim basis until they made arrangements to establish their own homes.

This provision will allow individuals who would otherwise not be able to do so to move into a community and provide that community with a specialised service.

The other matter I particularly want to raise this afternoon is the provision which enables the State Housing Commission to provide specialised housing; clause 60 facilitates this move. There has been considerable discussion long before the last State election, and particularly in the Pilbara, relating to the lack of housing for childless couples at both ends of the spectrum—that is to say, young couples who are yet to have children, and older couples who have had children and who perhaps are enjoying their later years in the north. Naturally, priority is given to families, as a result of which childless couples have been low on the priority list. Another group given low priority is that comprising single men and women.

Private enterprise is not always able to cope with the demands in areas such as the north, where costs are appreciably higher than in the metropolitan area. It is in areas like this that we see a healthy mix of Government involvement and private enterprise. One would hope that situation will not change as time goes by.

This Bill will broaden the scope of the commission's involvement to enable it in the future to provide more adequately for childless couples and single people. It will also enable the commission, where required, to provide housing for non-profit-making organisations such as the St. John Ambulance Association, slow learning children's groups, child care centres, and the like where there is a need for specialist officers or staff to assist them in their establishment, and in their on going operations.

So, even though the member for Balcatta in his comments was critical of the Government ideologically, I feel that in this instance, the broadening of the commission's ambit, and the intent of the new legislation is most worth while.

This Bill is very much in tune with the requirements of the north. As all members would appreciate, with the North-West Shelf gas development going ahead and, perhaps, with future iron ore projects getting off the ground—one in particular, we hope—it is rather timely we are now moving on from what has taken place in the past in respect of State Housing Commission progress in the north of the State.

It probably is appropriate at this stage to mention briefly that the extension of this role comes on the heels of a record level of home building in the north of the State. Some 591 dwelling units have been advertised for tender in the north-west and the Kimberley in the past two years at an estimated cost of some \$21 million. This has resulted in a considerable reduction in waiting time. In fact, in some instances the waiting time for homes, particularly three-bedroomed homes, is lower than it is in the metropolitan area.

This expenditure, at times, has been criticised by members of the Australian Labor Party. I hasten to add it has not been criticised by ALP members representing country areas, but by metropolitan-based members. They have castigated the Government for spending this amount of money in the north instead of spending it in the metropolitan area.

For my part I am delighted the Government has seen fit to increase the number of home units in the north of the State and to bring about a more satisfactory waiting time. There has also been a general reduction in rental levels of up to 33½ per cent, which has brought rentals into line with those applying in the metropolitan area.

Mr Jamieson: You mentioned that certain ALP members had objected to this expenditure. Would you be more specific?

Mr SODEMAN: Yes; in fact the Hon. Lyla Elliott made such a criticism. Unfortunately I do not have the newspaper clippings with me; they are in my file. However, she was reported in *The West Australian* as stating that this money could be spent to more benefit if it were spent in the metropolitan area. I do not blame the Hon. Lyla Elliott for her belief; she is a metropolitan-based member. I find her to be a very genuine person. However, I am delighted the money is being spent in the north.

Another aspect I should like to mention is the major design changes introduced by this Government in 1976, and continued. Generally, there has been a good response from tenants of SHC homes in the Pilbara; the design changes are resulting in houses which are far more compatible with mining company homes. They are of brick veneer construction, have modern aluminium windows, have improved provision for the fitting of air-conditioners, more modern fixtures and fittings, and overall, have been upgraded.

In concluding my brief comments in support of this Bill I point out that housing is singularly the most important aspect of living in the north. Probably, it is second only to the development which creates the opportunity for people to take up residence in places such as the Pilbara, the Gascoyne, and the Kimberley in the first place. This Bill, and the past progress of the State Housing Commission in the north, are indications of the importance the Government places on housing.

In the past, priority quite rightly has been given to families with children. It was important that waiting times and rentals were brought into line with those applying in the metropolitan area and the standard of housing generally be upgraded. In the main, that aim has been achieved and the provisions contained in this Bill—particularly the two items to which I have specifically referred—are a logical and natural extension of that progress, and of the Government's policy. It will create a greater degree of flexibility, and will progressively cater for those individuals who in the past have not been able to obtain housing.

As mentioned, if a town requires some sort of specialist service, whether it be from a solicitor, a doctor, or a tradesman, the commission now legitimately will be able to service those requirements. The Bill itself is a vehicle for achieving those ends. It is virtually the green light for a broadening of the commission's scope.

What we now need is a plan and a programme encompassing the aspects contained in this Bill, which will produce the goods.

I conclude my remarks in support of the Bill by saying I will be interested to see what the ongoing programme will be, not only in the Pilbara, but also throughout the north, to enable the provisions encompassed by the Bill to come to fruition.

MR WILSON (Dianella) [2.40 p.m.]: I support the remarks already made by our spokesman on housing matters. There is one particular matter I would like to raise in the general context of this move by the Government to introduce a Bill to

govern housing in the State generally, and in particular in the State Housing Commission.

In many parts of the metropolitan area, large blocks of apartment-type accommodation which were built under previous Administrations have been inherited. I do not think they would be acceptable under present policies. I refer particularly to the three-storied flat developments in parts of Balga and Lockridge, and some other Housing Commission areas in metropolitan Perth.

I do not believe that anybody here, or anyone else anywhere who had a choice, would choose to live in some of that accommodation. Of course, as time goes by there is an increasing number of people who have to depend on the Housing Commission for accommodation, who are becoming more selective about the type of accommodation they are prepared to accept. I do not think anyone will blame them for that, as their selectivity can be understood when they are presented with that type of accommodation as the only option.

There is an increasing number of people who are being forced to seek accommodation assistance who, even though desperate for assistance, are choosing not to accept the type of accommodation to which I have referred. There are increasing problems regarding vacant units in these areas. There are increasing numbers of people who are not prepared, even in desperation, to accept some of this accommodation. I know some people would say if they are desperate enough they should accept what they are offered, whatever they are offered. However bad it is, if they are desperate enough, they should accept it. The problem is that as this tendency becomes more marked, the people who are being forced to accept that sort of accommodation are the people at the lower end of the economic scale, and also the people who are vulnerable socially and in other ways. They are the people who are least able to cope with the pressures of life in that sort of high-density situation in Western Australian terms.

I know such places are not high-density situations when compared with the situations in other States—in Melbourne and Sydney, for instance. However, in Western Australian terms they are high-density living.

The people who are being forced to accept that accommodation are the people least able to cope with it. I refer in particular to the fact that, without any announcement, it has apparently become a policy of the commission to place Aboriginal families in apartment buildings. It is not being discriminatory to say that, in the main,

Aboriginal families find life in apartment-type accommodation to be very difficult indeed. Many of the people concerned would find it difficult enough to live happily and easily in single dwelling accommodation in suburban situations; but to be placed in apartment accommodation, and to be loaded with the pressures that involves is, in most cases, beyond their capabilities. Inevitably that results in great social problems.

If the commission is to persevere with this policy—and it seems that rather than the policy tapering off it is becoming more apparent—some consideration will have to be given to this problem. No-one else is prepared to accept a lot of this accommodation; so the social problems involved will increase. There will be neighbourhoods where these problems will be most marked. Inevitably it will be the police who will have to cope with the situations that result.

Not only are Aboriginal families being put into these buildings; so are other families who are at the end of their tethers. They are the ones being forced to accept accommodation which is the sort of accommodation with which they can cope least easily. The people with the greatest pressures on them in terms of economic, family, and social pressures are the ones who are having to cope with this particularly difficult situation.

I cannot see any solution to that problem. However, sooner or later the Government and the commission will have to make some sort of decision about the future of these apartment dwellings. In many cases, the only solution is to demolish them. There are many which ought to be demolished because they do not provide the sort of dwelling that people should be expected to accept. For instance, some of the accommodation is infested with cockroaches and mice; and although frequent attempts are made to rid the places of these pests, they seem to prove quite unsuccessful. Many of the buildings in some areas in my electorate are susceptible to damp and mildew, although the commission will not easily, or in some cases will not ever, accept that this is a problem for people. However, it is a health problem and the people should not be expected to put up with it.

The time is coming—and I think it is very close indeed—when a definite policy decision will have to be made about the future of this accommodation. It is not good enough for us to go on with the situation now developing. The people at the bottom end of the economic scale, the people with the greatest pressures on them, are the ones who are thrust into these situations. The problem will continue to deteriorate, and we will end up with ghettos, which are completely

unacceptable to our society and to the standard of life in this State.

I hope, therefore, that as we have this new Housing Bill and as many of the good things that have been initiated by the commission are now being put into proper perspective and given proper authorisation, this matter also will be given very serious attention and will be seen by the commission and the Government to be one which needs resolution in a definite way—a way that is fully acceptable to the standard of living we should expect in this State.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [2.51 p.m.]: In its many fields of interest the State Housing Commission has a responsibility to build not only unit dwellings, but also, to a degree, multiple dwellings. We have often heard from the member for Dianella about the distasteful features of a good deal of the commission's accommodation, but one of the great problems is the lack of multiple dwellings. For instance, there has never been any great problem with the Wandana complex since it has been completed.

Perhaps there is more necessity for this sort of accommodation in the central city area than in the areas mainly being built in by the commission. In other words, we should keep some life in the city. It is just as much a responsibility of the commission to do this as it is for private enterprise to have more responsibility within the approximate centre of the city. I feel there is no shame in that sort of building, which is being patronised and well looked after.

