Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 22nd November, 1979

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 10.30 a.m., and read prayers.

TRANSPORT COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

MR RUSHTON (Dale—Minister for Transport) [10.32 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The briefness of this Bill obscures its importance.

It provides the necessary legislative changes for the Government to commence the first steps for the introduction of a new policy for the transport of goods by road and rail.

It is an historic Bill, for it marks the start of a change in transport policy so complex and far-reaching that it will probably take at least seven years to implement. During those seven years, we can expect the face of land freight transport to change dramatically for the better.

At the end of the policy's implementation, we will have a stronger and more independent Westrail, free to concentrate on doing all those transport jobs it does well, actively seeking out traffic in the open market place, quoting competitive rates, and "packaging" its services from door to door, fully integrating them into the road transport connections at each end of the journey.

The users of transport will benefit from a new freedom of choice. Where rail suits their purposes, they will be free to use rail; where road transport suits, they will be free to use road. The new competition between the suppliers of transport will work to the positive advantage of the users of transport. The market place will replace the present restrictions as the major source of discipline to ensure that users' requirements are met at reasonable cost.

The road transport industry will respond to the new challenges, I know, in a highly responsible manner, to the great benefit of the community.

The Transport Commission will also undergo fundamental change. Even though transport will move towards greater competition, however, the Transport Commission will not fade from existence.

Instead, its role will change. Increasingly it will become the guardian of the interests of transport users. Rather than administering regulation, the commission will refrain from interfering in the free choice of users except in those cases where it is necessary either to ensure that an adequate transport service at reasonable cost is provided or to ensure that the competitive market does not impose unacceptable environmental or other social costs on the community.

The Government recognises that a time will never come when the whole land freight transport system can be entirely abandoned to the exigencies of competition. Some subsidies and some regulations will always be necessary to protect isolated communities and to ensure that the environment is safeguarded. It is possible, for example, that a small community does not produce enough traffic to sustain healthy competition between a number of transport suppliers; or it is possible that regulations will be necessary to prevent an influx of very heavy trucks into a built-up area.

This is why we see a permanently continuing Transport Commission. Over time, however, the commission will be intervening much less than it is presently required to do.

The Bill presently before the House relates only directly to the Transport Commission. The changes being made to the commission, however, will have consequences which will be felt by Westrail, the road transport industry, and the users of transport.

Behind the Bill stretch many decades of the old policy. Ahead of the Bill stretch many decades of the new policy. I believe members will rightly expect of me that I put the Bill in its context, for only then will they be able to make a judgment as to its merits.

In preparing for this, I took the opportunity to look back to the time, 46 years ago almost to the day, when the original State Transport Co-ordination Bill was introduced to this House. This was the Bill which set up the Transport Board, or the Transport Commission as it is called today, and which established the policy which has continued almost without change since then. In those days there was no Minister for Transport. The Bill was introduced by the Minister for Railways—for there was only one real recognised type of transport in the 1930s. There were only 13 000 kilometres of constructed roads in the entire State, and the majority of those would not pass muster against today's standards. By comparison, there were over 7 000 kilometres of good quality rail track open. Not many road vehicles would carry more than seven or eight tonnes.

The centenary of the construction of the first railway in Western Australia is being celebrated this year. That line, between Geraldton and Northampton, in 1879, was the start of a new era in Western Australia, because suddenly distance was no longer a great barrier and new areas of the colony could be opened up simply by the construction of a railway line.

But coincidental with the arrival of the depression, road transport was starting to take a significant amount of traffic away from the railways. With the exception of wool, road transport was carrying over 55 per cent of all payable goods traffic by 1933. Railways deficits were beginning to mount up, after profitable years in 1924, 1925, and 1927.

Not surprisingly there was a certain amount of concern. Nobody was clear as to where the solutions lay. The idea of the Bill in 1933 was simply to appoint an expert board which would sort the matter out. The Bill was based on similar Victorian legislation, which had established the Victorian Transport Regulation Board. Members will be interested to know that an inquiry undertaken by Sir Henry Bland for the Victorian Government in 1971 recommended the substantial dismantling of the Victorian legislation on which our own legislation is based. In Western Australia we have persisted with it almost entirely without change to the present day, despite the fact that the Act now has a different name from the original.

I should pay a compliment to the various members of the Transport Board and the Transport Commission, as it was later called. For nearly 50 years they administered the policy with dedication, and today's land freight transport system is fundamentally sound as a result of their work.

But today I can quote some words which were used in relation to the 1933 legislation and which are at least as much relevant to the present legislation before the House. The Chief Secretary said in 1933—

> If the Government are unable to secure the passage of a Bill of this kind, only two courses will be open to them. One will be to increase the freight on goods in order to make the railways pay and the other will be to impose increased taxation.

In 1976-77 the Westrail deficit increased from $3 million to $11.1 million, or 270 per cent. The following year it increased to $16.1 million or another 45 per cent. Last financial year, it increased to $24.1 million, or a futher 50 per cent.

Imagine the amount of money involved if we add together the net profit of BHP, CSR, and CRA. Now add to that the profit of Mt. Isa Mines and Comalco. Throw in, say, Myer WA Stores, Coles, and Woolworths. Finally, throw in the profit of TNT and Ansett. All that money, the combined earnings of some of Australia's most eminent companies, is equal to the amount which Australia's Government Railways lose in a year—$2 million a day. Proudly, Westrail's part in this sad record is very small indeed. The Western Australian rail deficit is only 3 or 4 per cent of the total.

However, it is precisely because Westrail is so well placed at the present time that the Government is eager to act now.

On almost any measure one cares to take, Westrail is a very strong, healthy, and well-managed rail system. Morale is high. The system is modern. Important marketing initiatives are already being taken. This means that Westrail is approaching the stage where it is able to compete actively for its share of traffic. We look for the support of all railwaymen in doing it. If we miss the chance now, our railways will certainly suffer in the long term.

The origins of the new policy trace back to 1975 when the Government set up the Southern Western Australia Transport Study or "SWATS". SWATS was conducted under the direction of the then Commissioner of Railways (Mr Pascoe) and the Director General of Transport (Mr Knox). The SWATS report, prepared by the expert study team that Mr Pascoe and Mr Knox put together, in fact consisted of a 467-page main report, two supplementary volumes, and 31 technical papers. All these documents—except for three technical papers which were kept confidential for commercial reasons—were released to the public in May, last year. Members who have taken the time to study these documents will fully appreciate the wealth of information contained in them. SWATS will remain a reference work for many years to come. I believe the new transport policy we are now introducing has the benefit of one of the most important studies of transport policy carried out. SWATS is a tribute to the people who carried it out.

When releasing SWATS to the public, my predecessor, the Hon. David Wordsworth, invited public comment to assist the Government in its review of the documents. In response, the Government has received well over 100 written contributions from interested parties. All this information has been subjected to close scrutiny.

The co-directors of the SWATS made no effort to direct the study team to any particular conclusion. The co-directors' recommendations were therefore of major interest to the Government, as well. These were released to the public, in order to assist the debate, at the end of last year.

In early months of this year, in company with senior advisers, I undertook a series of visits to about 20 country areas throughout the southern half of the State to gain at first hand the views of country people on the needs of transport policy. I have spoken with regional development committees, members of parliament, the transport committee of the Rural and Allied Industries Council, representatives of the unions which would be affected, the West Australian Road Transport Association, representatives of owner-drivers, commercial and industrial people, the Farmers' Union, the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, and a great many others—to all of whom I am thankful. It was most valuable to me to have their response and thoughts relating to this changed policy. Apart from the fact that no two people seem to agree on exactly what should be done, I would observe that virtually everybody I have spoken to recognises that it is time for greater freedom in freight transport.

Out of all the discussions and analysis, a large number of needs have become very clear. We aim to fulfil all of them simultaneously.

We want, at the same time, to maintain a healthy, prosperous Westrail; to hold transport rates to a realistic level; to protect the farmers' interests; to give transport users a free choice wherever possible; to prevent a spiralling of Westrail deficits; to give the road transport industry an opportunity to offer services which road vehicles can efficiently provide; and to keep the transport energy situation under review and control.

There are other needs which could be easily added to this list. But members will already understand that the full list is best summarised by the overall objective of safeguarding the State's ecomonic and social development through efficient, reasonably priced, land freight transport services.

Finding a way through all the alternative proposals in a responsible way is not easy. Those who have read SWATS know that it says there, in relation to the study team's own recommendations—

> The study team believes the recommendations should be accepted as a policy 'package', in which each item is closely related to the other. The team believes it would be undesirable to regard the ten basic elements as a 'shopping list', from which individual items can be selected.

The Government agrees that the palatable must come with the unpalatable; the popular decisions and the unpopular come together. The new policy can be implemented only if the Government faces its responsibilities. With a report as large as SWATS it is not suprising that the Government has not implemented all the study's recommendations in detail. We are, however, setting about putting its principles into practice.

I should now like to turn to the actions which the Government will be taking.

The new policy does not aim to make a major transfer of freight onto rail; nor does it aim to make a major transfer away from rail. It aims to allow the users of transport services to make a free choice, based on equitable competition between transport suppliers. Where necessary, regulations and subsidies will continue, but there will be far fewer than there are now.

The railways have come a very long way since 1933. Back then, only 2.5 million tonnes were carried. This year, Westrail carried nearly 20 million tonnes. This is the equivalent of one four-axle semi-trailer-load every 30 seconds, every hour of the day, every day of the year. It is quite impossible to imagine how our transport system would cope without Westrail.

But, with a traffic task of this sort of magnitude, we cannot continue any longer to force certain traffic to travel by rail, and then to force Westrail to accept the traffic and to carry it at a loss. This benefits neither Westrail nor the transport user. It is certainly not economic. By forcing Westrail to carry this loss-making traffic, through the common carrier obligation, we are forcing Westrail to try at least partially to compensate for the loss by charging higher rates on its contributing traffic, like wool and wheat.

This cross-subsidisation means that Westrail's best traffic—the goods which it can carry very efficiently—are made less competitive because they have to help carry the burden of the remaining traffic.

Under the new policy, Westrail will progressively gain the freedom to commercially market the services which it is good at without being burdened by the traffic which would be much better travelling by another means.

In general, the most obvious type of traffic which needs rationalisation is the small consignment, especially over shorter distances. Therefore, as one of the first moves in the new

policy, user choice will be extended to consignments of nine tonnes or less of any goods—except freezer-chiller—which travel within 150 kilometres of Perth or within 100 kilometres of Albany, Bunbury, Esperance, Geraldton, and Kalgoorlie. These new freedoms will be added to the other freedoms already enjoyed by transport users. As the implementation of the policy continues, both the weight and the distance limitations will be able to be lifted progressively.

In preparation for the extension of the freedoms, Westrail will be improving the competitiveness of its services, in particular, its wool, grain, and fertiliser handling.

In the case of wool, the Transport Commission will be granting permission for wool to be carried by road in those cases where Westrail is not able to supply a wagon or vehicle within a few days of a confirmed order being placed.

The further improvement of handling facilities for the contributing traffic, particularly the bulks, together with removal of the need to cross-subsidise the unprofitable traffic, will enable Westrail to develop and expand its role in its best traffic.

The initiatives I have mentioned will start on the 14th April, 1980. Together, they make up the highlights of the first moves. With the assistance of a Transport Advisory Committee, and the usual Government advisers, I will be keeping a careful watch on progress. As we get moving, other initiatives will be able to be taken. To maintain flexibility, the exact nature and timing of these later moves need to be kept open.

One important move, which it is proposed to introduce on the 1st November, 1980, concerns certain grains. Grain is the staple diet of Westrail. Farmers have invested enormous amounts in the handling facilities for the transport of grain by rail. But concern is growing that these facilities may be increasingly bypassed by direct road transport, especially to ports. The Government has given very careful thought as to how the trend might be stopped. As grain growers have been quick to say to me, the trend can be stopped by Westrail providing the best possible services and rates. But we have to realise that services and rates depend partly on the amount of grain handled. If grain moves away from rail and onto road, Westrail's job becomes harder and harder.

The Government has therefore determined that, for a temporary period of time, certain grain will be regulated onto rail, beginning on the 1st November, 1980. This will give sufficient additional tonnage for Westrail to reduce certain grain rates immediately—a step which, in modern times, is very rare indeed.

The regulation will also give Westrail the "breathing space" necessary to adjust its grain services further to the most acceptable standards in preparation for removal of the regulations. By that stage, the regulations will be largely redundant anyway, because rail will be the obviously preferred transport in nearly all cases where it is available.

I should say that, since the 1960s, there has been greater flexibility in the approach of the Transport Commission, and commercial goods vehicle licences have been more readily available for some transport jobs. The commission now has a long list of special types of transport jobs which can be carried out. These include most types of building materials, furniture, meat and meat products, newspapers, machinery and equipment, as well as goods for consumption at Gingin, Lancelin, Northam, Pinjarra, Toodyay, and York.

Under section 19 of the Transport Commission Act, the Minister can also notify exemptions from the provisions of the Act, where no licence from the Transport Commission is required. They include everything from bees to bulk petroleum, from fishing gear to fire-prevention equipment.

For the information of members, I will make available copies of the full list of "special commodities and exemptions." I ask them to comtemplate the sheer mass of confusing restrictions and exceptions under which road freight transport labours at the present time.

And yet, despite all the apparent exemptions, every one of us in this place can probably recount tales where some unsuspecting citizen has been forced to meet his transport needs through a most illogical and often expensive process using transport which is not the most suitable. In my 15 months as Minister for Transport, I have heard many of them. Quite regularly I receive approaches from citizens or members acting on their behalf, who point out these anomalies and ask that I intercede. Quite apart from the question whether a Minister can or should intervene in the Transport Commissioner's administration of the Act, I generally have to point out to these people that the whole of the present policy would quickly tumble about us if special exceptions were randomly made to meet each anomaly the policy causes.

I do want to point out, however, that we will have to live with some of the anomalies a while longer. As I have already said, the new policy will take perhaps seven or more years to bring fully into effect and, in the meantime, we will still

suffer from regulations which occasionally force us to make transport arrangements which do not make much business sense.

We will have to be patient in the introduction of the new policy. I think one of the reasons that a major review of freight transport policy was not instituted ealier is that people have seen that there is no simple and quick method of eliminating its faults. Changing to a more rational policy will be a long and complex task, and during the changover we will have to live with a mixture of policies for a time.

One of the main causes of this mixture will be the very important need for us to "prepare the ground" before a particular type of transport job is opened up to competition and free user choice.

Let me explain very carefully what I mean by "preparing the ground". The Government believes most strongly that some other States and countries have gone about introducing freight transport competition in the wrong way. They have very quickly removed the restrictions on road transport and done little or nothing to help their rail systems to respond to the new competition. The best example is probably South Australia, where the road transport regulations were removed more than 10 years ago. It was like the Colosseum for a while. The most lucrative rail services were fairly quickly picked off—the fattest Christians, so to speak. By the time Mr Dunstan made his clever sale of what was left of the railways to Mr Whitlam, the lions had eaten very well and South Australians did not care much for what was left; and the deficit on South Australian country rail today is about double that of Western Australia.

There is no reason at all that Western Australia should go the same way. All we have to do is make sure our "Christians" are adequately armed before we let the lions in. Perhaps my analogy is a little too brutal. Certainly, I do not envisage a fight to the death between road and rail transport. The new competition will encourage them to live harmoniously together, and to concentrate on developing their own respective abilities.

The Government is firmly committed to the future of the railways. It is absolutely determined to maintain Westrail as the backbone of the freight transport system in Western Australia. In a State with long distances and with enormous production of agricultural and mineral products, Western Australia cannot survive and prosper if Westrail does not survive and prosper.

It is therefore of paramount importance that the new policy be introduced in the manner we are proposing, and that all along the way we carefully monitor the success of each stage before we commit ourselves to too many of the future stages. This is also the reason that the Bill presently before the House goes only so far in introducing the new policy. Further changes to the present legislation will be necessary at other times. There will also be need for changes in the State Transport Co-ordination Act, which establishes the Director General of Transport, and the Government Railways Act. But these will not be necessary until later stages in the implementation of the new policy.

The Bill before the House makes all necessary changes in preparation for the first moves to begin on the 14th April next year—the first full working week after Easter. Only after all the details of other steps are decided—after consultation with the parties involved and in the light of the experience in getting the first moves going—will the necessary further legislation be introduced. But to get ourselves to the desired situation in the end, we are going to have to take the good with the bad, as I have already mentioned. We may even create some transport "anomalies" of our own for a while. I should like, Mr Speaker, to highlight the three main such so-called "difficulties".

The first one is the increased penalties, in clause 13, for infringement of the provisions of the Transport Commission Act. With the objective of greater freedoms, it is not comfortable to propose increased penalties for transport suppliers who are being forced still to live with regulation. The reason, however, will be apparent to anyone who thinks the matter through. In this time of policy changeover, it is more important than ever that all participants "play by the rules".

We cannot afford to allow people to take it upon themselves to obtain freedoms before they can be introduced. There will be a certain amount of impatience between now and the time when the policy is fully implemented. This impatience must not result in a deliberate flouting of the law, which would mean a flouting of the public interest.

The second so-called "difficulty" with the new policy's implementation is the nine-tonne limit which will, for the present time, be imposed on loads within the specified road transport "as-of-right" zones. Some people will argue that this limitation forces road transporters to carry inefficient loads. These people will say that this forces road transporters to carry less tonnage than they could and that, as a result, transport will be inefficient. To a certain extent, this accusation will be quite true. I make no apology for it,

however. The nine-tonne load limit was chosen as a means of allowing some of the "smalls" traffic which is currently regulated onto rail to gravitate onto road transport in cases where road is the better means of transport. The nine tonnes is equivalent to the capacity of the largest two-axle road vehicles, as well as being less than a load for the normal rail wagon. The legislation does not insist that the load be carried in a two-axle road vehicle. It can be carried in any sized vehicle which can legally use the road. The nine-tonne freedom applies on top of existing freedoms.

It is important to remember that the nine-tonne freedom is over and above the existing freedom.

I ask members to give careful thought to any alternative which is available. Even iron ore is not likely to be attractive to Westrail if it comes in a load of less than nine tonnes, and it is therefore foolish to insist any longer that these journeys must compulsorily be made by rail.

It is important to recognise that it is not proposed that Westrail will abandon the carriage of small consignments, but simply that it will progressively withdraw from the areas in which it cannot compete.

Within 150 kilometres of Perth, and within 100 kilometres of the regional centres of Albany, Bunbury, Esperance, Geraldton, and Kalgoorlie, it will no longer be compulsory that small loads travel by rail. In later stages of implementation of the new policy, the Government proposes both to extend the distances and raise the nine-tonne limit. Ultimately there will be freedom across the State, except under special circumstances.

The third and final apparent "anomaly" of the new proposals which I wish to draw to the attention of members is the regulation of certain grain traffic onto rail for the time being. This will not take place until the 1st November next year—the start of the new grain year. The details of this move are yet to be finalised. Nevertheless, the principles are clear. The regulation of grain will be temporary.

It is impossible at this stage for me to predict the date when grain regulations will be removed, for it will depend, of course, on the progress we can make in other areas of the new policy. It is imperative, however, that we assist Westrail to pass over the traffic which it should no longer be carrying in modern times before we force it to compete for every last drop of traffic which obviously would on economic grounds gravitate primarily to the railways.

At this stage, I should like to mention the so-called 'energy crisis'. Occasionally, I meet people who argue that all traffic should travel by rail because rail transport uses less fuel than road transport. This is without question a misunderstanding which has to be put right from the start. The fuel efficiency of a train depends on the type of train and the use to which it is put.

It will be clear to members that a fully laden bulk train will carry a given tonnage for much less fuel than a whole string of light trucks. But I hope it is equally clear that a couple of tonnes is better carried in a truck than a train which is almost entirely empty.

Fuel efficiency is largely dependent upon the use to which the particular type of transport is put. There is no simple law which says that any mode of transport consistently uses less fuel than any other mode of transport. Every indication suggests that it is better to ensure each mode of transport is chosen by the transport user in accordance with his individual requirement rather than put any mode of transport in a permanent position of favouritism.

Each type of transport will always have advantages over the other in certain cases. Under the new policy, the Government would like to see transport suppliers striving to make the best of their advantages. That is the whole purpose of competition.

There are certainly differences between road and rail. Road transporters pay company tax, and Westrail does not. Road transport can share the roads with other types of transport, and Westrail cannot; and so it goes on. There are advantages and disadvantages on both sides; but that applies in every other field of competition.

So long as we make sure that all prospective competitors are properly equipped to do battle where necessary, then it is quite pointless and unnecessary even to contemplate trying to iron out all the differences between road and rail.

While I am discussing these matters, let me come finally to the question of closure of rail lines. Country people want to keep their rail lines. Like the Government, they do not want to see them closed. One of the benefits of the new policy is the opportunity it gives users to put an insurance policy on their rail services. With Westrail providing attractive, competitive services, the use of a rail line will guarantee that it stays open.

In summary, the Bill is an important first step in a new policy which gives the transport consumer greater opportunity to develop a transport system which meets his needs.

Before concluding, I would like to pay credit to all the people who have been involved in the backroom work, including Mr Pascoe, and Mr

Knox and his team. I pay credit to all these senior and less senior officers, and to all the people throughout the country to whom I have been able to talk. Whenever an interest has been shown, we have discussed fully the introduction of this Bill.

Mr Jamieson: Who wrote this speech for you—Mr Knox?

Mr RUSHTON: I would like to mention one person in particular who has been very much involved in this matter, and who was involved also in the Southern Western Australia Transport Study. I refer to Stuart Hicks, who is working as the director of research and planning in the office of the Director-General of Transport. He has made a special contribution to this work. The task has been a formidable one, and I am pleased we have reached this stage. I am looking forward to the implementation of the policy and to the benefits we will gain from it.

The Bill deserves the support of all members, and I commend it to them.

Mr Nanovich: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr McIver.

COLLIE COAL (GRIFFIN) AGREEMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 8th November.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [11.06 a.m.]: This is the second of three Bills to ratify agreements between the Government and coalmining companies at Collie. Reference to the Bill will indicate that Parliament is being treated merely as a rubber stamp; it is being asked merely to ratify an agreement. This is borne out by the title of the Bill, which is—

> A Bill for An Act to ratify an Agreement between the State of Western Australia and The Griffin Coal Mining Company Limited with respect to the mining, development and rehabilitation of certain coal reserves and to matters related thereto.

