

prefer to leave until Committee, so that I can make sure of what I say. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition).

House adjourned at 4.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 9th November, 1967

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

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Premier), and read a first time.

QUESTIONS (18): ON NOTICE BLINDNESS

Electronic "Seeing Eye"

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

(1) Has he any knowledge of the efficacy of the electronic "seeing eye" or radar for the blind as manufactured by the firm Ultra Electronics Ltd., London, and demonstrated at the Royal Melbourne Eye and Ear Hospital?

(2) If so, will he give details?

(3) If not, will he make appropriate inquiries?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) to (3) Information was recently supplied to the Government by the Radar for the Blind Club of Victoria. This has been passed on to the Braille Society for its consideration and evaluation.

MIGRANTS

Scandinavians: Accommodation

2. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for immigration:

(1) Am I correctly informed that—

(a) Scandinavian migrants are unable to use either Graylands or Point Walter hostels;

(b) such migrants are requested to book into a hotel, rent a flat, or seek alternative accommodation with friends and relatives?

(2) If "Yes," is there any reimbursement or part reimbursement of accommodation expenses?

(3) What is the reason for the different treatment for migrants from Scandinavian countries?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

(1) to (3) It is assumed the Scandinavian migrants referred to are those accepted under the special assisted passage programme which is controlled entirely by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration, Canberra.

The State is not informed and, beyond offering assistance should this be required, is not otherwise involved.

CANNING DAM

Aesthetics and Public Conveniences

3. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) In the interests of travellers and tourism, will the Government give consideration to improving the aesthetics and providing public conveniences at Canning Dam similar to those at Churchman's Brook?

(2) When is it estimated this work could be implemented?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) and (2) The Metropolitan Water Board has already given consideration to this matter and intends to provide amenities as soon as it can make funds available.

DRUGS

Bulk Purchases for Hospitals

4. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health: Adverting to his "Yes" reply to my question 2 on the 7th November, 1967, that he is aware of the Press comment of the date mentioned relating to profits accruing to overseas drug manufacturers at public expense, will he—

(a) give similar consideration to the also mentioned New South Wales possibility of buying drugs in bulk for public hospitals under their generic names according to their chemical properties rather than their trade names; or

(b) seek alternative means of making drugs less expensive to the Western Australian community?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(a) and (b) This is already being done through the Tender Board on the advice of the State Drugs Committee.

ALBANY WOOLLEN MILLS

Government Financial Assistance

5. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

What form of assistance, including deferment of payments due to the State, was given to the Albany Woollen Mills between the 1st January, 1953, and the 31st December, 1959?

Mr. BRAND replied:

The answer is again nil, but in view of this and a previous question, it appears that the honourable member is seeking certain information which is not made clear in his questions.

If the hon. member sets out in writing to either myself or the Minister for Industrial Development the information he desires, every endeavour will be made to supply him with details.

SCHOOL TEACHERS

Taxation: Zone Allowances

6. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Could he inform me whether—
 - (a) teachers on transfer to a zone who serve 22 months of the normal two year minimum period qualify for taxation concession for one year only;
 - (b) others serving for up to 11 months do not receive any concession at all;
 - (c) the Teachers Union has tried for years to rectify this apparent injustice?
- (2) Will he intercede on a Federal level to ensure that this anomaly is rectified when the Federal Budget is next reviewed, or preferably before that date?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) The determination of taxation concessions is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Department of Taxation.

I understand, however, that concessions are on a six-monthly basis, the qualification being continuous residence for six months within a financial year.

(c) Yes.

- (2) Inquiries will be made of the Taxation Department with a view to making representations to the Federal Treasurer for consideration.

7. *This question was postponed.*

CREAM

Butterfat Content

8. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is the butterfat content of table cream sold in this State set by regulation or Act of Parliament?
- (2) Would he please quote the relevant authority?
- (3) Will any proposed changes be announced before the parliamentary session concludes for this year?

Mr. LEWIS (for Mr. Nalder) replied:

- (1) and (2) By regulations under—the Health Act (H.05.001); the Milk Act (Reg. 157).
- (3) It is not expected that this matter will be finalised before the present session ends.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Press Statement of Chairman: Accuracy

9. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

Will he ascertain and inform the House if Mr. Maher, Chairman of the Totalisator Agency Board, was correctly reported in Wednesday's *Daily News* as follows:—

Apparently under cross-examination in regard to what is known as the Bowman affair I indicated that I had informed Mr. Craig that this matter had been referred to and discussed by the Board when such was not the case.

However, on since checking official records it is quite clear I did not report to the Minister in this manner?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Yes, and I have been given the following explanation:—

By minute of the 11th March, 1966, Mr. Maher, who signed as Chairman, Totalisator Agency Board, reported to me on the letter dated the 16th February, 1966, written by the honourable member to His Excellency the Governor. The minute did not state that the views expressed in the minute were those of the board. The chairman intended the views expressed to be his own, although he believed that those views were also the views held by the board. On the other hand, the minute did not state that the views were the chairman's own, and it referred to certain policies of the board.

A draft reply from His Excellency to the honourable member was prepared by the Solicitor-General, who believed that all the material supplied by the chairman in his minute represented the views of the board, and prepared the draft accordingly. The material part of the reply as drafted was included in the letter dated the 24th March, 1966, from His Excellency to the honourable member.

In replies to questions asked by the honourable member in the Legislative Assembly on the 16th August, 1966, it was explained that the chairman of the board, when reporting to me on the matter in March, 1966, believed that he was stating the views of at least a majority of board members, and that on the 12th August, 1966, the board had held a meeting and all the seven members present had agreed that the chairman, in his minute of the 11th March, 1966, had correctly reported the views of the board.

RING ROAD SYSTEM

Northern Leg: Lease of Land

10. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Relating to answers given to question 6 on the notice paper for Thursday, the 2nd November, how many properties held for the northern leg of the inner ring freeway have been rented or leased to interested persons?
- (2) Have any properties been leased or rented because of a decision that the construction of the northern leg of the inner ring freeway was to be deferred?
- (3) Has it been decided to defer construction of the northern leg of the inner ring freeway?
- (4) If "No," what is the present programming for the commencement of construction?
- (5) What is the longest time for which any of the land held for the northern leg of the inner ring freeway has been leased?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Thirty-eight.
- (2) No.
- (3) No.
- (4) No firm programme for any portion of the inner ring road system has been formulated ex-

cept that section which comprises the Mitchell Freeway on the western leg at present under construction.

(5) Ten years.

METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD

Loans

11. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What was the total amount of money raised by the Metropolitan Water Board in loans other than allocations from the Treasurer during the last financial year?
- (2) Taking into account all charges in connection with such loans and including interest and sinking fund for loan redemptions, what was the annual cost of the money raised expressed as a percentage?
- (3) What would be the cost of the same amount if advanced by the Government from its loan funds?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) \$600,000.
- (2) \$38,250, which is 6½ per cent. of loans raised.
- (3) \$33,000, which is 5½ per cent. of loan capital.

12. and 13. *These questions were postponed.*

THOMAS STREET, SUBIACO

Beautification

14. Mr. DURACK asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has he yet crossed the desert of sand and bitumen recently created by the Main Roads Department along Thomas Street, Subiaco?
- (2) Is he aware that several members of Parliament, and a great many members of the public, have to cross this desert daily in order to get to work?
- (3) Does he agree that the revegetation of the area is almost as desirable as it is in the Ord River Valley?
- (4) What authority is responsible to undertake this urgent task?
- (5) Has any discussion taken place in regard thereto?
- (6) If so, what is proposed to be done other than the State Electricity Commission's suggestion that further tree lopping be carried out by the Subiaco City Council?
- (7) Does he agree that the park verge and the median strip should be beautified with grass and trees without delay?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) to (7) Thomas Street is not a declared main road. It is under the control of the local authorities concerned—Perth City Council and Subiaco City Council—and responsibility for beautification, improvement of verges, and median strips rests with both those authorities.

The Main Roads Department acted only as a construction authority, sharing the cost with the Perth City Council and the Subiaco City Council.

If he wishes, the honourable member may take up this matter with the local authorities concerned, although he must surely have noticed that certain work is still proceeding on this road which will undoubtedly become as attractive as it is efficient.

I feel I should add that the tone adopted by the honourable member has the unfortunate undertone of impatience, and makes it appear that he has little regard for the well-known fact that engineering works in their construction stages and early completion require at least the softening of time to bring out their real qualities of line and beauty.

I suggest he give consideration to being impatient and intolerant only of impatience and intolerance.

SCHOOL TEACHERS AT EXMOUTH

Cost of Hostel Accommodation

15. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

Referring to question 6 on the 8th November, 1967—priority for teachers' accommodation—can he now advise the cost of accommodation at the Commonwealth hostel at Exmouth so far as teachers are concerned?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The cost of accommodation at the Commonwealth hostel, along with priorities, is at present under consideration by the Commonwealth departments concerned. Advice has not yet been received.

Subsidy for Accommodation

16. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) If suitable accommodation at a reasonable cost is unobtainable for teachers at Exmouth, will accommodation be subsidised by his department?
- (2) What does he consider a reasonable cost for accommodation?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) The payment of subsidies for board is determined by Education Department regulations. When the salary is less than \$2,900 and board exceeds \$14 per week, a subsidy up to a maximum of \$6 per week is payable. Special cases are considered on their merits.
- (2) The definition of what is a "reasonable" cost can only be determined after a thorough investigation of all the factors, such as area, standard of accommodation, living costs, and status of the boarder.

17. *This question was postponed.*

HOUSING

Natives: Applications

18. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What number of applications have been received from natives—
(a) in the metropolitan area;
(b) from Allawah Grove, for housing in the past five years?
- (2) Has the State Housing Commission any houses for rental or purchase in the Mullewa area?
- (3) Would natives advised to leave Allawah Grove to go to Mullewa be able to get accommodation?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) Separate figures are not available for native families as all applications are treated on the same basis; i.e. income eligibility, tenancy standard, and credit worthiness. The commission is not always aware of an applicant's native blood.
- (2) The commission has 27 rental houses in Mullewa.
- (3) No rental or purchase homes are immediately available in Mullewa.

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE BETTING

Criticism by Board of Letter to Governor

1. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Will he refer to *Hansard* No. 1 of 1966, page 338 and inform the House if he is prepared to table the relevant papers concerning a letter sent by the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition to His Excellency the Governor, in reply to which His Excellency stated—

I am also advised that the Board considers that your criti-

cism of it is not warranted and that your letter is itself open to criticism in several respects.

(2) Was the advice to which His Excellency referred in the extract quoted given to His Excellency by the Premier on behalf of the Government or by him (the Minister for Police)?

(3) Was he aware when the advice was being tendered to His Excellency that the Totalisator Agency Board considered that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's criticism of it was not warranted that, in fact, the board as such had not seen the letter and the opinion was being based on information and views supplied to the Minister for Police by Mr. J. P. Maher, chairman of the board, who believed he was stating the views of at least a majority of board members?

The SPEAKER: I would draw the attention of the House to the fact that questions cannot relate to advice tendered to His Excellency the Governor. The remainder of the question could be said to be relevant.

Mr. CRAIG replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for advising my office this morning of his intention to ask this question. I am apparently on safe ground, in view of your comments, Sir, in replying—

(1) No.

(2) The advice of Ministers was tendered to His Excellency by the Premier.

(3) I was not aware that the board, as such, had not then seen the letter, but I then believed and subsequently had confirmed that the views expressed by the chairman in fact represented the views of the board, as explained in my answer to question 9.

ADVICE TENDERED TO GOVERNOR

Questions to Elicit: Not Permissible

2. Mr. TONKIN asked the Speaker:

I should be grateful, Mr. Speaker, if you would clarify for my education the ruling you gave a few moments ago. I understand you implied that questions which seek to obtain advice which was actually tendered to the Governor should, quite rightly, not be permitted. But is there any Standing Order which precludes any other question with reference to advice which has been tendered

to the Governor, if such question does not actually require the advice tendered to be specified?

The SPEAKER replied:

I think that would be all right; it is only the advice.

Mr. TONKIN: In view of that, what part of the question which I asked would come within the restriction which you seek to impose?

The SPEAKER: I understood you to ask what advice was tendered.

Mr. Tonkin: No, I didn't.

The SPEAKER: I thought you did. It was a question without notice.

QUESTIONS

Preparation by Members: Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER: I would like to draw the attention of members to the fact that the staff is having some difficulty in dealing with questions in view of the fact that they are written on all sorts of pieces of paper. In many cases, they are not clearly written and the questions are cramped up at the end of pieces of paper. It would greatly facilitate the work of the staff if members could be a little more careful in the writing of their questions.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Labour) [2.32 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill can truly be termed a small Bill. The essence of the proposal is on page 2 of the Bill, which has been circulated. It indicates the intention of the Government to change the word "seven" into the word "ten" in clause 10 of the first schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act.

Clause 11 of the first schedule states—

When the Board orders redemption as provided for in clause 10 of this Schedule—

(i) in the case of permanent total incapacity the lump sum shall be the sum ascertained by deducting the total amount received by the worker as weekly payments from the maximum sum of three thousand five hundred pounds;

Converted into modern currency, that is \$7,000. As I have referred to clause 10, perhaps I might advise the House what it has to say. I quote—

Where permanent total or permanent partial incapacity has resulted from an accident and any weekly payment has been continued

for not less than six months, the liability therefor may, on application by or on behalf of the employer or the worker, be redeemed by the payment of a lump sum to be settled, in default of agreement, by the Board, and any such lump sum may be ordered by the Board to be paid to or invested or otherwise applied for the benefit of the person entitled thereto.

The Bill simply corrects an omission in the amendments, which were before this House during the last session of Parliament, relative to the various amounts contained in the Workers' Compensation Act. I am assured that up to date nobody has been disadvantaged in any way because of this omission and the Bill before us is purely for the purpose of correcting such omission.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Mt. Hawthorn) [2.35 p.m.]: With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will speak to the second reading now. I am in complete agreement with the Minister who quoted clause 10 of the first schedule, which is affected by the amendment. I am satisfied that the fact that the schedule was not altered previously was an omission and that nobody is to blame.

I am in complete agreement with the amendment, but I would mention this item is one of a number, the subject of a motion of which I gave notice some time ago, but I suggest it is not substantially the same as the item in my motion; so if and when my motion comes before the House I trust, Mr. Speaker, you will not rule that the matter has already been dealt with. I support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Labour), and transmitted to the Council.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [2.39 p.m.]: The Opposition does not oppose this Bill in any way at all, but merely says the amount of assistance provided to denominational schools is not enough. The Minister, when he introduced the Bill, said very little about the Bill itself, but was kind enough to detail the research he had undertaken into the history of Government aid to non-Government schools within the State of Western Australia. He went back to the first independent school which, I think, was established in 1833;

and then he told us of the controversy which had occurred since that time up to 1895 when a Bill was passed by Parliament settling upon the independent schools a sum of money to do away, once and for all, with any further claims on the Government.

The Minister then mentioned that no further action was taken until 1955, and he referred to the claim made by the member for Mt. Hawthorn when dealing with a similar piece of legislation in 1965. During the speech he made on that occasion, the member for Mt. Hawthorn said the Australian Labor Party recommended aid to non-Government schools. I think on that occasion the member for Mt. Hawthorn referred to the modern approach to non-Government schools.

The Minister admitted that in 1955 certain subsidies were extended to independent schools, and further subsidies were extended to the same schools by the same Government a short while after. At the beginning of the 1960s these schools became increasingly aware of the burden they were asked to bear and a considerable campaign was commenced to bring forcibly before members of Parliament—both State and Federal—the invidious position in which the schools found themselves. This created a tremendous amount of controversy. It was easy enough to support an argument one way or the other, and that probably depended on the individual outlook; and it, may have been dependent on the individual's religion as to which way he argued.

There is no gainsaying the campaign was quite successful and it forced members of Parliament and the people holding the purse strings for the Government to become aware of the increased costs and increased demands on independent schools in every facet of their operations and in the provision of additional buildings—particularly for teaching staff—and, of course, in the provision of amenities. Some people have argued and I think the Minister mentioned this during his second reading speech—that if independent schools wished to become established, or if people wished to use independent schools, then it was quite within their right to do so. I think the Minister indicated that those people would, by supporting those schools, expect to bear quite a proportion of the cost. The Government's first concern was for the system provided by the State. Indeed, the Minister said the State system must receive first priority when Government funds were being allocated.

I think this has been acknowledged by most people, but what has been overlooked is that in the past few years there has been a dramatic change in public opinion. The majority of people now think the Government is expected to give some

assistance to independent schools, which, obviously, take quite a considerable amount of the education burden from the Government.

The Minister did not give us the slightest indication as to why this sum of \$10 for each primary-school child was chosen. Was it a figure drawn out of the air? Was it an amount of money the Government had swinging and did not know what to do with? Was it a sop to the independent schools to fob them off for a while; or what was the reason for agreeing to provide the amount of \$10 a year, in two moieties, to the independent schools? This, I think, would be interesting to learn.

Mr. Lewis: It was an appreciation of their difficulties, and the amount was arrived at after consideration of the total moneys available for education generally.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister may tell us when he replies whether it was worked out as a percentage of costs of the independent schools, or a percentage of the cost of the total education programme of the State. Was it merely a figure—which the Minister denies by shaking his head—considered to be a good round figure which would probably help independent schools and keep them quiet for a time?

Mr. Lewis: It was not designed for that purpose at all. It was not designed to quieten anyone, but to help them out of their difficulties.

Mr. DAVIES: If that is the only reason, it will provide very little help indeed because the total amount to be provided is only \$300,000 a year. Actually, when the Premier introduced the Budget Estimates he spoke more about the question of independent schools than did the Minister when he introduced this Bill. The Premier said the Government was aware that there were approximately 30,000 pupils attending non-Government primary schools, and some of these schools, if they could not carry on, would transfer a burden to the Government school system. The Premier said he thought it was fair to say that a number of schools had already closed, and the impact had been felt in the State school system.

If the Government is aware of the difficulties facing independent schools then I think it should have carried out a sincere study of the method under which those schools are working in an endeavour to find out the most advantageous way to help them. I presume that the amount of money allocated is to help the schools, but it certainly will not be a very great help to the parents.

We had the spectacle in 1965 of \$30 and \$36 being provided for the secondary schools. On that occasion the schools, in almost every instance, immediately raised their fees by practically the same amount.

This is a direct grant to the schools and is to assist them to carry on. We have no quarrel with that at all but we would like to know when the Government will do something other than say, "Here is an amount of money." We believe the problem requires a complete and thorough investigation. We should find out how the schools work, and find out the difficulties under which they are working and the amount of money required to help them out of those difficulties. I would suggest that this is the only proper way to attack the problem because, obviously, the position has got to the stage where it needs to be rationalised.

Supporters of Government schools claim that the independent schools will never be satisfied. This may or may not be so, but at the present time I, for the life of me, do not know what would be a fair and just amount to offer these schools in an endeavour to get them out of their difficulties.

We have only to study a file on these schools—the independent schools—to see that there is ample evidence of the continuing and mounting difficulties which they are facing. Not only do they now find that their buildings are inadequate, but they are unable to recruit staff from the religious orders to assist with the teaching. The latest figures indicate that this trend will continue and will become a much greater factor in the running of the schools generally.

It is no good one section of the people never being satisfied, and the other section—including the Labor Party—saying that is the most it can offer.

Mr. Lewis: Would it be possible to give more if you did not have it? This is a matter of an equitable distribution of the amount of money which is available.

Mr. DAVIES: In my view the Commonwealth must assist more than it has done in the past in the matter of education. I know all members of Parliament are very happy with the assistance that has been given in the way of science teaching, but that was a crash programme. It followed the American crash programme on science teaching. The Americans found they were so far behind the Russians that there was a great need to expedite all forms of science teachings. That has been done in this instance and the money has been found. The money would be found tomorrow if a war broke out.

Mr. Lewis: By the Commonwealth.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. Has the Government made any approaches to the Commonwealth on this question? I think members of the Government would probably have noted a decision which was reached in Adelaide last week when leaders of the Australian Labor Party, from all States and the Commonwealth, met to discuss various questions in regard to Commonwealth-State relationships. One

of the questions raised was that there should be far greater assistance to the States in the way of money for education, particularly university education. The States want to hold onto the control of their education systems, but they want the Commonwealth to give them more money for the purpose.

However, I repeat: Has the Government made any approaches to the Commonwealth in this regard? I know a number of committees have been formed. For instance, there was the Martin committee and the Jackson committee, which inquired into tertiary education in this State, and there have been a number of other committees at various times. However, I do not think—I may be wrong and, of course, the Minister will surely tell me if I am—the Government has ever had a committee appointed to consider the position of independent schools. And surely this is a first requirement.

It is not a bit of good occasionally slinging the independent schools a few dollars and telling them that this will be a help and that that is the best the Government can do. It might be the worst thing the Government could do for these schools. It might be a way of getting them to expect, at Budget time, to have a certain extra amount thrown to them—or it might be every pre-election Budget. We do not know whether that is the position, but it is not fair to the independent schools not to let them know where they are going. Those schools, too, must accept some responsibility for being independent schools, and the State must accept some responsibility for the saving to the State system.

Mr. Lewis: What proportion would you suggest?

Mr. DAVIES: That is exactly the point I am trying to make. I cannot suggest anything. I am asking what the Government has done. I am not in a position to assess what would be a fair and just amount. If the Minister read through my cutting file on State aid he would find that the figure ranges from 80 per cent. to about 20 per cent. Some people say, of course, that the State should pay all the costs; but I do not think that is fair and just. The trouble is no-one knows at the moment.

Mr. O'Connor: Do you think it should be up to 50 per cent.?

Mr. DAVIES: I would not make the slightest estimate. For the third time I will say that I do not know. That is what I want the Government to tell us or to find out.

