

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 8th May, 1973

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Days and Hours

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Leader of the House:

Last Thursday afternoon I asked the Leader of the House whether he would endeavour to indicate today the sitting days and hours between now and the date when this part of the session of Parliament will conclude; namely, the 24th May. Is he in a position to give the necessary information?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

It is my intention very shortly to move a motion without notice in respect of this matter. At that stage I shall give all the information that is sought by the honourable member.

2. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Leader of the House:

Last Thursday afternoon I posed certain questions to the Leader of the House and to his colleagues—the Minister for Community Welfare, and the Chief Secretary—in relation to the publication entitled *The New Deal*. Has the Minister and his colleagues had an opportunity to study this publication, in particular the back page; and if so will he either on his own behalf or on behalf of his fellow Ministers give us his and their reactions to the publication?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

I did look at the publication. The more I looked at it the less I could find that it had anything to do with my departments or with the Government. In view of my observation I feel I have nothing to say.

3. TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL

Publication "The New Deal"

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Chief Secretary:

In view of the question I asked him last Thursday afternoon about whether he would be good

enough between then and today to look at this publication, and in view of his reply "Being always co-operative I certainly will", has he looked at the publication; is he still co-operative; and what is his reaction to it?

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS replied:

Being always co-operative I certainly did look at the publication. As it does not involve my portfolio I have no opinion to offer.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: How very convenient!

QUESTIONS (8): ON NOTICE

1. BRUCELLOSIS

Eradication Campaign

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House:

(1) Which is the limiting factor in preventing the stepping up of the Brucellosis Eradication Campaign—

(a) the taking of blood samples;

(b) the testing of blood samples;

(c) financing (a) and (b);

(d) compensation for affected cattle?

(2) If a producer in—

(a) Esperance, or

(b) elsewhere;

wishes to accredit his herd, what delay can be expected?

(3) If a producer is willing to pay a private veterinarian to take blood samples will the department accept such samples for testing?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

(1) (a) to (d) A significant increase in the activity of the Brucellosis Eradication Campaign has already occurred.

The laboratory testing of blood samples currently places some limitation on the programme. However, facilities are being increased on a continuing basis to meet testing needs.

(2) (a) and (b) Approximately six months. Consideration is given to those herds where the production of breeding stock for sale is a major activity.

(3) Yes, provided prior arrangements are made and laboratory capacity for testing can meet the additional demand.

2. EDUCATION

Guidance Officers at Senior High Schools

The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Leader of the House:

Adverting to my question on 2nd May, 1973, concerning Guidance Officers—

- (1) How many students are currently enrolled at the Senior High Schools situated at—

Albany,
Bunbury,
Busselton,
Carnarvon,
Collie,
Eastern Goldfields,
Esperance,
Geraldton,
Hedland,
Katanning,
Manjimup,
Merredin,
Narrogin,
Newton Moore,
Northam,
Pinjarra?

- (2) Of the persons recruited by the Education Department for training as Guidance Officers, how many are currently being trained in this capacity?
- (3) What length of time does the training course take to allow trainees to qualify?
- (4) Where do trainees receive their instruction?
- (5) Is it expected that there will be sufficient trained Guidance Officers to allow the appointment of Guidance Officers to all Senior High Schools throughout the State as from the commencement of the 1974 school year?
- (6) If not, what remedies does the Government intend to implement to overcome the difficulty?
- (7) Having regard for the possibility of there being sufficient numbers of qualified Guidance Officers to meet the needs of all Senior High Schools in 1974, what will be the attitude of the Government regarding the filling of vacancies at any school should there be reluctance on the part of qualified Guidance Officers to accept any appointment?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| (1) Albany | 1,279 |
| Bunbury | 813 |
| Busselton | 613 |
| Carnarvon | 450 |
| Collie | 502 |
| Eastern Goldfields | 1,299 |
| Esperance | 538 |

Geraldton	1,328
Hedland	488
Katanning	562
Manjimup	542
Merredin	613
Narrogin	828
Newton Moore	734
Northam	900
Pinjarra	703

- (2) 8 in second year.
11 in first year.
- (3) Two years.
- (4) In the Guidance Branch.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) Answered by (5).
- (7) Guidance officer positions are promotional positions which are filled by advertisement and it is hoped that there will be sufficient teachers seeking promotion to fill the advertised vacancies for 1974.

3.

CHILD WELFARE

Institutions

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

- (1) What institutions exist to train, discipline or house uncontrollable children from—
- (a) the Kimberley region;
- (b) the Pilbara region;
- (c) the Metropolitan area;
- (d) the South-West land division?
- (2) How many children have been committed and corrected in the past two years from—
- (a) the Kimberley region;
- (b) the Pilbara region;
- (c) the Metropolitan area;
- (d) the South-West land division?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON replied:

- (1) The Department for Community Welfare's institutions for children all lie within the Metropolitan Area. The facilities collectively receive children from the areas named. There are 3 reception and assessment centres, 3 treatment institutions for offenders, and 1 facility for emotionally disturbed younger children.

As well as Government institutions there are a number of children's homes, hostels and missions operated by private organisations. These may accept children referred by the Department for Community Welfare, but have not been established specifically for this purpose. The majority of the institutions and hostels here are within the Metropolitan Area, the missions being located throughout the State.

- (2) The following numbers of children from the respective areas named were committed to the care of the Department for Community Welfare between July 1, 1970 and June 30, 1972 and subsequently placed in institutional care—

(a) Kimberley Region	58
(b) Pilbara Region	61
(c) Metropolitan Area	1,384
(d) South West Land Division	329

4. TOWN PLANNING

Statements by Member of Parliament: Inquiry

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) With reference to the article in *The West Australian* dated 3rd May, 1973, headed "Accusations lead to inquiry on land zoning", was the Minister for Town Planning correctly reported when it was stated that the Minister for Town Planning had ordered an inquiry by the Chairman of the Public Service Board?

(2) If so,—

(a) does the Minister intend that the Chairman of the Public Service Board only, shall call upon the Hon. F. R. White, M.L.C. to back up his allegations;

(b) does the Minister intend that a hearing shall be held and adjudicated upon by the three Commissioners of the Board?

- (3) Under what section of the Public Service Act has the Chairman or the Board as a whole, the right to summon a Member of Parliament to give evidence before the Chairman alone or the Board?

- (4) What knowledge and experience in the field of Town Planning and the Acts associated with Town Planning has the Chairman of the Board or the other two Commissioners?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) to (4) The Minister for Town Planning has called the attention of the Chairman, Public Service Board, to the statements by the Hon. F. R. White that departmental officers have been guilty of grave incompetence and that departmental officers disregard the statutes of this State, this action amounting to contempt of those statutes and contempt of Parliament itself.

The Public Service Board has the matter under consideration.

5. LEEDERVILLE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Extension

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) In view of the design of a proposed office block at Leederville Technical College, why has it been found necessary on further consideration to—

(a) exclude air conditioning which was in the original plan;

(b) delete the ablution block?

- (2) In view of the up to date amenities provided at newer Teacher Training Colleges, does not this appear to be treating the Technical Education Division as poor relations in the education field?

- (3) Will the Minister give urgent consideration to restoring the plan to its original concept?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (1) (a) Air-conditioning has never been included in Departmental planning at this College.

(b) New toilets are included in the proposed additions.

- (2) The proposed additions will provide modern accommodation and there is no intention of treating the College as implied.

- (3) The Education Department has not varied its original concept.

6. EDUCATION

Uncontrollable Children

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Has any child been suspended for uncontrollable behaviour from the Wyndham State School within the past month?

(2) If so—

(a) When was the child or children suspended;

(b) when was the matter investigated by an Officer with the required qualifications and experience;

(c) is the child now in an institution?

- (3) If the answer to (1) is "No"—

(a) has the Education Department received reports from the Headmaster of the Wyndham State School concerning uncontrollable behaviour;

(b) when was the first report received by the Department?

(4) How many reports of uncontrollable children have been received from the Pilbara and Kimberley in the past two years?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

(1) One boy has been withdrawn from the school for special treatment by agreement between the District Superintendent, Headmaster and Community Welfare Officer.

(2) These questions are not applicable as formal suspension has not occurred.

(3) (a) The Headmaster has discussed this matter with the Director of Primary Education and the District Superintendent.

(b) Actual dates of discussions with the District Superintendent have not been recorded but they were approximately mid April.

(4) None.

7.

ROYAL VISIT

Premier's Statement

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN, to the Leader of the House:

Can the people of Western Australia take heart, from the statement by the Hon. Premier made in the *Daily News* of Tuesday 1st May, 1973, which stated—

"The Premier, Mr. Tonkin, said he was delighted at the prospect of the Queen again coming to Western Australia. I am certain the visit will be welcomed by the people here, he said."

and that he supports the Country Party policy that both the National Anthem "God Save the Queen" and the Australian Flag should be retained.

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

The statement made by the Premier concerning the proposed visit to Western Australia of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and his delight at the prospect, was in no way related to Country Party policy on the National Anthem or the retention of the Australian Flag. In regard to these two matters, it is interesting to see that the Federal Leader of the Country Party has circularized his Party's Branches asking for their opinion thereon, which circumstance, to say the least, does not indicate that the Country Party's policy has been decided.

8.

PORTS OF ALBANY AND ESPERANCE

Cargoes: Reduced Tonnages

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House:

(1) What has been the effect on the Ports of Albany and Esperance of—

(a) wool being railed to Fremantle after sale rather than exported through local ports;

(b) inadequate grain loading facilities at Albany;

(c) smeltered and refined nickel being exported through Kwinana rather than as raw sulphide out of the local port;

(d) Northern exporters making salt exports uneconomic from Lake Lefroy;

(e) other bulk exports not materialising;

(f) oil being railed to the Goldfields from Kwinana rather than shipped to Esperance;

(g) increased labour costs?

(2) What action has the Government taken to alleviate each of these problems?

(3) Will the Government make special investigations into the difficulties being experienced in these out ports?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

(1) The ports of Albany and Esperance have been affected to varying degrees by the items listed in the question, and also by other factors, but it is not possible to identify specifically the effects of each factor.

(2) and (3) It is intended to undertake a study of the utilisation of outports, and the Australian Government has been invited to join the State Government in this investigation.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) (4.50 p.m.): I move, without notice—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 11.00 a.m. on Wednesday, the 9th May.

Might I expand and say that I can advise the House of the proposed arrangements for future sittings. On each Tuesday, commencing with today and including Tuesday, the 15th and Tuesday, the 22nd May, we will commence sitting at 4.30 p.m. On each Wednesday, commencing tomorrow and on the two subsequent Wednesdays of the 16th May and the 23rd May we hope to commence at 11.00 a.m., and

suspend for lunch from 12.30 to 2.30 p.m. On Thursdays, the 10th May, the 17th May, and the 24th May we will commence at 11.00 a.m., suspend for lunch from 12.30 to 2.30 p.m., and adjourn at tea time. A possible exception is, perhaps, that on the last sitting night of this part of the session—the 24th May—we may continue after tea if there are any matters which require to be cleared up.

I advise members to arrange their programmes and commitments to fit in with the above times, if possible.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.52 p.m.]: As Leader of the Opposition ordinarily I do not object to a motion of this nature. However, I think it is a bad state of affairs when the Leader of the Opposition has to ask the Leader of the Government in this House—as I did last Thursday—the intentions of the Government in relation to sitting hours when, a week ago, I happened to be in another place and I heard the Premier, in reply to a question by the Leader of the Opposition in that House, outline the sitting days and hours. I should have thought the Premier would communicate with the Leader of his Government in the Legislative Council and tell him of the arrangement.

We have now reached the point where the Leader of the Government in this House asks us to agree, without notice, to the House meeting at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow. I am bound to say that is very inconvenient because I have to attend a meeting at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow. Also, every other member of my party has to attend a meeting at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Members of both Houses?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, only members of this House. Therefore, it is very inconvenient for me to agree to the motion and I am in somewhat of a turmoil because for obvious reasons I do not want to disagree with it. The notice is very short and it is possible that other members in this Chamber have commitments, similar to mine, for tomorrow morning.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Would 2.00 p.m. tomorrow satisfy the Leader of the Opposition?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That would satisfy me.