In essence, the agreement has been signed, subject to ratification by Parliament. Of course, we know about the numbers game here; the Government has the numbers and I would assume from its performance to date anything the Opposition suggests would not receive favourable consideration. Therefore it is true to say the Parliament is being used as a rubber stamp. It is not discussing the terms of the agreement to be entered into between the Government and the Griffin Company; it is merely ratifying the agreement.

However, it is my intention to draw to the attention of the House a number of matters in respect of the Bill. I have had very close discussions with the Collie Coal Miners' Union executive—

Mr Nanovich: What did they have to say?

Mr T. H. JONES: What is wrong with the member for Whitford?

Mr Bertram: Plenty. Have a look at him.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Blaikie): Order!

Mr T. H. JONES: I think you should silence him, Sir; it would be easier for everyone because he just waffles on.

Mr Nanovich: You are a parasite—not the member for Collie.

Withdrawl of Remark

Mr T. H. JONES: If the member for Whitford was referring to me, I ask for a withdrawal of that remark because I am not a parasite.

Mr Nanovich: I didn't call you that.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I did not hear the remark to which the member is referring. Will he indicate what it is?

Mr T. H. JONES: The member for Whitford indicated I am a parasite. I feel that is unparliamentary and I ask for its withdrawal.

Mr NANOVICH: At no time did I call the member for Collie a parasite. I would not call him that, and I clearly indicated that I was not referring to him.

Mr T. H. JONES: If the member was not referring to me, obviously he was referring to someone else.

Mr Nanovich: Exactly.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I suggest we will make progress if the member addresses the Chair.

Debate Resumed

Mr T. H. JONES: It seems that the Parliament is again in an aggressive mood. It ended on an aggressive note at about one o'clock this morning. It seems that that sort of spirit still pervades the Chamber. How we will finish at 6.15 tonight is anybody's guess. It is your suggestion, Mr Acting Speaker, that I carry on with debate on the Bill before the House, and I will do that.

I had long discussions with the Coal Miners' Industrial Union in relation to the contents of the Bill. I understand that last Thursday, when the Premier made a visit to Collie, the executive of the union raised some serious matters with him.

Mr Watkins, the general secretary of the union, told me the Premier promised to discuss with the Minister for Mines those matters that were exercising the minds of members of the miners' union. I do not know whether the Premier would agree with the report I have received; but that is what Mr Watkins told me. I would be interested to know whether following the Premier's discussions the Minister has changed his opinion or has had other ideas in relation to the Bill. The Premier gave an assurance to the union that he would discuss the points at issue with the Minister.

Sir Charles Court: I do not know the specific items to which you refer; but there were one or two points on which they expressed a view, and I have discussed them with the Minister. I do not think they cut across the principles of the proposal.

Mr T. H. JONES: Obviously some of those matters will be discussed by me this morning. No doubt the Minister will have an opportunity to reply to them.

This Bill provides for the execution of a second agreement. I understand there may be another one between Western Collieries and Dampier Pty. Ltd. The purpose of the agreement is to bring about the orderly working of the Collie coalfield to ensure that the coal deposits are worked in the best interests of the State. However, this agreement contains a number of shortcomings to which I will refer briefly during the second reading debate and also when we reach the Committee stage.

In his speech, the Minister said—

> Another development of note since the Western Collieries agreement was considered by this House is the recent announcement of a major coal exploration effort in the Fortescue River valley in the Pilbara.

I welcome these developments; but I would ask the Government: When will it take the initiative to enter into this field itself? In fact, the Government is doing nothing in the field of exploration in this State.

The Government has made the statement that it will be necessary to utilise nuclear power in the 1990s on the premise that insufficient coal will be available in Western Australia for power generation purposes. When I moved a motion condemning the Government on its decision to consider entry into nuclear generation, the Minister indicated in reply to me that power produced from nuclear sources is dearer than power produced from coal-burning sources. The Minister will not agree that the capital cost of a conventional coal-burning plant is much cheaper than that for a nuclear plant.

If there is an evaluation of the system we will discover that the cost of production of nuclear power is dearer than production from coal, that the capital costs of a nuclear station are higher, and also that there are more problems with the decommissioning of a nuclear station than there are with a coal-burning station. The Government mentions the exploration taking place in the Fortescue Valley in the Pilbara and it is quite clear we should be entering into a similar scheme in other areas of this State. The Government is doing nothing. It is just saying that the coal reserves are available.

The Minister has mentioned that, since the first announcement of the coal reserves in 1974, an additional 15 million tonnes of coal have been explored by the coalmining companies on the Collie field. I know from my experience that other amounts of coal have been found that have not yet been reported to the Mines Department. It was only last week that one mining company bought a large farm-holding because it contains good reserves of easily won open-cut coal.

It is time the Government did something about proving the coal reserves in Western Australia. In my view, and in the view of other people associated with the coalmining industry, nobody can say with any reliability what are the coal reserves of this State. The Government should be proving these reserves, to prevent us from having to go nuclear, because there are so many things against nuclear power. I will not deal with them today because, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Blaikie), you would not permit me to do so. However, we learn that in America some wise decisions have been taken. The Minister and the Government have been relying on the basis of nuclear power in other parts of the world.

I was informed last week that France has gone nuclear because it has no alternative. Coal imported into France is costing the French power authorities $60 a tonne. That is the reason France and other larger nations have no alternative but to go nuclear. That situation does not pertain in Western Australia.

The Government should be prepared to take positive action to determine how much coal is in the Wilga field; and the Minister should tell us what reserves are in the field, and what work has been done. Exploration could take place in many other areas; but unfortunately the Government is sitting back and saying that these are the coal reserves, and it is doing nothing about them.

In his second reading speech, the Minister mentioned the following—

> Supply of approximately 50 million tonnes of coal to the SEC is envisaged over a 25-year period. Much of the coal will be utilised in the existing Muja power station and two new 200-MW extensions to the Muja station.

It is made apparent in the Bill that before any coal can be exported from Western Australia ministerial approval must be obtained. I oppose the thought that coal should be sent out of the State, because this would increase the need for the nuclear power house to be established. The prohibition of export would prevent the feeling that we should be considering a nuclear programme, which would be more costly so far as the capital cost is concerned, and which in terms of generating costs would be more costly than a coal-fired process. In view of the world power situation we should not be considering the export of our coal.

In his second reading speech, the Minister said—

> Reservation of 50 per cent of aggregate extractable coal reserves for SEC needs is required from existing coalmining leases, other than those the subject of the long-term contract.

We go a lot further than that. We say we must have a close look at our coal reserves before we agree to the export of coal from this site. We are in a very serious position.

The Minister has said, and the Premier has made it quite clear, that the only reason the Government is considering turning to nuclear power generation is that our coal reserves are limited. I have made the Opposition's point quite clear. There is no need to go nuclear; and we should be exploring to see what coal we have. In addition, we should not be considering the export of coal from this State while the threat of having to go nuclear is over our heads. I have made our view clear in that respect.

In the main, with one minor exception which is very important, this Bill is similar to the agreement entered into by Western Collieries. For some years, the mining unions have been urging successive Governments to implement a programme of orderly development of the Collie coalfield. Members will recall that in 1957 the first coal contract was entered into with the railways and the SEC for the supply of coal to those Government departments. The tenure of the contract was for three years only. We opposed the short tenure because it did not give the operating companies sufficient time to enter into a proper programme of development of the Collie coalfield so far as the mining operations were concerned. This is understandable.

It must be realised that in 1961 Amalgamated Collieries was left out of the contract. Of course, that company was working on a three-year basis only.

It is necessary that the companies know where they are going. The Tonkin Government did grant to one company an extension of the time beyond three years, and another company decided that it would not be in a position to do that. The Labor Government did look at this policy and brought into this Parliament specific agreements which spelt out what the companies ought to do.

Paragraph (a) of the schedule states—

> the Company is engaged in the mining of coal at Collie and desires to expand its activities and increase production and has applied for additional coal mining leases;

There is nothing wrong with that in the long term, but we do not want all the coal leases in Collie held up by a company which has not indicated whether it will work this lease. This has happened in the past when companies have had the control of a lease and not worked it. The company should indicate its desire to work the lease; otherwise the lease should be retained for an operating company to meet its contractual obligations. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of the schedule state—

> the State desires to ensure that the coal resource at Collie is developed in the most economic and practicable way and that the coal requirements of the State Energy Commission and industry in Western Australia are adequately safeguarded consistent with the purposes of this Agreement;
>
> by agreement dated 29th March, 1979 the State Energy Commission entered into an agreement with the Company to purchase coal for use in its power stations during a 25 year period from certain coal mining leases held by the Company.

This is where the agreement lacks teeth. It is stated that the Government can negotiate with the coalmining companies for the coal to be supplied for Government instrumentalities or the State Energy Commission.

There are no ratios mentioned in the Western Collieries agreement to which the Minister referred. Clause 7(1)(a) of the Bill reads—

> measures to be taken for the mining of coal by open-cut methods and deep mining

methods consistent with the purposes of this Agreement;

However, with the clause we are now discussing involving the Griffin Coal Mining Co., a different arrangement in the Bill exists. The Government should look at this because it is wrong in principle to allow any coalmining company to enter into a coalfield and take all the easy open-cut coal and then in 20 years' time be forced to revert to a deep-mining programme. That is foolish, and the Government must ensure that the companies are required to put down a deep mine as well. It is dearer to produce coal from a deep mine, but by doing this we would have a balanced price.

If we allow a company to enter the field and take all the easy open-cut coal to be provided to the SEC at a reasonable price, it will mean in the long term when the open cut has been used, the deep-mining coal will be much dearer. This has applied to some extent in the iron ore industry and the goldmining industry.

It is incumbent upon us as legislators to ensure that there is orderly development of the Collie coalfields. Unfortunately, the agreement is not specific to any degree. It is left to the SEC, the Minister, and the contracting company to produce an agreement for the supply of coal for the State Energy Commission of Western Australia. This is causing the unions some concern because anything can happen in a deep mine. At the moment there is only one deep mine in the Collie coalfield and that is operated by Western Collieries Ltd.

The union is worried that if there is a creek which interferes with the whole structure of the deep mine there may be an inrush of water into the mine and then the jobs of hundreds of workers would be jeopardised. The country would then be in trouble because it would be difficult to obtain sufficient coal to meet the State's energy requirements.

No-one believed that this could happen, but it did in 1965 in a mine adjacent to the Muja power station. It was a deep mine where roof bolts were used for supports. No timber was taken into the mine. It was a very cheap operation where the company just bored a hole, erected a roof bolt and the roof bolt was the support. The mine became flooded with a sudden rush of water and some 140 men lost their jobs at that mine.

I was the secretary of the union at that time and we had great difficulty in juggling the leave and long service leave for the workers so that they would not be retrenched.

The Griffin Coal Mining Co. should be required to put down a deep mine. Mr Jack Watkins of Collie asked me to mention that Mr Kirkwood had indicated to him that this would be done and that there would be no trouble with the Griffin company putting down a deep mine in the Collie field. However, if we read the contents of the Bill which ratifies the agreement between the Griffin Coal Mining Co. and the Government, we find no mention is made of a deep mine.

The Griffin Coal Mining Co. has one of the best deep mine propositions at Ewington held up.

Mr Mensaros: There is no mention of any open-cut mine.

Mr T. H. JONES: It is all open cut now. The Minister can say what he wishes, but the fact is the company has undertaken that it will not put down a deep mine.

Mr Mensaros: That is not the subject of the agreement.

Mr T. H. JONES: Of course it is not, but this is where the agreement is weak. The Minister and the Government should, in the interests of the Collie coalfields, have a ratio of deep and open cut mines in Collie.

Mr Mensaros: You would not even do that.

Mr T. H. JONES: I would do it because it was required of Western Collieries.

Mr Mensaros: Theoretically you would not.

Mr T. H. JONES: The Hawke Labor Government did that in 1957. On the day prior to the 1957 contractual arrangement made by an agreement between the two companies—Western Collieries and Amalgamated Collieries—the Government entered into the agreement and the ratios were 70 per cent deep mining and 30 per cent open cut. So the principle was clearly established, but of course since then we have come away from that.

I believe in mine profitability because if companies are making a reasonable profit there is an opportunity for the workers to share that profitability.

To be fair to the companies, this has occurred to some extent on the Collie field. They have made numerous agreements from which the workers have benefited by way of hours, leave, and wages based on productivity. But this agreement should contain a provision that within a prescribed time the Griffin Coal Mining Co. must put down a deep mine on the Collie coalfield, and there is good reason for that.

Let us look at what the Griffin company has extracted from the Collie field. On the 14th November I asked the Minister the following question—

What has been—

(a) the amount of coal produced from the Muja open cut since operations first commenced;

(b) the revenue in coal sales the company has received from the coal produced at Muja open cut?

The reply was—

(a) 12 998 449 tonnes to the end of September, 1979;

(b) $79 585 184 pit head value.

That is a great deal of money. I know that capital and development are included but surely some of that money should be set aside for the development of a deep mine.

The future of the company is very rosy. The Minister informed me on the 21st November in answer to a question that when the 2 x 200-megawatt units come on load at Muja power station an extra 2.1 million tonnes a year will be required. The Griffin company is now supplying over 1.1 million tonnes to the SEC. The answer to the question also stated that the additional 2.1 million tonnes of coal for Muja power station will come from the Griffin Coal Mining Co. in the main. So the company is in a good, sound, stable position. Is it unreasonable that the unions should be asking the company to do something about developing a deep mine?

The Minister knows the open-cut reserves are limited. Therefore, some requirement should be written into the agreement that the Griffin company put down a deep mine. From the knowledge I have of the field and the information I have gained from people within the industry, Griffin has held up one of the best deep-mine projects in the town. I refer to the Ewington leases which were formerly owned by Amalgamated Collieries which went out of business in 1961 and surrendered the leases to the Crown. Griffin obtained the leases. I understand boring has now taken place between the Ewington mine and the disused Stockton mine some miles away and it indicates continuity for four miles between the two mines. We must remember that when the Stockton mine closed the union, in conjunction with the Mines Department, put down five bores ahead of the Stockton mine which proved continuity of coal in a westerly direction towards Collie. So one of the best deep-mine operations is being held up and in view of the revenue of $79.5 million which the company has received from coal sales, the union says it is time consideration was given to requiring the company to put down a deep mine. The union took this matter up with the Premier last Thursday.

This is where the Bill lacks teeth. The Minister says if we were in Government we would not introduce a provison of this nature. We would. What would Western Mining do? It would say, "We are no longer interested in deep mines; we want to get our coal from open-cut mining." And what could the Government do about it? It could do nothing because it has to obtain its requirements of coal for power generation in this State.

Obviously we must develop deep mines, insisting on certain proportions of open-cut and deep-mine coal. This does not apply to the other company but it should apply to both companies for the reasons I have stated.

According to figures from the Mines Department, there are 286 million tonnes of open-cut coal and 190 million tonnes of deep-mine coal on the field. There are one deep mine, two open-cut mines, and a third open-cut mine in the wind. The other operating company mentioned in clause 2 of the Bill—Dampier—is also looking at an open-cut proposition. There is no mention of a deep mine. I think the reserves are far in excess of those indicated in the Minister's figures. There are 100 million tonnes of pillar coal. In the deep mine at Collie only one-third of the coal is extracted; two-thirds of the coal is left in the ground. The Government should require each company to operate on the field on a proper basis and both should be required to enter into a deep-mining operation.

The Government must have closer consultation with the Australian Coal Research Authority. Members would know that last year an agreement was entered into between the States and the Commonwealth to impose a levy on each tonne of coal produced at Collie to go into a central fund for research administered by the Australian Coal Research Authority. We should be looking very soon or right now to increasing extraction and the possibilities.

I discussed this matter with CSR officials who were at Collie last week for the opening of the Western Collieries administration building. It is estimated that there are some 5 000 million tonnes of coal underground on the Collie field at some depth, varying from the 13 metre to five-metre seams. If the Government is saying we are forced into nuclear power because of limited reserves of coal, it should get off its backside and ask the Australian Coal Research Authority or its own research body to find out whether it is feasible to extract some of the large volumes of coal on the Collie coalfield by the shaft method.

There is nothing new in this concept. I have travelled the world and seen mining operations in America, Britain, Scotland, and Germany, and the Minister would know as well as I do that the operation is possible. To obviate the need to go nuclear the Government should be doing what it can to have tests carried out to see whether it is possible to extract the thousands of millions of tonnnes which lie in the deeper underground seams in the Collie field.

The unions are concerned about the agreement. They have asked me to raise these matters with the Minister. I look forward to his comments and will deal further with the Bill during the Committee stage.

MR MENSAROS (Floreat—Minister for *Industrial Development*) [11.38 a.m.]: I thank the member for Collie for his contribution. What he said was not entirely unexpected, but one new note is creeping into his speeches. I noticed it also with the SEC Bill. He is picking up, attacking, and criticising an alleged provision which does not exist.

Mr Jamieson: We have to be suspicious of you because you have been so untrustworthy in the past.

Mr MENSAROS: This is a curly situation because many of the methods he attacked, obviously hoping the media would pick it up and say, "These are the bad things the Government does"—

Mr T. H. Jones: I am speaking for the miners' union. They asked me to put these views forward.

Mr MENSAROS: I realise that but I am saying many of the methods the member has criticised do not exist either in reality or, particularly, in the provisons of the agreement which is a schedule to the Bill.

Mr Jamieson: We have heard that in regard to other legislation.

Mr MENSAROS: Let me deal with the point that Parliament is a rubber stamp. These agreements have been a time-honoured practice of the Western Australian Government of both colours. I do not want to go into the old argument as to whether an agreement should be executed before it comes to Parliament—

Mr T. H. Jones: That is what we are doing.

Mr MENSAROS: —or executed later. I assure members it is a fairly time-consuming business to negotiate these agreements so that the result is in the mutual interest—and this is what it is aimed at—of the developing companies and the State. I emphasise that our system of agreements is unique to Western Australia and it does us a great deal of good. When people are thinking in terms of investment and development anywhere in the world today, an increasingly important factor to be considered is the investment climate. People wonder how secure investment and development will be in a particular area. Investors want to be fairly sure that the rules will not change during the game, and no-one is prepared to invest if he believes that the rules will be changed suddenly.

In a way unique to Western Australia the agreement system eliminates this problem. We can say we have one of the best investment climates in the world, and we can utilise our resources through these developments.

The member for Collie mentioned, as he always does—and I do not blame him for this because of the difference in the political philosophies of the two major parties—that the Government should undertake exploration. As in the past I must again tell him that it is not our policy to invest the taxpayers' money as risk capital.

We endeavour to maintain this investment climate in every way possible, through agreements, with security of the tenements, and a turnover of the tenements. We maintain that work should be undertaken on tenements and that they should not be held unworked for long periods. The royalties we ask for are not too high and excessive, and royalties are settled always by way of negotiation with the interested parties. By these means we achieve this investment climate, and we feel, according to our policy, it is much better for the private developmental companies to undertake exploration in very inducive climates rather than to spend the taxpayers' money on it.

I do not want to touch on the nuclear argument because it is not within the ambit of this measure.

Mr T. H. Jones: I do not blame you for not wanting to get into that area.

Mr MENSAROS: That would take us into quite different fields. However, I will state briefly again—because we are in a mode of repetition—the Government is considering all alternative forms of energy. We must do this because we cannot rely on one finite source.

Mr T. H. Jones: It has learnt from its mistakes of the past.

Mr MENSAROS: One subject I must refer to again, as the member for Collie repeated his views, is that if the conditions in regard to the Seamen's Union were not as presently prevailing, any Government would think seriously of importing coal from the eastern seaboards of Australia.

Mr T. H. Jones: Why?

Mr MENSAROS: This must be considered in the future.

Mr T. H. Jones: What year are you looking at when you say that?

Mr MENSAROS: Whenever the local coal reserves do not cover the requirements.

Mr Jamieson: We will be a long time dead then. You do not know what the shipping conditions will be at that time.

Mr MENSAROS: That does not mean the Government should not look ahead. The member for Collie attacks problems that do not exist when he comments on the exports. The Government does not wish that any coal should be exported. The word "export" is included in the agreement because there is no other legal way to cover this matter. The only way to do it is to incorporate it in an agreement as a schedule to an Act of Parliament.

As every member knows, according to the Constitution export licensing is under the control of the Commonwealth Government, so we cannot say to a company, "We will not give you an export licence", so you will have to do it some other way. Any exports must have the Minister's permission, and without that there is no export. The member for Collie made it clear that his party, with its political philosophy, would not even consider exports. I can assure him that we will not consider them, so there is no argument.

Mr T. H. Jones: Why have the clause in the Bill if you are not considering it?

Mr MENSAROS: I have explained this already and I do not want to repeat myself. We have no other powers than to deal with it in an agreement which is an Act of Parliament.

The reservation of 50 per cent generally of the coal reserves to the State utility is a policy which I would have thought would be exercised by Governments of any political persuasion. The member for Collie said that he would go further, but I did not quite comprehend what he meant. Does he mean that he would reserve 70, 80, or 90 per cent of the coal reserves for the SEC?

Mr T. H. Jones: I didn't say that.

Mr MENSAROS: I know the member did not say that. I am asking him what he meant.

Mr T. H. Jones: I said on the ratio of deep mining to open cut.

Mr MENSAROS: This statement was made before the member touched on deep mining and open cut. The member said he would go further than a reservation of 50 per cent to the SEC and I asked a question whether he would reserve 70 per cent, 80 per cent, or more.

Mr T. H. Jones: It would depend what the survey of demand for private industry showed.

Mr MENSAROS: That is quite correct, and the reason the Tonkin Government and our Government settled for approximately 50 per cent is that both these Governments were fairly optimistic that not only would the demand be there, but also it would increase.

The development of the Alwest Worsley project is the first proof that there will be a large demand for coal. We like to encourage industry to utilise the coal reserves as far as possible, and this is why we have roughly a 50:50 policy. Of course the policy is flexible, and if there is good reason to change it, it can be changed easily. It is not even a matter for legislation; it has been accepted as policy by both sides of Parliament.

The member for Collie expressed concern that the companies should work the leases. Clause 6 of the agreement provides for this.

Mr T. H. Jones: Will the Minister answer a question by interjection?

Mr MENSAROS: Yes.

Mr T. H. Jones: Why is the agreement in this clause different from clause 6 in the agreement relating to Western Collieries?

