

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 2 October 1980

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

HEALTH: MENTAL

Electroconvulsive Therapy: Petition

DR DADOUR (Subiaco) [11.02 a.m.]: I wish to present a petition from 19 residents of Western Australia. I will shorten it because it is a very long submission. Briefly it calls for the banning of electroconvulsive therapy—shock treatment—in the State of Western Australia.

The petition conforms with the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly and I have certified accordingly.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

(See petition No. 23.)

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

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

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill was foreshadowed in *The West Australian* of 12 August when I stated that it was proposed to amend the land tax laws to cushion the impact of increases caused by inflation and big rises in land valuations.

Although a committee has been appointed to inquire into anomalies caused by inflation and valuation rises in rates, taxes, and charges related to land values, the Government could not wait till the inquiry was finished to move in the matter because of the urgent need to give some relief in this area.

Therefore, the object of the Bill now before the House is to give effect to the Government's announcement and to provide some relief for taxpayers, pending the report of the committee.

Essentially, the Bill is in two parts. Firstly, it will allow valuation increases to be phased in, and secondly, it will remove the current exemption limit of 2.0234 hectares—five acres—on residential land.

I will now comment in some detail on the proposed amendments.

Land tax assessments are based on the unimproved value of land which varies from time to time as a result of periodical revaluations.

These revaluations generally take place every three or four years for property situated in the metropolitan region and at a slightly longer period for property outside that area.

Because of the time lapse between these revaluations, the difference in value of a lot over a three to four-year period can, in some cases, be fairly substantial.

When that new value is adopted as the base for assessing land tax, the resulting increase in tax can be reasonably large also.

The Bill proposes to amend the relevant provisions of the present law so that valuation increases will be phased in over a period of three assessment years.

It is proposed that the amended arrangement will commence immediately; that is, for the current assessment year. Accordingly, because of the proposed "phasing in" of valuations, assessments to be issued in the current year will generally be much less than the assessments that ordinarily would have been issued had the full effect of the revaluations been applied.

As previously stated, the metropolitan region is revalued over a period of three to four years as, of necessity, it is not possible, at the present time, to revalue the whole area in any one year. Therefore, it is not practicable to consider any other period, other than the current assessment year, for the commencement of the phasing in of the valuation increases.

In addition, because of the substantial amount of revenue that would be involved, the adoption of any earlier date is not financially feasible.

Furthermore, to have used any other starting point would have created serious administrative problems.

It is relevant to note that because of the provisions of the Act, it is not feasible to introduce a percentage limit for the increase in assessments, as has been done for some other rating charges.

As it is, the cost to revenue for the current year is estimated to be about \$5.3 million and the full effect of the phasing in programme will be some \$33.1 million by the time the programme is completed.

The second measure proposed by this Bill is to completely remove the present limit of 2.0234 hectares—five acres—applicable to owner-occupied residential land.

This will mean now that any one lot, irrespective of the area of that lot, upon which the owner resides, will be exempt from tax.

The proposal will eliminate the inequitable situation that now exists between owners of residentially-occupied land of an area less than 2.0234 hectares and those owners who reside on a lot in excess of that area.

Currently, owner-occupiers of land in excess of 2.0234 hectares receive an exemption for that area and are liable to tax on the remainder of that land. However, this is considered to be inequitable when the land is used only for the same purpose; that is, the residence of the owner.

The proposed amendment will overcome this anomalous situation. In addition, the proposed amendment will cure automatically the situation that confronts a taxpayer with limited financial means, who is required to pay the tax on the area in excess of 2.0234 hectares and who, for one reason or another, is unable or unwilling to subdivide his land.

Under this proposal it will mean that all owner-occupied residences will be exempt and it will matter not whether the area, the value, or the location differs from one person to another or whether one person wishes to live on a normal lot near the city while another chooses a different lifestyle and resides on a somewhat larger lot in the outer metropolitan region.

The main aim of the proposal is to exempt the lot upon which the owner resides and this will be achieved by the Bill now before the House.

Mr Davies: Is there any proposal to say which is to be the residential home in a case where people have two homes, or is it left for the department to decide?

Sir CHARLES COURT: That situation applies now. Quite a lot of people have two and sometimes three residences, but they must nominate one as their permanent, normal residence. For instance, many people have a normal home in the metropolitan suburbs and have another home equal to it at a seaside resort, such as Mandurah. Such people have to demonstrate to the commissioner which is their normal home; in other words, their bona fide home.

However, in order to prevent taxpayers from taking unfair advantage of the proposed extension of the present residential exemption, the Bill will also include a provision to retrospectively tax land in excess of 2.0234 hectares, which is subsequently subdivided after residential exemption has been allowed.

It is proposed that any assessment raised under this provision will be for a maximum period of five years from the 1980-81 assessment year. In other words, that is the current assessment year in which we are involved at the moment.

The proposal will be similar to that provision which currently exists in the legislation for religious and educational institutions. In these cases, the institutions are presently required to pay five years' taxes on the land previously reserved for an exempt purpose and exempted from land tax, but which is subsequently sold.

As was done in 1976 when inserting the exemption provision in the law for those institutions, the assessment of tax will be phased in. Currently, tax is assessed on land owned as at 30 June each year. Therefore, if exemption was granted for that land and subsequently in the 1980-81 assessment year, the land was subdivided, then only one year's tax would be raised. If subdivision took place in the next year, two years' taxes would be raised and so on until the maximum period of five years is attained.

The person liable for the tax is to be the owner of the property on the day the approval of the Chairman of the Town Planning Board is endorsed on the plan or diagram of the subdivision. It would not be desirable or practicable to raise this tax against the previous owner or owners of the property, who were entitled to and enjoyed the benefit of the exemption provision, while the land was being used only as their residence.

Therefore, the tax is to be levied against the person who is to use the land, or the surplus area, for a purpose other than his residence.

However, under this provision, tax will be payable only on the lesser of the subdivided area in excess of 2.0234 hectares or the subdivided area which does not contain the residence. In other words, the present area of 2.0234 hectares will not be subject to the arrears of tax. However, after the time of the subdivision, assessments in accordance with the provisions of the Act will be raised on the area of subdivided land, with the exception of the lot upon which the residence is located.

For example, a "residential" landowner, presently not liable for tax, who subdivides his half-hectare residential property into two lots, would not be assessed for five years' back tax on the second lot as his property does not exceed the 2.0234 hectares but would be subject to "normal" land tax until that block is sold.

Similarly, in the case of a "residentially" exempted 10 hectare lot, were the subdivided land

to be nine hectares, leaving a residence on one hectare, then the arrears of tax would be assessed only on 7.98 hectares—10 hectares minus 2.02 hectares—although future land tax assessments would be raised on the subdivided portion of nine hectares.

Furthermore, the tax will be levied only in those years in which the land was wholly or partially exempted. In addition, the tax is to be calculated on the basis that it is the only land owned.

The normal principle of aggregation will not apply in these cases, as it would not only be unfair to the taxpayer but it would also be administratively impracticable because of the many changes in land ownership that occur from year to year.

The tax to be levied will be based on the unimproved value adopted for land tax purposes as at 30 June for each year of assessment.

Provision has been made in the Bill for a reduced tax assessment if the subdivided property has been in receipt of a partial exemption. I think members will appreciate the necessity to provide for the possible subdivision of a large area which has been exempted because it has a residence on it. Members will find on examination that the method of taxing that land once the subdivision is agreed to, is a fair and equitable one which treats the owners at the time the subdivision is agreed to in a sensible way.

The proposed legislation will not require a landowner to advise the commissioner that land is subdivided as he will already be in possession of that information but it will be necessary in the ordinary course of events for a taxpayer to advise the commissioner of any alteration to his land ownership as at 30 June each year.

Should a prospective subdivider wish to ascertain the tax liability in these cases, the commissioner will, upon being requested, supply the appropriate certificate of tax liability.

The cost of the proposed concession, based on 1979-80 assessment is estimated to reduce land tax collections by some \$150 000 in this financial year.

On this point, it should also be noted that under section 41 of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act, properties which are subject to land tax are also liable for metropolitan region improvement tax.

Consequently, the new residential exemption provision of the Bill will also impact on metropolitan region improvement tax collections at an estimated cost for 1980-81 of \$50 000.

Similarly, provision is to be made to assess arrears of this tax, as is the case for land tax, by the introduction of another Bill.

As already stated, the Bill will provide immediate and considerable relief to those taxpayers affected in this current assessment year and will ultimately benefit all taxpayers. In the meantime, in accordance with my promise, no assessments will issue until the proposed changes to the law have been approved by this House and, of course, by the Parliament.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

METROPOLITAN REGION TOWN PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [11.19 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

As already explained in the second reading speech for the Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill, it is necessary, as a consequence of proposed amendments to that Act, also to effect an amendment to this legislation.

Under the provisions of the current law, metropolitan region improvement tax is levied on all land within the metropolitan region, which is subject to land tax and for efficiency and economy of operations, both taxes are raised by the issue of the one assessment notice.

Presently, the Act imposes tax on the person who is the owner of the land as at 30 June each year, which is similar to the current provisions for the assessment of land tax. However, under the proposed amendment to the Land Tax Assessment Act, tax is to be levied, under certain conditions, upon an owner at another point in time, which is to be the date that a subdivision is approved.

Therefore, it is necessary to amend this law to enable metropolitan region improvement tax to be assessed, in these special cases, against the "owner" of a property at any time other than 30 June.

This will not only then ensure the continuity of the existing assessment arrangement but in addition will enable some of the revenue that will be forgone by the proposed widening of the residential exemption provision in the Land Tax Assessment Act, to be recovered.

Members will appreciate this legislation flows on from the previous Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier)
[11.22 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is introduced for a two-fold purpose. Firstly, the present description of the Department of the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia handling the general banking business of the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia is the Rural Department. The effect of the Bill is to amend the description of the Rural Department to the General Banking Department.

The present description of the department as the Rural Department causes confusion to overseas bankers and financial institutions and it is anticipated that the amendment of the department's description will obviate this.

The second purpose of the Bill is to amend section 40 of the Act by repeal of the present section and re-enactment of it in order to permit the commissioners to have the authority to approve loans to staff. This changes the present procedure of requiring the Governor approving such individual loans to a staff member on recommendation of the Minister responsible for the administration of the bank's Act.

The proposed re-enactment of section 40 requires that loans to commissioners be approved by the Governor upon recommendation by the Minister responsible for the bank. Subsection (2) of the proposed re-enactment further provides that no loan to a commissioner shall be on terms more favourable than a loan available to a staff member.

However, the commissioners may approve loans to staff within guidelines fixed by the Minister responsible for the bank under subsection (8) of the proposed re-enacted section 40. It is further proposed by subsections (5) and (6) that the commissioners may delegate the authority for approval of loans to an appropriate officer of the bank. In practice, it is proposed that this power shall be delegated to a senior officer responsible for the supervision of staff. The staff member to whom such power is delegated by the commissioners will still require approval by the Minister.

Subsection (8) of the proposed section 40 provides the means by which the Minister shall fix the maximum amount of any loan made by the bank to staff.

Subsection (9) permits the staff and commissioners of the bank to conduct credit business with the bank.

As the aspect of loans to commissioners is now covered by section 40 it is necessary to amend section 17 subsections (1)(c) and (2) and the amendments in clause 5 have this effect.

I should explain that in the light of experience it has been found the present system of having all loans to members of the staff of the Rural and Industries Bank approved by the Governor-in-Executive-Council is somewhat cumbersome. The bank has grown considerably since the present legislation was enacted and, in the light of experience and having regard for the practices in other banks, it was felt the time had come when the authority to approve such loans should be vested in the commissioners.

Members will notice we are not giving this responsibility to the people who are doing the day-to-day banking business of the bank, therefore we avoid a situation where an officer could approve a loan to himself, or to his spouse. In those cases, it will be in the hands of the commissioners, who, in turn, will have some limits fixed on them by the new, re-enacted section.

Members will also notice that care has been taken to provide that any loans which involve the commissioners themselves and their spouses must follow the existing procedures. I believe that is a sensible division of responsibilities.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

BUSINESS FRANCHISE (TOBACCO) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [11.27 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill now before the House is one of the proposals contained in the Budget.

The Bill to amend the Business Franchise (Tobacco) Act is in keeping with the Government's aim of eliminating anomalies and inequities from taxing legislation and, whenever and wherever possible, to ease the burden of taxpayers and small businesses, in particular.