The Hon. I. G. Medcalf: Make it 2.15 p.m.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I am quite agreeable to 2.15 p.m.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: In that case I will not prolong the matter. However, the motion now before the House is to commence sitting at 11.00 a.m. Could I suggest to the Leader of the House that he withdraw that motion?

The PRESIDENT: We will substitute 2.15 p.m. for 11.00 a.m.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The motion has not yet been seconded.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then, perhaps, I am out of order.

The PRESIDENT: There is no need for a seconder.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think that between us we understand the situation, and I thank the Minister for his co-operation. I am sure he understands that I had no idea we would meet at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow.

I would like to think we could meet at 2.15 p.m. on the following Wednesday also because my party meets on Wednesday mornings to consider legislation. If we were to meet at 11.00 a.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays it would be a little difficult.

However, the motion now before us deals only with tomorrow and I will leave it at that. I thank the Minister for his co-operation.

Amendment to Adjournment Motion

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.56 p.m.]: I seek leave of the House to substitute the passage "2.15 p.m." for the passage "11.00 a.m."

Leave granted.

Motion, as amended, put and passed.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG DEPENDANTS: TREATMENT

Inquiry by Honorary Royal Commission: Statement

THE HON. R. J. L. WILLIAMS (Metropolitan) [4.57 p.m.]: I seek leave of the House, Mr. President, to make a statement concerning the Honorary Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the treatment of alcohol and drug dependants.

The PRESIDENT: Leave is granted.

The Hon. R. J. L. WILLIAMS: I wish to report very briefly to the House that on Friday, the 4th May, 1973, the Honorary Royal Commission which inquired into the treatment of alcohol and drug dependants presented its report and recommendations to His Excellency the Governor, and to the Premier.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.59 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

A number of matters were raised during the debate on this Bill, and I promised to do my utmost to answer the queries. The

Premier, who handles this particular matter, has advised me that the housing authority funds were not increased by almost \$2,000,000—it should be capital funds available to the authority this financial year were almost \$2,000,000.

The air-conditioning programme has been completed and all houses in the North-west and sub-northern zones are now air-conditioned.

The composition of the authority will be—

The Chairman of the Public Service Board or his nominee;

The Under Treasurer or his nominee;

The General Manager of the State Housing Commission or his nominee;

The Director-General of Education or his nominee.

The Secretary of the State School Teachers' Union, who will be the first person appointed to the authority, was formerly a teacher employed in the Visual Education Section and has travelled extensively throughout the country; he is well acquainted with the standards of housing provided for teachers, and is familiar with problems relating to accommodation.

It is intended that the representatives from the three unions; that is, the State School Teachers' Union, the Civil Service Association, and the Police Union of Workers will rotate every three years.

Since the authority was proclaimed in 1965 the standard design of the G.E.H.A. houses in the South-West Land Division has been changed and improved four times. The current design being used is of a gross area of 15.61 squares and contains three bedrooms, lounge-dining room, kitchen, laundry facilities, and a 20 feet by 11 feet attached garage, together with driveway strips. Specifications provide for complete fly screening, including back and front aluminium fly wire doors, hot water system serving bathroom, kitchen, and laundry, gas or electric stove, stainless steel trough, power points to all rooms including the bathroom and laundry—double outlet type is used in kitchen, living room, and all sleeping units—floor coverings in the form of vinyl tiles throughout, and window treatments. North-west and sub-northern houses have insulated walls, heat resistant glass, and ceiling fans to all living rooms. These dwellings conform to all health and building by-laws and regulations. Reference by Mr. Wordsworth to the authority spending well over \$1,000,000 a year to upgrade the buildings is not correct, the amount should read \$100,000 a year.

The statement that in some towns natives from reserves are placed in homes which are better than those occupied by Government employees would be correct. Because the Commonwealth has recently

made funds available for new houses to be erected for Aboriginal families, these new houses would be better in standard than some of the very old houses which the authority is gradually replacing, according to availability of funds.

In regard to present rents, the Government Employees' Housing Act provides for the authority to review rents every three years.

The comment that a \$14,000 house in the country is the equivalent of a house costing less than \$10,000 in the city is not correct. Overall, and disregarding isolated or very distant towns, the differential would approximate 10 per cent. It is not agreed the house will be in a very poor condition in 30 years' time, because the construction is supervised, the specifications are to general State Housing Commission standards, which are strict, and maintenance is carried out in a regular and planned programme.

In regard to water supply where a town is not serviced by a country water supply, G.E.H.A. houses in the South-West Land Division are provided with two 2,000-gallon tanks, plus a 500-gallon overhead tank, equipped with an electric pump. Where it is necessary for water to be carted, the cost is met by the department.

"Hopper windows" should read "awning panels". Papers on design and construction are submitted.

The comments made by Mr. MacKinnon regarding teachers not living in the houses allocated to them on a permanent basis will be taken up with the Education Department. However, it is not thought there is an easy solution to this problem. Take, as an example, a country town situated within a radius of 50 or 60 miles from Perth: if the teacher or tenant elected to return to his own home in the metropolitan area, it would be difficult to introduce any regulations preventing him from doing this.

The question of the length of time of posting of teachers rests with the Education Department and not with the housing authority.

The authority is aware of the problem in Toodyay and has granted approval for the construction of a six-bedroomed duplex to provide accommodation for single teachers. It is hoped the duplex will be completed this year and be available for single teachers at the commencement of the 1974 school year.

The addition of the new member to the authority does not mean that the provision of housing for Government employees throughout the country will be expedited. The number of houses that can be provided each year is governed by the capital funds available, which in the past two or three years has been approximately \$2,000,000 per annum.

The housing authority has granted approval for four units of new accommodation at Waroona to be provided for teacher accommodation in the 1973-74 building programme. The units comprise a six-bedroomed duplex for single teachers and two houses for married teachers. Every endeavour will be made to have this accommodation available for the start of the 1974 school year.

I have been provided with the following information regarding the comments made by Mr. Withers—

Design and construction: The papers on this subject have been prepared by the chief architect and are the result of research into housing conditions that are associated with our north-west.

As mentioned such investigations, apart from the commission's experience, are the result of the findings undertaken by organisations of the calibre of the Commonwealth Building Research Station, Commonwealth Department of Works, the State Public Works Department together with experiments organised by foreign countries on tropical and sub-tropical housing.

These papers are for general information and should the Minister wish to release same to Mr. Withers, or for him (Mr. Withers) to further discuss the subject matter of design etc. with the chief architect, then the commission is quite willing to do so.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: He is the one with whom I had the argument.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The papers contain some worth-while information. With all due respect, the honourable member probably does not know everything. The comments continue—

Design considerations are based on commissions own research into the north-west conditions together with the recommendations of the Commonwealth Building Research Stations publication "Climate and House Design", Public Works Department of W.A. and the Commonwealth Department of Works.

In the initial stages all this work by the various agencies was being carried out independently and simultaneously and produced the same results.

Continuing research is being carried out by the commission architectural division which is not only being performed by physical involvement in the area by senior members, but also by the encouragement of comment from:—

- (a) Professional personnel of Client Departments
- (b) Supervisors and Local Builders

- (c) Tenants in Commission properties throughout the North West

Constructive criticism from responsible persons living in these areas has always been welcome and has resulted in continuing improvements over the years. Analysis of comments must always be made to separate the desirable from the "essential".

Items which can be classified as "essential" are incorporated, "desirable" items being incorporated on a priority basis where and when economics permit.

New experimental designs have been introduced to contracts from early 1972. Some of these buildings are now being occupied and will be further evaluated for living conditions in the coming months. The results of these experimental units together with improvements, variations and corrections will be utilised in the new designs to be created for the Metrication of building which is due for practical application in January, 1974. "Metrication" does not only refer to new linear dimensions but also incorporates rationalised building construction methods and uniformity of building By-laws on an Australian wide basis.

Structural considerations: All buildings must have the structural stability to withstand the maximum known conditions of these high wind areas plus a safety factor for the unknown. This is an essential consideration for the safety of life and limb of the occupants. Economies have been made in a number of houses constructed privately in the North West areas at the expense of structural considerations. This is the prerogative of the individual who in order to provide housing for his family may be prepared to take a calculated risk on safety (based on average conditions) against initial capital outlay due to limited finance in areas of high building costs.

Costs: Costing quoted relates to G.E.H.A. housing which also includes provision for built-in wardrobes and dressing tables, ceiling fans, floor coverings and window blinds plus a 2½ square garage. Also included are concrete drives, front path, path to clothes hoist and of course the fencing of the property. All houses are provided with insulation to walls and roof and with heat absorbing glass to windows. (Heat absorbing glass is not to be confused with merely tinted glass).

Hopper windows: Item referred to is an insulated awning panel fitted below window sill level which will allow natural air movement at bed and chair level.

These panels are designed to be utilised during the cooler periods of the day or year for maximum air flow. Properly utilised, conditions can be created which will provide interior comfort for the occupants without the necessity to resort to electric fans. Running costs of electric fans, while considerably less than air conditioning, will still be a contributing factor to higher living costs in these already high cost areas.

Awning panels below windows (approximately 14 per house) have been fitted with "D" type handles for external operation without the necessity to open and close flyscreens. This operation will take considerably less time than internal operation.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: It is handy running out in the rain to close these windows.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The advice continues—

Friction stays ensure panels remain in selected position. Use of locking device is only necessary in the event of storm conditions or for security purposes when the premises are vacated.

Physical observation has shown a consistent and correct use of these items in the majority of north west towns.

Aluminium Windows: Sliding type "Domestic Section" aluminium windows are comparable in cost to timber framed windows when standard windows only are used. In areas of high wind loading "Industrial Section" members must be used to ensure structural stability of the window. Cost factor of sliding windows is increased when these sections are utilised.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Why are aluminium windows used in the cyclone areas?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The Principal Architect will discuss these matters with the honourable member. The comments continue—

Dust build up in lower tracks of sliding sashes is an item which must be taken into consideration in addition to the fact that sliding sashes do not permit opening of the whole window area.

Previous experience with sliding flyscreens has shown lack of attention by tenants to ensuring dust build up is not created in bottom tracks. The result of this oversight has been distortion of frames forced along the tracks under adverse conditions. Similar action with windows would result in major increase of maintenance costs and lack of weather proofing with the subsequent damage to interior of the building.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: How about sending those officers up to the mining towns?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: The officers have been to the mining towns more often than the honourable member has. The comments continue—

Breakdown of windows under adverse wind conditions will permit pressure and vibration build up to the internal areas of the building thereby creating collapse conditions for the whole of the structure.

Casement windows manufactured with "Industrial Section" components would be satisfactory in the majority of high wind areas but are more expensive in component parts and fabrication costing. These windows are not standard lines and would require fabrication for each contract as an individual item. Volume of demand would be insufficient to create an economic situation for the stockpiling of windows for anticipated future contracts by manufacturers. It would also be necessary to design further strengthening components easily incorporated into window framing for the areas of extreme wind velocities experienced in the Port Hedland-Exmouth area.

Roof material: Corrugated galvanised iron (C.G.I.) is utilised in all areas except when other materials are specifically requested by Client Departments.

Building operations are carried on throughout the whole of the year, considerable periods of which are not in calm conditions.

Tradesmen engaged in roofing operations will naturally give preference to their own safety rather than attempt to save a wind whipped sheet of material under gusty conditions.

C.G.I. is capable of salvage with undamaged sections utilised for creeper sheets at hips and valleys. This material is also capable of salvage for temporary repairs in the event of roof sheet becoming dislodged at times of "blow".

Roof framing construction: Structural considerations in roof framing are not only confined to support of roof sheeting. Just as important as support are the considerations for negative pressure, "uplift" or "suction" under high wind condition.

This negative pressure can be expected in the vicinity of 35 lb. per square foot at Kununurra and 60 lb. per square foot in other areas. This force can be equivalent to an upward pressure of up to three times greater than total roof construction weight. Structural members in many instances

must be capable of operating as both compression and tension members as roof loadings change during the course of a cyclonic disturbance otherwise roof "lift off" will occur.

