

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 16 December 1987.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair at 11.00 am, and read prayers.

APPROPRIATION (GENERAL LOAN AND CAPITAL WORKS FUND) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 15 December.

HON MAX EVANS (Metropolitan) [11.06 am]: I support this Bill. I note the capital works grant of \$388.627 million, which is part of the capital works programme of \$1 088.617 million.

I am concerned that the Westminster system of budgeting for capital works and consolidated revenue encourages the expenditure of the full amount allocated in the Budget, rather than endeavouring to save money by spending less if possible. Once an appropriation is made, if the Minister does not spend all of the funds allocated, he is not considered to have done his job properly. I will give some examples of where statutory authorities or business undertakings have, in fact, underspent on capital works last year. It is not clear whether that was a saving on their part, or whether the surplus money is to be carried forward.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Most of them represent underspending on committed works, so that the total commitment remains.

Hon MAX EVANS: So the surplus will be spent on other works, will it?

Hon J.M. Berinson: No. It means, for example, that if a commitment is for a project which will cost \$1 million this year and \$3 million next year, and only \$500 000 is spent this year, \$3.5 million will be available next year.

Hon MAX EVANS: The point I am making is that I would like to see that amount cut because money has been saved, not because the project has been delayed for some time. I will give some examples of where this has been done. The first concerns the Claremont Fire Station built to the same specifications as the Wangara Fire Station. The Building Management Authority called for tenders for the Claremont Fire Station and received one for \$465 000. The cost for the Wangara Fire Station was similar. I spoke to a senior Fire Brigades Board research development officer, Ron Harvey, who said that all that was needed was a five-bedroom house with a very large garage. It was not an industrial building problem, but a residential house. The Fire Brigade Board contracted for a home builder for a quote for a five-bedroomed house with a large garage. One bedroom had en suite for the fire chief, and the two rear bedrooms were for the two men on duty at night. The family room was the weight-training room. The house had a kitchen and a dining room, and a spare room for an office; and a side door led to a very big garage. Doing that achieved a saving of \$200 000 on the original tender of \$465 000. That was a saving of 40 per cent on capital works.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is far too much audible conversation. The Hansard reporter is endeavouring to get down what the honourable member is saying. It is difficult enough to do that without members carrying on about six different conversations.

Hon MAX EVANS: There is room in the area of capital expenditure for the Government to follow the example set by the Fire Brigades Board. In many cases expenditure occurs because people enjoy spending money or wish to create something as a memorial. I attended a function last night at the Slow Learning Children's Group which appears to have the same problem in trying to control capital expenditure. People have good intentions in their desires to have grand buildings, but buildings do not make the difference; it is the people and the facilities inside them that do. A few months ago I was at Osaka University which is one of the top five universities in Japan. Members would be shocked at the low-quality buildings at that university, but no-one would query the academic standards of Japanese universities. Large sums have not been spent on capital works, as the Japanese choose to provide funds for research and development and teaching techniques. Millions of dollars of capital expenditure can be saved in this way.

We would all like to have a high quality home similar to Laurie Connell and the staff to go with it but most of us cut our finances back to build a house which we can afford. A building society will lend according to a person's income and financial commitments, and the loan is taken over a suitable period of time.

I admit I cannot work out the mathematics of the General Loan and Capital Works Fund, Commonwealth Government grants and everything related to expenditure. For instance today this Bill covers expenditure of more than \$388 million which is only part of the total of \$1 billion made up of General Loan and Capital Works Fund with general borrowing approval of \$34.5 million; Commonwealth general purpose capital grant, \$11.3 million; Commonwealth specific purpose capital grants, \$36.1 million; Western Australian Treasury Corporation, \$273.4 million; loan repayments, \$21 million; State Development Fund, \$1.9 million, with the balance of funds at 1 July 1987 being \$10.4 million. We have borrowings by State authorities of \$289 million, with the Metropolitan Water Authority, the State Energy Commission and the railways being the larger borrowers; and other Commonwealth grants and advances, \$85.9 million; and internal and other funds, \$324.8 million. I am interested in internal and other funds and would like to learn more about this aspect of the Bill from the Minister for Budget Management in the new year. I am concerned that expenditure on capital works involves not only State Government finance but also Commonwealth Government grants. Funds provided by Commonwealth grants are usually completely exhausted to ensure that the grants will be forthcoming the following year. The same theory applies at the State level.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I have already asked honourable members less than five minutes ago to cease their audible conversations because they are out of order, unparliamentary and not allowed. I suggest to honourable members, in the interests of concluding this week's work as early as possible, that it would be a good idea if we listen intently to what members have to say in the hope that they will say it more quickly.

Hon MAX EVANS: A few years ago we had large borrowings by the SEC of \$1.4 billion in one year, and this was reduced over the following years. The expenditure on those borrowings seemed to be continued in the following year instead of a large drop in capital expenditure it remained at a steady level even though the SEC contract had finished.

Hon J.M. Berinson: The SEC does not come into loan funds, but certainly the SEC borrowings have dropped massively.

Hon MAX EVANS: I want to comment on the Commonwealth grants as I believe at both the State and Federal level our revenue expenditure could be contained. Commonwealth grants to the States come out of revenue at some stage, because any financial borrowings are eventually paid off. The Commonwealth Government borrows money to lend to the States but the money is repaid from revenue as the States have no assets to sell. Revenue is used to repay the capital and the interest on the loan; Commonwealth interest rates are better than the State, and State interest rates are better than private firms. We should have tighter control on expenditure for capital works at the State level. Does the BMA give this tight control? If we save only 10 per cent -- not 40 per cent like the fire brigade example -- on capital works of \$100 million, that is a saving of \$10 million per year for a State which had a surplus last year of \$0.3 million. Capital works must be controlled. It is so easy to think capital works represent a large figure so we will go out and spend it. However, this expenditure is paid for out of revenue sooner or later.

State assets are sold at various times. I note some items are paid for out of the State Development Fund which receives its money from Western Australian Development Corporation dividends generated from the sale of Government assets. This is part of a recycle programme, and forms a small part of total expenditure. I repeat there is a need for tighter controls to be maintained.

The Minister in his second reading speech said that the changes made in 1986-87 to the format of the Estimates have been welcomed as being more helpful and informative. He also said that this year another minor change has been made to the Estimates to make it easier to identify the financial progress of individual projects. He went on to say that total expenditure to the close of the financial year just ended is now recorded along with the estimated total cost of the project and the amount planned to be spent in the current financial year. I would have appreciated Mr Peter Farrell having told the Minister that that

recommendation came from me to Bob Boylan in writing. I make that point because in last year's Estimates a grand total could not be found for all departments for the current or the previous year. Totals were not provided at the end of each department either, so a person could not do a quick assessment of future capital commitment.

This year we have estimated costs of \$5.8 billion in connection with works in progress; expenditure to June 1987 was \$3.6 billion -- including expenditure for the year 1987 of \$1 billion; proposed expenditure \$1 billion; and future capital expenditure of \$1 billion to be made. I appreciate the Minister including these totals at my request as this is a normal requirement for most companies to show future capital commitments. The figures are not as bad as I expected and amount to the equivalent of one year's capital expenditure, which is a reasonable amount. A good example of this is the \$4 billion spent on the submarine project. In last year's figures, probably \$5 million would have been spent, but there will be a \$4 billion commitment down the line. I believe that should be shown, and it is shown now as a result of my recommendation to Bob Boylen through Peter Farrell last year. I have made some other recommendations since I came back from England, but I can see that the accounting procedures have improved. Previously expenditure was listed for the previous year and then the expenditure was listed for the present year; one then had to add the two figures together to find out the total expenditure to date. That has now been rectified and I commend the Minister for Budget Management for that.

I refer now to my years on the council of Scotch College and other organisations; it is my experience that people often forget that the cheapest part of putting up a new building is its construction, because the ongoing costs are more expensive. Once one expands the floor space by X number of metres, one ends up with space for more staff. Parkinson's Law applies: People are then brought in to fill the space available. There is never a reduction in the cost of, for example, Government works. If, for example, the size of a warehouse is increased by 100 per cent, one soon finds that the inventory carried in that warehouse is increased, because the space just happens to be available. One then has the carrying cost as well as the interest burden. That is why the big motor car companies in recent years have followed the example of the Japanese, using the "just in time" inventory, because they found that the more space they had, the more inventory they carried; whereas the "just in time" inventory was computer-based, and the company was carrying only one week's stock at any one time and could call in its suppliers, at a couple of days' notice, to replenish stocks. This cut down the capital cost of the stock.

I point out to the Minister for Budget Management that in respect of expenditure, one firstly has a lot more space. It is very easy to work out why one needs more staff, but when one looks at what the Government is doing, there is not much difference this year as against last year. An exception is perhaps the Police Force, which must deal with an increasing crime rate and needs more staff. In the Education Department and many other departments, the same number of customers are being dealt with and there is no need to keep expanding, particularly when one considers that there are costs such as financing costs -- one has to repay the debt, the interest on the debt -- and the employment of more staff which have to be justified. Years ago the Canning Shire built a huge building, which was about 10 times bigger than the building it had before, but after 10 years the shire has managed to fill it with people. The shire area is the same, although it collects more rates, and it could have been more efficient; but Parkinson's Law comes into effect and the building was filled up.

Extra maintenance costs are associated with buildings like that -- such as cleaning costs for the building and for windows -- which are ongoing; then one must consider the cost of air-conditioning and power costs, which are greater than before. I suggest that in respect of the General Loan and Capital Works Fund, the Minister for Budget Management, together with the Building Management Authority and his advisors, should put a lot more applied science and engineering techniques into air-conditioning and power costs. It is all very well to construct huge buildings; many of the architects, for example, responsible for some of the buildings in Perth have not put enough time and worry into considering the cost of the sunlight penetrating those buildings and the consequent high cost of air-conditioning. A lot more could be done; for example, I commend the architect responsible for the QV 1, because the techniques applied by that Eastern States' architect will cut down air-conditioning costs.

Buildings at the turn of the century were constructed with big roofs to keep them cool; nowadays many buildings are again being built with large roofs. Parliament House, for

example, was a far better building when it was built in 1904 than it is today. The front windows of the original building were under a portico, and had no sun coming on to them. However, when the building was expanded, the portico was removed and the sun hit the windows directly, the result being that heavy curtains and air-conditioning are now needed. Extra costs have resulted from bad management and bad capital works decisions. We should be looking to ensuring that Government-owned buildings are cost beneficial; capital expenditure can often be the cheapest thing, but once one has a badly designed, badly constructed and overpriced building, extra costs are involved. If the building is under specified in respect of power and air-conditioning costs, there will be an ongoing cost forever, which the Government tends to lose track of because it is just absorbed.

The Government must spend more time looking at this. The Government building across the road has been constructed with a great deal of glass, and I believe its construction could have been better and more cost saving. The WADC office of John Horgan -- and it could not happen to a nicer guy -- is like an incubator in summer; the air-conditioning cannot cope with the heat that enters the south west corner of the building on a hot summer's day. The AMP building used to be like that on its eastern side in the morning; one would get into the office at 10.00 am and have to take one's coat off because the air-conditioning could not cope since the building was under-specified in air-conditioning plant. A lot more should be done in these cases; it is not just a question of tinted glass.

Capital works is very important because it all comes from revenue expenditure somewhere along the line, and the running costs of those buildings will always come from that expenditure. There is a very fine line in revenue expenditure, as is shown in the Government's accounts. I admit that the Treasurer has a lot up his sleeve in terms of interest earned on the short-term money market, which has not been brought into the accounts for some years and has not been budgeted for this year. That should be used for other things, not just to pick up the cost involved in over-specified and inefficient buildings, the oncosts of which are very great.

In the supplement to the capital works Estimates, mention is made of a plan to convert 30 buses from diesel fuel to compressed natural gas. The supplement reads in part as follows --

\$1.0 million to convert 30 buses from diesel fuel to compressed natural gas as a feasibility trial to substantiate the cost effectiveness of gas fuelled buses. Considerable cost savings are expected to be demonstrated.

I would have thought that to finish off that paragraph, the cost savings should have been given. Is it \$1 million or only \$100 000? If it is only \$100 000, for example, was it really justified? Somebody, in putting that recommendation up, should have done a feasibility study to determine the comparative cost of diesel fuel at the present rate and gas fuel, the cost of maintenance and whether there could be any saving. We could then say, "Well, that's a great job"; there should not simply have been a bland statement of what was expected to be demonstrated. The Ministers putting up the suggestions must justify them in terms of what will actually be saved; they should not indulge in lovely rhetoric statements. One could spend \$10 million and save only \$1 million. Is it justified? It is like having a 10-tonne truck to run around with city deliveries of one-tonne loads.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Those questions are always asked.

Hon MAX EVANS: I would have thought it would have been better to include them in the Budget speech, because it would have made it look better. The Treasurer has included a lot of good things in his speech, but I think those sort of things could be done. The Treasurer made mention in his speech of contra-flow lanes on highways; we cannot say what that will save but the conversion to the buses would be commendable, if we could determine what it could save.

I did not go into the question of the Superdrome deficit last night with the Minister for Sport and Recreation, because I thought we might get bogged down on it. The Superdrome cost \$25 million, and it will be amortised over 50 years at two per cent per annum. In other words, there will be a depreciation figure of \$500 000. It is being amortised in this way because it is on University of Western Australia land; the university owns the land and a \$25 million building has been built by the Government on it, which will be written off over 50 years at two per cent per annum. As at last June, there was a depreciation on that building of

\$118 000, based on this amortisation. The State Instant Lottery Fund paid \$297 000 into the operating deficit of the Superdrome, which was about \$338 000; of that, \$300 000 came from SILF. Of the operating cost of \$338 000, \$118 000 was a book entry -- was depreciation -- and no cash was required; SILF made up this cash contribution in respect of the amortisation. What will happen in the future? The Minister for Sport and Recreation last night said that the deficit would be funded from the CRF. Of that deficit -- and there will be a deficit -- next year, \$500 000 will be this amortisation factor of the building due to the lease. There will be no cash outgoing. I believe that should be paid back as a cash amount to the Government, for the cost of the building, or contra it. In 10 years' time, technically speaking, it would have a reserve of \$5 million because if the amount is paid in cash for the total deficit each year that includes the \$500 000 in respect of the depreciation figure, it will build up a reserve. That is wrong.

Recently in a debate on the port authorities it was said that the authorities should be more accountable to the Government and that they should make a return on the a capital expenditure. Much of the Fremantle facility was built up by C.Y. O'Connor a long time ago, but even so the port authorities must make a return to the Government on those funds. The Superdrome made a deficit, and probably the port authorities did too, but there is no mention of a return on the funds to the Government. Why is a return expected from the port authorities but not from the Superdrome? Where is the line drawn? I am not convinced about the need for these port authorities to contribute these funds, but that could be argued both ways. A return of 10 per cent; that is, \$2.5 million on the Superdrome should be looked at.

In the last three or four years a fixed amount of only \$3 million has been returned from Instant Lottery to sports in this State. It was considered a good amount when it was first introduced but the figure has not kept up with inflation. An amount of \$118 000 of Instant Lottery funds went to Treasury in different grants, or the equivalent of this amount of depreciation. That amount should be investigated to see why the Department of Sport and Recreation and Treasury will be recouped from the Instant Lottery funds. That amount should have gone into the sports area rather than be spent on a concrete building. On the question of a return of funds, does the Art Gallery have to charge people higher entry fees to recover its costs, as the port authorities must? Why is that organisation treated differently from the port authorities? The extension of these differences when dealing with various organisations makes it hard to work out the policy of the Government in this area.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Some are commercial ventures and some are not. For example, the Art Gallery in the normal course of events does not charge because it is regarded as part of the social infrastructure. The port authority is regarded as a commercial operation. You are not dealing with comparables.

Hon MAX EVANS: I know all the arguments. Admission to the Art Gallery is not always free; it charges for a lot of exhibitions, which will reduce its costs.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is the exception to the rule.

Hon MAX EVANS: That is just a problem for the Minister for Budget Management to deal with. I will quote a few examples on the question of capital expenditure: It was proposed to spend \$205 million last year on State housing and the amount spent was \$164 million, a difference of \$41 million. The Transperth budget last year was \$25 million and that amount was spent. The State Energy Commission budget last year was \$311.7 million and \$245 million was spent. The budget last year for the Water Authority was \$148.6 million and \$128.8 million was spent. The budget for Westrail was \$35.5 million and \$31.2 million was spent. I would like to see in the capital works fund document an explanation of expenditure and comparisons with last year's budgeted figure. It is necessary to compare last year's book with this year's book to get the full picture. I assume with capital works expenditure that any amount unspent in one year will be spent in the following year. I would like to see some reference in the document to any large savings that have been made during the year. I know that a saving would not be made in the housing area because the Government is not in the business of saving money, but is in the business of spending all the money to get the maximum benefit in housing. However, SECWA may have made some savings as a result of a good deal on equipment purchases, favourable exchange rates, or perhaps a decision that certain items were not needed. In that case, the saving should be

identified and naturally the amount saved would not be carried over to be spent in the following year. For example, if an amount of \$50 million were budgeted to be spent on a turbine and it was not spent, it should not necessarily have to be spent the following year. The Government could sit back and consider that amount as a saving. An explanation should be given of any large expenditure which is less than the budgeted figure. In past years it was interesting to read the report of the Auditor General on the revenue expenditure because he commented on over and under-expenditure in the Budget, particularly on the Treasurer's reports. He identified those areas and gave reasons. That was very helpful; we do not get the same detailed information that we did in the past.

A better report on capital works should be provided, not just for the sake of Parliament but also for the history of this State, so that in future people will know why things happen. I am not advocating the production of further documents for the sake of it, but on the basis that they will assist the Government of the day and Governments in the future. It also becomes an incentive to save money. At the moment people may query why they should save money. The answer is that it can be better spent in another direction tomorrow. We should take away this philosophy of spending as much money as we can, particularly with Government capital expenditure. The \$1 billion comes from so many different sources, there is not much incentive to keep expenditure down. Staff may not care about saving the Federal Government \$50 million, for example. That is wrong and we need to change our attitude. We must try to bring down the capital expenditure and to get better value for our money.

HON P.H. LOCKYER (Lower North) [11.36 am]: I bring to the attention of the Minister for Budget Management a decision the Government has made relating to the closure of the Mines Department office in Cue. I understand this has only become public in the last few days. The Minister for Budget Management will be well aware that the Murchison and Eastern Goldfields particularly have boomed in the last couple of years as a result of mining activity in the area. I am sure Hon Mark Nevill will agree that the activity throughout that part of the State has rejuvenated many towns which were becoming sleepy hollows.

For many years the small town of Cue was the centre of the Mines Department, with prospectors and mining companies registering their leases at that office. If the Minister for Minerals and Energy had announced three years ago that the Mines Department at Cue would be closed, there would not have been whimper. I understand that last month a record amount of business went through that office and yet, lo and behold, the decision has been made to close it. This is causing considerable distress among the miners and business people of Cue. This morning I attempted to speak to the Minister for Minerals and Energy on the matter, but unfortunately he was otherwise engaged and unable to discuss it with me, although he will do so in due course. It is important to get the message across that although we applaud the trimming of expenditure, it is folly to take this particular action.

It is intended to establish the office 50 miles away in Mt Magnet, but that office is already fairly heavily taxed by the business going through it. It is an imposition on the people who mine around Cue, which is a vast area. I ask the Minister for Budget Management to urgently consult with the Minister for Minerals and Energy with a view to his reversing the decision to close the office, particularly under these circumstances. There is no indication that the mining activity in that area will cease in the near future. If anything, with the increased price of gold, improved extraction methods, and the discovery of new fields, it is more likely that the activity will expand. This matter should be closely considered. Perhaps the Minister for Minerals and Energy should get one of his senior officers to look at the Cue office, preferably prior to Christmas. He should consult with the shire council and business people in the town. I believe that it is an oversight. The matter should be attended to with some urgency and I am confident that the Minister for Budget Management will show the courtesy of passing my comments to the appropriate Minister.

HON J.N. CALDWELL (South) [11.40 am]: The National Party supports this Bill. It is for the General Loan and Capital Works Fund, which we realise has to continue for the wellbeing of the State. I also support Hon Max Evans when he asks why we have to spend all the money in the Budget. I feel sure that many savings could be made, and I would like the Minister to comment.

HON MARGARET McALEER (Upper West) [11.41 am]: In supporting this Bill I bring to the attention of the House a matter concerning the Morawa school and its hostel. Some little

time ago, many members -- perhaps every member -- received a letter from the Morawa Shire asking for support for the building of the Morawa school hostel to cater for both the agricultural students and the students in general studies. The Morawa Shire Council felt very strongly that the hostel had been delayed for many years, despite promises made from year to year; but in every case it had been disappointed when the Budget came round.

I am very glad to say that very shortly after that letter was written, the Morawa Shire Council arranged for a deputation to see the Premier when he was in Geraldton and the members of the deputation discussed the matter with him. He gave them a sympathetic hearing, and when he returned to Perth he discussed the matter with the Minister for Education. An assurance was given that the Education Department and the Country High Schools Hostels Authority were committed to the building of this hostel as soon as possible. When I say as soon as possible, they were looking towards the following year and the next Budget.

Two weeks after receiving this assurance, the Country High Schools Hostels Authority telephoned the Morawa school to arrange a visit. Their architect came up very shortly afterwards, accompanied by the administration officer. They met with the committee which oversees the agricultural wing of the school and its hostel and discussed the concept of the type of hostel to be built before returning to Perth to draw up a concept plan which will be returned to Morawa for comment. When that has been returned to the Country High Schools Hostels Authority, the architect will draw up full plans for submission in the estimates for the next Budget. The Morawa school and the committee envisaged needing a hostel with a capacity for 100 students, but I believe the Country High Schools Hostels Authority is looking at one for between 70 and 80 students, because that is the break-even point to make such a hostel viable. The discrepancy in numbers is immaterial at this time, and the committee welcomes the commitment given by the Government to go on with this matter. It is also pleasing to see that the architect and the Country High Schools Hostels Authority are very enthusiastic about the project, because it is the first time the authority and its architect has had the opportunity to draw up plans for a hostel from scratch; up to this time merely additions or renovations to existing buildings have been involved. This will be the very first country high school hostel to be built from scratch.

So far so good, and I hope that when the next estimates come forward the Government will give favourable consideration to this hostel, because it is badly needed. As members probably know, the old building is falling down and should be condemned. Accommodation is very limited, and 12 new students who have applied to come next year have been refused, and further applications will be received before the beginning of the next school year. This is an important facility for people in the northern agricultural areas, not simply because students will be able to "live locally", which means that they will be within reasonable distances of their homes without having to travel too far, with all the associated costs, but also they will be living and working in a region with a climate and conditions very similar to those they would have experienced on their own farms, so they will benefit all the more from what they learn there. I would not like to over-stress this point because the hostel accommodates students from other areas just as Cunderdin and Narrogin do. In fact it receives students from all over Western Australia.

One or two related matters are not so satisfactory. The hostel is not viable at the moment because it has only 30 or 40 students, so there is a problem with expenses. At the time of the deputation to the Premier he was asked whether the Government would consider paying the salary of the cook, which would amount to some \$17 000 or \$18 000 a year. It would have been a great help had this been accepted by the Government. However, the answer was that the Government would not pay the salary because it would need to come through the Country High Schools Hostels Authority, and until it assumed full control it would not be able to supply the money. I hope that further consideration might be given to this problem, even though the money could not come direct through the Country High Schools Hostels Authority.

A further matter causing the Morawa school some distress is that extensive renovations and upgrading of the school have been delayed for the past six or seven years. Some superficial and external renovation of the school is going on, and the school has recently received notification that \$10 000 will be spent on providing it with gas heaters. But the need of the school is far greater than that. Many classrooms are in need of modification, as well as painting, and it is very possible there will be a need for additional buildings. The school

numbers keep increasing, and at least 122 students are in the upper school. The Morawa District High School is a misnomer, because it has very large classes in years 11 and 12; there are 122 in those classes now and another 112 in years 8, 9 and 10. The lower school has smaller numbers because Morawa draws its upper school students from a very wide area, so the lower school is no guide to the numbers in the upper school. In line with other schools, these numbers are increasing, more so as the agricultural wing grows in popularity. It is necessary that the school should have this upgrading if it is to cope with this increase in the number of students. I bring this matter again to the attention of the Government in the hope that something may be done to speed up the work.

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan -- Minister for Budget Management) [11.50 am]: I thank honourable members for their support of this Bill. It is an important part of the process of financial management. I am sure members will appreciate that I cannot put myself into a position of responding in any detail to particular inquiries on individual projects. In respect of Hon Margaret McAleer's comments on the Morawa school hostel and other factors affecting that school, I will ensure those matters are brought to the attention of the Minister for Education.

Similarly, I will ensure that Hon Philip Lockyer's comments on the closing of the Department of Mines facility in Cue will be brought to the attention of the relevant Minister. Even now, however, I can assure Hon Philip Lockyer that the closing of the Cue office was certainly not an oversight, nor was it a measure undertaken in haste. It was an issue which, to my knowledge as a member of the Cabinet Budget Committee, had consideration over a period of a number of months and was in the context of a general review of the services of the Department of Mines. So far as I am aware there was nothing in that decision which related to the General Loan and Capital Works Fund. On my recollection, it was in the main a matter going to recurrent expenditure for staffing costs. For present purposes, however, that is not important and I will ensure that the comments by the honourable member go to the Minister.

Hon Max Evans said a number of important things and a great many of them sounded very familiar to me. After he had been speaking for about 10 minutes I realised the reason they were familiar was that they amounted to things I have been regularly saying to other people. Of course, in principle there is no difficulty in agreeing to the view that if buildings can be built more cheaply, while retaining efficient standards, they should be built more cheaply. There is no difficulty in saying that if a building is not required, it should not be built. In fact, in recent years the Government has made a number of decisions to either cancel or defer, for significant periods, building projects which have been put up on quite an urgent basis. Over recent years there have been efforts to tackle relatively unregulated approaches to the provisions of capital works.

One example relates to an early report by the Functional Review Committee which was given the task of reviewing the allocation of space in Government office buildings. That may seem a small enough issue, but the financial implications of it, given the amount of office space used by Government, are really quite considerable. I can think of two examples of buildings -- one built by Government and one leased by Government -- where the amount of space committed was said to be the absolute minimum required by the claimant departments. The buildings were accordingly built and leased on that basis. When we came to apply the new reduced standards of space allocations one building was left with two vacant floors and the second smaller building was left with one vacant floor.

Hon Barry House: Is that the Bunbury tower?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No, the Bunbury tower is in a separate category and that will be approached over a period. These are quite different.

In earlier days those floors would not have been left vacant. The staff would have expanded to occupy the vacant space. I do not know which of Parkinson's laws applies to that process, but that is what would have happened. Indeed, there were some comments floated that since the space was there, we might occupy it in anticipation of the department's expanding in due course. We did not take that view and what happened instead was that departments were restricted to the space that met the new guidelines and new space was allocated elsewhere. From memory, I think we have reached a stage -- I ask members not to hold me to this precisely, but it is somewhere close to the mark -- where for something like 12 to 18 months

the Government has taken up no new lease space and I would expect it to take up no new lease space for at least another 12 months.