This Bill is the result of an examination of the legislation by the State Taxation Department and is in accordance with the Government's policy of continually reviewing and updating its taxing legislation, as was the case last year when the House dealt with a Bill to amend the Stamp Act, arising out of a very comprehensive review of that legislation.

Turning now to the Bill before the House, it will be found that by the proposed amendments—

The annual \$10 licence fee payable by tobacco retailers will be abolished;

the \$1 fee payable for the transfer of a licence or the setting up of additional premises, or closing down of premises will be removed;

the Commissioner of State Taxation is to be allowed to refuse the issue or transfer of a licence; and

any person will be able to appeal to the Treasurer against the commissioner's decision not to issue or transfer a licence.

I shall now explain and comment upon each of the proposed changes. Under the present legislation, a "wholesaler" pays an annual licence fee of \$100 and in addition, a further fee of 10 per cent of the value of tobacco products sold in the State, based on a previous period. The fees payable by wholesalers comprise practically all of the revenue collected from this tax.

On the other hand, a "retailer" currently pays an annual fee of \$10. This is the fee which is to be abolished.

There is a third situation and this is the "retailer" who purchases a part of his tobacco products from an unlicensed wholesaler. By "unlicensed", I mean a wholesaler outside Western Australia.

In these cases, the retailer is required to pay an additional fee similar to that payable by wholesalers of 10 per cent of the value of tobacco products sold and which he has purchased from an unlicensed wholesaler.

The imposition of the additional fee in these particular cases is necessary in order to preserve equity as between taxpayers and also to protect the revenue. For these particular retailers, as with other retailers, the \$10 fee is to be abolished, but the additional 10 per cent fee is to remain.

A recent examination of the situation by the Commissioner of State Taxation has revealed that the revenue received from the \$10 fee is not comparable with the cost of keeping and updating records for some 4 700 retailers and the policing of requirements of the legislation to ensure that

all retailers hold a current licence. In addition, the legislation is inequitable inasmuch as the Act requires the payment of the same fee, irrespective of whether it be a store selling a large quantity of tobacco products or a small shop or club, which may sell only a few packets. Any increase in the amount of the fee is not justified.

The reasons outlined above apply equally to the proposal to remove the \$1 fee for the transfer of a licence or changes to premises by setting up or closing down an outlet.

The next proposed change is to enable the commissioner to withhold the issue or transfer of a licence should it be considered necessary to do so. Such a provision is contained in most corresponding legislation in other States, and is designed to combat in part the use of a tax avoidance scheme which has operated in the Eastern States for some time. Although the same scheme has not been noticed in Western Australia, it is appropriate that some machinery be provided readily to protect the revenue, should the situation arise.

The last proposed change is merely to enable any person to appeal to the Treasurer, should the commissioner unjustly withhold the issue or transfer of a licence.

The amended law will come into operation 28 days after the day on which it is assented to by the Governor.

The cost to revenue in a full financial year is estimated to be \$47 000. However, the effect on revenue for 1980-81 will be minimal as the \$10 licence fee is payable in advance and most of the licences have already been issued for the current year.

All in all, the Bill will remove some irksome charges and, in addition, the need for some 4 700 shopkeepers, club secretaries, and the like to apply annually to the commissioner for a licence to sell their tobacco products.

I commend the Bill to the House.

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

RURAL RELIEF FUND ACT REPEAL BILL

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier)
[11.32 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Farmers' Debts Adjustment Scheme became operative on 30 December 1930, and the principal legislation, the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act,

provided mainly for an extension of time in relation to the payment of debts through voluntary arrangements between farmers and their creditors. The growing realisation that this was inadequate for many necessitous farmers led to a Commonwealth-States conference at the end of 1934.

It was decided by this conference that farmers would be advanced money to enable them to effect composition arrangements with their creditors. To facilitate this the Commonwealth agreed to advance up to £12 million over a period of years to the States on an interest free basis. Each State agreed to provide legislative machinery; and this was done in Western Australia by the Rural Relief Fund Act, 1935.

This scheme, however, was not intended to supersede the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Scheme. Its purpose rather was to provide for the administration of the fund made available to the State from the Commonwealth and to issue stay orders to creditors where no voluntary arrangement had been reached under the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act.

The Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act lapsed in 1972; but the Rural Relief Fund Act remains on the Statute book. It should now be repealed since its functions have been overtaken by the Rural Adjustment Scheme. Further, the Commonwealth legislation, to which the State legislation was complementary, has been repealed by the Loan (Farmers' Debts Adjustment) Repeal Act 1979.

On behalf of the Minister for Agriculture, I commend the Bill to the House.

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

FIREARMS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Minister for Police and Traffic) [11.36 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to achieve two purposes. The first purpose is to provide authority for the making of regulations as to the penalty to be applied against persons who do not renew their firearm licences on or before the expiry date of those licences. The present penalty is \$20. It is proposed to increase that penalty to \$24. However, because it is considered inappropriate that whenever an increase is sought to the amount of a minor penalty such as this, the matter must be brought to Parliament by way of a Bill, the present proposal is that a change may be made by regulation.

The second part of the Bill is of great importance. It is the firm policy of the Government, and has been for many years under successive Governments, that the availability of firearms should be regulated strictly to ensure a proper level of protection for the community from the misuse of firearms. This policy is pursued in the full knowledge that it will not totally succeed, but it is believed that it contributes in a material way to maintaining the lowest possible level of violence in the community.

In June of this year, the Government became aware that particular types of high powered firearms were entering the State, in some cases for the first time. The firearms in question can be described as having certain identifiable characteristics. They are all light and portable, easy to handle in confined spaces, capable of being shot from the hip with accuracy, in some cases capable of being fitted with a bayonet, and in all cases for use with a projectile which has the velocity to penetrate a double brick wall with only a few shots.

The weapons in question are identified by possessing three particular qualities. They are—

- (a) centre fire;
- (b) automatic or semi-automatic; and
- (c) capable of bulk reloading by use of a magazine with a capacity of eight or more rounds of ammunition.

The ready convertibility of the semi-automatic versions of these firearms from semi-automatic to fully automatic is also of concern. Although requiring some technical expertise, the conversion can be carried out in as little as 1½ hours. Although some of the weapons are presented by the manufacturer with small magazines, larger magazines of 20 and more shots are available on a mail order basis. As the expenditure rate of ammunition can be 10 shots in one second, 15 shots in two seconds, 20 shots in three seconds, and 30 shots in five seconds, the possible use of larger magazines with these automatic and semi-automatic weapons is therefore of itself a major concern.

The Government is not convinced that there is any legitimate basis upon which the civilian population of Western Australia can justify the holding of weapons which are essentially of a military or para-military nature and capable of incredible devastation in the event of misuse. It is possible, and it occurs, that all types of firearms are at some time or other misused by criminals, deranged people, and sometimes simply by the irresponsible. In the case of the weapons now in question, it appears to the Government that

justification is needed for their availability to any person; and that justification has not been established.

It is not considered appropriate within the framework of the Bill now presented to legislate by nominating the particular firearms to be prohibited. Experience has shown that similar types of firearms are brought onto the market almost immediately with the clear intention of evading the net of legislation of that kind. Therefore, the Bill seeks a regulation-making authority to prohibit the licensing of such firearms in Western Australia.

It is the intention of the Government to prohibit the following weapons immediately—

- .223 Colt AR15—3 Licensed now
- .223 Ruger Mini 14—34 Licensed now
- .30 Calibre US Carbine Mk1—122 Licensed now
- M14—2 Licensed now
- 7.62mm. FN.SLR L1A1—2 Licensed now
- .223 HNK—None licensed
- 30/06 Rifle M.1 Gorand—4 Licensed now
- 7.62mm. H&K—1 Licensed now

Similar types of firearms which have not yet become available in Western Australia will certainly be prohibited when they come to the notice of the police and the Government.

It is understood that these prohibitions will not find favour with some sporting shooters. It is the considered opinion of the Government that professional shooters, hunters, and sporting shooters have a wide range of suitable firearms of similar calibres available to satisfy their needs.

A small number of the weapons in question already have been licensed in Western Australia. Consistent with my announcement at the time, I emphasise that the regulations to be made under this Bill if enacted will not apply retrospectively.

The regulations will provide for those weapons of the categories in question already licensed to become prohibited weapons at a future date when a licence falls due for renewal.

The regulatory action to be taken under this Bill, if enacted, is restrained and limited to the prohibition of certain weapons which are in reality military or quasi-military or, in some special circumstances, necessary in the hands of law enforcement authorities.

Mr Speaker, I have here an example of what I am talking about. I have a piece of annealed spring steel through which a number of shots have gone, having been fired by one of the weapons in question from a distance of 60 metres. When we consider that some of these weapons can fire 30

rounds in five seconds, the damage to this steel is the reason the Government and the police are concerned. This is the reason we do not believe there is a need for anyone in Western Australia, whether they be sporting shooters or professional shooters, to have such weapons. Of course, that does not include the military or para-military, or any law enforcement agencies dealing with terrorism. I ask that this piece of steel be laid on the Table of the House until the end of the debate or some other limited period. The test was conducted at the police firing range and it is decisive evidence of the basis of our concern.

I commend the Bill to the House.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the piece of steel be laid upon the Table of the House for the balance of this day's sitting, for the information of members.

Mr HASSELL: I seek leave to table for information purposes, photographs of the firearms to which I have referred.

The photographs were tabled (see paper No. 297).

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr T. H. Jones.

POLICE AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR HASSELL (Cottesloe—Minister for Police and Traffic) [11.45 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill sets out to amend areas in the Police Act which have caused concern in relation to general administration and application of the Police Act. It seeks to amend sections 16 and 34 of the Act which provide for the appointment of special constables.

Over the years, it has been found difficult to recruit supervisors and assistants to perform the functions necessary in running Police Boys Clubs. However, when these persons are available from within the community, their services are obtained and they are usually made "special constables" so that they can perform part of their duties in a police uniform.

Similarly, non-police musicians are sometimes inducted as members of the Police Pipe Band so as to have a functional number of band personnel. These persons then wear the Police Pipe Band uniform and to allow for this are either made "special constables" or simply wear the uniform.

The Government does not consider—and this view is supported by the Law Reform Commission—that a civilian should be appointed

as a "special constable" with all the powers, obligations, and privileges of a police officer merely for the purpose of enabling the wearing of a police uniform on specific occasions of formality or ceremony. Accordingly, the Bill provides for power to be conferred on the Commissioner of Police to permit limited use of police uniforms by non-policemen.

Power is also contained within the Bill for a stipendiary magistrate or two or more justices, upon the oath of any credible person, to appoint special constables in the event of any civil emergency.

Mr Davies: You put an emphasis on "credible".

Mr HASSELL: It is a word which has been used in legislation over the years. It has been the habit to use that sort of word, and everyone has thought people knew what it meant.

Present provisions within the Police Act allow this to occur—the appointment of special constables—only when any tumult, riot, or felony has taken place or may be reasonably apprehended in any place. The proposal is to extend that to the situation of a civil emergency.

The Bill provides also for regulations to be made to prescribe fees that may be charged for the issue of certificates for the provision of services, including the services of escorts or guards. This is merely to clarify a practice that has been in operation for the last 20 years or so, and has been followed with the knowledge and consent of previous Governments. It is not a new fund-raising exercise. I understand there may be some minor increases in fees involved which are in line with inflation.

Contained also within this Bill are provisions to create the offence of "trespass". It is generally believed within our community that such an offence does exist. It does exist in all other States in one form or another, but not in Western Australia.

The police are frustrated in the performance of their duties where persons enter a property and refuse to leave. Present law gives the owner or occupier of those premises, or a police officer requested to assist, power to remove those persons, but any police officer in so doing is acting only as a civilian and not given the protection the law gives a police officer.

Occasions have arisen recently where "passive occupations" of offices have taken place by groups wishing to register physical protest for

some purpose or another. Whilst not denying the right of free speech, disruption of the kind experienced cannot and will not be condoned.

Of serious consideration also are occasions that frequently occur when persons "gate crash" household parties. In those circumstances, police can only assist the occupier to remove the persons, and after having removed them to the street, let them free, no doubt to return later. The police act only as civilians.

The alternative, of course, is to wait for the "trespassers" to vandalise property, or assault some person, so they can be arrested and charged, as they should have been able to be shortly after they entered the property and refused to leave.

In the view of the Government, the offence of trespass should not arise unless and until the offenders are given a warning, requiring them to leave the land or premises.

Only when the offenders fail to heed the warning to leave will they commit the offence the Bill seeks to create.