I encourage the commission to build some degree of high-density accommodation, but perhaps what it has built to date has not been well located. The commission goes out into the broad acres and builds accommodation such as Brownley Towers and the units down in Medina, and it finishes up with all sorts of problems.

One of these problems has manifested itself year after year and the commission refuses really to do anything meaningful about it. Most members have complained about the problem of dampness found mainly in the lower flats in two-storied buildings. Actually, this accommodation should be knocked down and rebuilt because there is an architectural fault with it. Mothers implore me to do something about the dampness in their children's bedrooms, and when I complain to the commission I am told the tenants should open some doors or windows. The units on the second floor are reasonable, but the ground floor ones are not. In a wet winter these people should not have a virtual cyclone blowing through their housing.

The construction of these units is poor and they fail to keep out the dampness. The people living there are often supplying medical certificates for their children who have all sorts of bronchial problems, and so they are entitled to lay some of the blame on the State Housing Commission because of its failure to provide reasonable dwellings.

If it is a problem of ventilation, the commission has to see to it that these dwellings are better ventilated. This is not a recent problem; it has been coming up year after year. We have not had a very damp year since many of these places have been in existence. A very wet winter would mean very many more complaints would be received. Many members, including myself, have complained about this matter in this Chamber, but we have got nowhere. This type of accommodation has to be thoroughly re-examined and something done about it.

If the commission has to put in some sort of false ventilation to ensure the accommodation remains dry, so be it; but it is the commission's responsibility. Why should another person be allocated accommodation and be dry and have their children warm while others have this terrible problem of dampness? It is not fair or reasonable. It is no wonder many people complain to their local member about the situation.

The commission is not giving enough individual service to this sort of complaint. I realise it receives a myriad complaints about all sorts of things, but when a concentrated flow of complaints is received about certain types of buildings which are obviously faulty, it should do something about it.

I ask the Minister to get the commission to do just this. I ask him to have the commission's architects ascertain what is causing the problems instead of their merely suggesting a few doors and windows be left open. That is not the answer to the problem and it will probably exacerbate the existing conditions come winter time. With those few comments I support the Bill.

MR PARKER (Fremantle) [2.56 p.m.]: I would like to make a few comments in support of the Bill. I indicate I have no envy for the position in which the officers of the commission find themselves. When I have dealt with these officers during the few months I have been a member of Parliament and during the time I represented employees of the commission I always found they acted in the very best traditions of the Public Service. They all try their hardest to do that, particularly the current general manager, both in his present position and his previous one. He has

always proved to be a very rational and dedicated public servant with whom to deal.

It must be an incredible burden on a person running the State Housing Commission when one considers the problems which must arise. One can appreciate the difficulties the commission faces because of the lack of funds made available to it over the last two or three years, as indicated by the Minister in response to several questions I asked him about the last agreement made. Nevertheless, there are some practices that could be tightened up or changed. I hope this Bill will allow greater efficiency in the commission to ensure these things can be done.

My first question concerns a matter which has been troubling me for some time and which, incidentally, cropped up again today. The Minister will be aware I have discussed with him a particular person on whose behalf I have been making representations to the Aboriginal Housing Board. I am delighted to say that he has now been allocated accommodation. The problem which has arisen is that the accommodation is in need of maintenance and it has been indicated that it will take three or more weeks before this work will be completed.

I spoke with several officers in different areas of the commission and it would appear the practice is that when commission accommodation becomes vacant and maintenance is required, that maintenance does not get done until someone has been allocated that accommodation. It seems that maintenance is not commenced immediately following the vacating of that accommodation by the previous tenant; not until such time as someone else is given the accommodation is maintenance considered.

I appreciate there is a problem with vandalism. If the accommodation receives maintenance and then remains empty for some time, the work done could be undone by vandals. This is one of the problems the commission faces and to which I referred earlier.

This particular accommodation had been subjected to extensive vandalism and I appreciate it is a problem about which the commission can do very little—except perhaps to construct barbed wire fences, which no-one would support, of course.

It is a problem, but it is something which I hope the commission and the Minister will look at, because it seems rather unfair that a person must wait several weeks in any event—in some cases people have to wait for months—before being allocated accommodation, and he must then wait a further lengthy period of time before the

property is maintained. This is particularly unfair in the case of people who are in urgent need of accommodation.

What follows may be an area in which there is a fundamental philosophical disagreement between the Minister's party and me and my party; but it would be much easier to be flexible in these areas if maintenance work were carried out by employees of the SHC, rather than by contractors.

I am not saying contractors should not be used at all in the maintenance and, indeed, the building of houses. There is certainly a need for contractors in some country towns especially and also when maintenance work peaks. In those cases, the obvious solution is to call in contractors to perform the work. However, when there is a general level of maintenance to be carried out and it is clear that level will be sustained throughout the year, maximum flexibility would be obtained by increasing the size of the day labour force in that area and using it for the work.

I understand people employed in this area are highly regarded. They work very hard and, in many cases, they make do with old materials.

I remember taking a case in the Industrial Commission last year or the year before on behalf of a carpenter who was accused of working slowly. It transpired he was making up new window sashes and had to use old materials. He had to get the old wood into decent condition before he could make up the sashes.

That is a commendable use of public funds, but it indicates the way in which these people can, on occasions, be held up to ridicule for the time they take to complete a task, when in fact they cannot be blamed for it.

Another point I should like to make concerns the question of purchasing property. I am aware of the difficulties experienced by the SHC in relation to funds. I agree with the statement made by the member for Welshpool that units of accommodation should be built close to the city. Might I say this situation does not relate only to the city of Perth; it relates also to Fremantle. A large number of people have lived in the city of Fremantle for a long time and no new SHC accommodation is available close to the centre of the city. The Sampson estate is being developed, but that is a fair way out.

Frequently large tracts of land come onto the market, especially when people holding warehouse accommodation move from the city area to an industrial estate such as O'Connor. This is occurring at the moment in Fremantle. Large tracts of land have been occupied by woolstores

and other big warehousing or small manufacturing operations, the owners of which in many cases move their operations to an industrial estate such as O'Connor. As a result, those blocks of land are put up for sale.

It seems to me that, where possible, the SHC should consider purchasing some of those areas of land, with a view to constructing accommodation, particularly for pensioners who like to live close to the city in which they have always resided, so that they do not have to travel a great distance to do their shopping or for other purposes.

Where possible, the SHC should redevelop that land so that these people can live as close as is practicable to the city of Fremantle. This situation applies throughout the metropolitan area.

The other area of property purchase to which I should like to refer is the acquisition of individual units of accommodation as they come onto the market. The SHC used to adopt this practice frequently, but it seems to have discontinued it, possibly as a result of lack funds.

Scattered throughout my electorate are a number of suitable units which, at some stage, have been purchased by the SHC, presumably when they came onto the market and it was thought they were good bargains. In those cases, the SHC took advantage of the situation and purchased these units of accommodation.

That sort of housing is ideal, because it prevents the sort of ghetto situation occurring, a matter to which the member for Dianella referred. This practice also provides a variety of housing accommodation which the SHC can offer people.

I see such a practice as being of great value and the SHC should have the ability to purchase this type of accommodation. It is obvious this should be done on an economical basis only; but if such housing units come onto the market and it is worthwhile for the SHC to purchase them, it should do so.

This practice could be criticised on the grounds that comparisons may be made and someone may say, "I have a better house than yours." However, be that as it may, I believe this is a matter to which the SHC should give consideration.

A number of complaints have come to me from people of Aboriginal descent living either in or near my electorate. These people experience problems with the SHC. I would be the first person to recognise this matter is a very vexed question and people of non-Aboriginal descent have complained to me about people of Aboriginal descent. However, it is not a one-sided

story, because complaints are made to me about Caucasians.

I do not make these comments by way of an indictment of the individuals concerned; but an ethos has built up and it seems to me there is a degree of—I hesitate to use the word—racism which exists in the treatment of Aboriginal people generally in this State and by the SHC.

The question of standards is referred to frequently. It is said that a particular applicant has not met the required standards to be accommodated in SHC housing. Therefore, the person is referred to the Aboriginal Housing Board or denied accommodation altogether.

I find that practice objectionable. I appreciate the problems of the public servants in this situation. However, a particular case that comes to mind involves a person who has, as far as I am aware, never been accommodated in an SHC unit. He has always lived on a reserve or in similar circumstances. He has now applied for SHC accommodation and, as a result of his prior history, he has been told his standards are not good enough for him to be listed by the SHC. He can only be listed by the Aboriginal Housing Board.

I find such a situation objectionable in this day and age and it is a matter to which the commission should turn its attention. It is not an easy matter for the commission, but I believe the position should be rectified.

Another point to be considered in this respect is that if a substantial number of Aboriginal people are sent to the Aboriginal Housing Board after being denied accommodation by the SHC, then that board must be supplied with a greater number of units of accommodation than it has at the present time.

As I understand the position, virtually all the people who apply to the Aboriginal Housing Board for accommodation are on an emergency priority basis. Very few of the applicants to the Aboriginal Housing Board are on a wait-turn basis. That is my understanding of the matter, anyway.

Therefore, the Aboriginal Housing Board has to make a determination in regard to a large number of people, all of whom to some degree need accommodation urgently. The board must decide which of those people will be given units of accommodation. Virtually all these people are emergency cases and, because they are not listed by the SHC, they will not be given accommodation by it. They must then apply to the Aboriginal Housing Board and many of them

will never obtain this type of accommodation, because new, urgent cases are always emerging.