Mr MENSAROS: I will come to that in a minute. I believe that appears in clause 7.

Mr T. H. Jones: I am referring to clauses 6 and 7.

Mr MENSAROS: Clause 6 is in the Bill precisely to alleviate the concern which the member for Collie voiced. His concern has no basis because if the company does not submit proposals to the State as to how it will work the lease, it is in default of the agreement and it loses the deposits. So there is no legimitate concern that the leases will not be worked and there is no justification for saying they should not be left idle.

Mr T. H. Jones: There is every justification.

Mr MENSAROS: As expected, the main theme of the remarks of the member for Collie centred around what he called the balance between the deep mine and the open-cut mines. The reason the difference exists in the two agreements is the physical fact that the Griffin company supplies the SEC Muja power station principally from its own open-cut mines. According to the sales contract the company has signed with the SEC, it will continue to supply the commission from its open-cut mine for a long time to come.

However, the agreement provides that the company must also develop its other leases,

including the Ewington depression, which can mean only that the coal extracted from the deep mine would perhaps be the major supplier to private industry, whilst the State utility continued to be supplied from the open-cut mine. So, I repeat that the agreement is the best vehicle for developing deep mines from the Griffin leases.

I can assure the member for Collie that what he calls orderly development will be secured. This is and always has been a policy of this Government. In fact, if any changes in the policy regarding other minerals were effected, it was by his Government, which departed from the policy, while our Government always adhered to it.

Mr T. H. Jones: How far back are you going? Do you remember the introduction of a cost-plus system? The McLarty-Watts Government brought that in, and it was the worst thing that ever happened.

Mr MENSAROS: Whilst I appreciate the concern felt by the member for Collie regarding coal research, and his desire that Western Australia should participate in these activities to the fullest extent, I assure the honourable member we are doing everything possible in this direction. However, it is quite logical at conferences between State and Commonwealth Ministers for the dominant role in coal research to be taken by Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Of course, when it comes to gas, that role is played by Western Australia.

Nevertheless, by having the Commissioner of the State Energy Commission on this very important national board—I assure the honourable member he has a great deal of influence on that board—the interests of Western Australia are protected. He is very careful to ensure Western Australia is not bypassed in the utilisation of the funds raised by the levies. Although I cannot provide the member for Collie off-the-cuff with a comparison of figures and statistics, I can assure him that, proportional to the levy imposed on the various States, Western Australia benefits; we are better placed, proportionally, than the Eastern States, which pay a much larger amount.

Mr T. H. Jones: When is action going to be taken from this fund?

Mr MENSAROS: As I said, I cannot give the member for Collie an off-the-cuff statement regarding the areas under research, and the proportion in which Western Australia is participating. However, I will be happy to obtain that information for him.

With those comments, I commend the Bill to members.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr Blaikie) in the Chair; Mr Mensaros (Minister for Industrial Development) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Schedule—

Mr T. H. JONES: I refer to clause 6 of the schedule. I do not go along with what the Minister said, because in this instance, the power is vested in his hands. The Minister will be able to stipulate the proportion of coal, if any, which is to come from the deep mine. There is to be no compulsion on the company to develop a deep mine.

The Minister said that because the open-cut mine is situated close to the Muja power station, the company should not be required to develop a deep mine. This is a very weak argument. As the Minister would know, the Muja open cut does not contain unlimited resources. He would know that in 1960 the Government obtained the services of engineer Marshall from the Eastern States to carry out an appraisal of the extractable reserves of coal at the Muja open-cut mine.

I assume the Muja power station will be there long after the coal supplies at the Muja open cut are exhausted. That being the case, other supplies are needed. For this reason, the Government should insist on the development of a deep mine.

The Minister did not deny that one of the best propects for the development of a deep mine in Collie is the Ewington depression; I am sure officers of the Mines Department have kept him informed on this matter. When the mine originally opened, hardly any coal was extracted; it was only in a developmental stage. Since then, boring has taken place. Why should this company be permitted to retain its lease and thus tie up one of the best potential projects in the town?

Some of the profits being made by the companies should be put into development. Since the Muja open cut commenced operations, the company has received $79 585 184. It is going to receive a lot more, because once the additional 2x200-megawatt units come under load at Muja, an additional 2.1 million tonnes of coal will be required. This will come principally from the Muja open-cut mine and will reduce the life of the open-cut mine.

It is important that the company develops the Ewington depression, and develops it now. The union believes that while the company is making

reasonable profits, and can expect additional profits when the new units come on stream, it should use some of its revenue to develop a deep mine.

It is quite clear that the verbiage contained in the Western Collieries agreement is different from that in the Griffin agreement. Clause 7 of the Western Collieries agreement, relating to the submission of proposals by the company, states as follows—

> (a) the mining of coal, including measures to be taken to achieve a fair balance between the mining of coal by open-cut methods and deep mining methods;
> (b) evidence that the coal needs of the State Energy Commission have been met for the period covered by such proposals on a basis commercially acceptable to both the Company and the State Energy Commission;
> (c) details of the total tonneage of coal which the Company proposes to mine for sale to all purchasers including the State Energy Commission in each of years 1 to 15 inclusive;

That is what it says in the Western Collieries agreement. In Clause 6 of the agreement, on page 6, it says the company must—

> ...achieve a balance acceptable to both parties between open-cut mined and deep mined coal,

It has to achieve a balance.

Where does it say that in the Griffin agreement? The Western Collieries agreement which was ratified last year states there must be a balance. This is something we all agree with and something the union has asked me to come to Parliament to advocate with respect to this agreement. I quote from clause 7(1) as follows—

> 7. (1) On or before the commencement of year 1 (or thereafter within such extended time as the Minister may allow as hereinafter provided) and subject to the provisions of this Agreement the Company shall having due regard to the State Energy Commission contract submit to the Minister to the fullest extent reasonably practicable its detailed proposals...
>
> (a) measures to be taken for the mining of coal by open-cut methods and deep mining methods consistent with the purposes of this Agreement;

This differs completely from the Western Collieries agreement so far as it mentions in clause 6 that there must be a balance between open-cut and deep mining. In clause 6 of the Griffin agreement it seems the following words were included merely for the sake of putting something into the Bill—

> 6. The Company shall, having regard to the desire of the State to ensure that the coal resource at Collie is mined in the most economic and practicable way, forthwith prepare an overall scheme for the exploration and development of the Company's coal resource

The union is saying a sensible approach must be taken so that some of the profits the company is making from the Muja open-cut operation, where the coal is reasonably close to the surface—and as the open cut extends the ratio of earth to coal will increase, resulting in the company's operations being not so effective—some of the profit should be used for further development. The profits won from easily obtained coal should be used to develop a deep mine.

The union has pointed out there is one arrangement for Western Collieries and another in this Griffin agreement. On behalf of the unions I protest at the different phraseology contained in the clauses to which I referred.

Mr JAMIESON: I also protest at the provisions in this agreement. I see in the words of clause 6 of the schedule that we are not getting the best advantage to the State from this agreement; in other words, we may get the most economical and practical supply of coal at a particular time, but when this goes so the greatest ultimate tonnage available becomes doubtful.

I think the agreement should be made more specific so that all possible use is made of our reserves. It is of no use our getting into the position in which other people have found themselves in their coalmining fields where they have not been able to obtain the residue because they have picked the eyes out of their deposits. We have to get the maximum production from each field available.

The Minister even suggested in his second reading reply speech that we could reach the day when we run out of coal. We do not foresee this happening. I think the fields north of Perth, when they are properly tested, will be greater than at Collie. This has not been done and we may find there are other problems associated with them. There does not seem to be any information in the Mines Department about what we have in the way of coalfields in this State. This is something we have to face up to. We have to find out how much we have and how long it will be available.

The member for Collie rightly pointed out the differences in the terminology of the two agreements. It seems desirable we set a goal for all companies getting agreements with the Government that not only must their operations be the most economical and practical possible, but also they should be designed in a way to gain the greatest ultimate tonnage from the available leases. Then and then only will the unions associated with coalmining in this State respect the Government's move in the proposed agreement before the Chamber. There is a desire on the part of the unions to maximise this arrangement. Far too often they have seen companies go in and pick the eyes out of deposits because it is a way of getting an economic return from their investments. But it is not to the greatest advantage of the State.

If companies are to be given a State asset to mine they should be able to assure us that the greatest tonnage possible will be available to the people of Western Australia. After all, the deposits are not theirs; they did not put them there; they are something nature provided.

Mr MENSAROS: Mr Deputy Chairman, I would like your guidance. The member for Collie said he wanted to speak to three clauses and I wanted to reply after he spoke each time.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Blaikie): Order! Any member has the opportunity to speak three times to the schedule but he does not have the opportunity to speak concurrently.

Mr MENSAROS: In connection with clauses 6 and 7, the member for Collie mentioned the relationship between deep mines and open-cut mines. I point out that the economics of the situation is that the companies have to develop the leases because presently they have those leases in development which are best mined with an open-cut method. It is automatically understood from these provisions that unless they develop all the leases, which is what they have to do, they will lose their leases.

I agree with the member for Collie when he says there are other leases which will have to be developed with deep-mining methods and that is precisely the difference between the provisions in the Western Collieries agreement and this Griffin agreement; the Western Collieries group presently deep mine its reserves. The provision in the Western Collieries agreement that there should be a balance between deep and open-cut mining does in fact encourage the commencement of open-cut mining, because that group already has deep mines but no open cut ones. Whilst I appreciate the member for Collie's endeavour, we are not working against him by having different verbiage in the agreements.

I remind the member for Collie that we are dealing with commercial enterprises which cannot be expected to go into a project unless there is an economical and feasible market available. We are all confident that from an industry point of view there will be a market. However, it is first necessary to have a market because that is the only way that capital can be borrowed for development.

What the member for Welshpool said was commendable. I accept his comments 100 per cent. I assure him it is the Government's endeavour that the largest possible extractable tonnages are obtained. By way of explanation, when an agreement is negotiated it is not possible to include an obligation which is not viable for the company. We cannot state that the company shall extract the biggest tonnage possible irrespective of the viability and the profitability of the project.

If we have a so-called energy crisis and we find alternative forms of energy are more and more expensive, the value, the end price, of coal will always be higher and therefore more can be extracted with the operation remaining feasible.

I can assure the member for Welshpool that it is the policy of the Government to have the largest possible extractable quantity mined.

Mr T. H. JONES: There is one weakness in the argument put forward by the Minister, and I have already referred to it during my second reading speech. The Bill does not specify that there is an obligation on the company to put down a deep mine. The Bill simply states that the agreement will be ratified, from time to time, by the Minister.

Mr Mensaros: I ask the member for Collie how it would be possible to mine the Ewington lease by open-cut means.

Mr T. H. JONES: The Minister is talking about a different area.

Mr Mensaros: But can it be mined by the open-cut method?

Mr T. H. JONES: No.

Mr Mensaros: Well, that is precisely the answer to your argument. The company will have to go deeper.

Mr T. H. JONES: There is a limited quantity of open-cut coal on the field. Very shortly the operational costs of the Griffin operation will increase because the seam is dipping. The company has had the cream; it has taken the coal close to the surface, which is an easy operation. The Minister has been to the area and he cannot

deny that fact. The Minister would know that the seam is dipping considerably, and very soon the ratio of overburden to coal will make the operation unprofitable.

Mr Mensaros: We are aware of that.

Mr T. H. JONES: When I referred to correct timing, the Minister said now was not the correct time.

Mr Mensaros: Not before markets are obtained.

Mr T. H. JONES: The company received nearly $80 million for the sale of its coal. Why was not some of that money set aside for development?

Mr Mensaros: If the member for Collie could do it profitably I would be happy to have him on the board as an executive.

Mr T. H. JONES: Why was it necessary to require Western Collieries to have a deep mine? The Griffin company is operating under a different policy.

Mr Mensaros: Western Collieries have a deep mine.

Mr T. H. JONES: So if the mine was closed it would not matter?

Mr Mensaros: I tried to explain that in the Western Collieries agreement there is a balance which means that that company develops an open-cut mine—which it does not want really—but that mine balances the deep-mine operation.

Mr T. H. JONES: But that does not work. The knowledge of the Minister should be as good as mine. He knows as well as I do that the seam is dipping. What will happen when the easy open-cut ore has been mined? The company will then have to revert to deep mining.

I am trying to get across to the Minister that the Griffin company should be forced to put down a deep mine to balance its operations. It is preferable to operate in that manner now, especially in view of the fact that the company has an increased market. If we were looking at a depressed market perhaps the argument put forward by the Minister would be acceptable. However, the market has been increased and it has been guaranteed.

The Minister already has indicated that an additional 2.1 million tonnes will be required to fire the 2 x 200-megawatt station at Muja. So, we are looking at an increased and stable market. Surely it is not unreasonable to suggest, on behalf of the unions, that we should introduce orderly development on the coalfield. We should take a proportion of both open-cut and deep-mined coal. If we continue to follow the pattern of operation put forward by the Minister, the easy-to-get-at open-cut coal will last for 30 or 40 years but then it will be more expensive to mine the deep coal.

That is not acting in the spirit of the agreement which I thought this Bill was to bring about—orderly development of the coalfield. The measure will fail for the reasons I have mentioned. I could go on, but the opinion of the Minister differs from mine. The Minister is hell-bent on passing this measure, and he will be able to vary the agreement under the terms of the Bill generally. The same terms exist in the Western Collieries agreement with the exception of the provisions of clause 7.

The Government should have learnt from its mistake made many years ago. If the Minister were to talk to some of the older members of this Parliament he would learn of the mistake made by the McLarty-Watts Government when it introduced the cost-plus system. It took the industry years to recover.

The Minister would be well aware that cost-plus means a guaranteed profit. All sorts of practices occurred. A Mr Johnson wrote a thesis on the coalmining industry as part of his Master of Arts degree. He did not pull any punches with regard to the discoveries he made about the malpractices under the cost-plus system. Surely we are not to follow that pattern. The Government should take some positive action to see that the deep mines are worked correctly. I strongly oppose the measure not only on behalf of the Opposition, but also on behalf of the unions on the Collie coalfield.

Schedule put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 24	
Mr Clarko	Mr O'Connor
Sir Charles Court	Mr Old
Mr Cowan	Mr O'Neil
Mrs Craig	Mr Ridge
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Mr Grewar	Mr Sibson
Mr Hassell	Mr Spriggs
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Tubby
Mr Laurance	Mr Watt
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Williams
Mr Mensaros	Mr Young
Mr Nanovich	Mr Shalders
	(Teller)
Noes 16	
Mr Barnett	Mr Harman
Mr Bertram	Mr Hodge
Mr Bryce	Mr Jamieson
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr McIver
Mr Carr	Mr Tonkin
Mr Davies	Mr Wilson
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Bateman
	(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr P. V. Jones	Mr Taylor
Mr Sodeman	Mr T. D. Evans
Mr Coyne	Mr Grill
Dr Dadour	Mr Skidmore
Mr Grayden	Dr Troy

Schedule thus passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

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

BILLS (5): RETURNED

1. Country High School Hostels Authority Act Amendment Bill.
2. Superannuation and Family Benefits Act Amendment Bill.
3. Child Welfare Act Amendment Bill.
4. Acts Amendment (Port Authorities) Bill.
5. Perth Theatre Trust Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

MR T. H. JONES (Collie) [12.23 p.m.]: This is a very small Bill; the Minister took only two minutes to introduce it.

Mr O'Neil: I spoke quickly.

Mr T. H. JONES: I will speak quickly, too. The Bill is a simple one which is introduced to do two things. Firstly, it will alleviate overcrowding and inconvenience caused by delay at courts, particularly on Saturdays, Mondays, and public holidays. Secondly, it will enable any police officer or constable in charge at any police station or lockup to release a person to bail for any period up to seven days, calculated to include a Sunday and any public holiday, after the day of arrest. The Bill will be of assistance to our court system and the Opposition does not oppose it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Police and Traffic) [12.24 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I thank the Opposition for the speedy passage of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

CITY OF PERTH SUPERANNUATION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

MR CARR (Geraldton) [12.25 p.m.]: This also is a very simple Bill, and the Opposition does not oppose it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

MRS CRAIG (Wellington—Minister for Local Government) [12.26 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I thank the Opposition for its support of the measure.

Mr Davies: We are always pleased to co-operate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

WHEAT MARKETING BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 14th November.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) [12.28 p.m.]: The quinquennium covered by the present wheat stabilisation agreement is due to terminate and, as a consequence, a further agreement is before not only this Parliament, but also the Parliaments of the other States. The new agreement contains several differences from the present arrangement; it is important that this be appreciated because

something like 19 000 farmers are involved in Western Australia alone.

The measure has three important aspects. The first which is of prime importance is pricing. It is important that the determination of the export price and the domestic price, and the manner in which the price for stockfeed and off-grades varies from the present arrangement, be understood. It is probably of interest to understand that the first advance-payments scheme under which growers received an initial payment has been altered. Previously a first advance was granted to growers. This was a method by which growers, on delivery, received a near constant year-by-year advance per tonne, not related necessarily to final returns. As a matter of fact, during the past decade the amount has varied from nearly 90 per cent to below 50 per cent of the final payments. Nonetheless, that first advance has been of prime importance, and it has been of importance to the psychological well-being of wheatgrowers.

The first advance payment is now to be discontinued. In its stead, a minimum delivery price is to be set which will be equal to 95 per cent of the estimated average market return for wheat in that season and the two previous seasons. If the market does not return that price, the deficit will be made up, firstly, from the growers' fund which will be $100 million. Currently it stands at $80 million, so the growers of Australia will be required to make up the $100 million which will form the fund from which the protection against declining prices will be provided.

If the growers' fund is exhausted, the deficit will be made up by the Commonwealth Treasury from Government revenue. It would not be repaid.

The annual movement in the minimum delivery price would be limited to 15 per cent. Thus a new guaranteed market price will be a modified moving average, closely related to the actual marketing system.

In a different form, a moving average market price was included for the first time in the 1974 Act. It involved an average based upon five years. It should be pointed out that this method is bringing the actual price of export wheat in Australia much closer to the previous market situation. It also is most likely that the Commonwealth Government will not be called upon to make any contribution, certainly in the next five years.

It is always difficult to estimate and predict prices five years ahead. That would be virtually impossible because of the tremendous variation in prices and in harvests throughout the world. However, currently the estimate of world trends is such as to ensure that the buoyancy of the industry will be contained in the next couple of years. The continuing world inflation and the existing $80 million, which will be extended to $100 million, will ensure that the cost to the Federal Government is virtually nil in the ensuing five years.

The other significant point that should be made is that the position of the Wheat Board is to be retained in its monopolistic role in the industry. The arrangement of a GMP could well be supported on the ground of efficiency. This is supported by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics which indicates that wheatgrowers are very dependent upon a first advance in some form or other. That will ensure that plantings will continue at a high level. The first advance payment is the single most important factor in ensuring the number of hectares planted, as members would be aware.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics bears this out. As a consequence, it is important that a scheme of this sort should be retained. Perhaps it would be as well to make a comparison of the existing system and the changes that have occurred since 1948 when the scheme was introduced.

Wheat prices for human consumption will be administered and adjusted annually, as in the past; but wheat for stockfeed and industrial use will be priced at the discretion of the Wheat Board. The formula for adjusting the price for human consumption in Australia is set out in the schedule contained in the Bill. Put simply, the formula is: this year's price — (1 — 0.6 of the cost increases) x last year's composite human consumption price for the last eight years on the average export price for the last eight years. The annual price movement must not exceed 20 per cent. That formula is somewhat complex.

In itself, it is rather interesting because it applies an increment to the price of human-consumption wheat in the next eight years. This could have some deleterious effect, though it is offset by certain things. Lacking a computer—even lacking a telex in the office of the Opposition—it is fairly difficult to be precise on these matters; but as far as I am able to ascertain, if we look at the season 1979-80 the human-consumption price is $127.28; the f.o.b. price—and this is purely an estimate, taking it a little higher—is $140. The more accurate one, according to the pundits, is something between $130 and $135. That leaves a difference of $12.72; so, therefore, taking the zero line as an

export parity, there is a differential of $12.72. If the formula is worked out using an estimated 10 per cent annual cost increase and an estimated sale of $1 million, we find that in the 1980-81 season the human-consumption price will therefore be $153.34, with the f.o.b. price again estimated at $150, which makes a difference of $3.34 from the zero line which, as I indicated, was export parity. There was a differentiation of 34c on the plus side.

Going into the third year, and using the same formula, we have a home-consumption price of $184 and an export f.o.b. price of $160, or $24 above the zero line which we assume as export parity. In the fourth year—1982-83—we find a home-consumption price of $206.23 and an export price of $170, a difference of $36.23 above the export line. In the final year of the quinquennium, the home-consumption price would be $226.63, while the export price would be $183, a difference of $43.63 above the zero line, or export parity price.

The significant aspect about those figures is that while the formula provides for inbuilt increases and the home price will be affected, it will not necessarily result in an increase in the income of those who are dependent on wheat products. While, on the one hand, it is good to see a section of the community is to be assured to this extent, on the other hand, the producers who are an integral part of the entire cost-price structure are not given the same assurance. We find that Federal and State Governments of the political hue of the present Government are opposed to full price indexation on one issue, while on the other the formula ensures that those producing the commodity are assured of a satisfactory price. While basically and fundamentally we have no objection to this proposal, we do not want to disadvantage one section of the community against the other.

I reiterate that, in the main, my figures are assumptions. It is a simple matter when one has a computer to rearrange and readjust figures. However, when one does not have even a pocket calculator which is effective in this sort of exercise, one must leave a fair sort of margin for error.

Stockfeed has been an issue of considerable dispute. Under the agreement, in practice, discretionary pricing for stockfeed will mean pricing stockfeed and off-grades at the same level as export parity. Obviously, no-one will pay more than the export price for stockfeed if he does not have to do so. In this way, a stated price can be arrived at on both the export and domestic markets.

However, this provision may not be fully understood in some quarters. Two main issues are raised. It has been alleged during the course of various debates that the price of stockfeed wheat will rise, bringing with it a consumer rip-off. However, I do not think that is a valid argument, because I can see two flaws in that declared attitude. In only three or four years of the past 30 years for which records are available, export parity has been below the home price.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Before the luncheon suspension I referred to the methods of setting the export price, home-consumption price, and the starting off grades price which were somewhat different in the current agreement from the situation which existed previously. So far as stockfeed and industrial grain is concerned, the price is set by the Australian Wheat Board using commercial bills. Concern has been expressed, particularly in New South Wales, as to whether the device for setting the price of this grade of grain should rest in the hands of the Australian Wheat Board. The matter has, however, been resolved.