The Bill provides that in the case of premises owned or occupied by the Crown or a public authority the warning may be given by a person in charge of the premises or by a member of the Police Force.

In the case of premises other than premises occupied by the Crown or a public authority, including private land and buildings, the warning may be given by the owner or a person in charge or occupation of the premises or by a member of the Police Force.

This Bill also provides for implementation of Government party policy, announced during the last election, whereby persons who destroy or damage any property whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs are to be deprived of their claim of "lack of intent".

It is a sorry day when a person who stupefies himself either by alcohol or drugs is completely freed of any criminal liability for damage he causes to another person's property by reason of his intoxication. The Bill proposes to remove the defence of lack of intention.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr T. H. Jones.

APPROPRIATION BILL (GENERAL LOAN FUND)

Second Reading

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Treasurer) [11.53 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of this Bill is to appropriate sums from the General Loan Fund to finance certain capital expenditure items as detailed in the Loan Estimates.

Moneys paid into the General Loan Fund comprise new borrowings approved by the Australian Loan Council, Commonwealth Government grants for general capital purposes, repayments to the fund of various advances made in previous years and, from time to time, interest earnings from the short term investment of Public Moneys held in the Treasury.

The Loan Estimates are, of course, framed so as to reflect the Government's overall works program which takes into account other funds available. The other sources of funds include semi-governmental borrowings, certain Commonwealth Specific Purpose payments, the domestic funds of Government Instrumentalities, the Loan Council's infrastructure borrowings program and contributions from industry and property developers. These funds constitute the major proportion of the total capital funds available and are identified under each expenditure item of the Estimates in arriving at the proposed General Loan Fund allocations.

In addition, some funds of a capital nature received by the State are paid directly to authorities such as Main Roads Department and tertiary education institutions. The works financed from these funds are not included in the Estimates, but they do form part of the total capital works undertaken by the Government during the year.

Loan Council Programs

The June 1980 meeting of the Australian Loan Council was disappointing for the States. It was only because of the compelling case put forward by Premiers at the meeting that the Commonwealth Government yielded ground to the extent of granting five per cent extra on its original proposed allocation for the States' General Works Program.

The original Commonwealth Government proposal was to peg 1980-81 State programs at the 1979-80 level of \$1 245 million. Members will recall that there were minimal increases in the Loan Council allocations in 1976-77 and 1977-78, no increase in 1978-79 and the Commonwealth imposed a cut of 13.2% in 1979-80.

The final amount voted as general purpose capital funds for the States for 1980-81 at the meeting was \$1 307 million, as I have mentioned, a mere five per cent increase on the 1979-80 program.

Western Australia's share of this program is \$120.9 million, an increase of \$5.8 million on last year's figure. Of this total, \$80.6 million is a borrowing approval to be raised on our behalf by the Commonwealth Government and \$40.3 million a Commonwealth grant.

Though the five per cent increase eventually conceded by the Commonwealth Government was welcome, it is far short of the amount needed to cover even the basic cost increases of the past year. In fact, the funds for States' programs have been reduced in simple money terms from \$1 356 million in 1976-77 to the current year's level of \$1 307 million—a reduction of some 35% in real terms.

The five per cent concession by the Commonwealth on the General Works Program did not extend to the basic semi-governmental program for larger authorities. The 1980-81 allocation announced at the Loan Council meeting for this program was held at \$1 225 million, the same level as last year.

Western Australia's share of the total borrowing program for larger authorities will, therefore, remain at \$75 million in 1980-81. From this sum, an amount of \$7.7 million has been allocated to larger Local Government Authorities, leaving \$67.3 million available for the larger State semi-governmental authorities.

Apart from the basic semi-governmental borrowing program of \$75 million, the State will receive an amount of \$16 million as a continuation of the special temporary addition to our borrowing program for further work on the electric power project known as Muja 'C'.

Loan Council also approved in 1978-79 a special temporary addition to Western Australia's semi-governmental borrowing allocation for the upgrading of the Kwinana-Koolyanobbing railway. An amount of \$26.3 million will be borrowed for this purpose during the current financial year.

The funds available to the State under the new tier of infrastructure borrowings are approved by the Australian Loan Council for specific purposes associated with development projects. The main eligibility criteria under the Loan Council's guidelines are that a project put forward by a State Government must have special significance for development, be of national importance, contribute to the development of natural resources or provision of energy, help stimulate employment or contribute significantly to the conservation of petroleum-based fuels.

I have spoken to this Assembly on previous occasions of the needs and circumstances which led to the establishment of this class of borrowing. A new tier of borrowing it is called and that is what it was intended to be.

I therefore deeply regret the refusal to increase—and, in fact, last year cutting—the allocations to the States under other Loan Council programs because of the higher borrowings under this new provision.

A provision was quite deliberately included in the guidelines for infrastructure borrowings for them to be raised overseas if necessary. This was for the very sensible and practicable reason that the amounts in respect of major development projects could be so large that they could disrupt the Australian financial market if they were raised locally.

I fail to follow the reasoning of the Commonwealth Government in holding back allocations for our normal programs because of infrastructure borrowing approvals.

In seeking this new form of borrowing, I emphasised that the world economic situation had changed so dramatically since the sixties that, if Australia wanted major investment, Governments would have to provide its share of infrastructure. I find it puzzling, to say the least, that because State Government authorities now borrow for this purpose, the State's normal works programs have to be restrained because of their effect upon Commonwealth Government monetary policies. Yet, if private enterprises borrow the funds for exactly the same purpose, presumably those policies are not affected and our normal programs would not be cut in the way that they have been.

What the Commonwealth Government refuses to understand is that a State Government faces increased demands upon its normal capital resources at these times because of the multiplier effect generated by major investment projects.

Western Australia has received approval in principle for seven projects under the infrastructure program for amounts totalling one billion and thirty four million dollars (\$1 034 million) in 1980 dollar values. The projects are:—

- the natural gas pipeline from Dampier to Perth;
- integration of power supplies in the Pilbara;
- infrastructure for the Worsley alumina project;
- infrastructure associated with the North West shelf gas project;
- conversion of a further generator at the Kwinana power station to dual coal-gas firing;
- additional electricity generation by construction of Muja stage 'D';
- facilities at Jervoise Bay to aid construction for the North West gas field.

The proposed borrowings relating to these projects in 1980-81 is \$46.9 million.

Total borrowings by semi-governmental authorities under the larger authorities and infrastructure programs are, therefore, expected to amount to \$156.6 million and details of the distribution of this sum are set out in a Schedule to the Estimates.

The Loan Council does not limit the overall borrowings by "smaller" authorities, those whose individual new borrowings do not exceed \$1.2 million in a year. Smaller

semi-governmental authorities under this heading will raise a total of \$13.9 million in 1980-81 and details of how this sum is derived are also set out in a Schedule to the Estimates.

Commonwealth grants under Specific Purpose Programs for capital purposes have been estimated at \$59 million in 1980-81, an increase of \$4.4 million on the amount received last year. However, the four per cent increase in the funds approved for welfare housing, from \$26.1 million to \$27.2 million in 1980-81, is well below the annual inflation rate. The grants for the School Dental Scheme were frozen at 1979-80 levels.

Another important source of finance available for the overall works program is the domestic funds of Government authorities and instrumentalities. Depreciation plays a significant role in the generation of these funds and I feel that I should take this opportunity to make some comment about the treatment of depreciation by statutory authorities because of some ill-informed statements which have been made recently on the subject.

In accordance with normal commercial practice, depreciation is charged in the books of account of statutory authorities to recognise that part of the value of an asset estimated to be consumed each year in producing goods or services for the public. It is a perfectly logical and necessary practice to charge this annual cost to the operating expenses of the authority, just as is done in any private business in arriving at its profit for the year.

In fact to do otherwise would be irresponsible.

The initial purchase cost of the asset itself is, of course, not taken into account when arriving at the profit or loss for an accounting period because, in most cases, this would be impossible to absorb in one year—and it makes good sense to spread the cost over the working life of the asset.

Assets generally have to be paid for soon after they are delivered or built. The acquisition payment is recorded against the capital works program, the cash being obtained by borrowing or from the internal cash balances of the instrumentality.

An authority operating at or near a break-even situation generates internal cash balances by charging depreciation. Part of these balances are required each year for the repayment of loans obtained from the General Loan Fund or which may have been raised under semi-governmental borrowing programs in the past. The remainder forms part of the internal cash balances or domestic funds of the authority and is used to finance the purchase of new and replacement assets, which in turn will be subject to depreciation over their life.

Members will appreciate, however, that our principal long-term source of funds for capital works is borrowings, either from the General Loan Fund or under semi-governmental or infrastructure borrowings programs.

Members will recall that last year the State was able to channel the substantial amount of \$23.8 million from interest earnings from the short term investment of

Public Moneys held in the Treasury to bolster the General Loan Fund and thereby reduce the impact of the sharp reduction of 13.2% imposed by Loan Council in the general works program. The sum included \$5.7 million spent on the District Law Courts building.

As I mentioned, when I presented the Consolidated Revenue Fund Estimates on Tuesday, it has been necessary to take all of the interest earned on our short term investments in 1979-80 into the Consolidated Revenue Fund this financial year.

Only an amount of \$9.4 million from investment earnings prior to 1979-80 is available to supplement the General Loan Fund in 1980-81 which was earmarked for the District Courts building.

The total estimated cost of the District Courts building is \$23.8 million and, with the injection of the further sum of \$9.4 million from investment earnings this year, the cumulative input of funds from that source since 1977-78 will be \$20.5 million.

When the project commenced it was hoped that it would be able to be totally financed from interest from short term investments. This has not been possible because of escalation in the cost of the building and changed financial circumstances. Nevertheless the very significant proportion funded from this source is most satisfying.

The proposed expenditure from the General Loan Fund in 1980-81 is \$147.1 million, a reduction of \$5.3 million on last year's program.

The main reasons for the reduction are, as already explained, the sharp decrease in the funds from investment earnings we are able to apply to the loan program—\$9.4 million this year as against \$23.8 million in 1979-80—and a reduction in loan repayments.

Though no one would want unpleasant predictions to eventuate I remind Members that I sounded a note of caution last year during the Loan Estimates Speech and I emphasised that unless there was a substantial increase in Loan Council allocations we would face difficult problems in 1980-81. Unfortunately the Commonwealth's attitude on capital funds this year has justified the fears I expressed on that occasion.

With the funds available from the sources described, a total works program of \$528.4 million will be mounted this year, financed as follows:—

	\$ million
Proceeds of Commonwealth Loans	80.6
Commonwealth General Purpose Capital Grant	40.3
Receipts from Loan Repayments	13.4
Amount transferred from short term investment earnings	9.4
Balance in General Loan Fund at 30th June, 1980	3.3
Borrowings by State Authorities	123.6

	\$ million
Infrastructure borrowings	46.9
Commonwealth Specific Purpose Payments	59.0
Internal funds of Government Authorities	128.5
Other funds	23.4

The Government has made a determined effort to face up to the problems caused by the reduced level of funds available from the General Loan Fund and has formulated a balanced program of expenditure for 1980-81 despite the difficult circumstances.

The main thrusts are on energy development, water resources, hospitals, schools and prisons. The program reflects, as far as was practicable, the Government's determination to give maximum stimulation to employment.

I would now like to refer to some of the details of the capital works program. In most cases the specific works to be undertaken are set out in the Estimates and it is therefore unnecessary for me to comment on all items. I will therefore confine my remarks to some of the highlights of the program. Members, of course, will have the opportunity if they wish to obtain further details from appropriate Ministers during the debate on the Estimates.

State Energy Commission

Proposed capital expenditure by the State Energy Commission is estimated to rise by 23% to \$165.7 million in 1980-81. This represents 31% of the State's total capital works program.

In excess of 54% of these funds will be raised by the Commission by borrowings under the semi-government loan program augmented by special infrastructure borrowing approvals again this year.

The Commission is our largest borrowing authority and provides a service vital to the prosperity of Western Australia. I am sure Honourable Members would agree that the provision of adequate energy supplies is crucial to ensure a growing and diversified industrial base in the State.

In particular the Government is aware of the increasing overseas interest in undertaking greater processing of our mineral resources here and of the employment opportunities which will flow from this increased activity.

To accommodate this interest, particularly in the establishment of an aluminium smelter, it is essential that the existing energy base be expanded and generating and distribution economies are achieved wherever possible. Moreover, in view of the long lead times in constructing or converting power stations we must act now to rationalise and expand generating capacity.

