

I cannot help but feel that in times of economic hardship if costs are to be pruned, the first department to be affected will be the Department of Environmental Protection.

I congratulate the member for Morley on his research, and the matters he has raised in the House. By the same token I express the fear that as far as this Government is concerned, environmental protection is expendable, otherwise it would have supported the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Young.

*House adjourned at 10.21 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Thursday, the 5th September, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE

#### 1. MARGARINE

##### *Ingredients: Labelling*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

Do Western Australian labelling regulations for margarine require a precise statement of ingredients and whether animal or vegetable fats are used?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

Labelling regulations for margarine do not require a precise statement of all ingredients. However, table margarine must be composed of vegetable oils only.

Cooking margarine must contain over 90% of total animal fats and animal oils such as beef fat and/or mutton fat.

Manufacturing margarine must contain 75% to 90% of total animal fats and animal oils such as beef fat and/or mutton fat.

A statement to this effect must be printed on each package containing cooking or manufacturing margarine.

#### 2. MARGARINE

##### *Quota and Imports*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) What is the Western Australian quota for margarine manufacture?
- (2) What is the actual quantity manufactured in this State?

- (3) What quantity of margarine was imported into Western Australia from other States in the latest statistical period for which figures are available?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) The quota for table margarine is 1 423 tonnes. There is no quota for cooking or manufacturing margarine.
- (2) The quantity of table margarine produced in 1973 was 1 422.96 tonnes. No cooking or manufacturing margarine is produced.
- (3) 753 tonnes of table margarine in 1972-73 and 979 tonnes in 1971-72. 2 242 tonnes of cooking or manufacturing margarine was also imported in 1971-72. Figures for 1972-73 are not available.

### 3. FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES LEGISLATION

#### *TLC Meeting*

The Hon. V. J. Ferry for the Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Has a Cabinet Minister or any informed Government officer been invited to address the Trades and Labor Council on the 5th September at the meeting advertised as "Law of the Jackboot" on page 35 of *The West Australian* newspaper dated the 4th September, 1974?
- (2) (a) If so, who will be in attendance;
- (b) if the answer to (1) is "No" who will explain the amended Bill to the trade union representatives so that misinterpretations expressed by the Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council in the advertisement may be corrected?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) No, not to my knowledge.
- (2) (a) Answered by (1).
- (b) Presumably no-one. If only opponents of the Bill are invited and will be present, the meeting will be used to air only one-sided views and on past experience—having also regard to the advertisement to which the Hon. Member has referred—it will be a propaganda campaign—based on misrepresentation—

The Hon. R. Thompson: How do you know?

The PRESIDENT: It is hardly fair for the honourable member to interject whilst the Minister is answering a question.

The Hon. R. Thompson: But that is not right.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister did not get an opportunity to answer all the question before the interjection occurred, and I think that is unfair.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: To continue—  
—against the Government, and not a forum of objective discussion.

#### 4. WATER SUPPLIES *Catchment Areas*

The Hon. G. E. MASTERS, to the Minister for Justice:

In view of the concern expressed by a number of local authorities over the restriction of the public from large sections of the water catchment areas—

- (a) has the Water Purity Committee completed its report;
- (b) if so, will the local authorities concerned have the opportunity to discuss the matter before a final decision is made on restricted areas;
- (c) if the answer to (a) is "No" when is the final report expected by the Minister?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (a) No.
- (b) Answered by (a). However, the Committee is not aware of any expression of concern of a number of local authorities over the restriction of the public from sections of water catchment areas. It is suggested that the Hon. Member advise those local authorities that have approached him to submit in writing their cases for greater public access to the Committee, C/- Public Works Department, so that the submissions can be studied prior to the completion of the report.
- (c) This will be dependent upon the completion of further field inspections and report from a working group appointed by the Water Purity Committee.

#### 5. FUEL, ENERGY AND POWER RESOURCES LEGISLATION

##### *Law Society Opposition*

The Hon. S. J. Dellar for the Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Is the Minister for Fuel and Energy's opinion that the Western Australian Law Society is

politically motivated in its opposition to the Fuel, Energy and Power Resources Bill, supported by the Government?

- (2) If so, will the Minister—

- (a) advise the House on what grounds this opinion is based; and

- (b) what political party does the Society support?

- (3) If the answer to (1) is "No" will the Government call upon the Minister to make a public retraction of his remarks so far as they relate to the political motives of the Society?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) As the Minister's opinion is not what the Hon. Member suggests in question (1) the request to the Government for any retraction seems to lack any foundation.

#### 6. RAILWAYS *Derailments*

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Health:

Further to my question of the 3rd September, 1974, and the Minister's reply, will he advise how many of the 37 derailments, due to track conditions, occurred on track being maintained by private contractors as against that maintained by departmental labour?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

Not any section of permanent way is fully maintained by private contract. As a general rule the heavy work is performed by contract and the balance of maintenance work is performed by departmental labour.

Fifteen derailments occurred on track jointly maintained and twenty-two derailments occurred on track where the major portion of the maintenance work was carried out departmentally.

#### SALE OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### *Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and read a first time.

#### OFFICIAL PROSECUTIONS (DEFENDANTS' COSTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### *Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and passed.

## TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Third Reading

**THE HON. N. McNEILL** (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [2.39 p.m.]: I move—  
That the Bill be now read a third time.

**THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON** (North Metropolitan) [2.40 p.m.]: During the Committee stage I made a statement regarding the report of the committee of inquiry into the Corridor Plan for Perth. I said that the committee in its recommendations had proposed larger-sized allotments in some areas. I would not like members to think I deliberately misled them and so I must inform them that the report of the Honorary Royal Commission did not contain a recommendation of that nature.

However, this does not affect the main argument I was making at the time. During the Committee stage Mr Pratt referred to larger sized lots. The Royal Commission visited the hills district and I know I listened sympathetically to the proposals made there regarding larger lots on the outskirts of the town. Although I cannot speak for other members of the Commission, I believe they were also sympathetic.

In the 1928 debates on the original legislation it was proposed that the minimum size of a lot should be half an acre and Mr Nicholson, speaking at that time, painted a picture of the unsightly sprawl which was likely to develop if that proposal were adopted. Fortunately it was deleted from the provisions of the 1928 Bill, but this did not prevent subdivisions in what were predominantly rural areas bordering the then city and the initial suburbs from being divided into five and 10-acre lots. Some of the five-acre lots were even divided into 2½-acre lots.

This is the problem which faced planners following the rapid growth of the metropolitan region in the post-war years and quite a deal has been said about the matter. The fact that people concerned with planning have put a resolute face against subdivisions is understandable and Governments and Treasurers particularly have supported them, because the main problem is one of cost in providing the necessary facilities such as sewerage, electricity, water supplies, and so on, in the larger subdivisions.

In the past, development of the broad acres has been delayed, but now it is much easier to create a new subdivision over some hundreds or thousands of acres of land. However, we must be very careful that if we allow smaller subdivisions we do not experience problems which have faced us in the last several decades with the growth of the City of Perth. I think the Minister for Local Government and Town Planning mentioned this when he approved

the smaller subdivisions. In fact he said that people who went onto these larger-sized blocks would have to pay for the extension of services. The only difficulty experienced was that after they had agreed to do this and had bought the land and built a house, they faced problems in obtaining supplies of electricity and water and they then wanted the Government to pay for these services. When this happens we get right back to the situation which existed previously.