Mr. Lewis: Do you say the Government should not pay all the cost?

Mr. DAVIES: No. The figure might be 99 per cent.

Mr. Lewis: Why not?

Mr. DAVIES: In some directions, and particularly in regard to some schools, I would be disinclined to pay any of the costs. I do not know whether this applies so much in Western Australia, but I know that in the Eastern States there are schools which have a considerable snob value, and the children who attend them are sent by wealthy parents who want them to enjoy this air or this aura that the schools have, and for which the parents are prepared to pay.

Mr. Lewis: Where would you draw the line?

Mr. DAVIES: I think that would be a matter of opinion and I would only be expressing my opinion if I were to say what I think. However, if the Government would mount a committee and call me before it I would be very pleased to give my personal opinion.

Mr. Lewis: To decide what levels of aura should be attached to each school?

Mr. DAVIES: It is a very difficult position. The point I am making is that nobody has as yet made a genuine inquiry into the position of independent schools.

Mr. Tonkin: Is the Minister really seeking advice that he wants to act on?

Mr. Lewis: I am seeking advice.

Mr. O'Connor: The Government has already acted.

Mr. Lewis: I am seeking the opinion of the member for Victoria Park.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Victoria Park may proceed.

Mr. DAVIES: As members will have gathered, the Opposition is very concerned with the position of independent schools and it will certainly make a clear outline of its position at the proper time, which will be when the Opposition's policy is presented.

Mr. O'Connor: Do you think they are being helped too much or too little?

Mr. DAVIES: We know what our policy is.

Mr. Lewis: When did you say the proper time would be?

Mr. Tonkin: The Minister will learn in good time.

Mr. DAVIES: If I ask the Minister for Education a question I am sure he will be able to answer it. When would he say the proper time would be so far as the Opposition is concerned?

Mr. Lewis: I did not hear clearly what you said.

Mr. Tonkin: Would it be February or March?

Mr. Jamieson: You tell us and we will tell you.

Mr. DAVIES: Obviously we are not going to announce our policy on education on this occasion. We will announce it be-

fore the election, when the rest of the matters in our policy speech will be put to the public.

Mr. Lewis: We hope you will have one.

Mr. DAVIES: That is the proper time and we most certainly will put forward our policy on education at that stage. There is no need for the Minister to make snide remarks about what we intend to do. Our policy on education will be a better policy than the Government has put up.

The SPEAKER: I think you had better get back to the Bill instead of talking about the next election.

Mr. DAVIES: I think the Government—

Mr. Lewis: There is no need to get heated about it.

Mr. Elliott: How much are you going to suggest?

Mr. Court: It's all right; he has been helpful enough already.

Mr. DAVIES: I was merely trying to answer questions which have been put to me by way of cross-examination by the Minister for Education. On the question of education generally—

Mr. Tonkin: The honourable member handled the position very well.

Mr. DAVIES: Thank you. As the Government appeared to be so dense I had to try to drive home my point. That is all I am trying to do. I have asked the Government what it has done as regards a full inquiry into the position of independent schools. What has it done recently about approaching the Commonwealth for additional aid? If we can get clear answers to those two questions we will know where we are going; but at the present time it is a matter of throwing a crumb to the independent schools to encourage them and, I am sure, to seek the support and votes of the independent—

Mr. Lewis: That is not worthy of the honourable member.

Mr. Graham: For what other reason is it?

Mr. DAVIES: Obviously, the Minister for Education does not know what has been going on and what has been said at various meetings. Obviously he does not read the papers. I can show him cuttings which I have; I can show him an article dealing with the time when the Premier opened the parents and friends' annual conference and he spoke in glowing terms about the work the independent schools were doing. Apparently, if he does not know what is going on, he is not aware that 25 per cent. of the electorate would support what they consider is the best policy in regard to aid for their schools.

Mr. Lewis: Your implication was that that was done only at polling time, or at election time, for political purposes and that is why I said the remark was not worthy of you.

Mr. DAVIES: I can only speak as it appears to me. I may be wrong, but from memory the last time the various policy speeches were announced the headlines in regard to the Liberal Party policy, for the Western Australian election, were to the effect that State aid was promised for independent schools. The headlines in regard to the Labour Party policy were something to the effect that the Labor Party would not reopen S.P. shops. The heading was worded something like that, and I think it was slanted. We were very concerned over this question of State aid to independent schools.

Mr. Rushton: Were you not against it?

Mr. DAVIES: What I like about the member for Dale—

The SPEAKER: I think you had better address the Chair; there are far too many interjections.

Mr. DAVIES: What I like about the member for Dale is that he is always able to anticipate what I am about to say. Of course the Labor Party was against State aid to independent schools at one time. It was according to our then policy, and because of that policy I would say we were then over a barrel on this question, but thanks to the Leader of the Opposition in this House the policy was reversed.

Mr. Gayfer: You said you are drawing a line between State schools and independent schools which have a certain aura.

Mr. DAVIES: The member for Avon is trying to say I am against State aid for independent schools. At all times I have supported the policy of the Labor Party, a copy of which can be bought for about 50c at the Trades Hall. If the honourable member cares to purchase a copy he can find out what the policy of the Labor Party is and what we are trying to implement. I have never been able to buy a copy of the platform of the Liberal Party, but members will find that the State Labor Party supports State aid for independent schools, and I support it, also; but I have said that I would be distressed if I had to subsidise the fees of a lad going to a private school when his parents were far better off than I; or you and I together for that matter Mr. Speaker.

I have said there is ample evidence to warrant an inquiry being mounted to see what is the fairest and the just way to handle this extremely contentious problem. These days it can be handled in a far less sectarian manner than ever it could have been in the past, and I think I have already indicated that the majority of the population, according to the Gallup poll, supports State aid for independent schools. Therefore it is time some further action was taken to ascertain where we are heading in regard to this problem.

As I have said, the whole question can now be examined in a more realistic light and I would suggest that if a body of in-

quiry is appointed, representatives of State schools, independent schools, the Commonwealth Government, and the State Government should be members to try to draft some kind of policy for the future. What is interesting is that State aid for independent schools is an item which I noticed in the Education Estimates. This is item 19 of division 28—Assistance to Private Schools. In 1966-67 the vote was \$98,000, and the expenditure was only \$63,333. Whilst we are on the question of State aid to independent schools, perhaps the Minister can tell us how the discrepancy between the vote and the expenditure came about. It seems strange to me that at a time when there is such a clamour for assistance for private schools the vote should be approximately \$35,000 more than was actually spent.

Mr. Lewis: It could be that some claims for assistance were not presented before the end of the financial year.

Mr. DAVIES: Of course, the estimate for this year has been increased by \$2,000 over the vote for last year; that is, the estimate for 1967-68 is \$100,000, and an increase of \$37,000 over what was actually spent last year. It seems more than passing strange that this sum of money should appear on the Education Estimates in this fashion. Independent schools receive assistance in many ways, as was admitted by the Minister. When in office, the Labor Government extended considerable assistance to them and, at a later stage, when the pressure started to mount, the present Government, in line with other State Governments of the Commonwealth, also extended further aid to independent schools.

The concession that is being extended by this Bill, of course, is along the same lines, but less than the concessions extended to primary schools in New South Wales.

Mr. Lewis: That is a direct subsidy.

Mr. DAVIES: I suppose the difference between the manner in which these concessions are to be made—

Mr. Evans: Victoria is paying \$12 per head.

Mr. DAVIES: The member for Kalgoorlie has just said that Victoria is paying \$12 per head, and simultaneously I noticed that I had such a note on my file. If that is so, Western Australia would not suffer a penalty at the hands of the Grants Commission when comparing our allocations with those made in New South Wales, on which State our education expenditure is assessed.

Mr. Elliott: How is the secondary education subsidy assessed?

Mr. DAVIES: I have not studied the question of subsidies, but I would be only too happy to lend the member for Canning my file if he wishes to look for the information. The question of State aid to independent schools has been handled in a piecemeal fashion since 1958 and I think

the time has come to take some positive action even if it means withdrawing some of the present concessions and replacing them with others. Is there any check made to ensure that the amount of money being paid to these various private schools is being used to the best possible advantage; or are they accepting the goods or the money that is extended to them and saying nothing in the fear that if they did say something the aid would be stopped?

When it is considered we have been granting aid in various forms to independent schools for about 12 years, do not members think that the time has arrived to assess the position realistically to ascertain whether a total sum in excess of that which is being paid at present might not be more desirable than some of the concessions granted? As with many other pieces of legislation, such as those dealing with taxation, for example, so many amendments have been made to the Education Act from time to time that its real purpose has become lost and in my opinion the whole legislation needs to be rewritten. Because of the pressures that are now being made under the provisions of the Education Act, I think the Statute could be consolidated, or, alternatively, the question of State aid could be reassessed to ensure the money made available is being used in the best possible manner. That is all I ask.

The form of the Bill itself is much the same as that of the amending Bill brought forward in 1965. The conditions under which money is payable are set out clearly and distinctly in subsection (3) of proposed new section 9B and in my opinion they are an improvement upon the manner in which they were presented in the amending Bill of 1965. I know that following the 1965 legislation I received several queries from Asian students who received their education in Perth. They claimed that they should be receiving assistance because they were attending an independent school and paying the fees charged. Of course, it was never intended under this legislation that any children other than children resident in Western Australia should be granted this concession.

I think there is one fairly important part of the 1965 amendment which has been omitted from the Bill before us. It is section 9B (1) which provides that the Treasurer shall place at the disposal of the Minister moneys for the payment of tuition in respect of scholars who are engaged in taking a course of secondary education, but who are not in receipt of any scholarship, bursary, or like award the value of which exceeds £40 per annum.

I take it if a student of an independent school is in receipt of a bursary in excess of £40 per annum then he would not receive the grant from the Government. Obviously it was considered that as he had been awarded the bursary he

would not be entitled to receive the Government grant as well. In the Bill before us section 9B is to be repealed and re-enacted, and that aspect to which I have been referring has been omitted.

I suppose this is a provision on which one can argue either way. It can be argued that when the Commonwealth grants a teaching bursary, or a similar type of bursary, then the person receiving it is being assisted by the Commonwealth and the State should not be required to assist him also. It can be argued the other way; such a person should not be penalised just because he is brilliant enough to obtain a bursary. I am not prepared to argue on this point until I hear the Government's reason.

In my view this aspect is important enough for the Minister to have covered it during his second reading speech, but I cannot find any reference to it in that speech. The rest of the proposed section 9B seeks to achieve what the Minister told us in the first dozen or so lines of his speech. The re-enacted provision sets out the additional assistance which will be given to primary education, and it re-arranges the conditions under which that assistance is to be given. However, the Minister made no mention of the omission of that part of the provision in existing section 9B, with regard to the effect on students who are in receipt of bursaries in excess of £40, or \$80 per annum.

These are the two questions I raise, and I repeat them for the last time: Firstly, what is being done to have a full-scale inquiry into the genuine needs of independent schools? Secondly, what approaches have been made to the Commonwealth to assist with education, as it affects State aid to independent schools? I will not attempt to deal with any other facet of education, and I confine myself to those two questions only because of the very great importance that is attached to them. I do not believe, and I am sure every member in this House agrees with me, that any child should be penalised in regard to education because of his religion. I support the Bill, and regret the amount that is to be provided is not more.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [3.14 p.m.]: I also support this Bill. It is not a very big one, and it appears to have only one object and that is to repeal section 9B and re-enact it in a new form. The 1928 Education Act repealed the previous Education Act and re-enacted it.

Section 9 of the Act is the one which gives the Minister the right to establish and to maintain Government schools throughout the State, as well as other means of education. From 1928 to the present time there have been three amendments to section 9 of the Act. The first was made in 1955 when section 9A was added. The amendment was introduced

by the member for Mt. Hawthorn, who was then the Minister for Education, and it represented the first assistance given to public schools under the Act. As the Minister said when he introduced the Bill before us, assistance has been given in many ways right back to the 1880s.

Section 9A authorised the department to pay half the cost of projectors, the cost of radios to a maximum of \$100, half the cost of library books, half the cost of pianos, and the full cost of stationery and Government publications prepared for use in schools. This was the first step taken to provide assistance to private schools.

The Act was next amended in 1964, but not to any great extent. The amendment then was simply a rewriting of section 9A by virtually extending it to give power to the Minister to supply equipment, instruments, appliances, and things of a kind and class in respect of which, when purchased by a Government school, the Minister pays a portion of the cost. The portion is not mentioned, but I understand it is 50 per cent. of the cost.

In 1965 section 9A was again amended, and sections 9B and 9C were added. I will deal with section 9C first, because it simply allows the Government to pay a portion of any interest which might be incurred in building portions of schools, and so on. Section 9B sets out the method under which subsidies—this method of assistance was being introduced for the first time—payable to children were made to the schools. In this respect the subsidy was paid in respect of children receiving secondary education.

As the Minister said, the first, second, and third-year students receive a subsidy of \$30 per year, while the fourth and fifth-year students receive a subsidy of \$36. That was provided for in 1965, and the scheme came into operation in January, 1966. Up to the time the Estimates were introduced it had been in operation for approximately 18 months.

As the member for Victoria Park said, in last year's Estimates the Government had allocated \$98,000 to subsidise private schools. I take it this was the amount which was set aside for the subsidy. If we look at the annual report of the Education Department for 1966—the latest available—we find that in 1966 there were 10,794 children in the first, second, and third years in private schools; and 3,264 children in the fourth and fifth years. If the subsidies payable to those two groups of children are totalled they amount to \$431,556 in 12 months. Yet we find that the Minister spent out of his Budget an amount of only \$63,333. I wonder why the amount is so small, considering the actual number of children who attend secondary schools and the amount of subsidy that is set out in the Act. In his speech the Minister did not give us very

much indication of the exact amount that would be spent in subsidies payable to the schools.

Under the Bill before us, section 9B is to be rewritten to include a section covering primary-school children. I have taken out some figures from the 1966 report of the Education Department in an endeavour to assess the actual amount the Government will have to meet in a full year.

On the Minister's Estimates this year is an amount of \$100,000 which is to be put towards the subsidy. Yet the Education Department report reveals that there is a total number of 24,024 children in primary classes, and the total cost involved would be \$120,120 for a half year. Therefore that is in excess of the \$100,000 set aside in the Estimates.

Mr. Lewis: Is the amount in the Estimates \$100,000 or \$150,000?

Mr. NORTON: It is \$100,000, which is an increase of \$36,667 on the previous year. To the amount I have just mentioned, we must add the subsidy due to the secondary-school children, from the first to the fifth years.

Again, using the figures in the report of the Education Department, there were 10,794 children in the first to third years, which would amount to \$323,820, while the 3,264 children in the fourth and fifth years would involve another \$107,676. Therefore for a total year the amount required would be \$671,736. Members can readily realise that the \$100,000 provided in the Estimates is very far below the amount which will actually be required. I would like the Minister to give us some idea how he expects to be able to meet the amount required when there is only \$100,000 on the Estimates.

When we compare the cost of educating a child in a State school with the amount which is to be granted to the private schools, we must realise that the subsidy is really very small. According to the report of the Education Department, the cost of educating a primary-school child per year in the State school is \$162.98, while the cost for secondary education is \$263.33 per child per year. I certainly very much doubt whether the private schools could educate a child any cheaper. The amount I have just quoted excludes general expenditure, whatever that might mean.

There is no doubt that small though the subsidy is, it will be of considerable help to the institutions concerned, and anything we can do to help the institutions keep their fees down will help the parents, particularly those in the remote areas. They have no option but to send their children to one of these private boarding schools because the State schools are usually too far away from them and the hostels are always full.

The Minister stated that from January next year the independent schools will re-

ceive State assistance of \$34 per child per year, but I wonder how that figure has been arrived at. Has the cost of school buses and the like been taken into consideration? Have the amounts which are likely to be paid in respect of TV sets, radios, pianos, and so on, been taken into consideration? A lot of those amounts would be non-recurring, because when a piano, for instance, is purchased, the department is involved in no further cost in regard to the purchase because one piano should last for many years. As I have said, I wonder how the Minister arrived at the figure of \$34. If the cost of bus services has been included, it is quite easy to understand that the figure would be raised quite considerably. I feel we should be given a little more information on this and also an explanation as to why the figure in the Estimates is so low.

I do not have any recent figures regarding private school fees, but from the figures the Minister himself supplied, we can see that the fees have increased considerably over the years. He told us that in 1946 the fee per term was \$22.75. Whether that was for a primary-school child or a secondary-school child I do not know, but I understand there was quite a difference between the two. The total tuition fee for 1946 was \$68.25. However, we must remember that to that must be added the cost of board, and we have been told that the cost for the two was \$225 a year.

Now let us compare those figures with the cost in 1965, because by then it had increased tremendously. Tuition jumped from \$22.75 to \$124 per term, while the total cost of board and tuition increased from \$225 per year to \$876 per year. This reveals that educating a child today at a private school—and it must be remembered that many parents have no option but to send their children to a private school—is a very expensive business. To the tuition fees and board must be added other charges such as the cost of books, etc.

Therefore, if we are able to assist private schools in any way, we assist the parents, particularly those in the outback who are unable to have their children educated at a State school and therefore must send them to a private school, which entails full board and lodging. When we realise what the private schools are saving the Government, we must also realise what a small amount they are being given. The subsidy is to be \$10 a year towards the primary education of a child at a private school when this education costs the Government \$162.98.

The Minister himself said that a great burden is placed on the Education Department when a private school closes, not only as far as the actual teaching costs are concerned, but also because of the extra buildings and accommodation that are necessary. Whilst maintaining the standard of State schools and improving

it—I say again, improving it—we should assist these other schools to the utmost of our ability.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [3.30 p.m.]: When the Minister introduced the Bill the other evening, he gave a little of the history of the case. Often it is advisable to turn back into history to see what motivated actions at a certain time. I think we should look at the reasons why the *per capita* aid which was given to school children was abolished in 1895. At the outset, I do not want it to be construed that I am supporting a suggestion that the aid should have been maintained. Various circumstances have existed since that time.

Since I have been a member of Parliament, I do not think I have had a clear indication from anyone, including all the present Ministers, as to what they think in the ultimate on this question. It ill behoves the Minister for Education to ask the member for Victoria Park what he thinks in the ultimate. The only clear opinion I have ever heard expressed came from the present Minister for Education's predecessor. At a meeting which was subsequently organised by those who were strongly in favour of aid to non-Government schools, attention was drawn to the fact that only one member of Parliament was very much opposed to the idea of aid to non-Government schools. As I have said, the person referred to was the predecessor of the present Minister for Education. However, Providence dealt with him within six months. Whether the information on the views of members of Parliament at that time was accurate, only Providence knows, and I do not want to tempt Providence.

I wish to indicate that I consider a high standard of education is very desirable. To a certain extent, we have been our own critics. On an international comparison, it would be found Australia spends on education approximately the same proportion of its national income as Spain does. The existing standard seems to be far removed from the desired standard. We should spend more money on education, whether this money comes from Government sources or from private sources. Indeed, I am sure we must look to spending more money on education.

The member for Victoria Park indicated that the policy of the Australian Labor Party on this matter is clearly enunciated. The Labor Party considers a full public inquiry by the Commonwealth into primary, secondary, and technical education in both Government and non-Government schools should be conducted. This is most necessary. In the days of the Labor Government, the then Premier (The Hon. A. R. G. Hawke) put that proposition to the then Prime Minister (Sir Robert Menzies). I understand Mr. Hawke's suggestion had been supported by a number

of other State Premiers at a Premiers' conference. However, the Prime Minister rejected it for what, doubtless, was a very sound reason from a Federal point of view.

Of course the Prime Minister knew as a result of previous reports on universities, tertiary education, and other matters, that the recommendation would be that the Commonwealth accept a greater financial responsibility. The Prime Minister was not prepared to put the Commonwealth Government in the position where, by appointing a committee of inquiry it would nominally agree that something should be done. The Prime Minister would not put the Commonwealth Government in such a position if it was not prepared to take any action subsequent to the receipt of the committee's report. To that extent, the Prime Minister had a very definite plan. In effect, his attitude was that the Commonwealth would not bother to interfere because it might cause it to spend more money. That attitude is not good enough.

We on this side of the House consider that some form of assistance to education should be undertaken by the Commonwealth. I think our viewpoint has been made apparent by the recent action of leaders of Labor parliamentary groups. It is not possible to be definite at this stage as to what form the assistance should take, but one suggestion is that the Commonwealth should bear the responsibility of the top level of education, which would leave the State with more money to spend on the other levels. I do not know what the end result will be, but the problem has been with us for a very long time.

I refer back to the legislation of 1895, as follows:—

From and after the coming into operation of this Act no Elementary School, not belonging to the Government, other than a school in connection with an Orphanage or other institution certified under "The Industrial Schools Act, 1874, shall receive any grant-in-aid from public funds."

It went on to say that in lieu, an amount of £15,000 would be paid as compensation to the managers of the assisted schools.

That legislation was the culmination of a series of events which are worth relating. Even as recently as the 16th October, 1967, the Premier was reported in the *Daily News* in connection with a newsletter concerning the "Catholics In Aid Campaign." He said—

This Government does not propose to come into the election on the basis of an auction sale for the highest number of votes.

I do not blame the Premier for that statement. I consider it is bad when something like this becomes an involved issue. I have only mentioned it because of the original situation which existed in the

colony in 1895. A very similar situation to the present situation existed at the 1894 elections. Considerable bargaining took place and people were a little upset about the ultimate result. The Leader of the Opposition at that time was particularly upset over the result. Mr. Leake, the member for Albany, was Leader of the Opposition at the time and Sir John Forrest was Premier. Mr. Leake was sufficiently upset to move a vote of no confidence in the Government in relation to its education policy. He did this when he was speaking at the stage which is now known as the Address-in-Reply.