Hon Neil Oliver: I should hope not.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I will go further than Hon Neil Oliver's hopes and say I hope that the 12-month period ahead will be substantially extended. In some cases the Government is withdrawing from buildings. As leases expire it is vacating and making better use of other facilities. The Government is doing its best. It is a bit like turning the Queen Mary around because the Government inherited a system in which departments were invited to nominate what they liked, rather than face up to objective tests. I am not putting that on the shoulders just of the last Government, it was a system in place for a long time. It has not been easy to reverse that process.

The Functional Review Committee was our first approach to it, but in the last year we have started an entirely different process which is looking to a more fundamental change to our approach to capital works. One of the remarkable things about the Budget process which we inherited was the way in which consideration of capital works just all happened in the course of one or two weeks. We had X hundreds of millions of dollars in available funds and we received X thousands of millions of dollars in submissions for capital funds from different departments, and they were listed in some order of priority. I do not know what the previous Government did, but I believe it may not have even given it the sort of consideration we have attempted to develop. However, we have been in a position where in a very short time we have received a massive list of claims against available funds and quite arbitrary --

Hon Neil Oliver: Did you say you have discarded the Functional Review Committee?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No, I am talking about something quite different. The Functional Review Committee is still dealing with individual departmental reviews. I am talking about a new approach to the allocation of capital funds. What I was saying was the system we inherited compressed the consideration of quite huge allocations of capital funds into a very few weeks of the Budget process and that resulted in fairly arbitrary decisions having to be made.

Hon Neil Oliver: Is this what the Treasurer spoke about in his Budget speech in 1986 rather than 1987?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am sorry, but I do not recall the particular speech to which the member is referring.

Hon Neil Oliver: His Budget speech.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am speaking for the moment about a system which has only started to be phased in this year. That is a system which requires a rolling programme of submissions for capital works, which is considered in turn by the Office of Government Accommodation and the Cabinet Budget Committee. The idea is to set up a programme which will avoid a mass of applications having to be considered at one time, and will allow consideration over the whole year, not only by those committees but in the course of a process which will allow those committees to have independent evaluations of submissions put to them at the time that they have to make a decision.

Hon Neil Oliver: You are actually referring to the new committee and to the new position that Mr Johnson now holds?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes. Mr Ian Johnson is the executive officer of the Office of Government Accommodation, which supports not only the Minister but also a Government accommodation board, which is a subcommittee of Cabinet.

We have looked at standards, and there is a constant tug of war here. Hon Max Evans talked about being surprised at the relatively low building standards of some Japanese universities that he saw. We have initiated an approach which looks to maximum economy in the standards of the buildings which are constructed for Government, but we are constantly reminded of the balance which has to be struck. We are reminded, for example, that commercially-based buildings can function better than Government buildings, with a higher level of maintenance costs. We are told that since maintenance costs are a tax deduction for private industry but not for Government, there are different considerations in some respects when we come to the standard of the original building, and that it pays Governments better to

have a somewhat higher standard of original building, as long as that ensures a lower level of maintenance costs. That has all to be carefully calculated, and I tend to agree with Hon Max Evans that that calculation has in the past not been the basis of decisions leading to the standard of some of our buildings. I believe there has been the conceptual view that if it is a Government building, it ought to be of a higher standard; and that basis is different from the one that Hon Max Evans and myself are dealing with.

Finally, Hon Max Evans referred to Commonwealth funds and to a sort of compulsion by the States to spend during this year whatever is this year being offered from the Commonwealth, because if it is not spent it will not or may not be made available next year. There have been a number of instances where the State has felt it necessary to decline an offered grant of capital funds because it carried with it an unacceptable State commitment to the future recurrent costs of the services to be provided in those buildings. In recent years in particular, the Commonwealth has tended to develop a process whereby it will offer to find all or a significant part of the capital cost of the venture as long as the State later picks up the recurrent costs. We have to be conscious all the time of our capacity to continually increase our recurrent commitment. There have in fact been cases where we have had to say to the Commonwealth, "Thanks, but no thanks." We do that reluctantly, but I give that indication in response to the view that because money is on offer, it is always necessarily accepted.

Hon Neil Oliver: You must admit that statement was made, but it is interesting how the Commonwealth responded.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am always interested in how the Commonwealth responds.

Hon Neil Oliver: Your Premier made that statement, but in actual fact he finished up with more.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I think we are talking about different things. The member is talking about overall capital grants and approvals; I am talking about specific grants, which are in a different category. With those comments, I thank members for their support of this Bill and commend it to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), and passed.

LOAN BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 15 December.

HON G.E. MASTERS (West -- Leader of the Opposition) [12.08 pm]: I rise to take the opportunity allowed by a debate of this nature to talk not necessarily on the Loan Bill but to range onto other subjects. I want to raise a matter that is of some importance to members of Parliament on all sides of the political fence and to draw attention to what is happening in Parliament House and how Parliament House is operating these days.

Who is Parliament House for? What is Parliament House for? Members of Parliament have a job to do and they come into the two Chambers of Parliament House, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, to effectively carry out their duties. They also use the facilities of Parliament House to meet various people and to meet each other to discuss matters. Parliament House is owned by the public and serves a special purpose. It provides a forum for the members of Parliament, who are the public representatives of the community, to debate various issues in both Houses of Parliament. We know that some of the debates are good and some are bad, but every single member of Parliament is given the opportunity to take part in discussions on legislation and any other matters they want to raise. The

procedures of Parliament House also allow the Government to proceed with legislation through its various forms in what is called an Act of Parliament; in other words, Parliament carries out an action.

Parliament House and members of Parliament symbolise the parliamentary democracy that we today have, although at times I wonder at the large number of advisers who seem to be active in the House when the House is in session, and who sometimes outnumber members of Parliament, to the stage where I and perhaps other members feel they are intruders in Parliament House. The advantage of a parliamentary system and of these Chambers is that it guarantees to the members freedom of speech and special privileges. That does not mean to say we can abuse those privileges, nor should we; indeed, most members tread warily because they find out very quickly if they are a bit overambitious or too sure of themselves that this place rapidly brings them down to the right level, so they are soon brought to heel. With all the abuse and criticism members of Parliament have to face up to, they understand that there is a privilege and a responsibility, and I am sure they have a sense of achievement in gaining a position as a member of Parliament.

I raise those points because I think what is happening in Parliament House now is of concern to most members on all sides of the political fence. As I have said, Parliament House is for a purpose and no one person or small group of people has the authority or the right to manage and organise Parliament House without the authority of the members themselves. To manage Parliament House we have what we call the Joint House Committee, which comprises an equal number of members from both Houses, half from the Legislative Assembly and half from the Legislative Council. That Joint House Committee, along with other committees, is recorded for the information of members and anyone else on a daily basis on the back of the Notice Paper. The Joint House Committee was set up to manage Parliament House. In recent times some dramatic changes have taken place in Parliament House -- what I would describe in some cases as sheer acts of vandalism. That is only my view, but that is how I look at it. Things are being altered without consultation, and changes made which I find offensive, and I understand from discussions with many other members that they have the same view. I have taken the trouble to inquire of members of the Joint House Committee -- certainly on my side, and on the other side -- "Why are these changes taking place? Who is making the changes?" I do not like them a bit. I understand from my discussions that those people I have spoken to also have the same concern and when I ask who is responsible, they say, "We have not been consulted and cannot do anything about it." The Joint House Committee is elected by both Houses of Parliament to do a job; that is, to organise and run Parliament House on behalf of the members.

Hon Fred McKenzie: Don't you find it hard to believe that the Joint House Committee has no control over what is happening?

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I did find it very difficult to believe, and that is my concern. I am told that many of the decisions are now being made by the Chairman of the Joint House Committee without reference to that committee. Let me give the House some examples. The dogboxes -- the little boxes constructed all over Parliament House which I believe are absurd, disgraceful, and unnecessary and which were discussed and debated some 12 to 18 months ago -- were installed without the authority of the Joint House Committee but on the authority of the Chairman of the Joint House Committee. In the dining room members will see that a tapestry has been put up. I think it is a very valuable tapestry. To my mind it looks quite inappropriate in that position; indeed, it is an insult to the designer. It is quite out of place and demonstrates that whoever was responsible has no understanding of the value of the tapestry. It was in poor taste. At the same time, a photograph of Her Majesty the Queen was taken down. I know that does not worry many of the members on the other side of the House, but in those circumstances and because of the strong feeling of many members of Parliament it ought to have been discussed by the Joint House Committee. Indeed, I think the changes were made over a weekend and no-one was aware of them until the following Monday.

We now have at the top of the stairs on the second floor what I can only refer to as an advertisement -- and I emphasise the word "advertisement" -- for a certain art gallery and the paintings available there. For a start, I do not think those paintings are of very high quality. Parliament House is not the place for that sort of art gallery and I find it offensive that a particular art gallery can place an advertisement -- which is all it is -- at the top of the stairs

in any circumstances, but it is appalling that that should have taken place without reference to the Joint House Committee. We have seen at the top of those stairs a complete rearrangement of the paintings and so on, and this public art gallery advertising paintings for sale right in the middle of Parliament House, in what is perhaps the prime area of Parliament House. I find that offensive and I think the Joint House Committee ought to have been consulted. If the committee had made that decision I would have made my appeal direct to it, but I understand the committee had no say in those changes; again, they were the decision of the chairman himself.

I understand that a senior position in the dining room has been dispensed with and a person summarily dismissed. Once again, if that is the case and if there has been no consultation with the management group responsible for managing this House, it is quite wrong. I am making all these points because Hon Fred McKenzie asked whether I found it hard to believe that the Joint House Committee was not consulted; I agree with him, but I understand in all these cases the Joint House Committee was not consulted. I understand the extensions to Parliament House were discussed at length, and the first thing the Joint House Committee knew about those changes was by their reading it in *The West Australian* newspaper. Again, that is quite wrong and shows that there is something wrong with the whole arrangement. When I was on the Joint House Committee the decisions on such things as these were always discussed by the committee and decided on by the committee.

I put it to the House that there have been a number of complaints to the person concerned and those complaints seem largely to have been ignored or even, I suggest, met with contempt. I am appalled at the lack of consultation.

Hon Fred McKenzie: Don't forget we had an AGM only about a month ago.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Sure, but what brought it to a head was the change of arrangements at the top of the stairs. It is quite inappropriate that that sort of thing should take place and I find it offensive. The Juniper tapestry was just the same and I have already made those points. The person who was elected Chairman of the Joint House Committee -- who seems to be strutting around almost like a little Hitler at the moment -- was elected by the committee, and is responsible to the committee and to the members of Parliament -- all of them, no matter who that chairman is. I, like other members, am sick of seeing things changed around on what seems to be the whim of one person without consultation. I call on the Joint House Committee to take some action at its next meeting. I point out again that the Joint House Committee elects the chairman of the committee to do a job and if there are any doubts about the capacity of that person to do the job or his willingness to consult, that person ought to be changed. I will not go any further into the very strong feelings I have about that person.

Hon T.G. Butler: You mean Mr Barnett.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon John Williams): Order! I refer the honourable member to Standing Order No 87. I have been listening very carefully and the Leader of the Opposition has not named anybody because that would be to contravene Standing Order No 87.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. I have taken care not to name anyone but I make it quite clear that there is a feeling in the Parliament on both sides that something is radically wrong. Many members who have been here much longer than I are concerned about what is happening, and rightly so. Really and truly, members of Parliament, through their Joint House Committee, must have a say in these changes. If the changes to Parliament House are going to be as dramatic as they now appear, it seems the whole tone of Parliament will change and that is not necessarily a good thing. Other members may have different views but it is important that I state my concern for the record and reflect the concern of both my own members and many members on the other side of the House. I call on the Joint House Committee to take some action before members of Parliament themselves seek to follow it through of their own volition.

HON D.J. WORDSWORTH (South) [12.20 pm]: I support the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition, particularly those concerning Parliament House and its passages, although I was not aware that he was going to make them. I, too, was appalled when I came in on a Saturday morning to find workmen drilling holes in the marble walls up and down the stairs. They have completely desecrated the place. If a future generation has the good sense

and taste to move those photographs of Premiers, there is no way in which the stairs can be returned to their original condition. Those pictures, and the manner in which they are presented, are ghastly and in very bad taste. I have described it as a Hollywood mausoleum.

Hon Tom Stephens: They must be, they are mostly from your side of Parliament.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: That does not make it any better, I am afraid.

Hon Tom Stephens: It makes it all the worse.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: It is a disgrace to the people who have their photographs there. One does not need to know very much about hanging paintings to know that they should not be hung over a window. Even if one visits State housing homes one does not see bloody paintings hanging from a string over the windows. It is not a question of where one gets one's good taste -- one could even get it from Balga.

Hon Tom Stephens: I get the impression you feel strongly about this.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: Very strongly. The amazing thing is that in no way is it possible to read the names of the Premiers in the photographs. The little plaques are there, but it is difficult to read them. The only thing which can be seen in very large letters is the name of the Speaker in another place who opened the gallery. It is astonishing that one should wish to gain such notoriety from doing such a thing that one has one's name in such large letters.

Hon Tom Stephens: What about those awful sesquicentennial plaques with the President's name all over them!

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: I hasten to assure the member opposite that I disagreed with those too. Members of Parliament seem to take up the awful idea of having plaques to commemorate their services.

Hon Mark Nevill: You haven't got a plaque.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: No, I have not got a plaque. It is a pity that the painting of the first Legislative Council has been moved upstairs to a less prominent place. It was a suitable painting dedicated to our 150th anniversary, and should not have been moved without Parliament knowing. I agree with the proposal made by Hon P.G. Pandal at the annual general meeting of the Joint House Committee that we should have a committee to look into the manner in which additions and renovations should be made to this House. As I stand here, I can see the ghastly pink carpet outside the door opposite me, which clashes with the very nice carpet in this Chamber.

Hon Mark Nevill: It clashes with the tie you are wearing.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: For the benefit of *Hansard*, this tie happens to be the Parliamentary Sports Club tie and there is nothing wrong with it. It is a good idea that we should have someone to keep an eye on this Parliament House and make recommendations regarding its furnishings and the like. It is not good enough to simply pass this off by saying that we have not had any major additions, and had we done so we would have got an adviser in. It is the little things in Parliament House which count. This is not the first example of what can happen. Previous committee chairman have chosen carpets and other additions to the furnishings of this House which have also been of poor taste.

HON MARK NEVILL (South East) [12.25 pm]: I wish to respond to some of the remarks made by the last two speakers. This is a serious matter, but the problem with discussing it is that it is a question of taste.

Hon G.E. Masters: It is a question of who makes the decisions. Not just one person.

Hon MARK NEVILL: The Joint House Committee is quite capable of getting together and making those decisions.

Hon G.E. Masters: I am asking them to.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I hope that they would do that. No matter what the Joint House Committee --

Hon P.G. Pandal interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Hon P.G. Pandal will cease making unruly interjections.

Hon MARK NEVILL: No matter which decision the Joint House Committee makes, it will offend some people. One of my disappointments with Parliament House, having been here for two or three years, is that it is more like a museum than something which changes. I have always been disappointed that there is nothing here with Aboriginal content which could be shown to visitors of Aboriginal descent. The painting by Roy Gibson from Balgo Hills, whom I taught many years ago, which was outside the Post Office, is magnificent. I was very disappointed that it did not stay there for two or three months.

Hon Tom Stephens: Mr Nevill, I complained to a member of the Joint House Committee about exactly the same thing only to be told there was a painting in the building done by an Aboriginal. When I asked where it was I was shown to the tapestry by Juniper!

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon John Williams): Order!

Hon MARK NEVILL: The painting I like most in Parliament House is the portrait of Sir Charles Gairdner, but I do not know that many visitors would know who he was. That would be better placed at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. A lot of the local government art here is really appalling.

Hon P.G. Pandal: Not to put too fine a point on it.

Hon Tom Stephens: It was never intended to be an art gallery.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: For the information of the honourable member, a copy of that portrait is in Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

Hon MARK NEVILL: Is it? A lot of the local government art should be recycled, and perhaps replaced by local authorities themselves. As I said, this place is more like a museum than a gallery, and that should change.

Hon D.J. Wordsworth: Few of the local authorities realised the significance of the donations they were making at the time. Certainly the Esperance Shire Council --

Hon MARK NEVILL: This is not a reflection on the local authorities at all.

Hon D.J. Wordsworth: But it is on the shire councils which donated them.

Hon MARK NEVILL: Yes, it may be, and some of them should be invited to provide replacements. There are 13 watercolours by Cyril Lander, which must have been commissioned, out of 140 paintings. Ten per cent of the paintings are by Cyril Lander, which shows an incredible bias towards that artist.

I made a suggestion about a year ago that we should have a space set aside around Parliament House for the works of three or four contemporary artists which could be changed every few months, and people could buy their work if they wished. I do not like the fact that one gallery has a mortgage on space. I agree with the comments made by one of the previous speakers about that. I think the paintings which are on display at the moment have artistic merit, but I certainly would not buy any of them. It is a matter of taste.

Hon G.E. Masters: That is right.

Hon MARK NEVILL: No matter what the Joint House Committee does, some people will be offended.

Hon G.E. Masters: As long as it is the Joint House Committee, and not the chairman himself.

Hon MARK NEVILL: The watercolours outside the dining room by Leith Angelo and the other artists are photographs.

Hon P.G. Pandal: A great shame too.

Hon MARK NEVILL: Not many people know that, and when I tried to find out about it nine months ago, because I did not think they were originals, it took three or four days. The originals are stored in the Art Gallery and I think at least they should be offered to members for their own rooms.

Hon A.A. Lewis interjected.

Hon MARK NEVILL: Because they fade in the light.

Hon A.A. Lewis: The Art Gallery recommended that we preserve the actual paintings.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I am sure there are suitable rooms in Parliament House.

Hon A.A. Lewis: There's too much light.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I will not enter the argument about the Joint House Committee. No matter what the Joint House Committee does there will be people who do not like what it does. I do not like the tapestry hanging in the dining room but obviously other members do.

Hon G.E. Masters: I am not talking about the Joint House Committee; it was a decision made by one person, which is quite wrong.

Hon MARK NEVILL: I am touching on the broader issues which are offending many people also. As far as the Premiers' Gallery goes I think the pictures are far too big. I agree with the comment made about the plaques -- they cannot be read. If I were a dictator I would have made them about a quarter of the size.

Hon D.K. Dans: If I were a dictator I would take them all down. If the collection grows we will have to have a tower put through the roof.

Hon MARK NEVILL: The painting of the first Legislative Council is appalling as it is out of proportion, with heads which seem to be stuck on bodies. That painting is revolting, and the further it is moved towards the top of the building the better. I hope that members agree that this place should not become a museum and perhaps that with recycling the paintings could be more stimulating. Mistakes will be made, but more consultation should take place and general feelings taken into account, as tastes differ. Some art is good in that it upsets people and makes them think; if we were to have paintings which everyone likes this would be a dreary Parliament House.

HON P.G. PENDAL (South Central Metropolitan) [12.33 pm]: I rise to support the Bill. I intend to cover two matters today in connection with the finances of the State. Like other members, I intend to digress for a few moments to the issues raised by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon David Wordsworth and Hon Mark Nevill. If the Joint House Committee had taken seriously the suggestion for the appointment of an honorary curator for Parliament House, put to the annual general meeting and passed 15 months ago and confirmed three months ago, the problems would not have arisen. I add my protest to those of members who were critical of the Premiers' portraits. I suggest it is a case of amateurs dabbling in areas where they have no knowledge.

Eight or nine years ago, when I was not a member of this place, I made the suggestion that there ought to be in Parliament House a proper gallery for portraits of the Premiers of Western Australia. I pointed out in a recent letter to the Speaker that I did not envisage that we would drop to the level of mediocrity of the photographic reproductions which now vandalise the spiral staircase. My proposition was put many years ago for a public competition amongst Western Australian artists -- oil paintings would be done of the Premiers and the paintings would then be hung appropriately. Parliament House is not a place for Premiers, but nonetheless an area along the lines of the southern corridor of Parliament House could have been made over to the sort of gallery for the Premiers that I was suggesting. The relatives of at least one former Premier, who is still living and did not represent this side of politics, take exception to the type of gallery of Premiers contained in the spiral staircase at the present time. That family was aware of the original suggestion that I put and surely with artists of the calibre of Owen Garde, and many others, we could have produced a first-class gallery of Premiers instead of the mediocrity and nonsense of the present time.

If the current Chairman of the Joint House Committee had been prepared to listen and to take the advice of the annual meeting of the committee and then perhaps bring in retired people on an honorary basis -- people who would regard it as an honour to service this place and give their expertise freely -- we would not have the nonsense of the past few weeks. Anyone passing the Post Office wall can see the pictures hanging there; and unlike my leader I think those paintings are by a very gifted artist. However, a couple of holes have been drilled in the wall and a few cheap green plastic plugs have been hammered into the white marble to take the weight of the paintings. That is the sort of thing -- small in itself -- which is an act of official vandalism that would not occur if the suggestion I made for honorary curators were put into place.

I turn now to matters which concern the finances of the State. Recently I asked a question of

the Minister representing the Minister for The Arts arising out of the annual report of the Department for the Arts wherein a grant of \$10 000 was made to The Death Defying Theatre of New South Wales. I asked that question to discover why it had become necessary to fund an arts group from outside Western Australia at a time when touring funds provided by the Department for the Arts within the State are at a premium. I did not see the production called "Coal Town". However the answer to my question was that the The Death Defying Theatre is a community theatre company based in New South Wales. The group was given the \$10 000 grant to tour its production of Coal Town within Western Australia for a number of reasons: That it had particular relevance to mining communities in Western Australia, that the production had attracted excellent reviews, and that it was to be reworked to give additional relevance to Western Australia. I am not in a position to say whether the production was a good one. However, at a time when we are desperately short of touring funds for our own touring art groups, it is crazy to bring in groups such as this from outside the State and to pay them to tour.

Suggestions have been made that the decision to award those funds was based on a highly political and hands-on approach by the Minister for The Arts. If that is the case, many people in the arts community in this State are becoming increasingly concerned at the role and influence of the new Department for the Arts and the way in which it is becoming an extension of the political arm of the current Government. I do not care whether that is a sort of hands-on approach of whatever Government; it is still wrong. Where do we draw the line? Mr President, you would be aware that next year Western Australians are to pay approximately \$150 000 out of State funds to see our National Opera Company perform in this State. I have gone on the record elsewhere being critical of that. Here we are, the taxpayers of the nation, having to pay an additional impost to the State so that for the first time in 14 years a national performing arts company will come to Western Australia.

Hon Tom Stephens interjected.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Where I have said "ballet", read "opera".

To give members some indication of the comparison, I remind them that the Western Australian Ballet Company in August 1986 received a total of \$15 000 towards the cost of its north west tour of Western Australia. As that company and many other companies will tell members, touring funds are hard to come by; yet \$10 000 is being given to a fairly obscure Eastern States performing arts group, while at the same time \$15 000 is all we can manage to get one of our own, internal performing arts groups into the area of the State that Hon Tom Stephens actually represents. I will give members another comparison with the \$10 000 that is granted to an Eastern States company to come here, which might appeal to Hon Tom Stephens a little bit more: \$500 was allocated in the last financial year towards the travel cost of six musicians attending the Aboriginal Country Music Festival. That gives members some idea of the priorities of this Government. It can manage a mere \$500 to assist cover the travel costs for Aboriginal musicians attending the Aboriginal Country Music Festival, but it can manage \$10 000 -- that is, 20 times that amount -- for an organisation 2 000 miles away, which presumably has access to touring funds from its own State Government and possibly even from the Australia Council as well.

Hon Tom Stephens: How many miles is Perth from Kununurra?

Hon P.G. PENDAL: A long way.

Hon Tom Stephens: Why do people like you, clamouring around the banks of the Swan, want to tell people in the Pilbara and the Kimberley what they should and should not look at?

Hon P.G. PENDAL: That is precisely the point I am making.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon John Williams): Order! If Hon Tom Stephens wants to contribute to this debate, and I am sure he has several good points to make, he knows I am even-handed and will give him the call when he stands in his place. In the meantime, I would appreciate it if the member would listen and contribute to the debate at a later stage.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: The point the member made by way of interjection supports the criticism I am making, which is, apart from the points I have already touched on, that people in country centres have imposed on them a touring network and mechanism that very often they are not consulted about. That is the very point that I am making.

Hon Mark Nevill: That is being reviewed.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Indeed, it will not be reviewed just by the current Government; it is something on which the Opposition will look to bring a whole lot more pressure to bear when deciding policy. People outside the metropolitan area are not being consulted or, on the rare occasions that they are, are not being consulted sufficiently.

I return to my criticism at the point at which I started: Firstly, I query why \$10 000 was given to this New South Wales company in the first place. I am not in a position to say that it is incompetent or unprofessional; but at a time when our own performing arts groups would dearly love to get out into the country areas of this State --

Hon Tom Stephens: You are Perth-based --

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I have appealed once to Hon Tom Stephens. I know that he feels strongly about this subject, but I will give him an opportunity after lunch to contribute to the debate. I appeal to him to stop interjecting, because it wastes time and contributes nothing.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.30 pm

HON H.W. GAYFER (Central) [2.31 pm]: I was late arriving at the House because I had to attend a funeral this morning and I heard the tail end of some remarks that concerned me relating to the running of this place and the House Committee in particular. I am responsible to this Chamber as its elected representative on the Joint House Committee, and if the members of this Chamber were not in agreement with that, I would not be a member of the committee. I, like my colleagues Hon Robert Hetherington, Hon John Williams and Hon Beryl Jones, am on the Joint House Committee to perform a service for the House. It is a very prestigious committee and it used to rank No 1 in the list of committees at the beginning of *Hansard*. I do not know whether it still does; it may have slid down the list. As far as I am concerned it might as well slide a little further. We are becoming rather concerned about the committee, especially in view of the criticisms levelled by a couple of members in this place. I believe that the Joint House Committee has to be as authoritative as it is; I am not arguing about that. The Parliament has a magnificent building and many excellent staff; consequently considerable skill and careful decision-making is required when any matter is dealt with by the committee.

Hon G.E. Masters interjected.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: I am not here to argue with Hon Gordon Masters, I do not know what he said but I want to say something now, if the member does not mind. It appears that decisions are being made which affect the well-being and the harmony of this place, and by that I mean the whole environs of Parliament House. From time to time we are only made aware of a decision after it has been made.