To return more specifically to the subject matter of the Bill, I would again ask the Minister to have a further think about its contents because I believe its provisions are unwise. There is no particular necessity to rush the Bill through today. It could be adjourned until next week and this would then enable it to be given further consideration. It is not as though the local authorities do not have a considerable amount of influence on planning. They are responsible for drawing up their own district schemes and it is then the duty of the Town Planning Board to examine the schemes submitted and recommend changes if deficiencies are evident. Consequently local authorities have a considerable influence on the planning within their districts. It would be no loss to them if the Government adopted the suggestion we have made.

It is not difficult to imagine that a member of the Town Planning Board who was appointed under the conditions proposed by the Government could be placed in an embarrassing situation. For instance, if he is a member of a local authority—which he is very likely to be—his own local authority could be having an argument with the Town Planning Department about a proposal which it believes is right but which, seen in a wider context, is considered to be undesirable, and that representative could be placed in an unenviable position. On the other hand, if the local authority he represents has gained a special privilege which other local authorities have not gained, conflict could arise between the local authorities or even within the Local Government Association because of the position that representative holds on the Town Planning Board and because he does not have the same independence as would a person appointed in the manner we have suggested.

I recall the previous Chairman of the MRPA (Mr Hamer) saying that when he was appointed he resigned from his position as Chairman of the Perth Road Board because he felt that in his new position he needed not only to be independent but also to be seen to be independent, and he carried his belief into effect. The present Chairman of the MRPA (Mr Nell Hawkins) has very often been criticised by his rate-payers because of his dual role. In the matter of appeals against the proposed

district scheme, we would say it is a case of appealing from Caesar to Caesar. That is the kind of situation that can arise.

I say, then, there are stronger reasons for accepting the amendment we have proposed rather than proceeding with the amendment put forward by the Government. In the terms of our suggested amendment, there is nothing to prevent the Minister asking the Local Government Association to submit a panel of three names to him from which he can accept a nominee. I believe that would satisfy the association and allow the representative to have a feeling of independence in his position on the Town Planning Board.

The PRESIDENT: I must point out to the honourable member that the amendment about which he has been speaking has been dealt with by the Committee. We are now discussing the third reading of the Bill.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Thank you, Mr President. I have not lost sight of that fact.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You could have fooled us.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: What I am leading up to is that the Minister should delay further progress on the Bill in order to consider again the suggestion we have made. If he believes on further study that our suggestion has the value which I and members of my party think it has, he could recommit the Bill for further consideration. It has not gone beyond the stage when that can be done and I think it is the most desirable course to follow. It is for this reason that I am speaking to the third reading.

Criticism has been made of the Town Planning Board and the delays in procedures. It is not a new criticism, and it was one of the matters investigated by the McCarrey Committee which in 1968 submitted a report entitled *Land Taxation and Land Prices in Western Australia*. On page 34 of that report, dealing with the subject of delays, it is stated—

4.53 Most organisations that made representations to the committee maintained that an important factor in preventing or delaying new land coming onto the market was the length of time taken to get official approval. They said that for any major subdivision it was necessary to allow a year and that cases of two years' delay were not uncommon. Even small subdivisions involving only a few blocks in an already well-developed and therefore clearly-defined area took many weeks.

4.54 When examined it is not uncommon to find that the delays resulted from a variety of factors, not all of which can be laid at the door of the responsible planning authorities.

In some cases negotiations between neighbouring owners for pooled subdivision-arrangements drag on for long periods; in others the subdivider battles for approval of a subdivision plan that serves the aim of maximum profit but that is not acceptable by agreed community standards. In short delays at any point in the long, complex process of converting land in broad acres into building lots, including those steps that are the clear responsibility of the subdivider such as arranging finance or earthworks, are blamed on the bureaucratic machine.

I simply quote that to illustrate that other factors can cause delays and they do not arise as a consequence of the arrangement of the Town Planning Board or the department. Before we rush into changing the existing arrangement we should take note of that.

It is very easy to pick on one matter that appears on the surface and say, "That is the matter which is causing the problem." I think that is the kind of thinking which has brought this Bill before us or which is causing some people to support it. It is not the board or the way the members are appointed that causes delays.

There is another report, by the Land and Housing Consultative Committee, on subdivision problems, which arose from recommendations in the McCarrey report that the procedures be examined. That report again makes similar statements to the effect that it is not the procedures of the department which are at fault but there are other factors to be considered.

That is the matter I am bringing to the Minister's attention—that he give a little further consideration to what we propose. It will not do any harm to delay the matter until next week in order to examine a little more carefully what the Government has proposed to see whether on further consideration it can agree to our proposal, in which case the Bill could be recommitted.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. V. J. Ferry.

## DAYLIGHT SAVING BILL

### Report

Report of Committee adopted.

## TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [3.01 p.m.]: This Traffic Act Amendment Bill is one which proposes in the true sense five amendments of any consequence to the Act. In the first amendment it seeks to increase vehicle license fees by an average of something like 65 per cent. The second amendment proposes to increase drivers'

license fees from \$3 to \$5, while the third increases license transfer fees from \$3 to \$4 and the fourth introduces a recording fee of \$4. The Bill also seeks to change the formula from a tare-weight to a power-weight principle.

At this stage I should say that the question of dealers' plates is not in the Act—at least not to the best of my knowledge. I should imagine, however, that we can expect an amending Bill within the next week or two to ensure that all facets of license fees and registrations have been increased.

I say this because the Government has been particularly vicious in the increases it has brought down. It has claimed it is necessary for it to bring down these taxing measures which will, for this financial year, recoup to the Government something like \$8.1 million, and for the full financial year it will recoup \$10.9 million.

As I have said the Government claims it is necessary to bring these measures forward for the purpose of meeting the shortfall in the Commonwealth funds and to meet the inflationary trends that have been created, and blamed on the Commonwealth Government. I would suggest to the Minister that he look at the Liberal Party policy speech and see what was said at that time by the Leader of the Opposition on the question of inflation. He said—

It will be argued that a State Government may do nothing to offset the damage of the Federal mismanagement of the economy. That is not so. Inflation can be beaten to a substantial degree State by State. The simple answer, and the only answer, there has ever been is to beat the charges that are driving up the prices.

Of course now we have the argument that we have virtually the same amount of money to spend on roads as was provided in previous years. There have been some grants to local authorities and yet we see that the motorist is to be taxed to the limit. As I progress I will supply the taxing figures from all over Australia.

When we consider the rise in the vehicle transfer fee from \$2 to \$3 there is little doubt that it is hardly warranted, because the amount of work that is required in this respect does not amount to \$3, as it is carried out on a dual form which is necessary to transfer a vehicle, and the processing of that would not take more than two minutes. The fee is to rise by 50 per cent which is completely unwarranted. Drivers' license fees are to be increased from \$3 to \$5. The same reasons have been given; that figures supplied in relation to license fees are more costly in the other States. I will, of course, prove that to be quite wrong, particularly in one of the States that has been mentioned in the Minister's speech.

When we consider the question of the increase in drivers' license fees for pensioners we find it is rather a vicious increase. The Labor Government introduced a measure to allow pensioners a rebate of \$2, and they were only called on to pay \$1 for a license. If we look at the Minister's notes we will find he does tell us the truth, and to a casual observer it would appear that the pensioner will still retain the rebate he has been given. The Minister's notes state that the usual \$2 rebate will be given to the pensioners. It should be spelt out quite clearly that the pensioner will now pay \$3 for his license fee.

