

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 12th September, 1979

The SPEAKER (Mr Thompson) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

Questions were taken at this stage.

LAND

*Bicton Animal Quarantine
Station Site: Grievance*

MR HODGE (Melville) [5.08 p.m.]: My grievance concerns the protracted negotiations which have been going on between the State Government and the Federal Government for the past 15 months in connection with the future of the Bicton Animal Quarantine Station in my electorate.

The negotiations have been proceeding for at least 15 months to my knowledge, and for the past 12 months I have been endeavouring unsuccessfully to try to get information from the Government, and in particular from the Premier, about what was happening in regard to the negotiations, why they were taking so long, and what was the stumbling block. The Premier's answers to my numerous questions have been vague, evasive, and in some cases misleading, I think.

I am curious as to why the Premier is adopting such an evasive attitude to my questions. I believe the people in Bicton, which is in my electorate, have a right to know what is to happen to the Bicton Animal Quarantine Station site. I believe I, as the parliamentary representative for that area, also have a right to know.

I asked the Premier in November, 1978, a question about the terms and conditions of negotiation and about whether negotiations had been successful and how they were proceeding. The Premier gave me a reply which reads in part—

- (2) and (3) The question of mutually acceptable terms and conditions pertaining to the transfer of the Bicton land has yet to be negotiated.
- (4) The future of the site is yet to be considered by the Government.

So in November, 1978, the Premier told me negotiations had not yet commenced, but I found out later that was not correct.

I have been given by the Federal member for Fremantle (Mr Dawkins) copies of

correspondence he has received from Federal Government Ministers, which indicates that the Premier's reply to me was not correct. In a letter dated the 2nd June, 1978, from the Federal Minister for Health (Ralph J. Hunt), Mr Dawkins was advised that negotiations were proceeding and agreement had been reached for the transfer of the quarantine station from Bicton to Perth Airport. In a further letter to Mr Dawkins dated the 13th September, 1978, from the Federal Minister for Administrative Services (Mr F. M. Chaney), Mr Dawkins was advised as follows—

I am pleased to be able to inform you that an alternative site for the Animal Quarantine Station is available and discussions on its relocation are proceeding with the Western Australian Government at the present time.

The object of these discussions is to achieve a usage of the site which is more in harmony with the surrounding residential development. In the event that the Animal Quarantine Station is relocated, the Bicton site will be offered for sale, in the first instance, to the State of Western Australia. If that offer is accepted, the future use of the land will no longer be the concern of the Commonwealth. In that event, the local residents will no doubt make their views known to the appropriate State authorities.

A further letter to Mr Dawkins from the Federal Minister for Health (Mr Hunt) dated the 24th November, 1978, states in part—

An alternative site adjacent to the Perth Airport has been selected and the question of the terms and conditions for the transfer of the Bicton site to the State and the construction of alternative facilities is being handled by my colleague the Minister for Administrative Services in discussion with the Minister for Works in Western Australia.

Those letters prove that the Premier's reply to me was not correct. Negotiations have been proceeding in one form or another since the 2nd June, 1978; yet in answer to my question on the 1st November, 1978, the Premier denied that negotiations were proceeding.

On the 28th November, 1978, I asked the Premier another question concerning the Bicton Animal Quarantine Station. I asked him whether it was a fact that the Prime Minister had become involved in the negotiations. The answer he gave was an unequivocal "No", that the Prime Minister was not involved. However, in reply to a further question I asked on the 8th August, 1979, the Premier stated as follows—

- (1) (a) The Prime Minister, in a letter dated the 30th May, 1978 advised that Perth Airport site had been selected as the alternative site to relocate the Bicton animal quarantine station.
- (b) The Prime Minister in this letter also mentioned the future ownership of the Bicton animal quarantine station site.

So again the Premier's reply to me, putting it as charitably as possible, was very misleading. He said the Prime Minister had not been involved in the negotiations, but he clearly contradicted himself in replying to my question of the 8th August when he said the Prime Minister had written to him discussing the conditions of the transfer on the 30th May, 1978.

Why has there been such a long delay? What is so complicated about negotiating the transfer of three or four hectares of land in Bicton?

The Federal member for Fremantle was quoted in *The West Australian* on the 30th November, 1978, as saying—

Mr Dawkins also raised the matter in Federal Parliament last week.

He was told by the Minister for Health, Mr Hunt, that discussions had been going on for some time.

The two governments could not agree on the payment of transfer costs for the land.

Further on in the same article of the 30th November, the Premier tried to rebut Mr Dawkins' claim. He was quoted as follows—

There was no wrangle between the State and Commonwealth Governments over the use of the land occupied by the quarantine station at Bicton, the Premier, Sir Charles Court, said.

Then he said—

"Mr Dawkins is only being mischievous when he suggests that the two governments are wrangling."

If the two Governments are not wrangling, why have negotiations taken 15 months and still no conclusion has been reached? What is the stumbling block?

It seems to me some sort of cover-up is going on. Why cannot the two Governments reach agreement? If there is a problem, why have not the Governments come clean and told the people; and why has not the State Government informed the Parliament in reply to my questions? Why

have I not been given information? Why is the matter so top secret? I cannot seem to get anything other than evasive and misleading answers from the Government.

The matter may not seem important to many members of this House, but to hundreds of Bicton residents who have put up with the station for 30 or 40 years and now are hoping to see the last of it, it is a most important question indeed. The residents want to know what will happen to this valuable piece of real estate. Many rumours are going about the area; it is rumoured the land will be sold to private developers and used for private residential development.

I certainly hope that is not the case. I put a question to the Premier along those lines some weeks ago in the hope he would refute that rumour and say it was not correct; however, he gave no information about the intentions of the Government. I do not know why the negotiations must be so secret. I do not know what is the cause of the delay, and why the negotiations have taken 15 months. I would appreciate some answers. Surely the Government could take me into its confidence; surely the people of Bicton should be told what is the problem.

This is a very valuable piece of land in a densely populated residential area, and hundreds of people are worried about the land and interested in its future. I hope the Government will shed a little light on the matter and give me some answers. I believe as the member for the area I am entitled to the answers.

MRS CRAIG (Wellington—Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning) [5.18 p.m.]: In reply to the grievance raised by the member for Melville, I would advise him that so far as I am aware negotiations in respect of the area on which the Animal Quarantine Station is located are still proceeding. I think the correspondence he read out indicated that is so.

I had some discussions with the Minister for Administrative Services (Mr McLeay) back in about March of this year, at which time the negotiations had been proceeding for an unknown number of months with the Minister for Works. I raised the matter with him simply to see if I could determine whether a valuation had been arrived at which was suitable to both Governments. As I understand the situation at that time, no satisfactory agreement had been reached.

In so far as the member for Melville is concerned about being able to indicate to his constituents what will be the eventual use of the land, it is impossible for me to answer his question at the moment. He is probably as aware as I am

that land under Commonwealth ownership is not subject to the zoning requirements of the State. It will not be subject to the zoning requirements of the State until the State is the owner of it. Then consideration will be given to the future use of the land.

If the normal processes are followed, the local authority will, of course, have an opportunity to zone the land in accordance with its scheme; and the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority also will be looking at the area.

I know that my answer has not satisfied the member's query. I can only say that negotiations are still proceeding, and we hope they will be concluded satisfactorily before long.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Augusta Historical Society: Grievance

MR BLAIKIE (Vasse) [5.20 p.m.]: I would like to make some remarks in the grievance debate, directed against the Government for its obvious inactivity in respect of assisting the community at Augusta. I refer in particular to a project which I believe is worthy of assistance and should have received it but in fact has received no help. The Government was confronted with the problem but said if assistance was provided to the project, it would be outside the normal parameters and would create a precedent which would allow all other centres in Western Australia to climb on the assistance bandwagon.

My grievance refers to the Augusta Historical Society, a very important group in the area which commenced its work in 1967. Since then a group of dedicated people have given outstanding service to the community. They established themselves in 1968 in rented premises. Subsequently they moved to another rented building. I might add the society is a branch of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society.

In the early days the members of the society saw the need to have their own premises. I would like to relate some of the things the society does. It carries out very important research for the Western Australian Biographical Index. It carries out research into early settlers. It has conducted research into more than 20 of the early families in the area; and this work has involved a tremendous number of people.

I would like to point out that the research programmes carried out by the society have been wide and varied. It is my belief that the Augusta Historical Society has one of the more important libraries in the State, containing reports compiled and contributed by its members. Instead of going

through the list of the papers held in safe keeping by the society, I will seek permission to have it incorporated in *Hansard* when I conclude my speech.

The first request to the Government for assistance was made to the Minister for Cultural Affairs in April, 1977. The letter written to the Government by the Secretary of the Augusta Historical Society stated—

The Augusta Historical Society is in urgent need of financial assistance to enable it to build a permanent Museum. Its collection is now housed in loaned temporary accommodation.

The Society would be grateful if you, in your capacity of Minister for Cultural Affairs, would examine the possibility of assistance from State Government funds.

In due course an answer was received saying it was impossible to provide assistance. At about the same time as that answer was received from the Government, the people of Albany—as you would be well aware, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Watt)—received a magnificent grant from the State Government for their *Amity* project. I thoroughly support the *Amity* project and am wholeheartedly behind the involvement of the Government in it. However, the people of Augusta and certainly the member for Vasse gained confidence that a further submission to the Government would provide a grant to us also on the ground that the community would establish an historical museum as part of the Sesquicentennial Celebrations of Western Australia. It was felt that Government assistance could be provided on that basis. Therefore, a letter was sent to the Premier on the 22nd August, 1977, as follows—

Dear Sir Charles,

1. I make representations to you on behalf of the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River who are supporting the Augusta Historical Society Inc. in seeking financial assistance for the construction of a permanent museum building at Augusta.
2. The enclosed submission gives detail that the Historical Society; the Augusta-Margaret River Shire Council and the Augusta-Margaret River Tourist Bureau are contributing funds to the extent of \$42 000 and the building, when constructed, will be used to advantage by the community and will also be available for inspection by the visiting public.

3. As indicated in the enclosed submission, a grant of some \$48 000 is sought from the Government to enable Stages 1 and 2 to be completed.

It is in this regard of optimum usage by the Tourist Bureau and Historical Society that the Augusta project should be favourably considered. More importantly the project would form part of the Shire and States contribution towards the Sesquicentenary Year Celebrations of Western Australia in 1979 and the Settlement of Augusta in 1980.

The Historical Society already have made representations to your Ministers, Hon. P. V. Jones and the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, who have indicated their interest in the concept but have suggested an approach to you as Premier and Treasurer for assistance would be appropriate.

I request you consider these documents seeking financial assistance for the Augusta project and make further request that you receive a deputation from the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River and members of the Historical Society.

That letter was duly sent to the Premier. The answer was that it was not possible to provide assistance because of the precedent which would be created. Notwithstanding that, a further submission was prepared by the Hon. Vic Ferry and myself once again pointing out the importance of the project to the area. Again, a reply was received saying it was not considered possible to provide assistance.

However, I believe other precedents had been created throughout the State by way of Government assistance to the *Amity* project, and certainly by way of assistance in respect of the Russian Jack statue.

Earlier this year I again wrote to the Premier informing him that the project had been completed and that the community itself had raised \$77 600.

Let me recap in respect of the community of Augusta. The community has made an outstanding contribution by way of personal self-help service. The Minister for Cultural Affairs would be well aware of the community centre built by the people of Augusta which would be valued today at \$400 000. That building cost the local shire and the taxpayers of Australia a total of \$95 000. It was built on a self-help community basis. The community became involved also in the establishment of a home for the frail aged at expense to themselves. Projects conducted in

Augusta on a community self-help basis include the Leeuwin Lodge, the recreation centre, and the Historical Society building. The contribution of the State Government to those projects has been a miserable \$2 500, while the total value of the projects probably would be in the vicinity of \$600 000 to \$700 000.

I believe that there ought to be assistance to communities which are prepared to help themselves and, in fact, are prepared to get off the ground and really get involved. I have great admiration for the people involved in this project. It is one that I have supported fully. I have seen the community at work, and the people have worked hard.

I have been bitterly disappointed by the inaction of the Government. I believe the Government must give favourable consideration to projects of this nature. Surely in the coming Budget the Government must have funds available for the assistance of such organisations, although the funds may be limited.

In this sort of project, we like to see self help. I believe there is an obligation on the Government to help the members of communities which do that.

By leave of the House, the following material was incorporated—

Augusta Historical Society Papers, Reports, etc. 1977

Read

15.10.70
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1. Aboriginal Legends. Ivy D'Arcy.
2. The Story of Ngilgi. Ivy D'Arcy.
3. Early Settlement at Augusta. May Cammilleri.
4. Thirteen Decades, A Short History of the A-M.R. District. Kevin Lynn.
5. The History of Augusta from 1830 to 1900. Elizabeth Pinfold.
6. The Dawsons of Augusta. H. E. Gladstones.
7. James Woodward Turner of Augusta. Rose Watson.
8. The Early Bussell Family. Eric Watson.
9. The Bussells. Joyce Smith.
10. The "Adelphi" and the Bussells. Rose Watson.
11. Alfred Bussell of Wallcliffe. Rose Watson.
12. Wallcliffe. (From "Historic Homesteads of Australia") Lady Hasluck.
13. Extracts from the Journal of Fanny Bussell.
14. Charlotte Bussell Writes Home. (Selections from Letters)
15. Charlotte Bussell. (Biographical Material; Conversations)
16. The Allnut Family. Betty Pratt.
17. The Allnuts of Australind, Bridgetown and Augusta. Rose Watson.
18. Preston's Journey from Ram's Head via Augusta to the Murray. J. Cross, 1833.
19. Early Days in W.A. (Murray-Vasse Journey) Lt H. W. Bunbury, 1836.
20. Wonerup House and the Laymans. Gwen Ganzer.
21. Fairlawn. Gwen Ganzer.
22. H. M. Ommanney. Eric Watson.
23. Place Names in the Extreme South-West of W.A. Dutch and French; Early English; Royal. Eric Watson.
24. Matthew Flinders and Leeuwin's Land. Eric Watson.

