

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 5th October, 1967

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2): ON NOTICE CROSSWALKS

Scarborough Beach Road; Installation of Sodium Lighting

1. The Hon. H. R. ROBINSON asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) How many pedestrian crossings on Scarborough Beach Road have been recommended by the Main Roads Department for priority installation of amber sodium lighting?

(2) When is it anticipated work will commence on the fitting of units?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) There are eight pedestrian crossings on Scarborough Beach Road. At this point in time no recommendation has been made for the installation of sodium lighting. The priority list approved by the Minister for Traffic covers only those roads which form the principal arteries of the city and for which the Main Roads Department is responsible for upkeep. Sixty pedestrian crossings are involved in this scheme and the necessary materials have been ordered.

Scarborough Beach Road, along with other local authority roads in the metropolitan area, will now be considered for the installation of sodium lighting on pedestrian crossings as the second stage of the programme.

Due to the fact that the equipment has to be obtained from overseas, at this date it is not possible to say when the installation of sodium lighting on local authority roads will be put in hand.

(2) Answered by (1).

2. *This question was postponed.*

EXPLOSIVES AND DANGEROUS GOODS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Third Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I feel constrained to say that I was sorry I could not find any reference whatsoever to the debate on this Bill in this morning's Press. From time to time reporters have

concerned themselves with the Bill, and have asked me questions about it, and they have indicated to me that the measure is a matter of public interest. I also think it is a matter of some public interest.

I regret that the Press did not feel justified to make some mention of this Bill, particularly as I had asked, at the conclusion of the proceedings, that the Press give some indication to the public as to the passage of the measure.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It was mentioned in the news over the air this morning.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am talking about the Press, not the radio news. I am sure the failure to make any mention of it does not lie with the Press representative in this House. As a matter of fact I took the trouble to make a check, and found that he did send in a report. It is disappointing to know, however, that the matter has not been given some publicity.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It was on the A.B.C. news.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But not in the Press. Whilst a number of us at times listen to the A.B.C. news, and the news broadcasts of commercial radio stations, this is not always regarded as a good coverage with the incidence of TV. It is the Press to which I am referring particularly, and I would like to see some reference made to this fact so that the public will understand the situation. It is not too late even now.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILLS (4): THIRD READING

1. Town Planning and Development Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Town Planning), and transmitted to the Assembly.

2. Prevention of Pollution of Waters by Oil Act Amendment Bill.

3. Shipping and Pilotage Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and passed.

4. Bulk Handling Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. L. A. Logan (Minister for Local Government), and passed.

POISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West—Minister for Health) [2.45 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Poisons Act gives control over all classes of poisons used or marketed in this State. For some years interstate discus-

sions aimed at the introduction of uniform regulations relating to poisons have taken place. This product, of course, may contain several classified poisons. Draft regulations are prepared and ready for promulgation. It is proposed that these regulations will be made under the Health Act.

An examination of the position by the assistant parliamentary draftsman resulted in advice being given to the Public Health Department that the Poisons Act required amendment so that exemptions from the poisons regulations could be granted wherever effective controls were imposed under other State legislation. This is one of the aspects covered in the Bill.

Also, the Poisons Act authorises substances to be placed on any one of the several schedules. These schedules differentiate between groups of poisons according to their characteristics. The Act is insufficiently flexible to give clear power to include a substance in a schedule in a qualified manner. For example, the fourth schedule contains the entry "mercury salts and compounds for parenteral use." I am given to understand that "parenteral use" is by injection. The department has now been advised that the limiting words "for parenteral use" are of doubtful validity, as the Act simply authorises the addition of substances.

This Bill is therefore introduced to adjust these two points—

- (1) Allowing exemptions from the Poisons Act where the poisons involved are adequately controlled under other State legislation; and
- (2) Authorising the addition of substances to the schedules, with a qualification such as that mentioned for mercury salts and compounds.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition).

IRON ORE (HANWRIGHT) AGREEMENT BILL *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 21st September.

THE HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [2.48 p.m.]: Had we been pressed for time this afternoon, I would have contented myself with saying that I agree with the speech made by Mr. Strickland a week or so ago on the second reading of the Bill. But as we are not pressed for time, and as the House seems to be in a pretty tolerant mood, I propose to offer a few observations myself on this particular Bill.

During my sojourn in this House I have seen many Bills for the closure of railways, and, having lived in such an era, it never occurred to me that during my lifetime I would see the proposed construction of

three new railway lines, a couple of hundred miles in length, from places which hitherto were of no importance to places of no existence, thus facilitating the development of the Pilbara in a manner which, from its very magnitude, is still difficult to comprehend. I am sure the Minister for Mines must derive considerable satisfaction from the circumstance that he happens to be administering the portfolio of mines during this extraordinary development in the history of Western Australia.

Likewise, I am sure Mr. Wise and Mr. Strickland must, as we all are, be very pleased at the extent of the development which is at present taking place in the north.

Also it never occurred to me that I would live to read, as I did in *The West Australian* of Monday last, of a 104,000-tonner taking a 90,000-ton shipment of iron ore from Dampier, this being worth \$1,000,000, and loaded in the incredibly short time of 15 hours.

I understand Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd., which is in active operation, has orders which it is unable to fulfil with the present plant, and that it proposes to spend a further \$100,000,000 with a view to making the annual capacity of its plant something of the order of 20,000,000 tons a year, thereby making it the largest iron ore mine in the world.

"Speed the plough" was the slogan of Sir James Mitchell 40 years ago. That is still a pretty good slogan, but today I think it may be accompanied by the slogans, "speed the iron ore agreements," "speed the iron ore trains," and "speed the iron ore ships."

Likewise, it never occurred to me that I would live to see the day when we look like having more pelletising plants in the north than pubs in Kalgoorlie or, to be a little less picturesque, in Nedlands. The iron ore developments and the iron ore shipments which have already occurred, and which are only an indication of things to come, are already making a substantial and beneficial impact upon the finances of the State, the overseas trade of Australia, and the general industry of Western Australia. The royalties are beginning to flow into the coffers of the State Treasury. Even the comparatively insignificant item of stamp duty is not altogether unimportant; because, if my arithmetic is correct, the stamp duty on the receipt for the shipment of iron ore I have just mentioned would be a cool £1,000.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Do you mean dollars or pounds?

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am talking dollars.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You were talking pounds.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: I thought I was talking dollars.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You probably thought dollars but said pounds.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: As I say, even the small item of stamp duty on the receipt would be \$1,000. Unfortunately, the State Treasury will not achieve much real benefit from these royalties and stamp duties, etc., because there will probably be a corresponding reduction and diminution in Western Australia's present inadequate share of revenue collected through the medium of the Commonwealth Government. However, it is worth while remembering that, notwithstanding this, the Commonwealth Government and the Commonwealth Treasury will share in the profits of all these ventures in the north, probably to the tune of 50c in the \$1.

In addition, in the matter of trade, the iron ore shipments will still further substantially increase by hundreds of millions of dollars, and probably by thousands of millions of dollars, Western Australia's favourable overseas trade balance to the great advantage of Australia as a whole. Let us remember that, except for Western Australia's surplus, the overall Australian picture would be anything but bright, because the rest of Australia generally shows an adverse overseas trade balance. Also, the internal benefits of all this development which is taking place in the north, and which is percolating right through to the metropolitan area, is of untold benefit to all parts of the State. The provision of sleepers, machinery, houses, etc. in one sense has created great prosperity, activity, employment and, indeed, over-employment throughout Western Australia.