Previously New South Wales held that the prices commission should set it, but it is now prepared to accept a situation in which a consultative panel will deal with the matter, on the understanding that any disputation could be referred to the Agricultural Council. This is done on the understanding that the legislation may be reviewed if the system does not work satisfactorily.

This is a right which should be retained by all States. If a particular matter disadvantages the growers of one State, it is only fair and reasonable that that State Government should have recourse to redress, even to the extent of reviewing and amending the legislation if there is a need for such a drastic requirement.

In relation to the financing of the Australian Wheat Board, the first advance payment to growers was made under the Reserve Bank rural credit scheme at an interest rate approximately 2 per cent below that of commercial rates of interest. That credit adds to the money supply and by early July the additional sum would have amounted to approximately $3 million at an interest rate of 3 per cent.

Early in 1979 a combination of factors came into play. There was the higher payment which was made and the record crop harvested. The price of grain on the world market escalated dramatically in the early part of this year as a result of which the board's funds were exhausted.

Of course, this meant the first advance payment to growers was not available and the payment of growers' warrants was suspended. Despite Mr Howard's protestations, he was ultimately forced to admit this in the Senate in answer to a question on notice on the 13th May, this year.

Under industry pressure the Government instructed the Reserve Bank to issue more credit and it moved to persuade the board to refinance its bank loans and sales of commercial bills. Under grower pressure, the board refused to do so. Mr Sinclair then had the power to order the board to comply, but he did not use those powers and the stalemate continued until the Government's reputation and credibility on the money market was damaged.

Eventually the chairman of the Australian Wheat Board (Sir Leslie Price) came into the picture and agreed to issue commerical bills. That situation pertains at the present time and it means the Commonwealth Government has picked up the tab for the differentiation between the concessional rate of interest and the rate of interest paid on the open market.

I should like to point out some significant changes have been made to this agreement since the scheme was initiated in 1946. It emanated from the wartime restrictions imposed during the post-war period. In 1947 legislation was introduced and the Australian Wheat Board was established. Certain features of the wheat legislation have become part and parcel of the principles which have endured for the last three decades. In particular, we have had total acquisition of the Australian wheat crop by the Australian Wheat Board and it has been marketed by that single grain authority. That situation still pertains under the present agreement and it is one which I accept, because the Labor Government was involved in the initiation of this system.

Under the initial legislation introduced in 1947 a minimum price was guaranteed for a quantity of grain to be exported. This increased the number of ongoing schemes. A total of 200 million bushels of grain was underwritten in the 1968-1970 scheme. We then had the situation in which the price of grain for home consumption was fixed.

Those were the four components of the initial agreement and substantially they still exist, but changes have resulted in a somewhat different concept in relation to the underlying principle. Stabilisation of the grain price was achieved through a trust fund to which growers contributed when the actual export price exceeded the guaranteed price. This gave a margin which could be used when variations in price occurred.

When the actual export price was below the guaranteed price, payments were made into a pool from the trust fund. That was the basis of the manner in which payments were ensured to growers. In the event of a shortfall in trust funds, the payment was met by the Federal Treasury. At the initial stage that was without limitation but, subsequently, a limitation was introduced.

In 1963, in order to reduce the Government commitment, the yield division was increased to reduce the estimated costs of production, and at that time the move was supported by statistics in the initial concept. The first payment from the guaranteed price was determined by the cost of production with an owner-operator allowance. This was terminated in the light of the last two mechanisms by the prices having been fixed.

In 1968 the concept of estimating a guaranteed price from the cost of production was abandoned and the guaranteed price moved only after the first year of the quinquennial agreement on the basis of movement of cash cost associated with the production and marketing of wheat to the point of delivery.

The so-called imputed costs of interest on capital invested, and the owner-operator allowance, were not scaled upwards as had been done previously. That was the major change which occurred in 1968.

Despite those changes, the basic concept of a guaranteed export price on a fixed quantity of wheat was retained, coupled with a home-consumption price. To retain the home-consumption price, a fixed amount was added to the guaranteed price. In the period 1968 to 1973 this amount was 25c a bushel.

In 1974 some major changes occurred when the concept of a guaranteed price was abandoned. Instead, an export price—which was the sliding average of the current price—was established according to a formula laid down in section 29 (5) of the Act. I will not detail the formula of the stabilisation price, but suffice it to say it was a departure from the previous concepts, and it was a departure that has been continued, to emerge again in a somewhat different form which appears in the agreement now before us.

During the years 1973, 1974, and 1975, prices were remarkably favourable. Incidentally, the consequences gave the Federal Government an opportunity whereby it was able to give an assurance—and virtually that is what was required—because it was not likely to be called upon during that period to meet any financial

outgoings. It was able to make a fairly significant "good fellow" of itself at very little actual cost. The minimum delivery price replaced the first advance payment, as we have seen.

The growers in this State, and in other States, look upon this agreement with some misgivings. Perhaps that will not apply so much during the first five-year period because during the first two years the Commonwealth Government will not be called upon to make any advance. By that time there will be hundreds of millions of dollars in the trust fund, and that will ensure the Commonwealth Government is in a secure position. It will not be called upon to make a payout because there is a limitation on the amount paid from the trust fund in any particular year. To that extent, the Commonwealth Government will not pay out during this quinquennium.

The grower should have a closer regard for this matter than he has had in the past in accepting this agreement. I know it has been disputed over a period of 18 months that the growers are now closer to the market forces than they were during the period of the stabilisation scheme. They are more likely to be affected by world market trends, although I emphasise once again, not during this particular period.

On the question of the increase in the home-consumption price, I do not doubt that there was an inequity in the logic or reasoning of those who introduced the scheme and, perhaps, on the part of those who accepted it.

It is unlikely that we on this side of the House would oppose this legislation which is of a socialistic kind; the Australian kind of socialism, not that kind which those on the other side have endeavoured to brand us with over the years. When we are presented with a practical operating scheme which is of particular benefit to the producers we must admit that socialism has a lot going for it.

I daresay there would be an outcry if there was an effort to take this socialism away from the growers in this State. There would be a hue and cry such as we have never heard or seen before in this country.

While aspects of this measure cause us some slight concern—and we will watch these aspects with some interest—we do not oppose the measure. Perhaps there are other fields of socialism which the Government will be able to enter.

MR OLD (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [2.29 p.m.]: I thank the honourable member for his support of the Bill and those favourable comments he made about it. I think the renegotiation of the wheat agreement is the best that has ever been brought forward. If it is a socialist Bill, the basis of it certainly has been improved by this Government.

Mr H. D. Evans: I think world prices might have enabled that favourable negotiation.

Mr OLD: There are a couple of points only which I need to clear up, because the honourable member gave a very good run-down of the method to be used to implement this scheme.

However one point I would like to clear up relates to the grower contribution which stands currently at $80 million. As the member pointed out quite rightly, this is to be increased to $100 million. However, this money will not be used within the stabilisation scheme. In other words, if the actual realisation falls short of the GMDP guaranteed by the Commonwealth, the difference is paid by the Commonwealth Government and not taken from the producers' funds.

The money for the scheme is borrowed from the Reserve Bank for 12 months, and the grower funds will be utilised to liquidate that debt at the end of that time. So it will not be a part of the stabilisation scheme.

The method of arriving at the home-consumption price of wheat has been well explained by the member for Warren. As he said, the price will not vary by more than 20 per cent either way. Originally it was widely canvassed—and in fact almost accepted—at the Australian Agricultural Council meeting that the domestic price should be import parity plus 20 per cent. One of the States was not prepared to accept this proposition, and the formula as enunciated was evolved by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The result is almost the same, but as I said producers are protected in that the price cannot vary more than 20 per cent either way in one year.

Again with one dissenter, and this time New South Wales, the Agricultural Council decided that the Australian Wheat Board should be given the responsibility of pricing wheat for industrial purposes and for stockfeed. I feel this is a fair enough concept because the Australian Wheat Board has been given the task of being the sole marketer of wheat within Australia and for export, and as such it should have also the responsibility of deciding the price of wheat within the Commonwealth.

New South Wales thought the scheme could have a deleterious effect on the CPI if the price of feed and industrial wheat was too high. However, there is very little chance this will happen because the price for that type of wheat would have to be

linked to the price of other types of grain. The starch manufacturers and stockfeeders can switch quite easily to other grain and obviously they would do this if the price of industrial or feed wheat were too high compared with other suitable grain.

We were unable to convince New South Wales of this; the New South Wales Cabinet was not prepared to go along with the suggestion, and so the Australian Wheat Growers' Federation thought that a consultative committee should be set up composed of producers and users of industrial and feed wheat. It was suggested that such a committee would not have any statutory authority but it would confer with the Australian Wheat Board and act in an advisory capacity in regard to setting the price of wheat. If a State did not agree with a price thus set, the matter would be discussed at a meeting of the Agricultural Council and consensus reached in that way.

As I said in my opening remarks, this is the best agreement we have ever reached. Western Australia will fare relatively well because the freight advantage has been built into the stabilisation scheme and other States have agreed to the idea that a freight advantage be paid to the Western Australian producers. This is a fairly important matter because we are very well placed with many of the important world markets. In fact, when Chinese contracts are written, the importers demand that a large percentage of the wheat is delivered from Western Australia. This gives the Chinese importers a freight advantage because in the main they use their own carriers.

Mr Jamieson: Very little comes from anywhere else for these contracts.

Mr OLD: I cannot give the exact figure, but the Chinese importers insist that the majority of the wheat is from Western Australia.

As pointed out by the member for Warren, the Commonwealth will continue to service commercial borrowing where required by paying the difference between the commercial rate of interest and the interest calculated on loan fund rates.

No other points in the agreement are in any way contentious. Some aspects of the legislation refer only to this State. As members are aware, State accounting is provided for within this Bill, but it will not come into operation until the next wheat season.

One matter of importance is that where any wheat is sold outside the system, the seller will be called upon to pay a proportion of the CBH charges. CBH will decide on the proportion applicable, and it will then consult with a producer organisation to ensure that the charges are in accord with the wishes of the producers.

CBH has problems with State accounting and at this stage Western Australian handling charges are fairly high by comparison with other States; drought is a contributing factor to this situation. This will even out as other States are forced into the building of new terminals, and a decision is very close for many of them. In fact, discussions are taking place already about large terminals in some of the Eastern States.

There is no doubt the efficiency that can be practised at Kwinana—given the co-operation of unions—will make a great difference to the handling charges for producers in this State. I only hope we have industrial peace in the future because we have this magnificent facility which is not being utilised to capacity because of industrial disputation.

Mr H. D. Evans: Why don't you do a bit more with the industrial legislation to ensure that?

Mr OLD: The industrial legislation just passed by this House will do a great deal to ensure that it does work to capacity. Both sides must take a responsible attitude. CBH took a very responsible attitude during that dispute.

Opposition members always express great sympathy for the producers of this State but do little or nothing to assist them in solving the problems to which they are not contributors.

I am hopeful that through the lessons learnt during that dispute, there will be industrial peace and the queue of ships waiting in Gage Roads will commence to take the wheat away from our State.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Mr Old (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 15 put and passed.

Clause 16: Advance payment for wheat of a season other than final two seasons—

Mr COWAN: Clause 16 allows the board to make some deductions in the price of grain having regard for the quality and the variety of grain grown in any particular area. It was my understanding that the terms and conditions relating to varietal control were agreed upon by the Australian Wheat Board, and notification of any decision relating to the amount of dockage for

a particular variety would be accompanied by reasons for that dockage.

My interpretation of this clause, particularly subclause (3) is that the board is not required to give an explanation as to why it has reduced the price of a certain variety of grain. I should like the Minister to tell me whether this clause imposes any requirement on the board to state precisely why a particular variety of grain has been docked.

Mr OLD: My understanding is that the varieties will be approved for various districts. Anybody who wishes to grow a grain which is not an approved variety will be subject to dockage, and these dockages will be provided for within the legislation. I refer the member for Merredin to clause 16(4) and (5).

Provided the variety of wheat which is grown within a certain area is an approved variety and is declared as such on delivery, no dockage will occur. However, if farmers prefer to grow wheat which is not an approved variety for a particular area, there will be dockage.

Mr COWAN: In other words, the clause does not require the board to advance reasons supporting its decision to dock certain varieties of grain.

Another point which concerns me is that this year we have a situation where approved varieties, and varieties which are to be docked are listed on the 1st November. Can the Minister give me an undertaking the same situation will apply in future? Will this continue in subsequent years? At the moment, a grower is provided with ample notice to enable him to make a selection of the seed he wishes to grow. He knows before he obtains that seed whether it is an approved variety, or whether it will be subject to dockage. I should like an assurance from the Minister that ample notice will continue to be given so that growers can act accordingly on the list of approved or unapproved varieties.

Mr OLD: To the best of my knowledge, that would be the latest time by which a decision must be made. In fairness to growers, this is a necessary requirement. I will certainly take this matter up, and advise the honourable member accordingly.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 17 to 34 put and passed.

First and second schedules put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

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

REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Chief Secretary) [2.48 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Real Estate and Business Agents Act provides that business agents would be authorised to operate for a period of three years from the date of operation of the Act. The Act has been proclaimed to come into operation on the 1st December, 1979.

In the three-year period business agents have the opportunity to qualify for licensing as real estate agents. In this three-year initial period, business agents are required to furnish a bond in the sum of $75 000 to meet any claims which may arise as a result of their transactions. The anticipated machinery for providing the bond was the taking-out of cover through one of the insurance houses.

At this late stage it has been found that a significant number of business agents would find difficulty in meeting even the most favourable terms which are offered through insurance companies.

The individuals concerned are reputable business operators. It was not the Government's intention when introducing the principal legislation that it should impose unreasonable burdens or force any business agent of repute and substance out of business.

This Bill provides an alternative to obtaining a bond through insurance. It offers the alternative to business agents of subscribing to the Real Estate and Business Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund on a special basis.

The existing fund stands at over $300 000. This money has been subscribed by licensed land agents over a period of time.

The Bill will allow business agents to obtain cover from the fund at a cost of $750 per annum. This figure compares favourably with the premium which would be payable to an insurance company.

The arrangement offers a significant advantage in that security over the assets of the individuals seeking recognition will not be required, and the

limited time of cover offered by insurance will not apply.

At the point when a business agent qualifies for licensing as a real estate agent he would be accepted as a member of the fund. The contribution then payable would be $150 per triennium, which is the standard rate.

I commend the Bill to the House.

MR B. T. BURKE (Balcatta) [2.51 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this measure. Members will notice that the Opposition has agreed also to continue forthwith with the second reading of the measure. We accept the Minister's explanation of the urgency associated with the matter and find no objection to the provisions contained within the changes outlined in the amending legislation.

At the same time, I take the opportunity to point out to the House that it is not the Opposition's intention to obstruct legislation; in fact, it is our hope we will be able to co-operate wherever possible. We hope than when in Government, for example, Ministers will not refuse to answer questions without notice, because we do not think that is the proper way to conduct the business of Parliament. At the same time, the Opposition at this time, and on every other occasion, will attempt to co-operate with the Government. 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.

Third Reading

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Chief Secretary) [2.53 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I thank the Opposition for its co-operation in respect of giving this Bill a swift passage through the House.

I point out it seems to me no matter how much one endeavours to ensure people concerned by such important legislation have an opportunity to examine its ramifications, someone finally wakes up. This Bill had its genesis some years ago in a Law Reform Commission report which indicated the need to qualify the Act in relation to real estate agents. Further, it was considered necessary by that commission to provide some cover for those people who were business agents alone.

The Bill was introduced on the 20th April, 1978. I recall quite well, when introducing the Bill, saying it would remain on the Table of the House and that the debate would resume during the second part of the session that year. In fact, the Bill was brought back for debate, and finally received assent on the 20th October, 1978.

There was ample time for anyone who felt he would be involved with the legislation to make representations. I issued an invitation to members of the House and anyone else concerned to make approaches to my department in respect of any matters with which they found difficulty. No such approaches were made until almost the zero hour, or "D" day, which happened to be the 1st December.

It seems that no matter how much we try to get all representations with respect to legislation, many people do not respond until it is almost too late. However, on this occasion I trust it is not too late, and for that reason I thank the Opposition for giving this Bill an expeditious passage through the House.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [2.55 p.m.]: In case some elements of the population might think we can put these matters through without giving them proper consideration, I make it known that a copy of the Minister's speech was handed to us quite early when the House sat this morning. The Opposition has had time to look at the legislation. Indeed, the member for Balcatta, who has been handling these matters on our behalf, discussed the item with me and with other members of his committee which deals with this type of legislation. I would hate to think we might find a comment in the Press indicating we pushed through all stages, from go to whoa, in six minutes. Even though this Bill is only amending an error recently made apparent, it still requires the very proper consideration that all legislation should receive. This was not made clear.

I thank the Minister for his co-operation. We were happy to co-operate in return. As I said, we had several hours in which to consider the Bill. After consideration we decided we could support it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

PERTH AND TATTERSALL'S BOWLING AND RECREATION CLUB (INC.) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 31st October.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [2.58 p.m.]: This Bill was introduced as a private member's Bill, having come from another place. It was introduced to overcome a technical problem in connection with the assets of two very well-known and long-established clubs: the Perth Bowling Club, and the Western Australian Tattersalls' Club, which is affectionately known as "Tatts" Club.

The member for Karrinyup has explained the reasons for the Bill. The Government has examined the situation and agrees with what is intended. We wish the new venture well. It seems sensible to use the Legislature to overcome the problem of the assets of the two clubs so they can become one, without having to dissolve both and then start all over again.

The Government supports the Bill. I appreciate the co-operation of the Leader of the Opposition in allowing this item to be brought forward out of sequence. I understand from a message I received earlier in the week that the clubs need to get the legislation passed so they can complete certain formalities which are otherwise impracticable.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [2.59 p.m.]: The Opposition supports this Bill. We also appreciate the position. The facts appear to be completely as stated in the second reading speech. It is nice to think we are able to assist in the manner indicated.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [3.04 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

On behalf of the members of the two clubs, I thank the Government and the Opposition for the support given to the Bill and in particular for their recognition of the fact that this matter had to be dealt with forthwith.

Mr Tonkin: It's a pity you don't support private members' business sometimes.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

TRANSPORT COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Message: Appropriations

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

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 15th November.

MR TONKIN (Morley) [3.05 p.m.]: The Opposition has had a good look at this Bill and it seems to be a very sensible type of arrangement. For this reason the Opposition does not oppose the measure, and is happy to support it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

In Committee

Resumed from the 21st November. The Chairman of Committees (Mr Clarko) in the Chair; Sir Charles Court (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Part 3: Deputy Premier, Chief Secretary, Minister for Police and Traffic, and Minister for Regional Administration and the North West—

MR BRYCE (Ascot—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.08 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Deputy Premier to reconsider the decision that has been made in respect of a telex facility for the Leader of the Opposition. The Parliament, the Joint House Committee and the Government have been faced with some extraordinary decisions which lack logic and an understanding of the situation.

Since the Deputy Premier was the Minister who communicated the decision and the thinking

of the Government to the Opposition originally regarding a telex facility, I would like him to review or reconsider his decision. I did take the opportunity earlier this week to point out to the Deputy Premier that the Government's decision, through him, to refuse to supply and pay for a telex machine at Parliament House was one thing, but for the Government and its very strictly controlled majority on the Joint House Committee to whip into line and support the Government's decision to refuse to allow the Leader of the Opposition to install, at his own cost, a telex facility in this building is really quite an extraordinary length to take pettifogging party politics. We hear a grunt by way of interjection from the member for Whitford.

Mr Nanovich: I did not grunt, I laughed.

Mr BRYCE: Well may the member for Whitford laugh. He was one of the infamous members of the Joint House Committee who voted yesterday, on the basis of simple and sheer irrationality in party politics, to refuse to allow the Leader of the Opposition to install this facility. I intend to indicate for the record that not only was the member for Whitford—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the honourable member is making a passing reference to that matter, it is acceptable. I hope he will not make the actions of the Joint House Committee a substantial part of his speech.

Mr BRYCE: The Joint House Committee is not worthy of greater consideration than a passing reference in respect of its activities in this particular matter. On the occasion when the Joint House Committee met to consider the request of the Leader of the Opposition following the refusal of the Deputy Premier to allow a telex facility to be installed, I think students of history should be able to discover that some of the political pigmies in this State were responsible—

A Government member: Look in the mirror.

Mr BRYCE:—inside that committee for refusing—

Several members interjected.

Mr BRYCE: I am very happy to allow this particular argument to be committed to the record if those members can really feel satisfied with their performance. I think in the years to come they will feel utterly ashamed of their performance. The member for Whitford, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the President of the Legislative Council, the Hon. A. A. Lewis, the member for Narrogin—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have indicated that if this is to be a passing reference I will accept it, but if the honourable member intends to canvass the actions of the Joint House Committee I think he will agree with me it is not relevant to the item before the House.

Mr BRYCE: I have unlimited time and I intend to make only a passing reference to this particular question.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you have gained the thrust of my comments to you.

Mr BRYCE: I have. It therefore needs to be clearly understood that the Deputy Premier dealt with this issue as far as the Leader of the Opposition is concerned. He indicated the Government's thinking, and the Government's majority on the Joint House Committee acted in accordance with the Government's thinking, without a single piece of rational justification for not allowing the Leader of the Opposition at his own expense to install a telex facility in his own office in this building.

I can well imagine the Deputy Premier objecting to the installation of a telex facility if he feels it is unjustified in terms of cost, because he and his colleague, the Treasurer, would be expected to meet the cost of such a facility. I can understand that any logical person with responsibility for that financial outlay may well say, "In my opinion such a facility is not justified." We are well aware that the Deputy Premier did not even do the decent thing in the first instance and conduct an inquiry or an investigation.

Mr Nanovich: Does he want it for only six months?

Mr BRYCE: We want it for more than six months. We believe there ought to be a telex facility there for ever, at our expense initially.

If necessary we are prepared to pay for it initially to prove the point. I indicate that after the change of Government the facility ought to be there—

Mr Mensaros: You will not be in Opposition forever.