Insulation: Aluminium sheeting does contain thermal insulation qualities under certain conditions. This material, when exposed to the direct rays of the sun, will behave as any other material in the absorption of heat. Absorbed heat is then radiated from the underside of sheeting into roof space contributing to the heat build up in the dwelling. Thermal insulation qualities have the effect of retarding the dispersion of heat after the source of heat is removed from the roof after sunset.

Insulating material, correctly positioned, is just as essential with aluminium roof sheeting as with any other material. The considerations are not only heat insulation, but also for the elimination of water damage to ceiling material from condensation which is prevalent in these areas.

The majority of the above comments have been made in relation to the Kununurra area. It must be realised that in order to produce reasonably priced structures a standardisation of components for all areas must be established within reasonable bounds.

It must also be pointed out that many overseas publications on "Tropical Conditions" are based on true tropical conditions of reasonably consistent temperature and relative humidity for 12 months of the year.

The North and North West of W.A. are rather unique as they are one of the few areas in the world occupied by European type society in which considerations must be given to a combination of hot humid, hot arid and reasonable living conditions during the course of a 12 month time cycle.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North)
[5.15 p.m.]: I would like to comment on some of the remarks of the Leader of the House. He referred to hopper windows being fitted with external handles. I do know that the later models have been fitted with those handles, the reason being that I complained nine years ago about the difficulty of opening the fly screens. In his speech the Leader of the House said nothing which disagreed with what I mentioned about the correct operation of hopper windows. I have pointed out such windows are useless in the north, and I must continue to do that.

Handles fitted externally on hopper windows are most inconvenient because one must go outside to close the windows. This

is particularly inconvenient during a Kimberley thunderstorm and its accompanying rain; one gets rather damp.

With reference to aluminium window frames, I cannot understand why private enterprise can use such frames to advantage—they have a much better appearance and they cost less—and yet Government departments cannot utilise them. This leaves me absolutely stunned. I know it takes a long time for Government departments to change their ideas, but surely the Minister concerned should be able to guide the department and draw its attention to the fact that when a member stands up in the House and states a case drawing on his own experience, and has letters on file from responsible people, notice should be taken of what that member says.

The Minister commented that the officers concerned have been to mining towns more often than I have. I would point out that the Minister does not know how often I have been in mining towns, and, probably, nor does he know how often the officers have been there. If they have gone into mining towns they certainly have not taken notice of the aluminium window frames; or, if they have noticed them, they have not returned and incorporated such ideas in the designs of G.E.H.A. houses.

I would like to refer also to aluminium roofing. Excuses have been given regarding why this type of roofing should not be used in G.E.H.A. houses. The comment was made that many considerations must be taken into account, including stresses, loads, suction, and what-have-you. I would ask the Leader of the House why it is that I have built three buildings in Kununurra—admittedly it is not in the cyclone belt, but we do get strong blows there—and yet I have not had one roof so much as disturbed in a heavy blow even though G.E.H.A. and Housing Commission homes have lost their entire roofs.

I also point out that I did say aluminium is a reflective insulator. It is not necessary for the Leader of the House to tell me that aluminium is a good conductor. I know that. I did not say that it is an insulation against conduction; I know it is not. However, I did say it is a reflective insulator. I suggest that departmental officers should not comment that aluminium roofing absorbs heat and conducts it into the house, and that this is a factor which overrides the advantages of the reflective insulating properties of the material.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I mentioned at the beginning of my speech that my remarks were for the general information of all members. I was not picking upon your particular comments.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: During my second reading speech I referred to the fact that responsible bodies would be criticising Government housing. In the past this has been done, but it has not been

very well organised. I think it is well known to members that people of the north suffer so many disadvantages when compared with city people that they must struggle and work for much longer hours to sustain their very existence. That statement may sound rather emotional, but it happens to be true. Therefore, the people of the north have not been very well organised in presenting constructive criticism about the designs of their homes. They thank their lucky stars that they have a roof over their heads. When they first move into a house it would not matter if the bath happened to be in the middle of the bedroom; they are very pleased to have a roof over their heads.

However, now they are becoming a little more sophisticated and are starting to question the stupidity of the designs of the houses built in the north. Committees are now forming, and have been formed over the last few months, to question the housing designs. I hope those concerned will contact the person who will represent them on the G.E.H.A. regarding these matters, and I hope also the departmental officers will take notice of their criticism. I am sure at present those officers have insufficient knowledge to enable them to design houses for use in the tropics. Certainly if they had that knowledge the houses existing in the north today would not be there; something better would be in their place.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [5.21 p.m.]: I feel I cannot let the comments of the Leader of the House pass unchallenged. I was rather amazed at some of the remarks he made, including the statement that, except in isolated cases, it costs only 10 per cent. more to build a house in country areas. I think that statement could stand a great deal of examination.

In my second reading speech I referred to the redundancy of G.E.H.A. housing and said that I felt after 30 years many of the designs would not be suitable for housing employees in a standard suitable for those who play such a leading part in the community life of country towns. I still hold that all the maintenance in the world will not keep these houses to a suitable standard after a 30-year period. Long before that time has elapsed advances in design and material will make the houses completely antiquated.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

DISTRESSED PERSONS RELIEF TRUST BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 3rd May.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West) [5.23 p.m.]: I am sure members will recall that when the High Court invalidated the receipts stamp duty paid

on transactions involving goods produced or manufactured in Australia, the then Leader of the Opposition (The Hon. J. T. Tonkin) stated that the duty so collected should be returned to those who had paid it. At the time that statement struck many of us as being fairly wild, because the people who paid the duty had, in turn, collected it from their customers; and if the duty were returned to those people they would be at a loss as to how to pass it on to their customers.

That proved to be the opinion of many of those concerned because, generously, they decided not to accept a refund of the duty they had paid, and the Premier decided he would fulfil a long-term ambition to provide funds for needy people. Hence the introduction of the Bill to constitute the distressed persons relief trust fund.

Instead of paying back the receipts stamp duty collected before the High Court decision to those who had originally paid it, the Premier has decided to place the money at the rate of \$29,000 a year over a period of 10 years into a fund to be administered by trustees for the purpose of alleviating the position of people in need of relief from personal hardship or distress; those unable and unlikely to be able to obtain such relief from any other sources.

In another place the Premier accepted some amendments to the Bill, and I have no intention of pursuing them. The measure is a loose one, written in general terms. I believe that is the way it should be written. It is difficult to define exactly what constitutes the term, "in need of relief from personal hardship and distress", and it is difficult to define whether a person is unable or unlikely to be able to obtain such relief. Under those circumstances I believe we must place our trust in the appointment of satisfactory men who will be the trustees and will administer the fund.

I notice comments have been made that it appears nothing of this nature has ever been done previously. Indeed, that is not quite true. I suppose during my term as Minister for Health at least once a year someone would phone me concerning a person who required some special attention. As a matter of fact, a couple of those cases involved transport to New Zealand where a group of doctors were performing an operative procedure which at that time was not available anywhere in Australia. A small fund was available; I think part of the money in it came from moneys collected originally by the late Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, and the very much with us Mr. Ron Thompson.

The Hon. R. Thompson: The McKenzie trust.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is right. That trust had small sums added to it from the Lord Mayor's fund and other odd funds which at times had a surplus. The fund was under the control of the Chief Secretary and, as occasion warranted and with very little fuss, I was able to obtain from him sums of money for much the same sort of purpose as is envisaged by this measure. The fund was very small and at that time there was no need to set up an administering trust as is outlined in the Bill. However, the assistance we were able to render to people such as those I have mentioned was very much appreciated by those who received it. Of course, frequently in such cases the increase in life expectancy was not very great—it might have been a few years—but even a short increase was gratefully accepted by the person concerned and by his loved ones, and ameliorated much hardship. So we have had some experience of this.

I believe it will be necessary to watch the workings of the trust. Like a great deal of other legislation this Bill demands, and I trust will receive, the goodwill of all involved. I am sure the Government will be extremely cautious when appointing the trustees, and I am equally sure those who are appointed will be extremely cautious when making their investigations. I hasten to add I hope they are not so cautious that so much time passes by that the need for relief could well disappear. They must be cautious without being overcautious and perhaps they should err on the side of generosity.

I am sure that with sensible people administering the fund the Bill could turn out to be an extremely handy piece of legislation. It is appreciated that whilst social services provide relief for a great deal of the hardship normally encountered in the community, we will always have what one might call borderline cases for which it is impossible to legislate. I feel the Bill is aimed at providing for such cases. I wish the measure well and I hope it performs the charitable works it is intended to perform. I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. THOMPSON (South Metropolitan—Minister for Community Welfare) [5.30 p.m.]: I thank Mr. MacKinnon for his support of the Bill. As has been mentioned, it was, I think, in 1960 that a lad required an operation and approaches were made to the Premier of the day in order that the lad might be sent overseas. However, no fund was available for this purpose and, as a result, a public appeal was launched and a great deal of money was collected. Most of the money was used, but, unfortunately, the operation was not successful. As Mr. MacKinnon mentioned, the remainder of the money formed the nucleus of that fund. I doubt very much whether a great deal of money was left in the fund.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: There may have been £100 or £200.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Last year I was associated with an appeal for a family man who, through a simple accident at home, became a paraplegic. Through his friends and associates a great deal of money was raised in three weeks and it was thus possible for this person to be sent to the top authority on the subject in the world. This trip, too, was of no avail because, as Mr. MacKinnon knows, our facilities in Western Australia are equal to any in the world. Appeals will always be made for causes outside the scope of legislation and social service benefits and I commend the Bill to the House for that reason.

The legislation will be administered faithfully. In another place an amendment was included, under which the Public Trustee will be on the committee; and that is a good provision. I believe that those elected to the trust will be of good character and integrity. Snap decisions will probably be made in cases of extreme urgency and I am sure that the trust in its wisdom will utilise the fund. I again thank the honourable member for his support.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. R. Thompson (Minister for Community Welfare) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Funds of the Trust—

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: We all owe a debt of gratitude to those people who, in view of the confusion with regard to the return of the money, saw fit to leave it with the Government, thus enabling such a fund to be established. This was a generous move on the part of traders who are often maligned. I do not want to let the opportunity pass without making special reference to their generosity.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 12 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

RESUMPTION VARIATION (BOULDER-KAMBALDA ROAD) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 3rd May.

THE HON. D. J. WORDSWORTH (South) [5.36 p.m.]: It is the intention of our parties to support the Bill which is designed to facilitate the resumption of

land for the Boulder-Kambalda Road. Members will recall that this is a horror stretch of road on which so many people have lost their lives. In fact some 23 deaths have occurred on that road since it was built. An old fable states that new shoes tend to squeak until such time as they are paid for. It is to be hoped that with the passing of the Bill there will not be any further deaths on this section of road, and the issue which has been going on since 1968 will be finally settled.

It is rather amazing that so much trouble has been experienced in the resumption of the land in question merely because its title was issued last century. I should have thought there would be a lot of land in various parts of the State in regard to which mineral rights were owned by the freeholder, and I wonder what would occur in some of the coastal areas where mineral sands have been found by allowing a person to maintain the right to minerals.

Those familiar with Kambalda will know that Western Mining Corporation established its township on a nickel deposit and had to move the townsite. One can well understand owners of land on which the road was built wishing to maintain the mineral rights; and the problem has been solved in a most satisfactory manner. As everyone is aware, nickel is found well below the 100-foot mark as, indeed, are large deposits of gold. Nevertheless, it would be worth investigating possible amendments in order to prevent the problem occurring in future.

I seem to recall that one of the freeways was built over the top of land owned by the brewery and, because air space was required, some agreement had to be reached between the Government and the brewery. It would be a good idea if the Government investigated the problems which could arise in future involving land resumed for roads to ascertain whether amendments could be made to the Public Works Act to cover such difficulties. I support the Bill.

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East—Minister for Local Government) [5.40 p.m.]: I thank Mr Wordsworth for his support of the Bill. It is true that the horror stretch on the Boulder-Kambalda Road has been accountable for many accidents and deaths. In one accident an entire family was wiped out. Let us hope this does not occur again.