So though the Minister did not mislead the House—and I am not accusing him of that—his statement was to say the least most confusing. I asked several people for their interpretation of this aspect and they replied that from a reading of the notes they considered the pensioner would still only pay \$1. But that is not a fact; the fact is that the pensioners' drivers' licenses will now cost \$3 instead of \$5 which is a rise of over 200 per cent on what they originally paid.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: You will admit, however, that they are getting the usual rebate of \$2.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I said the Minister had not misled the House, but I feel that his notes, which I accept, are rather confusing, and it would appear the pensioners will continue to receive a \$2 concession, but they would need to look at the Act or the schedule to the Act to discover they will now be paying \$3 instead of \$1, which was instituted by the previous Government.

The Minister said that the usual concessions will apply—that is, the 50 per cent concession which is covered by section 11 of the Act—for one vehicle on a farm. The concession is also to apply to prospectors, beekeepers, and kangaroo hunters.

Members will observe I have had an amendment placed on the notice paper to make the same sort of provision available for pensioners throughout Western Australia. I think this is only right and proper. Today I had lunch with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in this Parliament and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from the South Australian Parliament who up till a few moments ago was sitting in the President's gallery.

I asked him whether South Australia had made concessions to pensioners and he replied that they had made a 50 per cent concession. I then asked him what was the total increase in fees in South Australia and he replied that the registration fees had increased by 25 per cent, which coincided with the information I had been given. Also, pensioners in that State enjoy a rebate of \$1 on their drivers'

licenses. Drivers' license fees in that State have increased from \$3 to \$4, compared with the increase in Western Australia of \$2, making the new drivers' license fee \$5 per annum.

Although there has been a lot of ballyhoo in the newspapers about the condemnation of the Federal Government by all State Premiers, Labor and non-Labor, who are reportedly critical of the Federal Government's allocation of funds to the States, the strange thing is that I have been advised that South Australia will balance its Budget which was introduced into the South Australian Parliament last week. Yet we in Western Australia find that we must increase motor vehicle license fees by some 65 per cent as against their increase of 25 per cent.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: We will not know until the end of the year whether or not South Australia was successful in balancing its Budget.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Of course, South Australia has a very capable Premier.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: I guessed that would be your answer.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Even people of different political parties—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And *Rydge's* business journal.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —agree that he is one of the most capable Premiers Australia has ever seen. He is acknowledged as such throughout Australia, not just in South Australia.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: The test will be at the end of the year.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Well, Mr Dunstan has been Premier for some years and the progress he has brought about in that State through his astuteness and his experience has made it possible for him to introduce these necessary restraints. However, at all times, he will continue within that State a policy of progress and full employment.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: Do you really think he will be there as long as Tom Playford?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I think he will be there longer than Tom Playford; the last voting figures in South Australia prove that.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: They gerrymandered that one.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member talks about South Australia being gerrymandered. That situation has existed for something like 30 years. If he really wants to get me wound up on something, just let him raise a subject like that.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the honourable member will not pursue that subject.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have no intention of pursuing it, Mr President, and I think the interjection was highly disorderly.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member should remember that all interjections are highly disorderly.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, Mr President, I have heard that statement before but, over the years, I do not think much notice has been taken of it. I have no objection to the Government removing the tare-weight system of registration and replacing it with the power-weight principle.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: We have won one point, anyhow.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This will bring Australia into line with the licensing system which applies in other countries and will make for uniformity and a better understanding of the system, generally. Some people did not want me to say that I agreed with this proposal. The owner of a Ford Fairlane is not going to be very happy with having his license fee increased by some 113 per cent. But, generally, it will bring the licensing system into line with that applying elsewhere.

My main objection relates to the system of licensing commercial vehicles and the defining of a vehicle as "commercial". I would imagine that people who live in country areas, and also a number of those who live in the metropolitan region, would agree with my contention in this respect. Under this Bill, a commercial vehicle could be a Landrover or any other four-wheel drive vehicle and it could also be a utility or a van. Over the years, many people have owned utilities and vans for private purposes. These are not used commercially and provision should be made to enable such people to pay the normal private registration fee. Many people own utilities for the purpose of private running; some tow caravans or boats with their utilities, for their own private enjoyment; while other people use utilities where it may be necessary for them to drive over sand tracks or to do some sort of bush work, such as gathering wood.

I can also cite the case of people who work on the main roads and who by virtue of their employment must move from place to place and live in tents or caravans. We find that, in the main, these people own heavy duty vehicles in order that they may tow their place of residence from place to place. In the main, it can be accepted that these vehicles are used for no other purpose but that. Yet, no concession will be provided them; they will be required to pay the full commercial rates. This is a quite unjust situation and I hope the Minister will have the schedule altered so that people who use commercial vehicles

for private purposes can enjoy the same registration fee as that applying to other private motorists.

We have often heard the statement—it rings hollow now—that this Government will put things right.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It has put things right up.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, it has put things right up. That was a very good interjection because since the 6th April, when the Government was sworn into office, many increases have occurred. Fares and freights have risen by 30 per cent; cartage rates have increased by 34.9 per cent; water rates have gone up by 11.1 per cent and sewerage rates by 25.8 per cent, a total increase for water and sewerage of almost 37 per cent; interstate rail freight rates have increased by 10 per cent; driver's license fees are to increase by 66 per cent; State Housing Commission rentals have increased by \$1 to a maximum of \$3.45 a week—although I should qualify that statement by saying that it does not apply to all tenants, because some tenants on lower incomes do not pay that amount; electricity rates have risen by 14.2 per cent; natural gas rates have gone up by 10 per cent and manufactured gas by 17 per cent; pay-roll tax, which we dealt with last week, will rise from 4.5 per cent to 5 per cent; car insurance rates have increased by 25 per cent; and, now, motor registration fees are to rise by 65 per cent.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Do not forget State battery charges.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am reminded of one increase I do not have on my list; namely, State battery charges which apply to the people in the mining areas, many of whom have been applauded so often in this House for their acumen and development in the prospecting and mining industries. These people are also to be slugged by the Government. We have listened this year to many sob stories which have been put forward with a great deal of emotion concerning the steep increases in rates and charges generally which have been imposed upon country people.

This Bill will indicate to members who have made such statements whether or not it is a sob story. If they are genuine and honest they will participate in the debate on the proposed increases in license fees that will be foisted on country people. This is where we will test the sincerity of members who claim they represent the people living in country areas.

Firstly, let us see what will be the impost on a person who lives in a country town. The great majority of the country towns do not have the advantage of a public transport system. While we were the Government some questions were asked by Mr Withers in this House, as to whether a

transport system would be introduced in the Dampier, Roebourne, and the Karratha area. He might have extended his question to take in Tom Price and Paraburdoo. There is no public transport system in that area, and I doubt whether the State will ever be in a position to provide one. The position applies to virtually every other country town in this State.

The people in these areas do not always live in the towns; some of them live some distance out. Such people include those in the lower-income bracket, working for the railways or serving the farming community. They also include pensioners.

The Hon. T. O. Perry: Some farmers are worse off than pensioners.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would like the honourable member to make a speech on that point. If he votes against an amendment which I propose to move in the Committee stage we will know that he is prepared to perpetuate the 50 per cent concession in the license fee on the first vehicle owned by a farmer, but at the same time he will discriminate against the pensioners in the electorates which he and other Country Party members represent. I should point out that it is just as essential for pensioners in country areas as it is for farmers to own vehicles, because of the lack of a public transport system in the great majority of the rural, mining, and pastoral areas.