The ensuing debate was very lengthy. It took a long time to convince the Premier that the Leader of the Opposition had enough numbers to support him. Of course numbers mean everything in a parliamentary sphere. When the Premier realised this, he apparently gave some assurances behind the scenes and said he would take action in regard to the desire of the Parliament. In effect, the Parliament wished to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the possibility of getting away from the assisted schools position.

In the first place, this was connected with vote-catching, because in those days the Catholic vote, as it was termed, was very valuable. Indeed, this has been the position over many years of elections. However, being a voluntary election in 1895, it was even more difficult to persuade ordinary people to go to the poll. It is worth relating that the Premier became very annoyed about Mr. Leake's move. I refer to page 401 of *Hansard* for 1895 when Sir John Forrest said—

The honourable member who moved the motion knows very well he got into Parliament on what is called the Roman Catholic vote. He only got in by one vote, and I heard that a man, a Roman Catholic, was taken out of his bed, wrapped up in blankets, and carried to the poll to vote for the honourable member.

They were mighty politicians in those days, because apparently they went and got their votes no matter what. It did not matter whether the voter was a Catholic or a Protestant, the politician went to whatever extent was necessary, even if it meant wrapping the person up in a blanket.

Mr. Elliott: Things have not changed.

Mr. JAMIESON: This action was probably taken so that he would not die on the way.

When the Minister introduced the Bill, he quoted something of what Sir John Forrest said at the time. Before I quote some other section, I think members would be interested to know that the decision of the Select Committee, moved by Sir John Forrest, was carried by 10 votes to three.

The findings of the Joint Select Committee were as follows:—

The Committee is of the opinion that if the Assisted School system be abolished it will be equitable, having regard to the vested interests which have been legally created, to pay the managers of the Roman Catholic Assisted Schools the sum of £30,000 by three equal annual instalments, commencing on the 1st of January, 1896.

The Minister indicated that this matter came before Parliament, which had in front of it the proposition of footing the bill for something like £20,000—as it was at that time. Evidently the Premier must have heard some of the murmurs in Parliament to the effect that it would not be possible for him to get £30,000 passed and, accordingly, he ultimately compromised on a figure of £15,000. So, obviously, feeling was running very high. If anyone is interested enough to delve into the full proceedings of the Select Committee—including the interrogation of the Right Rev. Bishop Gibney and of the Very Rev. A. Bourke, the Roman Catholic Vicar-General—these can be found in detail in the *Votes and Proceedings* of that time.

It is interesting to note that at that stage consideration was given to buying out what was called the parallel system of education. We have come a long way from that stage. We appear to have come back to a standard with which we are satisfied, because it is demanded by increasing numbers of people; and in a democracy we must do all we can to meet the demands of the majority. But with these increasing demands we have now reached the stage where both these systems must be sponsored.

One feature that concerns me in regard to the parallel system is that it can become more expensive than the single system of education. It is necessary for us to reach a degree of rationalisation. So it would be difficult for anybody to say that we must pay 100 per cent. cost for education in non-Government schools. If that were done all sorts of people with all sorts of ideas could possibly find it convenient to start their own school system; and the Minister would surely be aware of the fact that we would be involved in considerable expenditure in trying to meet this situation.

There is also a considerable and violent variation in the financial needs of the various parishes. It has been my experience that parents and friends' associations call for 80 per cent. of the amount spent on State schools plus 50 per cent. of the building costs. This expenditure might not be necessary in some parishes, while it might prove to be the answer in others, because they may be badly hit financially, not having been established for as long as some of the older establishments which would have very little capital debt and

which would be able to get by with the fees they receive.

When we consider a place like St. Joseph's Primary School, Queens Park, we find that the present school debt is \$15,913, and the interest on that debt is \$853. Alongside this school, and practically in the same grounds, we have St. Norbet's College which has an outstanding debt of \$116,836. That is a considerable amount of money.

For the most part other schools, like the Christian Brothers College in the North Perth area, have been in existence for a long time, and I doubt whether they would have any appreciable capital debt. It is possible they have had to make improvements in recent years, but with the fees they receive they would probably be able to get by. But any organisation which sets up a new college generally finds it is in considerable financial difficulty. It is the responsibility of Parliament to get such an organisation out of its difficulty. I do not mean that it is the responsibility of only one section of Parliament, and to this extent I cannot blame the Premier when he says he is not prepared to go onto an auction stand.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.6 p.m.

Mr. JAMIESON: When the legislative body appointed the Select Committee to consider this matter in 1895 the Premier placed himself on it so that he could, to some degree, guide its inquiries in the direction desired by his administration. In this he did have some degree of success. It is obvious from the debates that very little consideration has been given to these schools. In those days they were called assisted schools; and it is interesting to note that in the evidence given by Bishop Gibney he stated that about 33 per cent. of those attending his assisted schools at the time were not of Catholic parentage; and no doubt the Government would have taken cognisance of this when it was investigating the situation.

The Premier of the day obviously thought he was doing something for posterity, but this did not materialise as he anticipated it would. This had been the case on several occasions. We recall what the then Premier envisaged for Parliament House, but we will not go into that.

On page 1038 of the *Hansard* of 1895 the Premier said in his opening address—

Sir, I think I may say that, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I am doing that which will meet with a considerable amount of satisfaction, not only in this House, but also throughout the colony. I hope that anything I may have to say will not give offence in any way, and will not offend any member of this House. I believe that the action of the Government, in bringing this Bill before the House, will be commended not only at

the present time, but commended also in the future, as time goes on; because there can be no doubt whatever, in the mind of anyone who is acquainted with what has been going on in this colony during the last two or three years, that differences, and dissensions, and disputations have arisen, perhaps more in regard to this question than to any other, and especially during our Parliamentary elections. I believe the action we are taking here tonight will tend to a large extent to do away with those disputations, and differences, and dissensions, and that this action will have the effect of giving us a good deal of quiet and peace, at any rate for some time to come, in our Parliamentary elections.

Of course, there may have been a temporary lull, but it looks as though during that session they really dealt with aid to assisted schools in a way that has never been done in this House before and is not likely to be done in the future. When a vote was taken the Premier succeeded with 16 to 15 and had the matter recommitted to obtain a vote more palatable to him so as to justify the action that was being taken. It is also interesting to note that at one stage a note was made by *Hansard* that while the division was being taken the electric lights were put out. So there was a good deal of confusion all round.

In regard to the future of the education system in the Commonwealth of Australia—primary, secondary, and technical—there will have to be some kind of rationalisation. As pointed out by the member for Victoria Park, it is obvious that in those days the orders had little trouble in obtaining teachers for the schools. They were always able to obtain sufficient numbers of teachers in both the female and male orders of the church. However, that is not the position today, and this is one of the great problems at the present time.

In the new schools the lay teachers have to be paid award wages and I can foresee that in 25 to 30 years the full staff of non-Government schools will comprise lay teachers. I am referring to Catholic schools, because I do not regard the other denominational schools as being of any great significance. They are in existence for those people who want to provide their children with the sort of education they offer. I do not think those schools are our responsibility; and we should not worry if the fees are doubled at Guildford Grammar School, because there will still be a waiting list. We must look to the general education of individual school children and how this should be given.

As a consequence of having started a system of some sort of payment in consideration for services being rendered by non-Government schools, and having subscribed to the parallel system, the Governments of the various States and the Commonwealth will be forced more and more to pay a greater amount of money

both for capital expenditure for buildings and for the salaries of the teachers. There will have to be an agreement with the Catholic schools' organisation. Although it is the desire of some parents to have their children taught in a non-Government school, it appears in some circumstances to be ludicrous that two schools are provided when this is uneconomic to both the State and Catholic systems.

A different set of circumstances applies in the metropolitan area, but the situation I have just mentioned does exist in some country towns, and this is why I say we cannot pay 100 per cent. to any organisation which sets up such a school, because it would be absolutely useless for us to assume that we could finance such a scheme. Certain schools have been paid for for a long time and they are able to get by and do not require finance—I tried to expand this theme some while ago—but the new schools will require assistance, and they are the ones the Government should help.

However, there should be some protection for Government finance which is being spent in this direction. The Minister will agree that once equipment is supplied to a non-Government school, under subsidy, it becomes the property of that organisation. If the school closes down I do not think the Minister has any power to demand the return of the equipment. On the other hand, when the parents and citizens' associations sponsor activities and a subsidy is paid on the part of the Government for the purchase of equipment, that equipment becomes part of the school and is part and parcel of the Government's property.

So there is a great difference, and I think some protection must eventually be incorporated. For instance, if we as a Parliament decide to pay the full cost of a building for a non-Government school—for a Catholic school—and the organisation ceases to use the building as a school, surely the equity should be returned to the State rather than stay with that particular organisation. The taxpayers' money has paid for it. It is true the supporters of non-Government schools are also paying the taxes, and this is their main argument. Of course, it bears some examination and we find there are now more problems than there were before.

In various parishes instruction is being organised for Catholic students in State schools—far more than it has been in the past. This is being done for a two-fold reason. Firstly, because the Catholic schools cannot get the teachers within their orders and therefore cannot expand their schools and cannot accept all the children who desire to go to their schools. Secondly, a certain section of the Catholic following do not want their children to attend convents. As a consequence, they go to Government schools and come under religious instruction as arranged by the parish priest.

Whether this does any great damage in the ultimate, I do not know. It would be interesting to assess, over a period, whether a Catholic educated in a Government school, and receiving the religious instruction made available at that school, was any worse than a Catholic educated in a non-Government school.

However, the two-school system seems to be desired and we seem to have reached the stage where we accept it as being an order of the day. The only thing we can do is to organise education in such a way that it will involve the least possible expenditure on the part of the State. I am afraid that over the years the inclination will be for it to become an auctioneering sort of system, and I do not think this sort of thing should be manifest in good Government finance. There is no doubt one party contesting elections will very quickly indicate that it will pay for everything in non-Government schools. Of course, this is an irresponsible attitude as those people could never become the Government. A responsible Government could not make such a promise without having some idea of where to start or where to finish.

Referring back to 1895, one of the proposals canvassed by the Select Committee was the complete abolition of the other systems of schooling by incorporating all the schools and all the staffs. This had already been done in parts of Canada and, I understand, by reading Bishop Gibney's evidence, in parts of America. The only thing the lord bishop of the day did not like was that his brothers, who were teaching in various areas, were likely to be shunted around the State, wherever the Education Department wanted them. This fell rather flat with the bishop.

From my reading, if the bishop had been able to get a guarantee that his brothers would not be shunted around the State, he would have very quickly said he preferred the two systems to be incorporated. At that time he felt they could not carry on without some form of assistance; despite the fact that in the interim they have carried on—and carried on very well in some directions. They have produced some very good scholars and some very good schools, and those things are to their credit.

We have to look to the future, and this is a start. From the several circulars I have received it appears they appreciate the subsidy, but they say it does not go far enough and that they want more. We all want more, and that takes me back to where I started when I said we appreciate that more money is required. The member for Northam, when he was Premier, appreciated that more money was required for primary education when he tried to have provision made for a general inquiry. Until that general inquiry is made and until Commonwealth funds are chan-

nelled for this purpose, then we will be playing about with the matter. We are in the hands of the financial organisations which the Commonwealth has set up, particularly the Grants Commission. I am glad to hear that Victoria has now come in with a proposal. If New South Wales were the only State out of the four non-claimant States which granted \$12, the Grants Commission is likely to say the average was \$3. We would therefore, be \$7 over the average and would have to be penalised if we paid the proposed \$10.

If we were involved in that sort of financing, we would soon go broke, or else our deficits would rapidly increase. We would have to watch the position very closely. It is interesting to note just how these financial agreements are liable to cause us to be in disfavour from time to time. The problem arises through extending what the Grants Commission generally terms an extension of social services beyond that which applied to what were known as the standard States and which are now to be known as the average States. All in all, it looks as though we, as a Parliament, are involved in this move. The problem exists and will continue; some rationalisation is necessary in order to ensure that it does not get too far out of hand. There should be no competition in the matter.

If it came ultimately to the question of paying full expenses for non-Government schools, we would soon see that some parent, through a dislike for a certain master, or because of a personality clash would take his child away and send him to another school. We would be in the position where the educational system on either side would not be very secure. This could happen because of a lack of rationalisation. This situation will have to be tolerated and carried on sensibly by all future Governments. How it will ultimately be resolved I do not know.

I hope enlightened society in the next 50 or 60 years will find a sensible way of resolving the whole problem and will bring about a situation which will give to children what I am sure we would all wish; that is, the maximum education to the level of the child's own ability should be provided, not education to just a chosen few.

At the moment the situation is that we are considering approximately 25 per cent. of the school population. By various statements which the Minister has made recently, it appears as though the parents of the 75 per cent. of the children who attend State schools are now starting to complain that they are not getting things their own way, either. This is true. There is no free education as we would like it.

I am sure we all aim at ensuring that the education of all children, at least to the completion of secondary education if they have the mental ability to cope, should be the responsibility of the Government. Indeed, I am inclined to favour the

system which operates in the American States. They carry out their aim by progressively lifting the age limit of school leavers. However, that subject is outside the scope of the Bill, which merely sets out to aid the non-Government schools.

In the primary field, there are very few schools other than those run by Roman Catholic organisations. The Seventh Day Adventist Church administers the next greatest number of private schools, but a lot of those would be mission schools. The Church of England runs a few, but very few by comparison with those that are run by the Roman Catholic Church, which develops this system more.

This type of education is something that has come down through the ages. The teaching of people was entirely in the hands of the church during the Dark Ages, as members will recall from their knowledge of history. This system of teaching is something which has been left over and handed down through the years. It is a type of education which one section of the community wants—and to some extent it is justified as a form of education—as against that which is generally wanted by the greater part of the community.

Eventually I suppose we will reach the stage of the Commonwealth inquiry, and grants will be made available on a similar basis to that on which the grants are made in respect of science blocks; that is, a certain amount will be for Government schools and a certain amount will be for non-Government schools. Possibly the position will be that the States will have to administer the distribution of the finance as we do with secondary schools and the more expensive items of science blocks, etc.

Earlier, a member interjected and asked me if I thought Western Australia would have racial schools. I hope not. However, this principle could have been in existence. It is not so very long ago that I quoted to members from the then available and printed code of the Liberal Party platform. That booklet set out that the Liberal Party wanted segregated schools for natives. This was only a few short years ago. We have gone beyond that now, and I think it is an improvement which is appreciated by everyone. We would not want it to occur, because we believe that everyone who lives in Australia, irrespective of colour, should be entitled to the best schooling possible.

Mr. Brand: I point out that the same sort of change which occurred within the thinking of the Liberal Party in regard to segregated schools occurred within the thinking of the Labor Party with regard to State aid for schools.

Mr. JAMIESON: I thought that would be the comment the Premier would make, and I am glad he made it, because I wish to say that so far as I am aware, there

is no written Liberal Party policy on State aid, or any indication as to where that party has stood in respect of State aid from time to time. The policy it has espoused has changed overnight, and changed dramatically following decisions made in the party room. Members of the Labor Party are at least bound by the book until a general inquiry on State aid is made. Until that inquiry is made any aid granted to independent schools in any State of the Commonwealth can be supported in any other State. It is obvious the Labor Party has a very clear policy on this question.

If you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, I might say that I might be a little behind the times, but in the coalition Government headed by the Premier, I think the other party said not long ago it was opposed to State aid to independent schools; but possibly it has now amended its thinking.

Mr. Brand: I have never said that, nor has the Government, so far as I know.

Mr. JAMIESON: I am saying that such a policy was in the platform of the Country Party a few years ago. It was freely expressed, I think, in the Press.

We have had enough changes to allow our minds to be refreshed, and changes will continue. If we were not prepared to stand up to change and accept it when it is considered necessary we would soon be relegated to the past. I reiterate that the Labor Party has now a very clear policy on this question. Even when the Labor Party had no policy on State aid for independent schools, it did have a clear written indication that it considered the establishment of non-Government schools was justified. This has always been part of the Labor Party's policy. Any differences of opinion occurred on the amount of finance that should be made available to independent schools.

The D.L.P. has always supported the existence of independent schools; but, as far as I know, no other political party has written into its policy that the existence of these other school systems is justified. In returning to the question of racial schools, I hope the Government will watch the position. There are some group schools being established by various small organisations that seem to be cropping up and growing in strength. I have one in my territory and there is another at Armadale. These groups are associated with some of the reform churches. To ensure they are not creating and fostering a policy on racial matters which could become serious at a later stage, the Government should watch the position closely.

I cannot make a definite statement that they are doing this, because I do not know enough about them, but the reactions recently to conforming with the procedures of the law, the procedures of the trade

union movement, and all those customs we have learned to accept, make me suspect that the teachings of these groups could prove to be to the disadvantage of the State from a racial point of view. Therefore, I repeat that their activities should be closely watched.

We know that under the Catholic system there is no racial prejudice, but it has the distinction of probably segregating the sheep from the lambs, if I may express it that way. I offer no criticism of its system, except to say that it is high time we all supported a system of non-segregated education, and followed a co-educational pattern, which has been put in train by the State Government over the years. This is a most desirable practice; and, as students as well as members of Parliament become more enlightened in this day and age, I fail to see why we should segregate one group of students from another because of their sex and then, after a number of years find they are all thrown into one group, as it were, and are expected to react naturally. With those remarks, I support the Bill.

MR. ELLIOTT (Canning) [4.35 p.m.]: Despite the fact that many hundreds of words have been spoken on this measure, I wish to express my regret that not one speaker has found room to express a word of congratulation to the Government for its meritorious effort in introducing this Bill, which is obviously a major break through.

Mr. Graham: You really think so?

Mr. ELLIOTT: Yes; I do indeed. This is one of those subjects which are complex in the extreme; there is not one facet of it which is clear. The member for Beeloo has said we should not concern ourselves with the fees for the cost of the Guildford Grammar School, and he may well be right. Presumably he feels this was because he thinks the parents of the pupils attending that school can afford whatever increases might occur. Does he feel the same way about Aquinas College, St. Louis, and perhaps even Trinity?

Mr. Jamieson: They are getting down the scale.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I am sure Aquinas will be delighted to hear that.

Mr. Jamieson: You mentioned St. Louis.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Well, let us keep to Aquinas rather than any other.

Mr. Jamieson: Aquinas is on the same level as Hale School and other denominational colleges.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I am glad of that information from the honourable member. The point is, of course, it is so easy to say that the assistance granted is not enough; that is always the easy way out. There is no Utopia, nor will there ever be. I think it would be of interest to members if a break-up of the assistance granted to non-Government schools and pupils in

Western Australia were made. I would point out that in the 1966-67 financial year State aid granted to independent schools amounted to \$1,000,221. This amount comprised the following items:—

	\$
Boarding allowance	168,500
School transport	259,000
Tuition fees to private students	396,687
Scholarships and bursaries	2,700
Subsidies—	
Television	1,732
Library	12,326
Musical instruments	2,040
Radios	1,261
Projectors	3,631
Physical education	1,457
Duplicators	2,435
Freight and cartage	988
Native students	2,184
Materials and supplies	110,000
Swimming pools	4,000
Interest payments on residential accommodation	31,280

Mr. Jamieson: The Minister should have let you introduce the Bill.

Mr. ELLIOTT: To that total of \$1,000,221 can be added an estimated \$300,000 to be granted during the next financial year for the tuition fees and subsidies which are mentioned in this measure. I do not know whether the member for Victoria Park has Irish ancestors, but I could not help but think that he gave a perfect example of ambiguity. I do not blame him for that, because this is a difficult subject. He said he did not know what the subsidy should be, but whatever it was it was not enough. That is how I interpreted his remarks. The point I make is that this grant can be of major assistance to the smaller independent schools in Western Australia.

I am closely associated with one small convent which has some 80 to 90 pupils, and this grant will mean that the convent will receive about \$800 or \$900 a year, or \$10 for each student enrolled. Obviously, such a grant will put this convent in a more advantageous position than it was in the past. In the future it will be able to operate more efficiently in the knowledge that it has an assured income, and as the enrolments increase so will the amount of the grant.

It has also been said that nobody seems at all sure where the Government stands so far as aid to independent schools is concerned. For myself I think the Government's policy is as clear as day; it has stated its position often and quite simply to the effect that aid will be given to independent schools as and when this is financially possible. This has not been disputed, which, of course, provides further proof of the Government's position.

I do, however, agree with the member for Beeloo when he sounds a note of warning in relation to some of the problems that might arise with the subsidy system.

We could see this possibly applying to some of the more fanatical religious sects. I have in mind an organisation such as the Plymouth Brethren which, if it were allowed a subsidy amounting to 50 per cent. of building costs and tuition fees, could perhaps make a handsome profit from it. With the aid to independent schools being continually increased, as inevitably it will be, this will have to be watched very closely.

If, as is suggested these days, 50 per cent. of the building costs and tuition fees is to be subsidised by the Government, then it is right and proper—in view of the fact that public money is being used—that there should be substantial safeguards to ensure that the money is being wisely spent. If aid is to be given to independent schools, then those receiving it must be prepared to accept certain supervision; and, to ensure this is done, some measure of Government control must be exercised. I merely rose to enumerate some of the assistance that has been given by the Government in this field, and I congratulate the Government on the action it has taken.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.43 p.m.]: This Bill deals with a subject that has, from time to time, prominently been brought under our notice; indeed, at the present moment, I would guess that practically all members of this Parliament have received communications from constituents pointing out the difficulties confronting schools—and indirectly the parents—in an endeavour to have children educated in approved schools of the parents' choice.

We were interested in the summary given to us by the Minister for Education when he traced some of the history of State activity in respect of private schools. There is, however, in my view a significant omission which I intend to rectify, for the reason that some of the newer members, particularly, seem to be of the opinion that the present Government has become inspired and is breaking entirely new ground in the matter of giving assistance to independent schools.