Before the beginning of this century, Hampton Gold Mining Areas Limited, bought the land under special circumstances. It was mooted that the trans-line to be established would be the first through that area to Esperance and the Eastern States.

Mr. Wordsworth was correct when he said that Kambalda was built on a nickel deposit. I think Western Mining Corpora-

tion was in such a hurry to commence production so that it might exploit world markets that it built the town without first ascertaining where all the deposits were to be found. Subsequent drilling revealed that the town had, in fact, been established on a deposit and consequently the houses will one day have to be shifted. This is the reason the new town of Kambalda was established.

Mr. Wordsworth referred to possible amendments to the Public Works Act. I understand that during the Committee stage of the Bill in another place the Minister concerned undertook to study this matter.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Unfortunately, *Hansard* is not yet available so I do not know what he said.

The Hon. R. H. C. STUBBS: I think he did undertake to make those investigations. With those few remarks I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Long Service Leave Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. R. Thompson (Minister for Community Welfare), read a first time.

2. Town Planning and Development Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs (Minister for Local Government), read a first time.

FIREARMS BILL

Recommittal

Bill recommitted, on motion by The Hon. J. Dolan (Leader of the House), for the further consideration of clause 11.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) in the Chair; The Hon. J. Dolan (Leader of the House) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 11: Restriction on Commissioner's discretion—

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I have circulated copies of amendments which I wish to move to this clause. I was not too happy with the wording of the clause, as it stood, and for this reason the Parliamentary Counsel had another look at it and came up with further amendments.

If members read the amendments which have been circulated they will appreciate that they cover the points raised by Mr. Medcalf, firstly, in connection with an approved club or other approved organisation and, secondly, with the use of a firearm by an agriculturalist for destroying vermin on land used by him for agriculture.

I think the proposed wording is most satisfactory but I do not want to go into great detail. I move an amendment—

Page 7, line 30—Substitute for the passage "11. The", in line one, the passage "11. Subject to subsection (2) of this section, the".

The Hon. I. G. MEDCALF: The Leader of the House was kind enough to show me a copy of the proposed amendments earlier this afternoon. I have no hesitation in recommending that the Committee should accept the amendment which has been moved because it embodies the very points which were mentioned last week in the debate. I find the amendment quite satisfactory and the draftsman from the Crown Law Department deserves commendation for his careful and appropriate use of words. I have no objection at all to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

The clause was further amended, on motions by The Hon. J. Dolan, as follows—

Page 8, line 4—Delete all the words following the word "relates" inserted at a previous Committee.

Page 8, line 4—Add after subsection (1) a new subsection as follows—

(2) For the purposes of this section, where the Commissioner is satisfied that a person—

(a) is a financial member of an approved club or other approved organisation providing facilities for and giving instruction in the use of the firearm to which the application relates, who participates or will participate regularly in the activities of that club or organisation; or

(b) reasonably requires that firearm for the purpose of destroying vermin on land used by him for agriculture,

that person shall be taken to have a good reason for acquiring or possessing a firearm or ammunition of a kind suitable to the circumstances.

Clause, as further amended, put and passed.

Bill again reported, with further amendments.

EVAPORITES (LAKE MacLEOD) AGREEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 1st May.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [5.56 p.m.]: When the Leader of the House moved the second reading he commented that the measure provides for conditions under which Texada Mines Pty. Limited will be allowed to produce a new type of potassium fertiliser, instead of potash as defined in the principal agreement. This statement implies that the potassium fertiliser is new but I point out this is not so. I understand the fertiliser is mined in America and the amount of langbeinite now mined is sufficient to meet the existing markets.

The Minister commented, too, that it is potash as defined in the principal agreement. I hope to show the weaknesses of these comments throughout the ensuing debate.

The Minister said that the company's objective was to establish at the lake a plant for producing potash and other evaporites, including salt. The original agreement provided for the production of potash and, because sodium chloride is a by-product of the production of potash, naturally salt would be produced. However, it was not necessarily to be a mine which would produce salt for sale. The Minister recognises the need to produce potash for use within the agricultural industry of Australia, particularly of Western Australia.

For this very reason the original agreement was written with Texada to allow that company to produce potash. At that time we had salt-producing companies in Western Australia and we did not want other companies which would produce salt and nothing else. Consequently, an agreement was made for a plant to produce potash—and this is to be emphasised throughout the debate.

It was known that Australia imported all its requirements of potash. I am quite sure there would have been no agreement at all had Texada come to the previous Government and wished to draw up an agreement for the production of salt and not for the production of potash. The previous Government would not have entered into arrangements allowing Texada to put money into the Lake MacLeod area, in particular, for salt production.

We have salt producers. This company was set up solely to produce potash. I will keep saying this throughout the debate, because we must make quite clear to the Minister what the Bill is all about. Having read some of the debates in another place I find that people are a little confused as to the meaning of the original

agreement and why it was written. In his second reading speech the Minister said—

Establishment of the industry was thus a very desirable objective, in that not only would it produce indigenous potash, but it would also result in the development of an industrially undeveloped area, establishment of a new port, and provision of employment.

I have no argument with that; it is perfectly right. In fact this is one of the things that is completely right. Unfortunately, however, in amending the agreement the present Government drifts away from this aspect. When the Minister said, "By and large these objectives have been achieved", he and his advisers seem to be completely confused, because the company is not producing potash as per the definition in the original agreement. It is quite clear what potash is meant to be in the original agreement. The Minister goes on to say that—

The company employs about 300 people, and produces salt valued at some \$5,000,000 a year.

So what? This is not what it was designed for. It was designed to produce potash. The previous Government allowed Texada to sell a little salt to give the company a cash flow, as that was the only way the company could carry out its developments, its experiments, and its research for the further production of potash.

The Minister and his advisers further confuse the issue by saying—

The definition of "potash" includes the word "evaporites". Because of this considerable doubt has been thrown on the precise meaning of the word "potash" as defined in the agreement.

That is absolute rubbish. The definition of "potash" in the agreement is quite clear, as is the definition of "evaporites". For the benefit of the House I propose to read the definition of "evaporites". As stated in the agreement the definition of "evaporites" reads—

"evaporites" means minerals chemical elements salts and substances which are or have been deposited from aqueous solutions as a result of extensive or total evaporation of the solvent or changes in temperature of the solvent and includes all products derived from the evaporation of sea water sea water concentrates or brine including but not limited to the chlorides sulphates carbonates bromides and iodides of any of sodium potassium magnesium lithium and boron and any double or complex salts that can be obtained therefrom and any substances that develop through

metamorphism of other evaporites and any elements gases or organic substances contained in evaporite salts;

To the layman the definition of "evaporites" would appear to be slightly complicated, though in fact it is not. When "evaporites" is defined in that manner, with a little study the layman will be able to see what is an evaporite for the purposes of this particular agreement.

Page 6 of the original agreement contains the definition of "potash" and this would be very clear even to the simplest of laymen. The definition states—

"potash" means the evaporites potassium chloride and/or potassium sulphate;

It means nothing else but those two chemicals. The Minister goes on to say—

The company has claimed that a whole range of compound salts containing potassium chloride and/or sulphate and in particular a double sulphate of potassium and magnesium with the chemical formula ($K_2SO_4 \cdot 2MgSO_4$) known as langbeinite . . .

From his remarks the Minister implies that this should be potash. The particular compound does contain potash, but in a much lower percentage as the Minister admits when he says it contains 18.9 per cent. of potassium.

That, however, is not what potash means under the original agreement. Let there be no confusion on this point whatever. I would like to know which particular adviser advised the Minister that some confusion did exist about potash. Langbeinite is a particular double sulphate of potassium and magnesium with the chemical formula $K_2SO_4 \cdot 2MgSO_4$. It contains potash but it is not potash by definition in the original agreement.

Had Texada put forward a proposal to produce langbeinite instead of potassium sulphate or potassium chloride I am sure the previous Government would have agreed to such a conditional proposal. I feel sure an agreement would have been written on condition that a market for langbeinite was proved.

But let us look at the situation as presented by the Minister. It would have been different had we been given any proof that markets for langbeinite—this double salt which has a very limited use—did exist. Langbeinite is a fertiliser which has a high magnesium content; it is used in areas which have a magnesium deficiency. Where are there such areas in Australia?

I think members will recall that a question was asked recently in this House concerning the use of langbeinite as a fertiliser in Western Australia, and nobody seemed to know whether or not it should be used, or whether or not it has any use

at all in this State. Accordingly, as our own departments have been unable to produce a use for langbeinite or to prove markets for it, I feel that anybody who is expected to consent to an agreement which has been brought to this House for ratification should at least be shown proof that markets do exist.

Sitting suspended from 6.08 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Before the tea suspension I commented that we should study what has been said in another place concerning possible markets. No reference was made to any definite markets—only possible markets were referred to. One particular agent on the eastern seaboard of the American continent indicated a probable market for a certain amount of langbeinite, but it is not a definite market. In fact, it is so indefinite that the telegram could have been arranged by anyone with a particular interest in the legislation before us now.

The Leader of the House said that the flow-on benefits to the district would be the same as they would have been under the original agreement. I do not believe this to be so. The people of Carnarvon have been sold a pup, and a mongrel pup—it is not even purebred. The situation is, of course, that the 300 people employed by Texada hope to have a future in the district. They could well have a future there; it is quite possible that langbeinite has a great future, but this has not been shown to us in any way. If definite markets were proven, we could then say that the people of Carnarvon will have a good, secure future. Unless markets are established for langbeinite, the company will have to rely on salt sales for income. Until 1975, salt sales are limited, but it would appear that no limitations at all apply after 1975. If the Minister signed an agreement—and we know he did—I hope he said, "If you run into difficulty with langbeinite sales, let us limit your sales of salt. Let us tie the salt sales to the langbeinite sales at a certain percentage of potassium content." Such action would make sense, but it has not been done.

The Leader of the House said—

Whereas production of 200,000 tons of langbeinite under existing conditions at Lake MacLeod may be expected to produce a coproduct of approximately 2,500,000 tons of marketable common salt, a similar quantity of muriate of potash could be expected to produce nearly 15,900,000 tons.

The emphasis throughout this legislation is on marketable salt. I have to keep saying that we are not talking about a salt industry; we are supposed to be talking about a potash industry, but throughout his speech the Leader of the House referred to marketable salt. The implication is, of course, that if the company produces langbeinite instead of potash, it will not have so much salt; that is understood. It

was understood in the original agreement and it was understood by Texada. It knew it would have a tremendous amount of salt as a by-product but it was not meant to go onto the market. As I say, it was well known before the 1967 agreement was signed, because many tests had been carried out.

The Leader of the House goes on to say—

... langbeinite extraction is 1.9 times as efficient as muriate extraction.

This is a funny way of saying that the company cannot produce potash at this particular time but it will produce a product which is not as good as the potash it originally intended to produce. Admittedly the initial agreement contemplated rather than provided for the establishment of a potash industry. It is agreed that a great deal of research was required, but I would like to point out that the company knew this. If it found by research it just could not cope with the requirement of the agreement, it would not have gone into phase two. And yet, we find the Minister for Development and Decentralisation has signed an agreement with the company which has allowed it to go on and borrow \$6,000,000 to produce a product which has no proof of markets. I would say that the Minister has made a terrible blunder at the negotiating table. Perhaps he was inexperienced in this field and he met a man who is smarter than he is. I would say Mr. Christensen is a very smart man and he has been able to bluff the Minister into signing an agreement for a lesser product.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Don't you think the Minister has advisers who know anything?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I would say the Minister has advisers who know quite a bit.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Would you rather have a mongrel dog or an empty kennel?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If you were running a stud you would rather have it empty.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I cannot answer that. If I had any use for a mongrel dog, I would gladly accept it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You say there is no market for langbeinite. What leads you to that conclusion?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I said there is no proof of a market for langbeinite. I have said that possibly the new agreement could be a good thing, but we do not know as there has been no proof of markets. As I said earlier, when a member in this House asked about the use of langbeinite in the State, even the Government departments could not put forward a definite way to use langbeinite. They said it might be used in the State, but nobody has carried out any tests. The only

reference to a market is contained in a telegram from the eastern seaboard of the American continent.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are you seriously suggesting that Texada has decided to produce langbeinite it cannot sell?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: It is possible.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Are you suggesting that it will do so, not that it is possible?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I have suggested it is possible. It is also possible the company has markets for langbeinite, but why have we not been informed of them? Under the provisions of the agreement, after 1975 Texada could supply salt to the whole world on the figures presented. But the company was not originally set up for this purpose, and it was not granted a permit to use 800 square miles of land and lake to produce salt. The previous Government drew up an agreement which was signed by Texada and the Government to produce potash—that is all. That must be remembered.