There are 2 000 pensioners living north of the 26th parallel, and it is estimated that a large number of them own vehicles. For that reason it is necessary for us to provide some easing of the high charges. These people cannot increase their income; they are on a fixed income. They cannot make representations to the Industrial Commission, or through their union for an increase in the pension. At all times they are at the whim of the Australian Government. Although it can be said that the Australian Government has granted large increases in social security benefits, these are still not high enough.

In his second reading speech the Minister claimed that inflation was the cause of these increases. If that is the case the Government should be genuine and not mealy-mouthed. If inflation is the cause of such increases the pensioners and people in the lower income bracket cannot then afford to meet the increases.

For that reason I say the concession which applies in South Australia, where a 50 per cent rebate in the license fee on motor vehicles is granted to pensioners, should be applied in Western Australia. I hope that in the Committee stage, members who have contended that this is a true House of Review will act accordingly and truly review this legislation, so as to ensure that people on fixed incomes which are derived from benefits paid under the Social Security Act will receive some form of justice.

I now refer to a table of figures which sets out the license fees paid in the various States of Australia. These are my calculations; and if my mathematics are not as good as they should be, then I must take the blame.

I turn firstly to the Falcon XB250, commonly known as the Falcon 500. In Western Australia the old rate was \$31, and the new rate is to be \$52.97. This represents an increase of 70 per cent. For the same vehicle in New South Wales the license fee is \$41; in Victoria it is \$35.30; and in South Australia under the old rate it was \$37.40.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Is there a registration fee in South Australia?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There is no registration fee in that State.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Are you sure of that?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Today I had lunch with the Speaker of the South Australian Parliament, and he told me that no registration fee is payable in South Australia.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You have improved on your colleagues.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I verified this matter when I had lunch with the Speaker of the South Australian Parliament. To continue with the rates, in South Australia the old rate for a Falcon 500 was \$37.40, and the new rate is \$46.75. This is \$6.22 less than the fee being charged in Western Australia.

In Queensland the license fee for a Falcon 500 is \$41; and in Tasmania it is \$35.78.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Can you give us the pending increases in New South Wales and Victoria?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: According to the information supplied by the Minister in another place it is evident the motor vehicle license fees will be increased. The other States have announced they would need to consider increasing the fees, although the actual increases have not been stated definitely. It is presumed the license fees will rise. According to my information no Bills of this nature have been introduced in the other States; the only States that have introduced such legislation are South Australia and Western Australia. I am informed that there will be increases in the order of some 60 per cent.

In the case of the Cortina 1600 TC, the old rate in Western Australia was \$20, and the new rate will be \$32.22; this represents an increase of 69 per cent. In New South Wales the license fee is \$31.85; in Victoria it is \$20.30; and in South Australia the old rate was \$19.90, and the new rate is \$24.88; this is \$7.34 less than the figure

for Western Australia. The license fee for such a vehicle in Queensland is \$24.10; and in Tasmania \$22.78.

The old rate in Western Australia for the Holden 173 HQ was \$30 and the new rate will be \$49.65, an increase of 66 per cent. The fee in New South Wales is \$39.50; in Victoria it is \$32.90; and the old rate in South Australia was \$33.90. The new rate in that State is \$42.35, which is \$7.27 less than the new fee in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$37.75, and in Tasmania it is \$32.18.

The license fee in Western Australia for a Holden 202 HQ is \$30, and that will increase to \$51.31, an increase of 73 per cent. The fee in New South Wales is currently \$39.50 and in Victoria it is \$34.10. The old rate in South Australia was \$39.40 and the new rate is \$49.25, which is \$2.06 less than the fee in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$39.05, and in Tasmania it is \$34.22.

The old license fee in Western Australia for a Premier V8 253 HQ was \$32, and it will increase to \$62.10. I think a typographical error has occurred there because to give an increase of 72 per cent the first figure would have to be wrong.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: The new rate is probably \$52.10 instead of \$62.10 as appears in the table of figures.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The fee for the Holden Premier in New South Wales is \$41.50, and in Victoria it is \$41.90. The old rate in South Australia was \$44.40 and the new rate is \$54.50, which is \$7.60 less than that proposed in Western Australia.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That will not be the increase if the original figure of \$62.10 should have been \$52.10. The honourable member said that something was wrong with that figure.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, I said that the first figure, \$32, was wrong. The fee in South Australia will be \$7.60 less than that paid in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland, for the Holden Premier, is \$47.50 and in Tasmania it is \$40.98. However, there has been no mention of Queensland or Tasmania increasing their license fees.

The fee for the Torana 4 cylinder LC 70 was \$24 and the new rate will be \$30.56. This is one of the privilege class vehicles mentioned by the Minister during his second reading speech and it will only bear an increase of 29 per cent. The license fee in New South Wales for the same vehicle is \$30.80, and in Victoria it is \$18.60. The old rate in South Australia was \$19.90 and the new rate is \$24.85, which is \$5.68 less than the fee which will be charged in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$22.80, and in Tasmania it is \$21.22.

I was unable to obtain the old rate for the Valiant Charger, but the new rate for Western Australia will be \$49.65. The fee



in New South Wales is \$40, and in Victoria it is \$33.50. The old rate in South Australia was \$37.40 and that will increase to \$46.73, which is \$2.92 less than the fee to be charged in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$38.40, and in Tasmania it is \$34.22.

The new rate for the Valiant Ranger in Western Australia will be \$50.48. In New South Wales the fee is \$41, and in Victoria it is \$34.70. The old rate in South Australia was \$37.40 and the new rate will be \$46.75, which is \$3.73 less than the new rate for Western Australia. The rate in Queensland is \$39.05, and in Tasmania it is \$34.22.

The old rate in Western Australia for the Datsun 1200 was \$15, and that will increase by 80 per cent to \$26.41. The fee in New South Wales is \$26.25, and in Victoria it is \$16.10. The old rate in South Australia was \$16.40, and the new rate will be \$20.50, which is \$5.91 less than the new rate for Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$19.55, and in Tasmania it is \$18.62.

The old rate for the Datsun 180B, in Western Australia, was \$22 and the new rate will be \$34.71, an increase of 59 per cent. The rate in New South Wales is \$33.85, and in Victoria it is \$22.10. The old rate in South Australia was \$23.40 and that has increased to \$29.25, which is \$5.46 less than vehicle owners will have to pay for registration fees in Western Australia. The rate in Queensland is \$26.70, and in Tasmania it is \$24.86.

The old rate for a Toyota Corona 1600, in Western Australia was \$20 and that will increase to \$32.22, an increase of 65 per cent. The fee in New South Wales is \$31.85, and in Victoria it is \$20.30. The old rate in South Australia was \$19.90, and that has been increased to \$24.18, which is \$8.04 less than what the Western Australian motorist will pay. The fee in Queensland is \$24.10, and in Tasmania it is \$22.78.

For a Toyota Corolla, the old rate was \$16 in Western Australia and that will increase to \$27.24, an increase of 68 per cent. In New South Wales the fee is \$27.25, and in Victoria it is \$17.30. The old rate in South Australia was \$16.40 and the new rate is \$20.50, which is \$6.74 less than the proposed increase in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$20.85, and in Tasmania it is \$19.66.