Hon G.E. Masters: That is the point I was making.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: The reason I raise this subject is that I heard yesterday morning that a certain member of the staff in this institution would have his services terminated for various reasons. I went to the Speaker yesterday afternoon and waited outside his door until he was able to see me. I asked the Speaker whether he would call an immediate meeting of the Joint House Committee, or those members who were available, bearing in mind that both Houses were sitting.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the honourable member to resume his seat. Like Hon H.W. Gayfer, I was not in the Chamber when the comments to which he is alluding were uttered in this place. I am a little concerned at the tack that this debate is taking and I will explain it in the following way: Although the debate in these financial Bills extends to honourable members the opportunity to recite "The Charge of the Light Brigade" or talk about whatever they want to talk about, I sense a trend here and perhaps the debate should not follow that course. I am not asking the honourable member to refrain because he is in a better position than I to make that decision, as he is obviously aware of comments of which I am not aware. I find it difficult to understand how honourable members have allowed this House to be directed -- perhaps channelled -- into debate on the workings of a committee of this House and this Parliament, which I would have thought proper to have discussed within that committee. I am aware of the point the honourable member is making in regard to the

endeavour to hold that meeting last night, and I have no argument about that. I wonder whether honourable members should not think about the subjects they raise in this debate, bearing in mind that I do not intend to stop the honourable member if he intends to pursue further a matter of which I am not aware.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: I did think we were talking in this Bill about moneys available and to be spent by the State. The subject about which I am speaking is direct expenditure by the State, one way or the other, in the employment of people within this place.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am not denying that. I have acknowledged that the subject is a matter that I do not intend stopping the honourable member speaking on. My suggestion that we should be more careful about the subjects we discuss is made not because the subject does not come within the scope of the Bill. I thought more along the line that it does not come within the scope of business that should be discussed in this Chamber.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: Thank you for your guidance, Mr President, but having gone this far, and in view of the fact that I am replying to comments made this morning, as a representative of the members of this Chamber, I feel an explanation should be given about the events to date. I have said I waited outside the Speaker's office last night to draw his attention to the unrest in this place and to ask him if he would call a meeting together last night to discuss the unrest of members. He agreed to call this meeting last night, and I only want to tell honourable members that that meeting was not called, and so far I have not heard any more from the Chairman of the Joint House Committee.

I do not want to go any further than that; I only want to explain my position as members' representative and point out that it was only my concern about the alarm being spoken of by members of this House in particular which prompted me to ask for a special meeting to be called in order to give the Joint House Committee an explanation of why certain things were happening in this place. I leave it at that. I was surprised, having been told that a meeting was to be held last night to discuss this, that the meeting was not forthcoming. But that is beside the point. Members can make their own judgment on what has been said this morning.

We are receiving a lot of correspondence about the Cameron report and the allocation of road funds to local government. The stage is being reached where we as a Parliament must take cognizance of the fact that by 1991 the allocation of road funds to at least 37 shire councils in this State, eight of which are directly within my province, will be considerably less than in 1987-88. When one can forecast virtually three to four years down the track what country shire councils will receive, I can sympathise with them when it is brought to our attention day by day.

After all is said and done, the taxes we hope to share in are paid for, in the main, by Australians; they furnish the Commonwealth Treasury with funds. In this instance, particularly with road funds, it seems to me that the States are gradually being denied the right to allocate and spend funds raised in the States. That is a right I have put forward for years. Shire councils now cannot possibly keep their employment rate up, or plan, or know where they are going when the funds they expect to be able to build upon from last year's allocation will become worse rather than better by 1991. They will become worse by many thousands of dollars, both in metropolitan town councils and in country shire councils.

Various reasons are given for that, but the main thing to remember is that the overall allocation is a mere pittance compared with what the CPI generally will be and what we might expect in the way of taxation. Although Narrogin Shire Council is in Hon Bill Stretch's territory, I am concerned for it; I did represent it for many years. That council talks about the districts around it, and many of those shire councils are mine. Narrogin Shire Council will contribute \$300 towards the Country Shire Council Association's fighting programme. The shire clerk has reported that the council will lose \$1 450 in its 1987-88 ABRD grant, and in 1988-89 it will receive \$7 800 as opposed to the projected \$11 400. Specific grants to that shire have been reduced by \$2 000 to \$108 000. And so the sad story goes on. Road funds will decrease in money terms from \$172 000 in 1985-86 to \$52 000 in real terms in 1994-95. What a horrible outlook these councils must have when they realise that in real terms their grants will be reduced not by a third but to a third of what they are currently receiving!

The Kondinin Shire Council is equally alarmed. The Main Roads Department, referring to the ABRD local road programme, says this --

In previous correspondence you are advised that the allocation for the final year of the Australian Bicentennial Road Development (ABRD) Programme --

I will not go into what I think of the bicentennial. To continue --

-- would be adjusted when a more accurate estimate was available of the funds that will be paid into the Trust Fund. The Department of Transport and Communications has recently advised that Western Australia's share of Local Road funds under the ABRD Programme is \$44.27M or 1.9% less than this Department's estimate of \$45.15M on which each Council's programme for the period 1982/83 to 1988/89 was based.

That was the foundation for the planning of the shire councils, on advice to them by the Federal Department of Transport and Communications. To continue --

The effect on your Council is to reduce the total entitlement by \$5 600 to \$283 400.

In the attached Programme no adjustment has been made for the reduced entitlement. It is requested that you submit an amended programme to allow for the reduced allocation in 1988/89 at your earliest convenience. As the programme amendments require the approval of the Commonwealth you are urged to keep the changes to a minimum.

The Federal Minister has recently approved a revised commitment level of \$2 400 million for ABRD. The revised commitment level for Western Australia for Local Roads is \$42.53 million. This commitment level closely approximates the total of each Council's allocation for the years 1982/83 to 1987/88 as advised in the Assistant Commissioner Operations' letter of August 5 1986. It is therefore unnecessary to adjust individual programmes to allow the State's indicative allocation of Local Road funds in 1987/88.

Western Australia has been allocated \$9.6M of Local Road funds in 1987/88 under the ABRD Programme.

Even though projects extending over a number of years have been approved by the Federal Minister, payments to the State in 1987/88 will be limited to the allocation provided for 1987/88.

The letter was discussed at length by the shire and a motion was moved by Councillor Wilkins and seconded by Councillor Young that work already scheduled on road works for 1988-89 be reduced by \$5 600. Those were the details of the minutes of the Kondinin Shire Council on 18 November. The same thing applies to a lot of councils in Western Australia. I have already mentioned that 37 councils are involved and they have had to prune their estimates. Eight of those councils are in Central Province. The estimates were based on departmental figures previously given to them. It is an alarming state of affairs and, as members of Parliament, we should be aware of it. We must realise that the appropriation funds are increasing year by year as far as the State and Commonwealth coffers are concerned -- the loan fund has not increased to the same extent. Local authorities are being strangled and they are virtually being put out of existence because of the programming of reduced budgets to the financial year 1990-91 and even beyond that to 1994-95, which is some seven years down the track. Our protests fall on deaf ears. After all is said and done, who will listen to a member of Parliament in this place?

Hon T.G. Butler: Exactly. Especially a week before Christmas.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: Hon Tom Butler has the ear of Ministers and he can bleat as much as he likes, but the only bleating I can do is in this House which is here for that very purpose. If I had the ear of the Minister like Hon Tom Butler does, there would be no need for me to take the action I am taking. This is the only avenue available to me unless I happen to belong to the same political party as Hon Tom Butler, and I do not.

Several members interjected.

Hon Kay Hallahan: I am disappointed to hear you say that. I thought you always had my ear.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: The Minister for Community Services' ear could not be closer to me. It does not need the Christmas feeling to bring that upon me. As a matter of fact I must admit that the later this House sits, life becomes very interesting. I could go so far as to say to the Minister that I dreamt about her the other night, and I apologise.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon H.W. GAYFER: It reminds me of another subject I wanted to touch on; that is, the breeding of rabbits. I do not know whether you are aware of it, Mr President, but we have problems with rabbit breeding.

Hon T.G. Butler: Now he is talking about rabbit breeding.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: I will talk about that subject and I remind members that rabbits are country oriented. In three months a pair of rabbits will have increased the rabbit population by 70.

Hon D.K. Dans: Is that three or six months?

Hon H.W. GAYFER: I am sorry, it is six months. Within three months a pair of rabbits will increase the rabbit population by 14, but within six months that pair of rabbits will have increased the rabbit population, through natural processes, by 70. The life of each of those rabbits is about five years. Members might ask what the heck this has to do with appropriations.

Hon T.G. Butler: That is something I was going to ask.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: We got on to the subject of breeding and I thought this was as good a time as any to bring up the matter. Five silver grey domestic rabbits arrived in Australia on the First Fleet in 1788 and three of those rabbits belonged to Governor Phillip. By 1830 domestic rabbits were living in the wild along the eastern coast of Australia --

Hon T.G. Butler: That is a fascinating piece of information.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: Hon Tom Butler should shut up, go outside, grab a paint brush and do some painting.

Thomas Austin, a squatter on a property in Geelong, in Victoria, brought out from England 24 wild rabbits in 1859 and released them on his property for the purpose of sport. In 1867 -- only 12 years later -- he held a shooting expedition on his property and 14 253 rabbits were shot. It might interest members to know that 448 eagles, 23 eagle-hawks, 622 native cats and 32 domestic cats were also shot during that expedition. By 1868 the rabbits were rampant and by 1890 there was estimated to be 36 million rabbits in the Eastern States. As the plague increased Governments built fences across their States. In fact, such a fence forms three miles of my boundary fence. Two huge fences were built in this State -- one was built to keep the rabbits from encroaching into the west, but they were able to get through the barrier before it was completed. Each fence cost 400 000 pounds at the turn of the century and the fences had no control over the rabbits whatsoever. The carnage which took place in Australia was something really to be seen. Many members would not remember it.

Hon D.K. Dans: In 1890!

Hon H.W. GAYFER: Hon Des Dans is too young to remember these things.

Scientists have calculated that 100 rabbits eat as much as one head of cattle. In peak periods there has been known to be between 300 and 600 rabbits on every hectare of grazing land in Australia. In 1953 myxomatosis was introduced and it was the absolute answer to the graziers' and farmers' prayer. Ninety per cent of the rabbits were wiped out virtually overnight; and the value of Australia's annual wool clip increased immediately by \$68 million.

I can go to great lengths and quote further from my source of knowledge: Dick Smith, who is a well known man and is spending his life doing research into this subject. Dick Smith is famous for his helicopter explorations over the north pole, and he is now bringing forward a very interesting and well-researched *Australian Geographic* magazine. I have taken the liberty of sending these articles to all my local shire councils because, like members in this Chamber, a lot of those councils have forgotten -- if indeed they ever knew -- what it was

like in those days. Members such as Hon John Caldwell, Hon Margaret McAleer, and Hon Bill Stretch will remember the situation because they were faced with it, as was I.

We now find that we are talking about introducing into Australia domestic rabbits for meat purposes. I understand there is nothing -- other than a few regulations -- to prevent this from happening, despite the protests that we have heard around the country. I will read out a letter, dated 12 July 1987, from the Shire President of the Corrigin Shire --

Dear Mick,

Please find enclosed copies of relevant information on what changes may come about on rabbit farming commercially. No doubt you are aware of some of the discussions that have gone on since 1985 when the Agriculture Protection Board carried out a survey with the Regional Advisory Committee's in W.A. to assess reaction to the breeding of commercial rabbits.

The answer was a short 'No'.

However at a recent meeting of the Narrogin R.A.C I was dumbfounded to obtain a recent release from the Minister for Agriculture requesting the A.P.B to give consideration to allowing of commercial rabbit farming in W.A.

The Minister in my opinion is obviously under some pressure from his own electorate where in some areas particularly around Esperance, rabbits are very bad and some areas are being requested to being exempt from poisoning for a trial period so that rabbits may be caught for commercial purposes.

Rabbits as you know are a delicacy and a very popular meat item in butchers shops in the Metropolitan area.

As the letter states the Minister is seeking support from grower organisations and whilst he may have carried out some research into the history of rabbits he wants to remember that rabbits nearly brought this country to its knees in the 1930's and cost the State and the Commonwealth millions of dollars

We don't want to see a repetition of that period and I made this point very clear at the meeting, subsequently a motion to the Zone was carried unanimously.

Another motion going from Council to the C.S.C.A Conference will be an amendment to the ruling on the current skeleton weed levy placed on all grain growers. Council considers it would be more equitable . . .

The letter then goes on to deal with skeleton weed.

A memo was sent to all branches of the Western Australia Farmers Federation from Mr Gargett, the executive director, on 1 April 1987, which said --

Please find attached a copy of a letter received from the Minister for Agriculture, Julian Grill, on proposed commercial rabbit farming in Western Australia.

The subject was given considerable debate by General Executive at its March meeting. More research is being done on the concept and a paper prepared for July Council.

In the meantime, Executive moves that the letter be sent to all Members for their reaction to commercial rabbit farming.

The Minister's letter to Mr Winston Crane, received on 18 February 1987, said --

I have recently requested the Agriculture Protection Board to give consideration to allowing commercial rabbit farming in Western Australia as I see the present restrictions as an unnecessary constraint on a commercial activity and a valuable opportunity for agricultural diversification being missed.

The Board states that there are no scientific, technical or logical reasons to maintain the prohibition on such farming. However, its local Zone Control Authorities and Regional Advisory Committees have expressed opposition to such a change.

I consider this attitude to be unrealistic in the present state of agriculture where all possible alternative enterprises should be evaluated. I therefore seek the support of yourself and your organisation for the change.

Attached is a background paper prepared by the Agriculture Protection Board which lists the reasons for opposition, the answers to these and the procedures involved in such a policy change.

I now turn to the commercial rabbit production in Western Australia background paper, prepared by Mr Hogstrom, the chief executive officer of the APB. He says --

The keeping of rabbits for commercial purposes or as pets has been prohibited in Western Australia for about 25 years. In the past few years there has been substantially increased pressure to allow commercial rabbit production and the number of pet rabbits held illegally increased. The APB now allows the keeping of two non wild type rabbits per household in the metropolitan area.

Diversification of agricultural production is the chief argument raised for allowing commercial production. Farmers whose income is currently limited by property size or finances see rabbit meat production as a tangible but small enterprise to boost their income.

Equally, proposals have been made for large single enterprise "factories" to produce rabbits along the lines of broiler production . . .

BACKGROUND. Until 1961, permits were issued for commercial rabbit production. This ceased when the Agriculture Protection Board, in line with an Australia-wide decision, phased out commercial rabbit farms from that date. The largest producer had some 900 rabbits and ceased in 1964 because the price he was receiving was insufficient. Since the several producers all left the industry voluntarily, it is assumed that the economics of rabbit production did not support expansion or maintenance of the industry. At the same, there was considerable opposition to commercial rabbit farming by the broadacre farmers and concern at the standard of rabbit establishments.

In other parts of Australia commercial farming also ceased and there have been no fully commercial units anywhere in Australia for the past 20 years. Some "backyard" small scale production persisted. Such activities are illegal in all states (except Northern Territory where there are no restrictions).

The Australian Agricultural Council, Standing Committee on Agriculture and the Vertebrina Pest Committee of the SCA have all endorsed the Australia-wide policy of no commercial rabbits, most recently in 1982. At that time, New South Wales indicated it had given approval for a large commercial rabbit farm at Broken Hill -- with the product for export only but that it was not intended to issue any further permits. Tasmania was investigating the possibility of allowing commercial rabbits -- but under stringent conditions.

At the present time, no commercial rabbit farms are operating in Australia although the attitude in New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria is tending towards allowing them.

The reasons given for opposition at Australian Agricultural Council are --

1. the likely adverse effects of approval for rabbit farming on the willingness of landholders to participate in district rabbit control programmes;
2. the possible demand from an established industry for the introduction of the Fibroma virus for protection against myxomatosis --

That is what the argument is all about -- the fact that anti-vaccine against myxomatosis could be introduced, and the consequent risk of the spread of this virus to the wild rabbit populations. The report continues --

New South Wales proposed stringent security conditions and opposed the use of Fibroma virus. Tasmania also proposes tight security and controls but would allow the "anti-myxo" Fibroma virus. This virus is currently banned in Australia other than in scientific institutions.

Expert opinion is that "the possibility of Fibroma virus competing successfully with wild myxoma strains to establish in the field is remote". It has a poor capacity for transmission in Australian rabbits, . . .

In Western Australia, the APB uses the same arguments to oppose commercial rabbit farming, i.e.

1. farmers resolve to control wild rabbits
2. risk associated with Fibroma and
3. competition with other meats would be no overall advantage to farmers.

There is a lot more in that document. I am accused of taking up time during this debate to speak about rabbits, and have been told that this is no time to be talking about rabbit farming and rabbit breeding. I started my speech by explaining exactly how quickly the spread of 36 million rabbits took place back in 1860, in a matter of 12 or 14 years.

I have lived through it. I spent my boyhood trapping rabbits to try to get rid of them; putting an extended exhaust pipe on the old utility to try to fumigate them; mixing oil with petrol to see the smoke coming out of the holes in the ground so I knew which holes I had to fill up in the middle of summer or put some sand over to fumigate them; boiling wheat, which gives off a very powerful gas; putting down phos toxin tablets -- we did all sorts of things. But nothing -- not the fences that were built, nor the controls, nor deep ripping -- was as effective as myxomatosis. That was the greatest thing for this country, and for us farmers and this State, through the control measures that used to have to be paid for by the State. But now we are talking of bringing in more rabbits for commercial farming. I proved that commercial rabbits were brought here on the First Fleet and they spread right up the eastern coast. It did not need Austin to bring in the wild rabbits -- the others spread right up and down the east coast. Now we are talking of bringing in the anti-myxomatosis virus and spreading that in order to reintroduce commercial rabbits into Australia.

I understand that now even the Western Australian Farmers Federation has agreed, but I can assure the House that its members and those around the countryside do not agree with it. Members will have to go an awfully long way to convince me that bringing in commercial rabbits is a good idea, no matter how good is the intention of putting them in a cage and so on. I have seen a cement wall submerged in the ground like the foundation of a house with netting on top of that yet have no effect. All those good ideas do not counter the occasions when people get sick of looking after the rabbits and their kids will not allow them to wring their necks. So, out of kindness to their kids, they open the gate and let them go into the bush, just as people with kittens born on the farm out of their favourite pussy cat drop them in the State forest on the way to Perth -- and pups as well -- letting them fend for themselves. They do that purely and simply because they will not put them in a wheat bag with a rock in the bottom and chuck them in the nearest dam; it is as simple as that. We all do that, too -- that is the callous part about being a farmer. One has to do that.

Hon T.G. Butler interjected.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: Hon Tom Butler should not come on my farm because we have ways of dealing with people like him, too.

Hon W.N. Stretch: Have you got a big bag?

Hon H.W. GAYFER: I have a big bag, even for Hon Tom Butler.

Hon T.G. Butler: If you got your favourite cat fixed up you would not have it breeding every 10 minutes.

Hon H.W. GAYFER: I do not understand -- I am not quite with the member.

I believe that somebody must take a close look at this. We have on one hand a score written by the APB that says it agrees. We have a total rejection by the Australian Agriculture Council, which is a body of all Ministers of all States meeting. We have people like the Shire President of Corrigin, Mr W.R. Mooney, whose letter I read out, who are on the advisory committees which have voted a unanimous no to the proposition. All these people are pleading, and yet now I hear the idea is being proceeded with, the permits will be issued, and encouragement given.

The other day I was out at a country school. The year 12s were leaving and I asked a lad, "What are you going to do when you leave school?" He said, "I am going commercial rabbit farming." He had made up his mind. He is not a farmer's son but he lives at York and is from a well-known family there. He has set his mind on going into commercial rabbit

farming. His teachers and guidance officer have explained there is money to be made out of it, and he can see a great future in it -- he is 14 or 15. I say good luck to him. But for God's sake, somebody should tell him what the responsibilities are of keeping commercial rabbits and what the end result might be to Australia if they get out as they did once before and, as Ross Mooney said in his letter, brought us to our knees in the 1930s. For any person interested, although this is a lengthy document it is the most comprehensive document on rabbits that I have ever come across. It is in the *Australian Geographic* magazine, No 7, July-September 1987 edition. I am sure the library would run off a photostat, or if any member would like a copy my office would be only too glad to supply it.

In deference to some of my friends opposite who see this form of debate as a hold-up process, I will not continue to make the very long speech I intended to make on the lack of water in country areas -- how I feel water could be introduced from the Fitzroy River, how it could be pumped out, and how I like the idea that Minister Bridge is looking at it and asking others to look at it. Then again, I will have to see it go back onto the drawing board before I believe it, having been disappointed so many times before about the spread of the water that actually is going to come about. We might see the water coming to our properties and homes so we can have access to the same necessities of life as our city cousins have.

I support the measure.

HON J.N. CALDWELL (South) [3.20 pm]: I support the Loan Bill, and wish to make some comments about interest rates. The Minister said, in the second reading speech --

For the fourth consecutive year, the opportunity has been taken to nominate our total State Government borrowing allocation for public housing.

That is all well and good so far. He went on to say --

These nominated funds are advanced by the Commonwealth at the concessional interest rate of 4.5 per cent and are repayable over 53 years.

That part leaves a bitter taste in the mouth, especially the rate of 4.5 per cent. When country areas are in a drought situation people can acquire a drought loan of up to \$70 000, at a rate of 4.5 per cent. This is definitely a last resort for those people who need the money in an attempt to remain on their farming properties. No-one knows more than I do the complicated position in which one finds oneself when one is in a drought area, as my country area is at the moment. The Badgubup district is drought-declared. When we travel around the district we see that the stock have no feed, and the largest amount of grass we can see is at the bottom of the dams, many of which are empty.

Hon Neil Oliver: They are some of the best farms in Western Australia.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: They are, and that is probably the irony of the whole situation. Some of the major farming districts are in a very critical situation. One can also see the headers going around their sparse crop cutting corners. I have given instructions to my son to harvest two-thirds of the paddock and leave the rest for the stock. We see semitrailer loads of sheep being taken to areas where there is more grass than where they came from. It is gratifying that the Government has offered this 4.5 per cent interest rate. However, the bitter part of it is that after 12 months the interest rate will be reviewed. A farmer may, for example, have a reasonably good year next year. He may be able to pay back perhaps \$20 000. Then his position is reviewed, and the people who review it say, "He has had quite a good year, has paid so much back, let us bump his interest up to about nine per cent." A fluctuating interest rate is one of the most detrimental things to business. How can a farmer budget and say, "Okay, next year my interest bill will be \$10 000", when suddenly the interest rate is reviewed and he has to pay \$20 000? A drought loan, as I said, is a last resort. It comes to the people at 4.5 per cent interest rate, and it should stick at that rate until the loan has been paid off. It is imperative that we keep these people on the land and in businesses.

I would also like to mention briefly businesses in country areas. In my home town of Katanning there used to be eight machinery agencies, now there are four, and at least two of them are in a very difficult financial situation. Drought loans, or something similar, should be available to these country businesses. Who wants these businesses to have to sell up? Who wants the farming land to be sold and the big corporations and financial institutions coming in to buy it? Nothing is better for the country communities than to have the local

people looking after their own private business or land. I would like the Government to consider the remarks I have made about drought loans.

HON ROBERT HETHERINGTON (South East Metropolitan) [3.25 pm]: For the past three months I have intended to make a one-hour speech on the Budget. My time has now arrived, but because it might upset some of my colleagues I have thrown out three-quarters of the speech and will keep the rest of it down to about 15 minutes.

I was interested in what Hon Mick Gayfer had to say; he has informed me of something I was not aware of, and which does concern me. I can remember what rabbit plagues were like in Australia before myxomatosis. I was a little disappointed that Hon John Caldwell sat down without giving a small dissertation on the effect of lupins on stud rams.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Don't encourage him.

Hon ROBERT HETHERINGTON: I want to talk about two things. The first is that this morning I saw a landmark in the development and maturing of this Parliament. Nobody else may have noticed it. For the first time the Committee on Delegated Legislation met and elected a chairman. I have the honour to be that chairman. The deputy chairman who was elected was Hon Margaret McAleer. The other members of the committee are my good colleagues Hon Tom Helm, Hon H.W. Gayfer and Mr Frank Donovan, Mr Bob Greig, Mr Bob Wiese and Dr Ian Alexander from another place. This is a very important development. At various times I have pointed out the truism that as Governments get more responsibility so the volume and complexity of legislation grows, as does the Public Service, and regulations multiply. With the best will in the world mistakes will be made. It is most important that Parliament keeps such regulations under scrutiny. Every member knows it is very difficult to scrutinise regulations in the House. We are all fairly busy, despite some of the remarks that are made about members of Parliament. Members of Parliament work long and hard.

Hon Kay Hallahan: Hear, hear!

Hon ROBERT HETHERINGTON: We do not all do the same things, but we have a great deal to keep us busy. It has been my opinion for a long time that it is necessary for us to establish a Committee on Delegated Legislation. There has been a Public Accounts Committee for some time in another place. There is a Committee on Government Agencies, on which I was privileged to serve for some time, now chaired by Hon Mark Nevill. Both of those committees are doing excellent work. Now we have the third of the trinity, a Committee on Delegated Legislation, which will have a long and wearing job scrutinising regulations.

It is not denigrating the Government or the Public Service to say that such a committee is necessary. As responsibilities grow, as the size of the Public Service grows, and as Ministers get more and more responsibilities, the opportunities for mistakes arise. We recognised that when we set up an Ombudsman and we have recognised it again in setting up this committee. I hope that during the next year the committee will settle down, do some hard work, and become a committee to do the necessary work of acting as a check and balance on the Executive, which is part of the Westminster system. I might add that I would feel less happy about the work we have to do were it not for the fact that we have two excellent clerks who can advise the committee, both of whom are dedicated and zealous, and have legal training. This will make a great difference to the work of the committee and help it to work successfully. We do not give sufficient public recognition to the people who serve members of Parliament; that is, the staff in this Parliament. I remember Mr Gary Newcombe who served the Government Agencies Committee so well and continues to do so today. I commend the work of the various Clerks in this Parliament, including the Ushers of the Black Rod, and former Clerks serving various committees. These officers are essential to the workings of this Parliament. I hope members of the various committees will live up to the abilities of those serving officers, that the creation of committees will be warranted and that we will be able to flesh out in full the notion of the Westminster system.

Members find they get to know each other very well when serving on committees -- whether on Standing Committees or Select Committees. I came to know Hon Colin Bell on the Government Agencies Committee, following which he asked me to serve on the Select Committee on Agricultural Education. As a result, I now know my friend Hon John

Caldwell who has taught me a great deal about Murray grays, merino sheep, and lupins; not to mention other things which I will not mention. I have also come to know better Hon Sam Piantadosi, who proved to be a mine of information on matters horticultural. In this way members receive a greater appreciation of each other and of what each has to offer to this House. However a great deal of work is to be done on the Agricultural Education Select Committee. I know people look down their noses when we ask for a further extension, but we intend to produce a good report dealing with the many problems facing agricultural education today.

Recently a delegation from Zimbabwe passed through Western Australia on return from a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference in Kuala Lumpur. The delegation consisted of the Speaker of the Zimbabwe Legislative Assembly, Hon Didymus Mutasa; Senator George Chinengundu, Assistant Minister for Local Government; Senator Amina Hughes, Assistant Minister for Transport; and Mr John Nkomo, a former Minister and relative of Mr Joshua Nkomo, one of the leaders of the Zimbabwe revolution. Mr Nkomo and Senator Hughes are both Ndebele who come from Matabeleland so the group was a united one. The group visited Western Australia to see what we could do for them. I had the privilege of meeting Speaker Mutasa three years ago when I travelled through Zimbabwe with my wife. I met him again last year when I had the honour and pleasure of representing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association of this Parliament at the CPA conference in London. I made several speeches which gave pleasure to the front-line States of Africa, some of the Indians, and others. I was glad to hear the Zimbabwe delegation was to visit Perth. I spoke to the Deputy Premier and Hon David Parker, and through Exim we arranged for a short stay of five days. During this time Hon Sandy Lewis made a valuable contribution to the information made available to the delegation; for this I thank him. His time was given freely and voluntarily as he agreed that we were trying to do something worthwhile. I am hopeful that we can set up greater trade links with Zimbabwe as we have a great deal to offer. Senator Hughes said that she was quite envious of Western Australia when she toured Westrail and saw the rolling stock and facilities there. The delegation visited Muresk, and inspected grain storing facilities at York; it also visited Chamberlains, and Houghton's Winery.