Mr BRYCE: We will not. After the change of Government next February or March we will be quite happy for whoever takes over as the new Leader of the Opposition to make use of the facility. Unfortunately, there is a tendency in this place for the people who make the decisions with respect to this institution, although they rest with the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council in the first instance, to rely on the Premier or the Deputy Premier if the Premier decides to delegate to him. This institution relies to a great extent on those individuals to make the

decisions in regard to funding and for some unknown reason there is a tendency to expect this institution to trail a mile behind the rest of society, commerce, and industry in respect of facilities.

Mr Bertram: I think we know the reason.

Mr BRYCE: I ask the Deputy Premier to reconsider his decision that such a facility is not warranted.

In answer to question 2239 on the 20th November, the Premier indicated that 26 Government departments and agencies now utilise telex facilities. Fourteen of those have been installed since this Government came to office. It is rather illuminating that the Premier's Department itself did not have a telex machine until the present incumbent of that office took over as the Premier. Five or six months after he became the Premier he installed the telex facility in his department, and he has the hide and the unmitigated gall to state in this place that such a facility is not warranted for the Leader of the Opposition. He has spent taxpayers' money installing, hiring, and operating a telex facility to suit himself in the last six years. It is not a departmental matter; it has been installed at the direction of the Premier. How much more pettifogging and party political can one be than to say after six years he finds the political need for such a facility, yet as far as the Leader of the alternative Government in this State is concerned it is unwarranted?

Mr Young: There is only one Government.

Mr BRYCE: Of course there is only one Government. There is only one Opposition, and the Opposition under our system is always accepted as the alternative Government of the State. Twelve of these telex facilities were installed prior to the change of Government in 1974. In all sincerity I suggest to the Deputy Premier that if he believes the pressure of government and the speed at which things happen have changed enormously in Government departments since he and his colleagues went back into office in 1974, he should spend a brief moment to reflect that precisely the same has happened in respect of the Leader of the Opposition. If any case can be made out to show that the Deputy Premier or the Premier of this State and all the Ministers, in particular, should have access to that facility, it applies equally to the Leader of the Opposition.

I find it impossible to understand—it defies logic—the decision at that infamous meeting of the Joint House Committee yesterday to refuse to allow the Leader of the Opposition to install a telex facility at his own expense.

Perhaps when he replies the Deputy Premier will take the trouble to indicate to us a modicum of reasoning for his belief that there is no justification for the installation of facilities in the office of the Leader of the Opposition; and since he has been the prime instigator in the sense that he has handled the correspondence and conveyed the Government's opinions to the Leader of the Opposition in respect of this matter, I would like him to indicate just one iota of justification for refusing the Leader of the Opposition the right to instal telex facilities in his office at his own cost. I would be interested to hear the reply of the Deputy Premier.

MR JAMIESON (Welshpool) [3.21 p.m.]: I wish to raise several matters. Firstly, I wish to take the Electoral Department to task in respect of the new enrolment claim card. I do not know whether the Deputy Premier has had time to study the card, but it has some peculiar anomalies. In some ways it is more open and the print is bolder than on the previous card; and one is given more room in which to print one's surname. However, a computer operator would be hard put to write his occupation in the appropriate space provided on the card. A person who is a clerk would have no trouble. However a person with an occupation which has a longer title would have trouble fitting it into the space provided, and it would probably extend into the postcode or the sex box. That is unnecessary.

The worst feature of it is that 300 000 cards have been printed, according to the order information on the back. Previously cards have been printed in batches of 100 000. One would have thought the Government would exercise a little caution at first in order to ascertain whether the cards were suitable.

At the bottom of the card space is provided for the usual signature of the applicant and the usual signature of the certifying witness. Then the card asks the witness to fill in his "capacity" in a very small space. I do not know about that; some have more capacity than others, as I judge the members in this Chamber.

Mr Watt: Turn it over.

Mr JAMIESON: I will in a moment, and I will show the member for Albany the capacity on the back. While the space provided is sufficient for persons whose capacity is "C of C" or "EO"—

Mr Watt: People might think that refers to religion.

Mr JAMIESON: Perhaps; that is for religious persons like the member for Albany to determine when he is sitting in his correct place.

The matter of determining what should be put in the space marked "capacity" becomes a little more confusing when we realise that an 18-year-old person who is not on the roll could witness the signature of an applicant because he is qualified to be an elector of the Commonwealth Parliament and of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia. I wonder how the member for Albany would fit that capacity in the small space provided. The situation is becoming ridiculous.

Someone has designed this card without the knowledge of what is needed. Many cards will be wasted, because they will have to be reprinted before long. To me it seems a little odd, to say the least, that a person who has not even become an elector and who has difficulty in becoming an elector because he might live in the north-west, should be able to witness an enrolment card. Let us assume there are two brothers working in Newman, one aged 18 and the other aged 20, and they are both filling in claim cards. The 18-year-old can witness his brother's card, presuming he is on the roll already; but the elder brother cannot sign the 18-year-old's card as a witness.

I think the Government simply did not give this matter sufficient thought. The Kay report did not suggest that any malfunctioning occurred in the present system of enrolment cards. This new card will confuse the whole issue. I raise the matter because eventually we will have to combine with the Commonwealth and provide a single enrolment card, as has occurred in other States.

Recently the Deputy Premier said the saving achieved by having a joint electoral roll is illusory. I do not know about that, because the accounts of other Parliaments do not seem too illusory to me. Our Estimates show an allocation of $1.657 million to the Electoral Department. South Australia had an election recently, and it has a bigger population—although perhaps we have more problems with distance—and its allocation in the present year is $1.210 million.

Mr O'Neil: South Australia didn't budget for that election, did it?

Mr JAMIESON: The papers from which I am quoting were prepared and presented on the 11th October, after the new Government was elected.

Mr O'Neil: I am sorry, I thought they were Budget papers. I presume the figures are for the year during which they had an unexpected election.

Mr JAMIESON: No, the figures are for the past year. In 1978-79 the allocation in South Australia was $470 000, and the department used only $319 000. Therefore, clearly the election was allowed for correctly.

Mr O'Neil: They have picked up the cost of the unexpected election in this year's Budget.

Mr JAMIESON: Yes, that must be so.

There is a difference of some $400 000 between the expenditure of Western Australia and South Australia. If that is not a significant saving, I do not know what is. Probably we would not save all that because we have some problems in respect of distance; although some northern parts of South Australia are very remote. Nevertheless, printing costs, etc., in the main would be greater in South Australia because it must provide for a larger electoral population.

New South Wales has a huge population, and the cost of running its Electoral Department last year—apart from extra expenses—was $4.4 million. Of course, that was an election year. This year the expenses of the department are shown as $382 790, and allowance has been made for extraneous by-elections and a pickup of some of the last general election which probably was outstanding from a referendum and a redistribution. All of those are extraneous to the normal procedures of the department. In that State, the allocation is not as much as we propose for this year.

In that State, there is no duplication of effort. If one thing galls the public of Australia, surely it must be the bureaucracies that duplicate effort. The Electoral Office of the Commonwealth and the Electoral Department of the State keep separate habitation indices, and duplication of effort takes place. I point out there is a very clear saving to be found. At least $300 000, and probably more, would be saved if we had joint electoral rolls.

Included in the amount for South Australia there are amounts paid for printing, data and processing services, and other expenses. They amounted to $133 000 in an ordinary year. No doubt a lot of that would be paid to the Commonwealth for its services.

I want to deal now and complain a little about the set-up with the electoral situation in the electorate of Kimberley. This is an ever-recurring sore, evidently. We are receiving constant complaints in the office of the Leader of the Opposition on the basis that people who are ALP supporters are being removed from the roll, despite the fact they have never changed their addresses.

I admit to having done roll cleaning and laundering. I noticed one of the statements by the

member for Pilbara. I have not been in this area, but it is one I would like to do. It is a larger roll, and I could probably clean up a lot there.

I admit I have been in Kimberley, and I have been involved in roll cleaning with local people. For instance, I was on Koolan Island sometime ago, and I had most of the day to spare for people to come to see me in the community hall. Some of the local people sat with me in the hall, and we went through the roll, which has only a few thousand people on it. There were quite a few names that the local people noticed which should not have been on the roll any longer. The headmaster from the school and his wife had left the previous year. Obviously they had not changed their address. The new headmaster was on the roll. He had done the right thing, and put in his cards. The previous doctor, who was a woman, had been gone from the island for about 15 months, with her husband who was a civil engineer. They were still on the roll. There were the names of a number of men who had gone up there with their wives, and the wives had not liked the locale and had returned south. Some of them had left as long ago as three years. They were still on the roll.

This points to the fact that the State Electoral Department does nothing about checking its rolls, except at election time when it sends out forms if a person fails to vote. Even in those cases, if it concerns the wife of a man who is still there, when the election is on she says, "Oh, I must still be on the Kimberley roll, so I will go into the town hall or the nearest polling booth and have an absent vote for Kimberley." In that way, the Electoral Department is not able to pick up that there has been a change. That situation could remain for goodness knows how many years.

The State Electoral Department has not conducted a canvass of its own since the early 1950s. The Commonwealth does a fairly regular canvass, and it tries to do something about the situation. In a place like an island, which is away from everything, I believe the Electoral Department does not try to do anything. That is a malfunction of the system.

In a small place like Koolan Island there were about 47 names in the category of changed addresses. In addition, a lot of people were not on the roll. I processed a number of application cards in an endeavour to re-establish those people on the roll. I left a notice and cards so that other people could become enrolled correctly.

I admit to doing this. It is a job that has been done frequently by members for the Electoral Department. However, from today the department is on its own. I am no longer its servant, because I cannot be. It has lost the services of the people from the various parties, Labor and Liberal, who saw this as a paramount part of keeping some sort of control over the enrolments in those regions.

In the metropolitan area, the parties have gone through the newer residential areas with an enrolment drive, to pick up the people who had not enrolled correctly. I suggest the Government has a lot to learn about the new system. It is losing the services of a lot of people. It will have to look to its laurels in the future to make sure that the work previously done by all those people continues to be done.

That is about all I want to say about electoral matters. I do say that it ill-behoves the Government to enter into what it did. There will be terribly complex problems if the Federal legislation is passed, and certain people in parts of this State will have advantages over others. The Commonwealth has a responsibility.

If the Bill before the Commonwealth Parliament is not passed, there would be some kind of reaction in the United Nations, bearing in mind the various coloured people who are represented on the United Nations. Recently, of course, there was a motion on this matter in the Federal Parliament, and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Senator Chaney) supported the motion. He said he thought our legislation should not proceed. He would be in a difficult position if he and his colleagues did not support that matter.

If that legislation is passed, the whole situation will become terribly complex. Not only will the State have to have its own rolls, but also it will have to have the Federal rolls available because the legislation will mean that any person enrolled for the Commonwealth will have to be accepted as an elector for the State district in which he resides.

Under most legislation, one cannot get away with that; but because the referendum of some years ago gave to the Commonwealth the right to legislate on Aboriginal affairs, when there is conflict between State legislation and Federal legislation the Federal legislation is superior. The Commonwealth could reach the stage where it could tell the State what to do in respect of this.

I should like to refer to a matter which has concerned me for a long time and that is the representative of the Crown involving himself in political argument. I believe the fact that the Governor's Establishment comes under the Deputy Premier's division of the Estimates

demeans that establishment. The Governor's Establishment should come under the Premier's department. If we put it anywhere else we downgrade it. We might as well put it under the responsibility of the Minister for Conservation and the Environment.

Mr O'Neil: It is only the Governor's physical establishment.

Mr JAMIESON: It should be part of the Premier's responsibilities.

The Chairman may desire to refer briefly to Standing Orders in respect of this matter; but I do not intend to be irreverent in my references to the Governor. However, I believe he should keep his mouth shut on matters which do not concern him.

Recently the Governor opened the national conference of the Institute of Municipal Administration. He immediately referred to politics in local government. Most local authorities in the Eastern States have this type of political involvement already. Not only were the hosts of the conference in this State embarrassed, but the representatives of municipal associations in the Eastern States were embarrassed also, because party political activities have been established in local government for many years.

Mr Bertram: I thought it had been established here.

Mr JAMIESON: Party political involvement has been part of local government in the Eastern States for some years and it is a fact of life also in Western Australia, but it is carried out surreptitiously. The present Governor lived in Great Britain for a long time and political involvement in local government is common there.

Frequently the Governor deals with matters which would be best left alone. I have witnessed this tendency at various functions I have attended. The Governor should be seen but not heard unless he is asked to make a brief speech when opening a function.

The Governor is subject to the control of his Ministers. Under the provisions of the Constitution Act he is not a free agent. I wish people who undertake the role of Governor would recognise that, because it would not then be necessary for people in public life to criticise the Governor for remarks he has made.

I have been on most friendly terms with all of the Governors who have been appointed since I have been a member of Parliament; but on occasions statements they have made have caused me to be concerned. When Governor Kendrew returned from his furlough in England he made some pertinent comments in regard to the war in Vietnam when he left the ship in Fremantle. Such people should have more sense than to refer to controversial issues. Most of the men appointed as Governors are drawn from the services, so perhaps their military training can be blamed for this habit. However, it is up to the community whether or not there is party political involvement in local government. It is not up to the Queen's representative, because throughout the Queen's domain such matters vary from province to province and from country to country.

The Governor should be warned that it is undesirable for a person in his protected position to lash out on matters which should be sacred to the people who appoint local government personnel.

I have made my position clear on this matter and everyone would benefit if the Governor did not involve himself in such practices.

In the recent report of the Licensing Court a great deal of comment appeared about clubs using their premises for activities other than those involving club members.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.02 p.m.

Mr JAMIESON: I was dealing with a recent report of the Licensing Court to the effect that many people were using clubs for purposes other than that for which they are supposed to be used. It seems a great pity to limit the use of club facilities. While I appreciate that the hotels have to be looked after, many functions could be held in clubs during the week when those clubs usually are not used effectively. A considerable investment in bricks and mortar is going to waste. As long as the club facilities are not overloaded, perhaps we should be looking at the Liquor Act to see whether, in certain circumstances, the clubs could be used. The arrangements would have to be made through a member of a particular club who would have to accept responsibility for the particular function.

I will refer briefly to electoral enrolments. I took strong exception to the Liberal Party action in the Kimberley with regard to questions directed to people already on the roll. I have mentioned previously the actions of the Electoral Department. For many years it has relied on other people to provide lists containing the names of people who had left the district—not those people still living there. However, under an obvious direction and action from the Liberal Party many of the Aborigines living in the Kimberley are receiving notices asking whether they still live at the same address, and to state why their names should be allowed to stay on the roll. That action

is quite unnecessary and it is a despicable tactic, bearing in mind the position that now prevails. It is hard enough to get onto the roll in the first place.

I ask the Minister, when the enrolment cards are reprinted, to look at the possibility of setting out on the back of the card abbreviations of the classifications of the witnesses, so that the witnesses will be able to place those abbreviations alongside their names. There would then be no doubt as to the capacity of the witness. Under the present system, it will be possible for an enrolment card to go backwards and forwards two or three times before it is finally accepted. It should be the intention of the Legislature not to make it difficult to become enrolled. Certainly, it has been the endeavour of this Government to make it more difficult to enrol.

The provision allowing for a witness to be a person already on the roll, or eligible to be on the roll, goes right back to the introduction of our system of compulsory enrolment—which is a long time ago. The drastic step recently taken by the Government has changed the old system to the situation which now prevails. There is a limited range of witnesses for initial enrolments, or re-enrolments when a person's name is removed from the roll. With those comments on Part 3 of the Estimates, I conclude.

MR BATEMAN (Canning) [4.06 p.m.]: I recently asked a question regarding the construction of a courthouse in the Canning electorate, and I asked the question for a very good reason. My purpose was not to waste the time of the Minister or his staff. We have an ever-increasing work load in the Canning electorate. Many of those people charged in the Local Court come from north of the river but, in the main, most of them come from south of the river. The situation is getting worse, and that is the reason I asked the Minister whether the Police Department had an area of land set aside for the construction of a courthouse. The time has arrived when a courthouse should be constructed in the Canning electorate.

The Minister replied to my question and said that a courthouse was under construction in Armadale. The sooner it starts to operate in a similar fashion to the court at Wanneroo, the better. The staff at the Local Court at Cannington are overworked, and I do not know how they cope. I worked there myself many years ago, and the Local Court was busy enough then. The staff were working under great stress and strain.

The main reason for speaking to this part is to request the Minister for Police and Traffic to increase the strength of the Police Force in the Canning area. Every day of the week we see and hear of more and more violence, and more and more crimes. There is a violent type of activity which is not good in our society.

Just recently at one of the hotels in my electorate—and I think there are four or five of them—the whole of the Police Force based at the Cannington Police Station put on their uniforms—including the district superintendent—and they visited the hotel to which I have referred and stayed there for two or three hours. That was necessary because of the ever-increasing violence which is occurring there from Thursday night until Sunday night.

In the old days it was case of the Poms *versus* the Aussies. The English poeple would wave the English flag and the Australians would wave the Australian flag, and then it would be on—jugs, chairs, and anything that was handy. Now it is the Gosnells crowd *versus* the Thornlie crowd; the Thornlie crowd *versus* the Langford crowd; the Langford crowd *versus* the Gosnells crowd, and the Langford crowd *versus* the Lynwood crowd.

Mr Bertram: who is winning?

Mr BATEMAN: No-one wins. I was mixed up in it myself when I was a young fellow, but I have more sense now. I can assure members that no-one wins a brawl!

All jokes aside, violence is becoming more prevalent in the Thornlie shopping centre because of the actions of these young fellows with their bikes. There have been rapes and violence, and windows have been smashed. Most of the trouble is the result of the discos. As far as I am concerned, I think they should be closed because they arouse the young fellows and then the nonsense starts. There is a lot of noise which seems to wind up the young fellows. The disco music does nothing for me, but it makes the young fellows want to fight.

Many people in the area of the Thornlie Hotel and shopping centre fear for their lives. They fear for the safety of their youngsters at night time when they return from scout meetings, girl guide meetings, or church group meetings. It is not safe any longer to walk down the streets in the area without the possibility of being accosted by these half-drunk young larrikins. That is not good enough.

I appeal to the Minister in his wisdom, and to the Police Force in its wisdom, to arrange more patrols in the Gosnells-Thornlie-Langford-Lynwood area. I am sure that before long we will

see some really serious trouble. Some time ago when it was a case of the Poms *versus* the Aussies, a policeman who tried to intervene was clouted with a picket that had nails protruding from it. The policeman, poor devil, was knocked unconscious and he died three months later. The situation is now 10 times worse as a result of the loud music from the discos, and the unemployment situation.

It is a shame we have to ask for this type of action. It is sad, but it is a reality we have to face. The young fellows have nothing to do, and as we all know the devil finds work for idle hands.

We have to try to do something to curb this violence. We cannot provide work for the young people, so it is necesary to increase the strength of the Police Force. It is a sad situation. I again ask the Minister to do something about increasing police patrols in the four particular areas I have mentioned.

I noticed that the member for Gosnells—the suspended member for Gosnells—

Mr Davies: The unfairly suspended member for Gosnells!

Mr BATEMAN: —was fortunate enough to have an extra policeman appointed to the Gosnells Police Station to help carry the work load. That appointment was a result of the representations made by the member for Gosnells. However, the strength of the Police Force in the Canning area needs to be doubled, and anything the Minister can do to help in that respect would be appreciated greatly by the people in the area.

MR WILSON (Dianella) [4.13 p.m.]: I want to raise again the question of something more being done about the problem concerning child-traffic conflict in the vicinity of schools. Earlier this year I asked the Minister for Education—and the Deputy Premier—a question relating to this subject. The question referred to a report of a survey of traffic safety aids outside schools which was commissioned and conducted by the New South Wales Minister for Education. In reply to my question I was told there had been no consultation with the Minister for Police and Traffic regarding a similar study in this State to identify the importance of traffic control outside schools in order to increase safety.

In reply I was advised that the report was submitted to the New South Wales Traffic Authority but had been referred for further study and was not yet available to the public. This puzzled me somewhat because I had written to that department in New South Wales and I had been supplied readily with a copy of the same report. In a letter accompanying the report, I was told it dealt with surveys conducted at all schools in the Sydney metropolitan area and it was designed to assess the need for additional traffic facilities in the vicinity of schools. I was told also that the survey and the research associated with it would be an ongoing matter.

This attitude seems to be at variance with the attitude adopted by the authorities in this State. It appears there is some resistance to undertaking a great deal of research or inquiry into the area of providing greater safety facilities near schools. Submissions and approaches by Western Australian parent bodies have been rebutted; they have been told there appears to be no need for such inquiry. The reaction in the other States seems to be the reverse of this.

For instance, in New South Wales the Department of Motor Transport Traffic Accident Research Unit has published reports in recent times as follows—

> Report on the survey of traffic safety aids outside schools,
>
> The capacity of young children to cope with the traffic system,
>
> Pre-school children and the traffic light task, and
>
> Communicating road safety to the young pedestrian.

In other States, for instance in South Australia, a number of conferences have been held; reports are available from these conferences entitled "Paths to School", "Access to Schools", and a report from the Department of Agriculture of the Adelaide University, "Ways to Schools". There seems to have been a great deal of research as a consequence of the concern felt in other States. However, here in Western Australia we seem to be content with continuing to augment the vote slightly to increase the number of guards at crosswalks on the approaches to schools without really looking into alternatives or at other less costly ways which have been considered, and in many cases adopted, in other States to improve the situation generally.

We are still stuck with the system of having warrants regarding the number of children crossing roads and the volume of traffic on those roads. Many people in the community consider that the system is inadequate. Parents and others in the community are frustrated continually even in their attempts to obtain guards for crosswalks for children to walk across main roads in the metropolitan area. It is high time we provided the automatic installation of guarded crosswalks for main roads to ensure the safety of children going to and from school.

The other matter I want to raise relates to requests that I receive from time to time from residents in the metropolitan area for attention to particular streets and roads where the volume of traffic warrants better supervision. One of the areas most affected in the electorate of Dianella is Light Street between Alexander Drive and Walter Road. This street has been affected because of a huge increase in the volume of through-traffic as a result of very badly co-ordinated road developments further north. A large volume of through-traffic has been channelled into residential streets in this area.

The local residents have made many requests to the Road Traffic Authority for patrols to supervise the increased volume of traffic and the speed at which it travels. I have made a number of approaches to the Minister requesting that consideration be given to increased road patrols as a short-term measure. I have received assurances that such road patrols would be instituted, but when checking with local residents, no-one has noticed any such activity in the area.