The Hon. J. L. Hunt: Was any salt included in the agreement?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: There was no provision for unlimited salt sales in the initial agreement. After the Government realised the company was spending a great sum of money in an endeavour to establish a potash plant, it allowed some sales of salt to permit a cash flow.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That same shrewd negotiator must have been there when the agreement was signed with the previous Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The company was given permission to export salt on a limited basis.

The Hon. J. L. Hunt: What do you call a limited basis?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That was explained in the second reading speech made by the Leader of the House.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I would like to point out to one of the members of this House, through you, Mr. President, that he happens to be a member of the party which is in government. Surely the Government has all the advisers necessary to answer questions he wishes to ask. He should go through his Ministers.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Better than asking you.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am asking: Where are the markets? We have not been given an answer. I bet that we will not be given any proof of markets when the Leader of the House replies.

The Hon. F. R. White: When you refer to salt, is that NaCl, common salt?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am referring to common salt; in actual fact most of the chemicals here are salts of some kind. I pointed out the only reason that permission was given to sell common salt was to allow a cash flow to the company.

The Leader of the House goes on to say—

Only in the next two years were technical details of the secret partly-patented process sought and obtained from the company in the strictest confidence.

So what? Is this anything special? In the strictest confidence I could devise or purchase a system to turn salt purple, but what would that mean? Would it mean I knew of a process which would employ people and bring income to the State of Western Australia? It would not. It would mean only that I had in a secret way, purchased a process which may be completely useless because it would simply turn table salt purple. I just do not know why the Leader of the House made a play on this point.

I have not pointed out, although it has been mentioned in technical articles, that langbeinite can only be used in soils where there is a deficiency of magnesium. I understand this situation exists in certain areas of Florida in the United States. As I have said before, we may have some similar areas in this State, but as yet nobody seems to know where they are.

The Leader of the House went on to say—

The company has been very active and has successfully raised finance to complete a 200,000 ton per year langbeinite plant by the 31st July, 1973, at a cost of some \$6,000,000.

It is rather interesting to note that the Minister for Development and Decentralisation negotiated with the company in 1971. He knew then that it would go into the production of langbeinite, and he agreed to the company's arranging finance for the establishment of this plant. If the Minister did this—and it is obvious that he did—it shows a lack of principle as he has completely ignored an agreement written by the State Government which definitely specified potash. He then turns around and says, "You may go out and borrow money to build a plant to produce a lesser article."

If it is not a lack of principle then it might be a lack of knowledge. I can understand this, because at the time the Minister was relatively new and he had not had great experience with such negotiations.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Which Minister are you talking about?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am referring to the Minister who signed the agreement. I should have made that clear. I am sure the Minister who introduced the Bill in this House did not do that.

The Hon. J. Dolan: If you are referring to the Minister for Development and Decentralisation (Mr. Graham) you do not know what you are talking about when you mention experience.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am not aware that he has had great experience around the negotiating table in relation to industrial agreements. Possibly the Leader of the House could tell us about the Minister's experience. What recent experience in modern business principles did Mr. Graham have prior to 1971? I do not think that at the time he had very much of this experience, and this is illustrated in the Bill before us. He has allowed the company to borrow a large amount of money in order to produce a lesser article than the one defined in the agreement made with the previous Government.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The Premier is one who signs these agreements. I would say that no member of either House has had more experience than he.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: That is where the Minister is confused. He is referring to experience at the negotiating table in relation to politics, but I am referring to industrial agreements. The Minister cannot tell me that the Premier has had very much recent experience, or experience in the five years preceding 1971, in relation to industrial agreements.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The term "industrial agreement" is generally used in the arbitration system.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am referring to fiscal industrial agreements. The Labor Party was out of office for 12 years, so how could its members have had the experience around the negotiating table when dealing with fiscal matters? I notice from the Minister's second reading speech that he at least begins to recognise the problems of devaluation.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You mean revaluation?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am referring to the devaluation of the American dollar.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I was talking in terms of the Australian currency.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Further in his speech the Minister said—

... Late in 1971 Japan suffered a severe economic shock due to devaluation of the U.S. dollar—

I would point out that he does not understand this question, nor does he understand the question of the revaluation of

the Australian dollar, because he went on to say—

...—and uncertainty of future markets for Japanese goods in the U.S.A. This, and subsequent revaluations, had severe repercussions in all sectors of the Japanese economy and affected imports from Australia, including salt.

I have mentioned the question of revaluation and devaluation twice in this House. I have explained it to members. However, in the Bill itself, the Minister has the question fouled up.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: When did you explain that to the House?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I could explain it again, but in order to save time some member could explain it to the Minister or to whoever gave the advice on this Bill. I think most members would know about this matter, but it seems that somebody made a slip in the preparation of the Bill. At least I appreciate the fact that the Government is beginning to see that something happened around that time.

In his second reading speech the Minister said—

... the more efficient use of potassium and, finally, the unresolved dispute over the exact meaning of the definition of potash in the Act, the Minister has approved a variation to the agreement which accepts langbeinite and other approved potassium compounds as being potash for the purposes of the Act.

The Minister waved the magic wand. He said, "I cannot understand the agreement as written initially. I cannot understand the definition of potash, but because I have been told that langbeinite is potash I will change the agreement".

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: Only the Minister did not say that. You said that.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I shall repeat what the Minister said in his second reading speech—

...—the more efficient use of potassium and, finally, the unresolved dispute over the exact meaning of the definition of potash in the Act, the Minister has approved a variation to the agreement which accepts langbeinite and other approved potassium compounds as being potash for the purposes of the Act.

If Mr. Claughton noted what I said when I commenced my speech he will realise that I mentioned a new type of potassium fertiliser instead of potash as defined in the principal agreement.

All the way through his speech the Minister pointed out that he did not believe the definition of potash was clear. So, we see the advisers to the Minister trying to find a way to get around the situation.

They have said, "Let us change the Act and the definition, because the Minister is confused". I do not know why he should be confused. I have heard the Minister for Development and Decentralisation speaking, and he appears to be a reasonable speaker with a reasonable amount of intelligence.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I am pleased that you appreciate his qualities.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Only some of them. I do appreciate some of the qualities of the person who is about to become the Chairman of the Licensing Court; but he has certainly fouled up the Bill. I reiterate that I appreciate some of his qualities, but not all of them. However, his qualities are not evident in the Bill before us.

There is some duplication in the second reading speech of the Minister, so I shall skip over some parts which I wish to criticise. We have reached the stage when we must declare that if langbeinite is produced and cannot be sold it will be disastrous for the people of Carnarvon; but I do not think those people realise how dangerous this proposition is to them, nor do members realise how dangerous it is to allow an agreement, which does not limit the sale of salt from the year 1975, to go through.

The company could produce a sufficient quantity of salt to cover the needs of the world markets; so, after 1975—because there is no limitation in the Bill—if the company can arrange the markets it will be able to produce an unlimited amount of salt, and thus put the other salt-producing companies out of business. If the company is permitted to sell a limited quantity of langbeinite as well as a limited quantity of salt, it will be able to stockpile a huge quantity of common salt by 1975. If it is able to obtain the markets it could bring down the price of salt to such a level that the salt-producing industry not only of Australia but of the world would be jeopardised.

If the company had approached the previous Government to reach agreement to produce under the present proposals, it would not have received any consideration for the use of the brines at Lake MacLeod, unless salt sales were limited and langbeinite markets proven. The Minister also mentioned in his second reading speech—

It must also be remembered that this will be the world's first synthetic langbeinite plant.

I could be the first person in the world to produce purple table salt, but what great significance is this if I had little or no market for my product.

We in this House should consider a means to allow a limited sale of salt by the Texada Company, not just for the years up to 1975 but thereafter, so as to protect the companies which were set up

initially to produce salt. If the Texada Company has got into trouble because of its research plant, and it cannot meet the terms of the original agreement—and we know this Government wants the company to produce langbeinite, and other evaporites if necessary at the company's pleasure, and not at the Government's pleasure—then the Government should say to the company, "We will only allow you to sell salt in relation to the potash content of the langbeinite which you produce and sell and this must be aligned with the original agreement, the original agreement being to turn out 200,000 long tons of potash at 42 per cent. instead of the 18.9 per cent. potash content that is found in langbeinite."

I leave those thoughts with members. The Minister referred to a *force majeure* situation, but I would point out that the Bill is a *force majeure*. It is an agreement which comes to us for ratification. The Bill rewrites a previous agreement, and alters the meaning of potash—a definition which previously was quite clear. For some reason or other the Minister and his advisers have tried to misconstrue the original agreement which was purely for the production of potash, and to convert it into one which enables the company to be a salt producer and to sell the salt in unlimited quantities after 1975.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West) [7.58 p.m.]: As my colleague, Mr. Withers, has already referred in considerable detail to the variations that are proposed to this agreement, it is as well that I make some reference to the original legislation and more particularly to the speech of the Minister who introduced the original Bill in this House.

I think it is very relevant for me to do that, because on this occasion when the Minister introduced the Bill before us he alluded to the second reading speech of the then Minister. Quite obviously, and for very good reasons which I accept, he used the speech of the then Minister to suit the purposes of the Bill before us.

I refer to what is recorded on page 760 of the 1967 *Hansard*. This page contains the reference to which the Leader of the House alluded when he referred to the measure which was introduced originally. I would like to quote from the speech of the then Leader of the House (The Hon. A. F. Griffith) who was also the Minister for Mines at the time. He said—

The Minister for Industrial Development, when introducing this measure, which has been passed in another place, emphasised that the Bill to ratify the agreement contemplated rather than provided for the establishment of a potash industry for the reason that the company still has to carry out considerable research to

prove beyond doubt that the brines of Lake MacLeod will yield potash as a commercially viable operation.

There is no need for me or any other member to make any excuse for that statement. This has been acknowledged, and obviously that speech has been read by the Ministers concerned. No doubt they are aware of its implications.

Having so read, of course, the Government has used that expression to suit the purposes of this Bill. I will read one further reference from the same *Hansard* report, and it relates to the question of royalties. At page 761 the following appears—

A royalty of 50c per ton on potash is provided. There is also a royalty payable on salt, although at this stage the company has no immediate intention of marketing this product, even though it is estimated that approximately 3,000,000 tons per annum will be available as a by-product from the production of 200,000 tons of potash per annum. This salt would need some further treatment to be suitable for export.

It is rather interesting to note the reply to the debate on behalf of the Opposition—at that time—by Mr. Eric Heenan, the then member for the Lower North Province. His comments appear at page 929 of *Hansard* for 1967, and I think it is worth while referring to one or two expressions he used. I intend to do this because of the numerous interjections from some members of the Government and, more particularly, from one particular member who represents the same province as was represented by Mr. Eric Heenan.

Those members in this House who can recall Mr. Eric Heenan—and the speeches he made here—will be reminded of the way in which he approached the examination of a subject of this nature. I will quote his words from page 929 of *Hansard* as follows—

To all intents and purposes, therefore, it is a vast unattractive wasteland . . .

He was talking of the Lake MacLeod area. To continue—

. . . and, in the past, has been accepted as such. However, like the toad of which Shakespeare has written, although ugly, it apparently contains not a precious jewel in its head, but within its wide reaches something very rich and precious; something which is in short supply in this country, and something which is essential to the enrichment of the vast agricultural lands of Australia; namely, potash.

Mr. Heenan's speech continued but I do not intend to quote further for the present. While he did not proceed at considerable

length I am sure members will recall that it took him a little time, but he was very effective in the process.