I feel, therefore, that I can do no better than read from a certain publication—*The Record*—which is the official organ of the Catholic community of Western Australia. In a specially enlarged edition of this publication for the year 1956—larger because it happened to be published at Easter—there appeared the following in the report of the Parents and Friends' Association of Western Australia:—

"The outstanding feature of the year from the point of view of the Federation, was the amendment of the Education Act to provide certain subsidies to all efficient schools," said Mr. Mahoney . . . It is only right that we should pay tribute to the

Premier, Mr. Hawke, and his Labor Government on the historic legislation, and place on record our recognition of what they have done.

In the past 60 years since 1895, his was the first Government to place justice before prejudice in such a matter, his was the first Government to have the courage to give a subsidy to our schools. We trust his noble example will not be lost on his successors.

Mr. O'Neil: Do you know what was said in the most recent issue of *The Record*?

Mr. Brand: Any record of Joe Chamberlain's speech in that?

Mr. GRAHAM: It is obvious that the quotation I have just made is a little distasteful to the Government, because it has created this facade that it alone has moved in this matter of State aid to independent schools; whereas here we have recognition from the Catholic school authorities themselves that it was the Hawke Labor Government that made the break through; and they have used the words which I have faithfully quoted from their official organ.

Mr. Lewis: I acknowledged that in my second reading speech.

Mr. GRAHAM: I acknowledge that fact; but there are two younger members of this House—the member for Darling Range and the member for Canning—who apparently, having been fed with Government propaganda, are of the opinion that previously nothing had been done until this “mighty” Brand Liberal Government came into office. All I have sought to do is to put the record straight.

Mr. Brand: Do not let that upset you.

Mr. GRAHAM: If quoting historical facts is upsetting somebody, I do not know what I must do to amuse the Premier.

Mr. Brand: I said, do not let that upset you; do not let the Brand Government upset you.

Mr. GRAHAM: I have quoted that to people who have written to me; indeed, I go further and point out to the people that the present Government has occupied the Treasury bench for almost nine years; it has an unassailable majority in both Houses of Parliament and, if there is anything lacking in the way of aid to independent schools, the people should look to those who have constituted the Government for almost nine years.

Shortly there will be an opportunity for the people to express themselves, and at the appropriate time the present Leader of the Opposition will indicate unmistakably what a Labor Government intends to do if it be the will of the people to elect such a Government.

Meanwhile, however, the responsibility rests fairly and squarely in the laps of

those who constitute the Government at this time, and who have done so since the year 1959.

I have endeavoured, together with other members, to follow the Revenue Estimates which were submitted to us by the Treasurer, accompanied, as usual, by a voluminous set of Estimates indicating past performances and moneys to be expended in future. The figures appearing in the Estimates seem to bear no relationship whatever to some of the things to which we have listened with a great deal of interest. The member for Canning quoted certain figures—unfortunately they were read a little too rapidly for me to take note of the details—from which I would guess that a total of \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year has been made available to independent schools by way of special assistance for libraries, radios, and things of that nature. Yet we find in the Estimates that some \$9,999 was spent under the heading, “Subsidies and Grants as may be authorised.”

Do these figures mean what they say, or is the true position somehow camouflaged? I do not know. It has been indicated to us—indeed it is contained in the Estimates—that \$100,000 has been provided for assistance to private schools. I presume that is the amount that has to be paid to the independent secondary schools for the 12 months of this financial year, and to the independent primary schools for one-half of this financial year—from the 1st January to the 30th June next. The figure is set down as \$100,000.

My authority for the figures of the school population as at August, 1966, is the annual report of the Education Department for the year 1966; but no doubt the number of students would have increased to some extent, although I do not know to what extent. The figures show there were 14,058 students in the secondary grades in non-Government schools, of which 10,794 were in the first, second, and third years. They were entitled to a subsidy of \$30 per annum, and the total would represent a subsidy of \$324,000. There were 3,264 students in the fourth and fifth years of secondary school, and they would receive \$36 per annum each, making a total in round figures of \$117,000 for the year. In respect of all the pupils in secondary schools, the total subsidy would be \$440,000.

Then we come to the independent primary schools in which there was a total of 24,024 students—or 24,000 in round figures—to whom a subsidy of \$10 per annum would be paid; and this gives a total of \$240,000 for a full year, or \$120,000 for half a year. The total of \$440,000 for the secondary schools, and \$120,000 for a half-year for the primary schools would amount to \$560,000.

However, the figure in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for this finan-

cial year appears to be false, because we are asked to accept the figure of \$100,000 as being the amount to be expended. I ask the Premier, and I pause to enable him to interject, what is the explanation for this? Is the figure in the Estimates a fairy tale; because obviously it does not add up?

Mr. Brand: I will turn the other cheek and say very courteously that the total cost of education, including aid to private schools, is to be found in a number of items in the Estimates. Aid to private schools is not set out as a total.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am aware of that, but I do not accept it as being an explanation. Far from it! We are aware that radios, television sets, library books, pianos, etc., come under a separate heading. We are also aware that quite a number of the children who attend private schools are the subject of assistance for transport to enable them to get to school. We also know that scholarships of one sort or another are available to these children.

I am referring to the heading "Assistance to Private Schools." I pause again to enable the Premier to indicate under which of the 20-odd headings appears the figure to cater for the \$560,000 which it is proposed—as provided in the Bill—to pay to private schools?

Mr. Lewis: If you examine the Bill you will find that \$300,000 is involved for primary schools.

Mr. GRAHAM: I ask the Minister whether I can accept the figures submitted by the Director-General of Education in the annual report for 1966 as being correct?

Mr. Lewis: Yes, they are correct.

Mr. GRAHAM: That being the case, there were 24,000 pupils in primary grades in non-Government schools. I would point out that at \$10 per head the total is \$240,000 for a full year, but this subsidy will presumably apply for only half a year.

Mr. Lewis: The population statistics cover the period up to the end of 1966.

Mr. GRAHAM: These are the figures as at August, 1966.

Mr. Lewis: This new subsidy will operate as from the beginning of 1968, so the numbers will be greater.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. I am therefore using the minimum figure to show that 24,000 children at \$10 per head represent \$240,000 for a full year, or \$120,000 for a half year.

Mr. Lewis: That is right.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is for primary-school children in non-Government schools.

Mr. Lewis: The Premier has set aside \$150,000 for the half year.

Mr. GRAHAM: Then there are 14,000 children attending secondary independent schools. At \$30 per child for first, second, and third years, and at \$36 per child for the fourth and fifth years, the total amount is \$440,000 for a full year. This makes a grand total of \$560,000 for the primary and secondary children. In the words of the Minister himself, this is a conservative estimate, because the number of children will be greater. Again I pose the question: Where in the Estimates does this figure of \$560,000 appear? All that is set down is \$100,000.

Mr. Lewis: If you examine the present Act you will find there is a restriction on children who have received scholarships. That wipes out a very large percentage of them, and they do not receive assistance for secondary tuition fees.

Mr. GRAHAM: Further, and I repeat it for the third time, in respect of the primary-school children alone the commitment of the Government will be more than the figure set out in the Estimates for the current financial year.

Mr. Lewis: What is the commitment for the primary children?

Mr. GRAHAM: There are 24,000 children attending independent primary schools.

Mr. Lewis: That would make it \$240,000 for a full year.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes.

Mr. Lewis: The Premier has set aside \$300,000 for a full year.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is precisely what I am saying. Does the figure in the Estimates mean nothing?

Mr. Lewis: Of course it does!

Mr. GRAHAM: I think it is a fairy tale.

Mr. Lewis: That amount is included.

Mr. GRAHAM: How can it be included in a figure that is only a fraction of it?

Mr. Lewis: The figure in the Estimates shows the amount of money that will be payable for the half year, because the subsidy will apply for the half year from the 1st January to the 30th June next. Item 17 in the Estimates under the heading of "Scholarships and Allowances" shows an increase of \$198,000 to be set aside. The subsidy for tuition fees will absorb \$150,000 of it.

Mr. Court: There is another item for education in the vote for the north-west.

Mr. GRAHAM: That item covers a lot of extraneous matters, such as those enumerated by the member for Canning. I am speaking in connection with the item under the heading of "Assistance to Private Schools."

Mr. Court: That is only one heading.

Mr. Williams: Under item 20 in the Education Vote there is an amount set aside for school stock for primary, secondary, and private schools.

Mr. GRAHAM: I do not know for certain, but I am inclined to think that relates to the activities of the Education Department itself in respect of its own schools.

Mr. Lewis: That is not so.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am interested in this matter of the annual payment per student. I have already conceded there are many headings under which there are—let us call them—fringe benefits; but it is the general subsidy which is the subject matter of the Bill that we are discussing at the present moment.

The Government decided earlier on the basis of \$30 per annum for a student attending a private secondary school for the first to third years and \$36 for the fourth and fifth years. I daresay the Government had some reason for arriving at those figures; and, if it did, then it is completely beyond me how it could have decided that a figure of \$10 would suffice or be equitable in respect of pupils attending the primary schools. Using the Premier's own figures, the cost is \$272 per annum per student in State secondary schools and \$168 per annum per student in primary schools. In other words, the primary school cost is slightly in excess of 60 per cent. of the cost for the secondary schools.

As the average payment over the five years to the student in the secondary independent schools is \$32.60 per annum, surely the figure for students attending primary schools should have been 60 per cent. of that amount. In other words, in round figures, the amount would be \$20. What is the reason for this cheeseparating if the Government has worked out some sort of formula or basis to give even-handed justice to the extent that it has funds available? I agree with the member for Canning that whatever is given will not be enough, because a Government has so many calls that it does what it can.

In this case, having decided on a norm in respect of a certain group of students, why are not the others covered on exactly the same basis, measured against the experience in our own State primary schools? In other words, the figure should be \$20 and not \$10 as set out in the Bill.

Mr. Brand: No-one has said they are not the figures; and no-one has said the \$10 which was decided upon was anything other than a subsidy. The same decision was made in Victoria and in New South Wales, except that in New South Wales the amount is \$12. I presume it was just a contribution, having in mind the large number of primary scholars in independent schools. We can only achieve our objective little by little.

Mr. GRAHAM: I agree with that—that is, achieving our objectives little by little—but surely the Government gave some thought to its basis of calculation when

it decided something should be done in respect of students attending independent schools.

Mr. Brand: We gave what we could afford to give; and evidently the two other States which have the greater percentage of population of this nation decided to give about the same.

Mr. GRAHAM: Are we to have a Government that works things out on a basis of fairness and equity, or is it to be just a little Sir Echo of somewhere else?

Mr. Brand: We will have a Government that will not live beyond its means.

Mr. GRAHAM: I wonder if that is a fair summary of the situation.

Mr. Brand: It is.

Mr. GRAHAM: In that respect I would indicate to the Premier that he will be asked later on to point out where provision is made in the Budget to provide for equal pay for the sexes for equal work.

Mr. Brand: That will be provided for.

Mr. GRAHAM: It will be interesting to find out. I have a firm conviction that the Estimates had been prepared and the Government panicked over something or other resulting in belated steps being taken with the object of wooing the public; and, for that reason, the financial documents before us do not mean a great deal. However, I do not want to get away from the question of education and the amount of subsidy proposed to be paid. The position is that the Government will be paying a greater sum of money to the secondary schools than it will be paying to the primary schools, notwithstanding the fact that the latter exist in considerably greater numbers.

Of course, the number of students attending the primary schools is over 24,000, as against 14,000 in the other category. The conclusion I draw from these several observations, and from the attitude of the Government itself, is that there is every justification for what has been submitted by the member for Victoria Park—that it is time there was a full examination of this question. A sudden and belated gesture here and a vote-catching gesture there is not the way to go about what is an accepted situation—that we recognise the question of the education of the children of this State. Whether they go to a Government school or whether they go to an independent school, they are expected to conform to a curriculum and submit themselves to common examinations.

There are other features where the Education Department exercises a supervisory role. Therefore, approximately 25 per cent. of our children should not be left to this hit-or-miss method of think of a figure and that is it, and then another little instalment, bit, or plaster at a later date. No doubt an investigating authority going into all aspects of this very important

question would bring down recommendations—this is my thinking—that would be far in excess of what any Government could immediately accommodate, but at least it would be a guide so that bit by bit a programme could be followed.

As has already been pointed out, the Liberal Party has not a policy with regard to State aid. As the mood takes it, or the political climate dictates, the Government will or will not produce a gesture of generosity or tighten up the purse strings.

Mr. O'Connor: This also is not in your policy.

Mr. GRAHAM: The policy is in black and white, printed in the platform of the Australian Labor Party of Western Australia; and the specific programme to be embarked upon in the three years upon Labor becoming the Government next year, if that be the will of the electors, will be outlined by my leader. There will be no doubt about that.

Mr. O'Connor: You were talking about changing as politics demanded it. How long is it since you changed your policy?

Mr. GRAHAM: I have already quoted from the Catholic publication *The Record* paying tribute to a Labor Government for having made the break-through. Perhaps we should refresh our minds on some of the terms that were used—

In the past 60 years since 1895, his was the first Government—

That is, the Hawke Labor Government. Continuing—

—to place justice before prejudice in such a matter, his was the first Government to have the courage to give a subsidy to our schools. We trust his noble example will not be lost on his successors.

Apparently those words of Mr. Mahoney are having some effect and this Government is following the path initiated by the Hawke Labor Government; but, as in all things, the Labor movement, as its name implies, moves forward and we are anxious to give effect to the proposition of a complete survey of the entire situation.

In this way, in place of piecemeal treatment, a positive, reasoned, and calculated plan would be formulated instead of the whole situation being dependent on the whim or fancy of the Government of the moment. As already indicated, the recommendations following a survey would be implemented over many years, depending on the amount of funds available for educational and general State purposes.

I have expressed my opinion on the Bill, which I obviously do not oppose; but I regret the Government did not apply the same measuring stick to its allocation for primary schools as it has done in respect of independent secondary schools.

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [5.11 p.m.]: I would like briefly to support this measure and commend the Government for introducing it. As has been indicated by at least one previous speaker, this legislation is breaking new ground inasmuch as the assistance now being offered to schools catering for primary standards was not given before, and therefore it is something in addition to previous assistance.

The criticism has been levelled that it is too little too late. I agree that this is a cautious move, and I am in agreement with it because the giving of assistance to independent schools does not have the full support of the general population in Western Australia or, for that matter, in Australia. It has been quite a contentious question. Therefore I believe the Government is wise in exercising caution in its approach. Also I believe the Government was wise to be cautious because of the financial arrangement between the State and the Commonwealth, and the impact that this type of assistance has on those arrangements; and also because of the impact it will have upon the State's economy.

The stage is now set for possible increases in this type of assistance. We have now covered two aspects of the matter, and the member for Canning mentioned a number of items for which assistance has been given for quite a long time. This type of assistance is being extended all the time and now a subsidy is being paid in respect of all school children—both primary and secondary—right up to the Leaving standard. Assistance given in future will be added to that which is now being granted.

Despite what members opposite might say, the Government is to be commended for its move. In my opinion no attempt at vote catching has been made. The Government is well aware of the situation as it applies to independent schools. Deputations have been taken to the Minister and to the Treasurer, and a host of representations have been made to groups of private members of Parliament. Certainly those members who support the Government are conversant with the situation in regard to private schools, and are very familiar with the problems and needs of those schools.

I, personally, probably have an advantage in regard to this matter because I am a member of a school council, and therefore so far as I am concerned, there is no necessity for an inquiry to be held, because I am already fully aware of the situation. All the talk about an inquiry is airy-fairy because we are aware of—those on this side are, anyway—and are very familiar with the needs of independent schools.

Mr. Graham: Don't you think that members on this side would be at least as familiar?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I did think so, but having listened to the Deputy Leader

of the Opposition I have come to the conclusion that I was wrong; that he is not entirely familiar with the situation and that is why he requests an inquiry to bring him up to date.

Mr. Graham: Now is your chance to enlighten me.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: It was not my intention when I rose to speak, to enlighten the Deputy Leader of the Opposition as to the assistance which is required.

Mr. Graham: You are certainly not doing it in respect of him or anyone else.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: We have debated this aspect of the subject for quite a few hours now and my object in rising was merely to support this particular step by the Government.

Mr. Jamieson: Do you think this is as far as the Government should go at present?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: At this time I am supporting the move because it covers the whole field of assistance to schools and lays the foundation for any future assistance. I believe the Government has demonstrated that it has done some sound thinking on the matter.

Mr. Court: That is the important point—the principle has been established.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: Despite the claims made by those opposite, we have broken new ground. As I indicated earlier, there has been quite a deal of agitation for assistance for private schools. Not all private schools have been vocal, but many have expressed to me their appreciation of this assistance. Some may have expected more; I do not know. Some may have believed that because of the approaching election, a sweeping statement would be made at this time as to what additional assistance could be expected in the future.

However, as I have said, I believe the Government has been wise in exercising caution and from now on we can test the impact of the move on the general public and can give additional assistance in the future. I support the measure.

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [5.18 p.m.]: I want to thank members on both sides for their contributions to this debate. It is quite obvious that some have made considerable research into the subject. I think it was the member for Beeloo who mentioned the debates which took place more than half a century ago and which were conducted with a degree of bitterness, and, sometimes, in the darkness because the lights failed. I think we can all say quite happily that in these days we not only have visual light, but also a certain amount of mental enlightenment and are much more tolerant on this question of private school education than was the case previously.

Mr. Jamieson: You are certainly more tolerant on this issue than was your predecessor.

Mr. LEWIS: I am not in a position to answer for my predecessor. However, as someone mentioned this afternoon—and with this remark I entirely agree—we live and we learn. As we go along we become more appreciative of the needs of society in general; and, indeed, the very fact that about a quarter of the children of this State are being educated in independent schools and that this quarter will also be tomorrow's citizens, was one reason which influenced the Government in its decision to do something about ensuring that the quality of education in independent schools would not suffer because of economic pressures which were responsible for overcrowding. Whether this overcrowding is because of the lack of finance for extra buildings or because of the lack of finance to cater for extra teachers, I do not know; but it is probably a combination of both.

It is in these two areas that the State system feels the pressure—both in the capital development of classrooms, which have to be built out of loan funds, and the ordinary recurrent expenditure which is paid out of Consolidated Revenue. I appreciate that private schools do not have to erect buildings out of loan funds; the funds have to be obtained from the same source as the fees for teachers, and so on. I appreciate that many more lay teachers have to be employed now than was the case previously, for various reasons, and the parents who send their youngsters to the independent schools probably have to pay a very substantial part of the salary of those teachers.

Because of the great difficulties arising—despite the increases in fees which are inevitable from time to time, both in the primary and secondary sectors—we felt that the standard might fall and so the Government said that it would go even further than it has done in the past with piecemeal assistance to the schools.

The member for Victoria Park, who resumed the debate on this Bill, gave his approval to the measure. Here, I will say, the Bill has not yet been opposed. There has been some criticism of certain aspects of it, but the principle underlying the assistance which the Bill seeks to give has been accepted by both sides of the House. I am very pleased that this is so. The member for Victoria Park approved of the principle contained in the Bill, but, of course, said that the assistance was insufficient. I do not think any member has expressed the opinion that it is enough, and that this is the ultimate. Not one member of this Chamber would say that this is the ultimate—that \$10 is the amount required.

As I have said on a number of occasions, this is a contribution and a recognition by the Government of special needs. As moneys become available for education—further moneys compatible with the needs of education—the Government will give

consideration to further extending the aid. Just what this extent will be, no-one can say at the moment. We have to take these things as they come.

It is all very well for members to get up and say what should be done and what should not be done. Members opposite are not in Government. It is not so easy, when one has the responsibility, to do the fair thing in all avenues of Government with the money which is available. This, of course, is not confined to education, but is related to all the services performed by a responsible Government.

A charge was made—and I think without thought; and if one were a member of the Opposition perhaps one would have done the same thing—that we only wake up to these needs when an election is pending. I have already acknowledged that it was the member for Mt. Hawthorn, who was the Minister for Education at the time, and who commenced the subsidy scheme. I have already acknowledged this and I say again that it was the member for Mt. Hawthorn who introduced the subsidy scheme. However, the subsidies have been extended since then. I would not suggest for one moment that they would not have been extended had the Opposition been in Government during the interim. However, they have been extended both in range—that is the number of items—and amount. This extension has not been made at election time; it has gone along steadily.

Mr. Bovell: It is not election time yet.

Mr. Graham: It is just around the corner. It is only 3½ months before you will be out.

Mr. Brand: Is that true? Goodness gracious; it is not worrying me as much as it is worrying you.

Mr. Graham: It is something to look forward to.

Mr. LEWIS: The charge has been made that the granting of assistance has been done in a piecemeal fashion, and that it has been done without thought. It has been suggested that the system should be given a scientific examination. I would point out that this examination is taking place all the time. Superintendents from the Education Department, by virtue of the provisions of the Education Act, move around the schools and give considerable assistance. They advise if a classroom is too full, and also advise teachers how to group classes for more effective education. They see the need, perhaps, for more publications, and for more free stock to be given to a particular school.

The investigations are not confined to the superintendents; we are receiving communications from the schools all the time. Because of the constant awareness of the needs of the schools we try to do something to lift the pressure. This is going on all the time. I believe there are 188—or thereabouts—primary independent schools, of many denominations. Certainly, the

majority of them are Catholic primary schools. There are some with no adherence to any particular religion or faith. However, provided they are efficient schools, and operate in accordance with the Education Act, they are permitted to teach children. They are under constant surveillance. It is true that some better known church schools which have been in existence for many years do not need the same degree of surveillance as some of the new schools which crop up.