I now go on to the Leyland group, and the old rate in Western Australia for a Mini was \$14. The new rate will be \$23.09, an increase of 71 per cent. In New South Wales the fee is \$25.25, and in Victoria it is \$13.70. The old rate in South Australia was \$12.90 and the new rate will be \$16.13, which is \$6.96 less than what motorists will pay in Western Australia. The fee in Queensland is \$16.95, and in Tasmania it is \$17.06.

The old rate for a Mazda 808 in Western Australia was \$20 and the new rate will be \$28.90. That is an increase of 45

per cent. The fee in New South Wales is \$31, and in Victoria it is \$17.90. The old rate in South Australia was \$16.40 and the new rate is \$20.50, which is \$8.40 less than what Western Australians will pay. The fee in Queensland is \$21.50, and in Tasmania it is \$20.70.

I have given the Minister a copy of this table. It carries the following final notation—

N.B. 1. Above figures include registration fees as follows:  
N.S.W. \$6.00; W.A. \$4.00;  
TAS. \$5.00.

2. Other States have announced that they will need to consider increases in fees.

Of course, all we have heard is that South Australia has increased its fees and there is some likelihood that Victoria and New South Wales may follow suit. There has been no word that Tasmania or Queensland will increase fees.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: What is the significance of all the statistics you have given us?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The significance is that if the South Australian Government can come out with a balanced budget without these steep increases—and it claims that it has—why should we have them in Western Australia? It is more essential in a State the size of Western Australia—which is one million square miles—for people to use motor vehicles. We should not hit our motorists with this steep increase.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: You have missed the one significant point in the statistics; you must take the number of vehicles per mile of road. Compared with say, Victoria and New South Wales, we have far fewer vehicles from which to collect revenue, and about twice the miles of road.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I do not think the honourable member has to teach his grandmother to suck eggs! I mentioned that there are one million square miles in Western Australia.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: Yes you did.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: And that we have a lower population per square mile than any other State in the Commonwealth. I know that, and I think everyone in this Chamber knows that. We know we have more road miles, but we also know it is more essential for Western Australians to have motorcars. People rely heavily on motor transport, particularly in the rural and outback areas.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: That is why this measure is necessary—to help us build country roads.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is the point Mr Williams was making.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: That is what I said, he does not have to teach anyone that—it goes without saying. We are conscious of the needs of our State but we are also conscious of the fact that pensioners and lower income workers should not be hit with such a steep impost.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: But if we had another million vehicles, we could halve those figures—that is my point.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No, once these go up they will stay up, and the honourable members know that—we never see any reductions.

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: You missed my point.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The attitude of the Government has been to slug the taxpayer—in this case, the motorist—

The Hon. R. J. L. Williams: You missed my point.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: He does not want to hear.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: —to the maximum, mainly in an endeavour to finance some of its extravagant election policies.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I can assure you not one penny of the revenue from this measure will go into what you call extravagant election policies.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I can read the Bill just as well as the Minister can read it. The Bill and the parent Act specifically state that the money will be paid into the fund.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: How much of that money will go back into country roads, can you tell me?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: There is an equalisation of the funds on a needs basis. I do not deny the need for the construction of more country roads.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: If we do not get money from the Main Roads Department for the shires, where else would we get it?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Where else would we get it?

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: The Commonwealth will not give it.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: The Commonwealth has cut it out.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Government is taxing for more than its needs at the present time.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: I wish you were right!

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: This is my argument—the Government does not need this amount of money.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That is what you think.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: How else would we manage the upkeep of the shires?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Government does not need this money at the present time. I believe Mr Gayfer will agree with me when I say that economies could be effected in the Main Roads Department and also in some of the local authorities.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Such as reduction of staff, something like that?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not say that at all.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What other economies can be made?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: We do not see the same professionalism in road-making as we see in other areas.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Are you saying that the workers laying the roads are incompetent?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I said in the professional area.

*Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.05 p.m.*

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The surprising aspect of this taxing measure is that whenever the Australian Government has been forced to make an increase or to cut back a subsidy, it has come under the severest of criticism in this Chamber; yet we find before us one of the most vicious increases in taxation I have experienced in the many years I have been in this House. The average increase is 65 per cent, and this is in one taxing Bill only. This increase is to be imposed upon people who can ill afford to meet it.

I refer now to *The West Australian* of the 31st July, 1974, wherein an article appeared under the heading, "Plan to cut pensioner fees". The article states—

The Minister for Transport, Mr O'Connor, is investigating possibilities of pensioner exemption from proposed increases in vehicle licensing fees.

Mr O'Connor said he had been approached by the WA division of the Australian Pensioners' League and several members of Parliament for pensioner relief from increased charges.

There were some difficulties in giving pensioners special exemptions. They involved road costs and proposed expenditure under the present budget.

Mr T. J. Kannis of the Pensioners' League, said that about 10 000 pensioners in WA owned and drove cars.

Few would use their vehicles for more than shopping or visiting purposes.

The burden of increased registration or licensing fees would deprive many of these people of their cars.

Most pensioners had a struggle to keep their vehicles on the road and increased costs would make it impossible for many to own a car.

Mr Kannis, the Commonwealth liaison officer for all pensioner organisations in Australia, will visit other States next week to make similar submissions to governments.

I have already informed the House of the advice I received today from South Australia saying that State gives a rebate of 50 per cent to pensioners. I do not doubt Mr Kannis's word; and I know that you, Mr President, would not doubt him because you know him personally and you know him to be an honest man who is trusted not only in Western Australia but throughout Australia. I have never known him to fly a kite. When I was Minister for Community Welfare I listened carefully to every submission he made to me, knowing I was being told the full truth without any half-truths. I think, Mr President, you would agree with what I am saying.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: No-one has cast any doubts upon his integrity.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am not saying anyone has. Had the Minister waited a few minutes before interjecting he would have given me the opportunity to go on to say that when Mr Kannis makes a statement he does so after carrying out the necessary research; and he would know more than most about the plight of pensioners who must rely on private vehicles for transport and other purposes.

It could be argued by the Minister that invalid pensioners at present receive a rebate on vehicle licensing fees, and that is true. But that is not mentioned anywhere in the Act; it is done under a provision which enables the Minister to exercise his prerogative. Pensioners' drivers' licenses are specifically mentioned in the Act as far as the rebate is concerned.

Would we be doing a service to anybody—or even to the State—if we did not grant a concession to pensioners? If it is good enough to grant concessions to people who earn their living from their vehicles and to people who must have a vehicle—although I would suggest many of them enjoy a far higher standard of living than pensioners; I refer to kangaroo shooters, beekeepers, and farmers—then I think it is also fair enough that pensioners should receive a rebate. I think it is fair and just that people who must have a vehicle should receive a rebate; but if the full impost of this increase is placed upon pensioners, then I think Mr Kannis's remark that many people will not be able to afford to have a motor vehicle will be proved to be correct. Instead of the State collecting the revenue it expects to collect from these people, they will be forced to dispose of their cars and to utilise the public transport system.

Those pensioners who live outside the metropolitan area and in places where no public transport is available would be placed at a very great disadvantage.

I believe that rather than deal hastily with this Bill in an endeavour to get rid of it as quickly as possible my proposed amendment should be considered in depth. If my amendment does not meet the requirements of the Minister, I have no objection to its being altered in such a way as to make it fit tidily into the Bill. The Parliamentary Draftsman drew up the amendment. I told him what was required and, after investigation, he came up with what he considered to be the correct wording and the correct place for the amendment to be inserted into the Bill if it is accepted.