Although I do not want to blame the RTA for this, it seems to me to be just another indication of the way in which the limited resources of the RTA are being taxed beyond its ability to cope. If that means people cannot obtain the services to which they are entitled, much more consideration must be given to more substantial increases in the vote of the RTA in order to provide at least short-term relief for the local residents.

MR BERTRAM (Mt. Hawthorn) [4.22 p.m.]: The Premier is on record as having said from time to time he believes it is most desirable for the democratic process that there should be a strong Opposition in the Parliament. He does not mean of course only that the members of the Opposition should be competent and skilled as they are, he means also and more particularly that the numbers in the Opposition should be great and the margin between Government and Opposition should be numerically very small.

Surely he means also that the Opposition should be equipped in such a way that it can discharge its duties here in the Parliament and outside it to its best advantage. That is the inescapable inference in what he has said. However, we in this Parliament know he does not mean it. People outside the Parliament believe he means what he says whether he means it or not.

On this occasion he happens to be correct; there is an imperative need always for a strong Opposition, no matter who is in Government. It is therefore consistent with that proposition that the Opposition should not be equipped with horse and buggy modes of communication. Even the smallest businesses operating in St. George's Terrace have telex equipment—it is not all that expensive. Even if this Government is returned at the next election—and that is something I do not look forward to very happily, but anything is possible—in due course it will provide telex equipment to the Opposition. However, in my wildest dreams I cannot imagine that the Government would think for a moment about providing the Opposition with telex equipment on the eve of an election. That is completely inconsistent with anything the Government would do.

I would like members to reflect back over the last few years on what the Government has done to give itself unfair advantages against the Opposition. Off the top of my head I can think of at least 10 different outrageous actions that the Government has taken—at great expense not just to the Government but also to the people—to give itself electoral advantage, even stooping just the other night, to make an announcement that an air legal aid service to the north-west would commence—after years of babbling about it—in February.

We do not know what will be the polling day for the next election, but I imagine the service will commence a day or so before it. The Opposition must face up to such actions, and it is important that the readers of *Hansard* if no-one else are told of the realities.

It is all very well for the Premier to sprout these things through the media with the endless verbiage he is able to string together. We know that he says one thing and does the opposite, following the ideal precedent set for him by the Prime Minister.

The member for Canning touched on a very important point, and he was supported in his comments by the member for Dianella, when he said that we simply do not have enough policemen in this State. I do not have the statistics with me at the moment, but I would be very surprised if the incidence of crime has not skyrocketed during the term of office of this Government.

There are a number of reasons for this increase, not the least of which is the fact that there simply are not enough members of the Police Force, and there are not enough skilled policemen to supervise certain areas of crime. Some areas of crime are virtually disregarded, although there is nothing particularly new about that. As a matter of fact, two days ago the member for Roe brought the point home very eloquently and forcibly. His proposition was that an eye for an eye and a tooth

for a tooth may well prove to be the better deterrent. That was his proposition in 1979. On page 4371 of *Hansard*, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked him—

> Do your suggestions include white collar criminals?

The member for Roe responded—

> They do not cover those kinds of criminals;—

Mr Grewar: Just read on also.

Mr BERTRAM: To continue—

> —they are of a different class. Their offences are just as evil—perhaps in some cases even more evil.

However the medicine to be dispensed and administered, according to that member, is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Mr Grewar: It is not; you are misreading it. I believe we are all equal before the law.

Mr BERTRAM: I do not know whether the honourable member's colleagues would take that view. In fact, I remember that only a short time ago one of them had an extraordinarily good trot; he was not equal; he was super-equal!

The fact is that in Western Australia not only is conventional crime multiplying and the people are having greater difficulty in coping with it but also, and more importantly, this area of white collar crime about which Government members are not particularly worried is getting out of hand. It has been estimated recently that white collar criminals currently are stealing to the value of $500 million each year. If that is not bad enough, the fact is that very few white collar criminals are brought to book. Relatively few of them are ever charged and, of the ones who are charged, very few are convicted. The police seem to be having very little success in coping with white collar crime. There appears to be a number of reasons for this lack of success, not the least of which is the apparent lack of ability of the police to get into that arena.

Quite clearly, the Government believes that misdemeanours and similar offences should be pursued with extraordinary diligence. Indeed, we have the police turning up in large numbers in situations where nothing unlawful can reasonably be contemplated and when, in fact, nothing unlawful occurs. That seems to be an unreasonable luxury in an age where we have a shortage of policemen and an increasing flood of crime with which to contend. Statistics show that, as a percentage, the solutions of these crimes are diminishing at an ever-increasing rate.

Not only does the Government show very little concern for the problem of white collar crime; it has also managed to convey to many people the belief that if they can work a "decent" and substantial white collar fraud or crime, that is their good luck; that is fair game, and the people involved should be given credit for their endeavours. I believe a tremendous amount of that sort of public feeling currently is abroad in the United States. It is a thoroughly unwholesome state of mind and is not something which should be encouraged either inside or outside this place.

Indeed, white collar criminals seem to be regarded by some as folk heroes. The problem of white collar crime is burgeoning, and will continue to do so as a result of the computer. A very real and urgent need exists for something to be done to face up to this reality. Computer crimes can be worked, and the perpetrator of the crime can very easily conceal the evidence showing who was responsible, thus making the task of coping with it a very real one.

One needs to consider not only the criminal aspect; also, every time money is stolen the people ultimately must pay. It is true that the immediate shareholders may suffer some temporary cash disability; however, it is my belief that ultimately, through price increases and the like, the people at large pay for these crimes which, in themselves, remain substantially unsolved.

We have a need for a higher standard of responsibility in the matter of external and internal audits. I noticed that South Australia recently moved to legislate for the registration of accountants. Of course, this action was initiated by a Labor Government. This is a good move, which is long overdue. The accountancy profession is one of the few trades or professions currently under no legislative control.

In addition to "conventional" crime and white collar crime, we have the problem of drugs. For the moment, I am not talking about nicotine, lest I upset the Minister for Health. He might think I have become obsessed with that subject if I always talk about that, and nothing else. I am referring now to other drugs. A recent article in the Melbourne *Herald* stated as follows—

> We now must face the facts. The time for illusions is over. Australia has a major—an immense—drugs problem that has been developing for years, involving corrupt and criminal elements, coining vast illegal fortunes, and inflicting great damage on our community, particularly the young. And tragically, the official defences that we have relied upon to deal with this deplorable trade,

have been themselves defective, and are in need of immediate repair.

So, there is yet another area of very great concern.

I was puzzled recently to learn of a large drug haul which had taken place at Fremantle. One must always be rather careful before one sets oneself up as an expert. However, it appeared no attempt was made to allow at least some of that material to be followed into the States so that the people connected with drug trafficking in this State and in Australia generally could be apprehended. Perhaps an attempt was made; however, from the evidence it did not appear this was the case, and no further people were tracked down and apprehended. I wonder why that should be the case.

A considerable amount of public concern has been expressed about the activities of Mr Moll, doctors, and others in a scheme to avoid tax. Sundry questions have been placed on the notice paper regarding this matter; indeed, further questions on this subject appear on today's notice paper. People have expressed concern about the apparent lack of interest and enthusiasm and the apparent absence of initiative on the part of State police in this matter.

Mr B. T. Burke: They are not at all interested.

Mr BERTRAM: The Commonwealth Police came along belatedly; however, in a Press report some months ago, one seemed to detect on the part of a top police officer a distinct lack of enthusiasm to pursue this case. One wonders why that should be. When one reads the reports touching on the case, there does seem to be evidence of criminal activities, some of which are against the State of Western Australia.

Mr O'Neil: Could you give us an example of a crime against the State of Western Australia?

Mr BERTRAM: My immediate thought would be in respect of criminal conspiracies, as are provided for in the Criminal Code at about section 550. At any event, when the public is injured to the extent it has been as a result of these activities—whether they be lawful or unlawful—the public is entitled to be satisfied that the proper steps have been and will continue to be taken. Again, ultimately, it is the public who will have to pay. Others may be momentarily disadvantaged but in the long term, it will be the "consumer in last resort" who will have to pay for this little exercise.

Mr B. T. Burke: I think the Premier will give Mr Moll a knighthood, if past performances are any guide.

Mr BERTRAM: In regard to Part 3, Division 27—Electoral, which appears at page 63 of the Estimates, there does not seem to be much point to listing past and expected expenditure in such a manner. Last year, expenditure was $488 555 and this year, it is expected to be $1 657 000. Of course, the two years are in no way comparable. Last year was a non-election year, while a general election will be held during the coming financial year.

Mr B. T. Burke: That is to pay for all those officers who are knocking people off the roll in Kimberley.

Mr BERTRAM: I should imagine a large slice of the appropriation will go for that purpose. There does not seem to be a lot of point to listing figures which are not comparable. I should like to know the expenses for the last two general elections; only then would the Estimate for this year be meaningful and be debated on a proper basis. At the moment, we are left completely in the dark.

Since it is now Government policy to have the Government Printing Office print brochures relating to legislation in this Parliament, at the expense of the people—not at the expense of the Liberal or any other political party—I wonder whether the Deputy Premier would take the initiative of having more brochures printed, such as one to do with the Electoral Act Amendment Bill?

Mr O'Connor: One-vote-one-value.

Mr BERTRAM: Yes. That would be a very good thing, and I am glad the Minister for Labour and Industry at long last, by inference at least, supports that proposition. There are a lot of Government members who support that proposition secretly, but because of their own personal advantage they do not disclose it.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Minister for Labour and Industry has been showing a lot of promise lately. They tell me he will have a 28-man Cabinet.

Mr MacKinnon: Twenty-nine.

Mr BERTRAM: My last information was that the Cabinet would be up to 36 members. What the Deputy Premier could do is have a pamphlet printed to explain to the people that in future, as there is to be no limit on electoral expenses any more, all members of political parties could attempt to buy their way into Parliament. That is the obvious thing to happen. I would like the Deputy Premier to justify that situation if he could.

Mr O'Neil: It would be easier to explain there is no limit than to explain your policy of having the people pay for candidates' expenses.

Mr BERTRAM: Who pays for political candidates' electoral expenses now?

Mr O'Neil: People who choose to do so.

Mr BERTRAM: When the local oil company makes its $1 million donation, from whom does the Deputy Premier suggest it gets that money? Does he suggest they manufacture it?

Mr Tonkin: From the people.

Mr BERTRAM: When the local lawyer makes a donation—those who have the money—from where does he get the money?

Mr Tonkin: The people.

Mr BERTRAM: Right again. And where does the local doctor get his money?

Mr Tonkin: The people.

Mr Shalders: He gets it—

Mr BERTRAM: The member for Murray obviously does not know.

Mr Shalders: He gets his money from people who pay him who get their money from capitalist companies to which you are opposed. If you want to go back, go all the way back.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Treasurer has not even denied that Mr Moll has donated to the Liberal Party.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr Watt): Order!

Mr BERTRAM: I would like to know from the member for Murray what constitutes a capitalist company, as I have not heard that expression before.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! It would be preferable if the member for Mt. Hawthorn directed his remarks to the Chair.

Mr B. T. Burke: I do not think—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Balcatta will cease interjecting.

Mr B. T. Burke: Hear, hear!

Mr BERTRAM: So that is one thing which could be printed in a pamphlet. It would be a good idea if the pamphlet could be distributed just before polling day.

The brochure could contain the information that, henceforth, the taxpayers would have to pay for the litigation in which politicians are involved in instances of disputed returns. They would be particularly interested in that, especially those thousands of people who have sought to get legal aid over the last few years without success and in consequence have been denied justice. I could give an undertaking that, subject to the Opposition members vetting the pamphlet before it was printed, we would take steps to distribute it. The Government has set a very excellent precedent here. We invite the Government to act positively and fairly and if it is intending to send propaganda to the people at the people's expense it should also send out propaganda in respect of other matters in which the people have a very real interest. The conduct of this Parliament and the content of its electoral laws are matters with which every Western Australian is thoroughly involved.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [4.52 p.m.]: I have a query which relates to the licensing of vehicles and the new system which has evolved because of the levy put on petrol and diesel fuel as a result of legislation we dealt with earlier this year, which came into force on the 1st July. As a consequence of that legislation, many licences for heavy haulage vehicles had to be adjusted, which I think was grossly unfair. If a person licensed a vehicle for 12 months and at the 1st July the licence still had several months before the expiry date, the Government should not have subjected him to a reassessment for those months. The Government had plenty of notice it was intending to increase the licence fees. From memory, we dealt with the legislation in May.

It is more than passing strange that a person can pay a licence, or any bill, and then be told at a later stage that the Government has made changes requiring that person to pay more. It would be like buying a return plane ticket, only to find when attempting to return that one had to pay extra money.

Whilst we realise the Goverment is in desperate straits with respect to its revenue, I do not think sending out reassessment notices was fair or reasonable. I do not know how many extra dollars the Government hopes to receive. I imagine if the decision had been challenged it may have been found the Government had wrongly reassessed licences and wrongly issued accounts for the difference between the new licence fee and the old one. I believe the Government is getting money under false pretences. In one instance of which I have knowledge, when the amount involved is perhaps only $39, few people would be prepared to take the matter to court where they could end up with charges totalling several thousand dollars.

With the computers the Government has it was relatively easy to send out the reassessment notices. One can contrast this action of readily being able to adapt the computers to reassess the licences for a few months of the year with the fact

that the Government is unable to send out final notices to people who have not paid their water accounts. If an action will mean the Government will receive money, it seems there is no difficulty involved. As I said, I believe the Government is taking money under false pretences.

The following question was asked by the member for Avon on the 30th August—

1315. Mr McIVER, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) Will rebates be paid on motor car licences as from the 1st July, 1979?
(2) If not, why not?
(3) Were 11 000 notices issued by the Road Traffic Authority for increased licence fees for existing truck and trailer licences?
(4) If "Yes", what revenue will these increased fees realise?
(5) What will be the consequences to owner-drivers if they refuse to pay the increased fees on their existing licences?

They were five very reasonable questions. The Minister for Transport replied as follows—

(1) to (5) A number of requests have been received asking for a review of the present procedures and I am to receive a full report before considering these requests.
As the honourable member's questions relate to this report, I will provide him with the information sought as soon as I have determined if there should be any variation in the present procedures.

In other words, it is a mirror Government; it is looking at the matter. The member for Avon asked a further question on this subject some 10 weeks later. I refer to question 2111 which reads as follows—

Further to my question 1315 of Thursday, the 30th August, 1979 relevant to motor car licences, what action has been taken following reports he has received and what variations does he intend to implement?

The Minister replied, "This matter is still under consideration." In other words, the Government was still looking at it.

Mr B. T. Burke: It is a "gunna" Government; it is "gunna" do things.

Mr DAVIES: So after a very reasonable question was asked nothing has been done for two months. In the meantime, 11 000 reassessment notices were sent out and most, if not all, have been paid to this time.

The case brought to my attention involved a chap who had a large prime mover; one of those large cement trucks. He was obliged to pay a further $39. He did so, but not graciously. The Government is not playing the game. It knows that no-one will take it to court for $30 or $40. It knows that people will take the easy way out and pay up. In the meantime, the Government continues to ponder the question. Let us have an answer to it. The Government should obtain a legal opinion as to whether or not it is acting correctly.

Perhaps the RAC—I have not spoken to that body—may yet fund a case to the courts to see whether the actions are legal. The Government should find out whether it is acting legally and if it is not it should ascertain what it will do with the money that has been taken illegally. I say it is being taken illegally.

I do not recall when an Act was passed to make provision for reassessing licences. I do not recall legislation giving the right to reassess licences after a person has paid a licence fee. It is totally unfair, unjust, and irresponsible. The Government has an obligation to tell us what it intends to do, without delay. If the Government has a committee dealing with this matter—and that raises some doubt—surely the committee would not consider this matter over a period of two months without a resolution. I say the Government has a responsibility to tell us what it will do, before this Parliament rises. The Government may even wish to amend the legislation to make its position legal.

This matter should be looked at because it is another rip-off by the Government and, as I said before, this Government is interested only in obtaining money.

Some time ago there was some concern that people who had warrants issued against them for a misdemeanour were being asked a series of questions. I was not certain just what these questions were so I asked a question of the Minister for Police and Traffic. He said he was unable to answer off-the-cuff, and, as that is not unreasonable, I put my question in a letter to the Minister on the 9th November, 1979. It read in part as follows—

When a summons for a misdemeanour is served on a citizen what information is sought by the police from that citizen other than the name and address of the recipient? . . .

I also referred him to a story in that evening's *Daily News* on page 22. The Minister replied to me very promptly—actually it was one of the most prompt replies I have received from a Minister for some time. His reply read as follows—

> I refer to the question you asked in Parliament on Thursday, November 8 regarding information sought by the police. I indicated to you at the time that I would refer the matter to the Commissioner of Police. This was done.
>
> The advice now received is that when a summons for a misdemeanour is served, police seek information which relates to a description of the person concerned. Hence information is sought as to the person's birthplace, occupation and, if possible, an alternative address.
>
> The information is sought in order that a person be properly related to a particular summons and to assist in locating him should he be defaultive in relation to any penalty imposed once the matter is determined.
>
> On the form used to record this information, there is provision for religion. However, by common practice, this once required item has fallen into disuse.

The Minister said that this was done and he advised me of the information sought. There was not the slightest justification in his letter for this. The Minister said that this information was required in case a person was defaultive in relation to any penalty imposed once the matter was determined. He also said that it was to ensure that the person named in the summons was the person concerned.

If a person accepts a summons and says he is the person named in that summons that should be all that is required. If an officer says, "Is your name Des O'Neil" and the answer is "Yes" then the officer says, "I have a summons here", and the recipient says "thank you very much" for it. He is then asked what his occupation is, where he was born and his alternate address. In other words they want to know where a person will be if he is not there.

People who receive warrants are not criminals. They have committed a misdemeanour. Surely, if the place of residence is shown on the warrant, and if the summons is accepted, that is sufficient proof. What is the need for asking for the person's birth place when he has accepted his summons? If Mr O'Neil says he was born in Kalgoorlie, what good will that information be if he "blows through" and does not pay the debt or does not turn up in court? His hat or shoe size may just as well be taken. This may even be of greater use than information as to where he was born.

I have never heard such nonsense in all my life as the question relating to an alternative address. I have not spoken to any of the people concerned but from reports in the newspaper it was evident that the questions went beyond that. These people are not guilty of a misdemeanour. Once a person is guilty I suppose he can be photographed and fingerprinted etc. When a person accepts a summons he is subject to the due process of the law. If a person fails to turn up in court, I do not think the fact that he was born in Kendenup or Kalgoorlie will help to locate him. It is a useless piece of information.

I notice in this evening's newspaper the Acting Commissioner of Police (Mr Porter) has said there has been no breach of procedure. There may not have been a breach of procedure, but is it necessary to obtain all this information? It is a waste of time to the person concerned and also to the police officer. Often there are two police officers involved and I believe the practice should cease forthwith.

Indeed, what would be the position of a person who declined to give any information other than his name and address? As I understand it, a person is required to give that information to a police officer when asked, at any time. I do not believe that is unreasonable, but why should a person become a different person or be placed in a different category once he has accepted a summons?

I believe what I have said makes sense. I cannot see why this information should be sought. I suggest the Minister should discuss the matter further with the Commissioner of Police with a view to stopping this harassment. It is harassment of the people who receive summons on warrants, especially those who have not received one before. There is no need for the additional information to be sought.

I believe the police are going beyond what is required of them and I earnestly request the Minister to talk to the commissioner with a view to having the practice stopped. The Minister did say the details were printed on the form which was used to record the information. Perhaps he would be good enough to table a form so that we can see what is on it. I understand many policemen are unhappy about the amount of paper work they have to do now, so it would not be unreasonable for us to look at the form.

Earlier this year I had quite a lot of correspondence—and let me say that the Minister

was good enough to let me have the relevant departmental papers—with a firm, R. C. Sadleir Pty. Ltd. It concerned what is known as a Samsonlift, which is designed to fit at each end of a container, clamp onto the container, lift it, and move it.

The lift is locally designed and manufactured by R. C. Sadleir Pty. Ltd. I think it was Mr Frank Burke who was the man responsible for designing the lift. R. C. Sadleir Pty. Ltd. are transport and heavy haulage contractors, of 3 Miles Road, Kewdale.

I will not detail how difficult it was to get people interested in the invention. It was an extraordinary and simple invention. It was manufactured to fit a standard size container. However, when the lift was put on the road it was found that a licence could not be obtained for it, and neither could a provisional licence nor a temporary licence be obtained. The reason was that the measurement from the pivot pin at the back of the prime mover to the end of the extended jinker was not acceptable under the Australian roads standards. That was despite the fact, I am told, that the nose to tail measurement of the unit was not as great as many of the trucks which operate on our roads and which are accepted and licensed by the RTA.

Although I can appreciate the position of the RTA officers, I was disappointed at their attitude. They did not seem to want to help. Certainly, they said they appreciated the jinker had some advantages, but they merely said it was overlength, and that was the beginning and end of it. They said it did not meet the Australian standards specifications.

I believe it is possible we have lost an industry to Western Australia. I understand the lift has been accepted overseas and it is likely to be manufactured and used overseas. The inventor, a local man, wanted to keep the whole operation in this State but he found he could not get the required co-operation from the RTA licensing authority. That is a matter for a great deal of regret.

I again thank the Minister for making the correspondence available to me, and on going through it I am prepared to admit at one stage it was suggested the length of the containers to be used could be less than the standard container. Containers could be constructed to meet the requirements of the Australian standards. The point here is, of course, that whilst such a container could be used in Western Australia, the jinker would not be able to handle containers from ships. Obviously, the containers from the ships are constructed to world-wide specifications. Those containers will not be altered so that they can be used by jinkers in Western Australia. So, it was not a case of the containers being altered; it was a case of the RTA having a look at the road standards and attempting to get them altered.

It is true the company did make available a smaller container which was of advantage to farmers. It was possible to dump a container in a paddock and, when it was loaded, pick it up and take it straight to the siding. That was a considerable saving to a farmer, and another saving was that one prime mover could handle the wheat from several farms.

Mr O'Neil: Did you see the container which was modified?

Mr DAVIES: Yes.

Mr O'Neil: Was it shorter than the standard container?

Mr DAVIES: It appeared to be.

Mr O'Neil: I understood it was not, although I did not see it.