Mention was made—I am not sure by whom—that we would have to be careful lest certain schools sprang up and taught something foreign, perhaps, to the welfare of the State. This, again, is very difficult. We have a degree of tolerance now which was not possessed by our fathers or our grandfathers. A school which is a little out of the ordinary is tolerated provided it does not preach some sort of violence, or attempt to overthrow the Government, or something of that nature. I think we have to go along with those schools and be satisfied they are not detrimental to the mental outlook of the children. Provided the schools are efficient, and the instruction is efficient, we must tolerate them to a degree even though we might prefer to have something different which would suit our own individual ideas.

The member for Victoria Park summarised his demands by placing them in two categories. He claimed that first of all there should be a proper survey, and, secondly, there should be an approach made to the Commonwealth. I will deal with the demand relating to a survey. As far as I know—and I have to be frank and honest—I am not aware of any approach ever having been made to the Commonwealth Government for assistance—for specific assistance—to independent schools. Each State, of course, works under an Education Act. Also, each State system has been under economic pressure—if one likes to put it that way—and has always suffered from a lack of funds. I suppose this could be said about many services conducted by the State.

We never receive quite sufficient for what we want to do, because we are forever lifting our sights and trying to provide something better than last year, and so on. We are constantly breaking new ground; but, of course, improvement always is a normal aim. We do not stand still. We have to go ahead. Seldom, if ever, do we receive the money to give effect to all that we would like to do. I freely acknowledge that the same situation applies to all sorts of services, such as health, and many others.

Up to date our approaches to the Commonwealth Government have been primarily for a greater share of Commonwealth funds for the purpose of education. However, the Commonwealth has resisted our entreaties over many years now. Nevertheless, it has recognised, firstly, the need for something to be done in the field of

tertiary education. Our own State University has benefited very considerably by what might be described as the benevolent interest shown by the Commonwealth Government. Secondly, more recently the Commonwealth Government has assisted secondary schools with the provision of science blocks and the scientific equipment to go in them. It has not assisted secondary schools in any other area. The Commonwealth Government has assisted by making scholarships available, both in a technical and post-primary field. Technical schools, too, have been assisted very considerably by the Commonwealth Government. Up to date, with the exception of the science classes, the Commonwealth has not shown any interest whatsoever in secondary schools or in primary schools.

Mr. Jamieson: Does not the Minister think this deserves a public inquiry?

Mr. LEWIS: I do not know that a public inquiry is necessary. Little by little we are making inroads on the Commonwealth's policy in this regard. Progress has been made in persuading the Commonwealth to provide assistance for education to the States. This situation did not exist a few years ago.

More recently still the Commonwealth Government decided to finance the cost of a teachers' college. This is a great step forward, because it is something which the Commonwealth rejected a few years ago, despite the recommendation of one of our own committees. However, it has been accepted by the present Commonwealth Government and the State will receive it. There is a condition attached, but it is one which it is easy for the State to accept. The condition is that 10 per cent. of the places shall be available for those who are training to teach in independent schools. That condition has been accepted. As a matter of fact, teachers of independent schools have received free tuition at our colleges. I had the great pleasure of handing a certificate about a year or so ago to the dux of the teachers' college who was a teaching sister at one of the convents.

Mr. W. Hegney: The Education Department used to charge \$30 per year.

Mr. LEWIS: There is no fee charged now.

Mr. W. Hegney: There has not been since 1954.

Mr. LEWIS: There is no allowance made, but there is no fee charged either.

Mr. Graham: Lots of things happened before 1959.

Mr. Bovell: That is a profound comment!

Mr. LEWIS: I have already dealt with the point raised regarding the amounts not tallying. This is a complex matter, because a lot of money is involved. It could be worked out on a mathematical

basis by multiplying by 36 the number of secondary students for whom \$36 per student will be allowed and multiplying by 30 the number of secondary students for whom \$30 will be allowed and then adding the two figures together. It would then be necessary to deduct the amount applying to the number of students who are exempted from receiving the allowance because of a scholarship they have already received. I think the limit is \$80. Because they are receiving a grant, naturally they do not figure in the amount which is deducted from the school fees the parents pay. The existing legislation provides for a tuition fee for post-primary students of \$30 per year in the first three years and \$36 per year in the following two years.

The restrictive provision also exists in the present Act. This provides that the amounts I have mentioned are not available if the student is already in receipt of a scholarship which is worth over \$80. The regulations which were promulgated to provide the machinery to pay this money to the parents stipulate that the parents must apply to the school. The amount is collated from the number of applications made to the school, which advises the Government and a cheque is paid to the school. The individual amount is deducted from the account which is sent to the parents.

These conditions already prevail in the existing legislation. I am not referring to the provisions of the amending legislation. The Bill provides that \$10 will be paid to the school, not to the parents. Regulations will have to be promulgated as to how this will be done and on what basis. However, it will be paid every half year. That is the difference between the two. No restrictive clause applies to the sum of \$10 in the amending legislation, which will apply to both post-primary and primary schools.

In regard to primary pupils, it is a payment to the school. The school will receive it for every primary child, whether or not that child is in receipt of a bursary. There is not the need for a restrictive clause, because it is purely assistance to the school.

In regard to the post-primary schools, assistance to parents by way of having the amount deducted from accounts will still obtain. Of course, we have no control over the amount of the fee that will be charged. It could be jacked up to such an extent that the parents would not gain, but that is not our business. No doubt this has already been done. I do not suppose it has been done deliberately but because schools have felt the need of money, and the only way to receive it was to put up the fees. The increase could be of a lesser or greater amount than the subsidy and, in effect, the subsidy already given, although ostensibly for the parents, is to the benefit of the schools.

Mr. Graham: Do I understand the Minister to say that the subsidy will be paid to all students, including those who receive scholarships?

Mr. LEWIS: No, that will not apply at the post-primary level. The member for Gascoyne wanted certain particulars because he could not reconcile the Estimates. I am sure the member for Gascoyne deserves full marks for his arithmetic but, in this connection, some word of explanation is necessary. I point out that the assistance to the independent schools is given under a number of headings. I am not going to collate the items, as this was done by the member for Canning. However, I wish to mention a few.

Item 9 in the Education Estimates carries the heading, "Teacher Education." Ten per cent. is included in the amount charged to the Education Department and, of course, part of this is for teachers in independent schools. The charge for youth and physical education is debited to the Education Department, but some of it is spent in independent schools. In connection with child guidance, the officers work in independent schools as well as State schools. However, the officers are employed by the State department and their cost is debited to, and paid for by, that department.

Again, there is the question of publications. These are issued to independent schools in the same way as they are issued to the State schools, but the cost is debited to the State system.

There is also the question of the transport of children. It is impossible to say how many children of independent schools are transported in school buses, but the number is very considerable. When I came into office, the policy was that the children who were attending private schools would only be transported in the school buses if there was room. However, nowadays no regard whatsoever is had for the school which the child attends. No-one asks the youngsters which school they attend and tells them to get off if they are going to private schools. We meet the demand with additional buses. The children are transported regardless of the school they attend. The cost of this item is increasing every year. The expected cost this year is \$2,712,000, which is \$129,000 more than last year.

This is a considerable sum, but here again the service is rendered without charge to the independent schools. For scholarships and allowances, as mentioned before, for the half year ending the 30th June, 1963, \$150,000 is expected to be paid to the primary schools as a subsidy on the basis of \$10 per head. Under the item, Assistance to Private Schools, \$150,000 will be granted. I am not sure what this item actually represents, but I believe it covers secondary school

scholarships. I would have to make an inquiry to give the exact information.

Also on the Education Estimates there is an amount of \$804,000 allocated to cover school stock for primary, secondary, and private schools. This covers stationery and requisites, including supplies from the Government Printer and free issues to students. The amount of \$27,000 for research and in-service training is shared by both State and independent schools. So there are many items of expenditure which are shared by the independent schools.

As somebody said, the expenditure amounts to over \$1,000,000, and it is expected that a further \$300,000 is to be added. This amount will be spread over a number of items under the Revenue Estimates. It is not possible to define exactly, under each item, the cost of the services that are rendered to independent schools. I think it was the member for Canning who pointed out that this was the first time a *per capita* subsidy has been paid to independent schools. A subsidy is already paid to secondary schools. Legally it is paid to the parents of the students, but in essence it is paid to the schools.

The remarks of Mr. Mahoney, the president of parents and friends, have been quoted. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wished to do a while ago. I would like to put the record straight and bring it right up to date by quoting from Mr. Mahoney's letter published in *The Record* dated the 12th October, in which he said—

In the lifetime of the present Parliament we have seen the introduction of fee subsidies for secondary students, and *per capita* payments for primary students. More has been done to remove an historic problem in the past three years than in the previous eighty and it is fitting that the present Government should know our appreciation of this fact.

Those remarks by Mr. Mahoney speak for themselves.

Mr. Graham: He will get on; he is generous to everybody.

Mr. LEWIS: I think it was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who twitted the Government for not having an education policy. That may or may not be true, but it is definitely true that the Government has a performance; and it is performance that counts more than a policy set out on a piece of paper. Performance speaks for itself. Over \$1,000,000 is being spent at the present time on education with a promise of more to follow.

I think I have just about covered all the comments that have been made by the previous speakers. I am pleased indeed that whilst there has been some criticism of the implementation of this legislation,

we have made progress. Some members have said that the amount of assistance granted should be more. The question has also been asked why we pay \$30 per head to the post-primary schools, and \$36 to the post-junior schools, and yet pay only \$10 per head to the primary schools.

There is an explanation for this. Every member knows that to a parent the cost of school books and all attendant requisites is much greater when a child reaches the post-primary stage. Therefore, because of the extra pressure on parents who have children attending post-primary schools, the Government considered it should do something to help them with the tuition fees. Again, in post-primary schools, the fees are much higher than they are in primary schools, and the load on the parents is much greater. It was with this thought in mind that the Government then said, "For the moment, this is the greatest need."

More recently, the independent primary schools have felt the pressure of rising costs and insufficient teachers, and have said, "We want more lay teachers and, because the size of the classes is too big, we will have to reduce them." I have visited some convents and I will say they are not of the same standard as the secondary schools. The standard of classrooms, and the classroom situation, generally, in the secondary schools is very good indeed.

On the other hand, some of the primary schools, mainly because of lack of funds, have classes which are too large and the situation is such that I know it would not be tolerated by the Teachers' Union. However, the independent schools recognise this. They are doing their best to overcome the problem, and so the Government felt that it should do its best to assist them as much as possible. As the Premier and I have said, we will review the situation from time to time and when the time arrives that we feel able to render more assistance to the independent schools the matter will be given earnest consideration.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 9B repealed and re-enacted—

Mr. DAVIES: I thank the Minister for the manner in which he replied to the points raised during the debate on the second reading this afternoon, and the explanations he gave. In respect of this clause I understood the Minister to say it was not necessary to include the pro-

vision relating to students in receipt of bursaries, because of the allowance that was paid to them. I also understood him to say the assistance was granted to the students through the school.

Mr. Lewis: It is paid to the school and deducted from the account rendered to the student.

Mr. DAVIES: That is right. The amount is deducted from the account that is forwarded to the student. As I understand the position, the amount of money granted will be paid direct to the school in accordance with a system that will have to be determined. I was wondering whether the Minister, first of all, would tell us if he has any ideas on how the money will be paid? Will it be done merely on a count of heads twice a year, or has he any particular system in mind?

I still cannot appreciate why it is not necessary to mention particularly the students who have been awarded bursaries. Apart from the fact that the position in respect of bursaries has been omitted, the only difference in subsection (1) of proposed new section 9B is the inclusion of the words, "as will enable the Minister to pay every efficient school."

The provision in the Act at the moment states, "to enable the Minister to pay the efficient schools." There is very little difference in the wording I have just read out.

Mr. Lewis: There is no difference.

Mr. DAVIES: If that is so, why are we leaving out the words, "who are not in receipt of any scholarship, bursary or like award to the value of £40 per annum"? The fact that the Act does not exclude such people who are in receipt of a bursary could mean that they could receive the grant as well as the bursary, and it is obviously not the Government's intention that they should receive both. The old Act has worked quite efficiently and I see no reason why it should be replaced with the provision in the Bill.

Mr. LEWIS: There is no significant difference between the words, "paid to efficient schools" and "every efficient school." If they are efficient schools they are surely the same.

In regard to the post-primary student there is a saving provision in the Act that if he is in receipt of a scholarship of a certain amount he cannot receive the present subsidy. That has been waived in the Bill now before the Committee. The Crown Law Department has advised me that it would be in order to provide for this by regulations which can be varied; because at some future time the Government might think it feasible to lift the restriction on those in receipt of scholarships, and make the level higher than \$80. It would be easier to do this by regulation rather than to wait on legislation.

Proposed new subsection (2) (c) in clause 3 of the Bill contemplates the amount will not be deductible from the fee for a primary-school child, irrespective of whether he is in receipt of a scholarship or bursary, and no saving clause is therefore necessary. When the Bill is passed, regulations will be promulgated, and no doubt these payments will be determined by counting the numbers on the rolls every six months, or whatever the case may be. It will be determined on a count of heads. I cannot say whether it will be averaged out or how it will be done.

Mr. JAMIESON: I am still not clear on the question of payments to parochial schools.

Mr. Lewis: You mean primary schools?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes. Is the claim to be made by the principal of the primary school? For instance the amount will not be paid to the Seventh Day Adventists for all their schools—though I daresay the Seventh Day Adventists would not apply. At present a parent must sign a request for the amount to be paid in respect of secondary-school children. It will be different for primary schools, and this system is more desirable because it will save paper work. Will the principals of the individual schools be responsible for making application and receiving the amount, or will organisations make total application and receive the amounts at their headquarters?

Mr. DAVIES: I agree with the member for Beeloo. The Act says that the moneys can be paid to primary and secondary school students in such manner as the Minister thinks fit, when he makes the necessary regulations. Let us not be coy about this; let us pay direct to the school rather than deduct it from the amount that is paid by each parent. It would mean less paper work and it would be uniform.

Mr. LEWIS: In the case of the post-primary subsidy, a parent gets the tuition fee account and applies for a refund, or so much of it as is covered by the subsidy. The school will collect these applications and will notify the department that there are, say, 250 post primary and 243 post-junior students. The department will work out the amount and send the cheque to the school. I would not like to be dogmatic about this, but I believe the cheque goes to the school.

We do not send cheques to the parents individually; the money goes to the schools. The superintendents of the department visit the schools, and occasionally they check on the number of applicants to ensure that it tallies with the number that has been claimed. I do not know whether a statutory declaration is required from the headmaster or headmistress.

In the case of primary children the money will be sent direct to the school.

Although I cannot quote the regulations, because they have not yet been promulgated, the headmaster or headmistress of an independent primary school will be required to sign a form certifying that a certain number of children appear on the roll.

Mr. Jamieson: The cheques will go out to the individual parochial schools.

Mr. LEWIS: I presume that will be so, but I am subject to correction. I can make further inquiries and inform the honourable member. He wishes to know whether the department sends a cheque to, say, the Roman Catholic organisation in respect of the 147 primary schools stretching from Wyndham to Esperance, or whether it sends the cheques to the individual schools. I assume the money will go to the individual schools.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister said that regulations have not yet been promulgated. Before they are promulgated I would like him to ensure that the money is sent out to the individual schools. It is not desirable for the money to go to an organisation or to a private source, because a portion of it could be deducted.

Mr. Lewis: I will examine that aspect when the regulations are made.

Mr. TONKIN: There is one aspect with which I am not quite satisfied. As the law stands, if the amount of a scholarship or a bursary is beyond a certain figure then this allowance will not be paid to the holders. The Minister told us that in leaving out the particular words from the re-enacted section 9B it is not the intention of the department to pay those who have received scholarships or bursaries in excess of \$80 per annum. He said the position would be covered by the regulations. That seems to be a deceitful way to deal with this matter.

As the provision in section 9B (1) stands the holders of scholarships or bursaries which exceed \$80 per annum are excluded. The reasonable assumption is that the Government no longer intends to impose this limitation, but it seems from the remarks of the Minister that it will be re-imposed by regulation. The Minister said this limitation might be varied from time to time, and that was the reason for covering it by regulation.

I consider the limitation to be unfair, whether it is covered by Statute or by regulation. It virtually amounts to a reduction of the bursary or scholarship. If provision is made for the payment of the subsidy to every child who has not won a bursary or a scholarship, then the subsidy should also be extended to those who have received bursaries or scholarships.

I am opposed to the idea of reducing the bursaries or scholarships, and if the limitation is to be imposed by regulation I will take the first opportunity to move for

its disallowance because it is my view that the subsidy should apply to all the children in the schools.

I think we should acknowledge that scholarships and bursaries are given for a special purpose in order to reward merit. Apart from that, every scholar ought to be on the same level and I am disappointed to learn that leaving out of the Statute a reference to these awards is not for the purpose of including the holders of these awards, but for the purpose of re-introducing the exclusion in another and less obtrusive form. So I want to make it quite clear that I do not approve of this. I think it is endeavouring to gain credit for something for which no credit is due, and it is much fairer to leave it in the Act if it is intended it should apply and, from time to time, amend the Act if the Government has a mind to do so. To take it out of the Statute and make it operate by way of regulation is, in my view, an extension of the power of the Executive and it is something of which Parliament should not approve.

I repeat: If the Government does this I shall take the first opportunity to move for the disallowance of the regulation.

Mr. LEWIS: I feel the Leader of the Opposition has a misconception of the purpose of a scholarship. He said it is to reward merit. I claim it is not to reward merit at all.

Mr. Tonkin: How do you get it?

Mr. LEWIS: It is an assistance towards something that is yet to come; and the qualification for this assistance yet to come is on past performance. If a youngster earns a scholarship but, for some reason, is unable to take advantage of it, then he does not get the scholarship. So obviously it is a payment for something yet to come. This principle of saying that because one receives so much by way of a bursary one cannot qualify for something else is nothing new. It applies in other areas of education.

The purpose of the scholarship is to assist the child to pay its way for further education. If a child's further education is provided for by a scholarship, obviously the subsidy should not be added to it; the subsidy should be spent on other youngsters who are not brilliant enough to earn a scholarship. This restriction will enable the money to be spread over a greater number of children.

Mr. TONKIN: It has already been made obvious that in some instances, because of the provision of the subsidy, schools have increased their fees. If that procedure continues, and schools increase their fees, it will mean that a scholarship or bursary holder, not getting this subsidy from the Government, will have to use part of his bursary or scholarship to meet the increase in fees. That will virtually mean a reduction in his bursary or scholarship. I am against this principle which

I think is wrong, and whenever I get the opportunity I will oppose it.

Mr. LEWIS: The youngster in receipt of a bursary is financially better off than one who is merely in receipt of this subsidy.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education), and transmitted to the Council.

FAUNA PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Assembly.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Discharged Servicemen's Badges Bill.
Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

2. Railway (Midland-Walkaway Railway) Discontinuance Bill.

3. Government Railways Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [7.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Public Service Act to make provision for changes in policy relating to the permanent employment of married women in the State Public Service.

This Bill gives the Public Service Commissioner authority to retain the services of female officers after marriage and to recruit married women to the permanent staff. It also enables the commissioner to determine the appointment of a married woman where such action is deemed desirable. The Government has had this question under review for some time and has studied the situation elsewhere in Australia. Female officers are now retained on the permanent staff after marriage, in varying circumstances, in the Public Services of the Commonwealth, New South Wales, and South Australia. So far as I am aware, no action has yet been taken in the other States.

Under the existing provisions of the Act and regulations, a female officer is called upon to resign on marriage. There are also severe restrictions on the recruitment of married women. These provisions were designed to prohibit the employment of married women except in very exceptional circumstances. They were included in the original Public Service Act and regulations of 1904, and since that time all female officers have been required to resign on marriage.

This requirement has meant that the service has lost many experienced and efficient female officers, who have been eagerly sought by other employers not subject to this sort of restriction. In recent years it has been necessary to engage married women for temporary employment because of an acute shortage of suitably trained staff. In some cases the commissioner has been compelled to terminate the services of a competent woman on marriage and has re-employed her on less responsible duties in a temporary capacity.

After considering the increasing tendency for Australian married women to work, and the important contribution they are making to our expanding economy, the Government is convinced that this Bill is very desirable—not only in the interests of Public Service efficiency, but also in the interests of female public servants.

At the same time, the Government recognises it has an obligation to preserve reasonable employment prospects for single women and school leavers. Because of this obligation, the Bill gives the Public Service Commissioner discretionary authority concerning the retention of female officers after marriage. This will provide some flexibility to meet any fluctuations which may occur in the employment market.

It is envisaged that only those married women who are diligent and efficient will be retained, and in cases where the duties performed by married officers are more suitable for juniors than adults, continued employment would not be warranted. The appointment of suitably qualified married women to the permanent staff from outside the service will be subject to the normal recruitment processes. Most of these appointments will be to professional and technical positions where suitably single applicants are in short supply.

The decision to make provision for the permanent employment of married women raises the question of absence from duty in relation to childbirth. Experience both here and elsewhere leads us to believe that most married women will wish to continue in the service only until the advent of their first child. However, where a married woman desires to take leave of absence in relation to childbirth it is proposed to provide by regulation for

a minimum and maximum period. She will be permitted to use any recreation leave or long service leave entitlement to cover her absence, or a portion of it. Otherwise, the absence will be without pay. Sick leave with pay will not be granted for this purpose.

These proposals will enable those women who wish to continue in the service after their confinement to retain their employment rights. Those officers who resign from the service on marriage, or because of approaching motherhood may, if they desire, subsequently apply for permanent appointment and will be subject to the normal recruitment processes.

An existing provision of the Public Service Act and regulations provides that a female officer who resigns because of marriage may be paid a lump sum payment for the money equivalent of her *pro rata* long service leave, provided she has completed not less than three years of continuous service after her 18th birthday. This is commonly known as the "marriage allowance."