The matters to which I have referred should be attended to by the SHC. I hope the added efficiency this Bill will give the commission will work towards streamlining its activities and that it will proceed along the lines I have mentioned.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne—Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing) [3.09 p.m.]: I thank members for their general support of the Bill and also for the various comments made. I shall endeavour to deal with the questions raised during the debate.

Firstly, the member for Balcatta referred to the difficulties of the commission particularly in regard to funding, which creates problems in its achieving a workable programme to deal with the tasks before it.

It has been well documented that the amount of Federal funds available to this State has been diminishing in recent years. Reference was made to the current Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. This agreement was ratified in 1978. It is a three-year agreement which expires on 30 June 1981. The States are currently negotiating for a new five-year agreement commencing on 1 July 1981. There has already been some indication by the Commonwealth of a number of matters about which we are quite happy. However, other matters have been mentioned about which the State is not at all happy. I should like to refer to two of them.

One point is that the agreement will be a five-year agreement; so there has been a commitment by the Federal Government to continue putting funds into welfare housing across the nation for at least the next five years. The second point is that a minimum level of funding has been guaranteed for that five years.

All States disagree with the minimum level of funding announced by the Commonwealth; each State did not like the quantum of funds. The fact that there was a base level of funding indicated in advance of this new agreement for this five-year period is something with which most States were in agreement. Nonetheless, negotiations will go on for the next few months.

Certainly, the Bill before the House is a very important part of the future operations of the Housing Commission, and we have looked at providing the commission with much wider scope to try to improve its ability to meet the challenges ahead of it. It needs not only the legislative backing to do these things, but also the funds; that is something which we need to be constantly chasing.

It is true that the Commonwealth has cut the amount of funding that is available, which has occurred for two reasons: One is that a lot of the welfare demands round Australia have been catered for. In fact, across the country, in all States, there is a very large volume of housing units that have been made available by Federal funding in the last 30 or so years. The Commonwealth has been asking the States to generate more funds of their own to make better use of their existing housing stocks so that the Commonwealth can use its welfare funds in a whole range of other areas which have sprung up in recent years and in which people are making demands on Government funds—demands that they were not making before.

If these additional areas of welfare are to be catered for, as well as the traditional areas like housing, that can be done only if there is an increase in taxation or more funds are made available to the Federal Government. The Federal Government is looking for an opportunity to try to spread the available funds across more welfare fields which of course will put pressure on the field of housing.

During recent years in all States, including Western Australia, there have been some vacancies in the houses of the welfare housing stocks. The point I have made repeatedly to the Commonwealth since I have been the Minister is that the demands in this State come not only from the welfare field of housing, but also from the other fields of housing.

The member for Pilbara referred to several of these fields. Because of our development we have demands in this State not only for welfare housing, but also for housing in our growth centres. We live in a large State and have development in remote centres where the cost of building is high. Therefore, largely because we have this additional area of housing need, we are noticing a drying-up of funds. We do need to be leading the way in the developing areas by providing them with housing. As I said, we require funds not only for that purpose, but also for the purpose of development, and funds greater than normal because of the higher costs associated with those developing areas.

The member for Balcatta said that this proposed legislation is an update of the 1946 Act. We intend to modernise the Act and therefore the operations of the Housing Commission and this course will give us a great deal more flexibility. If the proposed legislation is to give the Housing Commission more flexibility, as the member said, that situation could be a two-edged sword—the flexibility could be used in a number of ways.

The member's point is well and truly appreciated by me. I have been reminded of this point by my colleagues on this side of the House as well as by other members during this debate.

The flexibility may in fact enable the Housing Commission to be more powerful.

The member said that the commission should be more vivid. I do not know how he saw the commission as being more vivid, but that could be a rather interesting concept to see.

It is not the first time I have stood in this House to argue the economic philosophies of the two sides of this House; I can remember debating that point with the member for Ascot on a number of occasions. I guess that the determining factor is the way in which the flexibility provided in any piece of legislation is used, and that will be the case with this Bill. I believe the flexibility will be best used in the hands of a Liberal or a conservative Government, and long may it be the case that there is a Liberal Government. We will not then have to see how the other edge of the two-edged sword operates.

Mr Parker: You will have until 1983.

Mr B. T. Burke: All things come to pass.

Mr LAURANCE: History will tell. History will record how flexibility can be used in more than one way. I guess one might say that there is political dyslexia; I think it is a mirror image. People see that flexibility from different viewpoints. Quite frankly, I see it allowing the commission to be more innovative.

Mr Bryce: Will you promise us that you will never become one of those mirror-like Ministers who tends to keep looking into things?

Mr LAURANCE: I will keep looking into it. I see the commission's having more flexibility as a way that will enable the commission to be more innovative. It will be able to join with private enterprise more often. Depending on one's philosophy one could say that this Bill is a socialistic measure or one could say that it is a private enterprise orientated measure. I believe it is private enterprise orientated.

The commission will have to go into the marketplace and match private enterprise on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The commission is doing this more often.

I indicated to the House on an earlier occasion that the commission has concluded arrangements with a charitable organisation to go into a joint arrangement to build a pensioner establishment. I do not see that move as socialistic; I see it as futuristic. If we are more involved with private enterprise we will be following along with the

Liberal philosophy and not running counter to it at all.

If the commission becomes more involved in joint ventures with the private sector then the commission will reduce its involvement in the housing field. I see this reduction of involvement continuing. It could be that we will reach the point under this legislation with this flexibility where no longer will there be a need for a body such as the State Housing Commission. That is how I see one edge of the sword; members opposite may see the edge in a different way.

Mr B. T. Burke: Completely different.

Mr LAURANCE: Right! The member for Balcatta talked about the board of the commission, and I would like to touch on that point. It is true that two of the provisions relating to the membership, when they were written into the existing Act, obviously were suitable, but that was in 1946, immediately after the war. At that time there was particular provision for ex-servicemen and other people representing sectional interests. I think that in the 1980s that is no longer appropriate; therefore the Act will provide for the appointment of people with a general ability to serve the State and the State Housing Commission.

The term of membership at the moment is unlimited, so there is a lifetime tenure. I do not believe that is appropriate in today's times. It is intended that when the Act is amended the members will be reappointed for a set term and that in future at varying times these members will come up for reappointment.

The member for Balcatta referred to one of the members of the board, Mr Clohessy. The member for Balcatta indicated quite gently, I thought, that the proposed provision may be a means of removing Mr Clohessy from the board of commissioners. That is not my intention; his membership along with that of all the others will be reviewed. I will not give a cast iron guarantee that the membership of Mr Clohessy or others will be renewed, but I have no intention to remove him from the board of commissioners.

As with other commissioners, I have had a good working relationship with Mr Clohessy in the few months I have been responsible for this portfolio. He has made a considerable contribution to the board, as have other members. I am very happy with all members of the board and I am happy with him. If the member for Balcatta cares to mention by name other members of the board, I ask him to remember what I have said.

I believe that the chairman (Mr Lindsey) and other members of the board are doing an excellent

job at this time and will be of considerable assistance to me in bringing these new provisions into effect.

The member for Balcatta also mentioned the mortgage arrangements proposed in this Bill. He referred to the part in the second reading speech where I indicated that there will be no statutory power to alter any contracts of sale or mortgages in force at the time the new legislation comes into effect.

I pointed out that fact very clearly because I prefaced my remarks by saying "it must be emphasised". I said this because there are people who have existing contracts and they would want to know the intention of the Government when the legislation comes into force.

I will outline the matter further when we discuss this particular clause in the Committee stage. However, I must make the point now that the existing contracts will remain as binding contracts between the commission and the tenants. That is the way the conditions were written at the time and that is the way they will remain. However, the new contracts will permit a more flexible approach to finance, whereby terms can be readily adjusted.

The member for Balcatta also referred to the home-building industry. I monitor this industry constantly and I have maintained a close relationship with the organisations within the home-building industry. I have also endeavoured to ensure that the senior officers of the commission maintain a close involvement with organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Housing Industry Association, so that we have a close working relationship with the private sector of the home-building industry.

It is also true that the indicative planning council report which was released two or three months ago showed some growth within the home-building industry in this State. This is despite the fact that there has been a shake-out in the industry in the last 12 months or so because of a number of conditions which have applied not the least of which is the change in the energy situation which has resulted in people wishing to live closer to the central city.

Some people do not wish to travel to the new suburbs and this is one of the factors affecting the home-building industry. Nevertheless, there can be some optimism—

Mr B. T. Burke: Quiet optimism.

Mr LAURANCE: —although it is quiet optimism, that the home-building industry in this State will pick up.

The fact was pointed out by the indicative planning council that some input will be made into this industry and into the private sector also.

I thank the member for Pilbara for his remarks in this debate. The scope and additional flexibility allowed by the commission in this Bill have been provided specifically to render assistance to the northern areas of the State. The member for Pilbara mentioned two factors: one was the eligibility criteria under which the commission will now have the power to help people who have skills which may be required in other areas and the commission will be able to help locate these people in remote areas of the State. The member mentioned also one situation with regard to the professional occupations such as accountants, solicitors, doctors, and so on. Under this Bill we will have to provide them with housing, but each case will be reviewed and considered on its merits.

The commission usually provides this assistance at the request of the local community and more often than not it is a request made by a local authority. If the commission gives assistance to establish a person in an area at the request of a local authority, that case will be kept under review, with the local authority. That assistance would not be on an open-ended basis. It would be kept on an interim basis until such time as the person became established.

The member for Pilbara mentioned also two particular areas of housing in the north-west. One was housing for single workers and the other was for childless couples; that is, young married couples without children or older couples whose children have grown up. These people do not have a high priority under the existing eligibility provisions in the Bill.