So far as the agreement which is contained in the schedule to this Bill is concerned, there are some aspects which, to my mind, are refreshing and some other aspects which seem to be curious and even harsh. I happen to be one of those men who may be described as an unashamed, one-eyed Western Australian and I take the view that whether we are looking for mining entrepreneurs, hospital administrators, town planners, or leaders in any other direction we have the ability here to throw up these men from within our own community. One of the pleasing features of this agreement is that the registered office of the company is not in Delaware but in Thomas Street and, likewise, the controlling shareholders in the company are not residents of some foreign country but are men who have been born and bred in Western Australia, and who have worked and lived amongst us.

Indeed, my friend, Lang Hancock, was not only born and bred in Western Australia, but was born and bred in the north of Western Australia.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: In the Pilbara.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes, either in the Pilbara or in the Ashburton.

These two men, as were their fathers before them, are well known to many of us. For example, my old friend, the late Fred Wright, who is the father of Mr. E. A. Wright, was for many years a prominent businessman in Perth and for a long period of time was a member of the Perth City Council in those far away days of its peace and tranquillity.

I have spoken of Mr. Fred Wright, and you, Mr. President, may remember that, in the dark days of the wheat industry in the 1930s, when it was in an extraordinarily perilous position, Mr. Fred Wright published a book containing his solution to the problems of the wheat industry. However, the passage of years has proved that the thesis or the hypothesis which he then propounded to save the wheat industry was on less solid grounds than those on which his son is endeavouring to help develop the north.

The name of Hancock has, for many decades, been well known throughout the Pilbara, particularly around Mulga Downs and the Hamersley Range. To my personal knowledge Lang Hancock and Ernest Wright have, for some 30 years, been actively interested in the mineral development of the north of the State. They have looked for gold; they have looked for manganese; they have looked for white asbestos; they have looked for blue asbestos, and they have looked for iron ore.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And found it.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes, and have found it. I want to go on record as saying that, in my opinion, the spate of iron ore development with which the State is blessed, and with which it is to be blessed, has its genesis more than anywhere else in the knowledge, the vision, the imagination, the energy, the tenacity, and if members like, the cussedness of these two battlers—Hancock and Wright.

It has been suggested in some quarters that Lang Hancock's attainments in diplomacy are in inverse ratio to his enthusiasm for the north. Speaking for myself I have always found him a pretty rational and level-headed individual. I think it is worth while recording that it was Hancock who induced Mr. Val Duncan, the Chairman of Directors of Rio Tinto, to come to Western Australia and to look at the proposal in respect of the development which is now conducted by Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.

It was Lang Hancock who took Mr. Tom Price to the Hamersley Range; he flew him over the area and convinced him of the mineral wealth, particularly iron ore, in that district. I well remember Lang Hancock telling me after he had taken the late Tom Price on that journey that Mr. Price said something to this effect: "Boy, we would give our eye-teeth for the gravel, let alone the iron ore in this district."

Then again it was Hancock and Wright who induced Daniel Ludwig to send his team of geologists and mining engineers to Western Australia. They were the people whose agreement we dealt with a month or two ago—I refer to the Sentinel agreement.

It was Robert Louis Stevenson who said: "To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive." These two sons of Western Australia have arrived, and they are to be congratulated. I wish them well. I suggest the fruits of their labour, however great, are well deserved. After all, they cannot take it with them; they cannot even give it away without gift duty; and there are, of course, such things as income tax and death duties.

On the 15th November, 1961, I had occasion to refer to the activities of Lang Hancock and Ernest Wright, and what I then had to say is recorded on page 2785 of *Hansard* of that year. I will not, however, burden members by reading it this afternoon.

I would say, however, that having arrived, and having assured themselves of royalties to the tune of about \$2,000,000 a year, they now want to plough it back in the Pilbara as risk capital, and press on to even greater things, as evidenced by the agreement before us. For quite a long while I felt that Lang Hancock, in his activities and prospects, was a pretty good illustration of the old Bible saying that "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country."

The developments that have taken place, and which are a fact today, demonstrate that he has proved himself correct in the vision that he had for the north.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Can you reconcile much of their achievement with Sir Arthur Fadden's view a few years ago?

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Is the honourable member referring to the letter he read the other night.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Yes.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: So far as Sir Arthur Fadden's letter is concerned, I might be inclined, for one fleeting moment, to adopt the philosophy of Goethe and say, "What I cannot praise I speak not of." Upon reflection I think I will, however, be my natural self, and say that I regard that letter as a pretty good illustration of the type of puerile thinking at Canberra which has for many years retarded the growth of Western Australia.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Hear, hear!

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: The only thing that can be said in favour of that letter is that it at least proves that Sir Arthur Fadden was not in the class of the girl who could speak 20 languages and who could not say "No" in any of them.

In connection with the development of Western Australia, in the metropolitan area, in the north, and in other districts, over the years we have seen that the

Government has encouraged industry, particularly in the metropolitan area, by giving away land, by making substantial loans, or by giving substantial guarantees.

Even in respect of the Kwinana oil agreement of 1952, and the B.H.P. steel industry agreement of 1952, we found that the Government undertook, at its own cost, to provide water, and to provide rails.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: And housing.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes, and housing and other things. But this agreement, like the previous iron ore agreements of recent years, presents a very different picture. If I may be permitted to reminisce for a moment, it certainly presents a different picture from the first iron ore lease of note—or notoriety—which was granted in 1920, or thereabout, to Jock Thomson; because in 1920 the Cockatoo Island leases were pegged by Jock Thomson. He was granted leases, not with an agreement, but without any agreement at all. He was granted mining leases subject to the ordinary labour conditions.

They were circumstances very different from those connected with the leases of today. One extraordinary feature about these particular leases to Thomson was that at one stage they finished up in the ownership of the Queensland Government. But today, we find that one does not merely peg a lease and expect to have it granted. One has a chance of getting the lease, but in connection therewith, as the Minister reminded us in moving the second reading of this Bill, the operator concerned is required to construct towns complete with power and water, do the mining, and operate ore extraction and handling facilities, provide roads, rails, and wharves at a flag-fall of about \$70,000,000.

As I said, the agreement now before us is, in most respects, much the same as agreements which have been passed in this House in recent years—Cleveland Cliffs, Mt. Goldsworthy, Mt. Newman, and so on. However, in this agreement with the two local lads, as it were, there appear a number of restrictions and penalties which are not to be found in the earlier agreements with the companies which are controlled outside of Australia. The Minister has described some of these penalties as encouragement, but from the Minister's explanation it would seem to me that his idea of the proper interpretation of the word "encouragement" differs rather materially from mine.

To me, the most oppressive clause in the agreement is that which, after two years, restricts the export of unprocessed ore to two and a half times the export of pellets. One could have understood this had the penalty been imposed if the pelletising plant had not been erected; but it is curious to say that after the company has spent \$750,000 in exploration work, and

then \$70,000,000 on a railway, wharves, towns complete with power, water, and so on, the company should still have this restriction placed upon it. As I see it, it is virtually an embargo upon the export of unprocessed ore.