It is proposed to retain the marriage allowance under existing conditions for female officers who resign on marriage. However, the decision to allow female officers to continue in the service after marriage necessitates several additional provisions so that they do not lose this benefit.

In the regulations it is intended to provide that where a female officer who continues in the service after marriage has completed three years' continuous service prior to her marriage, her *pro rata* long service leave up to the date of her marriage will be calculated and the marriage allowance will be paid as at that date.

Where a female officer who continues in the service after marriage has not completed three years' continuous service prior to her marriage, she will become eligible for a marriage allowance on completing three years' continuous service and will be paid for three years' *pro rata* long service as at that date.

So that these officers will not receive a double benefit for the periods of service covered by the marriage allowance, the Bill provides that after the payment of the marriage allowance such periods shall be disregarded when calculating future long service leave entitlements. Having drawn their marriage allowance they will then be on the same basis as any other officer in regard to *pro rata* long service leave.

This legislation will involve an amendment of the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act regarding female contributors to the superannuation fund, a matter which is at present receiving attention.

The Bill relates only to the Public Service. If it is passed, Government instrumentalities will be informed and will

be asked to comply with the principles involved. Some details remain to be worked out in regard to the retention of married women teachers in the Education Department, but I am advised that no legislation is required for this purpose.

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

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [7.41 p.m.]: As the Treasurer has said, and in accordance with an undertaking which he gave when introducing the amendment to the Stamp Act, he has carried out a review. I remember raising this question earlier in the session when the Treasurer, I thought, sought to indicate that his undertaking did not necessarily involve a revision. However, apparently it did because a revision has taken place, and I think it was very necessary. It became apparent there were many inequities and anomalies in the legislation which ought to have been remedied, and I am pleased opportunity is being taken to do that. For that reason, I support the Bill.

However, I think it is pertinent to point out that in making these amendments, and by removing the inequities, the Treasurer has stretched his net a bit further and drawn in some additional taxpayers. He seems determined to load an additional impost upon the State Electricity Commission because, during his Budget speech, he foreshadowed that he was thinking about putting increased charges into operation through the State Electricity Commission, despite its very large profits, in order to raise money which could be utilised by the commission in place of loan moneys, which it found difficult to obtain.

I do not know whether the Government has abandoned that idea or not, but if it intends to carry on with the idea then, on top of this impost, inevitably there will be substantial increases in electricity charges. That is quite the opposite to what we ought to be aiming for at the present time. I do not know what the present situation is, but I know that concern is felt in Victoria where the Government has imposed a similar tax. When I asked the Premier a question about this recently, he indicated that the only interest the Commonwealth had shown in the Western Australian tax, up to that date, was to make a telephone inquiry some three or four weeks previously. Whether the Commonwealth has stepped up its inquiries since, I do not know.

When I was out of the State last weekend I gathered that this was quite a live question in Victoria, and the feeling there is that the Commonwealth will resist this taxation on the ground that it is, in many respects, a proportional income tax. So

it could be, in the passage of time, the Government will be obliged to take another look at this. The Government seems to be particularly keen about this tax because it has been increased three times in the last five successive financial years, and twice in the last three years.

In order to get a full appreciation of the impact of this tax, it is very interesting to look at the way the figures have mounted. In the first instance, this is a sectional tax, but the Government is probably imposing it in the belief that those who are called upon to pay it in the first instance will pass it on so that ultimately it will be spread over the whole community and very few people will escape it.

If one looks at the figures one cannot but be astonished at the very heavy taxation load which this particular tax imposes, regardless of the taxes in other fields. During the financial year, 1962-63, this tax brought into revenue \$5,345,012. It is estimated that in the present financial year the tax will bring in \$15,750,000. In other words, this tax—if the estimate is realised—will have trebled in six years. It will have increased from \$5,000,000 odd to nearly \$16,000,000. My forecast is that the Premier has underestimated his receipts and that for the current financial year the receipts will be considerably above \$15,750,000. I base my estimate on the fact that this tax is currently running at the rate of \$1,250,000 to \$1,500,000 a month. I expect it to increase during the financial year.

During the financial year 1962-63, the tax raised was \$5,345,012; and during the financial year 1963-64, it was \$7,123,298. In 1964-65 it went to \$8,368,432; in 1965-66 it went to \$9,687,559; in 1966-67 it went to \$13,004,320; and as I have said, this financial year it is expected to go to \$15,750,000.

That is a tremendous impost to levy, in the first instance, upon the business community. We have evidence that in many respects this tax is passed on. Oil companies have passed it on, for example, so I suppose in the ultimate it will be the ordinary man and woman who will pay this tax; this tremendous levy which the Government keeps heaping on.

I think that the term stamp tax is a euphemism because it is really a combination of two taxes. It is a proportional income tax, and it is really a turnover tax on transactions. I think those are the bases upon which the Commonwealth, if it does challenge, will be likely to challenge. More remains to be seen of what will happen there. Whether it is being currently and actively inquired into in this State, we do not know.

Apparently it is still a very live matter in Victoria. Whatever is the final decision in Victoria must doubtless apply to Western Australia, because there is scarcely any difference in the taxes being

imposed. It is well known that very considerable pressure was put upon the Government to review and revise this tax. It was pretty obvious from the outset that those who were presenting their case had a very strong case, because it was perfectly clear that there was great inequity. Therefore, it is pleasing to see that the Government has decided to eliminate the 3c tax and make it a flat tax of 1c. That will give relief in some quarters and remove the undoubted inequity which existed.

Perhaps the Treasurer made it clear to other members, but I myself was not able to determine exactly how this will work. He said it will mean a net reduction of some \$430,000. I know the meaning of the word "net" as it is ordinarily applied, but words get a somewhat different meaning in Parliament, I have found. I wonder whether the additional revenue which will be received from the State Electricity Commission and from one or two other sources has been taken into consideration, or whether the net figure refers only to adjustments in the taxation of people currently paying it. I would like to know just what the real situation is, and I trust that when the Premier replies he will make it clear. When he says that the effect upon the Government's income will be a reduction of \$430,000, does that mean after all estimated increases and all estimated reductions have been taken into consideration? I will be surprised if that is the situation. I made a rough calculation and it seemed to me that the Treasurer would recover more on the swings than he would lose on the roundabouts. If that is so, then the true picture is not being placed before us. Accordingly, I would like to have that clarified if possible so that we can know precisely what is likely to happen as a result of the revision.

There is no necessity for me to go into the details of the revision, because it is clearly set out in the legislation. In each case I support the relief in taxation which is granted. I do not think the taxation should have been imposed in the first place. It confirms my view that when the increases were imposed, they were imposed hurriedly without a full consideration of the effect of what was being done. It looks to me to be a method adopted by the Premier to raise a lot of money in a short time in order to obviate the necessity for his having to impose additional taxation in the year prior to an election. I do not blame him for that. It is not the first time a Government has resorted to that and, if it is in a position to impose its taxation without reminding the people too much about it, I suppose one cannot blame it.

However, what I do criticise is slapping a tax on when it is known it will bring in a large sum of money,

and slapping it on without having any regard whatever to the fact that the taxation may be unfairly imposed and may, in the year in which it is being imposed, bring in a lot more money than is really required to balance the Budget. I criticise that action if the Government believes that, in so doing, the level of taxation will be sufficiently high the following year to obviate the necessity of imposing any taxation at all. That cannot be justified in my opinion.

The basic principle of taxation ought to be that the Government should not raise \$1 more than is necessary to enable it properly to finance its undertakings. A Government is not justified under any consideration in imposing a high level of taxation in order to secure a situation which will subsequently enable it to avoid the necessity of imposing any tax at all for a time. I charge this Government with doing that in connection with the stamp tax.

Let us look once again at the figures. After successive increases, the amount received in revenue for the financial year 1966-67 was \$13,000,000, which was \$3,300,000-odd more than the amount received from this source the year before, and it was more than half the total tax received from the same source in the year 1962-63.

I can recall the time when members of the Government were sitting on this side of the House and they said the State had reached the limit in taxation. Since the members of the present Government have been in office, the Premier told the Loan Council that the limit of taxation had been reached. However, since then he has imposed taxation at the rate of millions of dollars. He seems to have an insatiable appetite for this type of taxation, which is imposed on a section of the community. One of the sections upon which the burden has fallen most heavily is the motorcar owner. He seems to be singled out at every opportunity for additional imposts when the Treasurer thinks he needs more money. Surely this tax cannot go on being continually raised in this fashion. If it is continued, it will not be long before the situation is reached where more money will be obtained from this source than from all the other sources put together. Of course, that is against the very principle of sound taxation.

It may be thought that there are no basic principles in taxation and it is a case of "where you see a head, hit it," but that is not so. There are scientific principles of levying taxation and the Government ought to study them. It is a well-known fact that it is possible to raise \$10,000,000 from one source of the economy and deal it a death blow in the process. It is also well known that it is possible to raise twice that amount of money in another way, with a scarcely perceptible effect. This matter requires to be studied.

The Government should not take the method closest to hand and the first suggested. It is incumbent upon the Treasurer to make a study of the effect and implications of the proposals he is going to introduce, because there is nothing more calculated to place a burden upon a section of the community and create a situation where business will start to recede and possibly stagnate than to impose a level of taxation upon a sector which is not able to bear it.

It seems to me that this matter was the subject of very little science or study when the Treasurer last year introduced the amending legislation to increase the stamp duties. I hope, even now, the Government will be prepared to examine the various avenues of taxation in order, more fairly, to adjust the impact and allow the incidence of it to press less heavily on some sections than it does now. When this tax was initially imposed, it seemed to me it must cause great difficulty to some people.

I was speaking to a young businessman a week or two ago. He is a very live wire and he has been quite successful. He is a working man with a great deal of experience and he has been able to build up his business because of his knowledge and efficiency. He told me it is flourishing, but now he feels he is working for scarcely anything, because the impact of stamp duty tax has created difficulties for him which previously did not exist. Naturally I was interested in his point of view. I questioned him closely on the reasons for it and he was able to satisfy me he was telling the truth about his situation.

Mr. Brand: Are you talking about the 1c on \$10?

Mr. TONKIN: I am talking about the effect of the increase of stamp duty on business.

Mr. Brand: Is it the 1c on \$10 you are talking about?

Mr. TONKIN: At that time he may even have been paying 2c or 3c, but it was the difference between the stamp tax and the increase that was imposed. It is all right for the Treasurer to introduce that angle, but the additional money has to come from somewhere, and from many of these people it will come multiplied. One cannot take an additional \$4,000,000 from the receipts of business people without its being a cause for concern for some people and a burden upon them. It is all very well to say, "It cannot hurt this one; it cannot hurt that one; and it cannot hurt someone else, and therefore it is not hurting anybody." One could go on saying that *ad infinitum*, but it would not reflect the true position. The figures speak for themselves.

The Treasurer is of the opinion that a tax which has been trebled in six years,

from \$5,345,000 to \$15,750,000, does not hurt. That is not the impression which a number of business people in different walks of life have conveyed to me.

Mr. Brand: Did I say it did not hurt?

Mr. TONKIN: That was the impression I gained from the Treasurer's interjection regarding 1c in \$10.

Mr. Brand: You spoke of an individual case and I simply asked a question.

Mr. TONKIN: The people generally are only a collection of individuals, and if it cannot hurt one individual it cannot hurt the community generally. It is my view that this is an extremely heavy burden in anybody's language, and I think it is unscientifically applied. The fact that this legislation is before this Chamber and under discussion shows how much consideration was given to the various aspects of it in the first place. Just imagine taxing credit unions and not taxing banks! That was the position in the initial legislation. One could put money in the bank and take it out and it would not be subject to any tax, but if one put money into a credit union with the idea of taking it out, it was subject to tax when it was deposited and also when it was withdrawn. That was the provision in the initial legislation.

One cannot tell me that a great deal of thought was given to that measure before it was brought to Parliament. That is typical of many of the other anomalies which need correction. I welcome this change, but there should not have been any necessity for it. Nevertheless it is a good thing to realise that for one reason or another the Government was made to appreciate it could not hold the existing situation; and, although the Treasurer seemed to be in some doubt a few months ago whether a review meant a revision, the indication now is that it does mean a revision, because the Bill is presently before us.

I shall be able to support the Bill if the Treasurer will make some attempt to explain, for my benefit, whether or not the sum of \$430,000 under revision takes into consideration estimated increases and estimated decreases.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [8.7 p.m.]: I am pleased to note the Bill gives the Treasurer the right to exempt from stamp duty certain moneys borrowed from a bank. In particular I am referring to moneys that are used to aid charitable and semi-charitable organisations, and also an organisation with which I am mainly concerned; namely, the parents and citizens' association, which provides many facilities for schools.

On the 20th June last, on behalf of the Kent Street Senior High School Parents and Citizens' Association, I wrote to the

Treasurer pointing out that the association was undertaking a project for which it would need to borrow \$6,500 from the bank. The project was to provide an additional school oval at the Kent Street High School, because it had been found that the playing field facilities provided by the Government were absolutely inadequate, and the Government would do nothing to extend the facilities that had been provided initially when the school was built, or those that were provided by a body of citizens and parents in the early years of the school. The stamp duty on the \$6,500 loan amounted to 25c for each \$200, making a total of \$8.25.

The committee members of the association had to stand as guarantors for the amount loaned by the bank, and they were quite indignant when they found that in addition to having to stand as guarantor and pay the necessary bank charges—which I will say were not as high as they could have been, because certain concessions were made—they had to meet a charge of \$8.25 for stamp duty. In return for this the Government was to receive, in effect, a playing oval valued at \$6,500 at no cost to itself. The area was to be levelled, grassed, and fully reticulated, and this has been done.

Mr. Brand: Was there no Government subsidy for that?

Mr. DAVIES: None at all, unfortunately. As a result, the members of the association are very cross about the whole situation. The Education Department has told the parents and citizens' association that it must accept all the responsibility. For its trouble it had to pay \$8.25 stamp duty, and in return the Government is to receive a \$6,500 school oval.

On the 13th July, 1967, the Treasurer replied to my correspondence and stated that as the Stamp Act which imposes duty on securities has no provisions for exempting such documents, he regretted there was no authority under which the duty could be waived.

I then wrote to the Treasurer on the 18th July—some five days later—and pointed out that I thought this was fairly harsh; that perhaps he could have provision made under the relative Act to waive stamp duty in such circumstances.

I have not received a reply from the Treasurer, or his department, although this was some four months ago. When the Treasurer indicated during his Budget speech that he was going to alter the Act, I was hoping that provision would be made. Accordingly I am very pleased to see that the provision has been made except, of course, that it does not help the particular instance of which I complained—the \$8.25 which the Kent Street High School Parents and Citizens' Association had to pay.

The way the Act reads at present, only after the 1st December will the Treasurer have the right to provide this exemption,

and as this agreement was entered into in July, the \$8.25 will still have to be paid by the association.

I suggested in my letter of the 18th July to the Treasurer that the Government might show its good faith and, as a mark of appreciation of the \$6,500 oval it was getting, it might like to make an *ex gratia* payment to the P. and C. It was a reasonable request, and although I have not had a reply, the Treasurer might be good enough to look into the matter to see whether he is able to make an *ex gratia* payment to prove the *bona fides* of the Government.

It is a very good thing to encourage bodies such as parents and citizens' associations; indeed the Minister for Education himself has acknowledged that the education system in this State owes a great deal to the parents and citizens' associations for the work they do.

It would be a small mark of appreciation if the Treasurer were to answer my letter and send with it a cheque for \$8.25 to reimburse the parents and citizens' association of the Kent Street High School.

MR. GUTHRIE (Subiaco) [8.13 p.m.]: This Bill amplifies the problems that face a State Government. In the scheme of things, and the way in which taxation works in this country today, the State Government is inevitably left with all the direct taxes, while the Commonwealth Government very successfully gets away with the application of most of the indirect taxes which are not noticed.

It must always be remembered that stamp duties on receipts have been falling off for the simple reason that people devise ways and means of not paying stamp duty at all, by the simple process of not issuing receipts. When I first started off in the business world everybody issued a receipt for every payment made; everybody paid his stamp duty.

With the passage of the years, however, that practice was followed less and less. Originally when the system of endorsing cheques was introduced people would put stamps with endorsements on the receipts. But in more recent years even that has gone by the board, and people have struck off the printed word and simply endorsed the cheque.

With the passage of time the practice of making cheques payable to order and of requiring endorsement has lessened, and stamp duty has not been producing, percentage-wise, what it had done in days gone by.

In the course of his remarks the Leader of the Opposition made reference—which I have heard many people in the community make—to the fact that we are always taxing the motorists. I sometimes wonder who in the community is not a motorist. When we stop to examine the position from the point of view of almost

everybody today having a motorcar—and the majority of the people in the community use the motor industry to some extent even if they only travel by bus—one must admit, to be honest about it, that a tax on the motor industry is a tax which is placed on everybody in the community.

The tax is not merely placed on some of the people—on a few of those who use motor vehicles—it is placed on everybody who rides on rubber tyres in petrol-propelled vehicles. Any tax that happens to hit at the motor industry is, I suggest, fairly and squarely spread over the entire community. It is not a sectional tax, which some people would have us believe it is.

The Leader of the Opposition also chided the Treasurer with the fact that he was increasing taxation. The Treasurer had said some years ago that we would reach a limit of taxation. It must be appreciated, however, that we are living in a day nine years later; in different times from those in which the Treasurer spoke previously.

We are living in an era of greater prosperity and of a greater turnover in business. I often wonder if a survey were made of the impost being placed on the community today whether it would show that it is any greater than was the case in previous generations, taking into account the income; that is, the amount of turnover available, and the individual who is paying the taxes.

Mr. Toms: What about the price of residential blocks?

Mr. GUTHRIE: That is one of the red herrings the member for Bayswater likes to drag across the trail on every occasion. It is not the subject before the Chair. It is the only one, however, that the member for Bayswater can think of. I have never heard the honourable member mention anything else but the price of residential blocks.

Mr. W. Hegney: Don't do your block!

Mr. GUTHRIE: I am not doing my block; I am commenting on the wisecracks that come from the member for Bayswater with the greatest frequency when he refers to the price of residential blocks. I have not heard anything from him but the question of the price of land in Bayswater.

Mr. Toms: Read *Hansard*. If you were in the Chamber more often you would.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I will, but I feel sure I will not learn anything from reading the speeches of the honourable member.

Mr. May: That will read very well in *Hansard*.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I have no doubt it will.

Mr. Rhatigan: Will you agree to a reduction in lawyers' fees?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I will agree to a reduction in the salaries of members of Parlia-

ment, and I would like to hear what the member for Kimberley has to say about that.

Mr. Graham: You have half a dozen salaries.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Now we have the member for Balcatta coming in with his usual type of comment.

Mr. Graham: It was pretty close to the mark.

Mr. Toms: Who started all this?

Mr. GUTHRIE: The member for Bayswater started it with his stupid remark about the price of land in Bayswater.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GUTHRIE: To revert to the subject before the Chair, the Leader of the Opposition also made some reference to the fact that money could be paid into a bank account and drawn out again without any tax being paid. If he gives that some thought he will realise it is not a correct statement. One certainly does not pay stamp tax when one pays moneys to the credit of one's account, but one does pay substantial stamp duty every time one writes out a cheque and withdraws money from one's bank account.

Mr. Tonkin: But do you have to write out a cheque to withdraw money?

Mr. GUTHRIE: One does from a cheque account.

Mr. Tonkin: Who said anything about a cheque account?

Mr. GUTHRIE: Most people operate on a cheque account. The Leader of the Opposition was talking about the business community, which does not operate on a savings bank account. People in business do not go to the bank and take out the amount in notes every time a payment is necessary. I daresay the Leader of the Opposition also operates on a cheque account, as do a very large number of people. Certain concessions are granted, and always have been granted, on savings bank accounts.

It does cost 5c every time a person writes a cheque and withdraws money from his bank account.

If one puts money into another person's bank account one is supposed to put a stamp on the pay-in slip. In certain circumstances when a person puts money into another person's bank account he can be caught for stamp duty. I am not sufficiently well informed on credit unions to know whether the money paid in is retained to a person's credit, or whether it is held on interest as a debt. I fancy it is the latter. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition there is no reason why credit unions might not be considered for exemption.

It is very easy to offer cheap criticism of legislation of this nature. One has to accept the fact that increasing difficulties confront the State Government—whether

it be a Government led by the person who is the present Leader of the Opposition, or one led by the present Premier. While we have the present unfortunate financial relationship with the Federal Government, the State Government will be left to levy the unpopular taxes—the direct taxes that hit the ordinary individual. Our main task is to try to get the existing financial relationship altered or rewritten. If we should debate the Annual Estimates later this evening I hope to have more to say on this subject. I support the Bill

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [8.22 p.m.]: I do not know why there should be jocular comments about my getting up.

Mr. Brand: I said it was a sure bet.

Mr. FLETCHER: The memory of the Treasurer is not as good as mine. When I have something to say on a measure—particularly the one before us, which seeks to amend the Stamp Act, 1912-66—I have good reason for wanting to speak. On this occasion I rise to say that I hope—in my mind I am almost sure—the reaction of Fremantle to the imposition of stamp duty, as mentioned by me earlier in the session, has been responsible, in part, for bringing this Bill before us.

I will refresh the memory of the Treasurer as to what I did say earlier this session. My comments are to be found on page 377 of *Hansard* of this year. At that time I was speaking on the impact of the Stamp Act upon the clubs in the Fremantle area. The impact was so great that two of those clubs wrote to me.

Mr. Durack: Does that suggest that the stamp duty had a different impact in the Perth district?

Mr. FLETCHER: I did not hear that interjection.