On this point, it is relevant to note that Western Australia suffers disadvantages in energy production and distribution compared with other States. Greater distances,

lower population density and a previous lower level of known energy resources have led to a higher dependence in the past on imported oil as a fuel. As a result, escalating oil prices and volatility of exchange rates have had a greater impact on energy costs in Western Australia and this in turn has led to urgent action being taken by the S.E.C. to minimise the adverse effects on consumers.

It is for these reasons that the Commission's capital works program is largely directed towards the expansion of coal fired capacity and the substitution of local coal and gas resources for more expensive fuel oil.

The State has been assisted in this regard in the longer term by the Commonwealth Government's response to our submissions under the infrastructure financing arrangements.

Honourable Members will be aware that the following energy related projects have been approved under the new infrastructure program—which program was introduced in response to an initiative from the Western Australian Government:—

- the Kwinana power station conversion;
- additional power generating facilities at Muja (Muja 'D');
- the integration of power supplies in the Pilbara;
- Dampier/Perth gas pipeline.

Following the conversion of two 200 megawatt units at the Kwinana power station to dual coal/oil burning—which resulted in savings estimated at \$20 million a year—work will commence this year on the conversion of a further two 120 megawatt units. An amount of \$7.5 million has been allocated for this purpose and the total project is estimated to cost \$39.1 million. When completed, additional fuel savings in the order of \$12 million per annum are anticipated.

Muja power station Stage 'C' provides for the addition of 400 megawatts to the energy capacity of the interconnected system. The first of the 200 megawatt units will be fully operational in January 1981 and the second is planned to be in service twelve months later. An amount of \$30.6 million has been provided in the Commission's budget for this undertaking in the current year.

To meet the projected energy requirements of large scale industrial and mineral processing developments—including a possible aluminium smelter—further extensions to Muja are to be undertaken using the Collie coal resources. Muja Stage 'D' involves another 400 megawatts of generating capacity, comprising two 200 megawatt units, to be installed at an estimated total cost of \$236 million. In 1980-81, \$12.2 million has been allocated to allow this project to commence.

When completed Muja Stages 'C' and 'D' will represent a 58% increase in the Commission's generating capacity.

Special infrastructure borrowings will permit work associated with the Pilbara region power integration project and the Dampier to Perth gas pipeline amounting to \$22 million to be undertaken in 1980-81. The planned integration of power supplies in the Pilbara will enable a more rational use of resources and greatly assist further development of the region.

The provision of a guaranteed supply of natural gas to the South-West of Western Australia will act as a catalyst to the further expansion of large scale industry in the area. Of particular note are the improved prospects for mineral processing that will result from this development.

Progress on the Dampier/Perth pipeline project is proceeding as planned. The Pipeline Projects Office, responsible for the co-ordination of the project, is now operational and engineering and financial consultants have been appointed. Most construction expenditure on the pipeline is expected to be incurred in 1982-83 and 1983-84 as work accelerates to meet the timetable for the first delivery of gas onshore in the second half of 1984.

Quite apart from those major projects the S.E.C. plans to spend an amount of \$41.6 million on the extension and upgrading of subtransmission and distribution systems and the reticulated gas system. These expenditures are part of an ongoing program to ensure that a high standard of service to Western Australians is maintained.

Under the Country Towns Assistance Scheme, \$3.4 million will be expended in 1980-81 for the provision and maintenance of electricity supplies for 24 country towns throughout Western Australia.

The Government will continue to support research work into the provision of alternative power supplies in remote country areas under the Energy Commission's Remote Area Power Supply Investigation projects by the expenditure of a further \$0.5 million in 1980-81.

Solar energy demonstration projects at Meekatharra and Ballajura will be under construction during the year as well as a further wind power installation at Rottnest Island.

Hospital and Health Services

The efforts of the Metropolitan Hospitals Development and Review Committee to rationalise the hospital building program is already paying dividends. The input of the Government appointed committee and the specialist hospital consultant on the programming of major projects has helped reduce expenditure this year.

Although as anticipated, capital expenditure on hospitals peaked in 1979-80, the committee and consultant have worked towards rationalising overall hospital requirements in the metropolitan area, critically appraising standards and streamlining the building program in 1980-81 and future years.

As a result, the General Loan Funds requirement for hospital buildings in 1980-81 has been estimated at \$25 million compared to last year's expenditure of \$40.6 million from the same source. However, it has been necessary again this year to utilise the Lotteries Commission contribution of \$5.4 million to supplement the funds for hospital capital works rather than apply it to hospital operating costs.

The total program of works on hospitals to be carried out this financial year is planned to be \$31 million.

The sizes of individual hospital projects have been cut back in the rationalisation process but the 1980-81 proposed allocation will maintain a satisfactory level of capital works at hospitals.

The program has been designed to ensure that building can continue on major works already under construction and that a start can be made on some new high priority hospital projects.

Amounts totalling \$19.9 million have been allocated to complete the podium and ward block at the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and the South Terrace additions to the Fremantle Hospital. This will enable these two major projects to be commissioned early in 1981-82.

Other major projects programmed for completion this year are stage 1 of the redevelopment of Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital, the replacement hospital at Donnybrook and major additions at Three Springs Hospital. A provision of \$630 000 has also been made this year to finalise expenditure on the new Wanneroo Hospital which was officially opened recently.

The recasting of the requirements for the patient services block at Princess Margaret Hospital was a direct result of a proposal put to the Hospital Board by the specialist consultant. The anticipated cost of that stage of the hospital's redevelopment was thus substantially reduced and will allow work to commence on the project in 1980-81. An amount of \$1.5 million has been allocated for this purpose.

The consultant was able to effect substantial savings in other directions by rescheduling equipment and furnishing requirements for both Sir Charles Gairdner and Fremantle Hospitals and changing to bulk purchase ordering where practicable.

The savings generated helped in the framing of a moderate program of new hospital projects and additional works including:—

- * The north block at Royal Perth Hospital (\$2.1 million proposed allocation)
- * Stage 2 of the redevelopment at Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital (\$200 000)

- * Planning and preliminary construction work on a hospital at Karratha to serve the Nickol Bay region of the Pilbara. The need for the new hospital is linked with the development of the North West gas project. An amount of \$250 000 has been proposed this year in the Estimates for work on this hospital.

Work will also commence on a new outpatient centre and hydrotherapy pool at Royal Perth (Rehabilitation) Hospital and an amount of \$424 000 has been provided for the project in 1980-81.

A hydrotherapy pool is also incorporated in a new rehabilitation unit planned for Albany Regional Hospital. Fund-raising efforts by the local hospital auxiliary for the hydrotherapy pool are expected to generate a contribution of \$75 000 towards the estimated expenditure of \$155 000 on the project in 1980-81.

Under the Community Health Program funds totalling \$383 000 have been provided in 1980-81 to complete centres at Dalwallinu, Bremer Bay and Manning and for extensions at the Karratha and Busselton centres.

The additions at the Southwell, Koondoola and Queens Park pre-primary child health complexes are also to be completed this year at an estimated cost of \$105 000. An allocation of \$45 000 has been made for the construction of staff accommodation at Lake Varley and \$85 000 for nurses accommodation at Derby.

The injection of a further \$362 000 into the development of the Schools Dental Scheme will ensure that primary school children virtually throughout the State have access to dental care services this year. The funds have been allocated for additional fixed and mobile dental therapy centres in primary schools and modifications to the central bulk store that services them.

The process of rationalising the provision of pathology services in the State is continuing with the State Health Laboratory Services and teaching hospitals co-operating in a number of areas. The north block at the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre will have laboratory facilities for clinical chemistry, histopathology, haematology and related areas and will be used by the State Health Laboratory Services, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and the University of Western Australia.

An allocation of \$751 000 will enable construction to commence this year on the laboratory services facility in the north block. Alternative temporary accommodation for existing facilities in the area while the additional construction is under way is to be provided and an allocation of \$150 000 is proposed for this purpose.

The Animal Resources Centre at Murdoch University, which is being funded jointly by the State and Commonwealth Governments, is scheduled to be completed this year. The centre is being erected on the university campus adjacent to the Veterinary School to breed small animals for research and clinical laboratory work. The total cost of the centre is estimated at \$2.1 million. An amount of \$1.5 million for the completion costs has been included in this year's Estimates.

A statutory body is to be set up to administer the centre which will be used jointly by tertiary education institutions, Department of Agriculture, Public Health Laboratories and teaching hospital laboratories.

Steady progress is being made with the plans to replace the existing Swanbourne Hospital. One more stage of the overall relocation process will come to fruition when the Bennett Brook complex is completed early in 1981 to accommodate patients to be transferred from Swanbourne. The new complex will provide residential and training facilities for 66 intellectually handicapped persons.

An amount of \$770 000 has been included in a proposed works program totalling \$1.7 million for Mental Health Services in 1980-81 to complete the Bennett Brook complex.

The recently completed 60 bed intensive therapy ward at Graylands Hospital will also accommodate patients from the "security ward" in the Swanbourne Hospital and the transfer of patients is planned to take place in November. The new Graylands building incorporates the most modern concepts for the care, treatment and training of severely disturbed psychiatric patients. A provision of \$142 000 has been made in 1980-81 to finalise expenditure on the new block.

The Irrabeena Centre in West Perth, which provides assessment, treatment and referral facilities for intellectually handicapped persons from all parts of the State, was completed in November 1979. The overall cost of the project was higher than estimated last year and a provision of \$350 000 has been allowed in 1980-81 to meet the final carryover expenditure.

Corrections

The Government is giving effect to the staged implementation of a program to upgrade or replace existing prison facilities throughout the State. The five-year program was proposed by an interdepartmental committee set up to devise a plan to improve prison facilities throughout the State. Its recommendations were wholly endorsed by the Government earlier this year.

The four member committee inspected all Department of Corrections institutions in the State paying particular regard to the following factors:—

- (A) age and general physical condition of buildings;
- (B) accommodation;
- (C) health and hygiene standards;
- (D) security;
- (E) the role of farms and workshops for prisoner activities;
- (F) the financing of maintenance works.

The final recommendations by the committee for the improvement and upgrading of the prison system were based on a regional concept and contained

comprehensive details of the physical works program required to give effect to them over five years.

The committee's recommendations were adopted by the Government and have been programmed for implementation over the period from 1979-80 to 1983-84.

The program reflects the Government's previously stated policy to develop maximum security facilities at Canning Vale to eventually replace Fremantle prison as the State's principal maximum security unit. It also provides for the rationalisation of the entire prison system on a regional basis, indicating areas where facilities need to be closed or upgraded and the centres which require new prisons.

The committee recommended that, in the first three years of the five-year program, a comprehensive list of works be implemented covering general improvements and health and security aspects at institutions. This program is to be financed from both the Capital and Revenue Budgets.

The proposed capital expenditure of \$9.7 million in 1980-81 from the works program for the Department of Corrections is indicative of the Government's firm intention to improve the prison system. The allocation represents an increase of \$4.1 million on the expenditure in 1979-80, the first year of the long range program.

The 1980-81 program is dominated by the medium security unit, comprising 248 cells, being built at Canning Vale. Construction work on the unit, estimated to cost a total of \$11 million, commenced in November 1979 and is scheduled to be ready for occupancy in October 1981. Expenditure on the project is expected to peak this year at \$8.1 million.

The overall medium security complex will comprise four main cell blocks each with four wings, services areas, workshop, administration block and accommodation for ten senior staff officers.

The plans have special regard for security with provision of high concrete perimeter walls, watch towers and electronic monitoring equipment.

The workshop will include facilities for sheetmetal, woodwork and automotive repair trades and it is planned that the laundry unit will also serve certain other departmental institutions in the metropolitan area.

On completion, the medium security unit at Canning Vale will greatly help to relieve the overcrowding in other prisons.

The overcrowding at Fremantle prison was alleviated when prisoners were transferred to the 98 cells at the new C. W. Campbell Remand Centre at Canning Vale in June this year. The separate central kitchen and store block, built at the same time as the Remand Centre, is capable of servicing the whole Canning Vale prison complex, including the medium and maximum security units and the work release section.

The special maximum security unit will be the third stage of development of the Canning Vale complex and the 1980-81 program includes an allocation of \$288 000 for design work. Construction work is expected to start in 1981-82.

Forty prisoners will be accommodated in the work release section and an amount of \$50 000 has been allocated in the program for initial construction work to start in 1980-81.