The State Government—no less than myself and many others—has always felt that there should be no embargo on the export of iron ore; and, for that matter, on any other natural product of which we have adequate supplies for local use.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: None of the agreements presented to Parliament gave support to that contention.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: That is my point; but this one does. It should be the same as the others.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is not what you said.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: It is what I intended to say. If the Minister did not understand me the first time I will say it again: I see no reason at all why the prohibition should be in this agreement, as it is not in the other agreements.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I thought you said that the State Government, you, and the agreements did not see any reason why there should be a restriction on the export of ore.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: I have recollections of the State Government—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Is that what you said?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will have an opportunity to reply at a later stage.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Under this agreement the operators are liable to a 100 per cent. increase in royalties if the pellet plant is not completed by a certain time. I point out again that there is no such provision in any of the other agreements.

It is a little curious to me, as I studied the agreements, to see the restrictions have been included in this agreement. As Mr. Strickland mentioned the other night, there is a clause in the agreement which permits of variations, from time to time, and I respectfully suggest to the Minister that the clauses of which I have just made mention might well be looked at with a view to their provisions being eased, as there is no reason why these two men should not be given their heads. They know what they are doing, they are capable businessmen, and they are spending no small amount of their own money in this operation.

So far as the agreement itself is concerned, I am reminded of the Duke of Wellington on the famous occasion when he looked at his army and on being asked the question whether the enemy would be frightened by that army, said, "I do not know whether the enemy is frightened, but the army frightens me." To adapt

and adopt that statement, I would be inclined to say that I do not know whether these conditions frighten Hancock and Wright, but they certainly frighten me.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you think they would have mutually entered into an agreement of which they were frightened?

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: It would have to be the best agreement the Government would offer. They would be in the hands of the Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: They were in the hands of a mutual negotiation. Have you asked Hancock what he thinks about this?

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: I think his view would be much the same as that which I have just expressed. It seems to me also that the justification for easing that limitation becomes more important in view of the announcements which were published in the paper on Monday last indicating that at Wittenoom, which the partners purchased last year consequent upon the closure by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company of the asbestos works, some 300,000,000 tons of high grade hematite ore had been discovered within three or four miles of the existing crushing facilities. I understand the crushing facilities at Wittenoom are of about the same order as the crushing facilities at Mt. Goldsworthy.

That does seem to me to place an entirely new aspect on the prospects of the future of Wittenoom—and Roebourne for that matter—because I understand that prior to the closure of the asbestos works at Wittenoom those towns had a population of 1,400 people who were directly, or indirectly, supported by the asbestos crushing operations.

It appears that the plant which exists at Wittenoom is suitable and adequate to crush iron ore, and if that be so the prospects of the township, and of the people of the township, seem to be pretty bright—long term. As far as the people are concerned, if the crushing plant is working it matters not to them whether it is crushing asbestos, iron ore, or road metal. If it is working it is providing employment and keeping the town afloat.

Subject to the construction of the railway it does seem that quite apart from asbestos—even if the asbestos mine was never reopened—Wittenoom has a reasonable future. But, as the years go by, if the railway is constructed it could have the double advantage of reviving the asbestos industry.

The Minister was very careful to say that this agreement had nothing to do with asbestos. This agreement relates only to iron ore and is not contingent upon the reopening of the asbestos industry. However, there are a few facts in connection with that industry which are extremely interesting having regard to the develop-

ment which is taking place with respect to iron ore.

The two fundamentals in trade and commerce are these—firstly, one must have a market and one must meet the market price. Secondly, unless one can produce and deliver at a figure which is greater than the cost then the inevitable end is to go broke. I have some interesting figures with respect to asbestos which are worth pondering over, because the closure of the Wittenoom asbestos works was due to the two factors I have just mentioned. The cost of production and delivery was such that it could not be recouped at current market prices.

When it is borne in mind that the road freight payable on asbestos from Wittenoom to Roebourne was \$13 a ton, and when the railway is constructed the freight will be only \$1.20 per ton; and when it is also remembered that sea freight charged on asbestos was of the order of \$33 a ton, whereas under the new system of bulk shipment it can be reduced to \$1.75 per ton, it can be seen there is scope to substantially reduce production costs, and even make the asbestos industry a profitable concern.

The motion before the House is that the Bill be now read a second time. For my part, I would be happy if there were added to that motion the words "and let us now praise famous men" or, to switch from the classical language of Ecclesiastes to the language of the football field, "Come on Hancock."

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [3.26 p.m.]: I would like to take the opportunity to thank both Mr. Strickland and Mr. Watson for the remarks they have made in connection with the Bill. I also want to make it perfectly clear that what I intend to say in reply is in no way, shape, or form to be taken as criticism of the partners to this agreement.

In view of what has been said, and in view of the charge that has been made that these two local people have been dealt with unfairly by the Government, I do feel that the House is entitled to some explanation from me as to how these people have been treated. I would like members to know that, in my opinion at least, the partners have not been treated unfairly; as a matter of fact, they have been treated very generously.

I would like to tell the House how the Mines Department deals with what are known as temporary reserves. Members are aware, of course, that the Commonwealth held an embargo over the export of iron ore for many years. We have heard references to the correspondence from the Treasurer of the day, and certain remarks about that correspondence. However, I will not deal with that aspect.

From the day the Commonwealth Government decided that the embargo should

be lifted, the State Government set out to encourage people to search for iron ore. Applications were called for temporary reserves for iron ore with the exclusive right to prospect for the mineral within the areas of those temporary reserves. It was decided that a temporary reserve would be an area of 50 square miles maximum, but that the applicant could hold one or more temporary reserves.

The first advertisement, or announcement, that applications would be invited brought forth a large number of applications from all sorts and kinds of people. It was the task of the Mines Department to analyse the applications and grant the temporary reserves to people in accordance with the merits of each application. Messrs. Hancock and Wright were among those who were successful and were granted a considerable number of reserves.

As was stated by both members who have spoken to the Bill, Messrs Hancock and Wright succeeded in encouraging and enticing capital to Western Australia to assist in the development of the areas they were granted as temporary reserves at the time.

I well remember the occasion on which the late Tom Price—and he is the person after whom that great mountain of iron ore is named—came to the State of Western Australia. He went to the north, had a look at the area, and then returned to Perth. It was on a Sunday that the Premier (The Hon. D. Brand), Mr. Court, and I saw Mr. Price and his associates after their return from the north. It is true to say, as Mr. Watson has expressed it, that Mr. Price was most enthusiastic about what he saw, and also about the prospects for the north-west.

Two of the temporary reserves for iron ore that were granted to Messrs. Hancock and Wright were made over, by sales agreement, to C.R.A.—Conzinc Riotinto—which subsequently became the holding company, Hamersley Iron. Whatever arrangements the partners made, they sold two temporary reserves to the company to which I have just referred, under option, and later on that option was taken up.

Members will then recall the announcement regarding the closure of the mining operations at Wittenoom Gorge. It came suddenly and unexpectedly, although in the Mines Department we had knowledge of the fact that Wittenoom was running into mining difficulties because of the shortage of ore and as a result of other conditions. However, the closure, to say the least, came quite suddenly.