Mr DAVIES: I did not go into it in detail. I was shown a container which had been modified. I spent 1½ hours with the inventor. I must say the inventor was very cross with everybody and he appeared to be very cross with me even though I suggest nobody tried harder than I did to get the law altered for him. However, he was irascible.

Mr O'Neil: He was very difficult to deal with.

Mr DAVIES: Yes. I can see it appears the Minister for Industrial Development also had a word with him.

Mr O'Neil: I think the Minister for Transport may have been involved also.

Mr DAVIES: I wonder whether the Minister for Agriculture was involved.

Mr Old: Yes, I was in it, too.

Mr DAVIES: Was there anyone else? Only four!

I had a great deal of sympathy for the inventor. I hope we will not lose this beneficial industry to Western Australia. It seems the RTA has simply stated there are regulations and standards, and that nothing can be done about them. It may take a long time to alter the standards; I know that associated with them are road designs, corners, and kerbs. The fact is, however, prime movers with jinker trailers already are operating on our roads, and some of those vehicles exceed the permissible standards.

Mr O'Neil: It has been drawn to the attention of the RTA that those people may be breaching the law.

Mr DAVIES: The Minister has said something would be done about this.

Those are the three matters I wished to raise. I ask the Minister to look at the problem of the Samsonlift to see whether it is likely the position will be reassessed. It could be of some value to farmers in the use of smaller containers. I believe there are several secondhand containers at Fremantle which could be used now for wheat. However, they are too long to be used on the roads. Secondly, I believe that in the issuing of warrants the Government is going beyond what is necessary. Thirdly, I ask the Minister to look at the matter of reassessing licence fees which, I believe, are collected illegally. I would be very pleased if the Minister would look into those three matters.

MR O'NEIL (East Melville—Deputy Premier) [5.18 p.m.]: I will answer the questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition because, at least, he is present in the Chamber, as is the member for Welshpool. Certainly the matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition are immediate to my mind and I think I can answer them quickly, if not satisfactorily.

Firstly, it is a fact that the matter of amendments to the Road Traffic Act, concerning the raising of money for roads through vehicle licence fees, does fall on my colleague, the Minister for Transport. Members may have noticed that when amendments to the Road Traffic Act, in the area of raising money, appear in this Chamber they are handled by that Minister.

I suppose historically the Minister for Transport has also been the Minister for Police and Traffic because there is some misconception that traffic and transport are one and the same thing. It has always been my view that transport means the conveying of people and goods from place to place, by land, sea, or air. The Minister for Traffic controls the organisation which should be responsible for the safe movement of that traffic; namely, the policing of rules and regulations in the area of traffic control.

With that fairly clear in my mind I have already made a suggestion to the Government that consideration be given to the establishment of a separate Act dealing entirely with matters concerning revenue-raising or fund-raising from motor vehicle licensing. I think once again members will realise that the basic function of raising money through these areas is to provide the roads upon which the transport will travel. It seems to me not to be wrong to have a road fund Act or something to that effect so that any matters relating to the charging of vehicle users for use of the transport facility will be separate. In that case it would not matter if one Minister did not have the responsibility for both transport and traffic.

That being the case, I can go no further than to confirm what the Minister for Transport said to the Leader of the Opposition regarding the overpayment or illegal seeking of fees or whatever from heavy vehicle licensing.

Mr Davies: Can you ginger up that committee a bit?

Mr O'NEIL: I will discuss it with my colleague and draw his attention to the matters raised.

Mr Davies: I think the member for Avon has some questions on the notice paper for Tuesday, so we might get the answer then.

Mr O'NEIL: The information required by the police in respect of people summonsed for misdemeanours is a matter I have dealt with by correspondence to the Leader of the Opposition and either the Trades and Labor Council or the union whose member was involved. I recollect having some discussions and I think it was indicated to me that when a misdemeanour is committed certain information should be taken from the person concerned in order that the summons might be correctly prepared and served.

Mr Davies: This is when they are serving the summons.

Mr O'NEIL: That is right. I understand what happened was where a number of misdemeanours were recorded insufficient information was obtained and the officer concerned obtained the balance of the information when serving the summons. I would agree that whether or not all the information is required is a matter which is well worth consideration and I will bring the honourable member's comments to the attention of the Commissioner of Police.

In regard to the Samsonlift, it is true the inventor of this piece of equipment had some difficulty in having it approved for use on Western Australian roads. My understanding of the matter is that even prior to the development of the unit in toto a great deal of discussion was held with engineers of the Road Traffic Authority as to the restrictions which might be applied to the equipment when prepared for road use. The people concerned were fully aware of a specification which applied all over Australia that the distance between the last wheels of a trailer and the fifth wheel, which is the pivot pin on the prime mover, was restricted to a certain length.

If the Leader of the Opposition reads the correspondence he will see it is quite clear that at all times the inventor and those who joined with him in the manufacture of the equipment were aware of that fact. In fact, there is a letter which gives an undertaking that the final equipment, including the container, would comply. There was a clear understanding that the equipment that was being developed could not be operated with a container longer than 16 feet, and that internationally, containers are 20 feet long.

A temporary licence for the equipment was issued on the written undertaking of the people concerned that it applied when this equipment was used with a container no longer than 16 feet. All these things were known and everything went according to plan except that once the temporary permit was issued for the use of the equipment an application was made to allow it to be used with a 20-foot container. It was at that stage that one of the people concerned visited almost everyone in an irate manner and without appointment and tried to press the point home, and that the Leader of the Opposition had a visit and got in touch with me. I undertook to provide him with all the information, files, and letters which were available; and he has acknowledged that fact.

At that particular time the gentleman wanted to take this piece of equipment to the Dowerin field day and for the first time it was pointed out to me that it would be an ideal thing to use in a farmer's paddock. The farmer could have a container parked in the paddock, fill it from his harvest, connect the equipment, and take it to the bin. That was the first time it was contemplated using it for that purpose, and I think there was some difficulty in getting a permit to take it to the Dowerin field day. I understand it got through by hook or by crook, illegally, or under escort because it did not comply with standard equipment.

Many of the statements that the equipment could be used anywhere in Australia, if not anywhere in the world, were patently wrong because the standards for this type of equipment apply equally all over Australia. This was pointed out. I have sympathy for a person who has something which may establish an industry here and who shows some initiative, but all involved with this equipment were finally advised to deal with someone other than the man who was making all the noise, whether or not he was the inventor. It was a case where, having been given every consideration, little by little the original objective of the people concerned was sought to be achieved by pressure.

That deals with all the matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I will briefly touch on some of the other matters. I was surprised when the issue of the telex machine and the behaviour of the Joint House Committee was raised under my votes. There are no votes in respect of the Deputy Premier's department for the provision of telex machines, and there is certainly provision in Part 1—Parliament, to deal with anything which may have been done at a Joint House Committee meeting. I think the matter has been well and truly debated, and the Deputy Chairman (Mr Watt) might rule me out of order if I canvass this area.

Mr Davies: Are you asking for it to be ruled out of order?

Mr O'NEIL: I think the matter has been fully canvassed and I do not propose to go into it any more.

Mr Bryce: I just asked for a simple justification for not letting it be put in there at the Leader of the Opposition's expense.

Mr O'NEIL: Although I am probably the person who is now regarded as being responsible for this decision, such decisions are not made without consultation with the people who provide the necessary funds for many things which go into Government departments to assist people.

For example, the Premier's Department is responsible for the supply and maintenance of vehicles used by a few people around the place, including the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The officers of the Premier's Department are not without a deal of experience. Certainly I do not make a personal assessment as to whether any individual person should have a telex or a typewriter. In fact, I do not know where the telex machine is in the Superannuation Building, although I understand certain of my officers use it as well as officers from departments which are not even housed in the building. However, that matter does not fall anywhere within the vote allocated to the Deputy Premier's department.

The member for Welshpool raised the matter of the size and nature of the new electoral cards. The Chief Electoral Officer discussed this matter with me. I believe the card should be much simpler than it is. I am not one for having a great deal of fine print on the back of the card. It seems to me that when one receives an account from a Government department, the hardest thing to find is the place to which to send the account. However, the Crown Law Department believes that certain requirements must be met on the face of the card and on the back of the card.

Problems in relation to the size of the card then arose as it was feared that the new cards may be too large to go into the habitation index system under which we operate, as the member for Welshpool would realise. To have a card of a different size would create problems.

Mr Jamieson: I am not worried about that, but why would you double the size of the "former surname" area and halve the size of the "occupation" area?

Mr O'NEIL: That matter can be looked at, but one would not commit any great crime if one ran one's former surname into the "post code" area.

Mr Jamieson: Or into the "sex" area—but we should keep sex out of it!

Mr O'NEIL: The card was drawn up after consultation with the Government Printer because he knows the technicalities involved. Certainly I am not the architect of the card.

Mr Davies: What about the witnessing anomalies we now find?

Mr O'NEIL: These matters can be taken up with the Chief Electoral Officer who no doubt will pay attention to them. I suppose members realise it is not necessary to make an application for enrolment on those cards. The Act says an applicant "may" do this.

Mr Jamieson: That would muck up their habitation!

Mr O'NEIL: But one can do it, provided the information is given so that the Electoral Department can verify that the person concerned is entitled to be enrolled. It is much the same with an application for a postal vote—there is no statutory requirement that an application must be made on the form provided. However, it is more convenient for the department to have applications as far as possible on the cards.

Mr Davies: It is a bit of an anomaly that a person turning 18 can witness someone else' signature but then must have a JP or an electoral officer witness his own signature.

Mr O'NEIL: That has nothing to do with the card.

Mr Davies: Yes it has.

Mr O'NEIL: I believe that area was canvassed very fully when the legislation was dicussed.

Mr Davies: But it is an anomaly that shows up badly now because one must add whether one is an elector, a JP, an electoral officer, or a member of the Police Force. I would not sign "R. Davies, MLA" any more; I would sign "R. Davies, elector", or if I happened to be one, I would sign "R. Davies, JP", but I am not allowed to be one.

Mr Jamieson: But what do you put in if you are 18 years old?

Mr O'NEIL: I want to cover as many of the points raised by members as possible in the limited time available to me.

The lack of use of a joint roll has been canvassed here again. I answered a question here a few days ago, and I will answer another one today. As I have said before, I would not be averse to a uniform type of application for enrolment which could be passed from one department to another—Commonwealth and State. Somehow or other, despite the computerisation of rolls and the like, there still seems to be a need to keep a separate enrolment card for each roll with a signature and verification on it. I do not see why a card could not be photocopied in one department and forwarded to another.

I believe that one simple method for applying for enrolment for both electorates might be all right, but I do not know about the use of a joint roll. South Australia operates with a joint roll, but certain names carry an asterisk against them meaning that the people involved can vote federally but not for the State. South Australia and the Commonwealth do not have uniform voting requirements.

Mr Jamieson: That is only because it is not compulsory to enrol for State elections in South Australia. Once you enrol it is compulsory to vote.

Mr O'NEIL: I think it was back in 1972 that a joint committee was set up to examine this proposal. It has been looked into, and in fact chief electoral officers—federally and State—have changed in that time.

Mr Jamieson: In 1926 it was written into the State Act for the Governor to negotiate with the Governor General.

Mr O'NEIL: The inquiry commenced then, and it has been examined by the Treasury. On all the evidence available to us, and on consideration of the departmental report to the Government, the decision was made and announced not to proceed.

Mr Jamieson: We promise you that if we are elected we will do it straightaway.

Mr Sibson: That is easy to say.

Mr Jamieson: It will save $300 000 at least.

Mr O'NEIL: I have taken note of queries of members in respect of the use of clubs by persons other than their members and the questions raised by the Licensing Court. One's attitude to this problem depends on what side of the fence one is on. Some believe that clubs should be able to be used more freely by other than their members

whether or not there is a hotel adjacent. There is a competition between the holders of various classes of licences, each one wanting to improve its own capacity to perform under its licence, and mostly to the detriment of the other facilities.

I am sure to restrict the operation of sporting clubs and country clubs in country areas certainly would not win political or electoral support for the members in those districts. Exactly the same thing would apply if a member wanted to favour the clubs as distinct from the hotels.

I believe this problem will be with us always, and some concern needs to be shown. From what I have seen of the considerations of the Licensing Court, it appears that things are going reasonably well. The old idea was that the best way to raise money was to obtain a licence to dispense alcoholic liquor, but apparently sporting clubs—including those belonging to football clubs—do not see it that way. I am not sure whether or not that is a good thing.

The member for Canning made his usual request to increase the number of policemen on patrol in order to overcome the increasing problem in regard to juvenile delinquency, vandalism, and crimes related to them.

Perhaps one of the problems is not so much the lack of police presence as the mobility of the persons concerned. It is quite clear that whenever an incident occurs, while the police are on the way word of their impending arrival gets around and the whole scene moves to some other area. Mobility seems to be a problem we should attack. I have mentioned on a number of occasions the establishment of special mobile squads with better communication between police vehicles. If mobility is the greatest problem in the apprehension of these offenders, it seems to me the thing to do is to increase the mobility of the police and to give them greater flexibility.

The usual matter of child-traffic conflicts near schools was raised by the member for Dianella. This is constantly before us. I have said many times that the central organisation which represents parents, Main Roads Department traffic engineers, and other bodies are represented on a committee which makes the determination as to whether a guarded crossing is required. Other methods are available, such as splitting the main road with a median strip.

It has been a said to me by some parents that if they knew the school was under observation to see whether a pedestrain crossing was required, they would drive their cars past the schools on several occasions at the appropriate time. The objection to surveys being held without the knowledge of the people concerned is certainly not valid.

I have forgotten the amount, but additional money has been made available in the Budget to increase the number of crossing guards. I think the figure involved is some 60 or so. Some of the features which the member for Dianella mentioned as being available in other States appeared to be mainly educational material. In that regard the member should look at some of the material produced and the instructions given by the National Safety Council in respect of this matter. I do not think there is an organisation in any other State of a similar nature to the road traffic section of the National Safety Council of Western Australia.

I believe I have dealt with the matters raised by the various members. If I have omitted to reply to any matter, I will obtain a reply. I assure the Committee I will obtain copies of the speeches and refer them to the appropriate departments so that members may be supplied with replies.

Votes: Deputy Premier's Office, $1 067 000; Governor's Establishment, $454 000; Chief Secretary, $1 584 000; Registry and Friendly Societies, $636 000; Astronomical Services, $376 000; Electoral, $1 657 000; Licensing, $392 000—put and passed.

Vote: Department of Corrections, $21 031 000—

Item No. 5: Consumable Supplies and Construction Materials, $3 616 000—

Mr BERTRAM: Last year's Estimate was $2.547 million and expenditure was $3 199 976. The member for Roe a short time ago expressed concern that we should be spending $21.031 million on the Department of Corrections. He believes that figure is far too high. It is important that we should satisfy ourselves that the money proposed to be spent is spent properly. The amount of increase this year is provocative, and I would like to know why the figure has been increased by roughly $500 000.

The item seems to contain matters of a non-recurrent nature which perhaps should be met out of loan funds rather than revenue funds. Perhaps the Deputy Premier will comment on that, too.

Mr O'NEIL: Consumable supplies are, in fact, in most cases truly consumable. The member for Mt. Hawthorn would realise that those in institutions must be maintained and fed.

In regard to construction materials, an arrangement has been entered into whereby works of a minor nature, such as repairs, renovations, and maintenance to prison institutions, should be

undertaken by the prisoners themselves, provided they have the appropriate skills. This is certainly a method of occupying them in cases where they would not otherwise be occupied. Therefore, arrangements have been made to enable a certain amount of repairs, maintenance, and renovations to be undertaken by prisoners under the supervision of appropriate trade instructors. Additional materials are likely to be supplied from that source. To my knowledge that accounts for the increase.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Police, $46 823 000—

Item No. 1: Salaries, Wages and Allowances, $38 390 000—

Mr JAMIESON: This item shows 1 878 sergeants and constables, whereas the next division, which deals with the RTA, shows sergeants and other ranks separately. Why could not that be done in the case of police so that in future we will know the percentage of sergeants?

Mr O'NEIL: I see no reason that it cannot be done, although there may be one. However, I will certainly bring the matter to the attention of those who provide the information.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Road Traffic Authority, $21 583 000—

Item No. 8: Traffic Research, $36 000—

Mr BERTRAM: Last year expenditure under this item was $66 724, after $153 000 had been allocated. This year estimated expenditure is $36 000. That is a dramatic fall.

Are we to gather that all is well on the roads and that the carnage is going to be lessened; or is the Government showing the same disinclination to do anything about the road situation as it has in other matters relating to health?

Mr O'NEIL: I am sure the member for Mt. Hawthorn will appreciate that the road carnage is down. Tonight's issue of the *Daily News* reveals that the total deaths to date for 1979 are 241 while at the same time last year, the figure stood at 319. He can be assured of the research programme being undertaken, and of the added vigilance and efficiency of the RTA. Certainly, the objectives of traffic research are being achieved.

The Road Traffic Authority has been in existence since only about 1975. I assume that initially, there was a requirement for a great deal of basic research material. Now, of course, there is need only to update that material. The member for Mt. Hawthorn can rest assured the department is not lacking in implementing research programmes when and where they are necessary.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: Office of Regional Administration and the North West, $1 468 000—put and passed.

Progress

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

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [6.06 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 27th November.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.07 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

STATE FINANCE

Levy on Public Utilities

2292. Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

In each year since he introduced the 3 per cent tax, how much has become due from and how much was actually paid by the—

(a) Metropolitan Water Board;

(b) State Energy Commission;

(c) Rural and Industries Bank;

(d) State Engineering Works?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(a) and (b) The Public Authority Contributions Act was introduced in 1974 and the following amounts have become due and paid for the period the 1st July 1973 to the 30th June, 1979—

	Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage and Drainage Board $	State Energy Commission. $
1974	618 493	2 298 196
1975	886 078	2 898 269
1976	1 281 534	4 032 435
1977	1 458 495	4 393 975
1978	1 604 869	5 644 842

(c) and (d) The Rural and Industries Bank and State Engineering Works are not subject to the Act.

HEALTH: NURSES

Community Health Services

2320. Mr DAVIES, to the Premier:

(1) Is it a fact that the Royal Australian Nursing Federation has been negotiating for more than two years to obtain a standard award or agreement for nurses employed in community health services of Western Australia?

(2) Why has the claim not been finalised?

(3) When is it expected to be finalised?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) On the 14th April, 1975, the Commissioner of Public Health and Medical Services wrote to the Public Service Board requesting investigation of a proposal to merge the nursing services of community health services and child health services.

A meeting was held with the Royal Australian Nursing Federation and Public Health Department and Public Service Board representatives on the 7th July, 1975, to initiate negotiations regarding the amalgamation.

The Commissioner of Public Health and Medical Services requested the board on the 8th March, 1976, to introduce on a trial basis a pilot programme in the Pilbara region for the amalgamation.

The Nursing Federation representative attended a meeting with board and departmental representatives on the 19th March, 1976, in respect of the pilot scheme for the Pilbara region. At that meeting, the federation expressed objections to the pilot scheme and a reluctant attitude to the amalgamation of child health nursing services with other nursing services.

The Commissioner of Public Health and Medical Services recommended on the 2nd November, 1976, that inspections be undertaken of relevant nursing services throughout the State before the integration proposals were progressed.

The Nursing Federation participated in these inspections.

(2) The Nursing Federation has not filed any claim for a new award with the Industrial Commission. However, late in 1978, federation gave to the Public Service Board a draft for a new community nursing services award.

After meeting with the federation on the 2nd March, 1979, the Public Service Board wrote to the Federation on the 15th March, 1979, asking if it intended to lodge the document with the Western Australian Industrial Commission as the Public Health Department was anxious to have the matter finalised so that the integration of nursing services could be completed. At this time, the claim has not been lodged with the Industrial Commission.

(3) As the claim has not been lodged with the Industrial Commission, it is not known when the matter will be finalised.

HEALTH: MEDICAL CENTRE

Koondoola

2321. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Housing:

(1) What is the current position with regard to the development of a medical centre on part of lot 69 Koondoola as proposed by the State Housing Commission?

(2) When is it anticipated that work will begin on the medical centre?

Mr RIDGE replied:

(1) and (2) It is assumed the member is referring to lot 699 Lea Road, Koondoola and not lot 69 Koondoola.

Although there were no offers to a public tender recently invited by the commission for the development of a medical centre, there has since been inquiry from an interested party and the commission has directed further discussions with the local authority in order to come to a decision.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Government Policy, and City of Stirling

2322. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Can he confirm that the Government's policy in relation to waste disposal problems being experienced by local government authorities in the metropolitan area is based on co-operation between authorities within specified zones?

(2) Is his department concerned about the apparent breakdown in this arrangement which has forced the City of Stirling to propose the use of a private site in close proximity to residential areas in Dianella and Noranda as a waste disposal site over five and possibly more years?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

GRAIN: WHEAT

Handling Charge

2323. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

What is the charge per tonne on wheat to be levied by each of the grain handling authorities in Australia in the—

(a) 1978-79 season;

(b) 1979-80 season?

Mr OLD replied:

(a) and (b) Except in regard to the charges in Western Australia this information is not known to my department. It is being sought and will be provided to the member as soon as possible.

The Co-operative Bulk Handling charge is $11.10 per tonne for the 1978-79 season made against the first advance. The $11.90 per tonne for the 1979-80 season is a tentative figure.

POULTRY

Western Australian Egg Marketing Board

2324. Mr TONKIN, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

(1) Have notices of retrenchment been issued to employees of the WA Egg Marketing Board?

(2) If so, how many employees are affected and when will the retrenchments take effect?

(3) Will any severance pay be made?

(4) If so, how much?

(5) If not, why not?

(6) Does the relevant award(s) contain any reference to severance pay?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) No. However the Public Service Board, acting on behalf of the Western Australian Egg Marketing Board, will be writing to the Secretary of the Food Preservers Union of Western Australia this month informing the union that some employees who cannot be retained when new processing equipment is installed, will be given notice of retrenchment. Advice to individuals of the retrenchment will be given after the 17th December, 1979.