Other important works being undertaken in the 1980-81 program include:—

- * Completion of Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison—The total cost of the new minimum security prison is estimated at \$1 million and an amount of \$565 000 has been provided to meet the completion costs this year. The gaol will accommodate 60 male and 22 female prisoners and is being constructed by the Shire of Boulder for the Department of Corrections. On completion, the Department will be responsible for all maintenance of the prison and enter into a lease agreement with the Shire. Rental under the lease will be equal to the loan repayments incurred by the Shire.
- * Upgrading of Albany Regional Prison—An allocation of \$227 000 is proposed for general upgrading of the Albany Prison. The major portion of the funds will be used to complete works still in progress at 30th June, 1980 on improving security, which will give the prison "maximum security" unit status.
- * Kitchen facilities at Bandyup—A proposed allocation of \$165 000 in this year's program will raise the standards of the kitchen and equipment at this centre.

Water Supplies, Sewerage and Drainage

The capital works program of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board is estimated at \$62.1 million in 1980-81, an increase of 8.4% on the \$57.2 million spent last year.

The Board's program will be financed by a proposed allocation of \$24.5 million from the General Loan Fund and \$24 million from the larger authorities borrowing program, with the balance being provided from internal funds and developers' contributions.

Expenditure totalling \$23.6 million is proposed in 1980-81 for water supply projects in the Metropolitan region. The major portion of this expenditure will be committed to works currently in progress.

\$2.3 million has been provided to continue construction of a 3.7 km tunnel outlet to increase delivery from the Wungong Dam and a further \$2.1 million has been allocated for the Tamworth Hill Reservoir, to service the south west corridor.

Emphasis continues to be placed on the development of ground water resources. A sum of \$431 000 will be spent to complete stage 1 of the groundwater treatment plant at Jandakot bringing production to 22 000 cubic metres per day. In addition \$1.6 million has been provided to finish the first stage of an eastward extension of the Mirrabooka scheme, increasing production from 58 000 to 71 000 cubic metres per day.

Work will commence this year on the \$2.8 million second stage of this extension, which will lift total capacity at Mirrabooka from 71 000 to 96 000 cubic metres per day by 1983. An allocation of \$711 000 has been made for this purpose in 1980-81.

Rapid urban growth continues to place heavy demands on the provision of water services.

In 1980-81 approximately \$4.4 million will be spent on distribution mains, predominantly in developing areas. A further \$3.6 million is required for reticulation mains in new subdivisions and \$3.2 million will be provided for minor extensions and improvements, new services and meters.

A total of \$27.1 million will be allocated by the Board for sewerage works in 1980-81, compared with \$19 million last financial year. This marked increase of almost 43% reflects the continuing demand for sewerage services from both new developments and established areas.

Construction of major extensions to wastewater treatment plants will continue with planned expenditures of \$2.5 million at Beenyup and \$1.7 million at Woodman Point.

In addition major redevelopments will commence at the Subiaco and Point Peron plants at a total cost of \$1.1 million in the current year. Work will commence on the diversion of flows from the Swanbourne plant to Subiaco for treatment.

A total allocation of \$8.2 million has been made for work on main sewers and major pumping stations.

Construction of the Bibra Lake main sewer and the associated Munster pumping station will require \$5.2 million this year and when completed in 1982-83, will serve the total area contributing to the Woodman Point treatment plant.

\$900 000 has been provided for work on the pumping station and rising main linking Victoria Park to the Bibra Lake main sewer.

A sum of \$10.3 million is provided for servicing established and developing housing areas. The major projects are at Rivervale, Bayswater, Midland, Thornlie, Morley, Gosnells and Bateman/Booragoon.

The Metropolitan Water Centre—the Board's new headquarters at Leederville—is now occupied. An amount of \$2.7 million has been allocated to meet outstanding commitments on the building in 1980-81.

Expenditure of \$19.2 million on water supply construction is programmed for country areas and towns.

An amount of \$790 000 has been provided to extend the Mandurah regional scheme into the rapidly expanding Miami-Falcon area south of Mandurah.

To cope with the new housing in Waroona, associated with the Wagerup refinery, \$176 000 has been provided for improvements to water headworks for the town.

Expenditure totalling \$704 000 will enable continuation of major improvements to water supplies to meet growing demands at Geraldton. This expenditure comprises an amount of \$298 000 for additional bores, \$69 000 to duplicate the supply main and \$337 000 for other improvements.

Expenditure of \$1.1 million has been provided to enable continuation of development of the De Grey River scheme to provide a new source of water for the expanding Port Hedland area. The Mt. Newman Mining Company is contributing half of the estimated cost of this scheme and the State and Commonwealth Governments will fund the other half. The Commonwealth funds are being provided under the National Water Resources Program.

Special infrastructure borrowings of just over \$6 million are available for continuation of the upgrading of the West Pilbara scheme to meet the increased industrial and domestic demands in the Dampier, Karratha, Wickham and Cape Lambert areas and the needs of the North West Shelf gas development project. An additional amount of \$2.3 million has also been approved by Loan Council for the water requirements of the Worsley alumina project.

Expenditure of \$1.8 million is proposed for major improvements to the goldfields supply main and associated pump stations. An amount of \$1 million will enable major improvements and replacements to be carried out on the main pipeline and \$217 000 will allow installation of automatic pumping controls in the main pump stations to be completed to improve efficiency and reduce operating costs. Upgrading of mechanical and electrical equipment at Mundaring and Cunderdin pump stations will cost a total of \$512 000 this year.

An amount of \$329 000 is allocated in the Estimates to commence a program of tank roofing and the installation of additional chlorinators in supplies throughout the State to improve water quality and reduce the risk of infection from amoebic meningitis. This program is being supplemented with expenditure of \$657 000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Expenditure of \$159 000 has been provided to upgrade the Wellington Scheme including \$49 000 to complete the replacement of units in the Wellington Dam pump station.

Major improvements will be carried out on a number of existing water supply schemes including those at Binningup, Carnarvon, Derby, Eaton, Halls Creek, Hyden, Kalgoorlie, Karratha and Walpole.

Expenditure of \$7.8 million is programmed for sewerage works in country towns, with an amount of \$2.2 million being financed from local authority borrowings.

An amount of \$858 000 has been provided for major sewerage works at Bunbury, including an amount of \$748 000 for extension of the sewer reticulation system.

At Albany \$456 000 will be spent on reticulation and treatment works to serve new development.

Major works costing \$662 000 are to be provided at Collie. Of this amount \$364 000 will be spent on extending the reticulation while \$233 000 is to provide for improvements to pump stations and expansion of treatment works.

\$380 000 has been allocated to construct reticulation sewers and associated sewerage works at Manjimup.

An allocation of \$483 000 will enable continuation of sewer reticulation in the central area at Esperance and sub-division headworks.

Extension and upgrading of the main treatment works at Mandurah will continue and a provision of \$475 000 has been included in 1980-81 for this purpose.

At Kununurra, expenditure of \$424 000 will enable reticulation extensions to serve new development and a total of \$1.2 million will be spent on extension of reticulation and expansion of treatment works at Karratha to cater for increased population growth. This amount will be financed mainly by land sales.

The program this year for irrigation and drainage works is \$2.8 million including \$1.3 million to continue construction of a piped irrigation system to replace the very old open channel system in the central Harvey area.

An amount of \$140 000 has been provided for the continuation of the Gascoyne groundwater supply scheme to improve the water supply to the town and adjacent irrigated plantations.

Commonwealth funds of \$387 000 have been provided for works on the Ord Irrigation Project including an amount of \$360 000 for construction of additional rice storage facilities.

At Camballin a sum of \$250 000 has been allocated for improvements to the irrigation scheme to meet the need of the Australian Land and Cattle Company's expansion program.

The proposed drainage program also includes an amount of \$140 000 for various urban drainage works at Karratha.

Transport

The proposed allocation of \$37.7 million for the Railways Commission program in 1980-81 represents an increase of \$9 million or 31.5% over last year's expenditure. The increase is mainly due to the lift in the special temporary addition to our semi-governmental program for the continuation of the rehabilitation of the standard gauge line between Kwinana and Koolyanobbing.

The Australian Loan Council approved another special temporary addition to the State's semi-governmental borrowing program for the project this year of \$26.3 million.

Stage 1 of the project from the Avon Yard to Merredin was completed in July this year and the operational benefits are already being noted because of the greater speeds now possible on the completed section.

Work on the project this year will be concentrated on stage 2 involving one of the two tracks between the Avon Yard and Forrestfield. The second stage is scheduled for completion in May 1981.

The overall rehabilitation program will take in three more stages:—

- * stage 3, covering the Forrestfield-Kwinana section, is scheduled for completion in September 1981;
- * stage 4, the second track between the Avon Yard and Forrestfield, in July 1982; and
- * stage 5, the final link between Merredin and Koolyanobbing, in October 1983.

Upgrading of the Kwinana-Mundijong line will commence in 1980-81 and will eventually provide the link for the haulage of bauxite, coal and other products to the Kwinana industrial complex. Funding for the project is subject to final agreement being reached with the Commonwealth Government under the scheme of financial assistance to the States for the upgrading of the national mainline railway network. The total estimated cost of the project is \$6.4 million and an allocation of \$1 million has been included in this year's program.

Work will also commence on the rail link to the Worsley alumina refinery in 1980-81 and the program provides for expenditure of \$2.1 million. The project will take three years to complete at an estimated total cost of \$6.6 million. The line will connect to the existing Collie line and enable alumina to be transported to Bunbury for export.

The 1980-81 expenditure program for the Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust is estimated at \$4.6 million, an increase of \$1.3 million on last year.

The entire program will be funded by Commonwealth Grants under the Urban Public Transport Program, private borrowings and internal funds and balances.

\$2.6 million is to be spent on improvements to the Trust's fare collection system to improve efficiency.

A total amount of \$840 000 has been allocated for the construction of two bus transfer stations at Beach Road in Warwick and at the Rockingham Park shopping centre. The land for the Beach Road station was acquired last year.

The two new bus transfer stations will enable the Trust to further its long-range plans to provide a rapid transit system between the Perth central business district and the outer suburbs.

Funds will be allocated to acquire land for the construction of a bus depot at Lake Joondalup to help relieve the pressure on the Trigg and Morley depots.

Four modern, air-conditioned buses will be purchased at a cost of \$370 000 and it is anticipated that an additional 36 buses will be financed through leasing arrangements.

Port and Marine Works

The program of improvements and extensions to harbours and rivers works throughout the State is estimated to cost almost \$5 million this financial year.

It is proposed to spend \$2.2 million to construct bulk loading facilities at the port of Broome to handle the expected exports of the Australian Land and Cattle Company's grain from Camballin.

At the port of Wyndham an amount of \$239 000 has been provided to complete facilities for the containerisation of beef exports and general cargo. These funds will also enable completion of the bulk loading trimmer and upgrading of jetty lighting. The container park is to be extended by the provision of further refrigerated bays.

An amount of \$271 000 has been allocated in the estimates for improvements to navigational aids at Albany, Geraldton, Bunbury and Esperance.

The program of improvements to fishing industry facilities throughout the State is to be continued at a cost of \$1.3 million. Included in this amount is \$230 000 for the commencement of a new fishing boat harbour at Esperance and \$100 000 to commence a new harbour in Johns Creek at Point Samson.

An amount of \$140 000 will enable construction of a new jetty to proceed at Greenhead and expenditure of \$85 000 has been provided to complete the jetty and service area at Port Denison.

At Carnarvon a total of \$181 000 has been allocated to complete the upgrading of the slipway and other works associated with the fishing boat harbour and to commence construction of a new service jetty.

Improvement works to the fishing jetty at Denham will be undertaken at a cost of \$104 000.

A launching ramp at Busselton and a jetty at Middleton Beach are to be built at an estimated cost of \$234 000. Expenditure of \$65 000 will provide for construction of a new jetty at Keanes Point and a new ferry landing is to be constructed on the Point Walter jetty at an estimated cost of \$38 000.

Apart from the above work to be implemented by the Public Works and Harbour and Light Departments, \$5.2 million will be spent by the various Port Authorities in the State.

The principal project on the program is the reconstruction of berths 4 and 5 by the Fremantle Port Authority estimated to cost \$2.6 million. This is the initial stage of a development scheme to provide for the handling of additional containers and mixed cargoes and, in the long term, the construction of a new container terminal.

Education

The Government will continue to pursue its aim of getting value for money in the whole range of educational services for primary, secondary and tertiary students. However, the need for educational institutions has to be viewed in proper perspective with the Government's commitments in other areas such as hospitals and prisons in the overall budgetary considerations.