It was then that Messrs. Hancock and Wright decided they would look into the question of purchasing the Australian Blue Asbestos interests at Wittenoom Gorge; and they pointed out to me, to the Government, to the Press, and to everybody concerned, that the future of Wittenoom Gorge, and their ability to rehabilitate the

mine and the area rested, to use their own words, which the Press quoted, on these terms, "Unless we are given the right to prospect these reserves the future of Wittenoom and the blue asbestos mine there could be dimmed. Our purchase of Wittenoom could be useless." The reserves to which they referred were the two reserves which I have already mentioned.

I made it clear in my second reading speech—and Mr. Watson drew attention to this, also—that the agreement, which is part of the Bill, has no relation whatever to the reopening of Wittenoom Gorge, and the partners have made this perfectly clear. I merely want to point out that the essential matter, from the point of view of the re-opening of Wittenoom Gorge, was that the Government should grant—and I say "regrant"—the two temporary reserves which the partners had previously held.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: And then sold.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: They had to have them back. I think for the third occasion the Government decided to call applications for the reserves. For that third occasion—or it might even have been the fourth occasion—we put a fairly strict limit on the time in which applications could be made—in other words, we brought the closing date forward. This was done to facilitate the business and to move forward as quickly as possible consideration of the two temporary reserves which the partners needed so badly.

As had been the case in the past, we received a very large number of applications—probably I should have said "a considerable number" rather than "a very large number" of applications. In the area in which these two temporary reserves were situated there was a complexity of applications. One area extended over into another area, and they were all around the place. We had quite a job to sort the whole position out; and, in addition to the two temporary reserves that Messrs. Hancock and Wright wanted, they asked for many more.

I think initially they were granted 11 or 12—not two, but 11 or 12, or around that number. After the two partners had got under way, and had examined the area a little more closely, Mr. Hancock came to my office and said, "We have discovered some more hematite which is outside the boundaries of these areas. I would very much like to think that we could have an adjustment of the boundaries to include this." I did not think the request was unreasonable, since Mr. Hancock had looked around the district, and so I adjusted the boundaries and granted them a further area.

When the agreement was entered into it was not based on two temporary reserves, but on 34 temporary reserves. So nobody can tell me that these people have been treated ungenerously or unjustly, because they have been treated very justly indeed.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: I was referring only to a couple of points in the agreement.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know. At this point I am rather confining myself to the comment made by Mr. Strickland when he said that the local boys were being singled out for harsh treatment by the Government. I can assure members that is not the case at all; it was far from being the case.

Because some publicity was given to the matter, members will recall that the Leader of the Opposition (The Hon. J. T. Tonkin), Mr. Wise, Mr. Bickerton, and Mr. Strickland sought an interview with the Premier, Mr. Court, and myself to find out what was going on; and Mr. Tonkin made a statement to the Press after this interview. The newspaper article reads as follows:—

Opposition leader Tonkin said yesterday he believed the government was favourably disposed towards the development proposals of mining partners L. G. Hancock and E. A. Wright. However, the proposals were somewhat nebulous at this stage.

Mr. Tonkin and Labor politicians representing North-West electorates met Premier Brand, North-West Minister Court and Mines Minister Griffith to discuss the future of Wittenoom, Roebourne and Point Samson and any development proposals that might affect these towns.

Mr. Tonkin said before the meeting that Labor members wanted the government to take them into its confidence about plans for the Wittenoom area.

Later, he said the talks had been full and frank.

"We found the ministers anxious to answer our questions," he said.

The government had not received any proposals that could be regarded as firm.

That was in February, 1967, and the state of affairs at that time was rather nebulous. There were talks about the granting of the two temporary reserves and the discussion developed along those lines. Since then we have negotiated the agreement, and it was entered into in the same spirit as many other agreements which have been negotiated on behalf of the State.

One or two principal points were kept in mind with this agreement, as with all the others, one of the most important being that the State should not be called upon to provide any of the facilities required. The standard had been set with previous agreements—that in return for the right to prospect exclusively, within the area concerned, the obligation was on the companies to negotiate an agreement with the Government before any mining titles would be granted. One of the prin-

cial points was that the State should be free from any monetary obligations; the companies would accept these and the State would get the benefit by way of royalties, by way of employment, and by way of industry along the lines indicated by Mr. Watson.

The approach to this agreement was no different from the approach that was made to any of the other agreements. The reference to royalties is purely academic in the mind of Mr. Hancock, because he is quite certain the whole project will succeed, and I give him full credit for his optimism. If the project succeeds in the way he thinks it will the reference to royalties is purely academic and there will be no need for the provision to come into effect.

I am sorry if I misinterpreted what Mr. Watson said, but I thought he said that he saw no reason why the iron ore produced in this State should not be exported. The Government sees no reason why it should not be exported in reasonable quantities, and the royalty rates are set in relation to the f.o.b. rates in all these agreements; but the Government is extremely anxious that instead of the raw materials being exported they should be processed into some form within the State. Where that encouragement is given to a company, and it responds by treating the ore within this State, the royalty rate decreases, as is indicated in all the iron ore agreements, including this one; because the treatment of the ore locally would be of great benefit to Western Australia.

This again is part of the agreement. This is an agreement entered into by two parties sitting around a table and mutually agreeing to the clauses contained in the agreement which is signed at one of those little ceremonies people like to have, because it is an achievement on the part of the signatories; that is, both the Government and those who will benefit from the agreement.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Like the President of the United States, do you hand around a pen at the signing of these agreements?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We will invite the honourable member to one of these ceremonies at which an agreement is signed and he can see for himself. It is perfectly true that many of these mining operations can be entered into without agreements of this nature. I can grant mining titles to people which will give them the right to do certain things, but I am sure it will be appreciated that the basis of this agreement between the Government and Messrs. Hancock and Wright is outside the Mining Act. The areas are so huge that if mining titles were granted in the ordinary way it would probably defeat the objective.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You have to grant 24 acres at a time.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes; or 300 acres according to the permit that is granted. Usually these areas are granted initially in the form of a temporary reserve. In this instance each temporary reserve is 50 square miles in extent, and there are 34 reserves, which makes a total of 1,700 square miles. Within this area the parties to this agreement have full prospecting rights, and they are entitled to apply for mineral leases within that area. Even if 300 square miles were divided into mineral leases under the provisions of the Mining Act it would prove to be an extremely expensive proposition.

However, that is not the important factor. The important factor is that the State, on the one hand, grants the right to mine, but on the other hand the company accepts the obligation which goes with such right, and the result is the State is gaining the benefit of the mineral development. We can then look at the statistics showing the improvement in our trade, in our turnover, and in many other avenues over the last four or five years. As Mr. Watson has pointed out, great benefit has been brought to Australia as a whole because of the efforts of this State in regard to mineral development. I had a look at some of the relevant figures only the other day and I was surprised and amazed to note how well Western Australia was progressing compared with some of the other States.

Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.4 p.m.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have only a few more comments to make. Not only do I think the partners in this project received fair treatment, but I have also a letter in one of the files in the Mines Department signed by Mr. E. A. Wright in which he thanked me for the co-operation that the department extended to him in granting him 85 per cent. of the applications he had made for temporary reserves. It cannot be said justifiably that these people have been singled out, or that they have been given harsh treatment.