This provision for specialised housing in the north-west was made at the insistence of the member for Pilbara because of the urgency in his area for these types of accommodation. The legislation was designed specifically to help these areas in the north-west. The lower rental approach and the designed changes in this legislation to assist people in these areas generally have been appreciated.

Some \$20 million has been expended over the last two years on a major building programme in the north of the State to provide homes and it is anticipated that further funds will be expended in the future.

The member for Dianella referred to large apartment blocks. I remind the honourable member that we are talking about public housing and I am sure that the decision to build these accommodation blocks was the right one at the

time. The member for Dianella was not in this House at the time the decision was made, nor was I. At the time there was an urgent need for housing and we must be charitable and say that it was a right decision at that time. We are not building this type of accommodation today—

Mr Tonkin: Wrong now and wrong then!

Mr LAURANCE: —and it appears likely that it will not be built again.

Mr Tonkin: Go to Lockridge and see what it is like to live there.

Mr LAURANCE: I have been there.

Mr Wilson: What decisions will you make about the youth—

Mr LAURANCE: I am attempting to answer some of the member for Dianella's questions. I did not interject on him while he was making his comments.

The member for Morley mentioned the area of Lockridge. I believe the accommodation provided in the apartment blocks is good accommodation. It is accommodation which public housing authorities around the world would be proud to have in their housing schemes. The accommodation is spacious and modern, and most of it has been built in the last 10 years or so.

Mr Tonkin: All nicely covered with mildew.

Mr LAURANCE: The accommodation is spacious and often has three bedrooms. The member for Morley who has just entered this debate, has had an opportunity to make his comments without interjection. I ask him that I may have a chance to respond to comments made by members of the Opposition, without interruption.

The member for Dianella indicated that tenants may wish to be more selective. I agree with him that people are being more selective. Our standard of living has risen and I support that concept very much. However, I remind him that 55 per cent of State Housing Commission tenants are on a rebated rental and if he suggests that perhaps all the tenants should be on a standard rental, the increase in funds which would be available would provide a much more viable rental operation and then tenants could be more selective. We can have only one or the other. These rebated rentals are related to the tenant's income. Of the 55 per cent of the tenants who are on a rebated rental today, very few are located in the country and there is virtually none in the north-west of the State. So, a large proportion of the rebated rental tenants would be residing in the metropolitan area.

Over the last 12 months, well over 70 per cent of the new tenants in State Housing Commission homes have been on a rebated rental. The member for Dianella mentioned the fact that there is a number of vacant units. These vacant units are being filled very rapidly and I do not believe they are undesirable units at all, as the member indicated. The member said that the reason for their vacancy may have been because they are undesirable. If the member had checked with the people involved in the market he would then be aware that private rentals have been depressed in recent years. I think that is the reason for the vacancies because people who would otherwise be interested in public housing have been able to find satisfactory accommodation at reasonable rentals within the private market. However, that may not be the case in the very near future because rentals are increasing and there may be a greater demand for this type of rental very soon.

The member touched on a fairly sensitive area—that of Aboriginal families in particular dwellings. He claimed he was not being discriminatory, but, of course, he was. I remind him there is any number of people, apart from me, who would claim he was being discriminatory. For instance, most Government social workers would claim he was being discriminatory. I have had considerable pressure applied to me that all vacant units should be given over to Aboriginal families who require housing. It has been claimed that if we do not do that we are being discriminatory, in the same way as was the member opposite. This is a very complex matter.

Mr Wilson: You are not declaring yourself very clearly.

Mr LAURANCE: I said the member for Dianella was being discriminatory. We are trying to do the best by all tenants; that is the position.

Mr Wilson: That is a useless comment to make.

Mr LAURANCE: We cannot do the best by all tenants while the member opposite is being discriminatory. However, I can tell the member I will not report him to Al Grassby. If a member from this side of the House made the same comments the member opposite would be the first to report him to Al Grassby.

Mr Wilson: Rubbish!

Mr LAURANCE: I was a little disturbed that the member opposite should resort to sensationalism. When talking about housing units he said they should be demolished. That is absolute nonsense. Most units are under 10 years old, and they are quite modern and spacious.

Mr Wilson: And jerry-built.

Mr LAURANCE: If that is the only answer which the member for Dianella can put forward, it would make matters worse.

Mr Tonkin: They are not fit for human beings.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Dianella would be the first one to scream that we should be building more units rather than demolishing them. I think it was sensationalism, and he should be the last person to adopt that line. He should be the type of person who can well appreciate the welfare aspect involved in trying to get these people properly housed.

Mr Wilson: The Minister should ask them what they want.

Mr LAURANCE: The position is not made any easier by the member opposite. There are numbers of other people who are seeking sensationalism.

Mr Wilson: The Minister should ask the people who have to live in the units.

Mr LAURANCE: The member opposite has got himself a headline, but at the expense of the people living in the units.

Mr Wilson: The Minister should try living in one of the units himself.

Mr Tonkin: Most of them are desperate to get out.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Murdoch has similar situations in his electorate, and many of the people there are making a good fist of fitting in with the community with which they are involved. I am sure more could be done at Lockridge. The member for Dianella should not be seeking sensationalism and applying greater pressure to the commission by saying the units are not fit for habitation.

Mr Wilson: The Minister should listen to what the people have to say.

Mr LAURANCE: I thought the member would have appreciated the welfare aspect.

Mr Wilson: I do appreciate it very much, better than does the Minister.

Mr O'Connor: The member for Dianella worries about individual cases, whether or not they are deserving.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Dianella has forgotten his own upbringing and his own past, and he is seeking headlines.

Mr Wilson: You worry about your own upbringing.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Dianella should help to overcome the problem, and help to

alleviate it. I have been to every block of units in Lockridge.

Mr Tonkin: Have you talked to the people there?

Mr LAURANCE: Yes.

Mr Tonkin: Are they all happy?

Mr LAURANCE: The units are attractive.

Mr Skidmore: It is not a case of the units being attractive; it is a case of people having to live there.

Mr LAURANCE: A lot depends on the tenants and the caretakers of the units. When there is a good caretaker and co-operative tenants, it is a pleasure to visit. The people enjoy living in those units, and they make a good fist of it.

I would like to think the member for Dianella will be more helpful in future than he has been in his comments today.

Mr Tonkin: Will the Minister come with me to meet some of these people?

Mr LAURANCE: I have been there.

Mr Tonkin: The Minister saw about eight people without finding out any facts. I invite him to actually talk to the people. Has he done that?

Mr LAURANCE: Yes.

Mr Tonkin: How many?

Mr LAURANCE: I have been to every block of units in Lockridge. Has the member opposite?

Several members interjected.

Mr LAURANCE: The member for Welshpool mentioned the location of the large blocks of units and, in fact, disagreed with the previous speaker. He said there could be reasons to build medium to high-density blocks, and he may well be right. He gave a different point of view from that expressed by the member for Dianella. He referred to Wandana as a block of units which are satisfactory. There are others. I make the point we will try to keep blocks like that situated close to the city to serve a particular type of tenant.

I also take note of the matter he raised regarding the lower storey on some two-storied units. I say to the member, as I have said in previous debates, if he brings these particular matters to my notice we will attempt to do something about them.

Whilst we have had some problems with architecture, it is true to say that in recent years the architectural division has done wonders both in bringing down costs and at the same time providing modern housing of good appearance and with a great deal of variety. There is a number of developments throughout the

metropolitan area which would be a credit to any public housing authority. It is not possible to provide the sort of variety we would like, and still have low-cost housing. Members are well aware that the State Housing Commission is responsible for the provision of low-cost housing.

The member for Fremantle first of all spoke glowingly about the officers of the State Housing Commission, and I thank him for his remarks and I endorse them. I believe the attitude of officers, from the general manager down towards tenants is quite exemplary.

The brand new regional office at Fremantle was mentioned. It was built to reflect the history of the area, and to fit in with the plans of the local authority. At the same time, it is a very modern building. Regionalisation by the commission has brought the offices closer to the tenancies. I think the managers are doing a good job. The regional offices are better located, particularly in some of the outlying suburbs. It is not easy to have an eyeball-to-eyeball relationship with 25 000 tenants; but, up to date, the commission has done an excellent job.

Maintenance was mentioned, and this work is generally carried out by private contractors. It sometimes takes a contractor a few weeks to get to a job, and that is usually the reason for any delay. I have studied cases where contractors have not been up to scratch with their maintenance programme. It is difficult to do anything during the term of the contract, but if complaints are received and the contractor has not performed satisfactorily, his contract is not renewed. There are problems with vacant houses because of vandalism, and we have to be careful about that.

I do not think the answer to the maintenance problem is a large day-labour force. Day-labour workers would be flat out at times, and at other times they would have very little to do. That is a problem which faces any Government instrumentality. Generally, the contractual arrangement works satisfactorily, as long as the contractors are on the ball.

Mr Parker: I was saying there is a general level of maintenance that always needs to be done.

Mr LAURANCE: The commission has a day-labour force, and we will never agree on what the size of that force should be. However, as a matter of principle I believe this work should be carried out by contractors. It is up to the commission to ensure that contractors perform satisfactorily.

I referred to new work being undertaken by the commission, and the member said that there is a requirement for accommodation close to the Fremantle City area. The commission owns some

land, and discussions are being held with the local authority about utilising some of that land close to central Fremantle.

Another way to provide accommodation reasonably close to a central city area is by the redevelopment of old areas. As the member would know, excellent redevelopment has taken place around the Davis Park area where many old homes were constructed shortly after the war. I do not know whether the honourable member has seen that redevelopment, but if he has he would have to agree we can be very proud of such projects.