- 20.2.75. 25. Trim, Isle of France, 1809. (Biographical Tribute to Matthew Flinders' cat.) Matthew Flinders. (Reproduced from "Overland", 1973.) 20.3.69
- 14.3.71 26. (a) The Historical Importance of Deepdene. Rose Watson. (b) The History of Deepdene. Rose Watson. 19.4.73
- 22.6.67 26. Maurice Coleman Davies of Karridale and Liveringa. Bruce Hamling. 18.7.74
- 16.2.72 28. Karridale and After. (Davies Family). Geoffrey Davies. 19.11.70
- 15.1.72 29. Flinders Bay and Hamelin Bay Harbours, 1899. Herbert Davies. 20.5.71
- 18.5.72 30. Coming to the West. (Old Karridale). (ABC Script) Emily Cunningham. 16.7.70
- 20.6.68 31. Travels in W.A. (Old Karridale) May Vivienne. 15.3.73
- 18.6.70 32. Karridale Cemetery. Rose Watson. 16.10.75
- 30.3.69 33. A Naturalist in W.A. (Cape Leeuwin district) 1890. A. Campbell. 14.11.74
- 21.9.67 34. Moondyne Cave and Moondyne Joe. Eric Watson. 15.11.73
- 17.7.69 35. Group Settlement, The Early Years on Groups No. 3 and 4. Yvonne Challis. 20.9.68
- 16.9.71 36. The Doyle Family of Group 12. Tom Doyle. 20.6.74
- 17.5.73 37. Group Settlement Scheme. Tom Doyle. 20.5.76
- 18.9.69 38. Migrant Sisters: (a) My Welcome to Australia. Agnes Plant. (b) Not a Fairy Story. (Group Settlement) Adeline Brooks. 16.9.76
- 18.9.69 38. A Backward Glimpse: A-M.R. District (Group Settlement). Doris Jackson. 14.10.76
- 18.9.69 40. Aspects of Life in the A-M.R. District. Adeline Brooks. 20.1.77
- 19.10.67 41. Aspects of Life in the A-M.R. District. A. M. Spackman. 17.2.77
- 16.11.67 42. Recollections of Augusta, 1913. Tom Harrison. 4.12.76
- 18.6.70 43. Old Augusta Houses. Gertie Holland. 17.4.77
44. The History of Kudardup. Eric Watson. 16.11.76
45. Margaret River Township. Tom Doyle. 21.5.77
46. Augusta—A Town with a Past and a Future. Rose Watson. 18.3.71
47. Buildings, Places and Things of National or Local Importance in the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River. Requested by the Shire Council for submission to the National Trust, 7.12.1975. Rose Watson and Tom Doyle.
- 21.9.72 48. Our Memorials. Rose Watson.
- 15.7.71 49. Post Offices of the Pioneering Days (Lower Sussex) Lily Float. 4.12.76
- 19.10.72 50. Development of Education in the A-M.R. District. Dianne Challis. 17.4.77
- 15.8.68 51. The Work of the Augusta Branch of the RWAHS. Rose Watson. 16.11.76
- 19.9.68 52. C.W.A.: Augusta: Karridale: Kudardup. 21.5.77
53. Red Cross, Kudardup-Augusta Branch, Ida Gladstones. 18.3.71
- 17.4.69 54. Meals on Wheels, Augusta. J. Manson.
- 19.9.68 55. R.S.L., Karridale-Augusta Sub-Branch. Donald Manson.
- 20.3.69 56. St John Ambulance, Augusta District Sub-Centre. Beryl Watterson.
- 20.6.68 57. Infant Health Centre, Margaret River. Dorothy Errey.
- 19.10.67 58. Church of Elizabeth of Hungary, Augusta. H. E. Gladstones.
- 31.11.68 59. Foundation and History of Augusta Bowling Club. H. E. Gladstones.
- 17.4.69 60. History of Augusta Golf Club. H. E. Gladstones.
- 21.10.71 61. The Traders' Shield (Junior Sports). R. F. Anthony.
- 30.5.68 62. The Schooner Alpha. Eric Watson.
- 16.4.70 63. Local Wrecks. A. L. Jenkinson.
- 18.11.71 64. The Wreck of the *Georgette*. A. L. Jenkinson.
- 21.5.70 65. The Wreck of the *Pericles*. A. L. Jenkinson.
- 15.6.69 66. *Pericles*: Collated Press Reports. Rose Watson.
- 18.9.75 67. The *Tryall*. M. J. Williams.
- 19.2.76 68. Bay Whaling in and around Flinders Bay. Ivy D'Arcy.
- 17.8.72 69. The Whaling. Rose Watson.
- 18.3.76 70. Salmon Fishing venture, Hamelin Bay, 1947-1950. A. Krestensen. (Film—therefore no paper, Introductory Talk by Rae Wilson).
- 15.5.73 71. When Bullock Teams and Horses served the Settlers... Gwen Ganzer.
72. Bullock Teams and Drivers. Tom Doyle.
73. The Lost Art of the Sleeper Cutter. J. P. Henderson. (MS of an ABC tape recording)
74. People and Happenings near the Old Coast Road, 1886-1907. Sophie Jeffery.
75. In Search of a Grave. (Charles Farmer's: Austin Expedition, 1854) Alf Lawrence, Esme Lawrence.
76. John Forrest: Leichardt Search Expedition 1869. G. Spencer Compton.
77. Profile and Incidents in the Life of I. S. Little. Pioneer. Muriel Ward.
78. The Gairdner River WSLSS, 1954-1963. C. Cameron.
79. Rockingham. Notes on a talk by V. G. Fall.
80. The Chapel of SS Mary and George, Guildford Grammar School. H. E. Gladstones.
81. Heard Island, 1950. Don McKenzie.
82. The Stately Homes of England. Lord Montague of Beaulieu. (ABC Radio Script)
83. Floating Through France. (Readers' Digest) Rae Wilson.
84. Australians' Attitude to Their History. A. Rodgers. (ABC Radio Script)
85. Australia's Part in the War—World War I. Catherine Cooney. (Prize-winning Essay, 1917)
86. Family Trees and Family Histories. Rose Watson.
87. Keeping Records. Notes on a talk by Mollie Lukis.
88. Interviewing People... to obtain Personal Reminiscences. L. A. Gilbert.
89. Conducting Personal Interviews. (RAHS) E. J. Lea-Scarlett.
90. Inspiration and Perspiration. (Organization of a local Historical Society) K. J. Swan.
91. Visit to Busselton, 21.4.1974. Report. Rae Wilson.
92. Visits 11.4.1975: Darradup Homestead; Colonial House, Nannup; Wallcliffe (Isaacs Commemoration). Reports: Ernest Mann, Rae Wilson, Rose Watson.
93. The Story of Two Ships: *SS Shunsei Maru* and *SS Chofuku Maru*. Maurice MacBoll.
94. Travellers' Tales from Central Asia. Rose Watson.
95. Exercise Dry Run. (Into Austin and Farmer Territory) Major Peter Schuman.
96. Overlanding Stock (H. W. Hancock, 1867) Barbara Cooley and Alfred Lawrence.
97. *Georgette* (Centenary Commemoration, Calgardup). Rose Watson.
98. Augusta-Margaret River Shire. Points of Interest, 1970. T. W. Doyle.
99. A Short History of the Family of Sam Isaacs. T. W. Doyle.
100. Guildford—Swan. (Reports on Excursions, Historical Societies' Conference, 1976.) Rose Watson and Rae Wilson.
101. Electioneering and Elections over 100 years in Vasse-Sussex District. Rae Wilson.
102. Behind the Lighthouse (Moondyne Joe)—Extracts. Martin C. Carroll. Photostat: One copy only.
103. The Extension of the Goldfields Water Supply. R. J. Mitchell.

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Cultural Affairs) [5.31 p.m.]: The member for Vasse has drawn attention to some of the very difficult questions which have to be faced, not only by the Government itself but also by the various committees associated with the distribution of public funds to assist community projects, whether they be of an historical nature, a recreational nature, the performing arts, or whatever. I do not think any of us would not be supportive of the self-help motive to which the member has drawn attention, particularly in a community such as Augusta.

The member has suggested that I would be aware of the situation there. He is certainly not

mistaking the facts in regard to the Augusta Historical Society. The only aspect the member for Vasse did not refer to is the participation of people such as Mrs Rose Watson who have done considerable work over many years so far as the heritage of the State is concerned.

I will deal with the comments by the member in a moment. I would just like to make a few comments in broad terms.

There is a considerable awakening of interest within the community as far as historical and cultural activities are concerned. The Government is presently supporting far more of these projects than it has ever done. It is right that that should be so.

Mention has been made of this 150th Anniversary year. One of the great benefits of this year is that it has brought forth a tremendous amount of community support and community initiative in a whole array of projects—the refurbishing of old buildings, and the activities of various community groups. The Government has been called upon, through its various committees, to support directly with funding assistance, or indirectly through advice, far more of such projects than it has ever done before.

One matter about which the member for Murray made representations was the purchase of Edenvale at Pinjarra. The financial aspects were such that there were negotiations over a considerable time, until the Government could see its way clear to providing the necessary funds to assist with the purchase.

The particular committee to which I want to refer is the heritage committee. That committee assists with the provision of general information, and it acts as an advisory committee for the Government in this field. The heritage committee consists of representatives of community groups associated with historical and heritage matters, as well as one or two Government officers. There is a representative from the National Trust and there is a representative of the historical society of this State. The chairman is Dr Avril O'Brien, and there are other people like Mr Bannister from the W.A. Museum.

The committee deals with two types of funding. Firstly, funds are made available to the State through the heritage programme—the National Estate Programme. There are also the funds which this Parliament allocates and votes annually for these purposes.

Relative to the specific project mentioned by the member for Vasse, that project was considered by the heritage committee and evaluated. Applications were received from other

community groups for other projects. This project was considered to be one that could not receive financial assistance in the year that has just passed.

The member mentioned projects such as the Russian Jack statue at Halls Creek—

Mr Blaikie: A commendable project, too.

Mr P. V. JONES: That is very true. The Government was happy to assist an isolated community in bringing that project to fruition.

Mr Blaikie: The comment I wanted to make is that I support that project, because I believe it is a very important one. I am not in any way taking away from the Government's support for that.

Mr P. V. JONES: I will deal with the point at which I started and at which the member concluded. In view of the story which the member unveiled regarding what has been done at Augusta, certainly that is worthy so far as the community is concerned. I indicate to the member that we are prepared to have another look at the project. We will see what can be done to assist, particularly having regard for the fact that we have now entered a new financial year. There is a possibility we might be able to assist in some way, even in a small measure, with the project the people have carried out.

EDUCATION: SPECIFIC PURPOSE CAPITAL PAYMENTS

Reduction: Grievance

MR PEARCE (Gosnells) [5.36 p.m.]: My grievance is directed to the Minister for Education. It is a fairly natural follow-on from the question without notice I asked a little earlier. In answering that question, the Minister wilfully distorted the section of the question to which he directed his attention. Of course, he ignored the crucial part of the question. I will come to that later.

To begin with, I will outline to the Minister for Education one of the figures I quoted in my question without notice. The point I am making to the House and to the people of Western Australia is that a crisis is developing in the construction of school buildings in this State and will continue to develop in the next year or so because of the reduction in expenditure by the Federal Government in its recent Budget. There has been inaction by the State Government in terms of its inability to obtain a fair deal for Western Australia from the Schools Commission and from the Federal Government, despite the fact that it is a Government of the same political colour as the State Government. There has been the inability or

unwillingness on the part of the Government to meet the shortfall from its own funds, despite the fact the Leader of the Opposition has demonstrated that there is at least \$44.6 million up for grabs at the present time. The Government has salted that money away in a suspense account, doubtless for electoral purposes for the forthcoming 1980 election.

I want to discuss the situation with regard to capital allocations for schools—I pause here to say slowly and clearly to the Minister for Education, “capital allocations”. That is what I said in my question without notice; but the Minister somehow, in hearing the question across the floor, managed to hear it as “recurrent”. I certainly said “capital allocation”. I say that the capital allocations were nowhere near the amount—

Mr P. V. Jones: That is right—\$11 million, or something.

Mr PEARCE: I will explain what I am saying by quoting table 116 indicating Western Australia—Commonwealth Payments and Loan Council Borrowings, 1975-76 to 1979-80 (\$ thousands), under the heading “Specific Purpose Payments—Capital Purposes”. Under that we see schools, 1978-79, a sum of \$20 971 000; in 1979-80 a sum of \$11 977 000. That is the actual cash payment, so the difference is in fact close enough to \$9 million. If that is regarded in real cost terms, allowing an inflation component for building expenses, which is a different inflation rate from the normal one, the calculation of the variation in real terms is \$11.5 million. The Minister might like to regard that as a variation of \$9 million in actual terms. I do not mind. However, that variation in real terms represents a net deficit to the State of 55 per cent. The figure that the Minister has indicated shows that the Commonwealth has made an average cut in this area for the rest of Australia of 30 per cent. It is not hard to work out that Western Australia, in real terms, is receiving only half as much. Western Australia is twice as badly off as the rest of the States put together. That being the case, criticism has to be directed towards the Minister for Education, his department, and the Government. They have made no effort to obtain a better deal for Western Australia from the Federal Government, which is a Government of the same political colour.

Mr P. V. Jones: That makes no difference.

Mr PEARCE: The clear implication is that the Labor Premiers in States like New South Wales are receiving a far better deal from the Federal Government with regard to schools funding. The

South Australian Labor Government and the Tasmanian Labor Government have been successful in obtaining a better deal for their schools from the Federal Liberal Government. That is quite amazing.

The Minister for Education has said here and in other places that there is a growth in the school population in Western Australia, whereas in some of the Eastern States, particularly New South Wales, a decline is being experienced. Despite the fact that the school population in New South Wales is sinking, the other Australian States are receiving more money for new school building programmes than Western Australia.

I cannot say whether the most blame should be placed on Mr Fraser and his cohorts, or on the Premier and his cohorts. No matter whether it is the State or the Federal Government, somewhere along the line the Liberals and their National Country Party colleagues are betraying this State in relation to education capital funding. One possible reason for this is that the Western Australian Government is not covering its own commitment to education, as the other States are. This is one of the areas on which the Schools Commission makes its judgment. One has to look at the way the State Government has cut back its own contribution to education to learn why in fact we are not receiving a fair deal in Western Australia.

I have expressed my views twice in previous Budget debates. I am sure I will be doing the same next week. At a time of high levels of teacher unemployment, the Government has \$7 million unspent each year under the allocation for teachers' salaries. That is at a time when, as the Leader of the Opposition so clearly demonstrated in the Press today, \$44.6 million of State money is being salted away in a slush fund—a suspense account for unknown and unnamed purposes. That sum is about five times the amount in the suspense account at the beginning of the year.

Members should ask what is in fact happening to the tax dollar paid by Western Australians either directly or through the Commonwealth Government. Why is not this \$44.6 million being used? Since my area of responsibility in this House is education, I ask why is it not being used in this area. I know there are needs in the area of education which should be met.

I have demonstrated that there is presently a shortfall. This is brought about by the failure of the Federal Government. The Minister has been unsuccessful in convincing the Federal Government that it should give him a fair deal.

He therefore has a responsibility to meet the shortfall from State Government funds.

I will demonstrate from my own electorate that there is a need. The Gosnells High School confidently expected—probably mistakenly—that the stage 4 construction work would commence within the year. I asked a question in this House two weeks ago, and I learned that that work would not be done. The Lynwood High School, at which I used to teach, confidently expected that its stage 5 programme would be commenced. In the South Suburban Supplement of *The West Australian* this morning, we learn that the Lynwood High School programme would not continue.

I should like to point out also that the new West Armadale High School, which is in my electorate, will be into stages 1 and 2 at the beginning of next year. Its chances of obtaining developmental funds in the years to come are rather small. The net result there, of course, will be that they will have to use transportable buildings; they will have overcrowded classrooms and poor facilities.

It is clear that there is a need in my electorate and I will bet there is a need in the electorate of many other members in this House.

Mr P. V. Jones: Do you believe you should build stage 4 at Lynwood regardless of the pupil numbers?

Mr PEARCE: Stage 4 has been built at Lynwood. It is up to stage 5.

Mr P. V. Jones: Very well—stage 5 at Lynwood.

Mr PEARCE: I would argue that at Gosnells the pupil numbers are there.

Mr P. V. Jones: What about at Lynwood?

Mr PEARCE: That appears to be the case at Lynwood also, but I am more familiar with Gosnells. It is not just a case of adding on extra classrooms; for example, going from 15 to 20. Because of the way in which high school buildings are staggered in their construction, certain essential classrooms—in the case of stage 4, upper school classes—are left out and a school which is not provided with upper school classrooms has to battle on with classrooms designed for lower school activities.

This will be the case at Lynwood in relation to stage 5. That school will miss out on much needed science facilities for year 11 and 12 students.

There is a demonstrated need for these classrooms and, in the normal course of events, they would have been provided. However, the normal course of events has been greatly

dislocated, firstly by the activities of the Federal Government chopping back 55 per cent in real terms on capital education spending in this State. Secondly, this has been compounded by the failure of the Minister for Education and the Premier of this State to use some of the \$44.6 million which is available in the slush fund. If the Minister can screw some more money out of Mr Fraser, bully for him; but I would like to see some of that slush fund being used for education.

MR P. V. JONES (Narrogin—Minister for Education) [5.47 p.m.]: I suppose we have to get used to this every year; but I should like to point out there has been no greater critic than I, amongst all of the State Ministers for Education, of the Commonwealth Government or of the Schools Commission.

Mr H. D. Evans: Aren't you ashamed that you belong to that party?

Mr P. V. JONES: I should like to ask the member what that has to do with it.

Mr H. D. Evans: What a philosophy!

Mr P. V. JONES: The member for Gosnells has quoted already from one of my Press releases which was published last week. In fact, he could have quoted from three Press releases which I have made since the recommendations of the Schools Commission were published. Each of these Press releases has been critical of the Schools Commission and of the Federal Government.

For nearly three years the Schools Commission has failed consistently to recognise several aspects of funding where this State is concerned. Before dealing with capital spending, I should like to deal with recurrent funding. If the member will cast his mind back two years, he will recall that I opposed vigorously some of the recommendations of the Schools Commission, because they failed to recognise that in this State we have seven years of primary schooling whereas in the Eastern States they have six years. This was not recognised when recommendations were made in relation to recurrent funding.

The member will recall also that in the notices I sent out last year I drew attention to the fact that this State received nearly \$20 per head less than New South Wales in the *per capita* recurrent grants.

I do not believe any justifiable criticism can be levelled at me or at the Government of this State for being backward in criticising the Schools Commission or the Commonwealth Government for its allocation of funds between the States.

The member is quite right when he says we have been short-changed consistently. The present recommendations, however, contain some recognition of the complaints which have been made and agitation which has occurred over the last two or three years. I should like to refer to one programme only so that I do not delay the House, and that is in relation to migrant education. Recognising we are not talking about the size of the cake—or I am not at the moment—my criticism is of the way in which the cake has been divided. Where migrant education is concerned, for some years this State has been denied consistently its entitlement in this regard simply because of a very shortsighted policy adopted by the Schools Commission. We have not been represented adequately on the commission and this is recognised by it.

Last year the Schools Commission acknowledged the fact that an error had been made in the allocation of funding. It even went so far last year as to acknowledge that a table published in its recommendations was wrong. In this table the commission tried to demonstrate that the *per capita* funding in this State was at a particular level. We complained about it and the commission acknowledged it was misleading.

To some degree, the allocation of funding has been rectified in relation to the migrant programme; but this happened at a time when the Commonwealth was cutting back on funding. It is all very well to say, "Yes, we were wrong: We have not given you enough. We will give you more", but the total amount of funds available is less than it should have been and goes nowhere near making up the shortfall.

I should like now to move on to the capital situation. The member for Gosnells quoted some figures. I am sure he is aware of this, but for the sake of other members I should like to point out that in the Commonwealth Budget papers the capital allocation and recurrent funding referred to is in fact on the basis of two half-years and not one fiscal year.

The first figure quoted by the member of approximately \$20 million was for the latter half of one year and the first half of the next fiscal year. The member is aware—indeed he mentioned this when he interjected earlier—that the fund is based on a calendar year. The member quoted a figure of approximately \$11.9 million. This represents the remaining half of the 1979 capital funding which was contained in the vote in the last Budget and was covered by legislation in the State's Appropriation Act in November of last year.

That is a known quantity and it could be \$6 million, \$7 million, or \$8 million. The remaining sum which made up the figure of approximately \$11 million is a guess at the decision which will be made by the Federal Government regarding 1980 and it represents the payment which will be made in the first six months of that year.

The member's figuring is quite wrong. There was a total of approximately \$20 million, approximately \$10 million of which was for one half year and approximately \$10 million for the other.

The figure of \$11.9 million quoted by the honourable member is correct. The sum is likely to be in that region; but we should bear in mind that some of that money is committed already and we are spending it now. The figure for the first half of 1980 could very well be in the vicinity of \$4.5 million or \$5 million.

I agree with the honourable member that we have been shortchanged and there has been a lack of recognition of the fact—we are talking now about capital funds—that our pupil numbers are growing. As I said in answer to a question asked by the member, we are at the present time complaining very vigorously to the Federal Government—to the Prime Minister, but more particularly to the Minister for Education—that he should not accept the recommendations of the Schools Commission, because they do not recognise the situation in this State.