It is noted that Mr. Heenan accepted the legislation and was in favour of it. He referred to the activities of certain other companies in relation to mineral development, and he spoke in rather complimentary terms of the activities of some of those companies. At page 930 of *Hansard* he stated—

It has also been estimated that, by 1970, 100,000 tons of potash per annum will be imported into Australia, and 200,000 tons will be imported by New Zealand.

I thought it just as well to make reference to that fact because in the course of replies to question asked by Mr. Wordsworth some weeks ago it was indicated that the consumption, I think, in Western Australia in 1967 was 75,000 tons. I may stand corrected on the actual figure, but certainly not on the year.

The point I wish to emphasise is that this was in 1967—just six years ago—and I marvel that on a subject of this nature—the use of potash for agricultural purposes in this State—more information is not provided. I consider that for the purposes of this Bill, and for the purposes of explanation, we should have had a more precise and more accurate figure as to the requirements of potash for agriculture in Western Australia and in Australia as at 1972-73. That information is, of course, vital to the consideration of the entire Bill.

There can be no denying that the purpose of the Bill introduced in 1967—as was recognised by Mr. Eric Heenan—was to produce potash. At that time it was also recognised that there would be a co-product from potash, which would be salt. As has already been acknowledged by Mr. Withers, if the company had been permitted to carry on and market salt, it would have produced a quantity greater than the total needs of Japan, a fact which was realised by the present Minister for Development and Decentralisation when he, and the Leader of this House, recognised that an embarrassing situation had arisen.

After two years' operations by the company in the Lake MacLeod area certain difficulties have become apparent. One method of overcoming the difficulty was to market salt and to forgo the production of potash. I will not enlarge any further on what has already been said by Mr. Withers, but it is clear that the purpose of the industry was to produce potash for agriculture. In view of the need for potash by Australian and New Zealand agriculture it has been possible to pursue the original agreement to the point where we are, in fact, obtaining a product which is readily available and

usable. It is well known that the agricultural needs of Western Australia and the Commonwealth had priority of use of the product from the enterprise.

I recall the publicity given to the introduction of the parent legislation and the scheme when it was announced. I recall how magnificent this was to be for Western Australia and Australia: to be able to produce indigenous potash. It can be claimed—and is being claimed—that there is no real breakdown in the agreement because the company will still produce potash, but potash of a somewhat different kind from that which was originally intended in the definition.

I agree with my colleague, Mr. Withers, that the definition in the 1967 legislation was quite clear. That legislation certainly did use the word "evaporites", and we all know the interpretation of that word in common parlance. Those evaporites were considered to be potassium chloride and potassium sulphate. For the purposes of this measure it is proposed to vary the definition. The definition of potash will now mean any of the evaporites, potassium chloride, potassium sulphate, or langbeinite, and such other potassium compounds as the Minister may, from time to time, approve. Of course, that is a vastly different process from producing potash for agricultural purposes in Australia.

Referring again to the replies received by Mr. Wordsworth, I am more than a little surprised to learn that virtually no studies have been undertaken by the Department of Agriculture regarding the use and availability of langbeinite for agriculture. In reply to the question asked by Mr. Wordsworth it was stated that in response to inquiries some verbal indication had been given.

I think members will appreciate that I have had a little experience as a professional agriculturalist, in an advisory capacity, and I am sure that what applied in my day will certainly continue to apply today—if not more so. No agricultural adviser would give a recommendation regarding a fertiliser such as langbeinite, with all its significant costs and their effect on the economy; nor would he dare to recommend the use of such a product unless extensive trials and demonstrations had been carried out to prove its usefulness. Therefore, I must cast some doubts on the reply which was given to the question. I do not believe that any professional agriculturalist would have been prepared to commit himself on the practicality of the use of a product such as langbeinite. I must confess I had not heard of it prior to this legislation coming before the House. To go so far as to recommend the use of langbeinite, unless it had been subjected to some form of testing—and clearly this has not been done—would be unwise.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: So, in fact, an analysis could show that there is a deficiency in that particular material?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: That is true.

It is now claimed that there is justification for the company to produce langbeinite instead of potash, as originally intended. Of course, potash is still being produced in some form or other. We are still producing potassium sulphate and potassium chloride to some extent. However, the evaporites will now have to be subjected to certain processes to make them more readily suitable for agricultural purposes, but we certainly have not been given any indication—either in the Bill or in the Minister's explanation—that any investigations have been contemplated.

I agree with Mr. Withers that the line of least resistance is being adopted by the Government. I can understand the situation in which the Government is placed, and I would not wish to take any credit away from the company because it is committed to the expenditure of \$18,000,000 by the end of this year, and this is a very considerable sum of money.

Referring again to what Mr. Heenan had to say, the production of potash is of tremendous value to the State. The industry has been of great benefit to the town which serves it, and I am sure that nobody would wish to see the industry not established. Referring again to the words of Mr. Heenan, I will quote from page 930 of *Hansard* 1967, as follows—

As regards the provisions absolving the company from complying with certain Acts, there are valid arguments for and against. In my experience the fundamental element in any agreement is its spirit. I therefore express the hope that in this case the spirit of the agreement will be carried out in its entirety to the benefit of both parties. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The words I emphasise are, "In my experience the fundamental element in any agreement is its spirit".

Nobody can deny that the spirit of the legislation was the production of potash, because there were ample opportunities for the production of salt at alternative places, even though in 1967 those alternative places were not functioning and operative. It was also recognised that in the Lake MacLeod deposits, because of the brines and bitterns, such salt as was produced would have to be further processed in order to make it a marketable product as common salt.

I believe the agricultural community of this country must share to a great degree the disappointment I feel in regard to this legislation, because it relieves the company, at the behest of the Government, of

the necessity to probe further in its processing, treatment, and refining of langbeinite for the purpose of producing a readily usable form of potash for agriculture—and for the chemical industry as a whole, for that matter. This is the essential feature of it.

I can only deprecate the fact that the Government has been prepared to accept the variations. I am not denying that it is within the powers of the Minister and the Government to accept and allow for variation in the agreement, but the Bill before us provides for a second schedule which is a signed agreement.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is a fairly long time ago now, but if my memory serves me correctly the original temporary reserve granted to Texada was for potash. Perhaps the Minister would ask the Minister for Mines to give us a copy of the documents relating to the original reserve which I let when I was Minister for Mines. We would then see what the original agreement was.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I will not take up the time of the House by referring to the original agreement, although I have a copy of it here, but I refer to page 760 of *Hansard*, 1967, where the Minister said—

I granted the company a temporary reserve over the area under the provisions of the Mining Act in June, 1965, and between that date and February of this year, the company has carried out a considerable amount of exploratory work, with a view to determining the extent of the reserves of evaporites and their ability to yield brine for processing. This work is to increase within five years with a production of about 200,000 tons of potash per annum being envisaged.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I do not remember that but I well remember the first interview I had with these people and there is no doubt that potash was their objective.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: As The Hon. E. M. Heenan said, it was the spirit of the agreement—which was potash—which mattered. I believe the point has been made. I hope I have added some emphasis to it and I hope that, in consideration of the debates that have taken place in relation to this Bill, the Government will be prepared to negotiate further with Texada with a view to carrying out the spirit of the original agreement, which was to yield that product which is and could be in the future so valuable as a fertiliser in Western Australian agriculture.

In saying that I do not express a parochial attitude in relation to unjustifiable support or protection of the agricultural industries. The fact is that the agricultural industries are still of major importance in the economy of the State, and in

view of the economics and the foreign exchange involved, the production and use of potash is worth while taking a great deal further than the Government is apparently prepared to take it at this stage. For those reasons I express my considerable misgivings that the Government has been prepared to accept something less than the ideal in respect of this amending Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. G. W. Berry.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 19th April.

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [8.21 p.m.]: This is not a large Bill and its main purpose is to rectify an anomaly which occurred when the Government increased the lease rentals from 50c to \$2 an acre. At that time, under section 533 (e) of the Local Government Act, the local government rate on mining leases was 20 times the unimproved capital value. When the Government increased the rental charge from 50c to \$4, it increased the unimproved capital value of 24-acre leases by up to \$960, which is 20 times \$48.

Instead of reducing the tariff on the leases, the Government has reduced the local government rates to \$10 an acre, which brings the rateable value of a 24-acre lease back to what it was previously. We have no argument with this. Local government authorities are quite prepared to carry on under the provisions proposed in the Bill. They feel that the amount of help given to the holders of mining leases is well covered by the \$24 a year, approximately, they receive from them. Everyone connected with mining operations was happy that the rateable value had been reduced to the original figure.

The only point I make is that I think the Government could have been a little easier if it wanted to help the prospector. It could easily have cut the lease rental from \$4 to \$2 and still made quite a packet out of it. This would have helped the prospector on a 24-acre lease to the extent of \$48 a year. However, the Government was not prepared to do that. We have no further objection to the Bill, and we support it.

THE HON. R. H. C. STUBBS (South-East—Minister for Local Government) [8.24 p.m.]: I thank Mr. Heitman for his support of the Bill. He has said almost everything that could be said about it, but I can assure him I am trying to help the *bona fide* prospector. Some councils have rated quite heavily and, in an endeavour to assist the *bona fide* prospector, I have been in touch with every council—Sandstone, Cue, Meekatharra, Wiluna, Marble Bar, Boulder, Dundas, Menzies, Leonora,

and Laverton—to ask them how much is outstanding for rates and how much the current rates are. I have also been in touch with the prospectors' association in Kalgoorlie.

I am trying to work out a formula under which the *bona fide* prospector can be helped. We are now undertaking a certain exercise. I hope something will come out of it and that I shall be able to make a submission to the Treasurer which will assist. It is important that these people be helped. We must keep the prospector out in the bush, otherwise no new finds will be made.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 3rd May.

THE HON. F. R. WHITE (West) [8.28 p.m.]: Mr. Williams has adequately dealt with the amendments proposed in clauses 3 and 4, and I intend to deal only briefly with clause 5, which proposes to amend section 37A of the Act.

The amendment proposes to repeal the original section 37A, which consists of only 14 lines. I will therefore read that section in its entirety. It is as follows—

Where an agreement in the form prescribed by the regulations is entered into between the Minister and a student either alone or with others, setting out the terms and conditions upon which the student is admitted to a teachers' college, if the parent or guardian of the student, or if he has no parent or guardian, a stipendiary magistrate, endorses his consent to the execution by the student of the agreement, the student and all other parties to the agreement shall notwithstanding that the student was under the age of twenty-one years when he executed the agreement, be bound by each and every term and condition expressed therein to be binding upon him or them.

I draw attention to the opening words: "Where an agreement in the form prescribed by the regulations". It is proposed to delete that section and to include the proposed new section contained in the Bill. I feel it is necessary to draw attention to proposed new subclause (2) which states—

(2) The amount, the time and method of payment and repayment, and the terms and conditions applicable to the financial assistance given shall be as prescribed.

I ask the question: Prescribed by whom? Are they—the conditions—to be prescribed by the Minister or by the departmental officers? Whoever it may be, does the provision give Parliament the opportunity to look at the agreement and the conditions to be prescribed? No, it does not. The original section, which it is proposed to delete, includes the words, "as prescribed by the regulations". So whatever terms and conditions were prescribed under that section would be laid upon the Table of the House and could be considered by members of this Chamber and of another place; therefore they would be open to scrutiny and disallowance if need be.

The proposed new section does not say, "as prescribed by the regulations"; so therefore members of this Chamber will not be given the opportunity to approve or disapprove of the terms and conditions of any agreement that may be laid down. To cover that situation I have placed amendments on the notice paper which, if carried, will make it necessary for the conditions to be prescribed by regulations. Apart from that point, as I have already stated, Mr. Williams adequately dealt with the other two clauses of the Bill; so I will say no more until the Committee stages.

THE HON. J. DOLAN (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [8.32 p.m.]: Perhaps I should refer firstly to the remarks of Mr. White. The Minister for Education has no objection to the amendment proposed by the honourable member; it will make Mr. White happy, and it will not make the Minister unhappy.