Reference was made to the purchase of individual houses. The commission still purchases individual houses sometimes, subject to available funds. The point is taken that sometimes it is not necessary to undertake redevelopments on large chunks of land in central areas, and sometimes we do purchase individual houses.

The member for Fremantle referred also to the problem of Aboriginal housing, and he said that the Aboriginal Housing Board had been able to assist some people who had come to him for help. I would like to take the opportunity to say that the Aboriginal Housing Board is doing a wonderful job in this State. In fact, it is meeting today, and this week it is celebrating its second year of operation. It commenced in 1978, and it has done an excellent job since then.

As the board builds up its expertise and knowledge, we will see even better things from it. It is true that not all Aboriginal tenants can be housed satisfactorily within a conventional urban situation, and the member will know that the commission, in co-operation with the Department for Community Welfare, has just completed on the edge of the city a village-type complex called the Cullacubardee Village. This complex will cater for those Aboriginal people who do not desire conventional housing. If the project is successful, as I hope it will be, perhaps we can provide more such complexes for these people. I do not think any one particular answer will provide the solution to the whole problem. However, this Government has provided an enormous number of houses for Aboriginal people. Indeed, about 2 000 Aboriginal families have been accommodated in the metropolitan area in the last five years. We have an excellent record, and we will continue in the same vein.

I should point out that it is only 2 per cent of the Aboriginal families housed in the metropolitan area who cause complaint to the Housing Commission, and that speaks volumes.

We read and hear a great deal in the media about the problem of housing Aborigines, and various pressure groups are very vocal about it. However, it must be recognised that if only 2 per cent of the Aboriginal families in the metropolitan area are the cause for complaint, the problem is not as great as it would seem.

I thank members for their support of the Bill and I commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Mr Laurance (Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Objects—

Mr TONKIN: This clause sets out the objects of the Bill, and paragraph (a) refers to the improvement of existing housing conditions. Unfortunately I was not able to speak during the second reading debate, so I take this opportunity to make one or two comments about the Honorary Minister's remarks. Firstly, I can assure the Honorary Minister that I am not looking for a headline in the Press—that no longer has the capacity to turn me on.

Secondly, I am not making these comments of my own volition; I am making these comments on behalf of the people whom I represent. These people come to me every day with their problems, so my remarks do not stem from some private pique.

Some of the high-density dwellings in Lockridge are more like prisons than houses. It seems to me that in some of them the only things missing are the machine guns and the barbed wire on the top. It depresses me to visit the area because I know how depressed the inhabitants are.

One example of this type of housing is the high-rise development in Kerwin Way. In the passageways of these flats, one cannot see the light of day at all, and so a naked electric light bulb burns day and night. If the Honorary Minister thinks that is acceptable in a land that is supposed to be the land of sunshine, I cannot agree with him. We should not have to accept such housing.

In some of these high-rise development areas, children are put to bed instead of being allowed to play because of the social problem of young children being beaten up by older children. When

the parents are up on the third floor, they cannot supervise the play of young children. Certainly these flats are not suitable places in which to bring up children, and they should not be let to families. It is quite wrong for the Minister to say that they are adequate. If he is thinking in terms of cattle being bedded down for the night with water and hay, they are suitable; but for human beings in a social situation, they are not adequate at all.

I believe the Honorary Minister referred to the great service performed by the staff of the Housing Commission. I would like to put it on record that this has not been my experience.

I would like particularly to refer to repairs and maintenance. It is now normal for a person who wants repairs to a stove, a hot water system, a window, or a toilet, to come to my office. The experience has been that nothing happens when a complaint is made directly to the Housing Commission. It is not until a complaint is made to me and I get onto the commission that any action is taken.

Mr Sodeman: Is it common for that to happen?

Mr E. T. Evans: Of course it is.

Mr Sodeman: In the north it is much harder to have maintenance undertaken, and yet the service is excellent.

Mr TONKIN: It may be that different staff are involved in the north. Certainly it is normal for complaints of the most mundane matters to come to my office, and I have to operate as a clerk for the commission. Of course I have documentation of the number of times I have been asked to intervene when people have sought repairs and nothing has been done for weeks and months.

We should live in a society in which a telephone call from a resident receives as much attention as a telephone call from a member of Parliament. I do not happen to believe in the principle that if a person happens to know a member of Parliament he receives good service and if he does not, that is his bad luck.

The Honorary Minister has referred to people living in these high-rise units. I know of hardly anyone in the high-rise parts of Lockridge, which is in my electorate, who would not do almost anything to get out of there. Time and time again I have applied to the State Housing Commission only to have most applications rejected. I know of people who are living in appalling conditions elsewhere who have refused to accept the offer of an apartment in the high-rise part of Lockridge, such is the reputation of these places.

It is all very well to say there are many fine tenants there who are making the best of it; of course there are. However, can the Honorary Minister imagine the situation where there are eight people, only one of whom is not a good tenant? Can he imagine the effect on the other seven good tenants?

The Honorary Minister maintained it was a good thing at the time to construct these high-rise apartments because there was a need for cheap housing. I could almost see the dollar signs flashing in his eyes. I do not accept it is good enough to bring people from the other side of the world, treat them as factory hands, and accommodate them like cattle. I do not see that people should be brought from the other side of the world without the Government having any concern for their mental well-being.

To say there was a demand at the time for cheap building is to put the emphasis in the wrong place. There should be a demand for decent accommodation for people living in a modern, affluent society. The Premier has a mania for growth at any cost, but this practice of transporting people from the other side of the world and accommodating them in the cheapest possible way and under any conditions is not a civilised way to treat human beings. I do not care which Government built these units; it was a wrong decision.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 21 put and passed.

Clause 22: Powers in relation to development and management of land—

Mr LAURANCE: I move an amendment—

Page 15, line 23—Delete the words "tenancy agreements" and substitute the word "leases".

Mr B. T. BURKE: I cannot see why the Honorary Minister's amendment should not succeed. However, I think it is incumbent upon him to explain why he is so moving.

Mr Davies: It is not unreasonable to ask that.

Mr LAURANCE: If the member for Balcatta looks at the other amendments I have on the notice paper in respect of this clause he will see that this is a consequential amendment. The original intention was that this clause should relate to those people who are entering a contract of sale, a mortgage, or a lease arrangement with the State Housing Commission. It was never intended that it should refer to tenants. My amendment simply seeks to correct a drafting error, so that the clause will refer only to lease agreements.

Mr B. T. BURKE: That dissolves one of the problems to which I referred briefly during the second reading stage, when I mentioned that the Honorary Minister in his second reading speech spoke about this legislation not involving the ability to change existing circumstances. I said then that, as I understood the legislation, it actually did not fulfil what the Honorary Minister had undertaken in that respect. I was referring to tenancy agreements which will continue under this legislation. If this amendment is not proceeded with, there will be the ability to interfere retrospectively with tenancy agreements.

Therefore, I support the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr Laurance (Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Housing).

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

"THE WEST AUSTRALIAN"

Parliamentary Debate Headline: Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER: (Mr Thompson): I am concerned that an article appeared in this morning's *The West Australian* under the heading "Mensaros lied to Parliament, says Burke".

As members are well aware, such language is traditionally regarded in this House as unparliamentary. In one instance in yesterday's debate I required the member for Balcatta to withdraw the accusation that the Minister had lied. On another occasion when a similar expression was used I remonstrated with the member and he rephrased his allegation to use more parliamentary words.

I was disturbed that members of the general public could gain an impression that language such as that is tolerated by me in this House and for that reason I have contacted the Editor of *The West Australian* to express my concern. He agrees with me that the use of such a heading in the circumstances is regrettable.

It is also regrettable that the article on which the headline is based does not refer to my disciplinary intervention.

BILLS (3): ASSENT

Message from the Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust Amendment Bill.
2. Murdoch University Amendment Bill.
3. Rural Relief Fund Act Repeal Bill.

House adjourned at 4.15 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH

Meat Inspection

1149. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) In reply to question 946 of 1980 relevant to meat inspection by local government, he stated that \$702 500 was raised as a direct result of meat inspection by local government in the past year and that \$696 500 was derived from inspection of stock slaughtered at abattoirs. If no fees were derived in the period from re-inspection of meat inspected by Department of Primary Industry inspectors for export and diverted to the local market, how was the remaining \$6 000 raised?
- (2) What did it cost local government authorities to employ these full-time meat inspectors in the last year, including overheads directly connected with them?
- (3) What minimum qualifications are required of meat inspectors employed by local government authorities?
- (4) (a) With these qualifications can they be utilised in other areas of public health work;
(b) if so, in what areas?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) The \$6 000 was derived from meat placed upon the local market after being withdrawn from export.
- (2) The information requested is not readily available from the records of the Departments of Local Government and Health and Medical Services.
- (3) (a) Royal Society of Health—Diploma of Meat and Other Foods Inspection.
(b) Bentley Technical College certificate or equivalent.
- (4) (a) No.
(b) Not applicable.

DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Environmental Review and Management Programmes

1173. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Resources Development:

What staff does the Department of Resources Development have with

qualifications suitable for the assessment of environmental review and management programmes?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

As I have already advised, the list of personnel, together with their professional qualifications, is published annually in the *Public Service List*. I appreciate there is no current list publicly available on staff who have joined the Department of Resources Development from the former Department of Industrial Development, but I can assure the member that the department comprises many skilled and competent officers representing several academic and professional disciplines, who have already amply demonstrated their professional ability to advise the Government on all aspects associated with resources development and management.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Office Lighting

1174. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that some Government departmental offices leave electric lighting systems on well into the night?
- (2) Does the State Government have a policy with regard to the use of electric lighting in Government departmental offices after hours, if so, will he provide details?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Cleaning operations and associated security measures involve the use of electric lighting after usual working hours. Within these limits departments are required at all times to exercise economy in the use of lighting systems.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Belmont Shopping Forum

1175. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the Metropolitan Transport Trust reached agreement with the management of the Belmont Shopping

Forum to provide a special weekly hire-bus service to serve pensioner housing units in Belmont?

- (2) If so, will he provide details of the agreement reached?
- (3) If not, can he indicate when the matter is likely to be finalised?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes. On 22 October 1980.
- (2) No. It is the prerogative of the hirer of this bus to disclose details of the service.
- (3) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND PUBLIC SERVANTS

State Emergency Service: Duty

1176. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

Does State Government policy provide for all employees of —

- (a) Government departments;
 - (b) Government agencies,
- to receive paid leave when on duty with the State Emergency Service?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (a) and (b) Where officers of the Public Service are called out in an emergency for duty with the State Emergency Service, each case is treated on its merits having regard to departmental requirements and, more particularly, to the public interest served.

A similar practice is generally followed by Government agencies.

In addition, the permanent head of Public Service departments has authority to approve up to two weeks' special leave with pay, subject to departmental convenience for attendance at approved courses connected with voluntary emergency service.

This policy is broadly followed by Government agencies, but, in some instances, attendance at local courses of short duration does not qualify for leave with pay.

TOWN PLANNING

MRPA: Group "C" Delegate

1177. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) Has she appointed a group "C" delegate to the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority yet?
- (2) If so, will she indicate—
 - (a) who was appointed to the position;
 - (b) when was the appointment made?
- (3) If not, will she indicate—
 - (a) the reason for the delay;
 - (b) when an appointment can be expected?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Mr F. Senior, Deputy President of the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale;
- (b) 17 September 1980.
- (3) (a) and (b) Not applicable.

ROADS

Bayswater, and Beechboro-Gosnells Freeway

1178. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) In his announcement of the Main Roads Department's plans for a new road to relieve traffic problems in Bayswater, was he referring in whole or in part to land reserved for the Beechboro-Gosnells controlled access road?
- (2) If "No", is it necessary for proposals for such a road to receive the approval of the Parliament?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) and (2) The works as presently proposed by the Main Roads Department would be wholly within the metropolitan region scheme reserve.

RIVER

Swan

1179. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the rate of erosion on the banks of the Swan River upstream from the Causeway?

- (2) Is the problem of river bank erosion along the Swan River monitored by any of the Governmental or semi-governmental agencies under his control?
- (3) If so—
 - (a) which agency conducts the monitoring;
 - (b) how frequently is the monitoring done;
 - (c) will he release details of any studies conducted in the last five years?
- (4) What action is proposed or recommended in respect of—
 - (a) public land;
 - (b) private properties,
 to combat the rate of erosion?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) (a) Swan River Management Authority.
- (b) Specific problem areas are visited regularly by staff.
- (c) No report has been compiled on this work.
- (4) (a) The Swan River Management Authority and the Public Works Department undertake bank restoration and protection work. The Public Works Department has recently developed a foreshore erosion treatment policy for the Swan River and funds have been allocated to implement it. The Public Works Department is also conducting a research project to determine the role that boat wash has in bank erosion.
- (b) Where private property is affected, and the owner requests assistance, the Swan River Management Authority undertakes foreshore protection and restoration work.

PASTORAL LEASES

Degradation

1180. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Adverting to question 486 of 1980 relevant to pastoral leases—

- (a) what area of pastoral leases in the Gascoyne was determined from rangeland surveys, to require withdrawal from grazing use or other special remedial measures;
- (b) what percentage of (a) is the 382 020 ha so far agreed by particular pastoralists as requiring special remedial attention?
- (2) (a) What area of pastoral leases in the Gascoyne was determined from rangeland surveys to require other remedial measures in regard to pasture and soil degradation;
- (b) what type of remedial measures were involved and what size area was concluded to need reduced stocking;
- (c) what size area of the Gascoyne did the surveys cover and what is the currency of the information?
- (3) (a) Since 1974-75 how many of the years have been considered in the Gascoyne to generally be drought years;
- (b) have follow-up reports on rangeland condition been made since the Gascoyne surveys referred to by the Minister on 2 September 1980;
- (c) if so, when and by whom?
- (4) (a) In regard to the 382 020 ha of badly degraded rangeland in the Gascoyne that particular pastoralists agreed required special remedial measures, to what extent have the special remedial measures been implemented;
- (b) what monitoring of the implementation of the measures is made and by whom;
- (c) have reports made by both the Department of Lands and Surveys and the Department of Agriculture expressed satisfaction at the progress made to date;
- (d) what has been the nature of State Government assistance to Gascoyne pastoralists by way of drought relief since 1974-75 and by way of special assistance to implement degraded rangeland remedial measures over the same period;
- (e) does the State Government intend to implement a reduced stocking programme for pastoral leases in the district;

- (f) if so, what measures are proposed to ensure the programme is carried out by pastoralists?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) to (4) As this question is of such wide application, it is not possible to correlate in a practical manner the information required. Where possible, some portions will be answered by way of letter.

PASTORAL LEASES

Degradation

1181. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

Adverting to question 486 of 1980 relevant to pastoral leases—

- (1) (a) What area of pastoral leases in the Kimberleys is, from rangeland surveys, considered necessary to be withdrawn from grazing use or other special remedial measures;
- (b) what percentage of (a) above is the 535 960 ha so far agreed by particular pastoralists as requiring special remedial attention?
- (2) (a) What area of pastoral leases in the Kimberleys from rangeland surveys, requires other remedial measures in regard to pasture and soil degradation;
- (b) what part of the Kimberleys did the surveys cover;
- (c) what is the currency of the information;
- (d) what size area was involved and what percentage of the Kimberley pastoral district did it involve?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) and (2) As in question 1180.

EMU BARRIER FENCE

Lake Moore

1182. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) In connection with question 233 asked in the Legislative Council on 17 September 1980 and relevant to

the emu barrier fence in the Lake Moore area, what consultation has there been with—

- (a) Department of Fisheries and Wildlife;
- (b) Department of Conservation and Environment;
- (c) Environmental Protection Authority,

concerning the location of the emu barrier fence in the Lake Moore area?

- (2) Considering that the general area has been the subject of a biological survey and that the Government has already agreed that a Class "A" flora and fauna reserve be set aside in the area—
- (a) what effect will it have on the reserve proposal;
 - (b) on which side of the fence will the reserve lie?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) (a) to (c) Consultations were held with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Conservation and Environment prior to the line being ground surveyed.
- (2) (a) and (b) The fence realignment will not affect the proposed reserve which lies to the east of the fence.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Gingilup Swamps, and Denmark, Kent, and Mitchell Rivers

1183. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) What progress has been made in implementing the following Environmental Protection Authority "Red Book" 2 proposals—
 - (a) 2.12 (1) Gingilup Swamps area;
 - (b) 2.15 Kent and Denmark River catchments?
- (2) What consideration has the Government given to conservation needs of the Mitchell River area of the Hay catchment area?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) The inclusion of vacant Crown land is awaiting the outcome of discussions with the Mines Department in respect of temporary mining leases in the area.
- (b) Discussions are in progress between the Departments of Forests, Lands, and Public Works.
- (2) A number of recommendations are being considered.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

System 6

1184. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

- (1) Adverting to question 1046 of 19 October 1977 relevant to the System 6 "Green Book"—
 - (a) when is the System 6 "Green Book" now expected to be released for public comment;
 - (b) has the System 6 Conservation Through Reserves Committee yet received all the reports and comments from each of the System 6 study subcommittees;
 - (c) if not, which are outstanding?
- (2) (a) What stage has been reached with the Environmental Protection Authority's consideration of the Conservation Through Reserves Committee's System 7 "Green Book";
- (b) Did the Environmental Protection Authority obtain from the Conservation Through Reserves Committee the rationale it applied when recommending that reserves be Class "C" or Class "B" rather than secure Class "A" reserves?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) The "Green Book" is now being prepared for printing and will probably be available by early December.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (2) (a) The Environmental Protection Authority has made its recommendations and these are being considered by Government.
- (b) Yes.

HOSPITAL

Fremantle: Doctors

1185. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) On what basis was the choice made as to which doctors would and which would not be retained on the staff of the Fremantle Hospital?
- (2) By whom was the choice made?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) On performance of the applicant.
- (2) All medical officers covered by this agreement are appointed by the board of management on recommendation of the medical superintendent.

HOSPITAL

Fremantle: Doctors

1186. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the average number of hours worked by doctors employed by the Fremantle Hospital, excluding those employed only on a sessional basis?
- (2) Is there an estimate of the number of hours that will have to be worked by those doctors to make up for the cutback in employment of doctors and the termination of employment of a number?
- (3) If "Yes" to (2), what is it?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) It is assumed this refers to interns, residents, and registrars under the Western Australian Hospitals Salaries and Conditions of Service Agreement 1978—Medical Officers.
Under the terms of the agreement dependent on the discipline in which they work their hours may vary between 48 to 70 hours each week.
- (2) No. Resident staff numbers are unchanged.
- (3) Answered by (2) above.