It has been suggested that there has been a lack of spending on salaries. I do not intend to waste my time going into that matter. The member is aware no sum of money voted directly for salaries has remained unspent. The only sum of money not used is the allocation set aside for salary and wage indexation increases. The amount of money voted for salaries has been used and in the Budget papers next week we will find that situation applies.

The member referred to the representations made by the State in relation to the Schools Commission. This commission was set up by the Whitlam Government and it was opposed by the Government of Western Australia. Unfortunately the commission appears to have been embraced with loving fervour by the present Federal Government. The Government in Western Australia has very little, if anything, for which to thank the Schools Commission in the way it presently operates. Nevertheless, the guidelines given to the Schools Commission by the Federal Government and the manner in which that Government has indicated it wants funds administered is a matter of considerable criticism

by my Government. At a time when the Commonwealth Government is cutting back on funding, it is still saying exactly where it would like funds spent. It still wants to retain certain programmes which are not necessarily in the best interests of students in the schools. The member would be aware of areas where duplication of spending has occurred and where unnecessary equipment has been provided. He would be aware also of shortfalls in other areas.

We have very little for which to thank the Schools Commission in the way it operates at the present time and in that regard I endorse the criticism made by the member for Gosnells.

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE

*Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. .
Grain Terminal: Grievance*

MR CRANE (Moore) [5.57 p.m.]: I rise in this grievance debate to speak on a matter which is affecting the whole of Australia, particularly Western Australia. It is affecting very gravely the graingrowers in this State. I am referring to the protracted dispute at the CBH Kwinana grain terminal.

Members are probably aware that a very important CBH shareholders' meeting was held at Kwinana today to discuss this dispute, to give the graingrowers an opportunity to show their support for the directors of CBH and give an indication of the kind of action they feel should be taken.

In the first instance, I need not remind members that the grain terminal at Kwinana, which was opened only a couple of years ago, is owned entirely by the grain producers of Western Australia; that is, Co-operative Bulk Handling of which all grain producers who deliver grain to its terminal are shareholders.

Originally the terminal was estimated to cost \$42 million, but, because of inflation and increased prices, the final cost was over \$70 million. This is the fastest grain handling terminal in the world and yet since the 15th June this year it has remained idle. A total of approximately \$70 million-worth of equipment has remained idle for that length of time.

I should like to remind members that we built the terminal ourselves. We own it and, therefore, we believe we are entitled to employ people to operate it for us.

Unfortunately, earlier this year the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia felt that it needed the opportunity to work more than the four ship loading positions to which it was entitled, as outlined in February, 1977, before the complex was opened. The Waterside Workers'

Federation of Australia operates four outlets which are involved in the actual loading of the vessel.

The rest of the work is carried out by members of the AWU. However, through the actions of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, pirating of the positions held by the AWU has occurred. This in itself is wrong and CBH quite rightly stood strongly against such pirating. These tactics cannot be tolerated in any unions and anyone employing personnel cannot condone such tactics.

The problems caused by this strike are quite complex. Among the most important problem is the possibility of weevil infestation of the grain, because it is not being moved. This, of course, will cost the graingrowers money.

Indirectly, this trouble will cost everybody money. I know it is possible to keep weevil infestation down to a minimum. In fact, it is becoming quite evident that it is far easier to keep the weevils out of the grain than it is to keep these parasites out of the industry. That is the cause of the trouble today; some unions are demanding far more than is reasonable when they give very little in return.

The AWU has provided us with a good service. Its members have handled grain in Western Australia since 1947 under an agreement called the grain handling award of 1978. There is no reason that they should not continue to handle the grain as efficiently as they have done in the past. If it were not for the intervention by the Waterside Workers' Federation, all would have been well.

We are suffering a loss not only as a result of weevil infestation, but also owing to the fact that it will be necessary to build additional storage facilities. With harvesting almost upon us, we will be faced with the task of storing the additional grain unless existing stocks are shipped out of Western Australia. Additional storage will cost the farmers many dollars a tonne. This additional cost to the graingrowers will be money lost from circulation.

A further problem we face is the fact that our buyers throughout the world are becoming increasingly concerned that we are not able to deliver the goods. If this situation continues we will find that the contracts which have been entered into, and which we have been unable to honour—through no fault of our own—will need to be rewritten. The rewriting of the contracts will cost the grain growers at least an additional \$20 a tonne. That is a tremendous additional expense

which the wheatgrowing industry cannot afford at this time.

Many grain producers are facing their fourth year of drought, and whilst many of us are much more fortunate even we cannot bear this additional cost. Wheatgrowing is a heavy cost-bearing industry and the growers are feeling the pinch well enough as it is without any additional burden being placed upon them by the irresponsible action of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

At the extraordinary meeting of shareholders today there was a fine example of responsible control. Over 1 000 graingrowers attended the meeting and they were very serious and responsible in their attitude. They did not suggest any untoward action which would cause confrontation. However, they did show in no uncertain manner that they stood firmly behind the directors of CBH. They asked CBH to explore the possibility of employing farmers to be trained to handle the grain themselves so that, if necessary, they would be able to load the grain. We all know how effectively the farmers loaded the live sheep last year in half the time normally taken by union labour.

Another recommendation put to the directors of CBH was that an approach be made to the State Government to implement the Essential Foodstuffs and Commodities Act, which we passed through Parliament earlier this year. We are all aware of the trauma we went through during that all-night sitting. However, those of us who stood steadfastly behind the passing of that legislation would gladly have sat for a week if it had been necessary.

I ask the Minister whether the Essential Foodstuffs and Commodities Act could help in the present situation. I doubt, myself, that it could help. I think it probably would be necessary for some other form of legislation to be introduced. I can assure the Minister that every fairminded member of Parliament would stand steadfastly behind the implementation of such legislation, even if we had to sit through many nights.

I hope that when the Minister responds he will give me an assurance that the Government, if called upon, will take whatever action is necessary. Those of us who have been elected to this Parliament will show, in no uncertain terms, where we stand when it comes to the free flow of produce in and out of Australia.

In conclusion, I remind members of the warning issued by Jack Marks which appeared in today's paper. He warned that the unions will "sew up WA". I think that is disgraceful, and I

will do all in my power to see that the threat is not carried out.

Several members interjected.

Mr CRANE: The article in the newspaper stated that the threat was from Jack Marks; I thought it might have been from Karl Marx!

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Labour and Industry) [6.07 p.m.]: This State is passing through a very sad period with many problems involving various commodities which are produced in our community, and the movement of those commodities which mean so much to the well-being of the farming community, and the people generally, of this State.

I was pleased to note that the Opposition did not come out in support of what is happening. I was concerned, also, at the warning by Mr Marks which appeared in the paper that the unions would "sew up" Western Australia. He was saying he wanted to "stitch up" the State, and the community generally. It is a great pity that these threats should be made in Western Australia, where we have a great future if people would only go about their business in the right manner.

Several members interjected.

Mr O'CONNOR: Members opposite can support the views of Marks, if that is what they want.

Several members interjected.

Mr O'CONNOR: It is the only point I commented upon and obviously that is what the Opposition is objecting to.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the House come to order!

Mr O'CONNOR: It is interesting to note the lack of concern members opposite have for the farming community in Western Australia.

Mr Bertram: That is not true.

Mr O'CONNOR: The member for Moore has expressed his concern and I am merely expressing mine.

Mr B. T. Burke: Would you agree that one of the dangers is Government policy forcing union forces into the hands of extremists?

Mr O'CONNOR: In many cases we do not have to worry about that. It already applies.

Following a meeting today CBH requested me to meet with its representatives at 3.30 p.m. I was there until I came to the House. They expressed their concern to me because they claimed that the grain position is becoming critical. Unless something is done quickly there could be problems with next season's grain. They have

asked me, as the representative of the Government, to assist them.

They have had pressure from people who wish to load the ships and get the grain out so that the farming community will receive its entitlement. The Government will do all it can and of course it would prefer an amicable arrangement for the settlement of the issue. The position is critical. CBH has requested that I confer with the Government on certain aspects, and I will do this within the next 24 hours. The representatives also requested me to contact the Federal Government and to confer with the union within the next 24 hours to try to promote some sanity within the issue, and ship some grain out of the State.

While other States are shipping their grain I think everyone in this House should be concerned with the situation of Western Australian farmers who are considerably affected by this issue.

The Government is concerned and will do whatever it can to get the grain flowing. The Government will try to arrange it by amicable arrangement. It will do all it can to shift the grain. I appreciate the comments of the member for Moore and assure him this Government will do whatever it can to assist.

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.

BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Appropriation Bill (Consolidated Revenue Fund).
2. Appropriation Bill (General Loan Fund).
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr O'Neil (Deputy Premier), and read a first time.
3. Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr Old (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.
4. Prisons Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr O'Neil (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.

COUNTRY AREAS WATER SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [7.36 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is before the House because of the growing realisation of the salt problem and

because of some action taken by the Government to overcome that problem. I do not intend to traverse the problem of salt encroachment; that has been well covered already in the debates on two motions currently before the House; one moved by the member for Mt. Marshall, and one moved by the member for Warren.

On the 15th December, last year, the amendments to the Country Areas Water Supply Act were proclaimed. It was not until almost three weeks later that the implications of that amending Act were revealed. As further information of its contents became available, it was obvious that this Government had flouted several basic principles of parliamentary democracy—open government, discussion, and consultation. Not only were the full intentions of the legislation hidden from interested bodies such as the Farmers' Union and local authorities, but also, they were hidden from members of both sides of this House. The fact that Government members who represent affected areas did not speak against the measure indicates either their complicity in what amounts to a cover up, or their ignorance of the intentions of the legislation. Both of these situations reflect poorly on the willingness and ability of the Government to communicate with the public.

For the Government to assert that these amendments were in the public interest without ever consulting interested bodies to ascertain what the public interest was implies an omnipotence the Government seems to claim, increasingly without justification.

Although the Act was proclaimed on the 15th December, it was not until early in the new year that the guidelines under which clearing was to be permitted became known. Until this time neither the rural Press nor any of the farmer organisations involved were aware of the stringent nature and rigidity of the guidelines. In fact, I am sure that many members would have viewed the measure in a more critical light had the guidelines been made available.

No-one denies that the salt problem in Western Australia is worrisome and most farmers are aware of the effect of salt upon their land and crops. No-one denies either the need to ensure that adequate, good-quality water is available for consumption, especially while the metropolitan area continues to grow at such a rapid rate.

For this reason the amendment to the Country Areas Water Supply Act, which presented a case for the control of the spread of salt in water catchment areas, seemed reasonable, and it still does. Many farmers agree it is necessary to have

some control of clearing, but they do not agree with the total ban.

Nowhere in the Bill that we debated last year was there any reference to the rigidity with which the proposed controls were to be implemented; and yet in the originally published guidelines—and I say “originally published” because the Government had second thoughts and amended them—it was obvious that controls on clearing were to be so stringent that a blanket ban on clearing exists for all practical purposes.

Clearly the Government decided that the fewer people who understood the intention of the Bill the better. However, to refuse to consult the local government authorities and farmer organisations involved is deplorable. The Government could only have benefited from seeking their views.

The area and number of people directly affected is very large. In the Warren River water reserve, parts of the Shires of Manjimup, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Boyup Brook, Cranbrook and Kojonup are affected.

In the Kent River water reserve, parts of the Shires of Denmark, Plantagenet, and Cranbrook, are affected, and in the Denmark River catchment area, the Shires of Denmark and Plantagenet. The guidelines affect also parts of the Shires of Mundaring, York, Armadale-Kelmscott, and Beverley in the Mundaring Weir catchment area.

The effect on the lives and welfare of the people living in the areas covered by the guidelines will be devastating. The Farmers' Union has estimated that the clearing controls could result in lost production of up to \$75 million of agricultural output. That estimate is based on 1977-78 prices. So it can be seen that the cost to the economy of the State is considerable, quite apart from the traumatic experiences of the individuals directly concerned.

I mentioned earlier that the original guidelines were amended. When the Bill was first debated in Parliament, no reference was made to the guidelines. Subsequently the guidelines used were the same as those used in the Wellington catchment area.

Some members who were critical at the time of the manner in which the Government administered that Act were told that they should have known all about it because the guidelines had been in existence for a considerable period of time. Obviously they were in existence, but no-one was made aware of them.

It is now also quite evident that the Government was not particularly well informed of the need for those guidelines. After a number of

meetings and discussions took place subsequently, and after considerable pressure was brought to bear, the Government amended the guidelines for the Warren River, the Kent water reserve, and the Wellington catchment area. The area was divided into four different zones—zone A, zone B, zone C, and zone D. The original concept was more or less retained in relation to zone A and there was some slight alleviation of the bans in regard to zones B and C. In zone D there were really no limitations on clearing except the statutory limitation that requires 10 per cent of the whole area to remain uncleared.

The situation is now a little easier in some areas, but the restrictions are still very severe in a large area. Farmers in those areas who have large uncleared tracts to develop will be restricted severely. Many farmers, and particularly the young ones who have recently purchased virgin bush, have virtually lost all hope of developing their land.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of the measure and its associated guidelines is the assumption that rigid clearing controls will retard, or even reverse, the spread of salinity. It is in this respect that the Bill goes too far. Farmers are not stupid; they are aware of the need to preserve areas of bushland, and the Government would have been better off by limiting clearing controls in conjunction with other methods. Total bans may be warranted if it is found subsequently that that would be the only solution to the problem. At this stage, however, it is far too early to come to that conclusion.

One of the areas which should be further researched and given a practical application is the Whittington interceptor bank system, which is the subject of a motion moved by the member for Mt. Marshall.

There is a need for flexibility in our approach to the salt question from farmers, public servants and politicians. As we have already seen in some areas of the wheatbelt, farmers have found academic answers to the salt problem to be unacceptable and a failure, and have been forced to turn to alternatives.

In this, many have turned to the WISALTS method. I have met some of the farmers who have adopted this method of salt control. They told me they tried the interceptor bank concept four or five years ago and it has been so successful on their farms that they have been extending the area under control to the degree their finances will permit.

It is for this reason the National Party feels it is high time there was a full-scale field trial of the Whittington interceptor bank system.

The way the Government has gone about administering the Act which came into being last year has aroused the ire of the farming community. I hope they do not take the law into their own hands. As a member of this Parliament I could not condone any action along those lines.

However, I also feel that we as members of Parliament have a responsibility to ensure the laws of the land are fair and reasonable, and do not provoke our constituents into unlawful actions.

Mr Sibson: You must admit there is a need for clearing controls.

Mr STEPHENS: We have never denied there is a need for regulation; the farmers accept that point. However, it is the manner in which the controls have been imposed which has aroused resentment.

I turn now to the amendments contained in the Bill. I do not claim they will be the complete answer. However, if the Government is prepared to accept this amending Bill, it will make the situation more tolerable for the farming community.

The Bill seeks to repeal the provision which allows the Government to proclaim new areas by notice in the *Government Gazette*. In the light of the way the Government has gone about this matter already, we feel it would be far preferable to discuss proposed new areas in Parliament, rather than have the Government merely gazette them and allowing a member to move for their disallowance within six sitting days. We believe in adopting the more positive approach of allowing Parliament to discuss the matter in the first instance.

The addition of a new paragraph to section 12C of the principal Act will remove the necessity for landowners to apply for a licence to clear areas in respect of timber or windrows lying on the ground or regrowth on previously cleared land. In other words, it will enable the farmers to clean up any land they have already started to develop, without the necessity of applying for a licence. A licence would be necessary only with regard to the clearing of virgin bush.

In view of the manner in which the whole problem has been handled and the justifiable outcry from the farmers, I am particularly pleased that one provision in the existing Act has not been used. I refer to the provision which gives to the under secretary power to charge fees for the issue of licences. That really would have been

rubbing salt into the wound. To think we allowed that clause to pass through Parliament! The Act provides that farmers who are subject to a clearing ban may apply for a licence to clean certain areas but imposes the further indignity of a licence fee. Fortunately the Government did not proceed with that provision, and this Bill proposes to delete it altogether.

The Act contains no provision requiring the under secretary to state the reasons for his refusal to grant an application for a licence. This Bill seeks to include a provision that when a licence is refused, the under secretary shall supply the applicant with written reasons.

Perhaps one of the major amendments proposed in this Bill is the provision of an appeals tribunal. We know the Act contains a provision allowing an aggrieved person who has been refused a licence to appeal to the Minister. Subsequent to the passage of the 1978 legislation, the Minister established an advisory committee. However, it is only an advisory committee, and the final decision remains with the Minister.

This Bill seeks to establish a tribunal comprising three members. One member shall be nominated by the Minister and selected from either the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Conservation and the Environment. The second member would be the president of the shire in which the land the subject of the appeal was situated. The third member of the tribunal would be a farmer farming in the catchment area or water reserve in which the land the subject of the appeal was situated, this person being elected by farmers in the catchment area or water reserve in a secret ballot held under the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer.

A further provision in the Bill would allow for compensation to be paid on the grounds of an appeal to the compensation board constituted under part III of the Public Works Act, 1902. At the moment, where a person is denied the right to clear his property, he may apply for compensation, but his application is subject to arbitration. This additional clause will give the aggrieved person the opportunity to have his claim for compensation heard before the board. The option would remain with the person who had been denied a licence to clear.

I do not suggest this Bill will solve all the problems; however, it will considerably alleviate farmers' concern regarding the existing guidelines. The salt problem needs to be closely monitored; we need to keep an open mind to suggestions and experiments. The amending Bill

will permit farmers to continue in this vital industry. The industry cannot sustain the sort of knock a total clearing ban will bring.