Hon H.W. Gayfer: They would have been very impressed with the grain handling facilities at York. I understand that company turned on the services of their chairman to show them around.

Hon ROBERT HETHERINGTON: That is true. Everyone there was most helpful. My only regret is that we did not have time to ask Hon Mick Gayfer to show the delegation around the greater grain handling facilities. Perhaps that time will come in due course. Western Australia produces much that Zimbabwe wants, but unless we have the need for their products, Zimbabwe will not have the foreign exchange to trade with us. This situation needs to be looked at very carefully, not only as it affects Zimbabwe but also the whole of East Africa.

Hon H.W. Gayfer: For the member's information, a group from ADAB is in Zimbabwe at the present moment advising them on the construction of grain storage units and the maintenance of those units. The group left Western Australia about two weeks ago.

Hon ROBERT HETHERINGTON: The honourable gentleman keeps informing me. We have also had an officer from Zimbabwe visit the Perth Mint to train in the minting of gold. I am grateful to hear that this sort of exchange is beginning and I hope it will continue to grow.

In the two years since I visited Harare the city has grown and prospered, although it has great problems. Despite some of the stories of massacres in the south, the country is generally well run. The Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe, is an outstanding African leader. His so-called Marxism is a very pragmatic Marxism which looks to western countries for trade. If Western Australia can establish trade on a sound basis with Zimbabwe we will help our own economy, and their economy -- and by doing so help to stabilise that country politically, resulting in a better Africa which will also serve our interests. Enlightened self-interest is one of those things which we must always go in for. I will not at this stage talk about the rest of East Africa where there are grave problems because that is something I will do at another time; however, I want to mention the fact that the Zimbabweans are interested in Western Australia. I would like to read to the House a letter I received from Mr Speaker Mutasa after he returned to Harare, which reads as follows --

I wish to thank you for a wonderful time which we had in Western Australia during our five day visit to your Province. The programme was most interesting, informative and educational. Indeed, it all reflected your efforts in developing meaningful relations between our two countries.

I found the technology of Western Australia to be a direct response to your country's needs and conditions. There could not have been a better example than when our delegation visited Muresk Agricultural College, Western Australia School of Mines Yoke grain handling facilities and the Houghton Vineyards. Because of the similarity of some conditions of our two countries, it is important and desirable to cultivate strong relationships between us.

Thank you for everything.

I was about to add before I was interrupted by a friendly interjection -- and members know that I tend to lose my train of thought when that happens -- that the delegation visited Kalgoorlie and saw the mines there. Hon Mark Nevill hosted the delegation there and I could not think of a better person to have done that. As a matter of fact, I chose him and suggested that he do it because of his great knowledge and understanding of the problems there. Exim put on an excellent dinner at which the delegation could meet a large number of people from industry. The delegation also met the President of the Farm Union Dealers Association, and I think that discussion was very fruitful.

I hope that something good comes out of this and that we can develop a fruitful and mutually beneficial relationship between our two countries. Harare is one 10-hour plane trip from Perth, and Qantas sends a plane across once a week, although there is a problem in that Qantas has half the plane and Zimbabwean Airlines has the other half. I do not know what would happen if one airline decided not to fly. So far, they have managed to cooperate adequately and I hope this cooperation will grow and that we can develop relations across the Indian Ocean with our near neighbours in East Africa as transport becomes more efficient.

I want to pay tribute to the interest shown by the Deputy Premier, Mr Mal Bryce, and by the Minister for Minerals and Energy, Mr David Parker, and by members from both sides of the House.

It is with great pleasure that I support the Bill.

HON NEIL OLIVER (West) [3.43 pm]: Unfortunately I have not had the opportunity of officially attending a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference, of which the previous speaker spoke, but I recently took out of my own schedule the opportunity to be an observer in Kuala Lumpur at the conference to which the member referred. I suggest that members travelling independently of their parliamentary allowance should make themselves available at these meetings and other functions of the CPA; that includes the CPA in the United Kingdom and the association's headquarters there.

I will now direct my attention to the Loan Bill. I am very pleased to see that the Minister for Budget Management is present in the House. There has been an increase in this year's Loan Bill of nine per cent over last year. Last year the Bill was for an amount of \$260 million and I note that this year the figure is \$300 million; I have also noted many comments made by the Treasurer in his call for Budget restraint. I assume that all of the ingredients of this Loan Bill have been carefully examined by the Minister for Budget Management, and I am very pleased that he is now present to comment on some of the matters I would like to raise.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.00 pm

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I ask the Minister for Budget Management to explain the carryover of the unexpired balance of the previous authorisation, the amount involved and the percentage in a normal year.

Previously, this State was operating under the constraints of approvals from the Loan Council for borrowings. That amount has been increased by \$40 million this year, but I query what additional borrowings have been made by semi-Government bodies and statutory authorities. That information has now become extremely relevant when examining this Loan Bill. There is not much point examining the provisions of this Bill without taking into account the extra borrowings outside the legislation. I am not referring to the old style borrowings but to some of the new borrowings that have been approved.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Could you give me an example of the sorts you are referring to?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: One item which interested me particularly was a prospectus I examined while I was away from the State two months before Parliament assembled. It related to an organisation called the Western Australian Business Migration Trust; it was sponsored by the Western Australian Development Corporation and I received a copy from the representative of the Western Australian Exim Corporation. This is a new initiative and I was surprised to learn of the prospectus because I had not been aware of it when I was in Western Australia. I am interested to know the projections in this area.

Whilst all these authorities operate under Acts and report to the Parliament, I am interested to know the precise information. I do not expect the Minister to extract figures from the top of his head on these matters, so I ask him to indicate in broad terms whether the borrowings will be \$50 million, \$100 million, or whatever, within those areas. Obviously they formed part of the original Loan Bills as this House knew them many years ago.

Hon J.M. Berinson: It must be very many years ago because, for the few years I have been associated with the Budget, the borrowings of the statutory authorities, particularly the SEC, have very often exceeded Government borrowings by far. That was an established procedure when we came into office.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: That has always been accepted by the Loan Council. These days considerable loans have been negotiated outside that area and I have already referred specifically to the Western Australian Business Migration Trust prospectus which invited people to invest in a Government instrumentality. Bearing in mind that individual subscriptions of \$500 000 were invited, obviously a considerable amount of money will become available to the Government outside the normal provisions of this Bill.

I share the concern expressed earlier by many members with regard to the present occurrences within Parliament House. We are not addressing this matter as individuals but on behalf of our electorate and the people of Western Australia. You, Mr President, have often drawn to the attention of the House that this Parliament is not for us; we are passing through it; we are here for the period from when we are elected until we retire or are defeated. We are the custodians of this building. It is very much part of Western Australia and it has, and must retain, the respect of all Western Australians. All members have a duty to continue the traditions laid down by the people who have gone before us.

HON JOHN WILLIAMS (Metropolitan) [4.08 pm]: In rising to support the second reading of this Bill, my remarks of necessity will be short and, hopefully, to the point. I do not propose to reply to parts of the debate referring to the Joint House Committee. I prefer to take those remarks on board and deal with them in the appropriate place and at the appropriate time, and then report to this House as one of its representatives.

I congratulate Hon Robert Hetherington on his appointment as Chairman of the Delegated Legislation Committee. Some members may think it is a recent phenomenon but I can tell them and you, Mr President, who have served in this place much longer than I have, that I first mentioned this committee in 1971 when the Government of the day, despite reason, felt it was not appropriate and that it would interfere with Government. I dealt with it in 1975 when a Government of my colour was in office and it decided to appoint an outside committee to look at the matter. That angered me no end. I am glad to see it has come to fruition and I wish the committee well. It has a lot of hard work in front of it, and I know from when I started the Standing Committee on Government Agencies what a lot of hard work that will be. Many people have short memories, and if one does not tell people what part one has played, nobody else will either. With that new committee we are moving not just to the whole of the Westminster system but to a part of it which will give members in this place a reasonable and rational access to information and allow them to have majority decisions in this place implemented rather than be suborned by an Executive.

As one senior Minister remarked to me, it would be a good thing to be a Minister if we did not have a Parliament. I know the Minister for Budget Management does not share those sentiments, except perhaps at four or five o'clock in the morning when we are still going on.

On that subject, perhaps for the tenth time in my career, I ask the House to consider what a stupid set of rules we live under. We work, as Hon Robert Hetherington said, as hard as anyone in the community and sometimes harder than most. We sacrifice our time hour after

hour listening to members, perhaps like myself and others, expounding a point of view, yet we will not break with the tradition which says that we cannot meet until Tuesday at a fixed time in the afternoon, and we must finish on a Thursday. We have to meet on Tuesday because the Cabinet meets on Monday, and the Cabinet is very important. Cabinets never thought of meeting on Friday; that would be quite impossible! We should never start on a Monday at 10 o'clock and go through to five o'clock on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; we must stop on Thursday because, do not forget, country members must get back! The country members are talking about the days when they got back with horses and buggies and the President had a bedroom up here.

Hon H.W. Gayfer: That is a good story!

Hon JOHN WILLIAMS: It is a good one. With today's communications we should be looking at this again. This Government has been very generous of late and has taken a quantum leap almost into the twenty-first century by suddenly deciding that members should have certain sophisticated machinery.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Even on the hours, I think you will acknowledge, Mr Williams, that it took the Government some time to get the House to agree, for example, to 11.00 am meetings on Thursday and earlier meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Hon H.W. Gayfer: I still have not noticed 11.00 pm being affected.

Several members interjected.

Hon JOHN WILLIAMS: I could not agree more. I hate to disagree with Hon Tom Stephens in this place, but it is a multifaceted problem which perhaps not a committee but perhaps a task force --

Several members interjected.

Hon JOHN WILLIAMS: I wonder if I could continue; is that all right? Perhaps a task force of both Houses could be set up to examine all these facets of when we sit and for how long. I well remember a period in 1978 when I could no longer sit because I had sat in this place for too long. God forbid that there should be other members who will follow suit! My health is now happily restored, and is now probably 110 per cent on what it was in 1978.

We punish ourselves unnecessarily. If we handed the matter over to some management consultants, they would probably tell us how archaic we were and put us right for \$4 million. A task force from both Houses approaching the problem and looking at it sanely might suggest almost revolutionary things so that we could do much more for the members and for the efficiency of the House. If we are to run into these late hours at night, we must warn everyone and make arrangements for people to work shifts. Perhaps we might introduce penalty rates for members. The situation is ridiculous. I know the Minister, as Leader of the House, agrees in principle that the procedure should be reformed. I recall two speeches he made when he was on this side of the House, and I could refer him to speeches he made on the other side of the House. Everyone condemns our archaic sitting practices.

Hon J.M. Berinson: After you had made a somewhat similar comment last year, I attempted to set up an inter-party committee. Somehow it never got round to functioning.

Hon JOHN WILLIAMS: Indeed. And that reflects sadly on the members entrusted with that task. The Leader of the House is right; he did attempt to do something. It does not reflect on anyone's face more graphically than it does on the Leader of the House's when he is sitting over there -- and when he was sitting over here. None of us is at his best at 2.00 am, 3.00 am or 4.00 am. It is unfair to expect us to be.

Having been here for a fair amount of time, I was fascinated with an article which appeared in the *Daily News*. The article is the shortest, though perhaps not the most comprehensive on this next subject. It is headed "Moves to halt bingo rip-offs". To the credit of the Minister concerned, in 1987 at last something is going to be done about these bingo rip-offs. As you know, Mr President, and I trust to your amusement, this is not a new subject either. If you remember, some years ago you sat in the seat Hon Mark Nevill now occupies. I sat next to you, and the Chief Secretary, Hon Claude Stubbs, sat where Hon Graham Edwards now sits. In 1971 we passed a Bill for the control of bingo for charitable organisations so that only charitable organisation would benefit. Both you and I, Mr President, worked hard and long to make sure that it was a good, clean Bill. The Chief Secretary of the day, Hon Claude

Stubbs, was highly delighted with what we had done, and he was commended by all members, including the late Hon John Dolan, who was at that time Leader of the House for a short while.

I promise members that I am not going to do what the member for South East Metropolitan Province did. Debate was unlimited, and if members wish to follow his line, they will find it beginning on page 3312 of *Hansard*, volume 195, running on to page 3318. It began at 2.43 pm and continued till 3.30 am. Mr President, that was one of your shorter speeches in this place. If members look at page 3317, you listed and got away with listing all the charitable organisations which were to benefit from bingo. I will not read the list of those organisations and clubs which you, Mr President, mentioned in 1972. However, I will seek leave to have them incorporated in *Hansard*.

The material in appendix A was incorporated by leave of the House.

(See p 8169.)

Mr President, I like the comment you made about not listing all the items, because the items you did list came to almost two pages. After the speech you made, Mr President, I referred in my speech to the dangers of gambling and, in particular, the dangers of the commercialisation of bingo. I have nothing against the game of bingo, but what we were concerned about in 1972 was the commercialisation of it. The Minister for Budget Management will need to make sure that he will not be called upon in the future to make some recommendations to Cabinet that funds be set aside for charities in the Budget.

In a newspaper article the Minister for Racing and Gaming said that some operators were taking between \$1.5 million and \$2 million a year out of running these sort of games, the very thing we tried to get through to members in this House in 1972. If members have any hesitation about what we said, I ask them to read your speech, Mr President, and the speeches of Hon Arthur Griffith and myself on the pages I have mentioned. We expressed a genuine fear and, in doing so, the bingo Bill disappeared because commercial interests were after that money. Members can imagine, if there were six operators in this State and they were each taking \$2 million a year, how much money has escaped the Government coffers because it did not do what we asked at that time. Every one of those organisations mentioned by the President would have benefited from it.

I ask the Government to make absolutely sure that once bingo is part of the electronic media that it has absolute control. People are saying that they are looking forward to the electronic venture. The Premier has said that he has heard about it, but it has not yet been before Cabinet. Therefore, I am in time to ask the Minister for Budget Management and his ministerial colleagues to lend weight to my plea, because at one stage the social evil of gambling on bingo brought the United Kingdom to its knees. It was not the male population who were participating, it was the housewives who spent up to eight hours a day in the bingo parlours which were linked electronically one to the other. We argued about the fact that football clubs wanted to have an electronic bingo link between the various grounds, but we got wind of it and the Bill disappeared. While it would have been good for the football clubs, it would not have been good for the community.

As outlined in the article to which I have referred, that form of electronic bingo is to take place. I implore the Minister for Budget Management, who is a moderate man with legal training and expertise, to make absolutely sure that the population will not be engulfed by this giveaway system. Everyone has his hand out for the quick dollar -- people and charitable and sporting organisations have their hands out to the Government, and they spawn like mushrooms. I do not envy the Government having to decide between the paraplegics, the kidney society, the cat society, the Red Cross, the Girl Guides and the Scouts. As members will remember, we designated that awful responsibility to the Lotteries Commission and it did a good job. That responsibility has now gone to the Gaming Commission and it will do a good job.

If the public are given a free reign to gamble we must ensure that it is undertaken in a responsible manner. If that cannot be the case, unfortunately we have to legislate to put certain restrictions on it. Everyone is a gambler. People gamble on crops and catching the bus, at the races and at the casino. Unfortunately, there is a sickness in some members of society which makes them compulsive gamblers. In 1972 I quoted from a book about gambling written by Dostoevski in 1876.

I support the Bill, but I make this point, because when I reread that debate it brought back one certain fact; that is, the frustrated role of backbenchers in this place, the other place and in other Parliaments. That is the reason I was pleased when Hon Robert Hetherington announced his committee was underway. It is frustrating to speak year after year on a particular subject. If a member does not make outlandish statements and his views are rational and his approach reasoned and logical, he can bet his life he will not get the Press. He can bet his life that the media is only concerned with those things that will sell their part of the media. He can bet his life that if he does not conform with the executive of his party, he will not have a great voice in decision-making.

We have to look at this matter very seriously. I know that the Minister looked at one of the problems I mentioned last year. He said that things did not come up to scratch, but I ask him to look more earnestly and to ask his colleagues if this form of gambling does eventuate to look at it closely. While, on the one hand it might benefit charities, on the other hand if the right precautions are not taken the Government will have to form a fund to look after people who gamble.

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan -- Minister for Budget Management) [4.29 pm]: As is usual, with Bills of this nature the debate has been very wide ranging and this makes it impossible to provide a comprehensive response. I did note the early concentration on matters to do with internal arrangements in the House. Frankly, I am not personally aware of any of those matters. In any event, I am inclined to believe that the appropriate course is the one that you, Mr President, suggested at one point; namely discussion by the Joint House Committee and, failing that, by the general membership of the Parliament through their general meeting or other processes.

A number of members asked specific questions, and I will ensure all those questions are directed to the relevant Ministers and that if particular details have been asked for, and are available, they will be supplied directly to the members. I am not sure whether all the details referred to will be available, and I have in mind particularly the comments made by Hon Neil Oliver about borrowings by bodies associated with the Government. It would be possible to collate the borrowings of the State Electricity Commission, which I referred to by way of interjection, and that would apply also to a number of other statutory authorities. The honourable member referred specifically to the prospectus of a group with which I am not acquainted but which appears to have been sponsored by the Western Australian Development Corporation. I have to say, as has been said in a number of contexts related to that corporation's activities, that the details may not be available because of the independent and commercial nature of that corporation's activities. I will pass on to the relevant Ministers all the questions which have been raised, and whether that leads to a response to members or not, it will at least ensure those matters are considered by them.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon John Williams) in the Chair; Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title --

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I would be interested to hear from the Minister whether the unexpended proportion of the allocation of \$260 million in the previous year, now overflows into the \$300 million allocation. Is the amount of \$300 million the extent of the loan, or does it take in the carryover from the previous year, which the Minister referred to in his second reading speech?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not sure of the intention of the question, but I will add that question to the list of matters on which I will arrange detailed advice, and the member can approach me for further details if the response is unsatisfactory.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 5 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 Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), and passed.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL*Second Reading*

Debate resumed from 15 December.

HON NEIL OLIVER (West) [4.35 pm]: This Bill is the most significant Bill which annually comes before this Parliament. The Bill has already been passed in the other place and has probably occupied the time of that House for two to three months. This Bill is in essence the expenditure and receipts projections of this Government, which is what the Government's plans and aspirations are for Western Australia in this current financial year. This Bill seeks to appropriate the sum of \$3.546 million, which any member here present would consider to be a significant amount of money. The supply of this money will enable the Government to provide the services and facilities demanded by the people of Western Australia.

It is interesting to read what the Treasurer said when he introduced a similar Bill into the other House for the 1986-87 financial year. The great emphasis of that Budget speech was the focus on jobs, the need for accountability and the need to help the socially disadvantaged. The Treasurer went on to say that the strategy which was encompassed in that Budget was to provide the foundations for the economic and social wellbeing of present and future generations of Western Australians. I would hope the Treasurer would say that, because that is in essence what any Budget is about; but no doubt there is a degree of opening rhetoric about that statement.

Hon J.M. Berinson: It is, though, in anticipation of the results.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: That is correct, and I will talk about the results in a few moments.

Hon J.M. Berinson: The results have been quite good.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: The Minister might think so, but he should leave it to other people to make that decision. I can imagine that would be the response from the Minister for Budget Management -- I would not expect him to respond otherwise -- but self-criticism is always a very good part of commonsense which is not necessarily found in people of high intelligence.

The budgetary process had also to recognise and account for the constraints within which the Government operates. The key constraints now limiting the options available were set by international economic trends affecting the Australian economy. I am disappointed, however, because at the end of the year when the balance of the accounts were brought to conclusion, we found we had an amount of \$80 million of excess of revenue over expenditure. I presume that is due to economic restraint, but I thought the Government might have taken the opportunity to avoid some of the rather savage charges that were introduced prior to that Budget and also prior to this Budget. I believe the Government missed an opportunity there. If the Government, and particularly the Minister for Budget Management --

Hon J.M. Berinson: You are a fair man, Mr Oliver.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: -- were in a position to see they were to have an estimated surplus of \$80 million apart from the normal slush fund --

Hon J.M. Berinson: What normal slush fund?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: -- I would expect the Government to act responsibly in that regard --

Hon J.M. Berinson: There is no slush fund, either normal or abnormal.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: -- to endeavour to move within the confines of the directive of the Treasurer contained in *WA Government Notes*, No 62, dated 21 October 1986; that is, and I quote --

At the same time, the budgetary process had to recognise and account for the constraints within which the Government operates.

Further on, the report of the Treasurer stated --

Where this Budget emphasises promotion of economic activity generally, provision must be made to ensure that the most disadvantaged members of the community have the opportunity to participate equally in the social and economic development of the State. This is not a small task. One in eight Australians faces ongoing financial hardship, lives in sub-standard accommodation and is sometimes unable to obtain the basic necessities of life.

I would have thought that this Government, acting within the confines of the speech by the Treasurer in delivering the Budget for 1986-87, would at least in some way have taken into account this \$80 million of excess revenue over expenditure.

Hon J.M. Berinson: What would you have done with that, Mr Oliver?

Hon G.E. Masters: Decreased taxation.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That had nothing to do with increased taxes. It had to do with increased economic activity.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I will handle that in a moment. The second point I want to address is the initiative of shedding some 3 000 employees, with an estimated full-year saving of \$65 million. In this regard I will be very interested to know from the Minister how successful that programme was --

Hon J.M. Berinson: Totally.

Hon NEIL OLIVER -- how many of those 3 000 employees were shed, and whether the estimated full saving of \$65 million was attained.

Hon J.M. Berinson: The \$65 million refers to savings in a full year.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I would be very pleased if the Minister would contain his remarks while I am speaking so that he might reply to me when I have concluded. At least that will give me the opportunity to assess his replies and deal with them in the Committee stage. I would very much welcome his cooperation in that regard.

My next point is that the Treasurer, realising that the Federal Government had some rather major constraints under which to operate, considered that Western Australia would not really be able to obtain its slice of the cake this financial year; therefore there was a need to increase various Government charges in May and June this year because of an impending reduction in Commonwealth funds which had been signalled. The signals had been sent, the message received, and the signal sent back. However, Western Australia achieved a return from the Commonwealth of two per cent better than the rate of inflation. In that, the Treasurer had something of a windfall. The State was hardly badly dealt with by the Commonwealth in terms of the Consolidated Revenue Fund because its allocation represented a two per cent real increase of \$32 million.

Hon J.M. Berinson: A real tribute to the Treasurer's capacity.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: The Treasurer, in his national statesmanship, appreciated and understood the problems of the Australian economy and in fact had been an adviser to Prime Minister Hawke and had agreed that there was a necessity for constraint right across the board. However, in his great endeavours to exercise that constraint, Prime Minister Hawke repaid the Treasurer with an amount of \$32 million, representing a two per cent real increase in consolidated revenue.

Adding all those figures together, including the \$65 million from the three per cent cut which the Minister will tell me all about; \$65 million was saved there --

Hon J.M. Berinson: No, it was not.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: As well, \$32 million came from the Federal Government, and in addition to that we have our \$80 million. Wonderful! We have \$177 million more in straight dollar terms to keep the ship in order from 1986-87 to 1987-88. How unfortunate it is that the Government did not use that initiative to complement in some way what was put forward by the Treasurer in his Budget speech.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is precisely what we did.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: Why should the Government have had that surplus of \$177 million when there was a requirement to focus on jobs, and a requirement for accountability and the helping of the socially disadvantaged? That is a question that should be seriously addressed and I would be very interested to have those comments because in the current Budget papers despite this accountability -- this need for restraint -- in the current year the expenditure of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet will blow out by an additional 16 per cent. Why was not the payroll tax situation addressed in the form I put forward last year; that is, that the threshold be increased in accordance with movements in the Consumer Price Index? The sum of \$325 million was collected from this source in 1986-87, yet in 1987-88 the figure is \$365 million. That is a \$40 million or 12 per cent increase in payroll tax collections. That was a unique opportunity to deliver some tax relief. It was during the period of the Court Government that the first payroll tax deals were introduced during the term of the financial year to alleviate payroll tax burdens as the threshold was increased due to CPI increases. That is the only occasion since 1953-54 when payroll tax has been addressed by any previous Government, apart from when it was a Federal tax and incentives were offered under the export action programme. That programme was introduced by a Liberal and National Party Government. Payroll tax was addressed under the Court Government, but it has never been addressed by the present Government.

Hon Graham Edwards: We will address that in the next four years.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: The sooner the Government gets to grips with the problem of relieving the burden of payroll tax the better.

Hon Garry Kelly: It has been done.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I have spoken in this House many times of the need to establish a threshold linked to the Consumer Price Index rather than bringing a Bill to the House every year, but I persistently hear the member saying it has been done. He should clear his ears more often.

Hon Garry Kelly: Talk about something different.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: The problem for the member is that to him everything is different because he does not know what he is talking about. The other point I would like to talk about is accountability.

Hon Graham Edwards: We are in favour of it.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I would like to know the position regarding accountability as far as fuel tax is concerned this year. I cannot find in the Budget papers how much revenue will be raised by fuel tax. The Treasurer has been talking about accountability and I would like to know what the figure will be. Fuel tax increased by 11 per cent last year, yet it is not mentioned in this Budget. Perhaps the Minister could indicate in his reply what page it is on.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I can assure you we did collect a certain amount of money on that occasion.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: Concessions on stamp duty have been announced. It is recorded in *Hansard* that I spoke about stamp duty some eight months ago. I told the Minister that there would be a blow-out in stamp duty collections this year -- I also directed that matter to him in a question -- but he said it would not occur. We have now seen that stamp duty collections increased by 11 per cent over budget.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Last year.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: That is correct. The financial institutions duty collections are up by 20 per cent. Budgets always cater for excess expenditure. I would like to know if this Budget could be a little more accurate. It is difficult to find any expenditure that is less than the amount budgeted. Every amount is in over budget. We have the capacity to exceed the budgeted revenue, but expenditure never seems to come in on or above budget. It is fortunate that the Minister for Budget Management is actually in this House because he is probably in a far better position to give the answers than is the Treasurer.

I do not want to get engrossed in too many figures, although we are dealing with the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the current year. This is the most important item of

legislation that comes before Parliament, and it has been addressed in the other House for over two months. However, I would like to indicate some of my concerns to the House. I support the Treasurer in the statements he made in the *WA Government Notes*, No 62, dated 21 October 1986; but such statements must be put into action. It is no good putting forward a policy unless one is prepared to execute it. There is no point in dreaming up rhetoric for the public or for consumption by the media because ultimately the Government must be answerable to Parliament and the people.