The PRESIDENT: You can talk about that in more detail in the Committee stage.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Most definitely, Sir. I just make the point that we would be doing a disservice firstly to the State, and secondly to the pensioners, if consideration is not given to my proposal. On Wednesday, the 31st July—the same day that the newspaper article to which I referred appeared in *The West Australian*—Mr Tom Jones asked the following question of the Minister for Transport in another place—

- (1) Was the Minister correctly reported in *The West Australian* of today's date, where he was quoted as saying he is investigating possibilities of pensioner exemption from proposed increases in motor vehicle license fees?

The Minister replied, "Yes." The second part of the question was as follows—

- (2) If the answer is "Yes", will he please explain why he informed me by letter dated the 22nd July, 1974, following a submission I made on behalf of pensioners in connection with the matter, that he cannot extend concessions to aged pensioners?

To that question the Minister replied—

- (2) Subsequent to the letter referred to, Cabinet has set up a committee to investigate whether some special action can be taken to assist pensioners with the payment of vehicle license fees.

The question I would like the Minister to answer when he replies to the debate is: What are the findings of that Cabinet sub-committee? It has had the whole of the month of August and part of the month of September to investigate the matter; and probably it was appointed before the end of July. So it is reasonable now to ask for its findings. There is no indication in the Minister's second reading speech of anything concerning this matter, apart from the passage I quoted previously which is to the effect that the concession fee for pensioners' drivers' licenses shall remain at \$2. That is not a concession at all; it is an increase of some 200 per cent.

I hope that, when I receive a reply, a concession will be granted to pensioners. When we reach the Committee stage of the Bill I will spend some time discussing the eligibility of people in obtaining fringe benefits under both the Commonwealth Repatriation Act and the Social Services Act. Strangely enough, in the State sphere, such matters come under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Community Welfare who happens to be the Minister in charge of the Bill in this House. I know that the introduction of free pensioner travel, and the granting to pensioners of one free trip a year to country centres, was greeted with great acclaim by the pensioners, because I happened to be the Minister for Community Welfare at that time. In my view they were given the consideration they so rightly deserve.

I close on that note, hoping that at least we will hear from some members who represent the farming community; that they will stand up and justify the increases that will occur under this legislation. The view seems to be that because it has been introduced by the State Government it must be right. However I do not think it is right. I think the Government should do more homework and effect some further economies. A cut-back should be made in the more expensive road-making undertakings and more accent should be placed on labour-intensive sectors of road works and, wherever possible, economies should be made.

The remarks made by the Premier in appealing to the Australian Government to reduce its expenditure and to introduce economies in the field of operations sound very hollow when he accuses the Australian Government of forcing him to increase taxes on the scale provided in this measure.

In view of the limited numbers the Labor Party has in this House there is little we can do to defeat this Bill. If it were possible, I would attempt to defeat it, because I think it is unjust. I am not saying that there should not be any increases in some taxes, but if South Australia can get by with a 25 per cent increase in this tax, then we should. Further, we do not know of any other State in the Commonwealth that is imposing an increase in vehicle license fees as great as that which is sought under this Bill. Therefore I will leave further discussion on the Bill until the Committee stage.

**THE HON. V. J. FERRY** (South-West) [4.19 p.m.]: Unfortunately the necessity for the introduction of this Bill is that funds are required for road purposes. Whatever might be said to the contrary it is evident that the provisions of the new Federal Aid Roads Act are gravely deficient in providing Commonwealth funds for rural local roads and also for rural arterial roads in Western Australia. As a result of

the cut-back in the funds that are being made available from the Commonwealth Government, we find ourselves debating this Bill.

Under the new Federal Aid Roads Act greater emphasis has been placed on providing funds for national highways and urban and arterial roads, as distinct from roads in country districts. It is recognised, of course, that national highways and urban and arterial roads require a great deal of money for upgrading and for new construction in order to meet the modern needs of motor vehicles in Australia today.

I have been challenged indirectly by Mr Thompson to speak on behalf of people in the country. I am always proud and happy to do that. I am extremely disturbed to find that country people, once again, together with others, are being asked to carry the burden for providing additional funds to meet road requirements in rural districts. As Mr Thompson has correctly pointed out, Western Australia, representing almost one-third of the total land mass of Australia, has special difficulties in meeting this great challenge. Therefore it is particularly disturbing to find that the funds for road purposes in this State have been increased by approximately 33½ per cent. This represents about \$9 million. The figure may be a little less in this financial year, but it will be something in excess of \$10 million for a full year.

Under the Bill the average increase in vehicle license fees will be approximately 65 per cent. It may be considered that that is a fairly substantial increase on a percentage basis. However it must be acknowledged that this is the first increase in vehicle license fees in nine years because it was in 1965 that these fees were last increased and, bearing in mind the the present galloping rate of inflation, an increase of 65 per cent becomes rather insignificant when making comparisons.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You will not convince many people with that argument.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: The honourable member is convinced that there is no inflation in Australia and he would be the only one that holds that view.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I did not say that at all.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: On the information supplied to me, New South Wales and Victoria are about to increase the license fees in those States by approximately 60 per cent. Therefore the people in New South Wales and Victoria will be paying increases comparable with the increases proposed under this legislation. Further, my information is that in South Australia there will be a percentage increase—I am not sure of the exact figure—as from the 1st October, so even that State finds itself in the same predicament as Western Australia.

Country people, of course, need roads. I suppose in Western Australia there would not be any more vital need because, to meet our transport needs and to service the people in whatever sphere they may be engaged, we must have roads.

Bearing in mind that the purpose of this legislation, in the main, is to provide supplementary funds in the absence of funds that were expected from Commonwealth sources, we find that country people, once again, are being asked to indulge in some self-help. It is not unusual for people in country districts to engage themselves in self-help projects. They are accustomed to using their initiative to overcome adversity and difficulties in all kinds of situations.

As one who represents a country district, although I do not appreciate the increases that are necessary, I have no doubt that in view of the importance of servicing our roads, country people, together with urban dwellers, will, in all reasonableness, accept the situation that they cannot have the best of both worlds; if they are to have roads there must be funds to pay for them. Therefore I have no hesitation in saying that the country people will accept these increases—not willingly, of course—because they are being imposed in their particular interest and in the national interest to ensure that we have serviceable roads throughout the State.

Knowing them as I do, I believe that many country people today are keenly aware that the Commonwealth Government is selling them short on this particular issue, as it has done on so many other matters. During his speech Mr Thompson made particular play on the fact that the present Commonwealth Government has made some remarkable increases in social security benefits. I think those were the words he used. However I do not think the country people will agree that the Commonwealth Government is treating them remarkably well when the State is obliged to increase vehicle license fees under this particular piece of legislation. I think their views would be quite to the contrary.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The Commonwealth Government has given northern roads a low priority.

The Hon. V. J. FERRY: Mr Withers has just referred to priority. In this regard I am very much aware that local authorities—no matter in which part of the State they serve—are keenly conscious of priorities in trying, with responsibility, to meet the particular needs of their respective areas. Although no-one can disagree with the principle that economies should be effected in road maintenance and construction, I still believe that local people, with years of experience and expertise, are more likely to exercise care in the expenditure of funds for road purposes than somebody sitting in Canberra 2 000 miles away.