If the salt problem is to be solved, it must be through analysis, trial and discussion. It certainly will not be solved by command.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr O'Connor (Minister for Labour and Industry).

ROAD MAINTENANCE (CONTRIBUTION) ACT REPEAL BILL

Order Discharged

MR COWAN (Merredin) [7.53 p.m.]: I move—

That order of the day No. 2 be discharged from the notice paper.

Question put and passed.

Order discharged.

WATER SUPPLY CATCHMENT AREAS: SALINITY AND LAND CLEARING

*Appointment of Select Committee:
Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 15th August, on the following motion by Mr H. D. Evans—

That a Select Committee be set up to examine and report upon and make recommendations regarding—

- (1) The probable consequences and problems to individual farmers, Shire Councils and communities arising from the Government's amendment to the Country Areas Water Supply Act which introduced controls on clearing from 15th December, 1978 to the following areas—

- (i) the Mundaring Weir catchment area;
- (ii) the Denmark River catchment area;
- (iii) the Kent River water reserve;
- (iv) the Warren River water reserve;

- (2) the various alternative methods of controlling salt levels in Western Australia's rivers which may exist in addition to the curtailment of clearing;

- (3) the advisability of promoting an international symposium to bring together the most authoritative information on overcoming problems of salt encroachment and restoration; and

- (4) the provision of adequate compensation where resumptions and banning of clearing have affected viability of properties.

MR O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Labour and Industry) [7.54 p.m.]: I listened intently to the remarks of the member for Warren in support of his motion. I believe he presented a very weak case in support of his proposal to establish a Select Committee to examine this issue. This was evident in the length of time he took to stumble over its introduction.

He criticised the manner in which the Country Areas Water Supply Act Amendment Bill went through Parliament in 1978. That criticism is scarcely credible; in fact, the proposals contained in the amending Bill were very straightforward and passed through this House with very little—if any—objection from members.

The 1978 Bill virtually extended the conditions applying to the Wellington catchment area to encompass the four other catchment areas of Mundaring, Warren, Kent, and Denmark. These regulations had applied to the Wellington catchment area since 1976, and were simply extended to cover these other areas.

Mr H. D. Evans: They were not stated as regulations; they were simply a departmental document, and you know it.

MR O'CONNOR: What is the difference between the two?

Mr H. D. Evans: There is the world of difference; for a start, one is tabled and the other is not.

MR O'CONNOR: They are exactly the same.

Mr H. D. Evans: They are not; there is no access in one case while in the other the matter is tabled in Parliament.

MR O'CONNOR: The Bill extended the regulations applying to the Wellington catchment area to include the four other catchment areas.

Mr H. D. Evans: Not by regulation.

Mr Stephens: You had better read it.

MR O'CONNOR: I have read it.

Mr H. D. Evans: You obviously have not read it; it is not done by regulation. You are stupid. Sit down!

Mr O'CONNOR: The issue was given great publicity in 1976 and was well known to members of this Chamber.

Mr H. D. Evans: How many members on your side would have known about this? Do not be silly!

Mr O'CONNOR: This is the normal way the member for Warren carries on.

Mr Bryce: He is the gentleman of this House.

Mr O'CONNOR: Then I wish he would act like a gentleman and give us the courtesy we gave him when he moved his motion. We are used to members of the Opposition coming into this place and trying to deny members on this side a fair go.

Mr H. D. Evans: Be honest and precise.

Mr O'CONNOR: The honourable member talks about being honest; I do not know what he would know about that!

I remember the Leader of the Opposition saying he would be responsible for a new phase of conduct in this House, and that his side would be better behaved in Parliament. He certainly has not been able to control his members; we could never describe their conduct in Parliament as decent.

Mr Bryce: He does not treat his colleagues like school boys. He does not seek to dominate them.

Mr O'CONNOR: I would hope members opposite are as fair as we were when the member for Warren moved his motion.

The 1978 amending legislation made no alterations to the regulations or guidelines applying to the Wellington Dam catchment area. In fact, 180 farmers in the Wellington Dam catchment area have been subjected to these regulations for something in excess of two years. Some of those farmers have applied for clearing permits, and some of those applications have been approved and others rejected. Some properties have been purchased, and compensation has been paid. The existing guidelines have not been changed.

Members know what has occurred in this area and what continues to occur today. Initially, there was great concern on the part of farmers whose properties were either entirely or partially involved in the areas subjected to clearing bans. I can understand their concern; they have their livelihoods to protect. They were concerned for the development of their farms and felt clearing bans could affect the profitability of or return from their properties.

The Government has considered compassionately each case coming forward, taking into account the issues involved and trying

to assist as far as it could in each particular instance.

When I was Minister for Water Supplies, I visited the Wellington catchment area and discussed these problems with a large number of people at either the Harvey Hall or the Waroona Hall. Some of those people were concerned that replies would be slow in coming back to them, and I undertook to speed matters up. Some of these farmers were seeking an unreasonable level of compensation for their properties; indeed, one or two even admitted this to me. Some had real problems and it was up to us to do something. We overcame the problems as best we could.

The Government has also indicated very clearly that it is prepared to review the guidelines if necessary. It is not adamant about this matter; it is not saying what has been done is final. If there are any problems we will treat each case individually. We will try to assist people where problems arise in order to overcome them as quickly as possible. One must realise that in the south-west water is vital and the quality of the water certainly affects streams in the area. If we do not move quickly—and I am pleased to say we have moved quickly—the future of these areas as far as first-class water is concerned will be very bleak indeed. Such water could be gone forever or at best it could take a long time to overcome the problems involved.

The member for Warren referred to the Water Resources Council and the five recommendations made on the 26th May, 1978. He read only the last recommendation, knowing full well it could be taken out of context unless it was read in conjunction with the first four. The Government acted in connection with all the recommendations made by the council. I ought to know, because I was the Minister for Water Supplies when the Chairman of the Water Resources Council came to me expressing grave concern for the water resources in the south-west. He expressed the need to move urgently to apply clearing bans in the area. He discussed the matter fully with me. In fact, the matter was discussed with other departments and members of local authorities as well. In the long-term interests of the country centres involved, the council requested that we take immediate action to ban clearing in the areas.

The council pointed out the serious problem of salinity in the streams in the area and the need for immediate Government action. It stressed the need immediately to impose bans on clearing in the long-term interests of the people in the area and in an effort to prevent what had occurred in the Wellington area. In that area it had been

known that bans would be imposed and so a great deal of clearing had proceeded beforehand.

The council drew attention to the priority of needs and the necessity for studies to be made to determine possible priorities. The council expressed the need for secrecy in connection with this issue to make sure some people did not go out and start to rip the trees down and make the position worse than it was as far as the salinity of streams was concerned. The council wanted to avoid a repetition of what had happened in the Wellington area.

The member for Warren made the point that there should be a 12 months moratorium before legislation was enacted. This was mentioned by the Water Resources Council, but it also mentioned the need to proceed with first things first. The committee felt quite strongly that immediate action should be taken if we were to obtain reasonable water in the long term from these particular rivers.

If the member for Warren is truly concerned about this matter he should state whether he does support the basic philosophy of what is being done. He should state his thoughts on what is left of our limited water supplies and whether he believes action should be taken quickly to protect them for the future.

Mr H. D. Evans: I explained this very clearly during the course of my speech.

Mr O'CONNOR: I thought the member left his credibility in doubt. The resolution presented by the Farmers' Union was not in line with what the member was asking the Government to do.

Mr H. D. Evans: I quoted the resolution and I said that is what the Farmers' Union wanted, but I did not say I was supporting it.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am glad to see that the member is not supporting the union's resolution.

Mr H. D. Evans: I was pointing out options the Government did not consider.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Government considered all the options available to it.

Everything the member for Warren asked for in his motion has been or is being met; therefore, his call for a Select Committee is frivolous. If the member considers the Farmers' Union resolution to be a reasonable basis for negotiations—and I thought that is what he said—

Mr H. D. Evans: Your Minister said that at the public meeting in Manjimup.

Mr O'CONNOR: At the time of that public meeting in Manjimup the Minister, in fact, was not presented with that 10 or 12 page document

until he was actually sitting on the stage and the meeting was in progress.

Mr H. D. Evans: He said it seemed a reasonable basis. Can't you hear me?

Mr O'CONNOR: I can hear the member and I will go on with my speech. I believe the Farmers' Union resolution frustrates the issues involved. The resolution, if adopted, would merely accelerate a wave of clearing in the area, which is totally undesirable. Such action could ruin the valuable water resources we have in the area.

The Government has acted or is acting on all the points brought forward by the member for Warren. The honourable member suggested that a Select Committee should be appointed. I do not know why. The Government has sympathetically considered and will continue to so consider any issues brought forward by the farmers. Most farmers realise the need for controls. I understand their concern for their properties and their futures; but we are prepared to discuss and negotiate with them whenever we can.

Without doubt we must act in the long-term interests of the areas and the communities therein. The Government has tried to keep inconveniences to a minimum. It has tried to see that the long-term benefits to the community are kept at the maximum possible.

The honourable member mentioned salinity in the area. The Government was accused of not doing sufficient in this regard, but we have six or seven agencies researching this problem. It is a very difficult one and one that worries not just farmers but everyone in the south-west and people throughout the State generally. The member should realise that the problem of salinity is being considered. Research is being done by the university, by the Public Works Department, by the CSIRO, by the Department of Agriculture, by the Environmental Protection Authority, and by the Forests Department.

We have also provided funds to assist the Whittington interceptor bank study to see how it operates in the south-west. These banks have been operating for something like 30 years, so there should be ample opportunity to decide whether or not the scheme will be successful. However, when we get to the problem of salinity in streams the issue is very much different. In this regard, rain falls onto the land and then soaks down into the ground. Members might recall the rainwater contains 80 parts per million of salt. Over a period of 200 or 300 years there is a build-up beneath the soil and as the land is cleared the water rises bringing the salt with it. Therefore, it is important and imperative that we restrict the clearing of

land in these areas until we can establish which particular areas can handle clearing. At that time, we can negotiate to purchase land or compensate an individual who might be affected adversely.

The member for Warren tried to compare the problem in our south-west with the problem in the Murray Valley. He should know there are very few grounds for comparison. In the Murray Valley the salt is engendered by the irrigation system—not the sort of problem we have in the south-west. Our problem is entirely different.

To co-ordinate research the Government has set up a committee of senior officers from the mining, timber and agricultural fields. We have obtained the services of an Eastern States professor (Professor Holmes) who is endeavouring to ascertain just what is occurring and to make recommendations to overcome the problem.

The Government realises that money has to be spent to overcome this problem. We are prepared to spend money as long as it is not wasted.

The member for Warren suggested we should arrange for an international symposium to study this problem. I take this opportunity to inform the member that the Government has already taken this initiative. We have arranged to obtain the services of people from overseas, especially from America. The symposium is expected to be held in November of next year and it will include four interstate and five local representatives.

The matter of compensation has always been a worrying problem. We realise that not only should people be compensated for their properties affected by bans but also for any inconvenience which occurs during this period while bans are in force. The Government is prepared to undertake discussions with respect to compensation. The values involved are based on established values, and sympathetic consideration will be given to all cases. This does not apply only to the areas currently involved, but also to areas near the Wellington Dam which have been covered by such bans since 1976.

No good reason was presented for the appointment of a Select Committee. It would be a waste of time and money to retrace the steps which have been or will be taken. It would undermine initiatives which have already been taken and would do nothing to relieve the salinity problem. I sincerely believe it would be counter-productive to appoint a Select Committee.

The member for Warren made four points in his motion, the first being the consequences and problems faced by farmers, shire councils, and communities in the area. This matter has been

taken into account since 1976. It will continue to be considered.

His second point related to the various alternative methods of controlling salt levels in Western Australia. I have already pointed out the number of departments and agencies involved in ongoing studies. I mentioned the university, the Department of Agriculture, the Forests Department, the CSIRO, the EPA and others. I do not know how many more studies we need in this area.

The third point concerned the advisability of promoting an international symposium. There is no need for this because the Government has already taken action in that regard. A symposium will be held in Perth in November of 1980.

Mr Pearce: You pinched the idea from us.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Government had taken steps in this regard long before this motion came forward.

Mr Davies: What is the nature of the symposium?

Mr O'CONNOR: It will go into all aspects of salinity. We will bring all these people together to see what we can achieve.

Mr Davies: Where will it be held?

Mr O'CONNOR: At the university.

Mr Davies: Who is being invited? What about some detail?

Mr O'CONNOR: The Leader of the Opposition could not expect me to have all the finer details.

Mr Davies: I thought you might have been given some notes.

Mr O'CONNOR: The symposium is being conducted by the Public Works Department in conjunction with other departments. A number of people have been invited from overseas, particularly America. Some names have been mentioned to me. I cannot recall the names at the moment but I would be happy to obtain them for the Leader of the Opposition.

The member for Warren's fourth point was the provision of adequate compensation where resumption of land and the banning of clearing occurs. Compensation has been available since 1976. We have a committee which investigates and arranges compensation. If a person is not happy with the compensation he receives he is able to appeal. Therefore, as I said before, all the points have been covered adequately by the Government. I see no need for the motion and therefore I oppose it.

MR DAVIES (Victoria Park—Leader of the Opposition) [8.15 p.m.]: The motion introduced by the member for Warren deserved a more considered reply than has been given by the Minister. He referred to some notes which he may have written himself; we accept of course he is not the Minister responsible for the portfolio at the present time—nevertheless, it is not many months ago that he was the responsible Minister. I thought he would have done much more homework on the case prepared by the member for Warren because it is a matter of considerable concern throughout the farming community. It is also of great concern to all of us because the position in regard to water supplies is becoming increasingly serious. I do not put the blame for that entirely upon the Government because it is unable to control the rainfall but it is able to control many of the other features which affect salinity.

The Minister began his speech with the usual dialogue by saying it was a very weak case and it was not very well presented. I can only suggest he was not listening very closely to the member for Warren, he did not read the speech or have someone read it for him to note the various points to be answered in detail. I will not argue the facts of the regulations and changes that were made last year because I am not as familiar with them as other members of this House. Certainly I am not as familiar with them as the member for Warren, the member for Stirling and some others—including the Minister for Agriculture—who have been actively concerned and attended farmers' meetings. They have been able to gauge the feelings of the farmers but as yet there has been no satisfactory answer to the complaints.

A Bill has been introduced into this House tonight to provide an avenue of appeal. A committee has been appointed to look at different aspects of certain cases. I am not completely *au fait* with all of this but the fact remains that there is still a great deal of dissatisfaction regarding the introduction and the application of these regulations.

When the Bill was introduced last year, we accepted at face value the statements the Government made. We should know that with this Government that should never be done, because time and time again what it has purported to be the case is not so. Everyone was fooled by accepting the explanations of the Government in good faith. There is still dissatisfaction and the attempts to paper over the dissatisfaction have been completely unsuccessful. The Opposition is still receiving correspondence, phone calls, and personal approaches about this

matter. They are being received through my office and through the offices of the members in the affected country areas. So, I cannot accept that all is well in regard to the regulations. The Government should do something to try to remedy the situation.

I am concerned, as I am sure other Western Australians are when flying over this State, to notice the vast areas of salt lakes. It is not until one becomes conscious of the dangers of salt that one can see the damage that is being done. We are then aware of how the salt is encroaching upon our farm lands. Perhaps some of my comments are not directly related to the first phase of this motion. However, they are certainly related to the second phase in which the member for Warren requests a Select Committee to investigate the various alternative methods of controlling salt levels which may exist in Western Australia's rivers in addition to the curtailment of clearing.

This is not a new problem. I can remember reading about this in, what was then *The Western Mail* and which is now *The Countryman*, when I was a lad in my pre-teens; and wondering how salt could do all this damage. Yet, there has been no sincere effort to overcome the problem. Now is the time to call together all of the alleged experts who have been watching the problem so unsuccessfully. Those experts should be asked how successful their monitoring has been of the undesirable effect of this problem. It seems we will be using our own experts who have been allegedly watching the problem.

We should take up the suggestion contained in paragraph (3) of the motion which suggests the promotion of an international symposium. I look askance at symposiums sometimes because I know they are sometimes attended by people as a taxation dodge. Good luck to them, but some good must come out of them particularly when international experts are brought together to discuss a particular problem. The Minister says that the Government has pre-empted the Opposition on this and that the matter is under control. We congratulate him for that, but, when I asked him the form of the symposium, when it would take place, where, and the terms of reference, he apologised and said as he is no longer the Minister he could not answer the question.

I would have thought if he wanted effectively to answer the case which has been so cogently put forward by the member for Warren he would have those details so that he could hammer the member for Warren into the ground and say, "Look, you are wasting your time, we are going to

do this and this." That is not good enough. A Select Committee should be looking at this problem. Once again, we should be over-viewing the work of the people who are allegedly arranging the symposium so that we can decide whether or not the field ambit is sufficient and whether or not there is a need for other people to be invited. We should collate the best possible information on this very serious problem. That is a job for a Select Committee.

The Minister in his speech dealt very lightly with the position of adequate compensation. He said there were avenues of review and that these should be sufficient. I have read where these avenues of review are considered to be biased and do not deal with the problem to the satisfaction of the appellant. The Opposition is saying that a committee of this House should get together and with these four objectives of the motion, try to produce a solution. It should do something positive to overcome the problem which has been with us since the first clearing of farming areas. The situation will become worse. We have offered time and time again the services of members on this side of the House to sit on Select Committees so that people could be called to give evidence, to answer questions.