Based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics, since the Burke Government came to office to June 1987, inflation has been running at 32.6 per cent. Here is an example of some of the Government charges for the same period: Electricity, 46.8 per cent; gas, 47.7 per cent --

Hon Garry Kelly: Over which period? Four years to when?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: -- Metropolitan Water Board consumption, 38.3 per cent --

Hon Garry Kelly: What is the period over which these figures have increased?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: -- country water, 37.9 per cent; sewerage 33.8 per cent --

Hon J.M. Berinson: Historically low increases.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: -- bus and train fares, adults over four zones, 77.8 per cent, pensioners over four zones, 80 per cent.

Hon Fred McKenzie: That is divided by 10, is it?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: Mr Burke made his predictions on inflation based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' data for the period June 1983 to June 1987. As an example of the Premier's very firm and excellent leadership, I have quoted the percentage figures in connection with the actual increases under the Labor Government since it came to office.

The Premier made the following statement in an answer to a question without notice on 28 May 1987 --

As I have said repeatedly, the Government will not increase any tax or charge by any figure exceeding the inflation rate. The Government will also endeavour to restrain increases below that rate and hopefully, in some cases, to meet the target set . . .

However, as I have indicated, the figure shows a massive increase of 111 per cent in tax collections under the Burke Labor Government. My country colleagues may be interested to know that fuel tax has doubled from 2.17c to 4.17c. I do not know whether any National Party member has examined his accounts recently and noticed the higher charges. In 1982-83 we did not have a financial institutions duty tax in this State.

Hon Tom Stephens: Mr Oliver, you are boring us all to death, you are embarrassing your colleagues, and you are emptying the House -- could you please wind up?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: The comments of the interjector, who is supposed to be a bookkeeper somewhere, some place, come from one who is not interested in figures which affect the people of Western Australia. He is not interested in the comments of his leader, and if that is the laissez-faire manner in which this Government intends to approach the management of \$1.3 billion -- so be it. The member who interjected might like to make a contribution and indicate how the figures I have quoted are incorrect. Are the ABS figures wrong? Has the printer made an error? I would like the member to stand and quote the correct ABS figures, if mine are incorrect.

Hon G.E. Masters: Hon Tom Stephens is not allowed to make speeches.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: Every member should be allowed to contribute to debate. When we are dealing with Budget matters which affect the wellbeing -- according to the Premier -- of every person in Western Australia, even if figures need to be brought to account they need to be quoted. Since this Government came into office taxes have increased by 111 per cent.

Hon T.G. Butler: Rubbish!

Hon G.E. Masters: That is your level, Mr Butler.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: The Government member who interjected should stand and if possible go outside, get his hand calculator and try to work out whether the figure should be 111.872 per cent or 110.999 per cent recurring. If it is rubbish because it is incorrect by .01 of a per

cent, then I apologise to the House. If the member will get his calculator and tell me whether the figure is incorrect on a .04 per cent recurring basis then I will accept that and apologise. The member says the figure is rubbish so obviously he has worked it out on a decimal place basis -- he knows better than I do.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Robert Hetherington): I would like to hear the member on his feet. I think we can do without the interjections at this stage.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I did not intend to mislead the House. I wanted to round the figure off to the closest percentage rather than a decimal point.

Hon Garry Kelly: Tedious repetition.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I will decide on tedious repetition.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: To put my argument in clearer terms for members who cannot understand creative accounting, and for those who have difficulty with finances, the increases mean \$57 for every man, woman and child in this State. I put my argument in that form for those members who do not understand. Members may smile but many people around are not smiling.

I refer the Minister for Budget Management to page 113 of the CRF Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, item 12 -- Operating and Other Subsidies, \$527 million. What does this amount represent? It is interesting that, apart from the \$177 million to which I referred, the Treasurer's only reference in the Budget papers to the \$160 million slush fund, or to earnings on the short-term money market, was that the Government did not need to use those funds this year. I hope the Minister for Budget Management can clarify what has happened to that money, which the Treasurer said the Government did not need to use this year.

Earlier this afternoon comments were made in respect of quangos -- the need to keep restraints on them and, if necessary, review them and, if possible, abolish them. The Treasurer said, before the Labor Party came to office, that the Government would improve the management of assets and ensure that this occurred in the Budget process. The Treasurer said there would be a quango cull. There are apparently in excess of 6 000 quangos in this State; the Government has, since coming to office, increased this number by 50 and decreased it by about 12. It appears that we are losing the battle.

I will be very interested to learn what the Government's privatisation initiatives will be. Members will recall that in the last election campaign, the Liberal Party indicated it would embark on a privatisation programme. This attracted a tremendous amount of flak from the Government media; it was very critical of privatisation. I am not aware of what the Government's policy in this area is this year but I know that the Labor Party in Australia has made some major initiatives in the area of privatisation. Despite the antiprivatisation rhetoric at election time, both Federal and State Governments have begun a giant garage sale of Government property. However, the Government seems to lack some sort of privatisation strategy and I will be interested to learn what that strategy may be.

It is interesting to note that the Institute of Public Affairs review of May and July this year included an article which read as follows --

Privatisation of government assets has well and truly arrived in Australia -- and on the initiative of Labor governments at both the Federal and State levels. While Australia has been slower than other countries to recognise the advantages of privatisation, our overburdened and indebted governments are now seeing at least some of its virtues.

These initiatives have already been put forward in the area of aviation. It has caused some ripples but we know that Australian Airlines is under consideration for privatisation as is the Williamstown Dockyards, but these are a matters of a Federal nature.

In respect of the initiatives by the State Government, I refer again to the Institute of Public Affairs article, which reads as follows --

Brian Burke, in line with other Labor Premiers, has taken his first tentative steps towards selling off public enterprises to the private sector in Western Australia. The Government has sold a third of the Rural and Industries Bank of WA to a mixture of private and public institutions.

I am a little uncertain about the accuracy of that article, because in the selling off of that third interest, I am not aware that the third party has full voting rights or whether it actually has shares. From memory, I do not believe that is so. The article however continues as follows --

However, not wishing to give too much credence to the Burke Government's privatisation venture, the State-run State Government Insurance Office and Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust did take up major shareholdings. The sale was announced almost immediately after the 1986 election, which saw the Labor Party enter its second term of office, and only two months after it had vigorously attacked the Opposition for even considering privatisation.

This attack on privatisation was actively supported by the public service union, the Civil Servants Association (CSA), Western Australia's biggest trade union. Twelve months later the union is attacking the Burke Government's economic rationalistic (privatisation) policies, much the same as in South Australia. Any further moves to sell off public assets will no doubt be vehemently opposed by the CSA as the union believes that its power base will be seriously eroded.

Of course, I read with interest the speeches made by Treasurer Burke at various functions and it is clear that he has determined to implement a privatisation policy in Western Australia. In fact he has publicly offered to assist Prime Minister Hawke in this regard.

Hon J.M. Berinson: We have had a debate on that subject in which I quoted the Premier precisely. I think his comments are rather different from the impression you give.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: I have on notice quite a few questions of the Treasurer on the subject but unfortunately those questions remain unanswered. However, I am looking forward to an indication within the confines of the Budget debate of the strategy, rather than the policy, of the Government on privatisation in the current year. Without doubt we are seeing within Western Australia -- and within Australia generally where Labor Governments are in office -- an ever-increasing regimentation of the party. One member has already spoken about that this afternoon and I too have spoken about the growth of the Executive arm of Government. Several members interjected and indicated that this is not so and that in the Labor Party Caucus room the Executive arm of Government does not quite have the say we think it might have. However, it appears at times that decisions can be taken -- even Treasury decisions -- without the approval of Cabinet. I well recall last year coming to this Chamber from a Press conference given by the Treasurer in company with the Association of Permanent Building Societies in Western Australia; question time in this place was at 5.00 pm; the Press conference concluded at 4.45 pm and an amount of money in excess of \$80 million was allocated for a subsidised interest programme in Western Australia. I am not denying the need for that programme, but I came to this Chamber to put a question in respect of the Budget and the management of this State, and I was unable to get an answer.

It clearly indicated that the decision had been made by a small group; it obviously had not been put to the party room or to Cabinet. In our consideration of the Budget papers we are following the precedent set by Hon Graham MacKinnon when he became Leader of the House. In order to avoid delaying the process by the Budget papers being considered in this House after they had been passed in another place, it was agreed that they would be tabled in this House contemporaneously with their introduction in the lower House. I have some doubts about the system adopted in 1979 and in future I feel it would be better for the Budget papers not to be tabled in this House, but for time to be set aside to ensure that members have an opportunity to examine the Budget papers in full. We all have a responsibility to our electors for the taxes they pay and the services they demand. The sooner we come to grips with the meticulous attention that the Budget papers deserve, the better Parliament will be.

I believe many items should be dealt with in the Committee stage, clause by clause; they should be subjected to review and not discussed in this House in the dying hours of the session. Although members have had an opportunity to examine the Budget papers, they have not had an opportunity to debate them. That opportunity should be available. It is all very well to read the debates in another place, but we have a responsibility to ensure that the revenue and expenditure of this Government are in accord with the policies expounded by the Treasurer, which I hope are not just rhetoric but can be executed.

HON W.N. STRETCH (Lower Central) [5.24 pm]: I am deeply concerned about two matters; the first is the pesticide issue in the south west of my electorate. This has been referred to earlier, but further comments need to be made on this subject. The most important is to emphasise to consumers that Australians, and Western Australians in particular, are eating the cleanest meat in the world. There is no risk to human health from local beef. The United States, which precipitated this crisis for Australian farmers, accepts a level of pesticides in its home market which is 50 per cent higher than the level it accepts from Australia. Therefore, Americans are eating home produced beef which has half as much pesticide residue again as is acceptable in their imported beef.

Again in 1985-86, 45 per cent of American chicken was condemned because of salmonella infection. This must be viewed in perspective; people must realise that there is no threat from consuming Australian meat, and that Australian supplies are very well protected. Our farmers and the Department of Agriculture are taking every possible precaution to ensure that the meat is even cleaner. Hon Garry Kelly mentioned that the American market withdrew some pesticides -- it pulled DDT off the market because it was causing the eggs of bald eagles to become infertile. That may have ramifications for some people! Organochlorines have been causing some problems, and these have all now been withdrawn from the Western Australian market and stocks of chemicals on farms have been called back. People in Western Australia have been eating clean meat and will eat even cleaner meat in the future.

Hon Tom Stephens: Hon Garry Kelly is saying that the Americans have not been as circumspect in some regards to poison as we have been.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: It is hard to be totally subjective about that because I do not know. In some chemicals they have been and in others they have been more lax.

Hon Garry Kelly: They can sell the meat to third world countries. The American companies do that.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: That could be. It is documented in certain cases, but it really is not relevant to the point I am making.

Several members interjected.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Even at the American levels, Hon Tom Stephens would have to sit down to a meagre helping of two to three tonnes of beef at a sitting to show an appreciable effect from pesticides in his system.

Hon Tom Stephens: My wife insists that I eat less meat.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The member will be so fit that he will be absolutely dangerous. There is a lot of hysteria in the community about pesticides generally. In this sector of the industry steps have been taken to clean up the situation, and it is most important that the message be given loud and clear so that in the end there is no panic-induced swing away from meat consumption unnecessarily.

This does not in any way detract from the plight of some farmers who have this year's baby beef ready to sell and next year's calves due to drop in the next couple of months; they have no grass, no feed, and no cash reserves. The Opposition has put forward some propositions which may involve joint ventures of lot feeding, or moving cattle to agistment on clean pastures, but this does not overcome their immediate need for dollars. I mention this problem in the context of this debate on the appropriations because it will require dollar solutions in the short-term. No doubt the Minister for Budget Management has been forewarned of this danger, but it certainly should be mentioned from this side of the House as well. There is an immediate problem and a short-term solution needed, but also a long-term approach is needed to assist those people to go into other suitable and safe forms of agriculture because some of this country will take a long time to clean up and a different form of agriculture or horticulture will be required.

I wish to add to the remarks of Hon Mick Gayfer about road funding. He touched on the implications of the Cameron report as it affected some shires. It will also affect many other shires which he did not mention. This has been a matter of major concern to country shires because the Cameron report indicates a drop in road funding throughout the State of approximately one-third.

Hon Tom Stephens: You would be pleased that the State Government managed to get the Federal Government to undertake a review of that.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Yes. My point in raising this is to emphasise the importance of this matter, because it will not go away. Its calls for expenditure will become more and more, and the amount of money will grow, I think exponentially, although I am not a mathematician. It will increase at an alarming rate if we put off this maintenance work. This was well documented at the retirement of the Commissioner for Main Roads, Mr Don Aitken. At his departing speech or Press conference the problems which were building up were indicated very strongly. I have raised this matter in the House before, so I will not go into details. If members want to relate it to an old vehicle, an analogy would be that the longer one keeps it the higher the maintenance costs become, and the more one neglects it, the more expensive it is to repair. The same applies to roads.

In the 1950s and the 1960s there was an enormous boost in road funding and construction in Western Australia, partly brought about as a result of our new oil refinery at Kwinana. The heavy petroleum products became available at a cheaper cost; before that they all had to be shipped in. This led to a great expansion of arterial and major roads throughout Western Australia. But, like all plant and investment, servicing costs are attached, and we are now reaching the stage where our servicing costs are catching up with us. We have far more middle-aged or aged roads than younger surfaces. A disproportionate number of roads now require heavy maintenance and indeed reconstruction.

As members will know, current funding for roads is predominantly Federal. The Australian Land Transport Programme expires in 1990, and the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Programme at the end of 1988. We do not yet know whether they will be replaced, but commonsense dictates that not only will they have to be replaced but also vastly increased. The difficulty with roads is that they are not very exciting; they do not win a lot of votes, so they are unpopular with Governments in that politically they are not terribly productive. But it must be understood that the cost of bad roads relative to everybody is tremendous. The *Daily News* recently published an article which indicated the cost of running a truck on a good road as against a bad road. The MRD spokesman told the *Daily News* on Friday, 27 November this year, that the difference between a good road and a bad road could mean \$35 000 in the cost of running a truck. He went on to point out that these costs are spread across the community. In other words, all our food, all our produce and virtually all our consumer goods at some stage or other go across a road surface, and the cost of transporting them is an integral part of the cost of our food and clothing. Governments must get past the political implications of road funding and look at it as a basic cost of actually existing. It is the same as health care, schooling and those other basics which we would not think of doing without. One would not think of cutting back funding on those latter items, but road funding is equally important, and probably more so.

We have recently had a lot of debate about road safety. It is clearly shown that road engineering and road construction play a greater part in road safety than any other single factor. If we are to skimp on road funding we will face the situation of an increasing number of vehicles on the roads and a depreciating road surface. The inevitable result will be more road accidents and vehicles depreciating more quickly, not only in monetary value but also in their road safety quality. Members know what a bad road surface can do to a vehicle's safety. It can throw the steering out of alignment and put undue strain on clutches, brakes and all sorts of other components. This poses as big a threat to safe motoring in Western Australia as any other factor -- and I do not exclude alcohol. Somewhere along the line Governments of all persuasions must accept that they will have to allocate an ever-increasing amount of their Budgets to catch up on the lack of maintenance which has been forced upon the MRD.

I pay tribute to the retiring commissioner, Don Aitken. He has devoted his working life to road engineering in Western Australia. Limited though my travels have been, I believe that our roads can stand comparison with any in Australia. The MRD has been very innovative; it has pioneered techniques in using local materials, and it has thereby kept the cost of road construction down without sacrificing road quality. It has instigated a lot of innovation in road construction and bridge construction. I received a document recently called "Western Australian Roads" in which are outlined on the centre pages some of the innovative work done by the MRD staff. It makes one proud of the achievements of our road builders and

engineers. We are lucky to have those people working on our behalf, in many cases going far beyond the call of duty just for the love of their profession. Much of this is seen in bridgework in Perth. The Mt Henry Bridge is probably as pretty a construction as can be seen anywhere, and some of the bridges on the new highways up north have been tastefully and skilfully designed without losing any of their structural integrity. It is a tribute to our staff and they deserve our recognition and a lot more support from the Government. To carry on the standard of work they are trying to achieve they will need increased funds.

It will be very difficult for whatever Government takes on the task. Use of roads will increase, particularly around the Perth metropolitan area. According to this document put out by the MRD as a discussion paper, the growth of roads was more pronounced in the Perth metropolitan area, which had an average growth rate of 2.7 per cent per annum over 10 years. This was the highest of any major city, and almost twice that of Brisbane and Adelaide. We therefore have a picture of increased road use, increased city population growth and falling funding levels. This is a matter of great concern and it will require an immense amount of input by the Government, if it is to be overcome and, hopefully, reversed. At the same time, the staff levels at the Main Roads Department are falling and in its 1986-87 annual report, which was tabled in this House on 24 November 1987, there were some interesting graphs which showed the salary levels decreasing, the motor vehicle kilometres and travel on public roads increasing, and the funding decreasing. That has to be a recipe for increased wear on the roads and, as I said earlier, decreased road safety. We must be careful not to get carried away with the red herrings of road safety. The fact is that if we do not have safe roads on which to travel more fatalities will occur.

An interesting point that comes out of the New South Wales' road accident statistics is the appalling number of head-on collisions. It is very difficult to understand how these types of accidents occur in normal circumstances, where a large proportion of them are not caused by vehicles overtaking. I can understand a head-on collision occurring when a motorist overtakes a vehicle on a blind hill. What is unbelievable about the New South Wales statistics is the large proportion of these types of accidents that could not be explained and which occurred on straight roads with good visibility. They do not know the answer and I certainly do not. I regret that I do not have the figures with me, but it is a matter which requires research.

The MRD and the road engineers throughout Australia recognise that engineering plays an important part in preventing those sorts of accidents. The incident which was mentioned on the front page of *The West Australian* recently, and which occurred on a horror stretch on West Coast Highway, highlighted that fact. That section of road has a bad reputation for accidents. The road has an adverse camber which leads motorists into hazardous situations. With increased funding to implement the engineering solutions to these sorts of situations, the road toll can be reduced.

The Cameron report, which I mentioned earlier and which is of concern to Hon H.W. Gayfer, has also been a matter of concern to most of the shires in my electorate. The Donnybrook-Balingup Shire Council will have its funding cut in real terms by 1994-95 from \$259 000 to \$79 000. The Shire of Kojonup has written to me in a similar vein. It estimates that it will face a reduction of nearly \$200 000, or 10 per cent of its budget, which will require the dismissal of one-third of its work force. It is not just a funding matter, it will also result in a cut in the work force and, therefore, the population and infrastructure of that town. The Donnybrook-Balingup Shire Council pointed out that its outside work force will be reduced by four and with a reduction in other staff of six, there will be a total reduction of 10. The Shire of Dumbleyung is in the same situation and it is concerned about the sociological effect of a reduction in road funding.

As Hon Mark Nevill and other members from country electorates would understand, the further one lives from the metropolitan area the more pronounced these cuts become. People rely so much on their motor vehicles and transport costs become a major part of a local community's operations. The Shire of Wagin expects that nine jobs will be lost as a result of these cuts. It expects its funding to be cut from \$239 000 in 1985-86 to \$74 000 in 1994-95. The Government has a responsibility to sheet home to the Federal Government that this State will require massive funding. This will apply not only to Western Australia, but also throughout Australia. It is a problem that will grow and more road funding will be required. A bipartisan approach to the problem is required if it is to be overcome. I believed Hon Tom

Stephens when he said that his Government has made urgent approaches to the Federal Government to review the findings of the Cameron report. I wish the Government well and I hope it can point out to the Federal Government that not only has the funding to be reinstated to the basic levels, but also that it must be increased.

I will not bore the House with the graphs which show the increase in road ages because I have mentioned them before in a speech in this House. I have also mentioned the increase in costs of maintaining older roads. If we do not grasp the nettle now, we will reach a stage where road funding will demand an unacceptable proportion of the Australian budget. The only alternative is to put up with the declining standard of roads. I think Hon Jim Brown interjected on an earlier speech and said that some shires are already ripping up bitumen roads and replacing them with gravel because they have found that it is within their maintenance capabilities to maintain gravel roads in a better state. I do not want to see that occur and I do not believe any member in this House would like that to be the case. I urge the Government, in its budgetary considerations, to immediately make plans to take steps in the ensuing Budgets to redress this wrong.

In closing I point out the dreadful ramifications of the decision that was made in this House last year when we cut the road trust fund in half and converted it to a transport trust fund. It really was a highjack of funding which should never have been allowed to occur. At that stage we did not realise that it would be damaging and that it would lead to the electrification of a Perth railway; and one could question whether that is economical.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That will not be met out of the trust fund; it will require far more than the trust fund.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Yes, about three times the annual figure. We lifted about \$40 million out of the road trust fund.

Hon J.M. Berinson: We did not lift anything out of anything. We applied transport funds to transport.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Right, but it was road funds that we moved out.

Hon J.M. Berinson: At that time the fuel licence fee was increased. Had the funds continued to be dedicated to roads there would have been no point to that increase. You cannot keep dedicating funds in that way indefinitely.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Whatever happens the Government will have to find more funds from somewhere to make up the loss in road expenditure. I believe it was a retrograde step which we took at that stage. If the rail transport system needed more funds we should have provided funds from the appropriate source.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Why not out of the fuel licence fees?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: It was inappropriate. We have always understood --

Hon J.M. Berinson: Why?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: Because fuel licence fees--

Hon J.M. Berinson: Have always been dedicated to roads.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: -- have been dedicated to roads.

Hon J.M. Berinson: And that is what has been inappropriate.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: It is a logical nexus.

Hon J.M. Berinson: No, it is not.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: It certainly is as far as the shires in my electorate are concerned.

Hon J.M. Berinson: Why isn't land tax dedicated to the development of land and why isn't payroll tax dedicated to the development of industry? These are sources of revenue to the State that have to be applied to general purposes.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: There is a certain attractiveness in the Minister's statement.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Superficially!

Hon Tom Stephens: That is why you will never be the Minister for Budget Management.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I have no aspirations to be the Minister for Budget Management, and I do not envy him in addressing these problems. I am simply making the point that we made a mistake. I have been told by my electors and my shire councils that they believe this House made a grievous mistake, and I think the Government has had submissions from those people to that effect. If we are to carry a sociological cost of providing metropolitan transport, it will in the future have to rely on some other form of funding. I accept that we are only talking about money and it is wrong to put money into little boxes, but in the eyes of the community the fuel tax paid on their petrol is regarded as money for road construction.

Hon J.M. Berinson: They have to be encouraged to think of it in a different way.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: That is another one of the Government's social engineering thoughts: Must we change the way people think?

Hon J.M. Berinson: Are we going to have liquor licence fees dedicated to the construction of hotels?

Hon W.N. STRETCH: I said in conclusion I would mention this matter, and I obviously made an error of judgment in bringing it out at all; but I would like to point out it is regarded as a very serious mistake on the part of this House. We had assurances from the Minister at the time, Hon Des Dans, that there would be no diminution of road funds. In fact, we had a cut of 50 per cent; we lost half of it. Dress that up as we may, do it up with tinsel and holly and anything else we like --

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is not right; you did not lose half of what you had. What happened was you did not get the benefit of an increase which was put in place specifically for other purposes.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: The Government raised another tax on top of the existing fuel tax -- another 2c.

Hon J.M. Berinson: You must not call that a tax because the Constitution precludes fuel taxes, whereas licence fees are, we are told, acceptable.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: It is quite inappropriate to have a lesson in semantics at this stage of the sitting. I make the point that somehow the Minister for Budget Management, using whatever semantics he wishes, and calling things by whatever name he wishes, has to face up to the fact that if his Federal colleagues cut road funding to Western Australia, we will have to make up the deficit from State funds or else suffer the consequences of poorer roads, with increases in the costs of production and consumer costs, because those costs are carried by everyone in the community, right across the board.

Hon J.M. Berinson: We certainly have to take care of the community costs, there is no doubt about that, but if the Commonwealth cuts back far enough, there will inevitably be a reduction in the rate of expansion of the road network.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: We have to look carefully at metropolitan transport, railway electrification, and schemes like that, because at the bottom of all this is a factor which I cannot stress often enough: We in WA are still basically a primary producing and export oriented economy, and roads are an essential basis and the lifeline of our economy. If we ignore that factor, we are virtually undermining the whole of our economic base in Western Australia, and that is a price which is unacceptable to me; it is unacceptable to the community at large; and it is certainly unacceptable to the country electorates.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I admit it is also unacceptable to the Government.

Hon W.N. STRETCH: With those remarks, I support the Bill.

HON J.N. CALDWELL (South) [5.56 pm]: I would like to raise two points during this debate. The first point concerns the pesticide problem. Hon Bill Stretch talked about the production of eggs and what happened when DDT was used. I can assure members that many years ago when animals around the farmyard had stickfast fleas -- especially the cats, dogs and fowl -- we used to get the chooks by their heads and dip them in sump oil to try to get rid of the fleas, which put a different light on the situation -- especially from the chooks' point of view -- but it still did not rid the animals of stickfast fleas. This occurred at approximately the same time as rabbits were breeding in horrendous numbers, but the stickfast fleas were in greater numbers than the rabbits. So we got two or three handfuls of

DDT and threw it around the chook yard and the dog yard. That was about 30 or 35 years ago, and to this day there are no stickfast fleas there. The strange part about it is that we have now cemented those chook yards, and there are still no stickfast fleas, so somehow the residues of DDT have the ability to rise up through cement. The effects of the residues of DDT are well known, and I urge the Government to give attention to those farmers who are in financial difficulties, because if they are not looked after they will go out of business.

I noticed an article in *The Albany Advertiser* on Tuesday, 8 December, under the headline, "Minister supports farm tree concept". I can assure the Minister that everybody in Western Australia would support that concept. It is important that we in Western Australia have trees in our forest areas. Trees also have a marvellous effect on containing salt degradation of the land, and erosion caused by wind and water.

Hon Tom Stephens: They are also very important for the atmosphere.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: Yes. I would like to read some paragraphs of this article to the House --

AGRICULTURE Minister Julian Grill has given strong support to south coast farmers growing trees as a commercial crop.

I hope he will give strong support to other areas as well as those on the south coast. The Minister is quoted as saying --

"As a layman, I am appalled at the degeneration of forest in the South-West," he said.

"If we preserve the status quo with our forests, we will not be doing the right thing. Special attention needs to be on remnant forests on farming land, or it will all go."

The article continues --

The thrust of the recommendations was that positive incentives would have to be provided by the Government to make tree farming viable...

Mr Grill said it was not realistic to expect farmers to turn over some of their land to tree planting unless there were some financial incentives.

The answer lies in the words, "financial incentives". I remember that when farming was booming, there was the incentive of the investment allowances for farm machinery, and that was when machinery sales were high, and many machinery agents were returning to the country areas. If we could have something like that as far as tree planting is concerned, we would have the answer. The article continues --

WA Chip and Pulp spokesman Peter George outlined the success of growing eucalypts on private property in the last seven years.

A total of 1 200ha of company land and 350ha of farmers land has been put back to forest in that time.

That is a very small amount when we consider the amount of land in Western Australia. I urge the Government to consider some sort of tax incentives or to make sure that the Federal Government is made aware of taxation incentives. WISALTS put a proposal to the Federal Government to give a taxation incentive of 150 per cent for Whittington interceptor banks. I believe that was far too much. Had it suggested 120 per cent there may have been some value in it. I will be pushing for that and I hope the Government takes that on board. It is absolutely imperative that we get those trees back on the land to save Western Australia and its soil.