Mr. Durack: I can repeat it.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will remind the Treasurer of what I had to say when I spoke in the debate on the Address-in-Reply on the 15th August of this year. My comments were—

I received this letter from the Fremantle R.S.L. Club, "Wyola" Incorporated. It was addressed to me and was signed on behalf of the president, committee and 1,100 members of the "Wyola" Club Incorporated. The letter reads—

On behalf of the President, Committee and 1,100 members of the Fremantle R.S.L. Club "Wyola" Inc. I am appealing to you to enter a strong protest to the Government about the imposition of the Stamp Act 1912-66, which was enforced upon us. We as a club protest about the tax as a whole, but we are most concerned about having to pay 3 cents in \$10 on membership fees and donations to the club by members.

I hope country members who have clubs in their districts are listening.
To continue—

We are of the opinion that any monies received apart from bar takings should not be taxed at 3 cents, when all personnel in part C of the Stamp Act which includes medical, dental and business people are only asked to pay 1 cent in the \$10.

Hoping you can convince your co-members also the Government that some relief should be given in this matter.

So these clubs are being called upon to pay 3 cents in the \$10 as compared with 1c being paid by business people. Therefore, am I justified in reading that letter to the House? I submit I am, because this is discriminatory taxation and it is being levied against the clubs. There is a postscript to this letter which reads—

For your own information we have paid \$32.37 in February and for March, April, May, \$98.97. So you can see it is some considerable amount of money that should not have to be paid to keep a lousy government.

At that stage the member for Darling Range interjected to say that it was no wonder I read the postscript.

At that time I took exception to the stamp duty. I am pleased to see this Bill seeks to give relief in the way proposed. During the debate on the Address-in-Reply I also read a similar letter addressed to me by another club in the Fremantle area. I was informed that those two clubs circularised every other club in Western Australia.

Mr. Gayfer: Is the Wyola Club Incorporated a temperance organisation?

Mr. FLETCHER: No. It runs a bar. The imposition of duty at the rate of 3c in every \$10 was a great impact. Those two clubs informed me that all other clubs in Western Australia had been contacted in connection with this matter. At that time I made known to the House the reaction of the Fremantle clubs. I consider that the 1,100 members of the Wyola Club were justified in asking me to put forward their views and in making known their objections to the stamp duty.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: One of them in Fremantle asked me to do the same.

Mr. FLETCHER: Probably the Minister and I made a joint effort to twist the arm of the Premier to introduce this Bill. I am pleased to say that the Fremantle people played their part in having the Bill introduced.

Mr. Brand: There was no mention of a lousy Government in the letter to the Minister.

MR. DUNN (Darling Range) [8.28 p.m.]: I wish to say a few words in support of this measure. We should not forget that the main purpose of this tax is to assist the State in its development, and in the provision of necessary facilities and services. I sometimes think that many people take all this for granted. If they pause to think they would realise all this has only been achieved as the result of very good administration, good direction, positive thinking, and hard work on the part of the Government. This Chamber should be very proud to support a measure on taxation, introduced for the sole purpose of furthering the ends I have just mentioned.

If we cast our minds back to the debate which took place last year when a similar measure was introduced we will find that the Treasurer made it quite clear that the sole purpose of raising the extra revenue was to enable the Government to continue its progressive work, and to ensure that the services and facilities of the State kept pace with the rapid development of the State. I am quite sure that every member of this House acknowledges the wonderful efforts of the Government, and I am equally certain that they are proud of the part they are playing to achieve this rapid development.

As I see it, the measure is an attempt—and a positive one—to make more equitable the distribution of the burden of the tax—if one could call it a burden. I do not go along with the Leader of the Opposition in his reference to it as a terrifically heavy burden. I do not feel that is quite in accordance with fact. We should accept this tax as an equitable means of raising further finance and one which the Government is quite willing to adjust after 12 months' experience of the operation of the measure introduced last year.

I seem to recall that it was quite clearly stated there could possibly be certain anomalies; and, at that time, the Treasurer promised that he would give full consideration to requests that came to him from the various clubs and business interests. As a result of this consideration, we have before us some very sound legislation which is designed to adjust these anomalies, and to place the whole legislation on a more equitable basis.

It may be pertinent at this time for me to remind the Chamber of a few of the things which indicate the rate at which this State is progressing and to put them on record, although that is not necessary because they are to be found on record in many places. However, in so far as this measure is concerned, I will let the members, and those people who are interested in reading *Hansard* know some of the facts in relation to the development of our State over the past nine years.

We have already heard it said that we are opening land at the rate of 1,000,000

acres per year; and we know that the State is rapidly becoming a leader in the development of iron ore; and there is great development of the State's vast mineral resources. Probably one of the greatest developments in Western Australia during the last 10 years has been the amount of confidence that has been engendered in the whole of the populace of our State and, indeed, in the whole of Australia. It cannot be denied that this feeling of confidence is reaching out to the entire world.

Of course, our economy has improved, but it cannot be denied that this rapid rate of growth of our economy is bringing with it many problems. It has been said, and rightly so, that it is far better we should be facing these problems than those of a depression and an ill-managed economy.

Mr. Hawke: Is that set out in clause 3 of the Bill?

Mr. Brady: No, in clause 5.

Mr. DUNN: If the member for Northam wants to know what is in clause 3 of the Bill I would remind him that he has had a copy of the measure made available to him, just as has every other member in the Chamber. If he so desires, I will read it to him afterwards.

I do not know how many of us realise that the percentage of increase in the total personal income in this State is 62.6 per cent., while the Australian average, at this point of time, is registered as being 38.3 per cent. The personal income per head of population in Western Australia has increased by 14.9 per cent, as against 2.4 per cent. for the whole of Australia.

Mr. W. Hegney: Over what period?

Mr. DUNN: The honourable member can read this afterwards, too.

Mr. Graham: Have you measured how prices went up over that period?

Mr. Brand: Do not interrupt.

The SPEAKER: I hope the honourable member will relate his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. DUNN: I will relate them to the Bill—

Mr. Graham: You are doing a great job.

Mr. DUNN:—in this way: Having listened to the Leader of the Opposition and noted his remarks as regards the terrible impost brought about by the introduction of this taxation, I felt it was equally important that I should lay some emphasis on the necessity for this taxation. Therefore I used the example of the development and progress the State is making as a reason for the necessity to increase revenue. It is necessary so we can move along and keep pace with the rapid development of our State.

Dr. Henn: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUNN: I want to thank the member for Wembley; he is most encouraging.

Mr. Graham: You are certainly pulling this Government out of the fire at the moment.

Mr. DUNN: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is good, he might get the chance, too; but I am beginning to wonder. I would remind members that we must not forget that in regard to a measure of this nature it is proper and right that the Government should come to the House with amendments when it deems they are necessary: and this measure should be regarded as legislation that has been brought to Parliament as a result of experience and after the requirements of the State have been considered. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [8.37 p.m.]: One can imagine what a Leader of the Opposition might say in regard to a taxing measure of this kind, even though it is the result of a revision, or review, or both. I have never known any Leader of the Opposition, no matter who he has been, who has lauded a taxation measure of any kind; nor have I ever known any Leader of the Opposition to miss an opportunity to say that the taxation being imposed is the most dreadful thing that has ever happened—

Mr. May: That is his job, isn't it?

Mr. BRAND:—whilst, at the same time, making every endeavour to become Treasurer and do exactly the same thing.

Mr. Graham: Can you tell us where the breaking point is?

Mr. BRAND: It is at the same point as it was when we took over.

Mr. Kelly: Be careful!

Mr. BRAND: I have heard the member for Northam, when he was the Leader of the Opposition, raise these points; and I think I quoted to him what the late Sir Ross McLarty said about his administration and what he said about ours. However, the fact remains that a Government must have income if it is to provide the services to keep a State such as we have on the move. What is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition grunting about?

Tonight we took part in a debate about the insufficiency of \$10 as an aid to scholars of primary schools. Let us double it! Let us treble it! That is all so very easy; but where does the money come from? From where do we get the money to pay this subsidy? It comes from the same source as always—from the people generally; from the hundred and one varieties of taxation which are applied by Governments, both Federal and State.

Mr. Tonkin: A few more cents in iron ore royalty would help.

Mr. BRAND: Of course they would; but the fact remains the royalty level in respect of this matter has been decided and agreements have been made. The royalties have been arrived at, not only

in respect of iron ore and other minerals, but also in respect of timber and other products, and they have been arrived at by agreements made at certain times; and those agreements have been discussed in, and approved by, this House.

Of course, this applied when the Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Works many years ago. When certain royalties were decided upon in respect of iron ore agreements being prepared at that time, we said they were far too low. However, it seems to me we do not achieve a great deal by talking about these matters now; they belong to the past.

The reason for the increased taxation in respect of receipt duty is the increased receipts. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the sharp increase. He said that it would treble over a certain number of years, rising to \$15,000,000. He was referring, of course, to the overall income from stamp duty in its many phases. The increase has not occurred from the actual increase in the rate. It has come as a result of the tremendous turnover of shares, the increased number of transactions, and the big upsurge in commerce and trade. All these have contributed in a very direct way to the marked increase in stamp duty gained by the Treasury.

We have not taxed the people in this State at a higher level than those in other States are being taxed; and being a claimant State we should tax at least to the level of the other States, even to the level of the four which will form the standard from now on. We would have real cause for concern if the State found itself in a position whereby, in order to provide the same level and standard of services provided in the other States, we had to tax at a higher level. So far we have not had to do this and I think it is a matter for very real satisfaction that we have been able to balance the Budget over three years, and it appears quite hopeful that we will balance the budget for a fourth year.

The great advantage and benefit as far as this State is concerned is that we do not have to dive into and use up valuable loan funds to finance the deficit; and this is the main purpose of our endeavours to balance the Budget. We are budgeting for a deficit of something over \$700,000.

The Leader of the Opposition said that he knows we have underestimated our income from this source. I am not going to argue the point with him on that score, but I am going to say that the Treasury officers, with whatever experience they have behind them—and some of them are very well experienced and senior officers—have produced an estimate. However, I will agree with the Leader of the Opposition that if our fortunes are such that they continue to upturn, and development continues at its present rate

more industry comes into the State, and if we have a good year, as I am sure we will as far as primary production is concerned, the net result must be that more money will be received than has been estimated.

However, surely we must arrive at some firm estimate based on the situation at the time. I would prefer the Treasury officer who gives me an estimate which results in a surplus rather than an officer who makes an estimate which results in a shortage of funds. Some way can always be found of coping with a surplus, but I would find it somewhat of a problem to try to raise the necessary money if the estimated deficit were exceeded.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to say that this was a sectional tax, and I assume he was talking about the receipt duty increase. The stamp tax has been with us for a long time. In fact, receipt duty is a very old form of taxation and the only amendment we have made is to increase the actual rate since 1966—in this case it is 1c in every \$10. Had we not made this change, we would have found it necessary to find the money from some other source; in other words, some other taxation. There is no other means.

The member for Subiaco referred to the motorist. It is quite commonplace to hear people in this House and, in fact, outside if they want to appeal to certain people, say that the poor old motorist is carrying the burden of taxation. I agree with the member for Subiaco because these are cold, hard facts of life. Many people are associated with the motor industry and a very large percentage of people own a motorcar. Today the motorcar is making the greatest impact on our development, on our society, and on our funds. These funds are necessary in connection with roads, the police, the control of traffic, the casualty section of hospitals, and, indeed, as a result of the great loss of time, money, and life. The motorist must expect to pay more in the future. Even if, as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, a change of Government occurs in a few months' time, the incoming Government will find it necessary to continue to do as the present Government is doing. Unless it does, it will find itself in a very difficult predicament. The motorists and people associated with the industry must continue to contribute in order to cope with an ever-increasing difficulty which is not only Australia-wide, but world-wide.

The Leader of the Opposition asked me whether the \$430,000 which we believe will be lost to the Treasury as a result of these amendments will be a net result. Yes, it will be. There will be certain gains, including the tax on S.E.C. receipts to which he referred. There could be increases resulting from an underestimation of actual turnover in certain directions. In addition, we have closed a few loopholes

and we hope this will bring about further income. However, it is very difficult to assess what this income will be. To the best of their ability the Treasury officers advise that it could be in the vicinity of \$430,000.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the 1c in \$10 receipt duty which we have imposed on the State Electricity Commission. As I pointed out when introducing this Bill, the State Government Insurance Office has to pay a receipt duty as does the Rural and Industries Bank. We felt that as these concerns were in competition with the private sector, they should pay this tax; and they have not raised any opposition. The State Electricity Commission also, I believe, should make some contribution of this kind. In any case it amounts to only \$15,000 for half a year, and \$30,000 for a total year, which is not very much when spread over the tremendous turnover of the State Electricity Commission. It does indicate to the Grants Commission, however, when it compares us with Victoria, where a 3 per cent. turnover tax was imposed, that we are at least making some effort. The result, of course, will not in any way compare when it comes to the total receipts.

Might I say—as the Leader of the Opposition took advantage of the situation and highlighted what I said when introducing the original Bill—that I believed the time would come when we would take more of the profits of the State Electricity Commission to meet the capital charges because we have not available to us the borrowing capacity, or, in fact, the actual loan money, from another source.

In saying that I did not say that we are thinking of doing it now. I referred to the fact that Victoria had planned and talked about a surtax on top of the tax it had already imposed. I say again: I believe that unless further loan moneys are available from the Commonwealth, or some other source, the time will come when we will have to consider obtaining money through the general revenue of the State Electricity Commission to meet the increasing demand for electricity. The Leader of the Opposition himself said, on another occasion, that we have to keep up with the demand, and we have to plan ahead. I think he implied we were not doing that, but we are. We are planning ahead to meet the foreseeable demands on the State Electricity Commission in this State.

I think it was the member for Fremantle who raised the question of the clubs protesting when we imposed the 3c in \$10 receipt duty.

Mr. Fletcher: You are right; it was the member for Fremantle.

Mr. BRAND: I think the member for Fremantle claimed that his efforts had such an impact upon myself and the Government that we hastened to make

amends. I want to tell him straightaway that as an individual I am not impressed by any threat of this kind, for the simple reason that I believe drinking—being such a luxury—should carry taxation first above other forms of tax.

Mr. Fletcher: The protest was on membership.

Mr. BRAND: The membership was just a very tiny percentage. However, we have acknowledged the principles on which the clubs protested—or on which some of them protested—and we have reduced the rate from 3c and 2c in \$10 down to a flat rate of 1c in \$10.

At one stage, of course, we had planned to increase the liquor license fee by one-quarter or one-half per cent. However, because there was no need to do this straightaway—let me emphasise “straightaway”—we did not impose the extra license fee. I believe that betting and gambling, and the liquor industry, should carry extra taxation, if it is found necessary to impose extra taxation.

Mr. Hawke: The anomalies in last year's Bill were clearly pointed out when the Bill was being debated.

Mr. BRAND: That was an obvious situation. The Opposition—and the then Leader of the Opposition—did point out inequities and anomalies which, in the revision, we were forced to acknowledge. I do not think we ever made any excuse in this respect except to say that the 3c and 2c in \$10 was a straightout taxing measure to get more money.

However, we have now decided, through the machinery contained in this Bill, to bring the tax down to a flat rate of 1c in \$10. We can only hope that the estimates which have been worked out will be somewhere near the mark. It could be that we will receive more from this tax than we anticipate at the present time.

I might say we have closed a number of gaps with the introduction of this Bill which I believe will bring about a sharp increase in receipt duty. Some of the mining companies have been paying what was required, but I think we have closed some gaps in the legislation not only in respect of mining companies, but also banks and others, which will bring us in more revenue.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the taxes have been applied unscientifically. I think it would be difficult to find anyone who would say that the application of a taxing measure of this kind—or any other kind—was scientifically based, because whoever is taxed always shows resentment, and has a tendency to ask “Why me; what about the other fellow?”

I repeat: The decision to introduce the new receipt duty rate has created a great deal of interest throughout Australia. The

interest has been to the extent that the Victorian Treasurer, Sir Henry Bolte, decided to set up a similar system. However, in doing so it seemed to me that he tended to rock the boat a little. We, ourselves, made some very thorough inquiries regarding the doubt which was raised about the matter being challenged on the ground that it was unconstitutional. Our advice was that under certain circumstances, and provided we did not include certain provisions in the Bill, this would be a fairly sound measure.

The Victorians have gone a little further and they have caused the Commonwealth Government to question the situation. If the Commonwealth takes direct action and forces Victoria to forgo its measure, and this State in turn—but I do not think we are as vulnerable as Victoria is—then I can only say that the Commonwealth will strike at the very foundation of Federation. The States cannot continue to function unless they have an ever-increasing income to provide the services necessary and, indeed, meet the ever-increasing demand for the higher standards which we enjoy.

As the member for Subiaco said, it is left to the States to raise money directly from the ratepayers. Very often we become more unpopular than the Commonwealth which has been applying taxes of an indirect nature for such a long time—sales tax, personal income tax, and the like.

If the Commonwealth expects us to find more money, it will have to help in every way because, undoubtedly, if the State cannot raise more taxes it will be left holding the financial baby—if I can put it that way. Such a move could result in bringing us nearer to unification rather than to a stronger federated system of States within the Commonwealth. I do not think there is any question that we must be allowed to impose taxes of this nature—ours is a growth tax and is a system, I believe, which does not impose great hardship on any section. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, it will be passed on to the consumer. I would like to know of any tax which is not ultimately passed on. There has not been one tax ever imposed over the years which has not been passed on by the business or the person concerned; because they certainly could not carry it themselves.

I look upon the effects of this measure—with respect to receipt duty—as being spread fairly evenly over the rank and file of the people. Bigger companies with larger turnovers will contribute in a large way, whilst the man in the street will pay a receipt duty.

I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his support of the measure. It has been brought forward as a result of the undertaking I gave, which I believe will set up a system of taxation in the

State which is quite equitable and reasonable. The system will be as reasonable as any taxing measure can be.

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.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1967-68

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 24th October, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair.

Vote: Legislative Council, \$56,500—

MR. GUTHRIE (Subiaco) [9.5 p.m.]: I think it is somewhat appropriate to continue the debate we have just completed and deal with the question of State-Commonwealth financial arrangements. This is the subject on which I spoke some two or three years ago when dealing with the Loan Estimates. I have forgotten exactly how long ago it is since I spoke on this matter.

If one believes in Federation, and if Federation is to continue, I think one has to make it work. The problems that are arising in connection with Federation are, very largely, the problems of finance. It is of some interest to think back to the beginnings of Federation. If I remember my history, it was very largely the problem of finance which produced Federation in the first instance.

Mr. W. Hegney: I think it was the fear of a foreign invasion before that.

Mr. GUTHRIE: That is what Professor Scott has suggested in his short history of Australia, but I rather doubt it. If one studies English history, even at that stage, in 1897, the rise of Germany was not even contemplated. That came much later. I do not think anybody in Australia really feared foreign invasion in 1897. The real problems were the customs barriers between States, the problems of passports, and various other restrictions which were really irritating. Basically it was realised that there had to be some form of national Government in Australia.

For that reason, section 92 was written into the Federal Constitution. I suggest that if the drafters of section 92 were brought back to life today, and could see the way it has been applied by our courts here and elsewhere, they would be horrified. I am sure they would be horrified if they knew of the various pieces of legislation that have been declared to be invalid by reason of the provisions of

a section which was basically intended to be one which would get rid of customs barriers and that type of thing.

Members will recall that for a long while, when, very largely, the authors of the Constitution still sat on the High Court bench, they consistently held that section 92 did not bind the Commonwealth. It was not until a later stage, and long after those men had disappeared, that a man named James from South Australia caused doubts to be cast on this. If I remember correctly the Privy Council ultimately decided section 92 bound the Commonwealth as well as the States.

The situation in which we find ourselves today is that the bulk of the major taxing powers in this country are vested in the Commonwealth Government in Canberra. The States are left with a lesser and lesser proportion of these powers. It is often said that the death knell of the States was the day they handed over their income taxing powers to the Commonwealth during the second World War. I do not subscribe to that belief. I consider it was a correct decision. In my view the imposition of differing rates of income tax in various States is not a good thing.

The fact that one had to submit differing income tax returns showing differing items of income for tax and differing items as deductions was confusing. It was not a good thing for the business community and the taxpayer as a whole. Apart from that, it placed in the hands of the States a method whereby they could bargain one with the other. Alternatively, they could bid in an auction mart for foreign industry by offering tax concessions which a neighbouring State could not afford to do. Again, this was not a good thing. I have never advocated and never would advocate that any solution lies in the return of the income taxing power to the States. I would still take that view even if the court decisions were different from what they are; namely, that Commonwealth tax takes precedence over a State tax. Even if that were not so, I would still take the view that one field of taxation, such as income tax, should be in one hand.

The protagonists of greater taxing powers to be placed in the hands of the Commonwealth often say this is necessary to keep the economy on the line. Up to a point that is correct, but I often wonder just how far such a policy should be followed. I often wonder whether it is just a piece of propaganda that is sold to people when they get to Canberra, where such people apparently develop Canberra-itis, a disease to which Western Australians seem to be particularly prone. Like many others who come from other States of the Commonwealth, when they reach the open plains of Canberra they seem to become affected with the overall power of the central capital, and they also seem to forget they were once advocating the cause of Western Australia. One of the clichés

commonly used by them is: How can you control the economy if the taxes are not in the hands of the central Government?

I cannot offer any comment on whether that is a correct method of approach, because I am not an economist; but I have never thought that every major tax had to be handled in Canberra by the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. W. Hegney: You recently agreed to that in regard to wages.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I do not understand the implication behind that interjection.