The people themselves are not experts. They want to be informed, and the duty of the committee is to question and probe and come up with findings. It is a matter for some regret that the committees we have requested have not materialised. It is a pity because the functions of Parliament go beyond the matters of dogs, footpaths, and the like. If we are to approach our duties seriously then this is the type of work that we should be doing. We should be using a committee system more and more. These are the grounds for the motion to be carried.

I believe the Minister did not deal with the motion ineptly. He might have had some good answers but he did not convey them to us. It is a matter for regret to note that the Government believes because it has the numbers it does not have to answer the arguments put forward and does not have to agree with the motion.

The four requests outlined in the motion are simple but substantial. They can be dealt with very easily, but I do not propose for a moment that the answers will be easy. The Government should properly state its case so that we can ascertain whether or not it has hoodwinked the public. The Select Committee would allow us to overview the arrangements which are being made for the symposium and ascertain whether the arrangements are adequate. We could also consider the question of compensation. They are

reasonable requests; ones that are simply set out and show that this side of the House is prepared to help deal with these matters in a committee system. In this way we will be able to play our parts as members of Parliament. I support the motion

MR STEPHENS (Stirling) [8.28 p.m.]: With the National Party's approach in trying to raise the status and dignity of this House, it is no surprise that we support this move because it involves the members in a detailed examination of the problems. There are some problems with the changes to the legislation passed last year and we should try to get to the bottom of it and not adopt the attitude that nothing is necessary because the Government is taking care of it. The Government may be, but it does not have a Select Committee to report on the situation. If a committee were set up we could compliment the Government on its efficiency for leaving no stone unturned. That would be a feather in the cap of the Government. What has it to worry about? If it was found that some factors had been overlooked or not developed fully then the Government would perhaps be big enough to take notice along those lines. Of course the beneficiaries would be the people in the affected areas.

So I can see only good can come out of a Select Committee. It is quite obvious to those who represent people from the affected areas that they have been misled by the way the Government went about the administration of the legislation. I repeat, all members of Parliament, and certainly the farming people I represent, acknowledge and recognise the salt problem and realise something must be done in order to alleviate that problem. It is not good for the Government by default or by silence to mislead this House.

The legislation was put through and there was no suggestion whatsoever of the way in which the licences would be granted. In fact, there is a clause in the legislation which was passed which creates the impression that in most circumstances up to 90 per cent of the farm would be allowed to be cleared. That particular provision is on page 5 of Act No. 81 of 1976, where subsection (3) says—

(3) The Under Secretary may refuse any application for the grant, renewal or transfer of a clearing licence and shall do so where the clearing that would otherwise be authorized would result in less than one-tenth part of the land in question being left under indigenous trees.

That must surely create in the minds of most people the impression that in most circumstances

up to 90 per cent of a farm can be cleared; but of course, that was far from the fact.

When this legislation was proclaimed and the farmers were made aware that there was a prohibition on clearing, I tried to find out from the department just what was going on. It took some days for me to be informed as to the guidelines on which the licences would be granted. In effect, it was not a regulation of clearing but a ban on clearing by the non-issuing of licences. For their own protection, I will not name them, but within the space of two days two different departmental officers indicated to me that the farmers could apply for their licences and they would be refused; they could then appeal to the Minister if they so desired and the Minister would refuse the appeal; and then they could get their compensation. Two officers of the department could give a member of Parliament that information. Why was Parliament not told that was to be the approach of the Government? That is why I believe by its silence the Government deliberately misled this House.

When speaking earlier the Minister made reference to the submission of the Farmers' Union. I was at the Manjimup meeting at which the submission was put to the Minister and he publicly stated that he could not give a reply to the submission right then but he felt it was a reasonable basis for discussion. That is what he stated in front of 500-odd people. But what happened? The Farmers' Union was subsequently advised that the proposition had been rejected. It was not even given the courtesy of a discussion with the Minister, notwithstanding his public announcement that the document presented at the Manjimup meeting by the Farmers' Union was a reasonable basis for discussion.

The compensation is also a matter of great concern. To be quite honest, most of the farmers are not interested in compensation. They have taken up the land and they are interested in developing and farming their land. I think it is recognised that in extreme cases compensation may be the last resort, and I think it should be ample and generous because we are in effect penalising one section of the community for the benefit of the whole State; therefore the whole State should be prepared to make adequate compensation to those who are suffering or are likely to suffer because of the application of the legislation.

I also feel it is necessary for the Government to declare its hand with regard to its future intentions. Right throughout the south-west of the State, farmers living in the catchment areas of any of the streams are seriously concerned, and

there has been a tremendous increase in the rate of clearing in these areas on the basis that they will clear the land before any further areas are proclaimed.

Mr Harman: What is the future for the farmers you are talking about?

Mr STEPHENS: Those in areas which have not yet been declared are hoping to be able to get adequate funds to make their farms viable propositions before any further restrictions are imposed upon them.

Mr H. D. Evans: They are in there with bulldozers and everything.

Mr STEPHENS: That is right, and I think the Government should declare its hand and not leave the farmers in the State up in the air.

Mr Harman: What will happen to the farmers?

Mr STEPHENS: The debate is more along the lines of the farmers in the present declared areas, but I think the farmers in the other areas should be considered.

I mentioned earlier that the Government had mishandled its administration and application of the legislation. That view is held by others and we organised a meeting in the Perillup area which was very well attended. At my request the Minister was good enough to attend the meeting and he certainly found it very torrid.

Mr Harman: Which Minister?

Mr STEPHENS: The Minister for Works in another place. At the commencement of the meeting the presidents of various shires in the declared areas put the respective shires' points of view. The President of the Shire of Cranbrook in his submission, which supports the contention of some of us that the legislation was mishandled, said—

The Government has handled this matter badly. The deceitful manner used to introduce these regulations would seem to indicate they regard farmers to be corrupt and dishonest. What appears to be a straightforward innocuous piece of legislation is in reality the most obnoxious set of Laws introduced by the Government during its present term of office.

That is the view of someone outside of this Chamber but it supports the views of some of us who were involved in the legislation.

Coming back to the motion moved by the member for Warren, the Minister in effect rejected it on the ground that everything possible is currently being done. I do not think that is any reason to reject the motion. In fact, I think a Select Committee could be complementary to and

assist the Government in what it is trying to achieve.

With regard to paragraph (1) of the motion, I know that officers of the Department of Agriculture currently have the task of interviewing all farmers in the catchment area. That is great; we go along with that.

Mr H. D. Evans: They have found out who is in the area?

Mr STEPHENS: Yes, at last. We go along with that, but once that survey is completed, what is wrong with making that information available to a Select Committee and getting the views of that Select Committee so that it will be complementary?

Mr Harman: How many farmers are in the area?

Mr STEPHENS: I could not say offhand.

Mr Harman: Are you talking about 50?

Mr STEPHENS: No; in the order of 500.

With regard to the alternative methods of controlling salt levels, a tremendous amount of work could be done, and that is the subject of another motion before the House. The opinions and points of view which could be gathered could only be of benefit in arriving at a decision.

With regard to the advisability of promoting an international symposium, once again I think a committee investigating this matter could add to and improve any symposium which is finally decided upon.

With regard to the provision of adequate compensation, this is a very difficult area because we cannot compensate a person who does not want to leave his farm. There is also at the moment a degree of new land being thrown open, and perhaps consideration could be given to allowing the farmers in the affected areas to have first access to that land. There is plenty of work a Select Committee could perform, and even if the Government is working along the lines suggested here I believe the work of a Select Committee could be complementary to that which the Government is doing.

We therefore support the appointment of a Select Committee.

MR COWAN (Merredin) [8.40 p.m.]: Like my colleague, I support the motion for the appointment of a Select Committee. I certainly do not want to go into all the specific reasons contained in the motion. They have been very adequately covered by the member for Warren and the member for Stirling.

I would have thought this House would support the motion for the appointment of a Select Committee such as this for at least two reasons. Firstly, I do not think anybody can deny there has been some misleading of the House in the introduction of the Bill, and it has not been confined to members of the Opposition or members of the National Party. It has been stated on record or at least in the Press by a member of the Government parties in another place that he was so misled by the legislation that he was prepared to move the disallowance of some regulations, and he had never once been told he could not do so.

However, I would have thought this House, having felt it had not been given as much information as it should have been given, would leap at the chance to appoint a Select Committee to obtain for itself the information which I think is necessary in order to make a decision as important as the decision to deprive someone of his livelihood. That is what the decision of the Government did.

I believe, too, there is sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of the committee system in this House to justify the appointment of a Select Committee in this matter. I remind members of the success of the South Coast Fisheries Study, which was an all-party committee of the Parliament. It did some very good work and the Government paid heed to the committee's report and recommendations.

There is also the now defunct or semi-defunct Public Accounts Committee. I had the privilege of serving on that committee and I can state from personal experience that it was a very effective committee until, for political reasons, changes were made in the membership of it—

Mr Young: Why do you think that happened?

Mr COWAN: —and the Opposition saw fit—and I could do nothing but agree with it—out of protest, because of political manipulation, to withdraw from that committee. I certainly hope at some time in the future the Opposition will go back to that Public Accounts Committee and see to it that once again it functions well.

I would say to the Minister for Health that if he was frightened of the Public Accounts Committee making reports which would embarrass the Government, because the Government may not have had a majority of members on the committee, that speaks very poorly for the administrative powers of the Government of the day.

Mr Young: I have something more I could say about it.

Mr COWAN: Why does the Minister not say it? The Public Accounts Committee functioned particularly well.

Mr Young: I would be happy to say you and the Opposition got together to try to do a deal with one another. You asked me to say it and I have said it.

Several members interjected.

Mr COWAN: I really do not see anything grand about being on the Public Accounts Committee. I saw it as being a committee which functioned particularly well, but I did not see any power struggle there. If it satisfied the Minister's ego—

Mr Young: We had to shuffle our meetings around your squash games.

Mr COWAN: That is not true.

Mr Young: It is true. It is about time the truth was told.

Mr COWAN: I am quite certain the Minister knows he is not speaking the truth when he says that.

Mr Pearce: Are you responsible for the "Life: Be in it" campaign?

Mr Bryce: Only vital people play squash!

Mr COWAN: I think members of this House should consider one more factor in relation to this motion. A decision has been made to control further clearing of land in catchment areas. The Government has made no commitment to endeavour to control salinity in the areas that have been cleared already. I would have thought the Government would make some commitment to do that, because the cleared areas are the ones which are creating the salinity problem. The Government was prepared to leap in and ban clearing of land, but it has made no effort at all to promote a system to control stream salinity in cleared areas.

If this motion were carried and a Select Committee appointed, no doubt recommendations would be made. I suggest one of the first recommendations would be that the Government should make some commitment in respect of controlling stream salinity at its source; that is, on land already cleared. If that were controlled we would then have the opportunity to say, "We have that under control; salinity is falling away. Now let us go ahead and clear a little more land with a bit of common sense." That has not been done, and for that reason I suggest the Government should support the motion.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) [8.47 p.m.]: In all my years I have never seen a Minister flounder so helplessly as the Minister for Labour and

Industry did when he replied to the motion. I felt almost sorry for him because this matter does not concern his portfolios; but that is a deficiency he could have remedied had he set his mind to do so. Again, the Minister was carrying the brunt of a hasty and ill-considered action by the Government and the consequences which arose from it. The Government cannot stem those consequences, as was predicted when the amending Bill was introduced in October, 1978.

Mr B. T. Burke: The Minister has 73 portfolios.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The effrontery of the Minister is nothing short of staggering. He did not stick to the facts or to what I actually said; rather he attempted to twist my remarks to suit his argument. For example, he said that I support the submission of the Farmers' Union. That is not so. I cited the Farmers' Union submission as being the point from whence discussion could start. Those are the words of the Minister in another place; and a check of *Hansard* will show that. Such was the level of debate to which the Minister was reduced. Of course, it was purely a defence.

The Minister suggested also that the Farmers' Union submission was to my liking. That is just not so.

I turn now to reply to a few of the points raised by the Minister. In criticism of my motion he said he scarcely had a case to answer, and that members on this side of the House had little objection to the Bill. As a matter of fact, no member of this House objected when the amendment was passed because it was pointed out that no discussions had taken place. We told the Government that the ramifications of that would be something it would not forget. That was strangely prophetic, because it has come to pass; and this will not be the last time the issue is before the Chamber.

A series of hostile meetings were held last year, as the Government well knows. It will continue to pay electorally and in other ways for its action. There is no doubt of that.

I remind members of what transpired and the way in which the amendment was handled. I pointed out that on two occasions last year—the first time in August—I inquired at the Minister's office whether clearing controls were to be implemented in catchment areas. On two separate occasions I was answered, "No". Therefore, my surprise was not small when the amending legislation was introduced in this place with only six lines of explanation, which barely covered the situation. Indeed, the explanation merely said the Government was aware of the need for salinity

control, and clearing regulations would be extended to cover the four areas cited in the Bill.

That is how the Bill was introduced, and the debate on it was timed in such a way that I had the opportunity to ask only one question. I received a negative reply to my question. By the time I notified the Farmers' Union and shire councils of the position, the debate was before the Chamber and in no way could a full understanding of the implications be made available to members.

It was not until after the Bill was proclaimed and regulations were drawn up that the guidelines pertaining to the Wellington catchment area suddenly were applied to the other catchment areas. This was done in such a hasty manner that the changes being made have not yet finished but will continue. I point out that the people concerned had no access to the legislation. No member of the House could be expected to know the contents of every departmental document. We could scarcely expect the Minister for Health to be able to cite the most recent dictum of the Dairy Industry Authority. However, here we had a Minister saying that every member of the House should have known about the regulations applied to the Wellington catchment area. That is the sort of logic produced by the Minister for Labour and Industry.

The regulations themselves contained only procedural matters regarding the application of restrictions—how to apply for a licence, and other machinery matters. When guidelines were issued to farmers, the regulations were referred to. Of course, nobody knew about the regulations, and a member in another place was reported in large print in *The Albany Advertiser* as saying that members of Parliament were misled. He said he would challenge the regulations; that is how much he knew about the matter. We now know the restrictions were not contained in the regulations but in a document that never found its way into this Parliament.

That is the argument put up by the Minister when trying to belittle the case of the Opposition and hopefully endeavouring to defend the Government's position. He said he could understand the concern of farmers; but he could not understand it. This afternoon I asked a further question about properties to be excluded from the Warren catchment reserve. I was told that parts of 35 properties are now excluded from the reserve. The Government did not even know where the reserve is. Now we have a total of 40 farmers who are outside the reserve, although at first they were considered to fall within the ambit of the legislation. It is too much to expect that the

Government would know the names of the farmers involved, because it did not even know where the properties are or what is the extent of the catchment boundaries. That was clearly demonstrated by the Minister's answer to my question this afternoon.

Quite apart from the problems which would confront the farmers, the Government did not even know of the problems that confronted the districts, collectively. It certainly did not know how individual farmers would be affected. Yet the Government has the temerity to say all members should have known what was implied in the legislation. The Government did not even know the area to which it would be applied.

Mr O'Connor: We knew the area involved, and we were taking cognisance of the advisory council.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The guidelines were introduced and applied, and then they were changed. They will be changed further. The Minister says that everyone should have known the situation because it applied to the Wellington catchment area and, *ipso facto* according to the Minister, the situation should have been identical in each of the other catchment areas. What utter tripe and nonsense. Already the guidelines have been changed in four or five separate and distinct matters. Now, instead of a blanket being thrown over the whole of the land—and bear in mind the Government did not know where the area was in the first place—zoning has been introduced to which guidelines apply.

In the second place, the Minister in another place, after attending several stormy meetings in the areas most affected, made it known in the rarified atmosphere of the other Chamber that an advisory committee would be set up so that farmers who were disadvantaged would have the right of appeal. The committee was not to have statutory powers, but was to be able only to make recommendations to the Minister where it felt an injustice had occurred. So much for that.

As a result, several further matters arose which have produced changes in the thinking of those who initiated the legislation. The question of secrecy arose, with this legislation being rushed through without even a decent explanation. It was claimed that the Water Resources Advisory Council had advised that course. It suited the Government to adopt that recommendation because it offered the cheapest manner of doing it. If ever a cheap Government performed a cheap action, that was it. It admitted that it followed this course because of its cheapness in comparison with other options which may have been open to it, not that it had gone to any length to ascertain

what were those options. It did not even know what would be the effect of the option adopted.

Let it be clearly known that the reason for secrecy was self-defeating. The Minister reiterated that it was Cabinet's idea; it certainly was not the idea of the Government because nobody in the Government knew about it. How could such a course have been adopted in a joint party meeting?

The Government has again had the temerity to deny that secrecy was involved. The Minister said every member of the House should have known what was going on. Clairvoyance would be a useful quality for a politician in a place such as this. The secrecy was its own undoing. Headlines in country papers stated, "Boom in clearing"; and bulldozer operators have never been so busy in the catchment areas where they are able to operate unfettered and, according to information given to me, even in areas where restrictions applied. By the Government's secretive attitude, any prevention of clearing has been lost.

Mr O'Connor: At the request of the council. You know that.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The Government demurred on four out of five of its recommendations. Let us look at those five. The Water Resources Advisory Council drew attention to the fact there had been a spate of clearing in the Wellington catchment. Blind Neddie could see what was going to happen if four catchments were suddenly included. That did happen. I know that in the catchments of the Donnelly, the Blackwood, and the Deep Rivers there is a great deal of clearing proceeding. The farmers there will not be caught. That is the natural human reaction. Farmers know that they may be faced with bans. They know that the Government could slam down with the jackboot, and they will be caught. That is exactly what the Government did in October last.

Mr O'Connor: At the request of the community.