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan -- Minister for Budget Management) [6.01 pm]: There were very few things with which I agreed in Hon Neil Oliver's speech, but one thing that I think is beyond dispute is that one can hardly approach the Consolidated Revenue Fund appropriations Bill in the hope that a debate can be had on every feature of it. We have tried in the past -- and in this we are continuing a practice which we inherited -- to allow a more lengthy and orderly discussion of these issues by bringing in the debate on the Estimates of Expenditure. That was initiated almost three months ago when the Budget was first introduced and I have to put it seriously to the House that the sort of detailed questions which Mr Oliver raised in the course of his comments could have been and should have been addressed in the intervening three months rather than by way of contribution to this debate.

Indeed, even now many of the specific matters he raised probably would best be dealt with by questions on notice rather than by questions raised in a relatively shotgun manner in the course of debate on a Bill.

Hon Neil Oliver did ask one fairly basic question which I think I should respond to. He was unable to find the details of the fuel licence fees in the Budget papers. The reason for that is that the Parliament decided a couple of years ago that these licence fees should go into the transport trust fund and details are to be found in the annual report of the Department of Transport. The most recent such report is for 1987 and details of the transport trust fund and appropriations for both 1986-87 and 1987-88 appear in table 17 of that annual report. For the rest, Mr Oliver rehearsed a series of allegations against the Government's financial management which are not supported by the facts. Of course our revenue has increased, but that has happened over a period when the increase in taxation, rates and charges has been at a historic low. It bears the most favourable comparison with any five-year period previous to that and the main reason for the increase in revenue is to be found in the increase in economic activity, much of which has been stimulated by decisions of this Government. It also goes without saying that that increase reflects the increase in population in this State which, again, is leading the nation; so it is a sign of health in the economy, not something to be deplored as Mr Oliver apparently does.

It is true that after a very unfavourable early series of projections in 1986-87 which led to special measures by the Government we did have the benefit of what can only be regarded as windfall gains. No-one could have anticipated the stock market boom or the real property boom proceeding in the way that they did. Those factors, together with associated marked improvements in the level of employment, led to a very welcome increase in our revenue. Certainly it would have been irresponsible of the Government to take what was effectively a one-off or windfall increase and start spending or rebating it as though it could be relied on in the future.

The Government has shown again this year its capacity and determination to restrain taxes and charges. None of them, not even in the SEC which has special problems, has been above the CPI. Most have been less, and in a huge number of cases there has been no increase at all. I think the Government can be very proud indeed of its record of financial management and I have no doubt that that was a significant part of the reason for the healthy response by the electorate at the last election.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Minister for Budget Management), and passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.08 to 7.30 pm

CHILD WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL (No 2)

Assembly's Amendment

Amendment made by the Assembly further considered from 15 December.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon John Williams) in the Chair; Hon Kay Hallahan (Minister for Community Services) in charge of the Bill.

Progress was reported after the amendment made by the Assembly had been partly considered --

(See p 8010.)

To which Hon P.G. Pendal had moved the following amendment --

That the Council agree to the Assembly's amendment, subject to the following further amendment --

To insert at the end of the proposed section the following subsection --

- (4) The operation and effectiveness of the alternative procedure shall be reviewed by the Attorney General at the expiration of 2 years from the date on which that procedure was first used, and a report on that review shall be tabled in each House of Parliament within 6 months of the said expiration.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: Members will recall that last night Parliamentary Counsel indicated that the terminology in the amendment proposed by Hon Phillip Pendal contained legal difficulties. The amendment has been redrafted in a way which I understand is acceptable to Hon Phillip Pendal who now wishes to withdraw the original amendment that he made and move to include new clause 11. I understand that is acceptable to this Committee.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I move the following further amendment --

That after clause 10 the following clause be added --

Review and report

11. (1) The Attorney General shall, commencing on the second anniversary of the commencement day, carry out a review of the operation and effectiveness of sections 23A to 23C of the principal Act as enacted by this Act and shall prepare a report based on his review of those provisions.

(2) The Attorney General shall cause the report prepared for the purposes of subsection (1) to be laid before each House of Parliament not later than six months after the second anniversary of the commencement day and if a House of Parliament is not then sitting, shall cause the report to be laid before such House within six sittings day of the House.

(3) In subsections (1) and (2) "commencement day" means the day on which section 8 of this Act comes into operation.

Because this has developed along the lines of Blue Hills I will be brief, and hopefully make this the last episode. In moving that amendment I want to stress again that the Law Society was left with the impression after recent discussions with the Minister that the question of discretion remaining with the court had been agreed to. That, of course, is not the case. The remarks I made last night should make it clear that we do not think that situation is satisfactory. I repeat a point made earlier, that it seems to us it should be a court which remains the master of its own destiny, and the destiny of the people who appear before it. Those traditional rights ought not to be interfered with, and if they are to be interfered with, it must be done with the utmost care to ensure that the rights of one or the other party are not diminished. I am still of the belief that at least in the case of one of the parties there is still diminution of those rights. Care always should be taken that we do not get carried away with cosmetic changes simply because on the surface they appear to be some form of law reform.

Earlier in debate I quoted some of the opinion that exists in legal circles about what we are doing here. I would like to quote one more sentence which is relevant to this Bill. In the *New Law Journal* of 6 March 1987, James Morton said, among other things --

Why should not sexually attacked women be allowed to give their evidence in this way, why not the elderly who are mugged, or the witness who sees a bank robbery and is fearful for his or her safety.

He goes on to say --

The list can be lengthened to the point where there is no court trial at all.

Maybe people will think that is a simple thing but my point is that if we make what is, in many respects, a monumental decision, it ought to be made with a higher degree of consultation than in fact happened on this occasion. It is not only the Opposition parties who were left out in the cold on this matter but also the Law Society.

No matter what the outcome, the value of the two-House Parliament has been demonstrated again, because given that the Bill was introduced in this place -- and was a Bill of a Minister who is in this place -- as a result of some of those question marks we posed; the Bill was conveyed to the other place, as a result of which there was further discussion in the general community as well as in the legal profession. This led to changes in fundamental ways, such as the abandonment of the word "segregated" hearings because that has a certain unhealthy connotation in law, and other more appropriate words will be inserted.

In moving this amendment I remind the Government -- indeed any Government -- that other people including Oppositions and voluntary bodies such as the Law Society do not have the unlimited resources which are available to the Government. I have heard it said in this House in connection with the Law Society, "We will send down for an opinion from them", as though the society has unlimited numbers of people who can devote their attention to that request and provide an opinion within a 24-hour turnaround. This cannot happen because the Law Society operates on a voluntary and committee system which means we must wait until staff become available. It is a wrong and bad assumption to make that other people have the same resources available as the Government to pick up deficiencies in legislation.

My amendment will ensure that Parliament will receive a report on the progress of the new system within two or three years of the commencement date, and shortly after that we will have access to the Government's review. In 1989 or 1990 we may be in a better position to make more mature decisions than we are making tonight in the absence of compelling evidence in the debates of the last few weeks.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: The National Party totally supports the amendment moved by Hon P.G. Pendal.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I would prefer that clause 11 was not in the Bill but I accept that it will be accepted by the Committee. I ask my colleagues on this side to therefore support the Bill as it will now stand.

In response to the speech made by Hon P.G. Pendal, the Law Society was consulted. After the comments made in this Chamber last night I phoned both the president and the executive officer of the Law Society and they were pleased that consultation took place. I understand that at the meeting there was an acceptance of the position put by departmental officers. Later a letter was received which departmental officers felt reflected a changed position. However, consultation does not mean that one accepts the position of those whom one consults. One takes the benefit of their experience and has to weigh it up against other knowledge.

Hon P.G. Pendal: I am not suggesting that. They got the impression that the Minister was accepting their position; that is where the difficulty arose.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I do not know where that perception came from because my officers came away from the meeting with the courts committee with the view that the majority were in agreement. The letter came later signifying a different position. Despite all that there has been a very useful interchange between departmental officers and the Law Society which has built on the contact made through the summit on crime. The Law Society organised that summit very well and it proved to be a very productive forum.

We have not been carried away with the notion, "Let us have law reform for the sake of law reform." I did not give case histories in presenting this Bill because I do not like giving dramatic and headline-grabbing case histories. However, there have been some very serious cases where children have been very badly injured and then traumatised by the court process; therefore they have not given clear evidence, which has then led to somebody who carried out a very nasty offence against a child not being convicted. That is what we are talking about.

We are not talking about some trendy notion, as has been suggested. We are talking about being serious about offenders being brought to account for their behaviour. The best way not to do that is to make it impossible for a witness to give evidence, which is why during this

whole debate I have been very strongly opposed to the position put by Hon P.G. Pendal. It appears to me he has not had experience or some understanding of the very real trauma of victims in various types of court cases, particularly those involving children when he reads the ridiculous article stating that we will see women and the elderly in the same sort of trials. If we are to be serious about law and order issues we should make provision for just and fair trials on every occasion and not put obstacles in the way of witnesses giving evidence.

Hon P.G. Pendal: We have never disputed that.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: It did not sound that way during debate.

Hon P.G. Pendal: The Minister has a closed mind about it.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I do not have a closed mind. I have a concern about people who commit serious offences against a person and who are able to maximise conditions which stop witnesses giving evidence. Members here ought to be very concerned about that.

Hon Mark Nevill: Can you brief him on a few of those situations?

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I do not really want to get into that, but there is one particular case which springs to mind: A child was in court giving evidence of sexual abuse by her father and every time the child was asked a question, the father tapped his walking stick and the child froze. It became an impossible task for the court to get the information it needed.

Hon P.G. Pendal: Why didn't the magistrate say, "You will not do that"?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Hon John Williams): Order! The Minister is addressing the Chair; the member will have a chance to contribute.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: That is one example and there are others. Those of us who are concerned --

Hon Mark Nevill interjected.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind members that the Minister is trying to expedite the business of the Chamber. I would appreciate it if honourable members would not interject.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: Hon Phillip Pendal seems to come at the whole question of law reform from the assumption that the system is good and okay, and that any change to it has to be seriously questioned rather than saying, "The system must serve the purposes for which it has been evolved." I think that is probably a philosophical difference between us. The honourable member also said that the Law Society was left out in the cold; that is inaccurate because the Law Society was not left out in the cold. I am quite confident the Law Society would not subscribe to that statement. The Government does not have unlimited resources. That is one of the myths some people have. I accept the fact that the Law Society works on a committee system and that if one is going to consult bodies like that, one has to allow enough time for their members to get together for committee meetings.

I do not think there is a case of lack of compelling evidence about this at all. I think this is an important Bill. I am pleased that with some compromise on all sides we have arrived at a Bill which I think will be quite workable and serve our State well, particularly the young victims of assault and abuse of various types. I guess members are aware -- and that is why they are concerned about it -- of a new development in our court cases of using technology in the way that we are proposing. I hope that the review of that two years after it is set up will prove that it has served victims more kindly than the present system.

The Law Society's concern about this was not the concern that Hon Phillip Pendal put forward. His concern is that the trial has to be fair to the respondent.

Hon P.G. Pendal: It is his trial. That is why it must be fair.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: Exactly. I have not suggested anything else, but the honourable member is preoccupied with that; the Law Society does not have a similar preoccupation.

Hon P.G. Pendal: On the contrary, it does.

Hon KAY HALLAHAN: I spoke to the President of the Law Society today and he put the view to me that in some cases it might be desirable to have a confrontation between the witness and the offender. I said to him, "It might be the case that it sometimes is said to be

therapeutic for adults but we are talking about children and it is a very hard case to make in respect of children." The president was not strongly of that view but he certainly did not put the member's view; as I understand it he sees the system as quite fair. The Law Society supports the principle of segregated proceedings.

I support the new clause.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: I am not unaware of what goes on in many court jurisdictions. I spent three years as a journalist and court reporter and I saw many things that no doubt the Minister would describe as traumatic.

Hon Kay Hallahan: Children's Courts are closed, are they not?

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Children's Courts are closed, but the Press may attend and report but not reveal the names. I am surprised the Minister for Community Services did not know that. However, in saying that, in my experience magistrates have been able to cope quite well with this terrible pencil tapping, which I am surprised to learn is the worst instance that the Minister could put forward as an example.

Hon Kay Hallahan: It was not the worst instance; it is the worst instance I am prepared to mention.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Any magistrate or judge is capable of seeing that that action on the part of someone is intended to be intimidatory to a witness or to someone else in the court. I have yet to see a magistrate or judge who does not have the capacity to bring that person to heel. I have been in courts where defendants were removed from court because the judge or magistrate believed they were being disruptive or, on occasions, when they have been intimidatory. If that is the worst --

Hon Kay Hallahan: I made the point that I did not want to mention the worst.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: Even if that is one of them, this legislation seems to be more pitched at cosmetics and artificiality than it was before.

The Minister referred to "that ridiculous article". On what basis does she refer to any article as being ridiculous simply because it takes a contrary view to her own? I quoted that article at some length in the second reading debate and the subsequent stages of the Bill to indicate the contrary views of someone who believed there are many ways in which these problems can be overcome without proceeding down the path of reform for its own sake. If I were in any doubt before about whether we were dealing with reform for its own sake -- so that the Government could look as though it were doing something marvellously updated -- I am no longer convinced now. In my experience, there are many things that a magistrate or judge can do to put a person at ease -- not just a child --

Hon Kay Hallahan: You don't know what you are talking about.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: The Minister has just proved that she does not.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order! I will show the same even-handedness to Hon Phillip Pendal that I showed to the Minister. This is obviously developing into an argument of principle between them rather than dealing with new clause 11.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: New clause 11 will require the Government to bring a report back on the operations of this scheme after a two-year period. I repeat my earlier contention: The Parliament will probably be in a better position then -- and hopefully will not be in a position of having to acknowledge the folly of putting the Bill through -- as a result of two years' experience. People more skilled and experienced in the law than I or the Minister for Community Services have, in an article which the Minister preferred to describe as "ridiculous", made it clear that there are other options. There are other ways of ensuring that a person in a traumatised position, particularly a child, is not disadvantaged. I outlined these at some length during the second reading debate and subsequent stages. It would seem we have reached a stalemate on the matter, but I repeat that the Opposition supported the Bill enthusiastically --

Hon Garry Kelly: Except for the main bit.

Hon P.G. PENDAL: It is not the main bit at all. I wish the honourable member had bothered to read it. The Opposition supported the principle and the main content of the Bill but took

exception to the way in which one aspect of the Bill was to be achieved. I make absolutely no apology for that at all. I hope the next two years will prove there has been some value in having this debate so that if changes are needed then they will be carried out.

Amendment put and passed.

Report

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

AGRICULTURE: SALINITY

Select Committee: Motion

Debate resumed from 18 November.

Amendments to Motion

HON GRAHAM EDWARDS (North Metropolitan -- Minister for Sport and Recreation) [8.03 pm]: I move the following amendments to the motion --

Line 1, after the word "Select Committee" -- To insert the words "of four members".

After paragraph (c) -- To add the following paragraph --

(2) A quorum of the Committee is two members and the Committee's proceedings during the hearing of evidence shall be open to accredited representatives of the news media and the public.

Amendments put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

Question (motion, as amended) put and passed.

Appointment of Select Committee

On motion by Hon Graham Edwards (Minister for Sport and Recreation), resolved --

That the Committee comprise Hons D.J. Wordsworth, J.N. Caldwell, Doug Wenn and T.G. Butler.

COMPANIES AND SECURITIES LEGISLATION

Commonwealth Control: Ministerial Statement

Debate resumed from 8 December.

HON MAX EVANS (Metropolitan) [8.07 pm]: I support the statement made by the Attorney General, but there are a few comments which should be made. We note the Attorney General has confirmed that the Western Australian Government is strongly opposed to this Commonwealth move to take exclusive control of the companies and securities law. This would replace the cooperative Commonwealth-State arrangements which have been in place since 1981. The Attorney General said in his statement that the State remains committed, within a uniform national scheme, to maintaining a high level of local independence, flexibility, and initiative with ready access by all sections of the local business and professional community to policy decision makers.

I would like to go back to about 1973-74 when a proposed national companies scheme was put forward. There was a lot of feeling around Australia at that time that the scheme should not go forward if administered from Canberra without input from the States. In 1980 the Fraser Government put forward a national companies scheme which also lacked support around Australia because of the way it was drafted. This was set back for 12 to 18 months when the present legislation came forward. We must be grateful for the work of Hon I.G. Medcalf, the then Attorney General of Western Australia, towards the cooperative scheme we have today which had to be supported by all States and under which amendments must be supported by five out of seven States. The Federal Government set up a Select Committee to inquire into the present scheme. The main inference seems to be that all the power should rest with Canberra and that all the knowledge resides in Canberra and not in the States. It is on that point that the Attorney General and I fully agree that there should be no major change to the legislation.

The Commonwealth Government refers to the support of the business community for the proposed takeover. The Attorney General says there is no such thing as the business community in this country. As far as we can determine, support for the move comes from a narrow range of big business which sees its interest as best served through the centralisation of authority which is readily available to its head offices. To a large extent people in big business are talking of having very little direct contact with the Corporate Affairs Offices in the various States; it is done by people down the line not realising the benefit in the smaller States' operating directly with the Corporate Affairs Department. The State has made it clear that it will support the chairmanship by the Commonwealth of the ministerial council with the right of the Attorney General to have both a casting and a deliberative vote. The only situation where Commonwealth amendments will not proceed is where there is opposition by five of the seven States, the Northern Territory having a vote. Even now there is nothing to prevent the recommendation of the council being reviewed by the Federal Parliament before formal legislation is introduced. In this way the advice of the Federal Parliament would be available for the guidance of the ministerial council before its decisions are finalised.

As a result of the opposition of all the States of Australia except New South Wales, the Commonwealth Attorney General recently invited the Government to consider an alternative which would allow exempt proprietary companies operating solely within one State to continue to be governed by that State's security laws and administered by that State. We and the Attorney General do not think that is advisable, and that has been reflected throughout Australia. I will comment further later on. There is no way we can split the administration of corporate affairs between national companies and State companies. It would be optional for such companies to bring themselves under Commonwealth or State control, and that would be far from satisfactory. In the view of the States, the uniformity achieved should not be replaced by such narrow considerations as the place of a company's activity. This is exemplified by companies trading in only one State, whereas national companies can be registered throughout Australia. A company can be registered in another State, and this would create further complications. The Commonwealth made a proposal in respect of an agency base being set up for a transitional period to allow revenue to be gained by the States. The Attorney General made it clear that revenue implications are the least of his concerns. I am glad he made that comment because it is quite right. That is the important principle, not the matter of finance.

There has been rare unanimity across the professional business community behind the Attorney General's stance on this legislation. I would like to take some of the credit for this. I wrote to nearly all the large firms of chartered accountants and solicitors as far back as May seeking their support in this action when this first came out from Canberra, and as a result the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Western Australia took a stance against the Federal body. The Institute of Chartered Secretaries also took an opposite stance to its Federal body, and it has been reported that the Confederation of WA Industry took an opposite stance to its national body. Unfortunately the Attorney General is not here; I would like to have heard his comments on the meeting of Attorneys General in Hobart last week.

Hon Graham Edwards: He is away on parliamentary business.

Hon MAX EVANS: I realise that; I am not being critical.

Hon J.M. Brown: It just keeps the record straight.

Hon MAX EVANS: Yes; thank you.

There has been a lot of discussion regarding the splitting of the proprietary companies and public companies with a State record and a national record. The Opposition may reject this in the Federal Parliament, subject to the support of the Democrats, because the Senate is there to look after the States' interests, and that is what it would be doing, because all the States except New South Wales strongly support the present cooperative scheme. Only New South Wales does not wish to have this. The scheme has worked extremely well in the five or six years since operations commenced. Western Australia has been well served by Commissioners for Corporate Affairs on these matters, and the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has had a very busy job in the last two years. Far more public companies have been floated in this State than in any other State in Australia.

It is not the alleged support of the business community which is the main motivating force

behind the Commonwealth proposal. We believe the motivating force is the centralising of corporate affairs and the companies code, which goes back to 1974-75 when there was a very strong push to have a national companies code whereby major changes to the company legislation, administration of companies, disclosure of information and so on could be made at the stroke of a pen. This should not be the case. It is not big business which wants it; it is ALP policy to centralise more powers in Canberra. The left wing and the more radical sections of the party want this. Mr Bowen is not noted for his left wing views, but he is being pushed along because he believes it is good for the country.

Hon J.M. Brown: The only radical person is you.

Hon MAX EVANS: I like to be radical; as long as I am radical in the right direction I will make a great contribution.

There has been a lot of conflict between Melbourne and Sydney. Five or six years ago there was a great battle about where the national companies office would be set up. It was nearly as big as the battle of the 1890s as to where the capital of Australia would be. It was the best part of 12 months before differences were reconciled and the office was set up in Melbourne. There was antipathy to the legislation's going through if one State or the other could not have its own way.

Hon P.G. Pandal: And they have the cheek to call us parochial!

Hon MAX EVANS: That is right. There is this dominance by the Eastern States. People in the Eastern States do not believe that South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania are very different. It is only when people move over here that they see the big difference. Going back to the 1930s, we were looking for secession because of the dominance of the Eastern States. Something as important as the companies code, which influences thousands of corporate bodies in this State, should be located here where the business is done. The head office should be here where people can make contact; they should not have to deal with Canberra, as they do in respect of tax matters. The tax office here has very limited powers, and any major problems must be referred to Canberra for rulings, as Hon Jim Brown and I found out last year. It took seven or eight months to obtain a ruling from Canberra. The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs must have the power to make decisions here. This is most important, whether they are decisions to investigate -- the Government requested one with the Swan Building Society -- or anything else; it is important that they have this power and do not have to depend upon directions from Canberra.

One of the problems is that Ministers generally know very little about company law or about securities; they are dependent upon their advisers. Premier Cain changed his Attorney General yesterday to a person with no legal experience. He thought it might be a good idea if the Attorney General had no legal experience. I await the comments of Hon Joe Berinson.

Hon Graham Edwards: You have been doing that with your Premiers for years.

Hon P.G. Pandal: What a stupid comment!

Several members interjected.

Hon MAX EVANS: Ministers all rely on departmental experience. If a Minister relies on departmental experience, far better legislation will be drawn up at the State level than at the Commonwealth level. Commonwealth law officers have very little if any experience with this legislation; they would have to start from scratch because they have not been administering this law. The first cooperative schemes were in 1981. Prior to that they had no interest in it at all, and today Canberra is only one voice out of seven. The advisers are closer to the business community in the States, and they can make far better decisions. The decisions that they make will be very important for the administration of these tens of thousands of companies throughout the State. The position at present is that no amendment can proceed unless the majority of the Ministerial Council -- that is, four out of seven members -- supports it. Under the State plan there is a compromise proposal that if four out of the seven members oppose a proposal it may go ahead if the Commonwealth initiated it; this is a compromise. As Hon J.M. Berinson said in relation to Commonwealth proposals, if five out of the seven members vote for a proposal it will pass and that is because the Commonwealth would have a deliberative and a casting vote.

There should still be an extra power held within the State that provides an ability to oppose

legislation initiated in Canberra that the State does not think is right -- it could be the view of one or two States that it should not pass. This would not be on political grounds, because the States operate differently. There has been a greater growth in the number of private companies in this State in recent times than there has been in the other States and this has required a different approach to be taken here. The State Opposition indicates its support for any proposal that would allow simplification of the law and its procedures, but it does not like the splitting up of public companies and exempt proprietary companies into two codes, one run by the States and one run by the Federal Government.

When I was a member of the Chamber of Commerce there was mention that a separate code might be drawn up for exempt proprietary companies, and for public companies. However, the more one looks at that suggestion the more one sees how difficult it would be to handle as there would be two sets of rules in one corporate office or body, so it would not be workable. The Opposition strongly supports the State Government in its strong anti-Commonwealth view in relation to this matter. We do not support the recommended voting system, which has not yet been passed and is merely a view that has been put forward.

We hope that the Attorney General will look at ways to restore and maintain the strength of State opposition to any legislation forced upon the States by the Federal Government. The Opposition supports the Government and commends the Attorney General for his forthright statements and the Premier of this State for being forthright in relation to this matter. There have been many good comments that have been made by persons taking a professional view which have been reported in the Press at different times. On behalf of the Opposition and the professional people of Western Australia we thank them for the strong action that they are taking with the exception of the few minor points that have been mentioned that we asked be looked at.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND) BILL

Consideration of Tabled Paper

Debate resumed from 10 December.

HON FRED McKENZIE (North East Metropolitan) [8.25 pm]: This has been a long running debate and there are a number of matters about which I will speak, the first relating to the appointment of doctors. In the past few months a highly qualified gentleman has visited my office. I have seen evidence which indicates that he holds certificates from Malaysia and England showing that he is well qualified in gynaecology. He also produced certificates testifying to the fact that he had served in hospitals in the United Kingdom. Amongst his papers were letters appointing him to positions in Western Australia, one of those positions being with the Alcohol and Drug Authority.

Another of those papers related to the defence forces, where there are vacancies. He had been informed that, subject to his passing an examination set by the Australian Medical Examining Council, he would be accepted as a member of the Royal Australia Air Force. I guess that that acceptance would be subject to his passing all the medical examinations, by which I mean the fitness examinations that people are required to undertake before being accepted into the defence services. I tried to help that gentleman, but without success. I would do anything to have him accepted.

I have read comments in *The Western Mail* in relation to the appointment of doctors to the profession in Australia and that there is an acute shortage of doctors in country areas. One place mentioned in particular was Merredin. I wrote to the Minister for Health asking whether this person could be let in under certain conditions, because he was offering his services. People can be admitted without passing the appropriate examination, which is held in Melbourne or in one of the capitals in the Eastern States. People can enter the profession under that scheme because there is a gross shortage of doctors in country areas. The Minister wrote back saying that a procedure had to be gone through, that positions had to be advertised in the Press, and that under those circumstances the person could apply to be considered.

Despite the shortage of doctors in country areas I have found that such positions were advertised infrequently, and when they were advertised the gentleman did not seem to have an opportunity for appointment. However, there are very few such positions advertised. I

understand that a shire council in the area concerned must make application for such a position to be advertised. Whatever the system, I can inform members of this House that there ought not be a shortage of doctors in country areas, because there are highly qualified medical people available, but not to Australian standards, and this is the crux of the whole matter. However, these people are certainly acceptable in most parts of the world. I have been told by this person that when people go to the Eastern States for this examination, which is set by the Australian Medical Examining Council, only a small number are successful.

If he related the procedure accurately to me, it is a most unfair procedure. The Australian Medical Examining Council determines the number of doctors required. If, for example, 20 people were sitting for the examination, and the council decided it required only four, there would not be a pass mark in the exam; what it would do is just pick the top four people. It could therefore be possible to have in one examination a pass mark of 95, and in another examination a pass mark of 85. The pass mark might be 99 or 100, but the council will just take the amount of people that it has determined as being required.