I would like to pass a few comments in general on the remarks made by Mr. Williams. I firmly believe that education is for all the children of Australia. People have the right to send their children to obtain education wherever they think best. That is a good principle with which I agree. As I was reading through the allowances to students today I could not help but think just how well off they are by comparison with what was the position when I attended teachers' college. It may seem almost laughable now, but as a boarder at teachers' college I was allowed £1 a month, which was 5s. a week. Of course, as a young man I found that 5s. did not go very far. However, in comparison students nowadays receive \$700 a year. When I was a student I learnt to be a good administrator of my money.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That has carried on into later life.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Perhaps so. It was certainly an eye-opener to realise the difference between that time and the present. There was no question of my receiving a gift because in the first two years after leaving teachers' college £1 a month was deducted from my salary. In those days we were paid monthly by cheque. That

reminds me of a fellow teacher who was a bit of a character. At the time we were concerned that we were always broke in the last week of the month and this chap suggested at a Teachers' Union conference that teachers' salaries should be paid fortnightly. He eventually moved a motion at conference that the teachers' monthly salaries be paid to them fortnightly. The motion was carried, but soon afterwards the conference delegates woke up to its implication; that the effect of the motion was to double the salary of teachers. Their monthly salary was to be paid to them fortnightly. That certainly made people think just how poorly teachers were paid.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you remember the discussion we had a short while ago about negotiators? Those people weren't bad negotiators!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: They certainly were not. I am delighted to find that members agree with the principles contained in the Bill. I would mention that it is completely impracticable to put into effect the suggestion made by Mr. Williams in relation to the 20 per cent.-20 per cent. matching money. The present Minister for Education arranged a conference between the Director-General of Education and the former Minister for Education, and was able to convince that member that the suggestion is quite impracticable. I can assure members that this Government, like all Governments, does not bring politics into the question of education. We are trying to do the best we can by all our children. We realise, as does every Administration and every member of the Chamber, that our faith is in the future of our children, and our future lies in having a well-educated nation. The Minister for Education has prepared some comments in reply to the remarks of Mr. Williams, which I will read out to the House.

During the course of his speech, Mr. Williams made two specific proposals. One was that the financial assistance proposed in the Bill should be assured for a five-year period and the second recommended that a formula be devised to be incorporated in the Bill.

The form of financial assistance proposed in this Bill is the result of an invitation issued to the States by the previous Federal Government which agreed to give non-Government schools grants equalling 20 per cent. of the assessed national average cost of educating students in Government schools.

In other words, if the cost were \$1,000, it was undertaken to provide \$200. Of course, 20 per cent. will be a grant from the Commonwealth and a 20 per cent. matching grant will come from the State. The Federal Government invited each State Government to provide similar assistance.

This State is one of the first to agree to go along with the Federal Government in this scheme, and is one of the few that has agreed to match the full 20 per cent. of the cost of educating a Government school student.

However, this scheme is one that was announced by the previous Commonwealth Government without first being referred to the State Governments for their comments. These tactics by the Commonwealth were aimed at forcing the States to adopt the Federal line. Since the proposals were announced by the then Prime Minister in May, 1972, there has been a change of Government in Canberra. The present Government is making a full investigation of the best means of helping education in Australia, especially in the areas of greatest need. To obtain the facts on which decisions can be made the Commonwealth Government has established a number of commissions.

As a result of the operations of these commissions it is probable that changes will be made in the manner of distributing funds for education, including the distribution to non-Government schools. Although the Act passed by the McMahon Government provided for assistance to non-Government schools on the basis of the 20 per cent. of Government school costs to operate for five years, the present Federal Government has indicated that it will honour the 1972 Act for 1973 only at the rates already approved; that is, \$62 per primary student and \$104 per secondary student. From 1974 Commonwealth assistance, while not expected to drop below that provided in 1973, will be determined on the basis of relative need and the recommendation of the Schools Commission.

Since the present amendment to the Education Act is intended to honour an agreement to act with the Commonwealth and since the Commonwealth intends to provide assistance, in this *per capita* manner only for 1973, my Government cannot commit itself to continue acting unilaterally to provide assistance on the *per capita* basis when the Commonwealth and all other States will be operating under a different system.

The possibility of a formula being incorporated into the Bill was suggested by a member of the Opposition in another place and my colleague, the Minister for Education, gave it very serious consideration. However, because of the nature of assistance already being given to non-Government schools, which had to be taken into account, it will be necessary for the Government grant to each non-Government school to be worked out separately. No one formula can cover all the eventualities that might arise. Different formulae will be needed for the different cases that arise. Under these

circumstances I do not believe that it is worth while pursuing the idea of a formula.

The basic grant for each school is determined by multiplying the assessed national average per pupil—\$62 primary and \$104 secondary—by the number of pupils in the school. From this is deducted the assessed *per capita* value of equipment, materials, and services already provided by the Government—at present it is \$9 primary and \$13 secondary—and the *per capita* grants of \$30 primary and \$40 secondary already being made

From the sum still remaining to the credit of the school must then be deducted payments made on school basis rather than on a *per capita* basis. These refer to equipment grants to schools and library matriculation issues. The need to deduct these on a school basis makes the establishment of a formula based on *per capita* calculations so difficult.

An added difficulty in calculating school entitlements lies in the fact that many non-Government schools contain both primary and secondary students who are assessed at different rates. This factor, plus the combination of *per capita* and school assistance already being received, which has to be deducted, makes a formula almost unworkable.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Would you mind postponing the Committee stage until tomorrow? Mr. Williams is absent as he is attending a function.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: Yes, I will do that. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would ask Mr. Williams to obtain a copy of my remarks so that he may know what I have said.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I expected him back by this time.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I thank those members who have contributed to the debate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ACTS AMENDMENT (ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 1st May.

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [8.43 p.m.]: From what I have said on previous occasions when traffic Bills have been before the House, I think the Minister will be aware that I will not support this measure. I have always said that traffic safety should be dealt with by one Minister and one authority, apart from the police.

I feel the committee appointed to inquire into traffic safety was an excellent committee; but because of its terms of reference, and the fact that in making its inquiries it had regard to the policy speech

of the Premier delivered in February, 1971, and the fact that it knew it was the wish of the Premier that the police should eventually take over all control, the committee was not able to consider the matter as fully as it might have done had it been given an open go. I feel the committee should have included members of the local government traffic committee. After all is said and done, country shire councils have been controlling traffic in their districts for at least 30 years and must have some knowledge of traffic safety.

The Government could have done this at the time. It could easily have given the committee the opportunity—unrestricted in any way—to make an examination of the matter. It must be remembered that the committee had the advantage of the knowledge gained by Superintendent Monck who had just returned from an overseas fact-finding mission.

If notice had been taken of the country shire councils and the Liberal Party an endeavour would have been made to have all the control under the one Minister and the one authority.

It is interesting to consider the situation in the other States. The only control the police have in New South Wales is in connection with traffic safety. All other aspects of traffic in the metropolitan area and in the country are under the complete control of the Department of Motor Transport. In that State the number of accidents percentage-wise, based on population, is the same as the number in Western Australia in which the local authorities have control.

In Victoria the police and the road safety authority have control, while in Queensland the control rests with the Main Roads Department and the police. The situation in Western Australia, if the Bill is passed, will be that four authorities—not two or three but four—will administer traffic. It appears to me that we are not really going along the right track.

As I have said, if the investigating committee had had a free rein and been able to consider the problem from every possible angle, the report would have been different. It would certainly have been interesting to read the committee's recommendations in such circumstances.

This Bill involves a departure from police control and actually supports the proposal we have advocated for some time, which is that a single authority should be in control.

It has been said that if vehicle inspection were permitted by private garages some malpractice could occur. How many "bombs" are there on the road? The main traffic hazard is speed. If a vehicle is incapable of high speed it is not usually involved in very much trouble; and if a vehicle is inspected today, it does not mean that something will not go wrong with it

tomorrow. It is impossible to gauge what might go wrong with a vehicle at some future time.

It is false economy for the Government to establish a separate department at a cost of approximately \$1,000,000 for the purpose of vehicle inspection. If it is thought that any garage would not be capable of doing this work, it should be deregistered. The same should apply if any malpractice were detected.

Under the legislation a separate authority would be established for the issuance of drivers' licenses and the registration of used-car yards, and so on. From time to time we have advocated that if drivers' licenses are easily obtainable, the drivers involved are not as good as they should be. Drivers' licenses should be issued only under very strict conditions, and after the applicants have passed very stringent tests to ensure that the number of accidents is reduced and less speeding takes place.

Many provisions in the Bill are worth while, but the establishment of three or four different departments to control traffic will not help traffic safety. Traffic is such an important subject that it should be under one Minister only. Unless the problem is tackled from every angle it will not be solved and the number of accidents will not be reduced.

I will not support the Bill because I do not believe it will achieve what is desired. I hope that eventually traffic throughout the State will come under one authority divorced from the Police Department and that it will be the sole concern of that authority.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Upper West) [8.52 p.m.]: I have studied the Bill, the Minister's second reading speech, and the report on which the Bill is based, and I am afraid I cannot raise any great enthusiasm for the legislation. The whole emphasis in the Minister's speech seems to be on reducing the road toll. On the first page of his speech is the following—

In conformity with its policy to take action to reduce the accident toll on our roads . . .

On page 4 he says—

As my Government has approved and will implement these recommendations to provide a framework for the development of effective traffic safety policies aimed at achieving a significant reduction in the road toll . . .

The final paragraph reads—

I contend that the amendments proposed in this Bill will provide the administrative machinery for the development of effective traffic safety policies aimed at achieving a significant reduction in the Western Australian road toll . . .

On page 7, proposed new section 4F, paragraph (c) (1), reads—

to prevent traffic accidents;

I repeat that the emphasis seems to be on reducing the road toll, but no-one can tell me that this Bill contains any provision which will do this. It does not do anything that is not already being done.

In effect it transfers the licensing of motor vehicles from one department in one building to another department in a different building with possibly the same personnel doing the work. It removes the issuance of drivers' licenses from one building to another and again probably the same personnel will be involved. It removes the research section from the Main Roads Department to another building where exactly the same work will be done, but another Minister will be in control, and again probably the same personnel will do the work. The research section could have been improved had a couple or more officers been appointed to the section in the Main Roads Department where the facilities are available.

It takes the control of used-car dealers from one Minister in one office to another Minister in a different office, and it does the same with the licensing of driving instructors. It takes the control away from the Minister for Police in one building and puts it under the control of another Minister in another building. That is all the Bill does. No-one can tell me that these provisions will prevent road accidents or reduce the road toll.

The committee made great play of vehicle inspection, but it came to the conclusion that it had no evidence whatever to indicate that the examination of vehicles would prevent many accidents. On page 7 the committee stated that no direct evidence is available on the extent to which vehicles in this State are defective and that it would have to rely on overseas information in this respect. Why should we worry about overseas information? We should base our legislation on our own experience, surely, and not on what someone else does somewhere else. If only 1 per cent. of our accidents in Western Australia occur as a result of unsafe vehicles, why is it necessary to contemplate the expenditure of millions of dollars on the establishment of vehicle examination centres throughout the State? Surely it would be better to wait for the result of research on this matter before we give consideration to it.

I would like to know whether the committee studied the facilities available at and in use by many of the country local authorities. If it had perhaps it would have changed its tune to a certain extent. Some of the facilities are first-class and the local authorities are performing a first-class function in vehicle examinations and are possibly much tougher than are the police in the metropolitan area. To the best

of my knowledge the facilities available in the country have not been examined. Perhaps the Minister will correct me if I am wrong.

When dealing with vehicle licensing or inspection we must be careful we do not create problems for the farmers. In one or two places today a farmer must take his tractors and trucks 60 to 80 miles to the nearest vehicle inspection centre. A person cannot come in on any day he chooses to have this done but only on a day stipulated by the police in areas where the police have taken over country traffic control from local authorities. In some cases people have to take their trucks and tractors 60 or 70 miles.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: It is two days a week.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: This must be done irrespective of whether or not it suits the farmer. The situation has become more than tough when it is necessary to do this.

I am worried about the situation. If vehicle inspection becomes a compulsory requirement throughout Western Australia, how many vehicle inspection centres will be set up and how far will people have to travel to have their tractors, trucks, and cars inspected? These matters must be looked at before any thought is given to putting the legislation into effect.