The agreement has still some distance to go. When I saw the partners on the 20th March, 1967, I took a few notes of the interview. They are: The deposits are based on limonitic ore, the areas have not been drilled, and the partners are satisfied the ore is there.

I read a report in the newspapers a few days ago, and this changed the situation considerably. It was reported to the *Daily News*, but not to the Mines Department, that the partners were in possession of 300,000,000 tons of hematite ore; so in the space of a few months the situation has changed. Mr. Hancock has returned from overseas. He became aware of the fact that he had not fulfilled his obligation to the Mines Department to report quarterly on what he was doing. He has written in to say he regretted the report

had not been made, and that he would hasten to have the position corrected. I prefer to receive reports from mining people through the department, and not through the Press.

At the time Mr. Hancock considered that something in the order of \$700,000,000 to \$800,000,000 would be involved in the development of this area. That was in January, 1967. He said he thought the money would probably be provided by an Australian-United States interest. He said, "We expect the finance will be provided from the United States." I agree with him that an influx of capital from overseas will be required to get the project under way.

This project will be no different from the one he launched in respect of the first lot of temporary reserves which were granted to him when he approached C.R.A., or from any of the others. The amount of money involved in these developments is, indeed, huge. I want to make it clear that the Wittenoom Gorge claims for asbestos, and the titles that were held by A.B.A., were transferred to Hancock and Wright. As I have said, the matter of paramount importance was that Wittenoom Gorge could not be opened up without the granting of the two temporary reserves mentioned. The partners have now been given those two reserves, and 32 others as well.

They have discovered 300,000,000 tons of hematite ore in and around Wittenoom Gorge. I am glad they were successful in doing that and I wish them luck. If this discovery will enable them to carry out their original intention of reopening the Wittenoom mine, and doing something for the Wittenoom district, then I am sure we are all very grateful to them. The State will give them every possible encouragement to fulfil their objectives.

In conclusion might I say the Government regards this agreement as being no different from the others. I commend the agreement to members as being worth while, subject to the ability of the partners to implement it successfully. If they succeed in doing that not only will the profit be theirs, but it will also be shared—as I have said in relation to other similar agreements—with all the people of Western Australia.

Regarding the point made by Mr. Watson about the lack of benefit to Western Australia in respect of the royalties, I must say that I agree with him. Western Australia is a claimant State, and as long as it continues to be a claimant State then the benefit from the royalties is a doubtful one. Until the State moves forward and becomes other than a claimant State, many more other benefits, which we seem to be enjoying today, have a doubtful effect. It is estimated that the income from minerals to Western Australia could reach \$300,000,000 by 1971.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Did you say \$300,000,000?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, by 1971. I agree with Mr. Watson that this is a valuable contribution towards the economy of the State. From my own point of view it has been very nice to be associated with this development. As time goes by I feel sure we will produce more agreements of this or some other nature, in connection with the development of other minerals in Western Australia, for the consideration of Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (The Hon. F. D. Willmott) in the Chair; The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6 put and passed.

Schedule—

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: Following the Minister's remarks, I would like to clarify one point. My criticism, if it can be called criticism, was not directed at the basic treatment of Hancock and Wright by the Government. I was merely looking at this agreement, as one would look at a Bill, and comparing it with another. So far as the limitation of two and a half times for unprocessed ore, as against pellets, is concerned, I simply drew attention to the fact that that limitation was not in most of the other agreements.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I would also like to point out that my criticism and my references to harshness were made—if the Minister reads my speech—when I compared this agreement with similar ones which we have dealt with. I was not referring to the treatment by the department.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: It is a question of comparing one document with another.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I wish to point out that mining companies such as this one are not given possession of anything until the State confers on them the right to look. The minerals belong to the State and that point should not be lost sight of. That is the reason why the companies are given temporary reserves. Before they are given the right to mine they have to put their proposals to the Government of the day.

We have followed the line of getting the best deal we can for Western Australia under these agreements. This one may appear to be a little harsh in the eyes of Mr. Strickland and Mr. Watson, but I repeat that it is the result of mutual negotiations, and if the undertakings of the partners reach fruition, the question of royalty penalties will be purely academic.

Schedule put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

ACTS (7) : ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Acts.

1. Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment Act.
2. Evaporites (Lake MacLeod) Agreement Act.
3. Albany Harbour Board Act Amendment Act.
4. Bunbury Harbour Board Act Amendment Act.
5. Indecent Publications Act Amendment Act.
6. Police Act Amendment Act.
7. Physiotherapists Act Amendment Act.

FAUNA PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 20th September.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.18 p.m.]: It is rather a long haul from iron ore to fauna, and it is very difficult to move from the world of millions of dollars to the world of more or less fantasy; but as we are obviously in such a receptive mood today, may I suggest that we endeavour to project our minds back to 50 years ago and imagine the luxurious situation of a duck shooter of that time, in the near suburbs of Perth.

We can imagine how far he would have had to go to get a bag of ducks. We know how simple it would have been to shoot them, and what a good time would have been had by all under those conditions. I should imagine he would be no different in principle from the male duck shooter of today. At the end of a successful day he would return with a bag of ducks for his wife to pluck, clean, and cook, and then he would enjoy the evening meal, conscious of his complete ability to do justice to it.

I wonder what the situation would have been if one of us present here could adopt a somewhat ethereal appearance and at the stage when my shooter was in a most receptive mood—well dined and, we assume, well wine—had appeared before him and said, "In 1967 there will be no near waters in this State upon which you can shoot ducks. The ducks will have moved several miles inland for fear of the shooter's gun. They will be protected for part of every year because they will be dying out."

We can imagine my shooter rubbing his eyes and saying, "My word! I must have dozed off," because that would have been considered a ridiculous thing to say 50 years ago.

We do not have to go back 50 years to realise how the situation concerning fauna can deteriorate. I imagine that 25 years ago no-one would have thought the present situation concerning the wild turkey could arise. We know that 25 years ago all over Western Australia, and certainly in the northern portion of the State, the destruction of the wild turkey was called a sport. Why he was ever referred to as the "wild" turkey, I will never know, because no tamer bird ever existed. Nothing was easier to shoot, and it was a common pastime, week after week, to shoot many more of these birds than was necessary. Fancy 25 years ago saying, by way of prophecy, that within a very short period of time the bird would be virtually extinct and would have to be permanently protected! Would anyone who made a prophesy of that nature at that time have been believed? Oh, valiant and brave were we when we hunted and destroyed the wild turkey!

Recently I read an article headed, "Is the Red Kangaroo Doomed to Extinction?" Not many years ago kangaroo shooters were part and parcel of the countryside, at least in the north-west and Gascoyne. On the inland roads it would be common to see teams of shooters, as they were called, on almost every station, destroying the kangaroos. It was right that they should be shot, too, because they were actively competing with the sheep for the available fodder.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There were 30,000 in a single year on one station.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: That is so. On occasions, in drought times, the destruction was so great that the management had to insist upon some disposal of carcasses. Today I know of only one team of two men shooting in that area.

It is fitting that in this Bill we seek to preserve the image of the red kangaroo because I have heard visitors to this country say that they have seen no finer animal anywhere. The very big one—known as the boomer—is a majestic animal in his own right. I would very much like to be assured that the species will be preserved for the admiration of the people in the generations which will follow, because he could never be replaced. He is an animal unique to Australia, and I believe he is the very background of Australiana.