Assessing the funding needs to provide new and additional school facilities is made more difficult because of shifts in the dispersion of the school population throughout the State. The task is particularly difficult in the metropolitan area with the school population fluctuating as new suburbs develop.

Projections based on school population statistics indicate a slightly decreasing trend in primary school enrolments and a levelling off in secondary student numbers. However, the dispersion of the school population in the metropolitan area and other parts of the State is always difficult to gauge from year to year.

Moreover, the construction of a new school in a developing suburb or town does not necessarily mean that the facilities and staffing in an existing school can be curtailed because of declining student numbers. The continuing need for the existing school is, of course, governed by overall pupil numbers as well as the number of classes. Averages of pupil/staff ratios can be misleading when applied to the populations of individual small schools.

Having regard to these difficulties and the current tight capital funds situation, the expenditure program for school and technical education buildings has been estimated at \$37.5 million.

The program will enable progress to be made this year on the maintenance and improvement of existing school facilities, the provision of new school accommodation for children from families relocating in developing areas as well as meeting the increasing needs of the technical education sector.

Local communities are being encouraged to make greater use of school halls, libraries and playing fields for recreation purposes. This also means that the cost of providing certain facilities, such as school halls, gymnasias and ovals, can be shared with local authorities in some instances.

The capital projects planned for 1980-81 are spread in many parts of the state including Albany, Broome, Collie, Derby, Esperance, Gingin, Karratha, Northam, Onslow, Pingelly and the Perth area.

Six new primary schools and two new high schools will open in 1981 to cope with the development of new residential areas and increasing enrolments in secondary schools.

Two of the new primary schools are located in the North West, Cassia at Port Hedland and Millars Well at Karratha. In the outer suburbs of Perth, a new primary school will be opened in Ballajura, Goollelali in Kingsley and Newton in Spearwood. Glencoe primary school at Mandurah will also be ready for the 1981 school year.

Primary schools will have pre-primary facilities as required in line with the Government's policy of extending access to one year of informal, voluntary and free pre-schooling in the year prior to school admission.

The new high schools planned to open next year at Warwick and Lesmurdie will help relieve the pressure on existing schools in the nearby suburbs of Greenwood and Kalamunda, respectively. Stage 1 of Warwick high school, being built at a cost of about \$2.7 million, will cater for about 200 pupils in year 8 in 1981. The estimated cost of the first stage of Lesmurdie high school is \$2.5 million.

Special education facilities will continue to expand. A special school, at Kenwick, will be completed and the Rockingham special school is planned to open later in 1981.

In the 1980-81 program, \$3.5 million has been allocated to the second and third stages of Rockingham technical college, \$3.5 million to the next stage of Thornlie technical college and \$860 000 to the Technical Extension Service as part of a major rebuilding program.

At Eastern Goldfields Technical College, further re-development will be completed at a cost of \$1.1 million. Other works will be carried out at Albany, Carine and Geraldton colleges.

Provision is also made in the Estimates for a start on the construction of the new Pilbara community colleges and facilities at the Academy of Performing Arts at Mt Lawley College. The total program proposed is \$2.7 million. The work to be undertaken this year is:—

- * Hedland Community College—Provision of temporary transportable office and classroom accommodation and commencement of the new college. The total cost this year is estimated at \$988 000.
- * Karratha Community College—\$1.5 million will be spent in 1980-81 on building this new educational facility for the region.
- * Academy of Performing Arts—Mt Lawley College—Administrative and ballet facilities will be provided at a total cost of \$200 000.

About \$7 million has been allocated for additions and improvements to primary and secondary schools in the 1980-81 program.

Substantial upgradings will be carried out at Applecross, Belmont and Scarborough senior high schools and major additions to provide specialised areas are planned for Balga, Kalamunda, Katanning and several other high schools.

Major additions are proposed at the primary schools in Bateman, Byford, Duncraig, Mundijong and Warnbro.

General improvements and additions are also planned for the district high schools at Donnybrook, Kojonup and Yanchep and the agricultural high school at Cunderdin.

Housing

The State Housing Commission plans a program of \$46.8 million including the proposed allocation of \$5.5 million from General Loan Fund.

The problem of finding sufficient funds to enable the Commission to mount a satisfactory welfare housing program is worrying. It is aggravated by the Commonwealth Government's refusal to respond to repeated arguments that its attitude is totally unrealistic to State needs in this area. Unless this attitude changes, the State will have to increase the allocation to the Housing Commission progressively from its own scarce General Loan Funds with consequent disadvantage to other commitments.

The program this year includes the construction of 320 new dwellings with 45 being built in the North-West, 114 in other country areas and 161 in the metropolitan area.

Land acquisition and development costs are estimated to exceed \$12 million during the current financial year. This will provide serviced blocks for private purchasers in areas in which the Commission is the sole land developer as well as blocks for its own use.

The program of upgrading and additions to older style properties will also be maintained.

40% of the advance from the Commonwealth under the 1978 housing agreement will be directed to the Home Purchase Assistance Scheme.

The Government Employees' Housing Authority will undertake a works program estimated to cost \$10.8 million of which \$4.4 million will be provided from the General Loan Fund.

The Authority will construct an additional 160 units of accommodation and proceed with the third and final stage of its three-year program to install an air-conditioning unit in all of its existing houses in the North-West.

The Industrial and Commercial Employees' Housing Authority's works program last year was concentrated in the Pilbara region. Forty-four of the 49 dwellings completed in 1979-80 were located in that region.

The Authority's expenditure program of \$1.5 million will enable it to continue its role of providing houses for key employees of business enterprises operating in decentralised areas in various parts of the State.

Construction will commence on 25 additional dwellings this year and the program makes allowance for the carryover construction costs of 11 housing units.

Conclusion

That concludes my survey of the highlights of the Capital Works Budget for 1980-81.

In view of the difficult financial circumstances which the Government faced this year, I believe that the Budget represents a program of work which so far as practicable within the finance available to us, provides for both the short and longer term needs of the community. It was not an easy Budget to frame, but I am happy in the knowledge that the Government has struck a sensible balance between providing for those works which are essential or reasonable today while at the same time being able to invest in undertakings which will be important to our economic growth in the future.

I now turn to the main purpose of the Bill which is to appropriate from General Loan Fund the sums required to undertake the works and services detailed in the Loan Estimates.

Of the total finance required for the planned works program, an amount of \$147 094 000 is to be supplied from the General Loan Fund as listed in the Estimates.

Full details of the program are set out in the Estimates together with the source of funds employed. The amount to be provided from General Loan Fund, which is subject to appropriation in this Bill, is clearly identified.

Supply of \$75 000 000 has already been granted in the Supply Act, 1980 and the Bill now under consideration seeks further supply of \$72 094 000. The total of these two sums, namely \$147 094 000, is to be appropriated for the purposes and services expressed in Schedule B of the Bill.

As well as authorising the provision of funds for the present financial year, the measure seeks ratification of amounts spent during 1979-80 in excess of the Estimates for that year. Details of these excesses are given in Schedule C to the Bill.

I wish once again to express appreciation to the Treasury officers. This has been by far the most difficult Budget both in respect of Consolidated Revenue Funds and the capital works program I have experienced in my years in the Ministry. It is because of the commitment these people have shown, and the consultation which has taken place with the Ministers and their departments, to try to make the maximum use of the money to achieve a balanced program of development that we have been able to present both in the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the capital works Budget a sensible use of the money available to us.

I express my appreciation to the officers concerned. They normally work hard enough but this year, for the reasons I gave, they have had to work even harder and longer hours to frame the Budget.

I commend the Bill to Honourable Members and in doing so request leave to table the General Loan Fund Estimates of Expenditure for the year ending 30th June, 1981 and a copy of the Loan Estimates Speech.

The General Loan Fund Estimates of Expenditure for the year ending 30 June 1981 were tabled (see paper No. 295).

The Loan Estimates Speech 1980-81 was tabled (see paper No. 296).

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

Sitting suspended from 12.57 to 2.15 p.m.

APPROPRIATION BILL (GENERAL LOAN FUND)

Message: Appropriations

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

ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 September.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [2.17 p.m.]: This is a simple Bill which allows certain rules to be made by the court in regard to probate. In effect, it means that certain applications can be dealt with by post instead of being dealt with through a city solicitor.

We 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.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 September.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [2.20 p.m.]: This amending Bill comes to us somewhat belatedly. It brings up to date the oath which members are required to take before they are able to vote in the House. In doing so, it amends section 22 of the Constitution Act.

As the Act stands, it refers to Queen Victoria. I do not know whether the mention of Queen Victoria was in the oath that we have subscribed to since I have been in the House. I have never taken much notice of it. Probably, it was brought up to date. That raises the question whether we have been sworn legally if the Constitution Act continues to mention Queen Victoria. She has been gone for quite some time now; and undoubtedly it is time we brought the Act up to date.

I have no objection to the new form of the oath. Indeed, it is a more modern and appropriate form. The wording of the oath is taken out of section 22, and it has been placed into a schedule. The schedule provides that the name of the monarch can be altered from time to time. That is

convenient, because we do have changes in monarchs.

The new form will make it easier for a proper oath to be made; and it will be more convenient for the Clerks. Not only has the oath been brought up to date; but also the affirmation has been put into a more acceptable form. There has been general agreement on this legislation.

As the Minister introducing the Bill pointed out, this change to the oath appeared in a Bill which did not pass through both Houses of the Parliament during the last session, not because of the form of the oath but because of other matters. The Government decided not to proceed with that measure.

I am pleased the Government has taken the form of oath from that Bill and has now decided to amend the Constitution Act. We are in complete agreement with both the method and the form of the oath and the fact that it is being put into the Act in the form of a schedule. We agree with the fact that the oath and the affirmation are being brought up to date. I understand that the new form of the oath is the same as that which applies to judges and the like.

We support the measure.

MR SKIDMORE (Swan) [2.22 p.m.]: As one of those members asked to take an oath to the Queen when first entering Parliament, and having no religious beliefs whatsoever, I found it incongruous that I should have to make an oath in which I did not believe and which I could not make in all sincerity. When I indicated to the Clerk of the Assembly that I desired to make an affirmation of loyalty, I was somewhat taken aback when I saw the affirmation I would have to take. I wondered which was the worst.

The affirmation indicates that, "I declare that the taking of an oath is, according to my religious beliefs, unlawful." I have no religious beliefs. Making an affirmation is the only alternative to taking the oath which concludes, "so help me God". To me, God is a mythical character in some sort of history book. It seemed somewhat crude that I should have to take such an oath.

I have raised this matter consistently and I am pleased to see that, at long last, we are getting an affirmation which goes a long way to meeting my wishes. I support the proposed amendment and I agree with the remarks of my leader. The existing affirmation is such that I have been reluctant to accept it. I will feel far more comfortable and less guilty by taking this new affirmation. I support the Bill.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Deputy Premier) [2.24 p.m.]: I thank the Opposition for its general support of 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.

WATERWAYS CONSERVATION BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 18 September.

MR BARNETT (Rockingham) [2.26 p.m.]: The parent Act of this Bill which was introduced in the last Parliament authorised the establishment of three waterways management authorities: the Peel Inlet Management Authority, the Leschenault Management Authority, and the Swan River Management Authority. It also set up the Waterways Commission.

Each of the waterways management authorities was able to be represented by its chairman at commission meetings. However, since the introduction of the Bill it has been found that, on

occasions, the chairmen of the management authorities have not been able to attend the commission meetings. It has been found that there is no provision in the parent Act for the chairmen to be represented by anyone else from a particular management authority. Therefore, at some meetings, certain areas are not represented satisfactorily.

This Bill allows for the appointment of deputy chairmen who can replace chairmen at commission meetings. The Opposition has looked fairly closely at this Bill and it has no objection whatsoever to it. The Opposition is prepared to support the Bill fully.

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.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

House adjourned at 2.57 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

TOWN PLANNING

South-east Corridor

951. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) Will she advise when the metropolitan region scheme amendments for the south-east corridor will be introduced into the Parliament?
- (2) When introduced, will the recommendations include a recommendation on the Spencer-Chapman link road?
- (3) Will all land-owners affected by this proposed road amendment be advised by mail of the required resumption?
- (4) If answer to (3) is "Yes", when?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority is still considering submissions, but expects to submit its report and recommendations in time for the amendment, if approved, to be tabled during the current session of Parliament.
- (2) I cannot anticipate the authority's report on details of a major amendment.
- (3) All people who made submissions will be notified, in writing, of any reservation affecting their property after the Governor has made his decision on the amendment. However, current practice, because of the administration procedure involved, is that the only notice to other affected persons is by the scheme advertisements. Of course the reservation does not imply an immediate resumption of property and in many cases it is some years before the property reserved is actually required for planning purposes.
- (4) As indicated in (3), after the Governor has made his decision on the amendment.