FISHERIES

Rock Lobster: Fees

1187. Mr PARKER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife:

- (1) Will the Minister detail the current "pot" fees and other fees applicable to crayfishermen for the various districts?
- (2) What increases have occurred over the last two years?
- (3) What increases are anticipated within the next 12 months?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) Current fees and fees charged in 1979 and 1978—

	LIMITED ENTRY LICENSE FEE	BOAT LICENCE FEE	PROFESSIONAL FISHERMAN'S LICENSE FEE
1980	Zones A, B, C & D \$4.30 per pot Zone E \$2.50 per pot	\$4 to \$30 depending on length of boat	\$4
1979	Zones A, B, C & D \$3.50 per pot Zone E \$2.00 per pot	\$4 to \$30 depending on length of boat	\$4
1978	Zones A, B, C & D \$3.50 per pot Zone E \$2.00 per pot	\$4 to \$30 depending on length of boat	\$4

- (3) Limited entry licence fees are reviewed every 12 months in consultation with the Australian Fishing Industry Council (WA Branch) in relation to the average annual earning power of a rock lobster pot.

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES PTY. LTD.

Articles and Memorandum of Association

1188. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce:

- (1) In reply to my question without notice on 11 September 1980, the Minister stated that the articles and memorandum of association of Small Business Services Pty. Ltd. were being considered by its board of directors and it was hoped that the documents would be returned to the Crown Law Department in the week commencing 15th September and filed at Corporate Affairs Office. Have the articles and memorandum of association been filed at the Corporate Affairs Office?
- (2) Could he explain the reasons for the delay in establishing the company?

Mr MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The Crown Law Department has advised that it has been necessary to reconsider and redraft the proposed memorandum and articles of association in the light of a new statement of practice and model memorandum and articles of association to be applied in Western Australia—and New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland—relating to companies limited by guarantee.

HOSPITALS

Metropolitan Development and Review Committee

1189. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Who are the members of the Metropolitan Hospitals Development and Review Committee?
- (2) When was it formed?
- (3) What are its terms of reference?
- (4) Are its members paid?
- (5) If so, on what basis?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Dr F. Bell—Director, Mental Health Services
Mr C. M. Campbell—Hospital Consultant to the Minister for Health
Mr S. H. S. Gill—Chairman, Royal Perth Hospital Board of Management
His Honour Judge D. C. Heenan
Mr F. A. Johnston—Chairman, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital Board of Management
Mr L. McCarrey—Under Treasurer
Mr H. H. McGrath—Deputy Director, Hospital & Allied Services
Dr J. C. McNulty—Commissioner of Public Health and Medical Services
Dr W. D. Roberts—Director, Hospital and Allied Services.
- (2) First meeting held on 2 July 1979.
- (3) (a) Reviewing and updating of the Llewelyn-Davies Kinhill report produced in 1975.
(b) Reviewing hospital development and commissioning programmes.
(c) Providing a medium and long-term integrated plan for priorities in commissioning up to 15 years.
(d) Producing a plan for co-ordinated development of services in metropolitan hospitals.

(c) Procedures that will permit accurate cost and staffing comparisons among teaching hospitals in Perth.

- (4) Members are not paid for attendance at meetings of the committee.
(5) Answered by (4).

1190. *This question was postponed.*

FUEL AND ENERGY: GAS

North-West Shelf: Pipeline Projects Office

1191. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) When was the pipeline projects office formed?
- (2) Who are its members?
- (3) Is it contained within a department?
- (4) If so, which one?
- (5) Are its members paid?
- (6) If so, on what basis?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (6) The purport of the question is not clear. If the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the State Energy Commission's pipeline project team, it was established within the commission for the purpose of overseeing the overall conduct of the Dampier to Perth natural gas pipeline project. Its members are full-time employees of the Energy Commission, and act as an interface with the principal engineering consultants, Fluor/Maunsell.

TROTTING

Richmond Raceway

1192. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

Why did the Western Australian Trotting Association make a decision to pay only 50c place dividends at a recent Richmond Raceway meeting?

Mr HASSELL replied:

The decision to pay only a 50c place dividend at a recent Richmond Raceway meeting was made by the Totalisator Agency Board as no subsidy was applied. The Totalisator Agency Board's policy is not to pay a subsidy of 5c when 100 000 units or 75 per cent of the total investment is on the one horse.

ANIMALS

Resources Centre

1193. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Will legislation be introduced for a statutory body to administer the animals resources centre at Murdoch University?
- (2) Why is it necessary to set up a statutory body to administer the centre?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) Alternatives to administration by a statutory body are at present being investigated.
- (2) There is need for a legal entity to control the Animal Resource Centre. Because the capital cost is shared between the State Government and tertiary education authorities, the manner in which the various parties can be joined legally in the administration of the centre presents difficulties.

GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES

G. J. Clarke Pty. Ltd. and K & H Forrest and Hagel Pty. Ltd.

1194. Mr DAVIES, to the Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce:

Why is it necessary for State Treasury to meet a guaranteed loan to the Rural and Industrial Bank for—

- (a) G. J. Clarke Pty. Ltd.;
- (b) K & H Forrest and Hagel Pty. Ltd.?

Mr MacKINNON replied:

- (a) G. J. CLARK PTY. LTD.
Because of an obligation arising under a guarantee issued to the Rural and Industries Bank in pursuance of the provisions of the Industry Advances Act 1947-1961 on behalf of the State at the direction of the Treasurer.
- (b) K. & H. FORREST AND HAGEL PTY. LTD.
Because of an obligation arising under a guarantee issued to the Rural and Industries Bank which was in respect of the Ord River District Co-operative whereby the State agreed to meet any shortfalls incurred.

PRISONS

Interdepartmental Committee

1195. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

Will he advise the House of the recommendations of the inter-departmental committee set up to devise a plan of improving prison facilities throughout the State?

Mr HASSELL replied:

It is assumed that the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the interdepartmental committee report of December 1979 entitled "Correctional Institutions—A Programme of Maintenance, Improvement and Future Development".

The report was prepared as a result of a Cabinet decision of September 1978, and is a report to Cabinet.

The report was considered by Cabinet in March 1980, and the report was adopted as Government policy. One adopted recommendation relating to the method of performance of the maintenance of institutions programme has since been modified.

The report is in the process of implementation, and the content of the report recommendations publicly released is supplied.

STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Proprietary Companies

1196. Mr DAVIES, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

Is there any statutory limit or statutory requirement in respect of statutory authorities forming proprietary companies or taking over proprietary companies?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

This would depend on the authorising Statute, and the nature of the statutory authority.

PRISONS

Prisoners: Number

1197. Mr DAVIES, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What were the total number of people in Western Australian prisons and detention centres between 1 July 1979 and 30 June 1980?
- (2) Of that number how many were serving sentences of less than three months?
- (3) Of the number serving sentences of less than three months, how many were serving sentences of less than one month?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) The total number of prisoners received in Western Australian prisons between 1 July 1979 and 30 June 1980 was 3860. Note that there are no detention centres in the Western Australian prison system.
- (2) Of that number, 2 211 prisoners were serving sentences of less than three months.
- (3) Of that number, 1 207 prisoners were serving sentences of less than one month.

SHIPPING

Ore Carriers

1198. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Referring to his statement in *The Sunday Times* of 20 July 1980 and *The Australian* of 21 July 1980 regarding likely introduction of 250 000-tonne ore carriers to the Pilbara, can he advise what studies have already been done and what studies are currently under way on this question?
- (2) What conclusions have been reached by the studies?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) Numerous preliminary studies have been carried out over the past decade regarding the benefits of using larger carriers for shipping iron ore from the Pilbara, and possible locations and methods of development of the required port or ports. The majority of these studies have been initiated by the iron ore companies with the Government being kept informed and providing any inputs requested.

These studies have outlined the benefits of using larger ships.

Following the sharp increase in oil prices, the iron ore companies—in consultation with the Government—have continued more detailed studies aimed at determining accurate cost estimates for dredging shipping channels in Pilbara ports.

Concurrently, studies have proceeded in the shipping world to improve design of ships, better methods of propulsion, and greater use of cheaper type fuels.

Earlier studies have defined in general terms the cost benefits of using large ships, and studies are still continuing.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Protection Authority: Chairman

333. Mr BARNETT, to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Premier confirm or deny that Dr Brian O'Brien is to be appointed Chairman of the Environmental Protection Authority or to any position which may eventuate to changes in the structure of the EPA?

Mr O'Connor: Are you opposed to him?

Mr BARNETT: No, I am just asking the question.

- (2) Will the Premier confirm or deny that Dr O'Brien is now drafting his own Act in a blatant example of jobs for the boys?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I think the member's question is quite farcical. I can assume only that he does not have any knowledge or understanding of the procedures adopted in formulating legislation and making appointments which arise from legislation.

Mr Davies: He might have a very close knowledge of it.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I can only re-emphasise what I have said before: No Bill is before Cabinet. When the Bill comes to Cabinet, that will be the time decisions are made as to what shall be the form of the legislation to be submitted to Parliament.

Mr Barnett: Would you like to deny it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not have to deny or confirm anything the member asks; I am just answering the question.

Mr Barnett: If you are answering the question, would you like to confirm or deny it?

Sir CHARLES COURT: I emphasise there is no Bill before the Cabinet, and until a Bill is before Cabinet, no decision can be made—in spite of the ballyhoo which has built up over this matter, which is a typical reaction in this area of activity.

Mr Skidmore: It is not ballyhoo; it is the public's concern.

Sir CHARLES COURT: When the Government has made a decision, the Parliament and the public will be told.

Several members interjected.