For those reasons alone, we must realise that this Bill is necessary; because it increases the responsibility for conserving and protecting fauna in this State. It is timely in its content and conception.

The change in the title of the Act is worthy of note. It will be known as the Fauna Conservation Act instead of the

Fauna Protection Act. Obviously the basic necessity now is to conserve. To do this we must provide the ways and means by which the fauna can be conserved. Not only must we, with imagination, declare reserves, but we must also ensure that they contain plentiful supplies of food, water, and shelter. Then we must make provisions under which no possibility exists for our fauna to become extinct.

In passing I would like to say that as a layman I believe flora and fauna are so closely allied that if it is not possible to link them under one Act, they should at least both be under the control of the one Minister.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: They depend on one another.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: However, although that is not the matter under discussion at the moment, it may be a development in time to come. Previously, as the Minister told us, fauna has been associated with the four very important items of fisheries, vermin, whaling, and zoology, and he indicated that these four have up to date been the subject of more concern than has fauna. We can easily understand this because of their commercial value. Take, for instance, the whaling industry which leapt into prominence. We know the sorry state that it is in today because of the over-destruction of whales.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The same could happen to our turtles.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE: Yes, it could. Also, but for strong intervention, the same could have occurred to our cray-fishing industry.

However, the position will not continue in connection with our fauna because this legislation will afford it a particular form of protection at Government level. We must take drastic legislative action at times, and this is not easy to do. It is repugnant to those who have to review such legislation, and must be particularly so to those who have to introduce it into Parliament.

Section 20 of the principal Act gives an example of the necessary preventive measures which must be adopted at times. Subsection (2), paragraph (a), of this section provides that a warden may—

- (a) take possession and control of—
any weapon, instrument, illegal device or other thing or means which the warden, on reasonable grounds, believes has been used, is being used, or is about to be used, by the offender in the commission of the offence; . . .

and deliver them into the custody of a member of the Police Force to be dealt with according to law;

- (b) stop, detain and search any vehicle, vessel or conveyance or enter upon and search any land not being a dwelling house or en-

closed garden or curtilage of a dwelling house, or enter and search any hut, tent, caravan or other erection, which is not a permanent residence, or enter and search any shop, warehouse, factory, bond store office or any other premises of whatever description or enter into or upon and search any lake, river, pond, lagoon or other water . . .

So it goes on in these dramatic phrases. The point I wish to make is that provisions have to be written into legislation, because of the sheer consistent cussedness of the people who find loopholes in the law. Ultimately it is those people who are responsible for the very strict wording of legislation. They bring it upon themselves by their continued lack of co-operation, and their unimaginative desire to destroy, to beat the law, and to have no regard for the consequences of what they are doing.

Who could believe that an industry as lucrative as the crayfishing industry has to be protected against itself? However, there are some among those who are enjoying all its privileges who cannot realise that they are killing the source of the income upon which they live, quite apart from what they are doing to the future of the industry. Where do we go if we do not make these drastic measures effective? It is only possible to make them effective by putting them into the legislation of the country, and by arming people with the authority to enforce them.

I do not intend to make any comment with regard to the details of the Bill. In his remarks, the Minister suggested that we could discuss any of the clauses in Committee and I will take the opportunity at the Committee stage to raise any queries upon which I want further explanation.

I consider a most important point is involved in the question of the control of reserves. Some very big areas are gazetted already and I humbly believe they are far too big to be controlled effectively. With the committee, or the authority as envisaged by the legislation, there will be an opportunity to establish near to perfect areas. I realise that the real success of conservation must lie in heavy expenditure, and I wonder whether sufficient revenue will be forthcoming to match my imaginative enthusiasm when studying the Bill. Be that as it may, I realise that a start has to be made and the sooner the better. This is a start.

The constitution of the board is very wide and will include many knowledgeable persons. I was amazed to find that one member was to be a hydrological engineer. To be quite truthful, I did not know we had one in Western Australia. I knew there were many engineers for water supplies and the like, but I did not know

of an existing hydrological engineer. However, it is obvious when one traces the affinity of the name to the fauna problem that such a man would be of incalculable value in the deliberations of the board.

It is noticeable that people do not always appreciate an overall picture, but it is as well that they should present their views as they see them so that the authority can accept them, examine them, and appreciate the point of view. Above all else, the authority can remedy a situation on the occasions when these views are considered to be right. An article appeared in *The West Australian* of the 23rd September, 1967, headed, "Decision on Ducks Explained." The article refers to an action by the Chief Warden of Fauna, Mr. A. J. Fraser, and reads as follows:—

The Chief Warden of Fauna, Mr. A. J. Fraser, has sent an open letter to farmers, duckshooters, naturalists and sports shop owners about a delay in the opening of the duck season.

It says the season will open at 2 p.m. on January 20 and publicises the introduction of a \$2 game licence.

The letter says that duck stocks are down because 500,000 acres has been drained and other areas have been disturbed.

The delayed opening and abolition of the dual opening are first steps in a new conservation programme to which the game licence will be the key.

Areas will be bought with money from the Fauna Conservation Trust Fund financed by game licences.

I have here an editorial which appeared in *The Avicultural Magazine*, a Western Australian publication which is headed, "Is the Western Australian Government obliged to find targets for duckshooters?" It says—

Although it is only a couple of years ago that our Fauna Department was telling us that Water Fowl were abundant in W.A., they now tell us that "Duck stocks overall are low" and that therefore the duck shooting season will not open until January 20th, and close again on April 30th, for the South-west, and Eucla Land Divisions (presumably the continuous open season will continue to prevail for the other three quarters of the State). If that was all there was to it, at least it would be a very small step in the right direction, but that is not the case. It is proposed that Duck Shooters be given a license to kill at \$2 per year—the moneys so raised to be placed in a Fauna Conservation Trust Fund. It is suggested that this fund then be used to purchase key areas; to improve the fauna carrying

capacity of farm lands by fencing sections of dams, distributing nest boxes and planting trees, shrubs and other cover and food plants. To improve existing habitat by damming creeks and other run-offs to create more wetlands and by blasting potholes in potentially productive flats that now dry out too soon.

Since this document is signed by The Chief Warden of Fauna, we must assume that the suggestions are made in all seriousness and the Government and Parliament will be asked to endorse them. We therefore feel that it is our duty to ask one or two pertinent questions:—

*If this regulation is ever brought in, what is the estimated cost of enforcement? Would the taxpayer be called upon to foot the bill, or would it be taken out of the Fund? If it is to be taken from the fund what is the estimated deficit to be paid by the Taxpayer?

*If enforcement and all the entailed clerical work is to be paid by the Taxpayer and the full total of the suggested License fees are to be paid into the Fauna Conservation Trust what is the estimated returns over the next 5 years?

*If we assume that it is at all possible to raise a sum of money in this way that would pay for work that would have the slightest impact on our water-fowl, is the Fauna Department the best equipped Government Agency to carry out this work?

*If we assume that the money was raised, and the work was done, and it did result in increased water-fowl numbers, should we then allow them to be shot out of existence by duck shooters?