ROAD

Servetus Street

978. Mr TAYLOR, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

Does she intend making a statement in the near future on a matter affecting the

planning of Servetus Street and which will materially affect the future of some residents of that street?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

The following is a Press statement I issued to the *Daily News* on Tuesday, 30 September 1980—

The Western Suburbs Steering Committee which includes representatives of local authorities from Fremantle to Perth, has been studying proposals regarding north-south traffic movement and the future use of the Fremantle-Perth railway reserve.

When this study is completed it will make recommendations to the MRPA which, in turn, will report to Cabinet.

Until the results of the study and the recommendations of the MRPA have been conveyed, it is not possible to give any indication of specific proposals relating to the Swanbourne area and the future use of the railway reserve.

It is to be hoped that the committee will be reporting to the MRPA before the end of October.

LUCERNE

Pasture

979. Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is bacterial wilt of lucerne present in Western Australia?
- (2) If "Yes", why are there quarantine restrictions preventing importation of aphid-resistant strains of lucerne from the Eastern States on the grounds that they may not be bacterial-wilt free?
- (3) If "No", how serious is the disease?
- (4) Would it be more significant than having no lucerne at all due to aphid-susceptible strains only being available?
- (5) Is the department going to breed aphid-resistant bacterial-wilt lucerne strains?
- (6) If "Yes", when?

- (7) If not, will it relax restrictions on Eastern States seed so that this important pasture plant can remain a contributor to south coast pastures?
- (8) Does the department intend to answer queries raised on the subject in a letter from an Esperance farmer written on 1 August?

Mr OLD replied:

- (1) I am advised that bacterial-wilt has not been identified in Western Australia.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) It reduces the longevity and productivity of lucerne stands.
- (4) to (6) Australian breeding programmes are producing aphid-resistant strains and these are being currently tested in WA.
- (7) Lucerne quarantine regulations will remain for as long as the position reported in (1) is unchanged.
- (8) Yes. A reply was delayed pending discussion of the subject matter "lucerne pests and diseases" last week at an interstate plant production committee meeting.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Funds

980. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Transport:

Which locations in the metropolitan area have been listed for funding for traffic safety improvements in the 1980-81 financial year?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Traffic Control Signals

Aberdare/Railway
Alcoa Bridge/Cockburn
Barnes/Huntriss/Sackville
Beach/Davallia/Okely
Beechboro-Gosnells/Albany Highway
Beechboro-Gosnells/Kelvin
Bourke/Loftus
Brookdale/Cambridge/Oceanic
Broun/Collier
Causeway Western Roundabout
Coode/South Terrace
Council/Cygnus/Read
Crimea/Morley
Dixon/Ennis
East/High/Swanbourne
Goderich/Hill
Grantham/Jersey

Hampton/South
Havelock/Kings Park
High/Vahland
Main/Wanneroo
Marmion/Norma
Marmion/Rome
Marmion/Warwick
Oceanic/West Coast Highway
Oswald/Scarborough Beach
Orrong/Wright
Selby/Boulevard
Traffic Control Signal Modifications
Oxford/Vincent
Scarborough Beach/West Coast Highway
Shepperton/Duncan
Stirling Highway/Bay View Terrace
Traffic Control Signals and Channelisation
Albany Highway/Denny
Albany Highway/Grose
Alexander/Yirrigan
Duke/Scarborough Beach
Great Eastern Highway/Lloyd
Great Eastern Highway/East/Terrace
Lake/Newcastle
Leura/Stirling Highway
Lord/Walter
Mends/Mill Point Road
Wanneroo/Wiluna
Channelisation
Albany Highway/Brookton
Angelo/Coode
Angove/Farmer
Barker/Railway
Barnfield/Gugeri/Stirling
Beach/Mirrabeeka
Belmont/Keane
Beryl/Main
Boronia/Harvey
Bulwer/Palmerston
Canning Highway/Labouchere
Canning Highway/McKimmie
Canning Highway/Preston Pt
Carnarvon/Olivia
Carrington/Lefroy
Central/Guildford
Central/Robinson
Claremont/Curtin/Servetus
Clontarf/Hampton
Coghlan/Roberts
Cohn/Planet
Coode/Thelma
Curtin/George/Salvado
Dorothy/Eudoria

Duke/Sackville
 Durlacher/Waldeck
 Epsom/Sydenham
 Etchingham/Princess/Wilmington
 Fauntleroy/Great Eastern Highway
 Gilbertson/South
 Goderich/Nelson/Plain
 Great Eastern Highway/
 Fitzgerald/Peel
 Gugerl/Melville
 Hamersley/Rokeby
 Harborne/Salvado
 Hayman/Thelma
 Howard/South Terrace/Wray
 Howe/Hutton
 Iolanthe/Walter
 James/Lake
 Jarrad/Stirling Highway
 Kew/Orrong
 Kewdale/Orrong
 Langford/Nicholson
 Langton/Lowood
 Lord/Moore
 Monash/Winthrop
 Murray/Outram
 Railway/Roberts/Rokeby
 Ranford/Warton
 Scarborough Beach/Westview
 Scarborough Beach/St Brigids
 Spring/Yale
 Stirling Highway/Victoria-Glyde
Channelisation Modifications
 Anzac/Loftus
 Belmont/Fulham
 Belmont/Wright
 Bunbury Highway/Cockburn
 Bunbury Highway/Hamilton
 Canning Highway/South Terrace
 Chisham/Gilmore/Harlow
 Coolibah/Warwick
 Gnaragana/Wanneroo
 Great Eastern Highway/
 East/Terrace
 Great Eastern Highway/
 Johnson/Helena
 Jeanes/Karrinyup
 Main/North Beach Place
 Main/Wanneroo
 Marmion/Mullaloo
 Oats/Swansea
 Selby/Boulevard
*Combined Signal and
 Channelisation Modifications*
 Albany Highway/Nicholson
 Albany Highway/Royal
 Alexander/Fitzgerald/Walcott
 Beaufort/Bulwer

Canning Highway/North Lake
 Canning Highway/Stock
 Charles/Vincent
 Douro/Hampton
 Fitzgerald/James
 Great Eastern Highway/Hardy
 James/Fitzgerald
 James/Johnson
 Kewdale/Welshpool
Pedestrian Refuge Islands
 Afon/Safety Bay
 Albany Highway/Fancote-Fourth
 Albany Highway/Ladywell
 Alexander/Grantham
 Beaufort/Mary
 Beaufort/Seventh-Tenth
 Cambridge/Northwood
 Canning Highway/Berwick-Way
 Canning Highway/Foss-Harris
 Canning Highway/Murray-Stock
 Canning Highway/Stratford
 Cranford/Moolyean/Rountree
 Dane/Shepperton
 Edward/Lord
 Francisco/Orrong
 Grantham/Marlow
 Great Eastern Highway/Belmont-
 St Kilda
 Great Eastern Highway/Helena
 Bridge
 Jewel/Kensington
 Medina/Pace
 Stirling Highway/Victoria-
 Glyde
Bus Bays
 Albany Highway/Apperley
 Albany Highway/George
 Canning Highway/Allen
 Canning Highway/Hay
 Stirling Highway/Bay View
 Terrace
Median Dividers
 Banksia/Cape
 Gray/Rankin
 Hector/Main
*Flashing Lights—Railway
 Protection*
 Haddrill Road
 Riverdale Road
Culs-De-Sac
 Carrington/Healy
 James/East
 Fulham/Surrey
Embayments
 Causeway
 Freeway

*Cycleway
Causeway
Passing Lane
North Lake/Harrison*

PROBATION AND PAROLE

Parker Report

981. Mr WILSON, to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) What decisions has the Government made with respect to the recommendations of the Parker report on probation and parole, which it commissioned and which was released in March 1979?
- (2) When is it likely that the Government will announce what action it proposes to take with respect to the recommendations of this report?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) The Parker report on probation and parole was referred to interested parties including the Law Society. The replies are still being studied.
As certain aspects of the report impinge upon the terms of reference of the inquiry into the rate of imprisonment, it is now contemplated that both reports will be considered together.

HEALTH

Blind and Handicapped Children: Holiday Facility

982. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of plans of the WA Institute for the Blind to sell the holiday home for blind children at Rockingham?
- (2) Were any Government funds made available in the establishment and administration of this holiday home?
- (3) What is to happen to the proceeds of the sale of this facility?
- (4) What plans are there for an alternative holiday facility for blind children and their parents in the event that the present holiday home is sold?
- (5) Is he concerned about the lack of an appropriate holiday facility equipped to cater for the special needs of blind and other handicapped children in Western Australia?

- (6) If "Yes" to (5), is he aware of any attempts being made to cope with this need?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) No, and nor is there any reason why the institute should advise me if they have any such plans, apart from the fact that they know of my keen interest in their work.
- (2) Not specifically. The Government grant to the institute is to help meet general operating expenses.
- (3) to (6) The member's inquiries on this matter should be directed to the institute.

POLICE: FIREARMS

High Powered Rifles

983. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Is he aware of reports that high powered army style rifles are appearing on the open market?
- (2) What action is being taken in response to such reports?
- (3) Is any consideration being given to permitting the sale of high powered semi-automatic rifles in Western Australia?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Legislation is being introduced today to further control the use of these weapons.
- (3) Under present legislation certain high powered semi-automatic rifles have been permitted to applicants who can justify their use.

DRAINAGE

Dianella Sump

984. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) What proposals does the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Board have for reinstating the area around the drainage sump adjacent to recreation reserve 29753 in Waverley Street, Dianella, following its recent use as a storage area for sewerage extension work in Dianella?

- (2) When may residents in the vicinity expect the drainage sump reserve to be cleared of temporary fencing and maintained in a manner appropriate for a residential area?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

- (1) New fencing will be erected and the area reinstated.
(2) Within three weeks.

ELECTORAL

Mrs Jennifer Gardiner: Prosecution

985. Mr BRIDGE, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) In view of Police Commissioner Leitch's statement that the police would appeal against magistrate McCann's decision that Mrs Jennifer Gardiner was to be acquitted of an Electoral Act offence because she had no case to answer, why did the police not submit an appeal?
(2) Can he explain to the House why the police have spent thousands of dollars pursuing Mrs Gardiner and charging her with offences under the Electoral Act and then subsequently submitted no evidence?

Mr HASSELL replied:

- (1) On legal advice.
(2) Evidence was submitted.

HEALTH

Aborigines: Caesarean Births, and Sterilisation

986. Mr BRIDGE, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) For the periods—
(a) July 1975 to June 1976;
(b) July 1976 to June 1977;
(c) July 1977 to June 1978;
(d) July 1978 to June 1979;
(e) July 1979 to June 1980,
what are the statistics in the Kimberley for—
(i) Caesarean births carried out on Aboriginal women;
(ii) sterilisation of Aboriginal women by surgical procedures such as tubal ligation?
(2) What are the statistics for Derby Hospital for (i) and (ii) above?

Mr YOUNG replied:

		Lower Segment Caesarean Section	Bilateral Tubal Ligation
(1)	(a) July 1975—June 1976	19	19
	(b) July 1976—June 1977	24	21
	(c) July 1977—June 1978	17	7
	(d) July 1978—June 1979	20	17
	(e) July 1979—June 1980	10	7
(2)	(i) 76 (ii) 41.		

Hospital records are not racially orientated. Statistics do not distinguish between full-blood Aborigines, caste persons of mixed race, and Caucasians.

RACING

Horse: Sprint

987. Mr DAVIES to the Premier:

- (1) Has he seen a report in the *Sunday Independent* of 28 September 1980 that he told the WA Turf Club to introduce sprint horse racing at courses under its control in Western Australia—or else?
(2) Is it fact that the Vice Chairman of the WA Turf Club and committee men of the Turf Club were summoned before the Premier and told to have within a fortnight guidelines prepared for the introduction of sprint racing?
(3) Is it also fact that they were told if they did not comply with the Government's request their right of allocating racing dates for the whole of the State would be given to the Chief Secretary's Department?
(4) If the *Sunday Independent's* report was incorrect, would he advise the true position?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes. But the report is substantially inaccurate.
(2) No.
(3) No. This is a misrepresentation of what was said at a meeting held between the Chief Secretary, myself, and the WA Turf Club, some members of which committee were not present.