We read all the time about the shortage of doctors in this country, yet we have people coming from overseas, with qualifications that are regarded as acceptable in those overseas countries. I am a lay person, but it is the Government which places the regulations on the Statute books in relation to the method of selection of people to go into the medical profession. However, I guess as lay persons we are guided by the medical profession and it would be very hard to question them because they would ask what do we know about the medical profession. I know we have a very high standard of medical treatment, but the standard may be too high. I do not see any reason why we should have a shortage of doctors in country areas when we have doctors who are willing to go there.

I can show the qualifications of this gentleman to any member who wishes to see them. However, the confidentiality of that person must be respected. He feels that if he kicks up a fuss about it, it will damage his chances further down the track and he will be forever blocked from becoming a medical practitioner in Australia. I think that would be a tragedy. The qualifications of this person are of a high standard. He is qualified in many sexually transmissible diseases, yet he cannot practice.

I have used the opportunity of this debate to raise this matter, because the Government supplies the funds for the universities and medical schools which train doctors. I support the motion before the House.

HON D.J. WORDSWORTH (South) [8.35 pm]: We spend a lot of time in this Parliament passing laws which quite often end up being interpreted in a ridiculous manner. I wish to raise a case which I have raised previously in this House. The case concerns a shearer constituent of mine, who together with others in his shearing gang went to Queensland and New South Wales to break the wide comb dispute. His gang was legitimately employed to go over to shear there at a time when there was conflict between local shearers over the use of the wide comb. This shearing gang was between sheds and was having a drink in a hotel when word came through to the publican that it was likely there would be confrontation between the two groups of shearers. The publican instantly rang the police, but they refused to come around. The publican again rang the police when the shearers who were likely to cause trouble arrived, and the police said, "Phone us when they start fighting." The publican did phone the police when they started to fight, but the police were already outside the hotel, watching the fight from their car, and when the fight was over they came in and dragged the bodies apart.

Hon Graham Edwards: That sounds pretty wise to me.

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: Yes, but one of my constituents, Mr Bloor, of 90 Lower Denmark Road, Albany, was kicked in the head during that fight, which has affected him so that he has not been able to shear again and has difficulty in being able to keep jobs. Mr Bloor endeavoured to get compensation for his injuries and his inability to work. I understand that the most he would be entitled to is \$20 000. Because of the delay in the hearing of the court case in New South Wales, the Attorney General of New South Wales, following representations from Hon Tom Knight and myself, awarded \$8 000 compensation to this man. Mr Bloor is entitled to another \$12 000, and has been endeavouring to get that for several years. It is now estimated that the costs of the court case for his efforts to get this

\$12 000 are in excess of \$1.5 million. I will read the latest letter to me from Mr Terry Sheahan, the Attorney General of New South Wales dated 24 November 1987 --

Dear Mr Wordsworth,

I refer to your personal representations on behalf of Mr. R. Bloor of 90-95 Lower Denmark Road, Albany, concerning the case of Regina - v - Brown and Ors.

As you may be aware, on 22nd June, 1984, the accused Brown and eleven other accused were committed for trial to the Coonamble District Court. The venue of the trial was changed from Coonamble to the Sydney District Court on 24th October, 1986 --

That is over two years later. To continue --

-- and the trial was listed to commence on 20th July, 1987.

On that date, three of the accused, Rummage, Smith and Walford pleaded guilty to one count of affray. On 8th September, 1987, His Honour Judge Denton sentenced each accused to 18 months imprisonment and specified a non-probation period of six months, both to date from 7th September, 1987.

The remaining accused pleaded not guilty. Due to difficulties encountered in empanelling a jury, the trial did not get underway until 23rd July, 1987.

I gather that for that trial, as with the previous trial, the witnesses had to be brought over from New South Wales and Western Australia, together with a surgeon from Western Australia, and they spent literally weeks hanging around waiting for a jury to be empanelled. The letter continued --

The trial continued part-heard through to 12th August, 1987, when one of the accused, William Lohse, became ill and was conveyed to hospital. The matter was thereafter mentioned each day before His Honour until 19th August, 1987, when medical evidence was tendered stating that neither William Lohse nor another accused would be fit to attend Court for at least the next ten days.

Having regard to those circumstances, His Honour discharged the jury on the basis that the trial had become too disjointed due to the amount of time lost. His Honour then stood the matter over to 17th September, 1987, to set a new trial date.

I am informed by the Director of Public Prosecutions that the matter is now listed for trial on 25th July, 1988 as a Special Fixture with a Category A listing priority.

I trust the foregoing is of assistance in clarifying the situation.

Members can just imagine the frustration of this man. Of the people who did the bashing -- Brown and Ors -- one had already kicked a man to death, and the other white had a very bad record of stealing cars and rapping opal mines. I think they were the only two whites -- the rest were Aborigines. Members can see what is happening. By the time we collect all these people together to have a court case and one thing after another goes wrong, it just carries on and on. One really wonders what the cost of justice is to this nation. It has been estimated that this case has already cost nearly \$1.5 million. The object is to get my constituent \$12 000 compensation.

The other matter I wish to raise, which is much the same sort of thing, concerns the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation of the Australian Taxation Office in Perth. It relates to some sales tax which was levied by Albany Printers for the printing of one of the little district bulletins. I gather that previously Albany Printers in some cases had not levied sales tax where applicable and that the Taxation Department later assessed tax that should have been levied. That firm could not get it from the people for whom it had done the printing and had to pay the tax itself. Of course, in consequence it was inclined to charge sales tax on everything it sold, including the printing of the "Denmark Bulletin". I have here a letter from the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation to the person who prints the bulletin. I might add that the bulletin is given out free and the only way there is any income to cover the printing is from the small number of advertisements that appear in it. The letter reads --

Dear Madam,

Your recent letter requested a refund of tax paid by you to Albany Printers on the printing of the Denmark Bulletin.

The Denmark Bulletin is exempt from sales tax as a newspaper under item 54 in the First Schedule to the Sales Tax (Exemptions and Classifications) Act.

Under common law money paid voluntarily under a mistake of law is not refundable. Although there are sections in the sales tax law that provide for refunds of sales tax to be made, it is the view of this office that those sections do not override the provisions of common law.

In view of this it is not possible for this office to allow a refund of the tax on the printing of the publication.

Yours faithfully,

(B.F. POWER)

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF TAXATION

I hate to say so, but that is another case of the law's being an ass.

Hon Garry Kelly: Did you take it to an appeals tribunal?

Hon D.J. WORDSWORTH: After the last little effort of \$1 million for Mr Bloor's \$12 000 compensation, I do not know where to start on this one. How the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation would think this woman paid the sales tax voluntarily, I would not know, but she could not get her paper printed the next time unless she paid sales tax to the printer. I throw those two things in for comment by the Attorney General. As it happens, he has received copies of correspondence on the other matter and has assisted; and I have nothing against the New South Wales Attorney General, who has been very good too.

However, at times we just sit here thinking we are doing a great job making laws and this is the sort of thing that comes out the back end. I think it is worth drawing to the attention of the House, even if only to prevent our getting swollen heads.

Question put and passed.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AMENDMENT BILL (No 4)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 15 December.

HON G.E. MASTERS (West -- Leader of the Opposition) [8.45 pm]: The Opposition will not be opposing this industrial relations Bill and I note with interest the statement made by the Leader of the House in his second reading speech. It is very similar to the speech made by the responsible Minister in another place. The Minister in another place and the Leader of the House who is handling this Bill in the Legislative Council made strong reference to the tripartite council, which comprises employer groups, union groups, and the Government. The second reading speech gave every indication that the legislation was fully supported and gained the full approval of the tripartite council, and that would indicate to members that the council had been consulted and had viewed the Bill, probably in a draft form.

In fact this was not the case and although many discussions took place with the tripartite council it did not view the legislation and there were some reservations by at least one of the three groups. I was sorry to read the *Hansard* report in another place where the Minister was confronted with the question of whether the tripartite council had full knowledge of the legislation. He admitted afterwards that in fact the tripartite council was not fully consulted in the drafting of the Bill and it was not intended that the second reading speech should indicate that to members. When confronted, the Minister made this statement, which I think is an appalling statement for a Minister to have made. On 10 December, in answer to a question on the subject I have just raised, Mr Peter Dowding said --

The second reading speech is not written by me, it is written by a departmental officer who has his or her view on the matter. You should be very careful when reading the speech.

In other words that, from a Minister of the Crown, indicates that the Minister had not written his second reading speech and therefore did not accept full responsibility for it, and in fact blamed his own departmental officer for putting the wrong inflection on a second reading speech. I do not think I have ever heard anywhere, at any time, of a Minister making this

sort of statement in the House. Indeed, in my days as a Minister, under both Sir Charles Court and Ray O'Connor, a Minister would have been threatened with the sack for making that sort of statement. Members will know that in this House Hon Graham MacKinnon, a long-serving Minister, always accepted responsibility for any statements or information that his department gave him. I think it is a sorry state of affairs that this Minister is passing the buck to a departmental officer when, after all, the buck comes to rest with him. I hope that the Minister responsible never ever makes that sort of statement again. He can hardly respect the loyalty of the departmental officers if he simply shoves off blame to them if anything goes wrong. It shows the basic weakness of that Minister and the way that he views his job when the pressure is on.

Having made that statement, I will comment on the background of the legislation and the reason it was brought forward. Obviously I am going to make some of my own comments which will differ from those statements made by my party's shadow Minister in another place.

The major changes without any shadow of doubt are as a result of the Robe River dispute, and it is hard for me to resist a smile when I look at the legislation and recall the time that the Government and the Minister, Hon Des Dans, introduced some industrial legislation. I am pleased he is back in his seat; I was sure he would be. Hon Des Dans introduced legislation into this House which repealed section 45 of the Industrial Relations Act.

Hon D.K. Dans: I remember. You put it in.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: That is right, Hon D.K. Dans' Government repealed it, and now their Minister wants to bring it back in a different form. I recall that at the time I was opposed to the repeal of section 45 because it gave the Industrial Relations Commission certain powers, which could have been applied during the Robe River dispute. At the time it was repealed, the unions were in full flight and probably felt that the powers of the Industrial Relations Commission could be applied against them. I have no doubt that they put some pressure on the Minister of the day who agreed, along with his Government, to repeal section 45 because it was uncomfortable for some of the union leaders. Times have changed, and that is why I have a smile on my face.

Hon D.K. Dans: You are entitled to have it.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The boot is now on the other foot. Some of the more militant union leaders were taking a strong stand, and now we have seen the company Cliffs-Robe River, under the leadership of Charles Copeman, taking a stand and that has hurt the unions. The unions suddenly felt that section 45 would not be a bad idea after all. In amending section 44 the Government is returning section 45 because the unions need it. The pendulum is swinging. Employers are now taking a strong stand and, indeed, the work force itself now has a bigger say in the workplace. That swing has only just started, and there is nothing that the Government --

Hon D.K. Dans interjected.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: -- or Mr Dans can do about it. He knows it and so do I.

Hon D.K. Dans: No, I do not know that.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Is Hon D.K. Dans supporting this legislation?

Hon D.K. Dans: I am listening to you ramble on. I have not made my mind up yet.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The mind boggles. I will assume that by the time I have finished my speech Hon Des Dans will have made up his mind. I have said all along that the industrial relations system we now have is not a good one.

Hon D.K. Dans: The loaded gun in your hands is different from the loaded gun in our hands, and the unions know that.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The loaded gun is now pointed in another direction. It is pointed in the direction of some of the people that Hon Des Dans supported, and they do not like it. For years it was pointed at the employers who were told that if they did not do as they were told the trigger would be pulled. All of a sudden the situation has switched, the gun is pointed at

the unions, and they do not like it. The industrial system has never been very good. It has been abused and misused for many years, since the turn of the century, and it has been getting worse.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: By employers and other Ministers.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: On paper the system was excellent, but it has not worked, and will not under the present arrangements. Now times are changing. The economic situation and feelings within the community and the workplace have changed, and the work force has changed its views. Many companies have come to the end of their tether and have said they have had enough. They have carried out their own semi-revolt. We saw that in the Mudginberri dispute, the Dollar Sweets dispute, and the Robe River dispute. Those disputes were victories for commonsense, and have shown the way for Australia to look with some hope for the future.

Hon D.K. Dans: It has not led the voters back to the cause of the conservatives.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The Australian economy under the system supported by Hon Des Dans and Hon Sam Piantadosi for many years was going well and truly down the gurgler. This country went from having one of the highest standards of living in the world, not so many years ago, to something like the mid-20s or 30s.

Hon D.K. Dans: That is rot. I do not know how they put that together.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: It is understandable why there are so many interjections coming from the other side of the House. The workers on the shop floor are now having something to say. The rank and file, I have no doubt, will be making their own arrangements and there is nothing the members opposite can do about it. In the Mudginberri dispute the workers made their own arrangements. They agreed to work harder and longer hours and as a result doubled their pay.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi interjected.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: What happened? Hon Des Dans' and Hon S.M. Piantadosi's friends said, "You must not do that. You must not work harder and earn more."

Hon D.K. Dans: How do you know they are my friends? I have got my own friends.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let us at least listen to the member in relative silence, so that we can get on with this Bill.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I am talking about the bill, Mr President.

Hon D.K. Dans: Every time Mr Masters speaks about industrial relations he makes the same speech, he just changes the nouns.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I know that hurts Hon Des Dans, and I enjoy doing it because it rubs salt into the wounds. He knows times are changing and he can do nothing about it. The Robe River dispute, after Mudginberri and Dollar Sweets, had to happen. It was the greatest victory for commonsense in 50 years and has led to the resurgence of Australia as a competitive nation because it set the example for many other companies. There are mining companies in the north working in the same direction. They may not have had to take such a strong stand because the example has already been made and people know it.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: There has been consultation, Mr Masters, that is the reason.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: There is consultation now. That was a significant victory and has changed the attitudes of people in our community.

Hon D.K. Dans: A rogue bull in a china shop, that is what it was, Mr Masters, like you were when you were Minister.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The honourable member ought to know well that as a result of that dispute there have been significant changes in the mining areas which are gradually spreading throughout the nation. The reason this legislation is being brought in is to resolve some of the difficulties which may arise in future disputes similar to that at Robe River. But it is too late; the die has been cast, and this legislation will make no difference. It is obvious that some of the more militant unions in the past were actively encouraged by the Government of the day. As far as this Government is concerned, no-one will ever forget the role played by it and the Attorney General in the case of John O'Connor.

Hon D.K. Dans: You could lose the election through that.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Members will know that I am no admirer of the industrial relations system or, indeed, of the Industrial Relations Commission, as it has acted in the past. My comments differ from those made by my colleague in the Legislative Assembly. The members opposite know my views, I have never hidden them. There have been many factors and a great deal of pressure applied through industrial disputes. They saw fit to take a certain course of action, which was in the wrong direction and have been carrying out union policies rather than implementing sensible decisions. That has now changed.

I was interested to read the comments made by Mr Collier on his retirement. Some of his statements appalled me, but I do not need to go into that. He has one view and I have another.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: He believes in conciliation.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I am sure the member now believes in conciliation as a result of some actions which have taken place.

Hon S.M. Piantadosi: I always have.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The Robe River dispute was as a result of the company not being able to continue with work practices --

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I have asked the member to come to order. He is carrying on a conversation as though he is in a public telephone box. The member on his feet should very smartly get on to telling me something about the contents of this Bill, and not enter into conversations with Hon Sam Piantadosi. Perhaps then we will eventually have the Bill explained. I fail to comprehend so far as to what the Bill is about.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: In the Robe River dispute a number of work practices were operating which could no longer be tolerated because of the cost and the fact that these practices were sending the company broke. The company decided to end the work practices and operations which had been inflicted upon it by some of the unions. I blame the company as much as anything else. The level of manning would not be tolerated either. The Industrial Relations Commission then told the company to retain some of the work practices. The company appealed and the commission was not able to take any action. This legislation proposes to give the Industrial Relations Commission the power to direct companies to continue with certain practices if the commission thinks that is the correct course to take. I am unhappy with that situation. However my colleague in another place has supported the proposal, and the Confederation of Western Australian Industry has somewhat reluctantly also agreed to this legislation. I do not entirely blame the union leadership; I blame the company for being very weak in good times, and in tough times finding they could not afford to continue. Mr Dans knows as well as I do that that is what this Bill is all about.

Hon D.K. Dans: It is a little different from that.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The member would have to agree that some of the work practices were intolerable and could not be sustained. At one time 8 000 meals were being served to the work force per week; today 2 000 meals are being served per week; production is higher and manpower less. If the Industrial Relations Commission under Mr Collier had these proposed powers at that time, it would have told the company to continue with its operations. The company would have replied that it would go broke, and would close its doors. The Industrial Relations Commission did not save the company; the company by its own actions, and those of Charles Copeman, saved the company. I suggest it also saved many other companies in Australia as a result.

The amendments to this Bill will give the Industrial Relations Commission control in those areas. We may regret this, and I am deeply concerned that the commission will be able to interfere with and vary contracts which have legitimately been in operation for some time. I would like the Minister to advise me whether I am right or wrong. Do the participants in contracts need to agree with variations to the contracts before the commission can change those contracts?

I again indicate my strong reservations and concern on certain aspects of this Bill. However, I will not oppose the legislation.

HON J.N. CALDWELL (South) [9.06 pm]: The National Party will support this Bill which involves a number of changes in the industrial relations system. The procedures of the Industrial Relations Commission will be changed to speed up the process of dealing with claims, including more flexible advertising procedures. The powers of the commission will be widened in dealing with disputes to prevent the parties from continuing with provocative action likely to escalate a dispute. The definition of employee is extended to cover persons employed by agencies or domestic service businesses who are sent to work in private homes. Also the rights of teachers to appeal against dismissal for misconduct are recognised, as are those of Parliament and Government House staff. These provisions will be delayed until December 1988 and will be the subject of an amendment by the National Party, which I will comment on later. The commission will be required to maintain up to date copies of awards to be made available to the public. Finally, the immunity and protection afforded to commissioners is extended to persons sitting judicially as members of boards of reference or tribunals established under this Act. That is a broad outline of the provisions of this Bill. We support the Bill, although we will move amendments at the Committee stage.

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan -- Leader of the House) [9.09 pm]: As is not unusual with legislation of this kind, the opportunity has been taken by the Leader of the Opposition to canvass rather broader issues than the Bill contemplates. I do not blame the Leader of the Opposition for that; there are some temptations that none of us can resist, and in his case this is one of them. Nonetheless it appears from what has been said both by the Leader of the Opposition and by Mr Caldwell that the Bill as a whole has the support of their respective parties and, to the extent that there are issues to be raised in Committee, perhaps further debate could best be left to that point.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Hon D.J. Wordsworth) in the Chair; Hon J.M. Berinson (Leader of the House) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement --

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: On behalf of Hon E.J. Charlton, I propose an amendment --

Page 1, lines 6 and 7 -- To delete the clause and substitute the following --

2. (1) Subject to subsection (2), this Act shall come into operation on such day as is fixed by proclamation.

(2) Section 7(1) shall come into operation on the day on which the Act receives the Royal Assent.

The CHAIRMAN: The member is proposing a new clause. I will put clause 2, and if members wish to vote for Hon E.J. Charlton's amendment, they will have to vote against the clause as it presently stands and then they can go back and put Hon E.J. Charlton's amendment as a new clause.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: Clause 2 contains a provision for parliamentary employees and Government House employees to appeal against unfair suspension or dismissal. I feel that such employees have equal rights to those of other employees, and I do not see any reason for them having to wait until 18 December 1988, which is almost one year away, before this provision comes into operation.

Hon J.M. Berinson: There is no December date. The Bill was amended to avoid putting proclamation off that long, and was amended to provide that provisions of the Act shall come into operation on such day or days as are fixed by proclamation. December was originally proposed, but that clause was amended in the Assembly.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: The clause may have been amended, but we feel that there have been instances where employees of this place have had their employment terminated for no apparent reason. The staff have no means of appeal against unfair dismissal except to rely on fair-minded politicians to act on their behalf. If this amendment is accepted, the staff of

Parliament House and of Government House will have an almost immediate right of appeal. The National Party has had an informal request to amend the Bill so that the right of appeal which is currently available to every other employee in the State is granted immediately to Parliament House and Government House employees. It is a simple amendment, and I would like to see it accepted.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I oppose this proposed amendment. I put it to members that they should not support the amendment either. Let me start by talking about the principle involved. Members will be aware that successive Governments have insisted upon retaining the exclusion of the staff of Parliament House and the Governor's establishment from the cover of industrial legislation altogether. At various times when in Opposition the Government argued that these members of staff should be brought within the general industrial cover. I stress that it is at the Government's initiative that the Bill now seeks to bring the staff of Parliament House and the Governor's establishment within the general provisions relating to appeals against dismissal and so on. There is no question, therefore, that the Government is reluctant in this matter. On the contrary, it is the Government which has taken the initiative.

However, we propose that we proceed with some caution as this is not an ordinary extension of the authority of the Industrial Relations Commission. I believe that members would serve the interests of both institutions -- that is, Parliament House and Government House -- best by accepting that the Government, in looking to a situation where some small delay might be involved before implementation, is being reasonable in all the circumstances. What are the circumstances that make this position different from those applying to ordinary employees? This is a situation where the Parliament -- in formal terms the supreme court of the State -- could be required to appear before an inferior tribunal; namely the Industrial Relations Commission at that commission's demand. The officers representing the Parliament -- and I suppose in most cases they would be the President or the Speaker -- could well, in that set of circumstances, be called upon to answer before the inferior tribunal for actions they have taken when representing the Parliament. We also have the situation where the Governor, as the employer of staff of that establishment, could theoretically be called upon to justify a decision that he is unable to satisfactorily continue with the services of people who are quite personal to the exercise of his duties.

We therefore have a balance of considerations to apply. On the one hand, the wish of the Government is to provide the same sort of protection for the various employees concerned as are available to others, but, on the other hand, there is a need to proceed cautiously and to take every possible step to ensure that the sort of situation to which I refer does not in practice occur. It is contemplated that these sorts of situations might be avoided by setting up some distinctive internal dispute resolution process, both within Parliament and within the Governor's establishment. The precise form and nature of that process which would be designed to obviate the need for measures and which are clearly, on the face of them, undesirable has not been determined.

Hon J.N. Caldwell: Would you say that possibly the Minister has jumped the gun in proposing this?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No, not at all.

Hon J.N. Caldwell: It appears the Minister has put the cart before the horse.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is not a question of putting the cart before the horse; it is a question of establishing a principle and then ensuring that proper steps are initiated to make sure that the principle is applied in the best possible way from all points of view. To provide an analogy, and without anticipating debate on other Bills, tomorrow we will resume debate on the Residential Tenancies Bill. The second reading of that measure also flagged that it was not expected that the Bill would come into operation for at least six months after assent. The reason is that it is expected it will take that sort of time to put the necessary administrative frameworks into place.

Hon N.F. Moore: And to understand the Bill.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Given the number of amendments forced upon a reluctant Government by an insistent group of opponents, I can understand the honourable member's small degree of confusion. We can leave that debate until tomorrow, and I would prefer to

do that not only because of the Standing Orders, but because another Minister will be handling it, and I am sure she will be in a much better position than I am to straighten out Hon Norman Moore in respect of any confusion that he still has.

I raise that by way of example to indicate that what is being suggested here is nothing out of the ordinary but is a means of proceeding firstly with the principle and then with the means of implementation. One might have asked why the framework has not been set up for the residential tenancies legislation. The reason is we do not have the Bill yet and we could well have set up the framework and found that the Bill was changed in a way which wasted all that work. That is precisely what has happened with that Bill because it started off contemplating that residential tenancies should be dealt with by a division of the Local Court, and somewhere along the line it has gone off that track and has ended up with the Small Claims Tribunal. Had the Crown Law Department proceeded to set up the whole framework so it could have started next week there would have been reasonable grounds for complaint that all of that work was unnecessary and involved costly waste, and it had arisen because the department had presumed to anticipate what the Parliament would say.

Precisely the same sort of consideration applies here. The Government is very clear as to the principle it is pursuing, but it has not yet clarified with the responsible officers at Government House and in the Parliament what preliminary frameworks might be established to avoid the ultimate step which will always be there -- application to the Industrial Relations Commission -- but with a view to trying to change it, not just in the interests of the dignity of the Parliament and the Governor's establishment, but for the better and more harmonious operation of those two institutions. They are important institutions; they are at the pinnacle, so to speak, of our State institutions. We are moving a long way in establishing a principle. The Government can certainly be relied on to flesh out this legislation by appropriate measures to bring it into practice, and for those reasons I ask the Chamber to accept that there is no real detriment involved in avoiding this jumping the gun and, having come this far, some small degree of caution and patience that is involved in the provisions of clause 2 ought to be accepted.

Hon C.J. BELL: The comments made by the Leader of the House give me more concern than the original proposition. Given that the Bill can be proclaimed in bits over a period of time, the position of the staff mentioned by Hon John Caldwell is worse. When the original proposal was for December 1988 there was at least a definite date on which matters would be put in place. Under the Bill before the Chamber the situation is open-ended and the date of proclamation may be a long way off -- it may never happen. To that extent I am most concerned that this provision should come into effect.

I also accept the Leader of the House's comment that this place is the highest court in the State, and to that extent has a special responsibility to the people who work within it. I well recall that last evening Hon John Williams spoke about the administration of the Houses of Parliament and suggested a full and proper review of the whole administration was overdue. I support those comments. The changes which have been made to this Bill in the other Chamber appear to put the people who are covered by this amendment in a worse position than when the legislation was first introduced.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have some difficulty in setting a timetable, but I assure the honourable member of two things: Firstly, there is no question that the provisions affecting these staff would never be proclaimed. If we were not interested in proclaiming them they would not be in the Bill, so I assure him they will be proclaimed. Without the authority of the Minister and in the absence of the sort of consultations to which the member has referred, I cannot give a specific date. However, I think I can say this much on his behalf: I believe I am on completely safe ground in assuring the honourable member and committing the Government to a course of action which would have these measures implemented no later than December next year. That is the absolute outside date, and I give that as a firm commitment even without reference to the Minister.

Further than that, I advise the Chamber that the Minister himself gave an assurance in the Assembly when this issue was first raised and the December date was deleted that he would undertake to ensure that these provisions of the Bill would be proclaimed as soon as that could reasonably be done. It would certainly be done within the original timetable, which was 12 months, but he would undertake to make every effort to have it implemented as early

as possible. I cannot take it beyond that. I cannot say precisely how soon "as early as possible" is, but I think it would be a reasonable expectation that it would be substantially earlier than the original target date of December.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: It is quite obvious that the responsible Minister in another place really jumped the gun and made a bit of a hash of the Bill, otherwise we would not be in this situation. It is more than likely that he did not have sufficient consultations with the people who administer the staff and run Parliament House. As a result he has had to revert to tactics of delaying the implementation of this clause until he can get his act together. Any Minister doing his job properly would have discussed this matter with those interested persons and been able to come to this Chamber with a formula to set up an appeal system. If it is not the Industrial Relations Commission, it will be another appeal system, so we will still be lumbered with the situation we find ourselves in now. It is no secret that I have always strongly opposed any trade union movement becoming involved or getting hold of the Houses of Parliament, because I could foresee the day when a strike would be called and the operations of Parliament would be drawn to a halt. That has happened, and the unions have been involved and have gained some strength in the Houses of Parliament. I am not as unhappy about it as I would have been 12 or 18 months ago. Times are changing, and I think the union movement as a result is changing with them.