Regardless of party politics we cannot bring ourselves to believe that any Government of ours would lend themselves to a scheme that can be described as providing targets for duck shooters who enjoy no support from the community at large.

There are perhaps times when duck shooting may be tolerated; but there is a vast difference between being tolerated and being given a license to kill for a couple of dollars.

Never in the history of our State has anyone been given a license to kill our water-fowl; they are not vermin, they are protected birds.

If Duck shooters are granted these licenses, it will be the first time in the history of our State that they have

been granted an absolute right to kill protected birds.

That is the text of the article in the magazine. It shows a point of view in connection with this legislation and it does show the interest that has already been generated by the presentation of this Bill to Parliament. I support the measure.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (North-East Metropolitan) [4.40 p.m.]: I would like to say a few words on the Bill from the angle of flora, because flora and fauna really are quite inseparable as one lives on the other. I know of a case which is causing a lot of disquiet because of the proposed action to destroy one of the very good flora and fauna areas in close vicinity to a town. As I said, if one thinks of it in a commonsense way the subjects of fauna and flora are really inseparable, because fauna lives on flora. I am amazed they are not under the one Minister and the one department.

THE PRESIDENT: Order! I am afraid I cannot allow the honourable member to speak on flora because this Bill deals entirely with fauna.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They are ganging up against you.

THE PRESIDENT: According to the dictionary definition, fauna is "the animal life of any region or geological period." The parent Act sets out the definition of fauna as distinct from flora. I take exception to Mr. Lavery's interjection, and I ask him to withdraw it.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I am very sorry I used such an expression, Mr. President, and I withdraw it.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I am sorry I cannot speak on this subject. It is a very urgent matter in the present situation. We are about to lose one of the flora reserves just outside Midland, and this is used for educational purposes. If I cannot speak on this subject, I will not have the opportunity to let this information be known to the House. As fauna lives on flora, when one considers all of the insect life, etc., I do not know why it cannot be connected.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid I will have to insist. The honourable member will have a more appropriate time on another occasion to bring her point of view both forcibly and properly before the House. However, it cannot be done under this Bill.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Does the honourable member wish to continue speaking?

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: As I cannot speak, I will just have to stop.

THE PRESIDENT: The honourable member cannot speak on flora.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: As I have said, Mr. President, I was connecting the two subjects of fauna and flora, but I did wish to speak mainly on flora in connection with a reserve adjacent to Perth on which there are both flora and fauna. I wanted to speak before it was too late to do anything about it. I believe this precious spot of ours is going to be taken over for a golf course. I was told by the Education Department that one of the big colleges uses this extensively as an educational facility. If the council meets meantime, it might be too late for me to speak effectively on it. This was brought to my notice by the educators in the area, particularly the Guildford Grammar School, and I thought I could bring it forward under this Bill.

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West) [4.45 p.m.]: This is one of those occasions when I wish I could speak with some real and expert knowledge of the subject which is covered by the Bill. I speak not with any expert knowledge, but with some considerable enthusiasm for what is intended by the clauses contained in the measure. I cannot imagine that there would be anyone in Western Australia who would take exception to the provisions of the Bill, and who would not give anything but complete and absolute support—and I would hope enthusiastic support—for what the Bill seeks to achieve. There may well be some comment and criticism and, perhaps, some opposition at times, not necessarily because of what is contained or specified in the Bill, but rather because of the methods that may be applied at some later stage to implement those things which are intended.

I greet the Bill with considerable interest. It is a moment for which a great many people have been waiting and hopefully anticipating. For this reason, and for the reasons which have been stated by Mr. Willesee, I support the Bill. I also support it because while there is an appreciation of the wild life of Western Australia, and even though there is considerable interest, and people have the best intentions in the world, in the past there has not been a great deal of application of the principle of conservation which the Bill seeks to achieve.

Some time ago I was speaking with a gentleman who was relatively new to Australia and Western Australia, and he said he felt that Australia, generally, had arrived at the stage at which the United Kingdom had arrived about 10 years ago, as it related to public appreciation and the need for fauna conservation.

This statement surprised me a little, because I have been one of those people who have long respected the people of the United Kingdom for their very deep and personal interest in the wild life of their own country. It has become traditional

and a very great heritage of the people of the Old Country to preserve and conserve their wild life.

We could go a step further and say that this interest has been apparent even in the highest quarters—and I refer to the Royal Family—because of the interest and appreciation that has been displayed, not only as it concerns the unique or the rare types of fauna, but as it relates to every aspect of wild life known to exist in the country.

So to say that we in Australia have reached the position the United Kingdom arrived at about 10 years ago is indeed most encouraging. It is in line with the impression I formed myself many years ago, after a period spent in the Old Country itself.

I feel there has been a much too timid approach in the past on the part of authority in the field of fauna preservation or conservation. Perhaps it was a timidity arising from a feeling that the owners of the land in question might not always see eye to eye with the desires of those charged with the responsibility of fauna conservation and preservation. I believe that picture has really changed. I have noticed in recent years that there is a very keen appreciation among owners generally—and I speak particularly of the farming community—for the need to preserve fauna.

I would have liked to see some real steps being taken, at an earlier stage than this, by way of public relations, to ascertain and determine the position in a somewhat more concrete form. Even at this stage I feel the Bill has been introduced without a real appreciation of the true position. I think perhaps the Minister and his officers may still feel some apprehension that the provisions of the Bill may not be accepted, in the way they wish them to be accepted, throughout the country.

If there is any such apprehension, or if there is any feeling of opposition throughout the country to anything prescribed in the Bill before us, I believe it can be overcome by an exercise in public relations. I noticed that in his second reading speech the Minister devoted a good deal of time to an examination of fauna—the wild life and the animal life of the country—and related its preservation to the contribution it could make, and is making, towards increasing human knowledge.

The Minister connected the necessity for preservation with space research and the like. This is very real; it has some very definite application, and serves a most valuable purpose. But I would like to think that a Bill on fauna conservation would be introduced for the preservation and conservation of fauna in its own

right; I would like to think that this was just as important—or even more so—than the contributions its preservation is likely to make by increasing human understanding and human knowledge. I believe that the need to preserve our wild life should not be only associated with sheer academic necessity, but with a very natural interest, appreciation, and more particularly, an enthusiasm for its very existence.

The success of the entire exercise, or an approach of this kind, will depend ultimately upon the enthusiasm of those who are charged with the responsibility of administering the different aspects of this legislation; it will depend upon the enthusiasm of those owners of land in whose areas these sanctuaries and reserves are to be located.

This brings me to an aspect of the Bill on which I would like to comment. I refer first of all to the title; the name of the authority itself—the Fauna Board of Western Australia. Perhaps we are going through a period in our history when boards are not necessarily enjoying the most favourable reaction; and the word “board” unfortunately quite frequently conjures up in the minds of people matters of administration, penalties, inspectorial powers, and regulations. I do not deny that all these things must be present in this conservation process; there must be some element of these powers. But essentially it must come back to an appreciation and enthusiasm for the conservation of the species in their own right. I wonder also whether there may not be a more suitable word than “fauna.”

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I am open to suggestion providing it is less clumsy than “Fauna Advisory Committee.”