Mr H. D. EVANS: Against the interests of the community. The Water Resources Advisory Council pointed out several things. There were five recommendations, and these came to light only when the Minister in another place was stung into replying to the Farmers' Union in the weekly Press of the Farmer's Union. The Minister pointed out the five recommendations included the one to which the Minister has referred, that water salinity is a danger and that there was a need for secrecy. There was a need to obviate the probability of a sudden spate of clearing, as occurred in the Wellington catchment.

The Minister here did not point out also that that same council had advised a moratorium for one year, during which time there could be an examination of the problem, to give a breathing space so that the Government could bring down the legislation which would have been acceptable to and compatible with the situation.

Mr O'Connor: Out of context again.

Mr H. D. EVANS: The Government had the option. That is one of the recommendations quoted by the Minister in another place. The Minister here should argue it out with him.

Mr O'Connor: I was the Minister when the Water Resources Council came and expressed—

Mr H. D. EVANS: Well, more shame the Minister.

Mr O'Connor: —the urgency of proceeding immediately with clearing bans. That was the most important aspect they brought forward. You know that very well. You are trying to distort it.

Mr H. D. EVANS: That was one of the recommendations brought forward by the Water Resources Advisory Council. The other was the one for the moratorium. The Government opted for the cheapest course. It serves it right for what occurs now.

I contrast what has happened in the past in the pastoral areas of this State with the manner in which the Tonkin Labor Government operated when it was confronted with an analogous problem. It set up a committee to examine each of the properties in question. Now this Government is saying that there is a work force going into each of the properties in the affected area, and finding out what the problems are. That should have been done a year ago, when the damage was being created.

In the pastoral areas, the Tonkin Government established a committee of four, including each pastoralist in relation to his own claim. The pastoralist had the opportunity to advance his case and to try to convince the other three members of the committee that his claim was valid.

The same method was adopted by this Government subsequently in the Kimberley. Now the Government is coming round to the same solution again. However, it is a little late. I do not know what it hoped to achieve through the secrecy. What it did surreptitiously was an action against the interests of this State. It was done through sheer stupidity and pigheadedness.

The Minister went on to consider the separate components of the motion moved by me. He treated those components in a rather cavalier and

derogatory fashion. That is not surprising. When one is short of logic, one makes a personal attack, or one walks out of the Chamber.

In relation to the first aspect—the probable consequences and problems to individual farmers, shire councils, and communities—the Department of Agriculture is now going into each of the affected properties. That did not occur after discussions with the shire councils and the various groups within the communities who would be disadvantaged if there was a sudden decrease in available land. It is not honest for the Minister to make that claim. There is some inquiry going on.

In relation to the second point—the various alternative methods of controlling salt levels in Western Australia's rivers which may exist in addition to the curtailment of clearing—the Minister is saying now that that is being done. He pointed out that there are, I think, eight separate bodies involved in salinity research, including the CSIRO, the university, the Forests Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Conservation and the Environment, and two others. That may be so; but that does not mean that this belated, rather stunted and stinted approach to the situation is the manner in which it will be achieved. The Minister has given no indication of how the overall salinity problem from the source of the river to the mouth can be dealt with.

When we come to the motion in relation to Mr Harry Whittington, the Minister may give his opinion on that gentleman's methods. His methods are only a part of the methods available. His methods, in conjunction with others, may achieve a solution.

The Minister has made no reference in any detail to the practicability of river piracy—of taking the upper reaches of the Tone River and diverting them into either the Frankland River or Lake Muir. The Minister has totally disregarded that aspect. It is most important that the river system as a whole should be examined, not just the part from which the water supply will be taken. The problem is caused in the 100 miles further up from where the water is taken. The cleared areas are in the upper reaches.

This is the problem. This is the area which the Government is trying to short-circuit. The reason is that the Government took the cheapest way out. The Minister admitted that. The Government said, "This is the cheapest of the alternatives. Let us do it this way." There was no consideration of the problems which would eventuate and which would have to be faced up to. There was no thought for the people.

The Minister endeavoured to reply on behalf of a Government that acted in that manner. No wonder he has left the Chamber.

We come to the third point contained in the motion I moved—the advisability of promoting an international symposium to bring together the most authoritative information on overcoming problems of salt encroachment and restoration. The Minister says that is now being done. How opportune! How fortuitous! There has been no mention of this until the last week or so. Now there is mention of a committee that has been set up to monitor the effects. That is rather a sudden innovation. It took four hostile public meetings to move the Government in any way. The Government did not do the proper thing after it researched thoroughly. That should have been done a year ago, when the dislocation of the people involved could have been minimised. We had to light a lamp or light a fire under the Government. This is what was done at the public meetings in the water catchment areas of the south-west.

I hope that the symposium goes ahead with despatch. I hope we will find solutions to this problem.

The final aspect of the motion dealt with the provision of adequate compensation where resumptions and banning of clearing have affected the viability of properties. My office has received a number of complaints from farmers who have been put into the position of arguing for the right to compensation for a start, whether or not the rate of compensation has been determined. That depends upon the injurious consequences as well as the effects upon the clearing, varying with the size of the farm. The consequences will be the whole crux of the problem for the farmers, and they will indicate whether they survive.

That was one of the most interesting aspects of the Bill that was introduced by the member for Stirling tonight. One of the things he seeks to do is to give farmers who are disadvantaged the option of going to the compensation court. They do not have the right at the moment. Arbitration is never satisfactory. The manner in which it works is that the injured person puts forward a sum; the Government representative puts forward another; and any arbitrator will say, "Let us take it down the middle." That is the way arbitration works, depending on who the arbitrator is.

The right of access to a compensation court is fair and reasonable. This is what the Government should be considering.

I would point out that Professor Holmes has been visiting this State, and he has commenced his researches into salinity in Western Australian rivers. He indicates clearly in his preliminary report—and I did not have a good opportunity to divine it to its full extent—that drainage and other mechanical matters are most important in controlling salinity. The Whittington interceptor bank is based on that. It is possible that, in conjunction with other methods, the banks could go a long way towards relieving the problems in these areas.

The trial at Batalling Creek will be examined in closer detail. There will be discussion on that later this evening. I know members would not want me to speak at length on that at this stage. There is no fear of my transgressing in that regard.

I would like to point out this is not the only mechanical method to be considered. There is a straightout drainage proposition. There is also the "Bentall Bullet" which this Government has supported for further research. In effect, it is a mechanical means of digging drains alongside salt encroached land. It could result in doing the same work as agricultural pipes. It could result in moving water away quickly, avoiding flooding and the salting that occurs at lower levels.

The Minister made reference to the fact that I had cited the attitude that prevailed when the salinity problem in the Murray River was examined. He said that was a different story and a different technical problem. However, the manner in which it was handled was a great deal different from the manner in which the matter has been handled in this State. An opportunity was given to those who were involved to make public submissions so that the whole story could be examined. We did not suddenly wake up one morning and find that the 1976 guidelines applied.

There is no question about the concern of the people who live in the catchment areas and probably everybody in this State is interested in and concerned about the question of salinity. It is the biggest problem which is confronting us at the present time. Water will be the determining factor in the growth of Western Australia. It is as simple as that. That is the reason for the concern.

Every speaker at the public meetings attended by the Minister and other members made reference to the fact that they favoured control of salinity. They did not accept a system of total clearing bans which is the cheapest and most aggravating method being applied.

The Minister said that, because a symposium is now under way and the Department of

Agriculture is investigating the problems of individual farms, we do not need a Select Committee. I say we need a Select Committee more than one has ever been needed before. How can a Government of this ilk be trusted when one looks at the way in which it has handled this matter which is of great importance and affects hundreds of people directly and thousands of people indirectly? The Government has behaved in a most secretive and despicable manner. It has not referred the matter to local government and it has impinged on the principles of democracy. How can a Government such as this be expected to have the confidence of the people who are most vitally concerned?

One of the few methods open to an Opposition to take effective action to test the sincerity and bona fides of the people involved is to move for a Select Committee of inquiry. This would at least give the people concerned an opportunity to make submissions so that they can indicate the details of the situation. There is a great need for a committee to be established.

The South Coast Fisheries Parliamentary Study Committee which examined fisheries in this State last year will be remembered as a forum which provided the opportunity for all parties concerned to be involved in examining a problem which extended over approximately 13 separate electorates. It worked very well. Had it not been for the unanimity of the recommendations of that committee, the amendments to the Act which followed would not have been possible. The people who are dependent upon the fishing industry for their livelihoods would not have accepted the Bill had the Government introduced amending legislation without consulting them. Such legislation would have had no chance of success. However, the matter was dealt with openly and nobody cavilled at it as a result. The recommendations were accepted.

Mr Sibson: If you have a Select Committee you would be discussing a certain area. How much land do you think would be cleared in the time that the Select Committee was working?

Mr H. D. EVANS: One of the recommendations of the committee was that a moratorium should be applied for a year to enable people to decide upon the type of legislation which would be most desirable and effective. That is what should have been done. In that situation an opportunity would have been given for the problem to be evaluated fully. As I said at the time, it was a Pandora's box. The problems which were created because of the secrecy of this Government were not put to rest lightly.

The Minister was never more incorrect than he was tonight. In no way did he review the arguments and justify the actions of this Government. If anything, he exacerbated the problems and highlighted them even more. For that reason, it is obvious there is a great need for a Select Committee to be established and to commence its inquiries immediately.

Sir Charles Court: That is an amazing stand for a man who supported the original Bill.

Mr Pearce: You could have spoken in the debate if you had anything to say.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gosnells will cease interjecting.

Mr Pearce interjected.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Gosnells interjects again, I will name him.

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes 17

Mr Barnett	Mr Hodge
Mr Bryce	Mr Jamieson
Mr B. T. Burke	Mr T. H. Jones
Mr Carr	Mr McIver
Mr Cowan	Mr Pearce
Mr Davies	Mr Stephens
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Tonkin
Mr Grill	Mr Bateman
Mr Harman	

(Teller)

Noes 22

Mr Blaikie	Mr Nanovich
Mr Clarko	Mr Old
Sir Charles Court	Mr O'Neil
Mrs Craig	Mr Ridge
Mr Crane	Mr Rushton
Mr Grayden	Mr Sibson
Mr Grewar	Mr Tubby
Mr Hassell	Mr Watt
Mr Herzfeld	Mr Williams
Mr Laurance	Mr Young
Mr MacKinnon	Mr Shalders

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr Skidmore	Mr Mensaros
Mr Bertram	Mr P. V. Jones
Mr T. J. Burke	Mr Coyne
Dr Troy	Mr Sodeman
Mr Wilson	Mr O'Connor
Mr Taylor	Mr Spriggs
Mr T. D. Evans	Dr Dadour

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

WATER SUPPLY CATCHMENT AREAS: SALINITY

Whittington Interceptor Bank: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 22nd August, on the following motion by Mr McPharlin—

- (1) That in the opinion of this House the Government should immediately provide finance to enable a full-scale trial of the Whittington interceptor bank system in at least one of the water catchment areas which are the subject of clearing restrictions under the Country Areas Water Supply Act Amendment Act 1978.
- (2) The planning of the trial to be on a catchment area of a tributary creek under the supervision of Mr Harry Whittington in co-operation with the Public Works Department, the Department of Agriculture and the farmers concerned.

MR H. D. EVANS (Warren) [9.25 p.m.]: Perhaps I will be a little more fortunate with this motion than I was with the one we dealt with a few moments ago.

Mr O'Neil: Hope springs eternal.

Mr Davies: Never give up!

Mr H. D. EVANS: The motion moved by the member for Mt. Marshall, who unfortunately is not present this evening, is one which deserves consideration, because it raises certain aspects of mechanical control of water and salinity about which insufficient information is available and about which there is considerable disputation at the present time.

As far as clearing land is concerned, the theories presented by the Department of Agriculture simply mean that transpiration is reduced; there is increased runoff; the water table rises, with subsequent waterlogging, and an increase in the level of salts held in the soil. These salts are the result of rainfall over millions of years. They come up to the surface suddenly in waterlogged areas. This presents the problem of saline land as we know it.

The theory advanced by Mr Harry Whittington involves the creation of interceptor banks. These banks, in effect, are drains which channel the runoff at either a rapid or slow rate. If the banks are erected across the contour of the land no lateral runoff occurs. The theory is that, if the water is allowed to percolate into the soil, it remains at a higher level on the hillside, instead of moving rapidly down it as runoff and creating flooding in the low-lying areas which results in the salinity problem. The banks allow a much reduced flow of water down the hillside and subsequently the flooding and attendant salinity problems do not take place.

Waterlogging also results in the destruction of the structure of the soil. Waterlogged soil

collapses, resulting in the loss of micro-organisms. This has a deleterious effect on vegetative growth. That is, broadly speaking, the difference between the Whittington interceptor bank system and the established theory which has been presented by the Department of Agriculture.

The booklets circulated by the Department of Agriculture are most readable. They are comprehensive and everybody should be conversant with them.

The Battalling Creek experiment has been the subject of disputation. After monitoring the experiment for a year the report of the Public Works Department was not very encouraging. It is to the credit of the Government that it established this trial in the first instance, although a comparative 12 months figure has been lost. However, the trial has been established and the principle can be demonstrated clearly.

One of the most experienced men in this field, who is a senior lecturer in geography, pointed out in connection with the report of the Public Works Department that those who prepared it did not have a full understanding of the experiment.

It was a departure from the interceptor bank method which Mr Whittington has used on his own property and at other places. It was a departure in that it angled the interceptor bank so that it operated as a drain to take the runoff water into the stream proper before it had a chance to pass through the salt encroached land. The banks ran roughly parallel to the stream. The drains intercepted the water running down the hill and channelled it into the creek. The water was harvested from half way up the hill rather than in the stream. This particular principle adopted by Mr Whittington was not brought out clearly in the report by the Public Works Department.

Mr Conacher, the senior lecturer at the Department of Geography at the University of Western Australia, pointed out the disparity in the figures used by the Public Works Department. He demonstrated that a considerable quantity of water which had fallen on the area had not been accounted for in the way the Public Works Department suggested. A period of 12 months is not a very long time over which to conduct an experiment. There will be no conclusive evidence for some considerable time.

Professor Holmes, in his preliminary statement, made it clear that there is a role for drainage. One of the conflicts in dealing with reclamation of salt land is that a drain can be constructed and the land restored by keeping the rainfall back from the salt encroached area. That is possible, and it is being done in other parts of the world.

Incidentally, that is one of the principles behind the Whittington interceptor bank.

There is a conflict when one wants to harvest the water. If the water is held back it will percolate into the soil, and there will not be a runoff. If it is desirable to fill the metropolitan dams—which are badly in need of water—some other method will have to be devised. That could be done in a number of ways.

Mr Davies: There is no salt in the metropolitan water supply? It is the saltiest of any water supply in any capital city!

Mr H. D. EVANS: That is so.

The method which has been suggested is probably more costly than other forms which serve the same purpose. An engineer in the Albany area has indicated that by ripping and establishing a drain the same effect can be achieved in certain areas. The "Bental Bullet" method has been used by farmers in the northern wheatbelt. It has been tried out on the university land this side of Northam. That method establishes a drain by means of a machine which is shaped like a bullet. For that reason it is called the "Bental Bullet" system. It has a flanging effect below ground level which serves as a drain in the same way as an agricultural drain is used on a playing field. It gets the water away from the locality as quickly as possible thereby avoiding a rise in the water table and consequent waterlogging and the collapse of the soil structure. Professor Holmes recognised this method and pointed out that there was a conflict if one wanted to harvest the water in order to fill the metropolitan dams. Water for the dams would have to be channelled away from salt laden land. A balance will have to be achieved in this State between the harvesting of runoff water and land reclamation. I am pleased to note that Professor Holmes is carrying out research.

Perhaps I should refer to the fact that I was under some misapprehension with regard to the funding of Mr Whittington's scheme. I quite accept the Minister's statement in which he made it clear that a sum of \$10 000 would be available to Mr Whittington for experimentation. Apparently there must have been some confusion in communications, but I am perfectly happy to accept the Minister's statement. The motion before us is that the Government should immediately provide finance to enable a full-scale trial of the Whittington interceptor bank system in at least one of the water catchment areas which are the subject of clearing restrictions under the Country Areas Water Supply Act Amendment Act, 1978.

That is quite reasonable and I think the experiment could be located in the Wellington Dam catchment area. That area, of necessity, is probably the most convenient property being held for water harvesting, and it is desirable that the experiment be in an area of that kind. I would be perfectly happy to see a site selected there, though not necessarily at Batalling Creek. There are other catchment areas which are identifiable and are not as extensive. As a consequence, there would not be a great initial cost. It could be said that if the "Bental Bullet" drain method were used it would be far cheaper than the interceptor method which has been put forward for reforestation, repasturing, or agro-forestry.

There is an economic justification for proceeding with a full-scale trial of this method. It has to be remembered that a full-scale trial will need to cover an entire catchment because the trial will not be able to be commenced half way down a valley. If the entire area upstream is cleared that will not give a valid scientific conclusion. I think experimentation is required at the earliest possible time.

We are not in a position to be able to estimate the cost of establishing something of this sort. The cost should be reasonably modest.

The second part of the motion we are discussing states that the planning of the trial should be on a catchment area of a tributary creek under the supervision of Mr Harry Whittington in co-operation with the Public Works Department, the Department of Agriculture, and the farmers concerned. Obviously, that co-operation not only is desirable but also absolutely essential if such a proposal is to get off the ground.

For those reasons I am disposed to support the motion moved by the member for Mt. Marshall. I think his reasons are quite acceptable; he has not suggested anything outlandish. He has suggested a conclusive study be carried out. The conclusiveness of the proposition is whether it will work or not.