Mr. W. Hegney: You agreed to a uniform national wage throughout the Commonwealth.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I do not altogether agree with that, but again a reason could be advanced, along similar lines to those of the reason advanced for uniform taxation, for keeping to one type of wage structure throughout the nation. In returning to what I was talking about, there are certain forms of taxation and certain forms of financial control which are necessary whilst we adopt the present methods of writing down booms and lifting up recessions as we call them these days and, undoubtedly, income tax is one of them. Sales tax is another form, and exchange control is another.

I wonder sometimes if that is not where the control should end. For instance, I have often wondered to what extent excise duties are an absolute necessity for keeping the economy straight. Liquor is heavily taxed by both the Commonwealth and the State Governments. It is taxed by the Commonwealth Government by means of excise duty and by the State Government by what we are pleased to call locally a percentage on liquor returns, or payments to the receiver of revenue.

I have never made a study of the statistics and consequently I am unaware of the total tax paid by the liquor industry, and I am unaware of what percentage is paid to the Commonwealth Government and what percentage is paid to the State Government. But I am well aware that the tax paid to the Commonwealth Government is considerable, and I have been told it is much greater than that paid to the State Government. However, I cannot say whether that is true. What does appeal to me is that this is one of the fields of taxation where the Commonwealth could consider whether it should reduce the tax or retire from the field altogether.

In a case that went to the Privy Council from Victoria it was held that the type of revenue tax we impose on holders of liquor licenses is quite constitutional. So I suggest this is one field in which the Commonwealth Government could reduce the incidence of taxation and a corresponding increase could be made in State taxation. I suggest it is of little consequence to the

liquor industry or to the consumers whether they pay so many dollars in tax, half of which is paid to the State and half to the Commonwealth, or all of it to the State.

There is also the question of petrol tax. I have never heard it suggested that petrol tax is one of those taxes necessary to control the economy of the community as a whole. Again it would be within the realm of possibility for the Commonwealth Government to retire from the field of petrol tax and leave the States other avenues along which taxes could be imposed. The imposition of petrol tax by a State no doubt would be unconstitutional, but the money could be obtained by the State in the form of a road tax or on the mileage travelled by vehicles. By transferring the revenue from the coffers of the Commonwealth, we would bring a great deal of money into the State Treasury. Probate duty and gift duty represent fields of taxation from which the Commonwealth could well retire completely.

These are some taxes which come quickly to mind. No doubt if we conducted a complete study of all the taxes imposed by the State Government and the Commonwealth Government, one could think of many others, and, very easily one could find taxes which do not need to go into the hands of the Commonwealth Government for the sake of stabilising the national economy. So I do not accept the argument that the States have to rely on the Commonwealth Government forever and seek more and more grants.

For a moment I turn to the situation relating to loans. Today we see the spectacle—I have mentioned this before—of the Commonwealth Government performing and carrying out the whole of its public works programme by taking the funds required from revenue. As I understand it, the war service homes scheme is one exception. The States, on the other hand, are compelled to undertake their capital works by financing them from loan funds. We see the net result in the Annual Estimates before us now. That is, each year we have to provide an ever-increasing amount from revenue to meet the interest and sinking fund charges.

During the period I have been in Parliament I think the percentage of the total Education Vote has risen from 16 per cent. to 20 per cent., and the quantum of it is required to service loans raised to finance our education services. This must ultimately lead to the situation that the national debt will become the responsibility of the States and will not be the responsibility of the Commonwealth. The States will have to carry on under this burden. We have all acquired the very bad habit that whenever we want any additional finance we accept the proposition urged on us by other people that we should approach the Commonwealth Government for greater and greater grants.

There are people who advocate that more and more money should come from the national source rather than that we should face the real issue of the financial relations ourselves. Wherever possible we should endeavour to persuade people to be emphatic and outspoken on the subject of Commonwealth and State financial arrangements, instead of continuing to urge for more and more money from the national source. If we could get people thinking in those terms, even the Commonwealth Government in Canberra, whatever its political colour, may come to realise that the people expect State Governments to be responsible Governments.

Further, the Commonwealth Government should accept its share of the responsibility in the matter of finance. It should accept its share of the national debt and not be a dictator to the States on every grant that is made. I said previously in this Chamber, and I repeat again tonight, that the day will come when we in this State will not control its education policy; it will be dictated from Canberra. We have already seen evidence of that.

I can recall reading in the Press some three or four months ago, when the newly appointed Federal Minister for Education went to Hobart to open a conference on education, that his opening remarks were, "We must have a national policy for education"; in other words, a policy worked out in Canberra to which all the States would subscribe, irrespective of the situation in any particular State. The day we reach the position of having one education policy applying throughout Australia will be the day when we will have no policy at all.

Mr. Davies: Who was the Minister for Education,

Mr. GUTHRIE: I think it was Senator Gorton.

Mr. Fletcher: It does provide the finance.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I suggest to the member for Fremantle that we do not want the Commonwealth to contribute the finance; we want it to retire from certain fields of taxation so that we can impose our own taxes and develop our State accordingly; so that this Parliament can then continue as a sovereign Parliament with its own rights and its own taxation; so that it can take responsibility for its own actions. The Commonwealth Government should accept the fact, as a State Government does, that when it builds a post office, sometimes it might be possible to finance it out of loan funds. We, on the other hand, build a school always out of loan funds, and go on paying for it for ever and ever. In the case of the building of a post office, however, it is paid for out of the revenue of that year.

The whole situation is quite wrong. It must be highlighted and rectified, and we can only get it rectified by getting the message over to the people that the more they cry for more money from the Commonwealth, the more nails they drive into the coffin of Federation. There will be no future for us if we continue to get into the stream of seeking more and more money from the fountainhead, with more and more control passing to Canberra. Surely we have seen enough of that in recent years to realise that this will be so!

When the recent referendum was held in connection with the aborigines I voted "No," because I am as certain as I stand here that within 10 years the aborigines within Australia will be controlled from Canberra.

Mr. Court: Heaven forbid!

Mr. GUTHRIE: I am sure it will happen. In spite of all the undertakings that were given by the Prime Minister, I am certain this will happen. As the Commonwealth provides more and more money, it will take more and more power.

Mr. Fletcher: We have a very big State with a very small population, and the taxation would be very high *per capita*.

Mr. GUTHRIE: We can overcome that by an increase in the population. We are rapidly reaching the stage, as the honourable member should well know, where we will not be dependent on grants from the Grants Commission; and this stage will be reached in the next year or two. What I suggest will not be achieved overnight. I suggest to the honourable member that within 10 years we will be in the position of being able to stand on our own flat feet, and the problems about which he speaks will be problems of the past; they will no longer be with us. Even so, is it not of more importance that a responsible Government in Perth should in fact be a Government? If it is not going to be a Government, but only a lackey which receives money from Canberra and does it out in accordance with instructions received from Canberra, the sooner we wind it up the better.

If that situation ever developed, Western Australia would suffer very severely indeed; in fact, I would not hold out any great hope for the future of the State, particularly when one considers the percentage we exercise of the vote in the Federal Parliament. Power lies with the great numbers, and for a long time the big battalions have been on the eastern seaboard of Australia.

Mr. W. Hegney: The same thing applies to the metropolitan area as compared to the country area.

Mr. GUTHRIE: That is hardly so, particularly if one compares the electoral breakup in Western Australia. To my way of thinking it is just the reverse. We have given tremendous power to country representation.

Mr. W. Hegney: It still does not represent one vote one value.

Mr. GUTHRIE: The point I was making was in reverse; that where the great numbers existed the power would lie. I think it is fair enough in a State the size of ours, with the vast distances involved, that we should have regard to area as well as to population when it comes to a breakup of electorate districts. I have not been aware that any member of the Opposition has made the suggestion, when dealing with measures before the House that we should go over to one man one vote. I certainly do not think it will be popular in the community. That, however, is off the beam, and something quite different from what I was talking about.

I do say, however, that if the trend I have mentioned continues, we will see the gradual destruction of Federation. I have often wondered just how binding a legal document the Financial Agreement is, and how binding the set-up of the Loan Council is. I have often wondered what would happen if the State simply said to the Commonwealth Government, "You enforce it if you can, legally." There are such things as political agreements which courts have held are not capable of enforcement in a court of law. Where we are bound—and I think this is something which can be examined at some stage—is that the present set-up can only be altered by unanimous agreement.

Apart from that I do have hope that if people will study the problem more closely—and it behoves us as members of Parliament to see that they do understand it more clearly—they will understand the true problem, and will demand speedy rectification of the problem, which is the rewriting of the financial arrangement. If this is achieved I think we can look forward to something which would be better than that which we have had in the past: we may look forward to this country moving along successfully as a Federation.

It sometimes amuses me to read in the Press that people in the Eastern States talk about forming new States. Whatever for, I wonder? Unless they are prepared to give the States a greater degree of independence, the situation could be made worse and cause people a great deal of heart-burning and hardship by raising their hopes. What we want is an effective State, and an effective Federation. I cannot but emphasise the fact that this lies in the righting of the problem. This can be done if it is approached in a correct manner, and if the pressure is brought to bear by all people, not by merely a few people talking in the wilderness.

As I see it another bad feature is that the Commonwealth Government, in my opinion, has too much money; it is able to spend money on unnecessary things.

This will always be so while that Government has more money than it really needs.

Again, the Commonwealth Government could, quite apart from anything else, reduce its incidence of taxation. This would leave a pool available to the State Governments, and they could have a look at it and endeavour to make their own progress from their own resources. Until we reach that Utopia I can see no future for Federation.

MR. WILLIAMS (Bunbury) [9.31 p.m.]: I take this opportunity during the debate on the Annual Estimates to pass a few remarks on matters pertaining to my electorate, on one or two relating to the south-west, and on some which relate to the State in general. It is very pleasing to see in the Estimates that at long last Bunbury is to get a new police station. As I have explained in this Chamber on several occasions, the public and the staff of the existing police station have suffered for a long time under difficult conditions through lack of space, especially when members of the public make appointments to see officers of the force. Similarly members of the police at Bunbury have had to work in inadequate accommodation. It is very pleasing to me, and in particular to the staff of the Bunbury Police Force, and the public generally, that some time during this financial year the new building will come to fruition.

Another matter I wish to mention is the diversion of the Five Mile Brook. This has been a topic of discussion during elections in Bunbury, and also from time to time in this place. Before last winter this brook was diverted by the Public Works Department. I must place on record my own appreciation, and I am sure the appreciation of the majority of the people of Bunbury—particularly of South Bunbury—of the department for this diversion work. Had the diversion not been completed before last winter, I am quite sure that several hundred homes in the South Bunbury area would have been inundated with floodwater and that a great amount of damage and inconvenience would have been caused to the residents of the area.

One small problem still exists. Two series of pipes have been placed on Bussell Highway to carry the water which runs from the various lakes and swamps on the east side of the highway across to the west to enter the diversion drain. During last winter I took the opportunity while heavy rains were falling and the water was running off to inspect these culverts.

It is my opinion that the department should give serious consideration to removing these pipes, which are about 42 inches in diameter, and replacing them with straight open culverts. If that were done the water would not bank up on the east side of Bussell Highway to cause flood-

ing to several properties on that side of the road.

A year or two ago I put a proposition before the Minister for Health. It was suggested that when the old Stirling Maternity Hospital at Bunbury was vacated and the patients were moved to the new regional hospital, the maternity hospital be given to the Town of Bunbury for use as a centre for the aged. I am pleased to say this has been done by the Minister, and the land and buildings are in the process of being vested in the Town of Bunbury.

The council has formed a public committee of quite young and active members to promote the centre. At present Meals on Wheels operates from the centre, and this service does an excellent job—as members who have similar services in their electorates are aware. This service is a means of keeping many aged people away from hospitals, and thus saves the State a not inconsiderable sum of money. The committee is very active in promoting the centre, and this year it has done a great deal of work in altering the inside of the centre structurally by pulling down some walls and converting the area into a large room where the elderly citizens meet, are provided with meals, read, or watch television. The committee has great plans for the centre.

I believe it will not be too many years before this centre will become one of the show centres of the senior citizens' association in Western Australia. With a committee as active as this one is, I have no doubt this will be achieved.

Over the last 12 months I have been hoping that in this year's Estimates we would see funds made available for the building of a new technical school at Bunbury. However, that is not to be the case. I understand the Fremantle Technical School has to be completed before a commencement can be made at Bunbury. I would like to point out to the Minister for Education that the site which the Bunbury Town Council has made available to the department for a tertiary education complex is now at the stage where—as a result of the opening of a section of the ring road last week by the Minister for Works—there will be access from the road.

I hope that by next year we will see the beginning of a technical school in the Bunbury area to serve the Bunbury region. The present technical school has grown beyond all the expectations of the Education Department, and the coming year will see further growth because it will be expanded to take in the old primary school in Stirling Street. That school is to be taken over by the technical education division.

While still on the subject of education, I would like to point out to the Minister and to his officers that the Adams Road

Primary School—which is being constructed in about six phases—has been completed to the second stage. The Minister and his officers should watch this school very carefully, because of the very great development in housing in this residential area. If it is intended to phase the construction over six years, then there are still four more phases to be completed. If it is to be completed in four years I am sure that before that time is reached the school will be short of accommodation for primary children. I would advise the department to keep a close watch on the development taking place there, and on the number of children who could be attending that school in the near future.

One matter on which I have spoken in this House over the last two years, and of which I have made a good deal of study, is regional development. In active discussions with the Minister for Industrial Development and some of his departmental officers, the possibility of appointing regional promotion officers within the State was raised. The purpose of such officers is to assist the local authorities and the Department of Industrial Development, from which they will be appointed. These officers would be under the jurisdiction of the department and would obtain the views of the local residents as to how they could best promote their regions, and they would bring about liaison between the department, the community, and the local authorities.

I would like to place on record my appreciation of the assistance and advice I have received from the Minister himself and from his departmental officers. To them nothing seems to be too much trouble. On occasions after we have risen at night, and during my trips to Perth in the parliamentary recess, I have sat with them until 2 o'clock in the morning to discuss problems associated with regional development. On other occasions we have done the same in Bunbury.

As I have said, nothing seems to be too much trouble for them and they are a very helpful bunch of fellows who are only too willing to assist one and give advice to carry out research, where this is possible.

I am hopeful that the Minister will give consideration to making two appointments at the commencement of this scheme. I may be accused of being parochial, but I would suggest that one appointment be made to the south-west region and the other to the Geraldton region. I mention these two regions because they both have regional promotion committees operating. The south-west region is fairly closely settled, as far as country regions are concerned; but the Geraldton region, on the other hand, is more sparsely populated. They are very different types of regions, from the point of view of distance, size, and, as I mentioned earlier, population.

I should imagine one of the duties of these officers would be to compile the data necessary for a resources survey of the regions. As I have previously stated in this House, a resources survey would cover information as to the availability and price of land, power, housing, the workforce, the natural resources, the average weather and general conditions, the rainfall, the soil types, and the possible cultivation within the region.

If officers were appointed to these regions I believe that by being in direct contact with the local population they would obtain the best of knowledge. Let us face it: If a person is operating from the city he has only a limited knowledge of the region itself, but if he is living in the community, he is in closer touch with the people there.

I would like to see this inaugurated even if it is only on a trial basis for one or two years in order to see whether what I have just said is theoretical or whether it would work out in practice. It could be said that there should be some local participation so far as the employment of these officers is concerned; and I agree with that. If these officers are to work within a region, and assist the local residents and local authorities, perhaps the local authorities could be asked to participate in the regional development scheme and make a cash contribution, or contribute in some other way, to the upkeep of the officers concerned by way of a typist, or perhaps an office within the town from which the officers are operating.

One of these officers would operate from one town and radiate throughout the region. I believe this would provide a greater liaison between the Department of Industrial Development in the city, through its officers, down to the local community, and vice versa from the local community, back to the officer, and then to the department.

At the present time the department is producing some regional booklets; and two or three of them have been issued. I have seen two, one in regard to the Geraldton hinterland and the other in regard to the eastern hinterland. These booklets are of good quality, are easily read, and give quite a deal of information in regard to the areas with which they deal. I believe these booklets could be improved by the addition of another 15 or 16 pages which could give some of the general details of the resources of the area. A general survey of the regions could be undertaken—perhaps of the larger towns within the regions.

The statistics could include power prices, local authority rates, the price of land and water, educational facilities, population, workforce, health services, transport services, and housing, so far as availability is concerned, as well as the general cost of housing per square and the cost of industrial buildings per square. This could

serve as a guide to anyone overseas, in the Eastern States, or in any other part of the State who might anticipate setting up business within the particular region with which the booklet deals.

I suggest it would not cost a great deal to provide these extra pages which would make these booklets a first-class publication, providing a great amount of detail for those interested.

I believe that in the not too distant future the Crown Law Department could give consideration—and some officers I know are very hard to deal with—to commencing the building of regional offices in the larger country towns. This brings to mind the fact that although £15,000—that would now be \$30,000—was spent on the Bunbury Court House in 1962-63, it is now proving to be too small for the volume of work that is handled.

Mr. May: It is in the wrong place.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think there is a court house in Collie and no doubt the Bunbury Court House will remain where it is. It is a circuit court; and once every three months the circuit court sits in the regional towns. When the circuit court does sit in Bunbury the two girls who work in the court house as typists have to vacate their room for a week, or perhaps two weeks, because it is used as a jury room. These girls have to work on tables situated in the public office. Therefore there are five or six males working in the public office plus two females, making a total of eight. In addition to this, the clerk of courts goes in and out as his duties demand and this makes it a very crowded public office with very little room in which the staff can work.

Adjacent to where the court house is situated are several old buildings that belong to the Public Works Department. Possibly these buildings could be removed and a block of offices in which other departments could be housed could be erected on the site. I do not refer to Bunbury alone, because no doubt some of the other larger towns are experiencing the same problems regarding their court houses in particular, and other Government offices.

Over the past 12 months there has been much talk about a wood chip industry; and in today's issue of *The West Australian* there is an announcement that the Government is calling for applications from any company interested in supplying up to 500,000 tons of green wood chips per annum.

Before I get on to the subject of the harbour, I would like to mention that during last winter there was a near calamity as the levee banks of the Preston River were being undermined at a point a couple hundred yards east of what is known as Johnston's Bridge. Only because of the voluntary workers, and the sterling efforts of the employees of the Public Works

Department and the Harbours and Rivers Department was the area at Eaton able to be saved from being inundated.

If one looks at the Preston River from Johnson's Bridge to where it empties into the estuary, one will find about three loops because the river does not run straight. It takes three turns, and one of these comes right alongside what I think are called the No. 1 and No. 2 Cannington lines from the Bunbury power station.

After the last heavy winter rains, it was found that the banks were being eaten away and the water was getting near the two very big power lines. Consequently a great deal of sheet piling had to be done to stop this action taking place. The distance from the point where the levee banks were being undermined to the point where the river flows into the estuary is approximately 1 mile 30 chains; and I suggest some consideration should be given to developing this section of the Preston River along its present line, travelling approximately north and bringing it out into a bay in the estuary which I believe is called Vittoria Bay. This distance would be approximately 72 chains, which is less than a mile. This would take it about 50 feet from the edge of the estuary.

With regard to the harbour development, I asked some questions of the Minister last week as to whether some hydrographic surveys, etc., would be carried out in the Bunbury port and nearby areas; and, if so, the expected commencement and completion dates. The Minister replied that the surveys would be carried out commencing approximately the 23rd October, 1967. The completion date was expected to be prior to June, 1968. In view of the vast development which is taking place in the south-west region, I am hoping this survey will be completed well and truly before June, 1968.

Over a period the port trade at Bunbury has increased very rapidly, and it is interesting to note that the total trade of the port in 1963 was 583,004 tons; but by 1967 it had reached a total of 977,987 tons, which is an increase of about 68 or 70 per cent. Albany's tonnage was a little less, and Geraldton's a little more.

I believe that as this region grows, and perhaps more minerals are found within the south-west, in addition to the establishment of the proposed wood chip industry, the production from which could go through Bunbury—although not necessarily because this would depend on the companies—Bunbury will become a port used for bulk cargoes. With this in mind, and the present trend in shipping, which is the use of bigger ships to take greater loads to offset the rise in freight costs, greater depth will be required in the Bunbury area.

On particular tides at the moment, a ship of 29 ft. draught can use the land-backed

berths, although a 28 ft. 6 in. draught is the accepted maximum. The decision regarding ships of 29 ft. draught is left to the discretion of the harbourmaster who, on occasions, has exercised it. Generally, other than the No. 1 land-backed wharf, the two jetty berths are capable of taking ships with a draught of 28 ft. 6 in.; and then there is a decline back to the shore and only ships with a smaller draught can operate there.

Because of the surveys which are being conducted at present—and I had the opportunity to speak on this matter two years ago—I have made a study of some of the old plans submitted by various engineers of the Public Works Department. Speaking from memory one of the plans was submitted in 1907, followed by many others through to 1929. These showed that a sheltered harbour was possible in the estuary, but not a deep harbour. Thirty-foot contours appeared before hard rock was reached at 40 feet. I believe that the present surveys will reveal that berths to a depth of up to 40 feet will be possible in the harbour.

There is one problem, and this depends on where the development will take place. If the development were within the estuary on the western side of the mouth of the Preston River, a channel would have to be dredged from the entrance of the present harbour over the present turning circle, and back into a cutting which would have to be provided for the sheltered harbour. I certainly hope the survey will reveal some areas which may be deepened without great cost; although I think that this is wishful thinking because when rock is encountered, and this type of dredging is undertaken, it is quite costly.

However, perhaps a scheme similar to that adopted with regard to the north-west ports could be adopted in connection with Bunbury. The Government might possibly assist with concessions to companies which would use the port, and the companies, in turn, could assist in the port's development. I trust the Minister will give this matter consideration and hurry the project along so that within the next few years Bunbury will have a port with a depth greater than the present 29 feet.

Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. W. Hegney.

House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.