(2) Approximately 30 persons will be involved. The first retrenchments will take effect in the month of February 1980, but they will not all necessarily be effective in that month.
(3) and (4) No.
(5) Severance payments are contrary to Government policy and guidelines in respect of redundancy.
(6) The Egg Processing Award, 1978, contains the usual award provisions relating to the payment of *pro rata* long service to workers who are retired for reasons other than resignation.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

Minors: Committal to Custody

2325. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

(1) In relation to the committal of minors to the custody of State Government institutions, will he explain—
  (a) all stages of procedure usually adopted by the Community Welfare Department when a departmental welfare officer on his initiative decides that a minor is to be immediately committed to the custody of a State institution on unsubstantiated claims of allegedly unsatisfactory home life;
  (b) if it is normal practice for the department to make such drastic and allegedly defamatory (to the parents of the minor) committal without first confirming the validity of the claim;
  (c) if it is normal procedure to make such a committal when the parents of the minor have no record of neglect or maltreatment of that, or any other, minor or person, are regarded by prominent personalities as being responsible parents and are on record with the department as always showing interest and concern for the minor's welfare and advancement;
  (d) if it is normal procedure to make such immediate committal when the minor has committed no offence, has not been charged with an offence and has no record of any type of delinquency?

(2) Will he explain if it is normal departmental procedure to—
  (a) make such a committal before, utilising staff trained for the purpose, interviewing either parent or, alternatively, an available high school guidance officer conversant with the nature of the parents;
  (b) make such a committal without first informing the unsuspecting parents that the action was being taken or that the supposed necessity for such action allegedly existed;
  (c) make arrangements with the minor about a particular proposed foster parent and the conditions of living with that foster parent before the unsuspecting natural parents had even been consulted or advised that such arrangements were, secretly, being made;
  (d) make arrangements in advance to obtain some form of order, against the natural parents, in a specific magistrate's court, before those parents have been advised or made aware that such drastic action is contemplated?

(3) Will he detail the number of committals of minors and the dates of the committals, during the last five years, under the above described circumstances?

(4) Will he explain the means of redress or appeal to parents complaining of committal under the above described circumstances?

(5) Will he openly investigate any such complaint, calling for all available records in the process?

(6) Finally, has he received any such complaint recently?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) to (6) The information requested by the member involved considerable detailed inquiry and research. The information will be provided in writing when available.

2326. *This question was postponed.*

POLICE

Mr C. T. Moll: Action

2327. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

(1) Can he assure the Parliament that all possible avenues have been exhausted with regard to possible action by the police under State law against Mr Christo Moll for defrauding many Western Australian citizens?

(2) Do the police have any grounds to believe that Mr Moll has acted in collusion with any others who may still be resident in Western Australia?

(3) Are the police giving any continuing consideration to action in respect to these matters?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1) to (3) No evidence of an offence has been revealed for State police inquiry as yet. If and when it is, the appropriate action will be taken. Commonwealth offences are being properly dealt with by the Australian Federal police.

2328. *This question was postponed.*

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment: New Residential Suburbs

2329. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

(1) Is he aware of the claim made on page 5 of the Australian Catholic Bishop's statement "Beyond Unemployment" that unemployment is particularly high in some of the newer residential suburbs, where Government housing authorities have located housing estates without the employment opportunities in the area needed to support the residents?

(2) In particular, is he aware of the Commonwealth Employment Service statistics for January 1979 quoted in the statement which show that Girrawheen had an unemployment rate of 13.35 per cent?

(3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2), what special measures such as travel concessions is the Government proposing to take to counter the special problems affecting unemployed people in such areas?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

(3) Persons attending for interviews are, where necessary, provided by the Commonwealth Employment Service with fares to attend the interview. Therefore the State Government does not provide travel concessions for such interviews. Applications for vacancies are not limited to the local CES office. Under the self-service system now operating in the CES a person may apply for a position in another CES district. The Government, through the corridor plan and decentralisation policies, encourages the establishment of business ventures in areas adjacent to residential areas.

The Government is also committed to providing the capacity for sound economic growth. As this continues employment opportunities will increase in all areas. I refer to member to my answer to question 2304 in this regard.

LAND: RESUMPTION

Teranca Road, Mandurah

2330. Mr SHALDERS, to the Minister for Transport:

(1) With reference to the land referred to in question 2214 of 1979 in which year did the Main Roads Department decide this land was no longer required for the purpose for which it was acquired?

(2) Has the land been rezoned since its acquisition by the Main Roads Department?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

(1) 1975

(2) Yes.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

Joint

2331. Mr BERTRAM, to the Chief Secretary:

(1) As to part (b) of his answer to question 2227 of the 16th November, 1979 relevant to electoral rolls, was his assessment that it was better to have separate rolls made before the advent and use of computers in Western Australia?

(2) If "No", when was it made?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1) and (2) The Cabinet decision was made on the 9th July, 1979 and a Press release was issued on the 11th July, 1979.

DAMAGES AWARDS

Atlas Tiles v Briers Case

2332. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

Is it his intention at an early time to legislate to reverse the effect of the High Court decision on the Atlas Tiles *v.* Briers case which has had the effect of increasing awards for damages to claimants?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

No. We are waiting for the High Court's decision in another case where it must be said whether or not the rule in Briers *v.* Atlas Tile Company is of general application.

That decision is now imminent, and the question of whether legislation is neccessary cannot reasonably be resolved until it is given.

TRAFFIC: OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Third Party Insurance

2333. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is it a fact that the Control of Vehicles (Off-road areas) Act does not provide for compulsory third party insurance?

(2) Is there comparable off-road vehicle legislation in other States?

(3) If "Yes", does the comparable legislation require compulsory third party insurance?

Mr Young (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) As far as I am aware, only Queensland and Victoria have legislation dealing specifically with off-road vehicles.

(3) I understand that third party insurance for off-road vehicles is compulsory in Victoria. I do not know what the position is in Queensland.

HEALTH: TOBACCO PRODUCTS

"Daily News" Article

2334. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Did he observe the headline in the *Daily News* of the 20th November, 1979 "Tobacco 'Daily Dose' increased"?

(2) If "Yes"—

(a) does his department agree with the director of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria (Dr Nigel Gray) when he complained that the introduction by cigarette pushers of packs of 25 cigarettes was a clear attempt to increase the number of cigarettes smoked by the "average one pack a day" smoker?

(b) is the Government, like Dr Gray, "very antagonistic to this marketing ploy";

(c) if "No", why;

(d) if "Yes", what action has he taken concerning it and/or what action does he propose to take about it, and when?

(3) (a) Is it a fact that "Outside heroin, tobacco is the most dependence inducing drug . . . .";

(b) if "No", why?

(4) Is it a fact that "Even young smokers are likely to have between 10 and 15 per cent less lung capacity than non-smokers of similar age and physical condition"?

(5) Is it a fact that "If smokers kick the habit they will experience a quite rapid reversal in such health related areas as lung cancer and heart disease"?

(6) (a) Is it a fact that if smokers kick the habit they will also cough less within two weeks and their breathing will improve markedly within six weeks;

(b) if "No", why?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) and (b) No.

(c) and (d) Why should the Government be antagonistic? There are possible explanations other than that given by Dr Gray.

(3) (a) No.
(b) There are a large number of drugs which have been termed addictive and "dependence inducing" and this statement expresses an opinion only and not a scientific fact.

(4) I can well believe that some young smokers would have a reduced lung capacity compared with non-smokers of a similar age and physical condition.

(5) No.

(6) (a) No.
(b) Again, I can well believe that many smokers will experience cough relief and improved breathing after ceasing smoking. To imply that all will do so is nonsense.
The risk of sudden death from heart disease becomes less fairly rapidly after ceasing smoking; the risk of developing lung cancer also becomes less but falls at a much slower rate. Established heart disease will be less affected and established lung cancer not affected at all by stopping smoking.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

Charges

2335. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Local Government:

When does she expect the motor vehicle third party insurance charges to be increased, why, and by what sum?

Mr Young (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

As I advised the House in answer to question 1766 on the 11th October, 1979, a request from the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust for an increase in premiums is under continuing review.

No decision has yet been made on this question.

STATE FINANCE

Loans: Commissions and Fees

2336. Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

(1) What is the estimated sum of money spent each year by way of commissions and fees or otherwise to raise loans?

(2) (a) Will he supply particulars as to how that figure is calculated;
(b) if "No", why?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) and (2) The State Government is required to meet loan flotation expenses and discounts paid on loans raised by the Commonwealth and allocated to the State under the provisions of the Financial Agreement. Details of loan flotations on behalf of the State in 1978-79 and of expenses, discounts and fees deducted are set out in statement No. 10, pages 76 to 78 of the public accounts for 1978-79 which accompany the Auditor General's Report.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

Investment in Associated Securities Limited

2337. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) What action has the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust taken to recover the sum of money it has invested in Associated Securities Limited?

(2) What result has so far been achieved and when?

Mr Young (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

(1) I am advised that, as Associated Securities Limited is in receivership, the trust can do no more than wait for the company's affairs to be settled in accordance with the law.

(2) I am advised that the trust has received the following distributions in respect of its investment of $250 000 in first charge debentures—

10c in the dollar in February, 1979;
15c in the dollar in October, 1979.

STATE FINANCE: CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND

Transactions: Publication in Newspaper

2338. Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

What are his objections, if any, to providing the public each year—per medium of, say, *The West Australian* newspaper—with a comprehensive account of transactions through the Consolidated Revenue Fund together

with such simple explanations as may be necessary?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

Far from having objections to informing the public on the Government's financial operations, the Government goes to some pains to ensure that information is widely disseminated to the media which is the traditional channel of communication with the public.

Each quarter during the year a special *Government Gazette* is published and supplied to the media giving details of transactions for the quarter for all main accounts with a comparison of details for the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

A Press release giving details of the principal items of revenue and expenditure and the more significant departures from the Budget is issued within a few days of the end of the financial year.

This is followed by a special *Government Gazette* giving details of transactions for the year in the same format as the quarterly statement, also with a comparison to the previous year.

Finally, full details of transactions of the year are published in the Public Accounts in conjunction with the Auditor General's Report on those accounts. These documents are also made available to the media and can be obtained by any member of the public from the Parliamentary Papers Office in the Superannuation Building, or through the Government Printer.

The Press frequently seek explanations and comments on the published accounts from the Treasury and this information is, of course, readily given.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

No Fault Insurance

2339. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

What action has the Government taken with a view to introducing no fault insurance in respect to personal injuries arising from motor vehicle accidents, and when?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The matter is being considered, but no action is currently proposed to introduce such a scheme.

STATE FINANCE: CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND

Annual Salaries and Wages Bill

2340. Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

What was the total annual salary wages bill paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year ended the 30th June, 1979, and what is the estimated total for the year ended the 30th June, 1980?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The total salaries and wages bill met directly from the Consolidated Revenue Fund is as follows:—

1978-79.....	$618.7 million
1979-80 Estimate..	$706.0 million

In addition, grants to statutory authorities, recoups of losses for business undertakings such as the Metropolitan Transport Trust, and subsidies to public hospitals contain a substantial element of salaries and wage costs.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Offices: Landlords and Rents

2341. Mr BERTRAM, to the Treasurer:

Will he provide a list of the names of landlords, the situation of premises, and the annual rental paid for Government offices for the year ended the 30th June, 1979 and the anticipated rental for the year ending the 30th June, 1980?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The information is being collated and I shall advise the member in writing when it is completed.

HEALTH: DRUGS

Laws

2342. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

(1) Did he see the recent report ascribed to the Minister for Police and Traffic in which he said: "W.A. drug laws already tough"?

(2) Does his Government share this view, and more particularly does it believe that the maximum penalty of $4 for the pushing of the drug nicotine through cigarettes is tough?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) So far as the first part of question 2 is concerned, the answer is "Yes". In fact Western Australia was a leader in legislating for higher penalties.

The second part is irrelevant to the matter referred to in part (1)

HEALTH: DRUGS

North-west Coast Surveillance

2343. Mr BERTRAM, to the Premier:

(1) Is it a fact that a short time ago two boatloads of Vietnamese refugees arrived at Broome direct from Vietnam?

(2) Is an aerial surveillance maintained of the north-west, coast amongst other things to detect vessels bringing drugs other than the drug nicotine into Western Australia?

(3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2)—

(a) did the aerial surveillance observe the two Vietnamese boats as they approached Broome;

(b) if "Yes", precisely where were the two boats situated when first observed;

(c) if "No", why?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

(1) to (3) This is a matter which falls within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Government, and I suggest that the member direct his inquiry to the appropriate Federal department.

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE

J. Doohan

2344. Dr TROY, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

(1) With regard to question 1350 of the 11th September, 1979, relevant to a psychiatric report concerning John Doohan of 21 Bartlett Street, Willagee, will he fully answer part (4) of question 1350, and explain the doctor's full reasons why the report was to be denied to John Doohan and those acting on his behalf?

(2) With regard to his answering of part (4) of question 1350, will he explain if the Workers' Compensation Act makes provision for the State Government Insurance Office to enter into an agreement with a doctor, in advance or contemporaneously with the initial supplying of a medical report, that the relevant worker and his representatives are to be denied a copy of that report under any circumstances?

(3) If there is such a provision, will he clearly explain it?

(4) Finally, will he advise the date that John Doohan was first advised by the State Government Insurance Office that a medical report pertaining to his workers' compensation claim was required?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) This information cannot be obtained from the doctor's report, as the report has been returned.

(2) and (3) There is no such provision in the Workers' Compensation Act.

(4) The 2nd December, 1974.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLE LICENCES

Stock-carting Trucks and Trailers

2345. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

(1) Will he please provide details of licensing concessions available to owners or operators of stock-carting trucks and trailers?

(2) What is the procedure to claim such concessions?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1) A licence fee of $10 is payable on a vehicle owned by a person carrying on the business of stock transporting providing that the tare weight of the vehicle exceeds 1 524 kilograms and it is used solely for the carriage of stock.

(2) By application to the Road Traffic Authority.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLES

Commuter Buses and Camper Vans

2346. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

(1) Will he please provide me with a copy of any rules or regulations used by the Road Traffic Authority covering the fitting of auxiliary fuel tanks to commuter buses or camper vans?

(2) What are the permit requirements for having such modifications carried out?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1) Yes. I seek leave to table a copy of the rules for auxiliary fuel tanks provided as tabled.

(2) Apart from passenger cars and passenger car derivatives where written application is required, vehicles must comply with the tabled rules and must be inspected after conversion.

All camper vans and commuter buses are inspected with all equipment (including long range fuel tanks) when first registered. If an auxiliary fuel tank is fitted after registration, the owner is obliged by Vehicle Standard Regulation 124(1) and (2) to present the vehicle for examination. With respect to passenger cars and passenger car derivatives, written application must be made for permission to fit auxiliary tanks.

The rules were tabled (see paper No. 489).

MARINE DEALERS AND COLLECTORS

Prescribed Areas

2347. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

(1) Further to his answers to question 1965 of 1979 concerning the rights of a holder of a marine dealer's licence, will he please specify the difference between a collector's licence and a marine dealer's licence?

(2) Does the Swan Brewery have the right to prescribe areas in which a collector may collect empty beer bottles?

(3) Is the holder of a collector's licence entitled to receive empty beer bottles in his bottleyard from people bringing them in, irrespective of where they reside?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

(1) Both licences are issued under the provisions of the Marine Stores Act.

Section 2 of the Act defines a collector as follows—

> "Collector" means any person engaged in collecting or carrying on the business of collecting marine stores of any kind;

and further defines a dealer as:—

> "Dealer" means any person other than a ship-chandler or ship-owner dealing in or buying and selling marine stores of any kind, whether such person deals in any other goods or not.

In essence, a marine collector's licence entitles the holder to collect bottles in any area. A marine dealer's licence entitles the holder to receive bottles from any person at the premises stipulated in his licence.

(2) No.

(3) No. A collector's licence does not entitle him to act as a dealer, and the Act prohibits the holding the both licences.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pensioners: Rebates

2348. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is there a time limit within which a pensioner ratepayer must pay his council rates in order to qualify for the 25 per cent rebate?

(2) If "Yes", will she please provide details of the time limit?

Mr Young (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) By the end of the financial year for which the rates have been imposed.

PAINT: SPRAYING

Damage to Adjacent Property

2349. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

What redress is available to the owner of a motor vehicle which, while parked legally in a kerbside parking place, was sprayed with paint drifting from a

nearby industrial premise where large tanks were being spray painted?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

If the vehicle is covered by a comprehensive insurance policy he should approach his insurer. In the event of its not being covered, it is suggested he seek legal advice.

EDUCATION: SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Landscaping

2350. Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

Whose responsibility is it to provide stakes for trees as part of a school landscaping contract?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Contract specifications require the contractor to provide stakes for all trees planted as part of a landscaping contract.

EDUCATION: SCHOOL

Waggrakine

2351. Mr CARR, to the Minister for Education:

What consideration, if any, has been given by either the Education Department or the Public Works Department to constructing some form of windbreak at the Waggrakine Primary School, Geraldton, to offer protection from the prevailing southerly winds?

Mr Old (for Mr P. V. JONES) replied:

Windbreaks in this area are usually provided by planting trees and shrubs; and the school will be asked to have their gardener undertake the work.

WATER SUPPLIES: GERALDTON

Consumption: Queries and Disputes

2352. Mr CARR, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Are records kept of the number of people who query or dispute the quantity of water metered to their residence in the Geraldton area?

(2) If "Yes", is the Minister able to provide a comparison of the number of such queries or disputes this year compared with previous years?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) No.
(2) Not applicable.

2353. The SPEAKER: As the member for Gosnells is currently under suspension, question 2353 is postponed.

Mr Davies: Unfairly under suspension.

TRAFFIC: MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

Surpluses: Shares

2354. Mr BERTRAM, to the Minister for Local Government:

(1) Is any person, firm or corporation entitled to share in any surpluses achieved by the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust?

(2) If "Yes", who are they and to what shares are they entitled?

Mr Young (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

(1) Section 3P (6) of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act provides that the trust may, in anticipation of a surplus remaining to the credit of any annual account, make a distribution to the participating approved insurers for the year to which the annual account relates, in accordance with each participating insurer's percentage interest in the fund for that year, but so that the total amount distributed by the trust shall not exceed five per centum of the amount of the premiums received for that year.

(2)

	per cent
State Government Insurance Office	70.727
Commercial Union Group	10.000
Sun Alliance Insurance Ltd.	5.500
R.A.C. Insurance Pty. Ltd.	5.000
Westralian Farmers Co-operative Ltd	5.000
Mercantile Mutual Insurance Co. Ltd	1.626
A.G.C. (Insurances) Ltd.	1.100

	per cent
Western Underwriters Pty. Ltd.	.500
FAI Insurance Group	.258
T & G Fire and General Ins. Co. Ltd.	.129
Palmdale Insurance Ltd.	.129
Legal and General Assurance Soc. Ltd	.031

HEALTH: NURSES

Community Health Services

2355. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

(1) Has the Royal Australian Nursing Federation made approaches to the Government through the Public Service Board to negotiate an acceptable award to cover nurses involved in community health, infant health, pre-school health, and school health areas?

(2) If "Yes", how long have the negotiations been conducted, and is there any inordinate delay?

(3) If there is any excessive delay in this matter, would he have the Public Service Board give urgent consideration to the matter so that this matter can be concluded in the interests of the nurses concerned?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) to (3) The answers to these questions are contained in the answers to question 2320.

2356. *This question was postponed.*

TOWN PLANNING

Prevelly Park

2357. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

What is the present position regarding the application made by the Margaret River Shire for a redevelopment of land adjacent to Prevelly Park that was submitted by Margaret River land holdings?

Mr Young (for Mrs CRAIG) replied:

Augusta-Margaret River Town Planning Scheme No. 13, Gnarabup, was granted preliminary approval in June 1979, and the advertising period closed on the 24th September, 1979. Submissions received are still being considered by council.

ABATTOIRS

Sheep: Slaughter under Islamic and Muslim Rites

2358. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Who are the contractors for the killing of sheep for the export market to Iran and other Muslim countries?

(2) Is there any supervision of the killing that ensures that animals are killed according to Muslim laws?

(3) If "Yes" to (2), who is the person appointed to ensure that animals killed for the Islamic Republic of Iran are killed according to Islamic law and who selected that person?

Mr OLD replied:

(1) to (3) With the object of ensuring that Islamic religious slaughtering procedures are correctly carried out, the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation recently appointed to its staff an Iranian religious representative to oversee such slaughtering procedures in Australian meatworks.

I understand that the person appointed, Hojatoleslam Mohammed Nakhai, has approved the Muslim slaughterers who carry out slaughtering procedures at export works in Western Australia.

CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Reserve No. 8434: Removal of Gravel

2359. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister for Conservation and the Environment:

(1) Is it a fact that gravel is being, or has been, removed from the north-east corner of Class "A" Reserve No. 8434?

(2) Would he have an officer immediately evaluate the area to see what damage to the environment will result, or has resulted, due to the removal of this gravel?

(3) If the environment is being affected, will he take steps to have the removal of the gravel from this area stopped immediately, and those responsible for its removal make good the area?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

(1) An inspection of the area has been made by a National Parks Authority ranger, who reports that gravel has been extracted from Reserve No. 8434.

(2) An officer of the Department of Conservation and Environment will inspect the area soon to assess the environmental significance of this activity.

(3) If there is environmental damage, a report will be submitted to the Under Secretary for Lands.

LAND: RESERVE

No. 8434

2360. Mr SKIDMORE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is it a fact that some person or persons have removed gravel or like material from Reserve No. 8434, which removal would appear to be contrary to the purposes for which this reserve is set aside?

(2) If gravel is being removed from the reserve, has his department given approval for the removal of such gravel, and, if so, when was the approval given?

(3) Would the Minister advise who controls this reserve?

(4) Where is the gravel being deposited, by whom, and for what purpose?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) Not to Lands Department knowledge. However it is understood that the area will be inspected by an officer from the Department of Conservation and Environment.

(2) Not applicable.

(3) Sussex locations 4171 and 4172 are vested in the Augusta Margaret River Tourist Bureau. Remainder of the reserve is not vested.

(4) Not known.

HOSPITAL

Kalgoorlie

2361. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Health:

(1) What capital expenditure is proposed for the Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital in the current financial year?

(2) What new development or redevelopment is proposed for the hospital in the next 12 months?

(3) In what area of the hospital campus will the development or redevelopment take place?

(4) Are any buildings at the hospital to be demolished; and if so, which ones?

Mr YOUNG replied:

(1) $200 000.

(2) New theatre block and central sterile supply department.

(3) and (4) General ward B and clinic building will be demolished to make way for new complex referred to above.