It is surprising to realise there are in excess of 600 farmers who are members of WISALTS. The organisation has been set up to propagate and disseminate the information gained from the

Whittington process. Those farmers are practical men who are not likely to spend money on what might be a wildcat scheme. They have confidence to the extent that they are prepared to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in the establishment of interceptor banks. There could well be a different method of achieving the same results as the interceptor banks. For the reasons I have given, I support the motion moved by the member for Mt. Marshall.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Crane.

BILLS (5): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills—

1. Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act Amendment Bill.
2. Health Education Council Act Amendment Bill.
3. Margarine Act Amendment Bill.
4. Iron Ore (Hamersley Range) Agreement Act Amendment Bill.
5. Western Australian Marine Act Amendment Bill.

MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Message: Appropriations

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

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mrs Craig (Minister for Local Government), read a first time.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 9.44 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

LAND

Tenterden

1319. Mr STEPHENS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Further to question 1178 of 1979, as a result of the meeting with the shire is the Minister now in a position to reverse the decision to exchange the land?
- (2) Was the Cranbrook Shire consulted prior to the exchange?
- (3) (a) If "Yes" to (2), in what way; and (b) with whom?
- (4) If the exchange does not proceed, what compensation will be offered to Mr Preston for his land, the subject of the proposed reserve on Geckabee hill?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) The land exchange is held in abeyance and no further survey action will proceed.

An investigation of the reserve by the WA Museum is to be carried out and should this report indicate a need for its retention, the landowner has agreed that the exchange should be abandoned. In such case any survey costs incurred will be met by the department.

- (2) and (3) The shire was not included in the authorities to which the matter was referred and the department has apologised accordingly.
- (4) If the land exchange does not proceed, the matter of compensation will not arise. Mr Preston has to be commended for previously surrendering 3.7636 ha from his then CP lease for the preservation of flora.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Kalgoorlie Pipeline

1353. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the estimated natural wastage—or non-replacement—of wages employees in each year from 1970 to 1979 inclusive employed by the Public Works Department on the Kalgoorlie pipeline?

- (2) What effect has this natural wastage had on the average age of Public Works Department wages staff presently employed on the Kalgoorlie pipeline?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) 1970—Not available.
1971—Not available.
1972—Decrease 29.
1973—Increase 88.
1974—Decrease 6.
1975—Increase 9.
1976—Decrease 26.
1977—Increase 191.
1978—Decrease 84.
1979—Decrease 59.
- (2) This information is not readily available.

WATER SUPPLIES: METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD

Work Force: Average Age

1354. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What is the estimated natural wastage—or non-replacement—of wages employees in each year from 1970 to 1979 inclusive?
- (2) What effect has this natural wastage had on the average age of Metropolitan Water Board wages staff presently employed?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) See answer to question 1306.
- (2) Information not readily available.

WATER SUPPLIES: METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD

Work Force: Machinery and Plant

1355. Mr BRIAN BURKE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

What is the board's policy on updating or replacing machinery/plant used by wages employees in the construction, treatment and maintenance areas?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

Efficient economic functioning.

LAND

*Government Departments and Instrumentalities:
Holdings*

1356. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is it a fact that the Minister's department is considering or is in the process of developing a computerised land information system which will comprise a register of State Government departmental and instrumentality holdings throughout the State?
- (2) If so, when is it expected that such a register will be completed?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The Lands Department is involved with the Public Service Board in a working group which was recently established to review existing land information systems used by State Government departments and instrumentalities.
- (2) The review is still in its preliminary stages and no time can be given until a decision has been made as to what system will be adopted.

IMMIGRATION: REFUGEES

Vietnamese: Intake

1357. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Immigration:

- (1) (a) How many Vietnamese refugees have been received by Western Australia in each of the past 12 months; and
(b) what percentage does this represent of the national intake in each case?
- (2) (a) What percentage of Vietnamese refugees received in Western Australia is provided with hostel accommodation by the Commonwealth Government; and
(b) what is the average period of stay at the hostel?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

The arrival and initial settlement programmes for all refugees including Vietnamese are subject to Commonwealth Government policy. Statistics on a monthly basis are not readily available but the following information has been provided by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs—

- (1) (a) For the year ended the 30th June, 1979—978.

(b)

	Total National Intake of Vietnamese Refugees	Percentage to Western Australia
1978-79	10 779	9.07 per cent

- (2) (a) Commonwealth Government policy requires that all refugees be accommodated initially at Commonwealth migrant hostels. In Western Australia all Vietnamese refugees have initially been accommodated at Graylands centre.
- (b) The average length of stay at Graylands centre varies from three to six months.

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

Unemployed

1358. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many teachers are registered as unemployed in the—
(a) primary;
(b) secondary;
(c) technical divisions?
- (2) How many of these teachers are specialists, indicating the fields in which they specialise?
- (3) How many graduate teachers are without teaching positions?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) and (2) The Education Department does not keep a register of unemployed teachers. Some statistics could possibly be supplied by the Commonwealth Employment Service.
- (3) The member would be aware that the Education Department is not the sole employer of graduate teachers and that it is therefore not possible to state with any precision the number of 1978 graduates who have not been appointed this year to this date.

However, I am able to provide details of current employment with this department, estimates for employment for the remainder of the year, estimates for independent school employment, and hence the estimated over-supply.

The department has received 1467 applicants for employment from the 1978 graduates, and it is known that these include graduates who have also applied for teaching positions in non-Government schools.

It is presently estimated that non-Government schools will require between 200 and 270 graduates in 1979, and that the department will require 990.

To the end of August the department has employed 888 graduates but it is not known how many graduates have been employed by non-Government schools.

By the end of 1979 it is estimated that about 200 of the 1978 graduates will not have been placed. The fact that a residual over-supply of about 200 teachers was expected was announced by me on the 16th January, 1979.

HOUSING: STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Land: Belmont

1359. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is it a fact that the State Housing Commission has recently purchased land in Epsom Avenue near Great Eastern Highway in Belmont?
- (2) If so, will he indicate—
 - (a) the purpose for which the land is to be used;
 - (b) the precise area of land involved;
 - (c) the cost of the land to the State Housing Commission;
 - (d) when construction work on the site is expected to commence?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Single storey aged persons accommodation.
- (b) 5463m².
- (c) \$60 000.
- (d) Planning is currently in progress and development is programmed for this financial year.

TOWN PLANNING

Redcliffe

1360. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning:

- (1) What plans does the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority have for land held by that authority at the end of Fauntleroy Avenue in Redcliffe adjoining Belmont City's Garvey Park?
- (2) What area of land is involved?
- (3) For what purpose is the land currently being used?
- (4) (a) Is the land classified as an "A"-class reserve;
- (b) if not, how is it classified?

Mrs CRAIG replied:

- (1) It is part of the regional open space system for the Perth metropolitan region—in this case related to the Swan River.
- (2) Approximately 22ha inclusive of some unmade roads.
- (3) Portion is leased to Tibbradden Horse Stud and the rest is vacant.
- (4) (a) No.
- (b) Reserve for Parks and Recreation in terms of the Metropolitan Region Scheme.

HOUSING: STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Land: Purchases

1361. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) During each of the last five financial years how much money was spent by the State Housing Commission on the purchase of land—
 - (a) throughout Western Australia;
 - (b) in the metropolitan area?
- (2) In respect of the metropolitan area, how much land has been purchased during that period of time and in which localities?

Mr RIDGE replied:

- (1) and (2) This information will take some time to prepare and it will be conveyed to the Honourable member in writing as soon as possible.

HEALTH: MEDICAL SERVICES

Unemployed People

1362. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that the rising costs of medical treatment including prescriptions for drugs is a cause of growing concern to individuals and families where breadwinners are unemployed?
- (2) Will his Government make representations to the Fraser Government requesting the extension of the pensioner medical benefit system to unemployed people?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I can appreciate that the recent changes made by the Commonwealth may cause concern to individuals and families where breadwinners are unemployed.
However, the member must know that the Commonwealth Government is fully aware of the effect that the changes will have on unemployed persons. There are a number of options open to the patient who is unemployed. He may, for example, be classified as disadvantaged by the attending doctor and can obtain treatment free of charge.

EDUCATION: SCHOOL

Rivervale

1363. Mr BRYCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What number of students were enrolled at Rivervale primary school in 1965, 1970 and for each of the last five years?
- (2) (a) Has the school enrolment declined to a point where the school is about to be reclassified;
(b) if so, when is this likely to occur?
- (3) At what point would the Education Department consider closing the Rivervale Primary School and channelling students to nearby primary schools?
- (4) Does the Education Department consider that the Rivervale Primary School has a viable future?
- (5) What is the estimated enrolment in grade I at Rivervale Primary School for 1980?

- (6) Since the Happy Days kindergarten in Norwood Road Rivervale was converted to the Tranby pre-primary school, how many students have been channelled to the Rivervale Primary School from that school?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) 1965 361
 1970 269
 1975 186
 1976 169
 1977 153
 1978 146
 1979 114.
- (2) The school has not been reclassified for 1980 and the next review will be for 1982. It is not possible to predict whether school numbers will have declined sufficiently by then to result in any change in its status.
- (3) and (4) There is no plan to direct children from the Rivervale Primary School to other schools in the vicinity.
- (5) 13 (approximately).
- (6) One.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL
(NO. 2)*Scrutineers*

1364. Mr HASSELL, to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) In relation to proposed amendments to the Electoral Act will he please advise if scrutineers appointed by candidates will be entitled to accompany electoral officers when they visit remote areas to take votes prior to polling day and when they visit declared hospitals and institutions to take votes prior to polling day?
- (2) If "Yes" to (1), whether the Electoral Department will facilitate the accompaniment of their officers by scrutineers by making provision for them to join any group travelling and by advising candidates of the times and places the electoral officers will visit?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Scrutineers may be present at polling places appointed in declared remote areas and at declared hospitals and institutions when votes are being taken.

- (2) The Electoral Department does not propose to transport scrutineers to such polling places as the type of transport may not suitably accommodate equipment and the number of persons to be transported.

The returning officer will advertise the places at which the poll will be taken in accordance with section 75 of the Act and, as far as practicable, will advise candidates of itineraries and any revision thereof.

ELECTORAL

Pilbara Seat

1365. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

In view of the fact that there has been a disparity in the number of electors enrolled in the seat of the Pilbara compared with the other three statutory seats for some years now, why has his Government avoided taking the necessary action to create an additional seat in the Pilbara or to more equitably redistribute representation in the north?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

The Electoral Districts Act provides that in respect to division of the metropolitan area, as well as the agricultural, mining and pastoral area, due consideration must be given to community of interest, among other things.

It is obvious that the Pilbara region, embracing the State's iron ore province, represents a community of interest peculiar to that region, and since the total enrolment is similar to most of the metropolitan electorates it is considered that at present the district can be well served by one Legislative Assembly member.

TRADE UNIONS

Federated Clerks' Union

1366. Mr HASSELL, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Is the Federated Clerks' Union apparently conducting a concerted

membership drive using its preference to unionists clause to enforce membership and that the drive extends to the employees at doctors' surgeries and yacht clubs, amongst others?

- (2) Are the actions of the Federated Clerks' Union causing a very considerable degree of resentment, especially in places where—

(a) wages and conditions exceed those applicable under comparable awards;

(b) the employees do not wish to join the Federated Clerks' Union or any other union; and

(c) the employers do not desire to have their employees compulsorily unionised?

- (3) Will he explain publicly the entitlement of all such employees to apply for exemption from union membership and to obtain that exemption without any test of any conscientious or religious objection?

- (4) Will he facilitate applications for exemption by directing his department to issue and make freely available a simplified form of application for exemption of membership?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.

- (2) (a) to (c). Yes.

- (3) Section 61B of the Industrial Arbitration Act allows any person who objects to being a member of a union for any reason to apply in writing to the Industrial Registrar for a certificate of exemption from union membership.

The person seeking the exemption must pay an amount equivalent to the union fees to the consolidated revenue fund, or a public charitable or benevolent body.

The usual preference clause requires that a person must apply for such exemption within seven days of being supplied with the necessary application form for membership, a copy of the preference clause and a copy of the union's rules, by an accredited representative of the union.

- (4) The Act in its present form provides that a person who objects to being a member of a union applies in writing to the registrar for a certificate of exemption and no provision is made for a form of application.

I think alterations can be made by regulations

1367. *This question was postponed.*

HEALTH: MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

Roebourne

1368. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is there a Government doctor at Roebourne?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) What were the arrangements with the Government for a private medical practice to operate at Roebourne?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) and (2) There is a position of salaried district medical officer at Roebourne.
- (3) The private medical practice at Wickham had the opportunity to recruit a surgeon with general practice capability. This involved temporarily increasing the number of doctors in the practice from two to three. In view of the benefits to the local community that would derive from the availability of a surgeon, it was agreed the practice could take over responsibility for medical services at Roebourne for the balance of 1979. The arrangement has now been terminated because of the unexpected departure of the surgeon. The position at Roebourne will again be filled by a district medical officer.

HOSPITALS

Charges

1369. Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Health:

Under what circumstances will a person attending either—

- (a) Royal Perth Hospital;
- (b) Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital;
- (c) Fremantle Hospital;
- (d) Princess Margaret Hospital;

(e) King Edward Memorial Hospital, as—

- (i) an out-patient and/or
- (ii) an in-patient,

be charged financially for service received from—

- (1) a doctor;
- (2) a specialist;
- (3) a teaching medical professional;
- (4) maintenance as an in-patient in a ward;
- (5) the pharmacy section;
- (6) or any other section?

Mr YOUNG replied:

- (1) to (3) No registered outpatient is charged by any of the doctors referred to. A few doctors who have rented consulting rooms on the hospital site conduct private practices and raise charges for their services. Insured inpatients or Statute cases may be charged by the attending specialist(s).
- (4) Insured inpatients or Statute cases are charged by the hospital.
- (5) No charges are raised for pharmaceutical items.
- (6) Therapy treatment, in general, is not charged for. Charges are raised for items such as spectacles and some other prescribed aids and appliances.

POLICE: DEMONSTRATION

Wagerup Refinery Site

1370. Mr HODGE, to the Minister for Police and Traffic:

- (1) Did the Campaign to Save Native Forests give the police any prior notification of the occupation of the Wagerup refinery site which took place between the 26th May and the 28th May?
- (2) Is it a fact that the Campaign to Save Native Forests informed the Police that the demonstrators were undergoing training in forms of protest that did not involve violence and that the occupation would be a non-violent one?
- (3) How many members of the Police Force were assigned to the Wagerup demonstration on—
(a) Saturday, 26th May, 1979;

- (b) Sunday, 27th May, 1979;
 (c) Monday, 28th May, 1979?

- (4) What were the total number of hours worked by members of the Police Force involved in the Wagerup demonstration on the three days, the 26th, 27th and 28th of May, 1979?
- (5) How many members of the Police Force appeared in the Beaufort Street Court on Wednesday, the 8th August, 1979 to give evidence on the Wagerup case?
- (6) What was the total number of hours involved in attending the court in connection with this case on Wednesday, 8th August, 1979?
- (7) If any other police time was spent on the second Wagerup occupation in addition to that mentioned above—
- (a) how was the time spent;
 (b) what is the total of the additional hours?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.

- (3) (a) 60 General Police
 7 CIB
 19 Traffic Patrol
 —
 86

- (b) 7 General Police
 3 CIB
 11 Traffic Patrol
 —
 21

- (c) 26 General Police
 3 CIB
 10 Traffic Patrol
 —
 39

- (4) 1 434 hours—for the three days.
 (5) Seven members of the Police Force.
 (6) Approximately 60 hours.
 (7) (a) Planning and research.
 (b) Estimated 150 hours.

WATER SUPPLIES

Falcon

1371. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) In view of the many statements that water would be reticulated to the Falcon

area south of Mandurah, would the Minister give an assurance that reticulated water is proposed for this area?

- (2) If "Yes" what year and month can it be expected?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
 (2) The Public Works Department has made provision on its draft 1979-80 capital works programme for work to commence. However, this is dependent on funds being made available in the Budget and the completion of the works depends on the level of funding in future Budgets.

ROAD

Hale Road

1372. Mr BATEMAN, to the Minister for Transport:

Will he give a full explanation as to what exactly is envisaged by way of resumptions and upgrading of Hale Road, at the junction of Hardey and Hale Roads, Forrestfield?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

Construction of the present stage of the "Foothills Route" will require excision of land from A Class Reserve 17098, Lot Part 4, and a small area of land from Lot Part 23 (Metropolitan Water Board.)

Additional land for later stages of the project will be required from Lots Part 21 and Part 3.

A channelised intersection is to be constructed where the new "Foothills Road" crosses Hale Road. Work associated with this channelised intersection will extend along Hale Road to the vicinity of Hardey Road and involve minor alteration of the Hale Road-Hardey Road junction.

ENERGY: NUCLEAR

Power Station

1373. Mr T. H. JONES, to the Minister for Fuel and Energy:

- (1) In reference to my question directed to him on the 3rd April this year on estimated capital costs for nuclear power

stations, recorded in *Hansard* at page 194, is the report by Burmott Australia Proprietary Limited referred to in his answer available for study by interested members of the public?

- (2) (a) If not, will the report be made publicly available; and
(b) if so, when will it be made publicly available?
- (3) If the answers to (1) and (2) are in the negative, what are the reasons for not allowing public scrutiny of this report?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

- (1) to (3) The State Energy Commission retains and from time to time commissions advisers in fulfilling its duty of complete research and information on all energy matters. The information and documents submitted by the advisers are on a confidential basis and hence I will not table them.