Therefore, on the issue of priorities, one can do no better than to request people in local situations to review their special needs as they see fit. I do not believe that any Commonwealth Government, no matter to which political party it belongs, is the best authority to decide how funds shall be disbursed for the maintenance and construction of rural roads. When one considers what a mess has been made of the Australian Assistance Plan, following the great promises that were made, and the resultant fiasco, then, if this is an example of prudence in expenditure I do not believe it is a very sound one.

Although no-one wants to see increases in fees or taxes at any stage, and no Government or individual member of Parliament has any desire to advocate such increases, I have no hesitation in supporting this legislation because if we are to manage the affairs of the State in a responsible manner the increases have to be imposed. When dealing with roads and the programming of road works one is conscious of not only future road construction, but also of the commitments that have already been made on the road works in hand and in the programmes that have been drawn up for future planning. In such circumstances the responsible authorities, in drawing up such plans to engage their work force, have committed themselves to a certain figure of expenditure. Therefore I do not believe we have any difficulty in supporting this Bill provided we are responsible for looking after our own affairs in Western Australia.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health).

## TEACHER EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central—Minister for Health) [4.30 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to amend the Teacher Education Act, 1972.

It has three principal aims, first, to amend the constitution of the Council of the Western Australian Teacher Education Authority; second, to provide for the recognition of staff and student associations within the constituent colleges; and third, to allow the constituent colleges to invest money, not immediately required, in authorised trustee investments.

It is my intention to deal with each of these separately and in the order just given.

The Teacher Education Act arose largely from a report of the Western Australian Tertiary Education Commission on the future of the teachers' colleges transmitted to the then Minister for Education on the 4th July, 1972.

In suggesting the composition of the council of the proposed Western Australian Teacher Education Authority the report made a point of representation of employers, both Government and non-Government; teachers in schools, Government and non-Government; principals, students and staff of the colleges; and community members.

When the original Bill was drafted, the words employed in the report were used in paragraph (d) of clause 10, which reads, "Teachers engaged in teaching in schools", two of whom were to be nominated by the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia Incorporated, and the Bill was passed in this form.

I understand that after the Act was proclaimed, the Teachers' Union approached the then Minister for a ruling as to whether headmasters, headmistresses or principals of schools were debarred by these words and the then Minister, on advice from counsel, notified them that headmasters, headmistresses and principals actually in a school were considered as teachers engaged in teaching in schools, but a principal who was not actually attached to a school would not be eligible for nomination by the Teachers' Union.

This automatically disbarred the President of the Teachers' Union from being nominated, since as President of the Teachers' Union and union representative on the Teachers' Tribunal, he was relieved of all duties in a school.

It was certainly not the intention of those who wrote the report that the President of the Teachers' Union should automatically be disbarred from nomination by the union since the President of the Teachers' Union was actually a member of the committee of the Tertiary Education Commission which wrote the report.

However, the Government of the day, rightly, was not prepared to make amendments to the Act so soon after its passing, merely to correct this position. The Government has been approached by the Council of the Teacher Education Authority to make two other important amendments to the Act and it seemed appropriate to rectify this anomaly at this time.

The amendment makes provision for four persons to be appointed by the Minister from teachers, two of whom shall be engaged in teaching. At present on the council these two members are a teacher from an independent school and a teacher from a Catholic school. In addition the amendment makes provision for two teachers who are members of the Teachers' Union and nominated by it, but they need not necessarily be engaged in teaching in schools at the time. Teachers who could come into this provision include the President of the Teachers' Union, education officers employed in other duties by the Education Department such as recruit-

ment officers, curriculum officers, research officers and a number of other teachers, who for the good of education are not necessarily employed in the classroom.

The amendment has the backing of the Council of the Teacher Education Authority, the Teachers' Union, the Academic Staff Association, and the boards of the various colleges.

The second purpose of the Bill with which I wish to deal, relates to the staff and student associations and first, I would indicate to members, for their information, that the report on the future of the teachers' colleges, referred to earlier, made one recommendation regarding associations of staff and students and that was that "the colleges and the council shall give due recognition to properly constituted associations of professional staff and students".

Section 55 in the original Act took cognisance of the existing position of staff and student associations in relation to the colleges but made no specific reference to the council of the authority.

At the time each college had a staff association which included both academic and non academic staff and these associations from the five individual colleges had formed themselves into a loose federation for the exchange of views of the colleges and to communicate and negotiate on general matters with the W.A. State School Teachers' Union and the Education Department, but each individual staff association dealt with its own college.

Section 55 then made provision for academic staff and students and for communication with college boards. It made no provision for "other" staff mentioned in section 50 of the Act, nor did it make provision for communication and/or negotiation with the council of the authority, except through college boards.

Since the passing of the Act, the academic staff of the colleges have formed themselves into the Academic Staff Association of the Western Australian Teachers Colleges (Inc.) with branches in the individual colleges. There is no compulsion on any academic staff member to join the association. The other staff—including professional officers, librarians, clerical and technical officers—have formed themselves into an Association of Salaried Officers of the Teachers Colleges with branches in each individual college.

The various student associations which have been in existence almost since the establishment of the colleges, have formed a Western Australian Student Teachers' Association with a regularly approved constitution and representation of the student body of each college.

It was thought appropriate that the Act should be amended to provide for a situation which actually exists and that provision should be made in the Act for an

overall association of academic staff, an overall association of "other" staff, and an overall association of enrolled students with branches of each in the individual colleges. Such overall associations seemed appropriate as the bodies to communicate and negotiate with the council of the authority.

As the colleges are autonomous bodies governed by their own boards, it was not thought appropriate that the overall associations should be the bodies to communicate and negotiate with the college boards, but that this should be the prerogative of the branches of the individual colleges, as obtained in the original Act.

It is not the intention of the amendment, or the Act itself, that branches of associations or individuals themselves should be denied access to the council of the authority and in fact the council has accepted submissions from the Academic Staff Association, the Association of Salaried Officers, and from individuals. The Act and the amendment, merely make provision for the "recognised" or usual means of communication and negotiation.

The amendment has the support of the council of the authority, the Academic Staff Association, the Association of Salaried Officers, and the Association of Student Teachers.

The next portion of the Bill on which I would like to speak relates to the application of money received by the college boards.

At the present time, section 64 of the Act makes provision for the council to invest money not immediately required for the purposes of the Act in any investments authorised by law as those in which trust funds may be invested. In the drafting of the original Bill, this section was included to give the council the same power as was given to the Council of the Western Australian Institute of Technology and the Senate of the University of Western Australia.

However, the Council of the Teacher Education Authority stands in a very different position from these bodies in relation to the boards of the individual teachers' colleges.

One of the objects of the authority, for example—paragraph (f) of section 8—is to organise as soon as practicable the control by each college of its own finances within the allocations and general policies approved by the authority.

The position has now been reached where most of the money allocated to the authority is, in fact, held by the college boards and it is necessary, therefore, that the college boards should be given the same power to invest funds as is at present given to the council.

In commending this Bill to members, I would mention that this Act is a very recent addition to the Statutes. Neverthe-

less, it has proved quite efficient and most difficulties have been overcome during the period of implementation of its provisions. These few amendments are considered to be relatively minor.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. F. Cloughton.

## ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. N. E. BAXTER** (Central—Minister for Health) [4.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Art Gallery Act to enable the Western Australian Art Gallery Board to borrow money and to invest money in authorised trustee investments.