I agree with what has already been said with regard to the terms of reference, one of which reads in part—

... to inquire into the establishment of a new department responsible for traffic safety, accident research and related functions such as the registration of motor vehicles and licensing of drivers.

There is nothing new about this: it is being done at the present time. The only thing which emanates from the report is that there should be a transfer from one department to another and from one Minister to another. A committee such as this, which was set up to deal with the problem of traffic, should have been given completely free scope and should not have been limited in any way. After all, traffic is a major problem and is the subject matter of many pieces of legislation which come before the House. We have seen the furore in the Press on traffic problems and have read the comments of Superintendent Monck. We have heard suggestions for road patrols, etc.

It is as well to look at paragraph 4.9 on page 8 of the report which says, in part—

Irrespective of the lack of evidence, however, there is a danger that a system using private garages would be open to malpractice and for this reason alone a Government operated system would be preferable as long as

there were sufficient vehicles to warrant setting up a modern inspection station.

This comment relates to vehicle inspection and I think it is in entirely bad taste for a committee such as this to imply that private garages would be subject to malpractice. Malpractice would be no more prevalent amongst private garages than amongst Government employees. As a matter of fact, if a private garage proprietor were to try this, he would find himself out of business in a short space of time. I take exception to such a remark in this report. It is stated in paragraph 8.5 on page 14 of the report—

The establishment of the authority would not require enabling legislation but could be formed by delegation of specific responsibilities by the Ministers for Traffic Safety and Police.

I am extremely glad the Minister saw fit not to attempt to do this by regulation or by shifting responsibility from one Minister to the other. Had this been done by regulation, I assure the Minister the regulation would have been disallowed when it came to the House. It would not have been good enough to deny Parliament the right to debate the issue on a subject such as this.

The Minister, in his second reading speech, said—

In this regard, members may be aware that as early as 1970 the then Commissioner of Police made a strong case for separating his department from the administrative functions of vehicle and driver licensing when he reported that the present system had outlived its initial convenience . . .

This statement was made by the Commissioner of Police in 1970 but, in 1972, the Minister for Police introduced a measure which had, as its purpose, the complete takeover of traffic control by the police. Why did the Minister do this when his own commissioner did not agree?

The Hon. J. Dolan: Yes he did.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: According to the Minister's speech, the commissioner did not.

The Hon. J. Dolan: He did.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is a point which should be cleared up.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I will read it again—

In this regard, members may be aware that as early as 1970 the then Commissioner of Police made a strong case for separating his department from the administrative functions of vehicle and driver licensing when he reported that the present system had outlived its initial convenience . . .

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Notwithstanding that, the Premier included it in his policy speech.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did not see members of the Opposition refuting it and saying they did not agree with reducing the road toll.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The measure in question had as its purpose complete takeover of traffic by the Police Department. The police would have done all the administrative work and everything which went with such a takeover. There was no separation. This would have applied, had the measure become law throughout the whole of Western Australia. I raise the point because I want to know why the Minister for Police went ahead with the legislation introduced into this House when he knew what the recommendations of the Commissioner of Police were.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The commissioner told your previous Minister for Police that he was in favour of police control.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Why, then, are the words I have quoted included in the Minister's second reading speech? Are they not factual?

The Hon. J. Dolan: I told you this last year when I introduced the other measure.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Are the present words not factual?

The Hon. J. Dolan: All you are saying is that the commissioner was in favour of separating the licensing of vehicles from other functions and he wanted a separate department. That is not related to police takeover of traffic.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The purpose of the measure introduced last year was to make traffic control throughout Western Australia the responsibility of the Police Department.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Since I have been Minister I have been doing just that. I have been taking men off the licensing of vehicles and putting on special men, who are not policemen, to do it.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I ask the Minister to look at the measure which he introduced last year, and to see what he said on that occasion. I raise the question because there seems to be a disparity of opinion somewhere along the line.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The measure introduced last year had as its purpose police takeover of traffic full stop! That is why dozens of local authorities objected so strongly.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why are local authorities objecting to this measure? It is because vehicles may be examined.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I take exception to that remark, because more vehicle inspections are carried out in country areas than in the city.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Of course they are.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They are done a lot better, too.

The Hon. J. L. Hunt: Who carries them out?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Men with the necessary qualifications to carry them out.

The Hon. J. L. Hunt: I doubt that very much.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: So you see, Mr. Dans!

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If the Shire of Port Hedland does not carry out this work, that is not the fault of the legislation but of the members of the council, no more and no less. If every local authority were to carry out its duties as it is supposed to do under the Traffic Act we would have no troubles. Most of the country local authorities which still accept the responsibility for traffic control carry out this work effectively.

I shall now refer to a news release, dated the 12th April, 1973, containing a statement by the Federal Minister for Transport. I quote—

The Government has decided it must involve itself more directly in a more vigorous, co-ordinated multi-disciplinary approach to road safety at a national level.

I do not know whether it is intended that the Federal Government will take over traffic control and safety matters and that the State Government will be by-passed. As I read the news release, it says straight out that the Federal Government will go to market on this subject.

The Hon. J. Dolan: No it does not.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Perhaps the Leader of the House should read all the news release and find out for himself. This would be another incursion by the Federal Government into State matters.

The Hon. J. Dolan: The Federal Government could not take it over without the consent of the State.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: The Federal Government will do many things unless the State Government is careful.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You have funny ideas.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am glad the Minister is waking up to what is likely to happen.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Do you seriously think that what you are saying is true?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It will happen.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You think it will, but you do not know much.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know whether the honourable member has read the news release but I have it here if he wants to read it.

Of course, the Minister has now gone against the Police Union and, to some extent, I am glad he has. A letter appeared in *The Civil Service Journal* of April, 1973, at page 299 from the General Secretary of the Police Union. The letter is addressed to the Civil Service Association and asks for support for complete police control of traffic.

The Hon. J. Dolan: You read some peculiar things into it.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: No I do not. I have the journal here.

The Hon. J. Dolan: I have read it.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Why is it peculiar?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It says—

For a number of years, systems for control of traffic operative in Western Australia have been the subject of extensive examination.

The recommendation of a Select Committee was that control be vested with a single authority—the Police Department.

The whole tenor of the letter is concerned with police control of traffic. The concluding paragraph reads—

We ask you to consider these views and are hopeful that you will press for an end to the present impasse and place the job of policing our highways in the Police Department whose authority is recognised and respected throughout the State.

I mention this only because it is not quite consistent with the measure under discussion. I mentioned earlier that not one provision in the Bill will help to reduce the road toll. How many amendments to the Traffic Act and the Police Act have been made over the last decade? How many regulations, under these Acts, have been framed? If we were to search the records we would find that the number is very large indeed. All the amendments and regulations were made with the idea of reducing the road toll but not one has been effective when we consider the road toll at the present time.

The Hon. J. Dolan: If we had not had them, there would have been a holocaust on the roads.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: If members study the report on which the present measure is based they will find that it relates directly to the New South Wales legislation, despite the difference in name. Has the New South Wales legislation made any difference to the road toll?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: How can you arrive at that conclusion?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I only ask a question: Has it?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It is a speculative question. The road toll in New South Wales could have been greater without the legislation.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: It could have been less without it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I do not know how you arrive at that. It is a peculiar way of thinking.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I am not too sure whether we should not look at the request of the Allied Temperance Association with a view to bringing it into line with the Victorian Act as it relates to the alcoholic content in the bloodstream. The Western Australian Act provides for an alcoholic content of .08 per cent. whereas the Victorian Act provides for .05 per cent.

I do not know whether this would make any difference, but it may be worth looking at, because if we are to take any notice of statistics and the reports of doctors who treat traffic accident victims in hospitals, I think we will find the reports indicate that even if the traffic accidents are not caused by alcohol, there may be a great degree of alcohol in the bloodstream of the accident victim.

The Hon. S. T. J. Thompson: Do they have spot checks in Victoria?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I do not know, but in Victoria they work on .05 per cent. I suggest that we should have a look at this position, and after having considered the statistics see whether something cannot be done to overcome the problem that faces us.

I do not believe in being negative. I wish to assure the Minister that despite what I have said I will not oppose the Bill; even though I feel it will not do any good. As a matter of fact there is nothing in the Bill to oppose, because it contains provisions that have already been acted upon. Statistics also show that the greater percentage of the accident victims are those who are under 30 years of age. Whether anything can be done to reduce the toll of accidents in this age group I do not know.

But this is the aspect we should be considering; we should not be worrying so much as to whether traffic should be under one particular department or the other; or whether it should be located in one building or the other—such considerations will not alter the fact one iota.

I do not like the Bill very much. I think that to a certain extent its provisions will mean more fragmentation, and I feel it will not achieve what it sets out to achieve. If it does achieve its purpose I will be the first to admit that it is worth while. I only hope the Bill will do something towards alleviating the present position in which we find ourselves.

I would like to repeat what I have said many times in this House. I have previously made it clear that it would have been far preferable had the country local authorities been looked after and given sufficient capital to run their own traffic affairs. It would have been far better had

we given them sufficient inducement to do the job properly, and had we provided sufficient finance for this purpose and left traffic control in the hands of country shires.

These people are on the spot. They know the cars and the people involved, and I am sure it would have been far better had we provided them with the finance to enable them to carry out their own traffic control. This would have been a more sensible way to handle the situation.

It is not too late, even now, for the Government to return to the situation that existed previously. The main reason that local authorities have turned over the control of country traffic to the police is because they did not have sufficient funds to permit them to carry the burden. That is the main reason.

If we are to overcome the problem that faces us we should give the local country shires all the encouragement they deserve and need. Had we done this I am sure we would not be faced with the problem we have today. We would not have had the struggle that ensues today between local authorities and the police.

Accordingly I have come to the conclusion that to a certain extent the Bill proposes to remove from the police, traffic control and administration with a view to placing it in a separate department. It is possible, of course, that this move will be successful and, as Mr. Heitman has said, eventually we will attain traffic control which is entirely different from that which exists today.

As members will see, I have placed an amendment on the notice paper. I observe that Mr. Ferry also has an amendment on the notice paper. The reason for my framing my amendment as I have is that the amendment to be moved by Mr. Ferry refers to a person to be nominated by the Local Government Association. I seek to have one representative from the Country Shire Councils Association to be appointed from a panel of three names submitted by that association.

I have done this deliberately, because I feel that the Local Government Association has not been affected by traffic control for 20-odd years, and I do not see any reason for that association to be brought back into the authority now. If a representative from any body should have been brought in, it should have been one from the Country Towns Association which covers a greater number of people than is covered by the shires. It is the country shires that have been fighting for this principle all along the line, and there are still many country shires which control their own traffic matters.

If the Minister desires co-operation he will include a representative from the Country Shire Councils Association on this authority. If he appoints such a representative he will get more co-operation than he

would by appointing a representative from the metropolitan area. I repeat: the reason for my foreshadowing this amendment is to have the Country Shire Councils Association represented. I reluctantly support the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. D. K. Dans.

House adjourned at 9.22 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 8th May, 1973

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

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE AND GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PRECEDENCE

Wednesdays

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [4.35 p.m.]: I move, without notice—

That on Wednesday, 9th May, and on each Wednesday thereafter until the 31st May, 1973, the House shall, unless otherwise ordered, meet for the despatch of business at 11.00 a.m., and that Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day on each such Wednesday until 12.45 p.m. and from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

I would explain that in a desire to facilitate the work of the House I consulted the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party, who expressed their agreement to this motion and to my introducing it without notice. The purpose of the motion is none other than to facilitate the business and to ensure that private members' business shall have the same scope as is generally extended to it, and that no private member shall feel he is restricted in any way by what is proposed.

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Leader of the Opposition) [4.37 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure of the procedure here, and whether or not permission of the House must be obtained for this motion to be introduced without notice.

The SPEAKER: It will require an absolute majority.

Sir CHARLES COURT: It is correct that the Premier conferred with both the Leader of the Country Party and myself. We understood that the motion would be introduced without notice today and, personally, I have no objection to it.

The only query I raise—and I presume it will be in order for the Premier to reply to the motion—is that I gather the motion, of which the Premier gave notice before