I share the concern of the Minister, but I also endorse the comments of my colleagues. There is no doubt that if members of the staff are members of a trade union, they should be entitled to the same protection as their fellow unionists who may be outside the Houses of Parliament. It seems unfair to me that there is not the same sort of appeal mechanism to give them the protection which the others enjoy. I make that absolutely clear right from the start.

At the same time, listening carefully to the Minister, I am concerned that there may be a time when the Speaker or the President, the two Presiding Officers, may be called before the Industrial Relations Commission to answer questions about unfair termination of employment. I take the point that the Parliament and its presiding officers ought to be in much stronger and more senior positions than the Industrial Relations Commission. I have already said that I am no supporter of the Industrial Relations Commission and the way in which it has acted in the past, but no doubt that will change as well. I share the concern of the Minister; I am not at all happy about the situation which may arise. I am persuaded by the Minister that if it is possible to avoid that situation we should avoid it.

The Minister has said there is a move to set up some sort of pilot scheme where the staff of Parliament House will be able to go to a committee if they feel an injustice has been done. I cannot see why the setting up of an appeal system, even a temporary appeal system before setting up a better system, could not be done in two or three months. It might not be perfect, there may be some trial and error, but there should be somewhere for the staff to go if they feel unfairly treated. The Minister has given an assurance that the appeal system, whatever it may be, will not be set up later than December next year. That is unacceptable to members of the House. It is far too long; we would be looking at some better undertaking than that.

Earlier today I expressed grave concern over what was happening in Parliament House, and this is all part of it. I made reference to a person being dismissed without reference to the Joint House Committee, or with anyone except, as I understand it, one or two other people. The actions of the Joint House Committee chairman are unacceptable in many of the ways he is going about his job, and for that reason I support the introduction of an appeal system as soon as possible.

The Minister has given an undertaking of a sort, but I am sure that would not be totally acceptable to the members of this House. I ask the Leader of the House whether he would consider a different amendment. I am not moving it, I am just floating the idea, because I would like the Leader of the House to respond. I know, Mr Chairman, you have an amendment before you, so I am floating a different proposition that clause 2 headed "Commencement" read as follows --

The provisions of this Act shall come into operation on such a day as is fixed by proclamation.

That means that the Government could go about setting up an appeal system and it could receive assent for this legislation, but before it is proclaimed there would need to be some

sort of appeal system set up and the Bill could be proclaimed with a provision for the protection of the staff. I will not go further but just seek the Leader of the House's reaction.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not attracted to that possibility because it fails to acknowledge the special circumstances we are trying to accommodate in respect of the Governor's and Parliament's employees. They come into a category which involves special consideration, but that is no reason to delay the cover for domestic employees who are employed by other than individual householders. I take that as the simplest example. If we decide that that sort of employee should be covered, there could be a case for some very short delay while the relevant employers are put on notice of the change. That might be a matter of days or a couple of weeks at most, whereas the other items could well take a matter of months.

I do not think it is necessary to say that the whole Bill stands or falls on the timing of this one issue. There is no room to doubt the bona fides of the Government in this matter. It is the Government which has taken the initiative which no previous Government has taken to ensure that the staffs we are referring to are covered. We would not be interested in introducing a Bill providing for these changes if we were not also interested in bringing them into effect as soon as they could reasonably and responsibly be organised. I have already referred the Committee to the undertaking given by the responsible Minister to do his best to have this implemented as soon as possible. I have set the absolute outer limit -- and I do not believe we will approach that limit -- at 12 months. I do not believe it is necessary to tie it down to the next two or three days, which is what assent implies.

I turn now to comment on another matter arising from an earlier part of Mr Masters' comments. If he wants to pursue a bit of political criticism that the Minister has brought this Bill in part-baked, that is all right; that is the sort of thing we are used to, and the public are also used to it. The public do not take it seriously and neither do I. I have a feeling in my heart of hearts that the Leader of the Opposition does not take it seriously.

Hon G.E. Masters: Oh my goodness!

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is the sort of criticism we go through. I put it to the Committee that the analogy of the tenancy legislation coming forward tomorrow is a valid one. It is a matter of accepting the principle in the first place and then moving on as quickly as is practical to the implementation, and that is what we are doing. Let us assume we followed Mr Masters' criticism and took it seriously. Let us assume that the Minister should be satisfied that the appropriate grievance framework is in place in the Parliament before the Bill is introduced. What is to be achieved by that? What would be achieved by that is that the principle would not be before us now -- we would have the other aspects established and would be waiting until we came back next April before we had a Bill introducing this matter. It could be said that we had had several months and had reached a reasonable understanding of what the internal procedure would be and that now we would have the Bill. What would be gained from all that?

Hon G.E. Masters: You are saying that we would have to draw up another Bill.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No, I am saying that if we were to follow the line of the Leader of the Opposition, which I think is an incorrect line -- that is, that we should not introduce a Bill until we are able to say at the same time that we also have in place the sort of framework that we think should go along with the Bill -- since the framework is not ready we should not have brought the Bill in now.

Hon G.E. Masters: That was not the point of my suggested amendment.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have been through that amendment and have indicated why I think it is unsatisfactory. I am referring to the earlier comment of the Leader of the Opposition in which he was critical of the Minister's --

Hon G.E. Masters: Half-baked proposal.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is not half-baked -- it is a fully baked proposal in principle. What is missing so far is the icing, which is the equivalent, I suppose, in this context of the separate administrative arrangements that we are looking to establish; that is all that is involved here. I repeat again; the bona fides of the Government must be accepted as beyond dispute. It is the Government which has taken the initiative and which is interested in pushing this legislation through, but is just asking for a certain degree of caution, a little patience in the final implementation of this matter, and that is all that is involved in the Bill.

Hon C.J. BELL: I sympathise with the predicament of the Leader of the House and understand the urgency of the main part of the Bill. However, I find unacceptable the possibility of extending the situation for 12 months.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I say that it will not extend over 12 months, but I cannot specify a shorter period.

Hon C.J. BELL: I draw an analogy of when the Leader of the House spoke earlier about the tenancies Bill to come before the House tomorrow. The situation is that that Bill was debated in the other place and major amendments were made to it. It came to this place yesterday and we will debate tomorrow a Bill of immense proportions and magnitude in its impact on the lives of Western Australian people, yet we will do that in 48 hours, effectively.

Hon J.M. Berinson: But we would not implement it for at least six months.

Hon C.J. BELL: The Act will effectively be in place. I accept the reasons why the Leader of the House says it will take six months as there are things that need to be introduced into the system slowly. But even then, that is in six months, there will be a massive change in administration. In this Bill we are considering a relatively minor change in the Parliament and the only people involved are, basically, the people in this place. If it is to take up to 12 months -- and I am amazed at that -- I find that sort of priority unacceptable.

Hon J.M. Berinson: At the risk of repeating myself, I am not saying that it will take up to 12 months; I expect it to take less than 12 months, but I am not in a position to specify how much less because the necessary discussions have not even commenced.

Hon C.J. BELL: I would find it much easier to accept the Leader of the House's argument if he said that it would take less than 12 weeks. I accept the point he makes that he has difficulty in making a commitment on behalf of another Minister. However, it is the right of this Chamber, and its responsibility, to pass legislation as it believes it appropriate to do so. I wonder whether the Leader of the House can see some way clear to make a shorter commitment, or to give a finite time, given that he says that he wishes that some aspects of this Bill should come into force in a short time, and given that the Opposition has accepted the basic thrust of this Bill. We would not wish to delay that, but at the same time we are concerned to ensure that this aspect of the Bill is not overlooked in the longer term.

If the administrators in this Chamber cannot get something together in a relatively short time -- and I think three months is longer than a short time, but is getting into the medium distance -- then I would be surprised if they were really serious about trying.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I endorse those remarks. If someone gave me the job of setting up a temporary appeal procedure for the purpose about which we are talking, I would have thought in three or four weeks a member of Parliament could devise some scheme -- and certainly a Minister could do a much better job with his resources. A period of a month may be a bit optimistic. I am sure I could work something out in a month. To talk about 12 months, which is the maximum -- and the Leader of the House keeps reminding us of that -- would be unreasonable. I would have thought the Leader of the House could give an indication there is every likelihood the maximum of three months would be the time period and after three months -- and we are only talking about into March -- there would be a temporary appeal procedure set up, which could be a testing ground which may never be used, or which may be used occasionally; from then on a permanent arrangement could be made.

To say it could take up to 12 months is unacceptable simply because it is unbelievable. I ask the Leader of the House to give us something more definite as the member who has moved the amendment is obviously expressing the concern of his party and of many people who are perhaps paying attention to this debate. They would find it difficult to believe the Government of the day, this Minister, and other Ministers with their resources could not work out a simple appeal procedure in a matter of weeks; it is hard for me to follow.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I have --

Hon G.E. Masters: The Minister usually smiles when he is in a spot.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I usually smile when I am happy and it suddenly struck me we have come into this spot of bother because I really have not explained the situation clearly enough; once I do that, we will have overcome it and will be able to move on to clause 3. The reason

why we cannot give this to one of our members to go away and sort out is that it is contemplated currently that what I have referred to for want of a better term as an "internal grievance procedure" would be part of an award that would be discussed and negotiated with the CSA. I am told the CSA is happy to engage in discussions on the shape of the award, including grievance procedures, in advance of the Bill formally providing for the sorts of rights to employees that it includes. In other words, the CSA accepts that the Bill, if passed in its present form, would establish a principle that would give them a realistic basis for conducting negotiations on the award which would deal not only with matters relating to termination but also with others, and it is that process which would in the ordinary course of events be completed before proclamation.

I cannot offer three months, or four months or any other period up to 12 months because the responsible Minister was not able to do that. Perhaps because of this further comment I have been able to offer members will appreciate that it is not just a matter of one or two of us going off with the President or the Speaker, or with anyone else in the Parliament, but a matter of orderly negotiations with a union that will, in the event, represent these employees in allowing that process to flow on in an orderly way.

Hon G.E. Masters: I suspect we are not being told the full story, but perhaps that is my suspicious mind.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am telling the whole of the story as I know it. Why should a Government bring in a Bill to cover these employees, in a way in which they have never before been entitled, and then take any extraordinary measures to prevent that actually applying, unless there are realistic hurdles which are recognised as having to be first overcome? That is all that is here involved. I say to members again they should be prepared to accept that the Government, having brought the matter this far, is not going to deliberately delay it. I repeat the Minister's undertaking to bring the matter to finality as soon as possible, and part of that process involves negotiations with people other than those within our own circle here. Those negotiations ought to be allowed to be progressed in an ordinary and orderly way.

Hon C.J. BELL: I am glad the Minister brought that up because it has jogged my memory. Is it not true that other Parliaments in Australia are already in the position that we intend to arrive at, and is it not also true that the proposed award has already been drafted and is well down the track? I would like the Minister to give us some information about that matter.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I am not in a position to say what are the arrangements in other Parliaments; I have more than enough difficulty keeping up with what we ourselves do. I would have to answer that I do not know.

I am also advised that whether or not the Civil Service Association has commenced work on a draft award, a set of proposals of that kind has not been presented to the Office of Industrial Relations, which in the ordinary course of events would be the adviser.

Hon J.N. CALDWELL: I have taken on board all the Minister's comments. I believe the process that is proposed by the Minister in the other place will be somewhat slow, to the extent of not knowing when it will come to fruition. I believe the amendment put forward by the National Party will give the Minister some urgency to bring the matter to fruition, and will give also some protection to the employees of these two Government institutions. It has been demonstrated over the last few months that they need this protection, and this will give a little more pleasantness in this place -- not that this place is not pleasant; I enjoy it immensely -- because we sometimes come across things outside this Chamber that we probably do not feel very easy about, and we hear that some employees have complaints. If those employees are dismissed, they should have a right to appeal. The National Party supports this proposed amendment.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I would regret it if members opposite pushed this amendment. The amendment really amounts, if taken any further, to a basic questioning of the bona fides of the Government and the Minister in their intention to carry this matter forward. That is simply not warranted by the facts and by the initiatives that have been taken. We have waited 100 years to move to the proposal that the Government is now putting forward. All we are now asking for is a realistic degree of patience to make sure that we do not botch it up now that we have reached this stage. I put it again and for the last time that to insist on this

amendment is not reasonable in the circumstances, and given the explanations which I have been able to offer, I urge the Committee to not support the amendment.

Hon C.J. BELL: Given the reply of the Minister -- and I am sure that all members on this side of the Committee take it on board with great seriousness -- all I would ask the Minister is that he give us something less than 12 months as a target, even if he has to report to us at some time that they cannot meet it.

Hon J.M. Berinson: The reason I have not been able to do that, as I have explained, is that the responsible Minister in the other place did not feel able to do that. I have indicated that the period should be substantially less than the original 12 months that was contemplated, but I cannot come down to a sharper definition than that.

Hon C.J. BELL: I am disappointed about what the Minister says. I agree with the point made earlier by Hon Gordon Masters of perhaps putting in a temporary provision while a more formal situation could be arrived at. I find it difficult to think that all the resources of this Chamber, which is responsible for making all the laws that apply to our State, cannot be used to find a way to give a sharper period than something less than 12 months.

Hon J.M. Berinson: I can only give the member the honest answer, which is based on the response of the responsible Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Leader of the Opposition speaks, I do not wish to reflect on him, but the debate is becoming repetitive, and the four members taking part are repeating the same thing over and over again.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I have a new idea, and I suggest the Minister give consideration to this. As I understand it, the termination of appointment of members of the staff can be made by one or two people. We have in this Parliament a Joint House Committee, which comprises members from all parties and both Houses. Would it not be possible that where a person's employment is terminated, that committee or a subcommittee of that committee is able to review the situation if a person feels they have been unfairly treated? That is a sort of temporary solution, and even though I doubt whether the Minister can at this particular time give that sort of undertaking, I believe the Joint House Committee could consider that proposition and set up a mechanism within its own ranks to do that job. I put that proposal to the Leader of the House in all sincerity, and in making those comments to him I put indirectly the comment that at the next meeting of the Joint House Committee, it ought to consider that situation and the possibility of carrying it out.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Having said that I had spoken for the last time, I will correct my last statement to say I was then making my penultimate contribution. One of the possibilities is that the Joint House Committee would be given a role, and that could well be considered in the course of preparing grievance procedure arrangements within the award. So far as I am aware, it is open to the Joint House Committee to consider any matter that it wants to consider.

Hon G.E. Masters: It does not seem to have much power at the moment; that is what worries me.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: So far as I know, the Joint House Committee has the same powers it has always had.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 5 amended --

Hon G.E. MASTERS: The reference to "industrial agreement" goes through a large part of the legislation. As I understand it, the inclusion of "industrial agreement" in this Bill means that the Industrial Relations Commission can deal with awards and the like, and also under this legislation it can effect changes to industrial agreements and contracts. It may not necessarily be in this clause but the question of industrial agreement and the ability of the Industrial Relations Commission to change contractual arrangements and industrial agreements seems to be reflected in this legislation. If that is the case, I am always concerned that contracts could be interfered with by anyone's complaining, whether it be the work force and the company, or between various companies, or whatever.

I have always been very wary of this situation. I imagine that an industrial agreement in this case refers to a registered industrial agreement rather than an agreement that has been signed privately and not registered. I want to know whether the Industrial Relations Commission can vary industrial agreements and contracts without the support and agreement of either or any of the parties involved.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The first thing to be said is that an industrial agreement does mean a registered agreement, and that follows from section 7, which is the interpretation section of the Industrial Relations Act.

Hon G.E. Masters: So we are not changing it at all?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No. This clause is the first implementation of a general approach which the Bill introduces, and it is for the reason that an industrial agreement -- that is, a registered industrial agreement -- has the same force as an award. The intention is to re-insert "industrial agreement" wherever an award is referred to unless specifically excluded. I think it is fair to say that the general rationale is that matters which would otherwise be the subject of an award can be implemented by registered agreements and, just as an award is amenable to variation and so on, so should the industrial agreement be in the same category.

The present clause is an indication that the inclusion of the term has effect in many ways. Clause 4, which amends section 5, deals with the question of the Act prevailing over the Truck Act, and all that is being said by this current amendment is that, just as an award should be capable of prevailing over the Truck Act where the two are inconsistent, so should an industrial agreement.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5: Section 7 amended --

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Obviously concern has been expressed about the effect of this legislation on domestic help in the private home. In his second reading speech the Leader of the House gave an assurance that the legislation did not enable anyone -- let us say a union organiser -- to enter a private home if a person were employed there for domestic purposes -- in other words some home help, whether it be temporary or casual -- even if that domestic help had been obtained from an agency. I understand that a union organiser can go to a company supplying domestic help to private householders. For instance, if I wanted someone to help my wife on one day a week, I could go to an agency and ask for someone. That person would come into my home and work for one day a week. However, this legislation does not allow a union organiser to come to my home and ask that person how much he or she is being paid and so on.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is correct.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: On the other hand, it would enable the union organiser to go to the agency who supplied that help and say, "We want the records of these people you employ and subcontract out." Is that correct?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: Yes, that is correct.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6 put and passed.

Clause 7: Section 23 amended --

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Is it intended under this legislation to enable the Industrial Relations Commission to set awards for domestic help the like of which I described a few minutes ago? In other words, is it likely that the Industrial Relations Commission and the union organiser will go to an agency supplying domestic help and say, "How much are you paying them, is it enough, and is there an award, or will there be one?" That is the first point.

If my wife, or anyone's wife, or anyone were to employ someone privately for one or two days a week as a domestic help, would that award apply to those arrangements? Is an award proposed or is there already an award for the domestic helpers who are employed by an agency first, and does an award apply now, or is one proposed, where people employ domestic help on a private basis rather than through an agency?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: I can only say that, to the best of my knowledge, on the advice available to me at the moment, there is not such an award.

Hon G.E. Masters: Is there any award proposed under this legislation?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: It is anticipated that awards would flow from the provisions here relating to domestics employed by agencies.

Hon G.E. Masters: What about privately, not through agencies?

Hon J.M. BERINSON: No.

Hon G.E. Masters: In other words, everybody makes their own arrangements and no award will apply.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: That is so.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 and 9 put and passed.

Clause 10: Section 44 amended --

Hon G.E. MASTERS: Clause 10 is the key to this legislation. I made most of the points I wanted to during the second reading debate, but I draw members' attention to the fact that the amendments to section 44 largely reintroduce the old section 45. I am sorry that the Government was not charitable enough to reintroduce section 45. If section 44 in its proposed amended form had been in operation, the Industrial Relations Commission would have had far greater powers than it did in the Robe River dispute, and would have been able to enforce those powers much more effectively. I am not sure that I am entirely happy about that, but as it relates closely to the old section 45 which I probably introduced, I can hardly grumble too much.

Hon J.M. Berinson: That is very consistent of you.

Hon G.E. MASTERS: I only say it is a pity that section 45 was deleted in the first place.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 24 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 Hon J.M. Berinson (Leader of the House), and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

On motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Leader of the House), resolved --

That the House at its rising adjourn until 10.30 am tomorrow (Thursday).

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: ORDINARY

HON J.M. BERINSON (North Central Metropolitan -- Leader of the House) [10.15 pm]: I move --

That the House do now adjourn.

School Safety

HON NEIL OLIVER (West) [10.16 pm]: I will not keep the House long. Members may recall that when the Court Government was in power we had an emergency motion on a matter of this nature, and the debate led by two of the current members on the Government side of the House took three hours. I am referring to safety in schools. As we are in the final stages of this session I draw attention to some of the problems I am experiencing in my electorate.

There is a major problem concerning maintenance being undertaken which affects safety in schools. It has now become very serious, and in one school the situation was so bad that it required the immediate attention of the Building Management Authority. I hope that the

Minister will draw this matter to the attention of the Minister for Education, as it has been going on for almost two years. I quote from a letter I received from the Kalamunda High School Parents and Citizens Association. It is addressed to me, and reads as follows --

Further to previous correspondence in this matter it may interest you to know that almost two years down the track we still await completion of several items listed for attention. As you can imagine, both the Principal of the High School and the P & C Association find the whole situation extremely frustrating to put it mildly.

For your information, I attach a copy of a letter this day sent to the Minister for Education. Thanking you for your continued interest and support.

I might add that I never get anywhere by writing letters.

Hon Graham Edwards: You have to write to someone.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: This is a letter sent to Hon R.J. Pearce --

Dear Sir,

Re: Building Programme at Kalamunda High School.

I refer to numerous letters in this matter and wish to inform you that as at 1st December the following 5 items still remain in need of attention:

1. Ventilation of the English classroom E3 -- this is the most urgent and will be even more so should we start the 1988 school year with a burst of really hot weather.
2. Dangerously exposed wiring in the computer room.
3. Still to be installed -- the proper audio equipment in Business Education A7.

Hon Graham Edwards: If it is that dangerous, why have you not done something more responsible about it than bring it up now?

Hon NEIL OLIVER: To continue --

4. Dangerous condition of the stairway on the western side of the bookshop quadrangle.

Hon Graham Edwards: You are a joke.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: To continue --

5. Replacement of broken slabs outside Social Studies rooms C1 and C4 -- heavy vehicles used by the builders cracked the original slabs and the replacement slabs were also cracked.

On the face of it, a couple of these items may seem of little significance, and all five can hardly be classed as works of a major nature. It is therefore more than a little puzzling as to why they are still outstanding after all this time. Both the Principal of the School and the P & C Association find it extremely frustrating (to put it mildly) that we are on the verge of entering the third year and these matters are still incomplete. It is inconceivable that a building programme can have been allowed to drag on for this length of time. The whole situation is ludicrous. Whatever patience anyone had has long since gone. What must we do to have the matter dealt with satisfactorily once and for all? Perhaps we could apply for inclusion in the *Guinness Book of Records* or even the TV show "Ripley's Believe It Or Not".

We look to the Minister to assist us in bringing about the final completion of this long drawn out programme with the utmost speed and without further delay.

The Governor Stirling High School was an absolute disgrace. How can the maintenance at the school have reached the situation where 28 electrical connections are operating off the one plug for an electric typewriter? I find it impossible to believe. When the principal of the school rang me I could not believe it. I believed it was a gross exaggeration and only on inspection of the property could I be assured that the complaint was authentic.

Hon John Halden interjected.

Hon NEIL OLIVER: For the benefit of the interjector, on one occasion in this House a matter of a similar nature was debated for three hours when the Liberal and National Country Parties were in Government. Therefore I do not find it unreasonable to use the adjournment debate to bring this matter before the House. I thank members for their indulgence.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.21 pm

APPENDIX A

Agriculture College & Society
Art Workshop for Children
Aust.-American Association
Accordian Society
Aquarium Society
Activities Club
Arts and Drama Groups
Aero Clubs
Bands
Business & Professional Womens & Mens Clubs
Bird Society
Civil Aviation Institute
Colonial Bottle Clubs
Camera Clubs
Coin Clubs
Good Companions Club
Cheerio Clubs
Cats --

Fanciers
Society
Clubs

Dancing and Ballet Clubs
Dog Clubs
Fire Brigade Clubs
Housewives Association

Several others are mentioned. Then under the category of sporting clubs the following appear --

Athletic Clubs
Axemens League
Archery Clubs
Angling Association
Badminton Clubs
Baseball Clubs
Netball Clubs
Boating Clubs
Car Clubs --

Hot Rod
T.Q.
Sporting
Speedway

Cycle Clubs
Croquet Clubs
Cricket Clubs
Canoe Clubs
Darts Clubs
Football --

W.A.N.F.L. Clubs
Junior Councils
Amateurs
Ladies Auxiliaries
Businessmen's Clubs

Go-Kart Clubs
Golf Clubs
Pistol & Rifle Clubs
Gymnastic Clubs
Hockey Clubs
Pony & Horsemens Clubs
Judo Clubs
Karate Clubs
Lacrosse Clubs
Polocrosse Clubs
Rowing Clubs
Rugby Clubs
Miscellaneous Sporting Clubs
Softball Clubs
Soccer Clubs

Ski Clubs
 Sailing Clubs
 Squash Clubs
 Tennis Clubs
 Trotting Clubs (Not W.A.T.A.)
 Turf & Jockey Clubs (Not W.A.T.A.)
 Volleyball Clubs
 Yacht Clubs

Under the category of charitable and religious organisations the following appear:--

Air Force Association
 Asthma Foundation
 Churches --
 Anglican
 Catholic
 Catholic Schools Parents & Friends Associations
 Cancer Crusade
 Civilian Physically Handicapped
 Diabetic Association
 Senior Citizens --
 Aged Homes
 Meals on Wheels
 Welfare
 Autumn Clubs
 Epilepsy Association
 First Aid Clubs
 Flying Angel Clubs
 Royal Flying Doctor Service
 Hospitals
 Kidney Foundation
 Legacy
 Maimed & Limbless Association
 Mentally Incurable Children
 Muscular Distrophy
 Ngala Mothercraft & Training Centre
 Nurses --
 Association
 Clubs
 Aged Society
 Pensioners League
 Paraplegic-Quadriplegic Association
 Returned Services League
 Red Cross
 Slow Learning Children's Groups

Several other organisations are mentioned in that category. Under the category of social welfare organisations the following appear:--

Apex Clubs
 American Field Service
 Aust Care Campaign
 Aboriginal Fellowship, Homes and Clubs
 Boy Scout Groups
 Blind --
 Society
 Business & Professional
 Centres
 Guide Dogs
 Civilian Widows Association
 Christmas Tree Clubs
 Country Womens Association
 Coocinda Clubs
 Fairs, Fetes, Gymkhana & Festival Committees
 Girl Guides and Brownies
 Infant Health Centres
 Interact
 Italo-Aust. Welfare
 Jaycees and Jaycee ettes

Kindergartens, Play Centres & Day Centres

Lions Clubs

Lodges

Mothers Clubs --

Kindergartens

Schools

Naval Association --

League

Girls Nautical Training

Progress Associations

Police & Citizens Youth Clubs

Rotary Clubs

Women's Radio Clubs (for Nulsen Haven)

Swimming and Surf Life Saving

Ex Servicemen and Women

Sea Scouts

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

PAYROLL TAX AVOIDANCE

Investigations

547. Hon A.A. LEWIS, to the Minister for Budget Management:

- (1) How many businesses in the last year have been investigated as potential payroll tax avoiders?
- (2) How much extra revenue did these investigations raise?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

(1)-(2)

The Commissioner of State Taxation advises that 1 582 businesses were investigated during the 12 months to 30 November 1987, as a result of which additional revenue of \$7.91 million was assessed.

ROTTNEST ISLAND RANGER

Radio Call Sign

552. Hon P.G. PENDAL, to the Minister for Sport and Recreation representing the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is it possible for the radio call sign for the Rottnest Island ranger to be made available, even on a limited basis, for regular Rottnest Island boat users?
- (2) If not, what is the impediment?

Hon GRAHAM EDWARDS replied:

(1)-(2)

I am advised by the Rottnest Island Board that the marine ranger does not use a special call sign, and utilises equipment identical to that installed in many other vessels. If the member wishes to provide further information, I would be happy to have this matter further investigated.