Members will recall that when the Art Gallery Act was introduced in 1959 for the purpose of establishing an Art Gallery separate from the Western Australian Museum, the Art Gallery Board was permitted to display works of art only in the Art Gallery building in Beaufort Street.

An amendment to the Act in 1968 gave the Art Gallery Board permission to move works of art to other suitable venues, as well as permission to provide for the establishment of regional and branch galleries in an endeavour to ensure the optimum use of the board's exhibits.

The Bill before the House will, if passed, enable the Board of the Western Australian Art Gallery to borrow money. As it is a State instrumentality it is considered desirable that the Art Gallery should have power to borrow its own funds for specific purposes.

At the present time the board and the Government are considering the establishment of annexes to the gallery in order that a greater number of exhibitions may be made available to the public throughout the State.

I mentioned previously that the Art Gallery is a State instrumentality and, I believe, as such, should be encouraged to serve the interests of art throughout Western Australia.

It is supported by Government funds contributed by taxpayers from all areas of the State and, therefore, all taxpayers should have ready access to its activities.

The other purpose mentioned earlier is to enable the board to invest money not immediately required in authorised trustee investments.

In recent times the Art Gallery has been fortunate in receiving gifts from appreciative persons. This is a wonderful thing and something that the board and the Government are keen to encourage. It is desirable in these times to strive to avoid the erosion, through inflation, of such gifts and, to this end, it is considered prudent to invest the money involved in

suitable investments rather than have it retained in the Art Gallery's account at the Treasury.

In the past, Western Australia has been one of the few States, if not the only State, where it has not been possible to encourage such benefactions and it is hoped that this amendment will rectify that situation.

I commend the Bill to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. F. Claughton.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION BILL

### *Second Reading*

**THE HON. N. McNEILL** (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill deals with the participation of certain members of State Parliament in meetings held since last January in connection with the Australian Constitutional Convention.

This House, by resolution passed on the 16th August, 1972, appointed five of its members to the 12-member State delegation to participate in a proposed Constitutional Convention. Seven members were appointed by the Legislative Assembly. Subsequent resolutions appointed further members to the delegation: one to replace a member who had resigned his seat in Parliament (the Hon. H. E. Graham, M.L.A.) and another to replace a delegate who did not intend to seek re-election to the Parliament (Mr W. A. Manning, M.L.A.).

The convention held its first meeting in Sydney early in September last year. As recently mentioned when dealing with current appointments, various committees and subcommittees of the convention have met regularly to discuss detailed proposals for constitutional amendment and to plan the convention's second session which is due to be held later this year.

Members of the Western Australian delegation were approved by the Governor as representatives of their respective Houses of Parliament and thereupon became entitled to be paid allowances under section 41A of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act in respect of expenses incurred through their attendance at meetings of the convention and its associated committees and subcommittees. However, the Government has been advised that so far as the delegates appointed by the previous Legislative Assembly were concerned, this entitlement expired when that House ceased and determined on the 31st January, 1974, under section 21 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act.

This aspect does not affect members of the Legislative Council. This House never dissolves, membership being continuous to the 21st day of May in an election year

at the expiration of the six-year term. Section 21 has application only in respect of the Legislative Assembly.

The Government's advisers have warned that, owing to the terms of section 41A of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, any member who accepted an allowance in respect of expenses incurred subsequent to the date on which that House was elected would run the risk of forfeiting his seat in that House by reason of the office-of-profit provisions contained in the Constitution Acts Amendment Act.

Accordingly members of the Legislative Assembly who attended convention committee meetings after the 30th March this year were advised to refrain from seeking immediate reimbursement of their expenses. At the same time the Government promised to take whatever steps were necessary to enable those members to receive reimbursement without jeopardising their seats. The Bill now before members is designed to honour that undertaking.

In summarising the legislation, which is of exceptional legal complexity, I would say that this Bill would deem those members of the Legislative Assembly who were delegates to the convention as at the 31st January this year to have continued to be delegates from that date up to the date on which delegates were formally reappointed. Secondly, it would authorise and approve the payment of allowances in respect of expenses incurred by those members in connection with the convention committee meetings attended during that period; and finally, it would ensure that members of the Legislative Assembly will not be liable to vacate their seats or incur any disqualification by reason of their acceptance of such allowance.

It will be noted that two clauses have been included in the Bill which are designed to deal with any similar situation which may arise at the conclusion of this Parliament or at any subsequent time should the Constitutional Convention still subsist.

It is emphasised that there is no necessity for legislation appertaining to members of the Legislative Council. Those members who were appointed delegates are covered by the terms of their original appointments and by section 41A of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act and are not affected in any way by the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly under section 21.

**THE HON. R. THOMPSON** (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.48 p.m.]: I will not seek the adjournment of the debate on this Bill because when I spoke on the 16th August with reference to the appointment and replacement of delegates to the Australian Constitutional Convention I mentioned that



some members had been unable to attend because of the situation in which they were placed.

As far as I can see the Bill does exactly what was outlined in the second reading speech. I cannot see any flaws in it. It is a necessary Bill and virtually follows on from what I pointed out previously, at which stage I had no knowledge of the legislation. I support the Bill.

**THE HON. N. McNEILL** (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [4.49 p.m.]: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his ready response and willingness to proceed immediately with the consideration of this Bill. There is nothing further I need add at this stage.

Question put.

The **PRESIDENT**: This Bill requires the concurrence of an absolute majority of the Legislative Council, in accordance with Standing Order 308. A dissentient voice will necessitate a division being taken. There being no dissentient voice, I declare the question to be carried by an absolute majority.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

*House adjourned at 4.54 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 5th September, 1974

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

### QUESTIONS (38): ON NOTICE

#### 1. WATER SUPPLIES

*Railway Dam: Williams*

Mr P. V. JONES, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Have arrangements been completed to transfer the Williams railway dam to the control of the Williams Shire Council?
- (2) Is the dam catchment area also being transferred to the Williams shire?
- (3) If (2) is "No" why is the above area excluded from transfer?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes. The Williams Shire Council has been advised that, following completion of survey, the area will be reserved for water supply purposes and vested in the shire.

(2) Yes.

(3) Answered by (2).

2.

#### WATER SUPPLIES

##### *Sampling of Bores, and Proclaimed Areas*

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) (a) What is the nature of any regular sampling of bore water in the Perth Metropolitan Region;
- (b) what is the location of bores being monitored and are these permanent monitoring stations?
- (2) Have any areas been proclaimed as—
  - (a) public water supply areas;
  - (b) underground water pollution control areas,
 under the provisions of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board Act?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) (a) Sampling is carried out to determine physical and chemical characteristics of the water and to observe seasonal changes in the groundwater table.
- (b) The General Manager of the Water Board will supply direct to the Member a plan showing the location of the bores. The monitoring points are permanent.
- (2) (a) and (b) Yes. Mirrabooka and Gwelup Areas have been proclaimed under both categories.

3. *This question was postponed.*

#### 4. COASTAL SAND DRIFT AND SEA EROSION COMMITTEE

##### *Members and Function*

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) What are the names of the members of the interdepartmental committee on coastal sand drift and sea erosion, and what departments do they represent?
- (2) When was this committee formed and on how many occasions has it met?
- (3) What are the committee's terms of reference and to which Minister is it responsible?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Answered in reply to question 38 of 8th August, 1972.
- (2) The committee was formed in July, 1972, and met eleven times.