WATER SUPPLIES: CATCHMENT AREAS

Land Clearing: Warren River

1374. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Have any blocks in the Lake Unicup area previously subject to clearing controls now been considered outside the Warren River reserve catchment area and released from these controls?
- (2) If "Yes" what are the location numbers of such blocks?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Part 12639, Part 12640, 12641, 12642, Part 12643, Part 12644, Part 12645, Part 12650, Part 12673, Part 12674, Part 12675, Part 12676, Part 12658, Part 12659, Part 12657, Part 10854, Part 12655, Part 12656, Part 12653, Part 12647, Part 12648, Part 12168, Part 12412, Part 12169, Part 12170, Part 12159, Part 13106, Part 12157, Part 12156, Part 12377, Part 12378, Part 12418, Part 12417, and Part 8148.

VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT

Proclamation

1375. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it intended to proclaim the Veterinary Surgeons Act and regulations?
- (2) If so, when is it expected this will be done?

Mr P. V. Jones (for Mr OLD) replied:

- (1) and (2) Draft regulations are now with the Veterinary Surgeons Board. Arrangements to proclaim the Act and gazette the regulations will be effected when the board advises me that the regulations are satisfactory.

ELECTORAL: STATE

Swedish Immigrant

1376. Mr PEARCE, to the Chief Secretary:

Is a Swedish subject (male) married to a British subject (female, born in England), resident in Australia for 11 years entitled to register for a vote in Western Australia?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

No. Section 17(1)(a) requires that an elector is required to be a natural born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty.

ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTSMEN

Qualifications

1377. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

What qualifications or registration is required by a person wishing to practice as an architectural draftsman in Western Australia?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

None.

EDUCATION: PRE-SCHOOL

Teachers

1378. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is there any distinction in departmental policy as presently applied between pre-school teachers employed in Government or private schools?

- (2) What are those distinctions?
- (3) What are the reasons for those distinctions?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) to (3) As the Education Department has no responsibility for pre-school teachers employed in private schools, and does not keep records relating to their conditions of service, the information requested is not available.

RAILWAYS

Nannup Line

1379. Mr H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it a fact that the railway line to Nannup is to be closed?
- (2) If "Yes" then—
 - (a) when is this line to be closed;
 - (b) what alternative mode of transport is to be available to serve the needs of this town?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) I refer the honourable member to my answer to his question 985 of the 9th August, 1979.
These lines cannot be examined in isolation but only on a system wide basis.
There are no specific proposals to close the Wonnerup-Nannup line.
- (2) Not applicable.

- (2) Is he aware of the possible abuse of this special night trading concession by some large firms such as Boans which had been able to open for trading on the Thursday night and proceeded to open on the Friday night as well?

- (3) Is he also aware of the possible disadvantage of this additional night trading by such firms on small firms, especially as it affected their Saturday morning trade?

- (4) Does he propose to take any action to avoid such possible abuse on future occasions?

- (5) If "Yes" to (4), what will be the nature of this action?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes.
- (3) I am not aware that the additional night trading affected Saturday morning trading by small firms.
- (4) and (5) One would hope that the irresponsible actions by a trade union which prevented normal late night trading will not be repeated. If it is, then the action to be taken to provide shopping facilities to the community will be determined at that time.

ALUMINA REFINERIES: ALCOA

Alumina Sales and Price

1381. Mr COWAN, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) To whom does Alcoa of Australia sell its alumina?
- (2) Is there a corporate link between Alcoa of Australia and any of the companies it sells to?
- (3) At what price per tonne does Alcoa of Australia sell Western Australian produced alumina?
- (4) What is the estimated world market price for alumina?

SHOPPING: NIGHT

Friday, the 31st August

1380. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Labour and Industry:

- (1) Is it a fact that in authorising special permission for night trading on Friday, the 31st August, he stipulated that this was to allow for businesses without their own electric generators which had been precluded from trading on the Thursday night owing to power cuts resulting from the strike by State Energy Commission workers?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

- (1) Alcoa of Australia ships alumina to every continent. About 5 per cent of the production is shipped to the company's smelter at Geelong, Victoria, for the production of aluminium. Domestic shipments will increase substantially in the near future as the company is presently expanding its Geelong smelter and has also announced plans to construct a new smelter at Portland, also in Victoria.

The company's markets are distributed as follows:

	per cent
North America	46
South America	7
Japan	21
Middle East	14
Europe	2
Africa	5
Australia	5

Customers in Japan include Mitsubishi and Sumitomo and in the Middle East include a smelter in Bahrain and one currently under construction in Dubai. Its customers in the USA include Alumax and a subsidiary of the Aluminum Company of America, to which it ships 800 000 tonnes per year under a tolling arrangement.

- (2) Approximately 75 per cent of the alumina is sold to companies without any equity links with Alcoa of Australia. Most of this alumina is sold under long-term contract, but occasionally small surpluses are sold under short-term or spot contracts.
- (3) Alumina prices under long term contracts are determined partly by reference to external indices and partly according to movements in costs of production. The Mines Department estimates that the value of production of alumina in WA in the first half of 1979 was \$207 million, or \$107 per tonne.
- (4) There is no published world market price for alumina. Prices received depend on many factors including whether the sale is made as a spot sale or as part of a long term contract, and when the contract was negotiated.

MINING: GOLD

Cue: Treatment Facilities

1382. Mr McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) (a) In the light of increased prospecting activity and improved gold prices, is the Government prepared to re-establish treatment facilities for ore at Cue; and
(b) if not, why not?
- (2) Is he aware that prospectors in the Cue area have to cart ore at least 80 kilometres to Mt. Magnet, and often 120 kilometres to Meekatharra for treatment?
- (3) Is the Mt. Magnet plant outmoded?
- (4) (a) If "Yes" to (3) does the Government have any plans to remedy the situation; and
(b) if not, why not?

Mr O'Neil (for Mr MENSAROS) replied:

- (1) (a) No.
(b) Insufficient ore supply to justify the cost.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) and (4) No.

RUSSIAN JACK STATUE

Funding

1383. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Premier:

- (1) What were the criteria adopted by his Government in assisting the funding of the "Russian Jack" project at Halls Creek?
- (2) Was this project a 150th Anniversary celebration project?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) The Government considered that the "Russian Jack" project was one in which the State should become involved, especially as we should not expect a remote local authority with a limited income to bear the full burden of such a memorial for the benefit of an increasing number of tourists passing through their town.

- (2) Initially when agreement was reached with the Halls Creek Shire to proceed with the "Russian Jack" statue, it was not contemplated that it be a 150th Anniversary celebrations project. The fact that the statue was erected in 1979 added considerably to the significance of the occasion.

1384. *This question was withdrawn.*

NATIONAL TRUST

Government Assistance

1385. Mr BLAIKIE, to the Premier:

- (1) Did the Government give assistance to the National Trust for—
 (a) headquarters;
 (b) National Trust projects various, since the 30th June, 1978?
- (2) (a) If "Yes" what were the amounts involved in each project; and
 (b) the locality of each project?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
 (b) Funds have been provided by the Commonwealth Government and passed to the National Trust via the State Treasury.
- (2) (a) and (b) During the 1978-79 financial year the following cash amounts were received:—
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Administrative grant | \$60 000 |
| Greenough and Hamlet, Greenough Shire | \$97 060 |
| Warden, Finnerly House, Coolgardie | \$10 000 |
| Old Perth Boys' School, Perth | \$12 866 |
| No. 8 Pumping Station, Dedari | \$10 000 |
| Wonnerup House, Busselton | \$20 000 |
| Dongara Mill, Dongara | \$ 3 000 |
| Various surveys and documentation | \$44 274 |

WATER SUPPLIES

Denham

1386. Mr JAMIESON, to the Minister representing the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) (a) Is any other town in the State other than Denham supplied with a double water supply system;
 (b) if so, which towns?

- (2) Is any other town in the State subject to double service charges for each consumer?
- (3) What is the price charged for water per kilolitre for bore water, and for reverse osmosis water, at Denham?
- (4) Why is it necessary to charge a double service charge when both meters can be read together and both charges included on the one account?
- (5) What has been the financial return for each of the financial years since the installation of the reverse osmosis scheme with respect to both schemes?
- (6) What amount of finance is received from the service charge for the osmosis scheme for each of the referred financial years?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) (a) No.
 (b) Not applicable.
- (2) Any consumer served with water under the Country Areas Water Supply Act in any town or area of the State who requires more than one service to a single rated property, is charged an annual service fee for each additional service. The amount of the fee is uniform throughout the State.
- (3) The consumption of bore water and desalinated water consumed on each rated property is aggregated, and the total aggregate consumption for the property is charged at the appropriate by-law price for the particular classification of purpose. For example, domestic purpose water at Denham is charged—
- | | | |
|-------|------------------------|----------------------|
| First | 600 kilolitres/annum | @ 10 cents/kilolitre |
| Next | 200 kilolitres/annum | @ 20 cents/kilolitre |
| Next | 400 kilolitres/annum | @ 40 cents/kilolitre |
| Next | 800 kilolitres/annum | @ 60 cents/kilolitre |
| Over | 2 000 kilolitres/annum | @ 80 cents/kilolitre |
- There is no differential price as regards bore or desalinated water.

- (4) The annual cost to the State of maintaining each water service provided under the Country Areas Water Supply Act is far in excess of the annual additional service fee charged. The amount of the fee is adjusted from time to time in line with the maximum annual rate payable for domestic properties under 2 500 square metres in area. This charge is heavily subsidised by the State.

- (5) The financial results of the individual schemes within the water supply at Denham are not maintained separately. The financial results of the combined Denham schemes since the installation of the desalination unit have been as follows—

1976-77	\$37 071 loss
1977-78	\$88 805 loss
1978-79	\$69 862 loss.

The desalination scheme was installed in February 1977 and therefore had an effect on part only of the 1976-77 year. The financial result in 1975-76, the year before the installation of the unit, amounted to \$24 593 loss.

- (6) The income from the service charges for the three years has been as follows—

1976-77	\$ 250
1977-78	\$2 400
1978-79	\$3 500.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

EDUCATION

Specific Purpose Capital Payments: Reduction

- i. Mr PEARCE, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware that specific purpose capital payments for schools have been cut by \$11.5 million in real terms in 1979-80?
- (2) Is he also aware that \$11.5 million would finance the construction of up to—
 - (a) 15 new primary schools with 16 permanent classrooms to cater for a total of over 10 000 students;

- (b) the construction of three new high schools for a total of about 3 600 students?

- (3) Is he reported as having said in *The Sunday Times* of the 9th September that cut-backs in school funding could result in delays for schools, more temporary classrooms, and the possibility that schools to be built in remote areas might not eventuate?

- (4) Why has he not asked the Premier to transfer some of his \$44.6 million surplus to be used in the construction and maintenance of schools in Western Australia?

Mr P. V. JONES replied:

- (1) There is just a complete mass of confusion in that question. For example, I certainly do not know of any \$11.5 million cut-back in recurrent costs for the 1979-80 financial year. There is no relevance in it at all with regard to a statement of mine; the amount of money, or for the years stated.

Mr Davies: I will tell you where it comes from if you like; that is, for the 1979-80 financial year.

Mr Pearce: The Schools Commission runs over a calendar year.

Mr P. V. JONES: If the honourable member cares to tell me what it relates to I could then answer the question, because there is no relationship between the current grants for 1979-80 and that amount of money.

- (2) I do not know what the member means when he quotes 10 000 students as being inadequately housed.
- (3) and (4) If I understand correctly, this relates to capital funds where there most certainly has been a considerable decrease and where this State is protesting loudly because the Commonwealth has reduced the total allocation by 30 per cent throughout the Commonwealth. Whereas one could not expect that education would be immune from the general economic situation, our concern is that the allocation to this State is based upon national decisions

and on national figures. The declining school population, which is given by the Commonwealth Government as the consideration when making its decision on a national basis, is not the picture in this State. We must bear in mind the cut-backs in the Commonwealth schools dictate the manner in which the funds have been allocated, but it does not reflect the situation in this State. It may be necessary to delay certain programmes such as upgrading and replacing programmes which are used. This situation would exist, unless we receive some supplementation.

HOUSING: FUNDS

Cut-back, and Use of Suspense Account

2. Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

In view of the \$35 million cut-back in real terms in housing funds for Western Australia which has resulted from the last four Federal Budgets, with the result that over 1 600 new three-bedroomed State Housing Commission homes have not been built, will he explain why funds available to the Government in the Treasury suspense accounts were not used in part to cope with the huge backlog in demand for housing accommodation?

Mr RIDGE replied:

I request that the question be placed on the notice paper to enable detailed consideration to be given to it.

HEALTH: MEDICAL SERVICES

Unemployed People

3. Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

I refer to question 1362 on today's notice paper, in which I asked the Premier whether his Government would be prepared to make representation to the Fraser Government requesting the extension of the pensioner medical benefits system to unemployed people. Is the Premier indicating that his Government is not prepared to make that representation? In view of the fact

that he has indicated that people can be classified as disadvantaged patients and qualify for free medical treatment, they are not entitled to free medicines to which they would be entitled under classification of the pensioner medical benefit fund. Does he appreciate that many people who have been breadwinners for years and who have been unemployed for long periods in some cases find it difficult to pay as much as \$5.50 for two items of medicine prescribed by a doctor under the present system? Is he not prepared to make that representation to the Federal Government to see whether it would consider extending the present pensioner medical benefit scheme to unemployed people?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I do not think any representations are necessary. However, if the honourable member can give me a specific case where he believes a person who has been unemployed for a period is disadvantaged under the present system and is unable to cope with the situation, I will look at it. My understanding was that the Commonwealth Government spelt out that there would be a very simple procedure in respect of disadvantaged persons.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Aboriginal Legal Service

4. Mr TONKIN, to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Did he receive a letter some three months ago from the Aboriginal Legal Service requesting an interview to discuss the Electoral Act Amendment Bill (No. 2) which is presently before Parliament and to which he did not reply?
- (2) Were subsequent negotiations carried on over the telephone, culminating in an appointment at 10.30 a.m. today?
- (3) Did he cancel this appointment when he knew that Aborigines, who are a majority on the committee of the ALS, would be present?
- (4) If not, why was the appointment cancelled?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

- (1) A letter dated the 14th June was received from the Principal Legal Officer of the Aboriginal Legal Service requesting an appointment to discuss the electoral Bill, to which a reply was made on the 19th June requesting a written submission.

On the 12th July the Principal Legal Officer wrote enclosing a submission and requesting an appointment.

- (2) On the 10th September I made arrangements to meet with the Principal Legal Officer and an ALS consultant at my office at 10.30 a.m. today (the 12th September). The arrangements were accepted.

On the 11th September a message was received at my office that the Principal Legal Officer had to go to Kalgoorlie and would not be able to attend, and asking whether two other persons could take his place.

I was also requested to meet with the Aboriginal Consultative Committee in lieu of the arranged meeting for 10.30 a.m. today.

I declined both requests.

- (3) No. I advised Mr J. Huelin, the Aboriginal Legal Services' consultant, by 'phone that I was prepared to meet with either the Principal Legal Officer or him or both. Mr Huelin advised that he had been instructed by the ALS not to meet with me on those conditions.
- (4) See answer to (3).

IMMIGRATION: REFUGEES

Vietnamese: Sponsorship

5. Mr GRILL, to the Minister for Immigration:

- (1) Is he aware of a report in this evening's issue of the *Daily News* of a new scheme, suggested by the Commonwealth Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for Western Australians to sponsor Vietnamese refugees to this State?
- (2) Has the State Government been consulted by the Federal Government about the proposed scheme?
- (3) What is the State Government's attitude towards the proposed scheme?

Mr O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) to (3) I have had no notice of the question and as I have not seen the newspaper I ask the honourable member to place the question on the notice paper.

TRANSPORT: BUSES

Timetables

6. Mr WILSON, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware that the new bus timetables being distributed to residents in areas to be served by the new Mirrabooka bus station list departure and arrival times on a 24-hour scale rather than the previous 12-hour scale to which people are accustomed?
- (2) Why was this change, which will possibly confuse and worry elderly people who are the major users of public transport, made at the same time as other major changes to timetables and bus routes which will also possibly cause confusion and worry for the elderly?
- (3) Was this change necessary?
- (4) Is he prepared to ask the MTT to consider reverting to the 12-hour scale to save possible confusion and distress to the elderly?

Mr RUSHTON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The 24-hour scale is now used almost universally throughout the world for transport schedules.
- Westrail public timetables have employed the system for a number of years and there has been no unfavourable reaction from the public. The MTT is progressively introducing it as new timetables are required or reprints of existing timetables become necessary. Again there has been no unfavourable reaction.
- (3) Refer to (2).
- (4) No.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT
BILL (NO. 2)

Aboriginal Legal Service

7. Mr TONKIN, to the Deputy Premier:

The Deputy Premier ducked out of answering my earlier question without notice. I asked him why he had refused to meet with the representatives of the Aboriginal Legal Service and he gave what seems to me to be a smart-aleck answer in which he said, "I refused to meet them." When it was known that some Aborigines from the Aboriginal Legal Service wanted to meet him, which seems to be fairly logical, why did he refuse to meet the deputation which included these Aborigines?

Mr O'NEIL replied:

I did not refuse to meet a deputation from the Aboriginal Legal Service. However the person who initially wrote to me requesting the deputation

indicated he had something more important to do. In those circumstances I said I would see the legal consultant, Mr John Huelin, who rang me about it this morning. However, requests were made in relation to extension of the representation and I declined them.

Mr Tonkin: Why?

Mr O'NEIL: Because I had already made arrangements with the Aboriginal Legal Service, which had been accepted, to meet two gentlemen in my office at 10.30 this morning. Those arrangements had already been accepted and it was only this morning that a change of plan occurred. I indicated I would still meet one of the gentlemen who was intending to come with Mr Huelin, and he told me over the phone he had been advised to refuse to meet me under those circumstances. So I did not refuse to meet them; they declined to attend the meeting.