Sir CHARLES COURT: I do not think I will waste my time trying to answer the question, in view of the unruly attitude of the Opposition.

FUEL AND ENERGY: SEC

Two-way Radios

334. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

I preface my question by thanking the Minister for his written answer to my question regarding the conversion of SEC two-way radio units in the Geraldton area. I am interested to know whether it is the practice of the SEC to contract this work out to employees of Telecom, and to allow those employees to carry out the work part time, in their

own time. Does the Minister intend to investigate further a proposition that for at least part of the work, Telecom equipment be used?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

If the member refers to the answer I gave him, the first part has already been answered. In relation to the second part, the inference quite clearly was that the answer would be "No." It is not intended that that would be so. The inference was that some other steps would be taken to ensure that a similar situation did not occur. The first part of the answer he seeks is within the letter.

PHARMACY AMENDMENT BILL

Pharmacy-related Professional Services

335. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

Some notice has been given of this question.

Will the Minister provide clarification of what is meant by the term "pharmacy-related professional services" used in the second reading speech relating to the Bill to amend the Pharmacy Act 1964-1977?

Mr YOUNG replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question, but I have not had time to prepare the information I would like to give him. I would say that the term "pharmacy-related professional services" refers to organisations such as wholesale drug companies which advertise offering professional advice on common ailments. I cannot elaborate on that; but I will send the member a letter with the details of the sorts of advertisements to which I should have referred in the second reading speech.

PRISONS

Prisoner: Compassionate Leave

336. Mr PEARCE, to the Chief Secretary:

This relates to his portfolio as the head of the Department of Corrections.

- (1) Would he care to confirm that a long-term prisoner, who has been given compassionate leave on weekends against the advice of the Department of Corrections but on the personal representation of the Deputy Premier, has breached the terms of his weekend compassionate leave release in that last Saturday during this leave, apparently, he was handing out Liberal Party how-to-vote cards?
- (2) Will he confirm further that a prison officer saw the long-term prisoner doing that, and reported him to the Department of Corrections?
- (3) Will he advise the House if that is true; and if so, what action is being taken to review the conditions of compassionate leave for this gentleman?

Mr Davies: I reckon we should be taking action against the bloke that let him out.

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) to (3) I suggest the member put the question on notice.

HEALTH: NURSES REGISTRATION BOARD

Chairman

337. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Health:

This relates to the Bill introduced into the House last night to amend the Nurses Act. The Bill is seeking to alter the composition of the Nurses Registration Board.

Can the Minister advise me at this stage if the chairman of that board, when it is re-formed, will be a nurse?

Mr YOUNG replied:

The Bill provides that the Chairman of the Nurses Registration Board will be a member of the board, chosen by the Minister. I give the member and the House an assurance that I will take the views of all members of the board into consideration before a choice is made. If the members decide that a nurse should be the chairman, I do not see how I could refuse.

HEALTH: MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

Karratha

338. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Did the Minister read the letter to the Editor in *The West Australian* last Tuesday in which Mrs Marshall of Karratha claimed that the town of Karratha had one doctor only?
- (2) If so, is there any substance in this statement?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) I read the letter in the paper and it would probably be unreasonable for me to answer it.
- (2) I have made inquiries which indicate that the correspondent is well known to the doctors in the town—there are three of them, incidentally—and that on their behalf one of them—

Mr E. T. Evans: Would not the member for the area know that?

Mr YOUNG: —will reply to the letter at the first opportunity.

PRISONS

Prisoner: Compassionate Leave

339. Mr PEARCE, to the Deputy Premier:

Has he made representations to the Chief Secretary for the weekend release on compassionate grounds of the long-term prisoner to whom I referred in a previous question?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I have not heard the name of the individual involved. I have made requests on a number of occasions on behalf of a number of people. If the member likes to give details, I will take it up from there.

MINING: GOLD

Hampton Gold Mining Areas Ltd.

340. Mr E. T. EVANS, to the Minister for Mines:

I refer to an answer given in writing to a member in the other place, the Hon. Peter Dowding, regarding Hampton Gold Mining Areas Ltd. The question

asked by the Hon. Peter Dowding was as follows—

Is it a fact that the title held by the company includes the ownership of the minerals on it, and does the company, therefore, not have to comply with the conditions of the Mining Act?

The answer to that was—

Yes, the title includes mineral rights other than gold, silver and precious metals as does all land alienated prior to 1 January 1899 and the locations are exempt from the provisions of Part VII Mining on Private Land—Mining Act 1904.

I now ask is it a fact that the company owns the gold and precious metal in the ground also?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

I recall the question; and the member for Kalgoorlie has asked some questions related to this. I am not sure; but relying on my memory, I think there are pre-1899 titles involved in this situation, although I could not be precise. So that I can give the member the answer he would like, I ask him to put the question on notice.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT ACT

Validity: Supreme Court Application

341. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

On Tuesday, 7 October, I asked a question of the Premier regarding the application to the Supreme Court relating to the validity of amendments to the Constitution in relation to the appointment of two additional Ministers. He said he did not know what was going on, and that he was anxious to find out. He said he would inform us in due course. Has he any further information to give the House?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I did make some inquiries following the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition; but I could not be precise as to the present position. I did obtain some interim information; but I would rather have something more definite before I make any response.

PRISONS

Prisoner: Compassionate Leave

342. Mr PEARCE, to the Deputy Premier:

The Deputy Premier invited me to give him a name when I asked him had he made representations to the Chief Secretary for the weekend release on compassionate grounds of a prisoner. The person concerned is Mr Lionel Cruttenden.

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Yes, I have. If I recall correctly, about five and a half years ago Mr Cruttenden was imprisoned for misappropriation of about \$170 000, of which he repaid \$100 000. He has now been in goal for something over five years in connection with that. He now owes about \$70 000. He has had a lot of problems at home, including a father who has cancer and who, I believe, is dying. I hope the Press will not comment on this; but I am saying that in response to the question. I did make representations to the Attorney General some two years ago regarding this man; and I made representations to the Chief Secretary about six or eight months ago.

HEALTH

Head Lice

343. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Health:

Is he aware whether the Health and Medical Services Department has ceased examination of the hair of school children for nits?

Mr O'Connor: One of the biggest nits over there.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. Burke: You handled things quite well up until that comment. Now your slip is showing.

Mr PEARCE: There will be a little more information about that next week.

To return to my question to the Minister for Health, could we have a statement whether the examination programme has ceased, and if so, why?

Mr YOUNG replied:

To my knowledge, the programme has not ceased. In fact, I understand the

situation is that in almost every school in the metropolitan area head lice are rather prevalent. One of the biggest problems the department has is convincing the parents of the children that if they ignore the education pamphlets and the information given to them, and they fail to take the proper precautions in respect of the hair of their children, then they, and any others who fail to do that, will almost certainly reinfest the entire school.

Mr Davies: I think it is a bit hard to get nursing people to examine the children. That is the problem, is it not? That is what I have found out from my schools.

Mr YOUNG: The problem has become infinitely worse than that. It is not so much a case of doing the inspection; it is a case of accepting the fact that head lice are rampant.

If the proper precautions are not taken by individual parents as per instructions, they will remain rampant. It is not a case of going around looking for them; it is a case of how many we can get rid of.

I think it would be fair to say there would be hardly a school in the metropolitan area that did not have some preponderance of head lice. This question has given me an opportunity to say to all parents in the State that as individual parents they have to take personal responsibility for the cleanliness of their children's hair and they should take the advice which is ubiquitous in the schools in respect of the cleanliness of their children so that one of their children is not the one—and it needs only one—who is responsible for the reinfestation of that school.

Mr Pearce: As I have had a complaint from the principal mistress of a particular primary school that the programme has ceased, should I put a question on notice so that you may follow this matter up and give me further advice?

Mr YOUNG: Certainly. To my knowledge the school health programme has not been broken down in any way.

Mr Bateman: What is wrong with a few nits? There are many of them here.

**NOONKANBAH STATION: TRANSPORT
OF DRILLING RIG**

Police Escort: Cost

344. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

Has it yet been possible to assess the charges of the Noonkanbah convoy?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I have said that a statement will be made regarding the cost of the drilling operation. I want to make it clear I have also dealt with the question of segregating the police costs; it is not the Government's intention to do that. There will be a comprehensive statement made on the drilling operation and I have asked the Minister to endeavour to give that statement to Parliament before the drilling is completed.

Mr Davies: I just wanted to let you know I have not forgotten.

SHOPPING CENTRES

Committee

345. Mr PARKER, to the Premier:

On 16 September 1980 he issued a Press statement concerning shopping centres which indicated that a Government party committee had been set up to look into this matter. Can he advise—

- (1) The composition of that committee;
- (2) its terms of reference and when it is expected to report; and

- (3) what will be the case in respect of those shopping centre developments which are currently before the department and local authorities pending the outcome of the Government's decision on its policy in this matter?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) Off the cuff, I could not advise the composition of the committee. I know the last time I checked with the Minister on its progress everything was moving satisfactorily. I did not get a date when the committee's work would be finished. I will check with the Minister and the committee to ascertain what stage has been reached. So far as the rest of his question is concerned, which I gather is in connection with matters before the Minister, I know in many cases the Minister might have to wait until the overall picture is clearer. But some cases will be resolved because of the circumstances of those particular cases. In other words, those developments could have been committed previously or they could be at a stage where it would be wrong to hold them up. She might have to give either a rejection or an approval.

I know the Minister is handling the matter with great care and sensitivity in view of the economic problems existing in some areas due to the number of shopping centres which have been established.