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I appreciate the Minister's comments. He knows that I have given some thought to this matter, and I cannot come up with a suitable answer; I cannot come up with what might be a suitable term for this body. I agree that the word “committee,” as employed previously, does not engender the right attitude at all. It implies no executive power; it suggests an advisory capacity. We want the board, not in an advisory capacity, but in an executive capacity, to get on and do something with respect to fauna sanctuaries. So I agree with what the Minister has said.

Seeing that I have referred to the United Kingdom; I notice in the Official Handbook for 1967 for Great Britain that there is an organisation—of which, of course, the Minister would be aware—which is called, “Nature Conservation.” There is a body dealing with nature conservancy, which is a committee of the natural environment research council. I know that nature conservancy perhaps

still does not cover the sort of situation that we have in Western Australia in relation to fauna; it covers those things about which Mrs. Hutchison wished to speak a short while ago. It also covers some of the items referred to by Mr. Willesee.

There are a great many features associated with wildlife which perhaps might well be part of the general administration. Forests are closely associated with this as are ecology, zoology, and botany. It would be difficult to imagine those circumstances and environment in our modern-day life which did not have some bearing on the question of fauna conservation.

In fact, Mr. Willesee in his opening comment said—and I hope I may be excused if I misquote him—that it was a long haul from an iron ore agreement. But is it really so; because the huge areas taken up by these great commercial and industrial undertakings are certainly having some effect on the wildlife of Western Australia.

This has been well appreciated, and I refer again to the United Kingdom; because the organisation that exists there considers industrialisation a very important part of the whole question of nature conservancy. I mention these things not for the sake of talking, but in the hope—as mentioned by Mr. Willesee—that the Bill before us, which I consider to be monumental in character, is only a beginning as it relates to fauna conservation, and that in due course our legislation will encompass all those features we consider most desirable.

I hope that in the not too distant future we will have in Western Australia something approaching the Kruger National Park; not merely because of its obvious tourist appeal, and the finance it will attract, but because of our great appreciation and enthusiasm for the preservation of our wildlife.

I believe this sort of appreciation can only be obtained under circumstances like this. The British Government has gone a stage further in relation to this matter and, according to the publication to which I referred, published a white paper—I may slightly misquote again—on walks in the countryside of Great Britain in order to engender a greater enthusiasm and appreciation for the general countryside.

Surely we in Western Australia can take advantage of and enjoy the benefits of our countryside so much earlier in our history than the United Kingdom by doing something wider in compass than is intended by this Bill.

I now return to the question of fauna. While I take some slight exception to the use of the word "board" I also take exception to the word "fauna." Again, it

is a scientific term; but the title "fauna board of Western Australia" does not make one enthusiastic, and it does not create the impression that is wished.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If we call it the wildlife council you will be happy?

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I think the Minister may have noted that I have used the word "wildlife" more frequently than I have used the word "fauna"; and, candidly, I do prefer that term. I think it is essential that we refer to the wildlife of Western Australia.

One of the main purposes of the Bill is to appoint members to the board. I note that certain officers will be *ex officio* members. I well appreciate that these *ex officio* members will be people who are environmentally concerned in the conservation of Western Australia's fauna. The Bill lays down that certain people shall be *ex officio* members of the board by virtue of their office. This does not necessarily mean that these people will supply the required amount of enthusiasm. Certainly they will have knowledge of their own spheres, but are they the most desirable people to have on a board of this nature? I know the words I have used in this respect will not in any circumstances be taken personally by any of the departmental officers to whom I have referred.

I am speaking in terms of a principle, because the Bill states that certain people shall be *ex officio* members of the board. I repeat: What we need is interest and enthusiasm, and perhaps to go a little further than is proposed. This interest and enthusiasm must of necessity include a considerable knowledge of the subject. Perhaps the greatest contribution in the way of doing something towards fauna conservation may well come from those people who are not civil servants. I note with some approval that the Bill provides for an increase in the number of appointed members. I appreciate and applaud the necessity shown to include a taxonomic botanist; and Mrs. Hutchison made the point of the importance of the flora aspect. There is provision for the appointment of two zoologists. This is most necessary; and then we have the persons who shall have a wide and practical knowledge of the subject, and who are not civil servants.

A suggestion has been made and canvassed that if there are to be *ex officio* members—who are heads of departments—who are appointed because of the areas of country in which they are concerned, perhaps we might also appoint someone from the areas in which these sanctuaries will be situated—I refer to the farming community. Perhaps this is something which could be looked at. I am not necessarily advocating it, because the first essential is the appointment of the right type of people rather than a particular category of person.

I said earlier that I would not have been disappointed had a Bill of this nature been brought in earlier in our history. My reason for saying this is that apart from the need to care for our wildlife, there is another aspect to this question which has been a most controversial one in country districts generally. I refer to the existence of these reserves and the size they should be, the use to which they should be put, and whose responsibility it is should they become a source of vermin, a bushfire hazard, and so on. Some sections of the farming community fear that someone with an unbounded enthusiasm in the wildlife field may run riot and take over greater areas of land than are necessary for this purpose. Many representations have been made over the years on this score. Because this feeling exists, there is always timidity on the part of farmers neighbouring these reserves as to what development they should undertake in regard to their own properties.

This is an additional reason to bring about a situation where these reserves can be classified, and something must be done to place them on a proper footing. Most people know that these reserves are there; and, generally speaking, the people do not dispute the need for them, and in this Bill I see an opportunity for their greater care and maintenance. I say again, in relation to our fauna, that the greatest need is to have an organisation which has the capacity, the enthusiasm, the means, and certainly the executive power to bring about a conservation of Western Australian wildlife.

It would be largely unnecessary for me to indicate in any terms, the uniqueness of our wildlife. The fact is, as far as I am concerned, the grey kangaroo is not by any means unique on my property. I have a license to destroy; but frankly I have a great deal of difficulty at any time in bringing myself to the point where I can destroy, because I like to see them, even though they cause damage. It is not a case of their being unique, it is a case of our having them, and we should be prepared to go to considerable lengths to make certain that we not only conserve what we have but, if possible, also increase their numbers.

I intend to deal with some of the provisions of the Bill in the Committee stage but for the present I will let what I have said suffice and give my wholehearted support to the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. H. R. Robinson.

House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 5th October, 1967

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

QUESTIONS (18): ON NOTICE

LAND

Forrestania Area: Releases

1. Mr. YOUNG asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Following the success of trials conducted by the Department of Agriculture in the Forrestania area, have surveys been commenced by the Lands Department to subdivide this area into blocks suitable for selection?
- (2) If "No," when is this survey likely to take place?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) A soil survey, with the bulldozing of access tracks, is to be carried out in the Marvel Loch-Forrestania-Lake Johnson area commencing approximately mid-1968. A decision on which areas might be released is dependent upon the results of this soil survey and water storage investigations being carried out by the Department of Agriculture.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES ACT

Delegation of Powers to State Government Offices

2. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Has the Federal Attorney-General delegated powers under the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1959, part VII, to any State office mentioned in clause 78 (1) (b) of the Act?
- (2) If "Yes," to which office are the powers delegated?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) To the person occupying from time to time the office of Solicitor-General for the State of Western Australia.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Report of Pan-Indian Ocean Conference

3. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has a report been prepared on the Pan-Indian Ocean Conference on technical education which was held in Perth last year?