- (4) The Government has, on several occasions, sought the assistance of the Turf Club in relation to the requests received by the Government for the introduction of sprint racing in Western Australia.

On two recent occasions, the club has declined to assist the Government, notwithstanding the statutory obligation of the Turf Club to regulate the whole racing industry in Western Australia.

As the Government has an obligation to all groups interested in the racing industry it has now, in a formal way, sought the assistance of the Turf Club in relation to sprint racing in Western Australia.

Beyond that, I am not prepared to disclose the nature of the discussions between the Government and the Turf Club as it is expected that further discussions will be held in the near future.

I do express disappointment, however, that some members of the committee have abused the courtesy shown to the club by the Government. I have no doubt that the responsible members of the committee are aware of the true position and, in particular, the firm desire of the Government that the control of racing remain with the Turf Club so that it may exercise its responsibility with the long experience and knowledge of the industry which it has.

MINING

Bauxite: Darling Range

988. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

- (1) Who were the members of the committee advising the Cabinet of bauxite mining referred to in the Stanford Research Institute's review on land use planning in the Darling Range?
- (2) Were the members of the committee paid?
- (3) If so, on what basis?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) I am not prepared to discuss the detailed contents of the Stanford Research Institute report which was a report commissioned by the Government for advice to the Government.

Suffice to say, the Government was advised by an interdepartmental committee of senior officers, including forests, environment, water supply, and resources development, and thus by people of repute able to consider bauxite mining in relation to other land use plans.

- (2) and (3) Not relevant.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Distressed Persons Relief Trust

240. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

My question is in regard to the Distressed Persons Relief Fund. I note there was a newspaper report about the fund this week and I also note that the fund is running out of money. I note also that the fund is not able to make arrangements for special consideration with either the SHC or the SEC where people are in trouble over payment of their bills. As I understand the matter, the State Energy Commission is referring people to the Trades and Labor Council Welfare Fund. Can the Premier advise whether it is proposed to take any action to make further funds available to the Distressed Persons Relief Fund because I regret to say that I am informed that the Trades and Labor Council Welfare Fund is no longer in a position to pick up the referrals from the SEC when people are unable to pay their accounts.

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The approaches that are being made to the Distressed Persons Relief Fund are known to myself and the Treasury. I have also noted the newspaper report that the Wearne Trust—the private organisation which dealt with these matters—is also under pressure.

The State Treasury and I have had a look at the matter and whilst we appreciate the concern of some of these people and we are aware of the action which has been taken by a number of organisations to attempt to alleviate the situation, we have to be careful that we do not put ourselves in a situation of taking over the Commonwealth's responsibility. We have taken action to

remind the Commonwealth and members will note that in the Budget speech I made references to the arrangements we had made for another form of relief. We were carrying this responsibility for the first six months in each year when it was truly the responsibility of the Commonwealth.

Now, because the State served notice on the Commonwealth of that matter, it has taken over that full responsibility. With this problem when it gets beyond a certain point it is essentially a matter of social service and should be dealt with by the Commonwealth. I assure the member that we will not hesitate to bring to the Commonwealth's notice any such matter where people should be referred to them. There are other forms of relief—about which I cannot be precise at the moment—which come under the care of the Department for Community Welfare.

As a result of the Budget deliberations in regard to this fund I have asked the Treasury officers to discuss this matter with me again to see whether there is any way we can assist with further money without getting involved in a field which is not our responsibility.

HOUSING

Building Societies: Interest Rates

241. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Treasurer:

I ask the Treasurer whether he is aware of the significant pressure on lending societies to increase interest rates and the likelihood that within a very short period there may—according to authoritative sources—be a rise in interest rates, especially on home loans, from 1 per cent to 2 per cent? If the Treasurer is aware of this inflationary pressure can he please tell the House what steps his Government will take to overcome the hardship which may result from the rising rates?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The member well knows that the Treasury and I have taken a very direct interest—not only now but during our whole time in government—in the question of interest rates.

Despite the criticism of the honourable member on one occasion when he said that we were artificially keeping rates down, I remind him that we have succeeded in keeping the rates as low as the market will permit. There have been pressures for some time for the rates to move but I think it is to the credit of the Commonwealth Government and the State Government that we have managed to keep the rates down at the levels they are, especially when they are compared with other countries.

Mr B. T. Burke: It's getting harder now.

Sir CHARLES COURT: As far as I am concerned we have always adopted the attitude of dragging our feet when any request has been made for interest rates to be increased, even though the market may indicate—both here and overseas—that the rates should increase.

I have found from past experience that it is easy to put interest rates up a point or two but it is very hard to get back to where they were.

We have had a wonderful response from the local building societies and by and large they have done very well to maintain their position because in this market there is always pressure from banks wishing to obtain a larger share of the money. This places pressure on the market. However, we do our best to resist any increases with the Commonwealth Government and the State Government working together on this matter. I believe we have done very well—especially when we have regard to world pressures—that we are able to resist the increases in some ways.

MINING : IRON ORE

Goldsworthy Area "C"

242. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Mineral Resources:

- (1) What is the current status of Goldsworthy's plans to develop mining area "C"?
- (2) Is there any possibility of an announcement of a go-ahead on this project and if so, when?

- (3) If not, are there any other proposals which will be able to use the team and facilities of that mining venture when its current deposits run out?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) The present status of the project is that it is being considered by the Japanese steel mills in association with several other projects. It is not anticipated that there will be any decision from the steel mills before early next year as to which iron ore mine will be opened in this State—it could be opened or commenced in the middle of the decade, about the 1985 shipping season.

The Government held discussions with the steel mills as recently as last week. At the present time nothing more has been said other than that negotiations are continuing.

- (3) The Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs which is responsible for the selection and placement at the end of the training period, endeavours to make placement where there is some prospect of continuity of employment.

- (4) Provisions are made for supplementary staff in a situation where there is a work requirement.

- (5) Yes, as indicated in (4).

It is a great pity that a member from another place has now criticised the placement of this girl and it is indicative of his total insincerity in the employment of her.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B. T. Burke: The Minister is out of order anyway.

ABORIGINES

Employment

243. Mr SODEMAN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) How many Aboriginal young people have been employed by the State Government under the NEASA Scheme since its inception?
- (2) Is it normal policy for the State Government to employ Aboriginal youth under this scheme in its departments?
- (3) Is the possibility of employment continuity at the completion of the training period an important criterion when employing Aboriginal youth under the scheme?
- (4) Are vacancies created for trainees under the scheme or are they taken on where there is a requirement for additional staff?
- (5) In the case of the Pilbara branch of the State Government Insurance Office undertaking to employ an Aboriginal girl as from 22 September 1980, did a further staff requirement exist?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

I thank the honourable member for notice of the question. The answer is as follows:

- (1) 197.
- (2) Yes.

MINING: IRON ORE

Projects

244. Mr PARKER, to the Minister for Mineral Resources:

Further to the Minister's answer to my question today, can the Minister advise what other projects are being considered by the Japanese in conjunction with the one he mentioned?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

As the member may be aware, it has been made public that the steel mills and the companies collectively are discussing the future developments, not only of the mining area, but also of the West Anglas deposits, the Yandicoogina deposits of CSR and the Deepdale deposits held by BHP. They are the major ones being considered at the present time.

TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION

Stock Carters: Intimidation

245. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) In view of the continued threats being made to stock carriers delivering stock at Robb Jetty Abattoir who have been

advised that they will not be unloading in future until they join the Transport Workers' Union, will the Minister advise whether this action is legal?

- (2) If it is not legal, will he issue a strong statement to the effect that drivers should disregard these threats and carry on transport work as usual?

The SPEAKER: I must rule that question out of order because it asks for an interpretation of a Statute.

EDUCATION.

Gifted Children's Programme

246. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is it a fact that only 10 per cent of this year's year-seven students are to be given the opportunity to be tested for possible inclusion in the gifted children's programme?
- (2) If so, is it because there are only enough test forms to allow 10 per cent of children to be tested for the programme?
- (3) Is it also a fact that schools have been given five days to nominate their 10 per cent of students to be tested for this programme?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) to (3) I ask the member for Gosnells to put the question on the notice paper.

EDUCATION

School Holidays

247. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

I congratulate the Minister on the speed with which he took up the Opposition's initiative on the Show Day holiday. My question is—

- (1) Can he enlighten me whether the committee inquiring into the two-year trial period for the revised school holiday arrangements has reported?

- (2) If so, what is the report and what action has the Government taken to restore the school year to a more sensible format?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) I ask the honourable member to put the question on the notice paper.

Several members interjected.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Low-income Families:

Approach to Commonwealth

248. Mr WILSON, to the Premier:

I note that in his answer a few moments ago to the Leader of the Opposition's question regarding the possible augmentation of funds available to the Distressed Persons Relief Trust he reiterated his former statements that financial assistance for low-income earners in difficulty is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. In view of the reiteration of his former statements in that regard, what are his reasons for continuing to be reluctant to make a special approach to the Commonwealth Government to remind it of its responsibility for people facing these difficulties in Western Australia?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I want to be precise about it. The honourable member asked me yesterday about specific people and I gave him an answer on that. While I said we had not to my knowledge made representations about specific people, I went to some pains to explain that we represented the general question to the Commonwealth regularly because we did not want the Commonwealth to escape its responsibility in a field in which it has the constitutional as well as the moral obligation.

The question addressed to me today by the Leader of the Opposition referred to the Distressed Persons Relief Fund in which the member for Dianella has taken an interest over a considerable time—a fact which I acknowledge—and I was answering more directly the question he had addressed to me. So, the answer I gave the honourable member yesterday still stands and he will find it

is consistent with the answer I gave the Leader of the Opposition.

TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION

Stock Carters : Intimidation

249. Mr CRANE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

In view of the continued threats being made to stop carriers delivering stock at Robb Jetty Abattoir who have been advised that they will not be unloaded in future until they join the Transport Workers' Union, will the Minister advise what action he is taking to ensure the smooth flow of stock, including sucker lambs, to market?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

We as a Government believe people should have the right to choose for themselves. We have been very concerned about the actions taken by the Transport Workers' Union in this regard.

Mr Barnett: That is a scurrilous thing to say.

Mr O'CONNOR: That is the sort of stupid remark we would expect from the member for Rockingham.

Mr Davies: I wonder where he learnt it.

Mr O'CONNOR: Obviously from his leader. We have had discussions with a number of people today. The Department of Labour and Industry has spoken with people who are concerned in this area and I will be having talks with the Meat Industry Employees' Union tomorrow morning in the hope that we can reach a sensible conclusion to this particular issue.

TEACHERS' UNION

Levy

250. Mr CLARKO, to the Minister for Education:

A number of teachers have expressed to me concern and in every case annoyance about the recent circular they have

received from the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia regarding a \$10 levy call. The circular states that the levy "applies to all members and it is mandatory that it be paid". It also states, "Any member who disobeys a directive of Conference or Executive is guilty of misconduct." Does the Minister share with me my dismay that the Teachers' Union should communicate with its members in such a dictatorial way—

Point of Order

Mr H. D EVANS: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I require you to consider the admissibility of this question. It is asking for an opinion and is dealing with a subject which is not within the Minister's control; namely, the domestic affairs of the union.

Mr Clarko: I have not finished the question.

Mr B. T. Burke: You are not allowed to.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! In order that I can make a proper assessment of the question the member wishes to ask, and in order to ensure it is one that is admissible, I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells and I ask the member for Karrinyup to make available to the Clerk the question which he has obviously prepared and which he is in the process of asking.

Sitting suspended from 2.47 to 2.55 p.m.

Speaker's Ruling

The SPEAKER: I have had an opportunity to consider the question which the member for Karrinyup sought to ask. I rule it to be inadmissible.

Questions (without notice) Resumed

EDUCATION: TERTIARY

Nedlands College

251. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Education:

I refer to the Minister's answer to question 926 on Tuesday in relation to student complaints about the business education course at Nedlands College. Part of his answer to the question was that no complaints had been received by him, after which appeared in brackets

the words "Minister to verify this". Has the Minister had an opportunity to verify that?

Mr B. T. Burke: Put it on the notice paper!

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

The reply, of course, was obtained from the college. No doubt it included a note to that effect, expecting me to verify it.

Mr B. T. Burke: Wasn't it published in the *Daily News* for you?

Mr GRAYDEN: I have not received any representations of that kind.

Mr Davies: Then what is the answer?
